

Exodus 4

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[0 : 00] Well, thank you. It's really good to be back at my home church. It's good to be able to preach here. If you go to the book of Exodus, chapter number four, and my outline is in Bosnian, but it's not like I'm trying to be a saint or anything. I really prepared it in Bosnian and preached it in Bosnian, and so I figured it'd be good enough for here, right? In Exodus, chapter number four, you know what's going on in the book of Exodus.

I'm pretty sure most of you read that part of the Bible. Exodus is a book of the Exodus out of Egypt, and the Israelites are leaving Egypt, but when you come to Exodus, chapter number four, quite a few things have happened. The Israelite situation has become extremely, has become very bad. It's been in a horrible state for a long time. They've been in the land of Egypt for a long time, but you have that period of time when the Pharaoh changes and the Pharaoh looks out at his people, and he tells them, he says, I want every male baby that is born into a Jewish household. I want you to kill that little boy, and if it's a girl, you can let him live, and then along that way, Moses is born, and his parents hide it. You know the story, and then Moses goes along, and he kills that Egyptian. He ends up fleeing into the wilderness, and I know I'm leaving out details in the story, and I'm hoping you know it well enough to fill him in, but this is Israel. They're in a horrible situation. For years now, Israel has been praying for a deliverer. They've been praying that God would free them from their oppressor. They've been praying for deliverance from bondage, from slavery, and they're in a horrible situation. Well, God comes down, and he meets with Moses, and Moses at this point, he believes he's out, and he'll never do much for God. I really believe that, because when God appears to Moses, Moses has a bunch of excuses, right? And Moses goes through, and this is often a passage used for missions, which a lot of people like to tell their Moses story, how that God took them all through all these stuff to get them to do his will, but that's not what we're going to do tonight. But anyway, so that's what happened in Moses' life, and he comes to the end, and God has shown him signs, right? He threw his rod on the ground. It becomes a snake. He puts his hand inside of his jacket, and it becomes leprous, and he puts it back, and it's not leprous anymore. And he throws a little water on the ground, and it turns into blood. It's some pretty amazing stuff, and it's not trickery. It's actually miracles that God is working. And at the end, he says, Lord, I can't speak. My tongue, it can't speak.

And he says, I just can't do this. And God says, okay, fine. I made your mouth. I gave you all your ability. He said, I made the blind, and I made those that are able to see. I made the deaf, and I made those that are able to hear. But I'm going to send your brother, and he's going to help you out. So this is amazing news that he has been given. His news is that he's going to go into Egypt, and he's going to deliver the Israelites from bondage. And there could be no greater job than that, seeming from the outset, right? I mean, you get to be the deliverer of God's people, and there's a lot of amazing things. But it comes to Exodus chapter number four, and the Israelites think the same thing. He comes into the land of Egypt. He gathers all the elders together. And in verse 29, and Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. So Moses comes before them, and he says a few things, and he tells them how God has heard their cries, how that God has been amongst them, and he has heard their prayers, and that God has prepared a deliverer to come and deliver them from their enemy. Then he showed them the signs that he would have, that God showed him. Moses would have told them something special. He told them, I am sent me, which was extremely special. I think looking back at it now, we don't think it's all that special, but no one knew the name of God up to that point.

God tells Moses, he said, Abraham didn't know me by the same name you know me. He says, Isaac didn't know me that way, and Jacob didn't know me that way, but you get to know me this way. And he is telling this to the people. Verse 31 is probably the most wonderful response you could ever expect.

And the people believed. They hear some good news, and they believe. And when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped. They worshipped God as a result of the good news. That's the right response to good news, right? When you heard the gospel for the first time, the best news in all of the world, how that God loved you so much, he sent his son to die on the cross for your sins, and he offers it to you as a free gift that is only accepted by faith, not of works, and you believed it, it is wonderful news. God makes a lot of promises, and promises are wonderful news. I would like to share with you some promises that I know that we already know, but some of the promises of God that we have as believers. In Matthew chapter 11, verses 28 to 30, Jesus said, come unto me, all you that labor and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. There's a promise of rest in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 13, 5,

[5 : 05] God promises to be with you. If I say the word bog, that means God in Bosnian, so forgive me. Hebrews 13, 5, God promises to be with you. If you are saved today, God is with you. Hebrews 4, 15, God is not just with you. He feels your weakness. There are wonderful promises in the word of God, but God understands your situation. In Christ Jesus, we have the victory. In Christ Jesus, we have victory. Hebrews 8, 37, 1 Corinthians 15, 57. Isn't that a wonderful promise? In Christ, you have victory. If you are saved today, you are not defeated. You are victorious. You are more than a conqueror. In John chapter 16 and verse number 24, he says, pray and you'll receive. Pray and you will receive that your joy may be full. He says, ask and you shall receive. That's the proper word in English. In Luke 6, 38, if we give, it'll be given to us. God says, when you give, I will give.

And he says, I will give that you meet with all. He shall be measured to you again. He says, I will give what you give. I will give to you. In another place, he says, if you give, I will give even more. We have many wonderful promises from God. And I think the natural response to a wonderful promise is joy. If you hear that God is with you, what could be better news than to know that God is with you? No matter where you are in the world, he's the best person to have with you. He says, you have victory. And far too often, we don't feel like we have it, but we have victory. How did you respond when you heard the gospel for the first time? How do you respond when you hear the promises of God?

What is our reaction? And I think sometimes for us older Christians, those have been saved for a while. I'm not old, but I've been saved now for 25 years. We can get to a point that we forget the wonderful promises of God and the amazingness of them wears away, or we stopped believing them.

We stopped believing them because we didn't see them fulfilled like we thought they would be. And tonight, I'd like to share that with you because that's what happens in this story. The Israelites hear some of the best news you could ever imagine. They have been in bondage for a long time. Over 80 years, they've been living in a period of time where their sons were supposed to be killed. And I don't know that we can even imagine the terror that mothers had to feel in the land of Egypt. Imagine every time that you were with child, you couldn't have an ultrasound, but you knew that if it was a boy born, the boy was supposed to be killed. After birth, after you got to meet it, it was supposed to die. I can't imagine living like that. Along comes a man and he says, there's wonderful news you have deliverance. And sometimes I think we have the same thing with salvation. We have wonderful news. In Christ Jesus, you have everlasting life. And we automatically think that everything will go right. You read the promises of God and you thought everything goes right. I read the promise. God says, if you ask, I will give you. And you think, well, if I ask today,

I'll have it tomorrow. And when you don't have it tomorrow, your reaction will be much like what happens in this passage of scripture. In Exodus chapter number five, Moses and Aaron, they go before Pharaoh. They start talking to Pharaoh. They tell Pharaoh a few things. In verse number one, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

[8 : 50] They're speaking on behalf of God and they say, let my people go and watch Pharaoh's rejection. Verse two, and Pharaoh said, who is the Lord? Pharaoh looks at him and he says, who's your God?

I don't know him. Why should I obey him? That I should obey his voice to let Israel go. I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Moses and Aaron say, and they said, the God of the Hebrews hath met with us. Let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the desert and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword. They receive good news from the Lord. They go to deliver it to God's people. God's people hear it and rejoice. They take it to the oppressor and the oppressor says, I don't know your God. Why would I obey him? He's not my God.

In verse number four, and the king of Egypt said unto them, wherefore do ye Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works get you under your burdens. Go back to work, you lazy men. That's not written. I added that. In verse number five, and Pharaoh said, behold, the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest from their burdens. And Pharaoh commanded the same day, the taskmasters of the people and said, and their officers saying, ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick as heretofore, let them go and gather straw for themselves. They hear the promise of God. They rejoice. Pharaoh, Moses takes the news of Pharaoh and their situation gets worse.

Sometimes when we pray and ask God for deliverance from something or for help or for anything, and we're relying on the promises of God, the situation doesn't get better. It gets worse. That's what happens in this passage of scripture. He says, and the tale of bricks, which they did make theretofore, ye shall lay upon them.

Ye shall not diminish aught thereof, for they be idle. He says, these people are idle. They are lazy. They don't want to work. They just want to run off and pray to their God because they don't have enough to do. The good news turns into awful news to the children of Israel. They heard a man say, you're going to be delivered. The next day, after he speaks to Pharaoh, their work gets harder. They end up getting beaten. They have to produce the same amount of bricks every day, but they're not given the supplies to do it. Imagine you're given a job to do without the supplies to do your job. So not only do you have to do your job, you have to go get the supplies. I was a drywaller by trade, and I couldn't imagine going into a house and not having drywall and trying to hang a house in a day. You'd have to have materials. It is impossible to do work without materials.

[11 : 39] That is where the children of Israel are at. Their situation became worse and worse. They had been praying for deliverance for 80 years. They hear good news, and their situation gets worse. And they go before Pharaoh, and they say, Pharaoh, this isn't fair what you're doing.

You are putting something on us that we cannot bear. And Pharaoh says, your idol, your idol, go back to work. And they leave the house. They leave Pharaoh's house. They walk out, and they run across Moses. And I want you to watch their response. In verse 20, and they met Moses, this is chapter 5, and Aaron, who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh. They walk out of Pharaoh's house.

They just got rejected by Pharaoh. Their situation is far worse. Just a little while before, they were rejoicing and praising God. They come out from before Pharaoh. They look at Moses and Aaron, verse 21, and they said unto them, The Lord look upon you and judge you. The Lord look upon you and judge you.

They want Moses and Aaron to face the judgment of God because they blamed Moses and Aaron for their problem.

So, because ye have made our Savior to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hands to slay us. How do you respond when you were believing God and it didn't turn out like you thought it would? How do you respond when you're holding on to a promise of God? And it seems like God is not keeping his end of the deal.

[13 : 28] And I think that is a very real situation in the Christian life. We know the promises of God, but very often we become angry because things just aren't going like I thought they would. God isn't hearing my prayers. God is not delivering me from my problem.

He's not with me like I thought he would be. I don't feel rested. I don't feel I don't know what it is. And we get angry at God. In chapter 6 and verse number 9, Moses had heard from God and Moses spake so unto the children of Israel, but they hearken not unto Moses for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage.

They are hurting so bad they can't hear the good words that Moses tells them. In bondage, promise, the situation is worse. They become so angry and hurt they can no longer even hear the word of God. And I don't know where you are today.

But I ask you, how is your relationship with the God of heaven? And how are you standing on his promises? Are we standing on his promises because we are seeing them fulfilled or because we believe the God of heaven?

When I went to Bosnia, I thought things would go out very different than they did. I thought everything would be different than it was. I one time told someone that nothing went as I thought it would.

[15 : 02] And that's the honest truth. But if your expectation is where your hope lies, it's in the wrong place. And if you expect God to answer your prayer immediately, you don't know God.

God waits a long time sometimes. He waited 80 years, over 80 years, to send Moses to the children of Israel. God is not in a hurry. God is in a hurry. So there's one response to when things don't go as you expect that's wrong, and that is anger at God and his people.

And far too often that is what we do. We become angry with whoever told us the promise of God. We get angry that life isn't going like I thought it would.

We get angry because ministry isn't as I thought it would be. We get angry because things in life just don't turn out like we expect. We read the promises of God.

We hear the promise of God that said his word will not return void. And you can preach the gospel to people, and they reject it all the time. And you can believe the God of heaven, and he said, if you ask me in Jesus' name, I will give it to you.

[16 : 11] And you ask God for stuff, and he just doesn't give it to you. And somewhere along the way, we start thinking, God, you don't keep your word. And we can get angry at him. But may I challenge you to have Moses' response.

In verse number 22, And Moses returned unto the Lord and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me?

Moses is hurting as well. And this passage isn't a very happy passage when it all comes down to it. But Moses is hurting. God told him, he sent him to do a job. Moses didn't want to do the job.

When he finally goes to do the job, it all goes wrong. Everything goes wrong. And you look at the whole situation, the right response was what Moses did, is he went to God, and he asked him.

And aren't you thankful that we have a God in heaven that we can pray to? That we'll hear our prayers. Verse 23 says, He says, Lord, you sent me to deliver your people, and you haven't done any of it.

[17 : 24] You're not doing what you said you would do. And tonight, I think far too often us as Christians, we get to this spot. And I want you to see what God responds to Moses in chapter number 6.

Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he deliver them out of this land.

He reminds Moses of his promise. He tells Moses, I sent you to do this, and I will do it. Verse 2, And God spake unto Moses and said unto him, I am the Lord.

God reminds him of his promise. God reminds him who God is. Verse 3, And I appeared unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty.

But by my name, Jehovah, was I not known to them. He looks at Moses and Aaron, and he says, I knew Abraham, I knew Isaac, I knew Jacob, but they didn't know my name, Jehovah.

[18 : 37] Moses, you have a special relationship with me. And tonight, you have a more special relationship with God than Moses had. Sometimes we think about Moses, and we see that he spoke to God face to face, and we think, I wish I could have that relationship with God.

But you know how often Moses got to talk to God face to face? It wasn't all that often. And you know how often you get to open and read God's very words? It's any time you want to. You can have a better relationship with God than Moses did, because you have his living word with you all the time.

You don't just know the God Jehovah, you know his son Jesus Christ, who offers you salvation, and Moses didn't know Jesus. Verse number, he didn't know Jesus by his name.

He knew God, so he knew Jesus, but he didn't know Jesus as we know Jesus. So I don't say heresy. Verse number four, and I have also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan.

He says, I made a promise. Made a promise. When they were still pilgrims and strangers. Verse five, he says, I have heard the groanings of the children of Israel.

[19 : 46] God hears and feels your pain. When God is not answering or doing what you expected, he knows where you are, and he feels your pain.

He understands your situation even better than you do. And he remembers his promise. He has not forgotten his covenants.

Verse six, Wherefore, say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord. He tells Moses, remind the children of Israel who I am.

Our hope is not in what God does, but in who he is. Our hope is in who God is. Because he is good, and he is the God of heaven.

And he says, and he reminds them over and over again, he uses the word I will. He says, I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptian. I will rid you out of their bondage. And I will redeem you with a stretched out arm and with great judgments.

[20 : 49] And I will take you to me for a people. And I will be to you a God. And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. God wanted a relationship with Israel.

And God wants a relationship with you. And we forget in our problem and in whatever is going on in our life where we don't know that God is keeping his promise that the real reason God is in your life is he wants to have a relationship with you.

And we focus on what we want, but not the relationship that God wants. God is more concerned with his relationship with you than what you want from him. Many times we are more concerned with what we want from God than the relationship we have with God.

But God told Moses, remind the people of who I am and what promise that I made. And may I tonight remind you of who God is. He's a good God. And he loves you.

And he knows where you are. And he feels your pain. And he understands your situation. And his promises are as good today as they were the day he made them. And he will keep them.

[21 : 56] You may not see it. You may not see it in your lifetime. Abraham never saw the fulfilling of most of God's promises. But God kept his word. Because God does not lie.

God made a promise to the land of Canaan to Moses and his descendants. Abraham, not Moses and his descendants.

Abraham and his descendants. Abraham dies. Isaac dies. 400 years past. They still not receive the land. And you and I are surprised when we lived a Christian life for a few years and God hasn't fulfilled all his promises he made in the New Testament.

It took him 400 years. Over 400 years to give Abraham's seed the land of Israel. And yet we are surprised when we pray and we don't automatically receive the answer.

When we are in a problem and we don't automatically see deliverance. When we are struggling with sin and God doesn't just take it out of our lives but he lets us struggle with it so that we can learn who God is.

[22 : 59] And I'm not saying that as an excuse for any sin that we may commit. There is no excuse. But there is a reason why God does not just take away the temptation of sin. God wants to know you personally.

He wants you to know him personally. He wants you to walk with him. May I ask you today how is your walk with God? Are you hurting so bad that when you hear the word of God you can't hear it?

If that's the case I would ask you to ask yourself where do I think God has done me wrong? And I promise you he has not done anything wrong.

There's a second reason God puts us through hardship. Not just because he wants to know you. Not just because he wants you to see his mighty power. But also because he wants the world to see it.

He wants the lost around you to see it. He wants those you know to see who he is. Do the people around you know who your God is?

[24 : 08] Do the people you speak to know that your God is the God of heaven and that you believe him? Exodus chapter number 7 And the Lord said unto Moses See I have made thee a God to Pharaoh and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Thou shalt speak all that I command thee and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh that he send the children of Israel out of his land and I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

He looks at Moses and he says the situation is not going to get better immediately. How do you know that? Because he said I'm going to harden Pharaoh's heart. If Moses was told to tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go but Pharaoh's heart is going to be hard and that means he's going to say no.

God's on purpose allowing Moses and the children of Israel to go through hardship. God on purpose lets your life not be perfect. And sometimes as Christians we look at that and we think well then God doesn't love me but what you don't understand is if God didn't love you he would never put you through hardship.

But God does love you. God knows what's best for you. Verse 4 But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you that I may lay my hand upon Egypt and bring forth mine armies and my people the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by great judgments and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.

[25 : 39] He said in all of this when you are delivered the Egyptians your oppressors will know who I am. Pharaoh when he first hear Moses say let my people go he says who's your God?

I don't know him why would I obey him? And God looks down and he says he's going to know me he's going to know who I am and he's going to know that I am more powerful than his river I'm more powerful than frogs I'm more powerful than flies I'm more powerful than the sun I'm more powerful than life itself because I can take his son at any time that I want to because I am the God of heaven and that is the God you believe in the God who has all power for him the God that is above all and may I ask you today how is your walk with him?

Are you walking with God? And the reason I say that is because the Lord says they shall know I am the Lord they will know him the Israelites knew who God was even though they forgot him a hundred times from here on out I think many times in the Christian life we hear good news and we get excited and we are pumped up and we are ready to take on the world you know with a water pistol whatever people say when they go to hell take it on with a water pistol right and then it doesn't turn out like we thought and you hear someone preach about praying and believing God in prayer and you pray for something and five years go by and somewhere along the way we think God I don't know do you really even hear my prayer?

Are you really with me? You face a situation and you don't feel the presence of God like that goosebumps you got one time when you were in a service and you start thinking maybe God's not with me like he said and somewhere along the way you start thinking maybe God doesn't feel my problems because he just lets them happen and happen and happen and happen may I remind you God is working in your life and he's putting you through everything he's putting you through because he wants you to know him God wants a personal relationship with you Micah chapter number 6 and verse 8 and I'm not going here just because it has my name it says he hath showed thee oh man what is good and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly to love mercy to walk humbly with thy God God wants you to walk with him may I challenge you to have the reaction of Moses to take your complaints and your problems to the God of heaven and then seek the answer and God's probably not going to speak to you in an audible voice but if you open his word he will show you and give you the strength to go through whatever you're going through one of my favorite verses in all of the Bible is John chapter 17 and verse 3 and in John 17 3 tells us what eternal life really is many times we think eternal life is that someday in the future

I'll get to be with God for eternity or sometimes we think eternal life is that someday I get to be in heaven for eternity but eternal life isn't that it's on the screen and this is eternal life that they might know thee the only true God this is eternal life that you can know God wherever you are you can know God you don't need a preacher to preach to you God you can know him we need preachers but we don't have to have that to know God and you can know Christ Jesus whom he hath sent I ask you today are you believing the promises of God and if things haven't turned out right if something has gone wrong in your life how is your reaction how is your walk with God and I beg you to fall on your knees if something is between you and God and make it right and making it right doesn't mean you have to confess everything and go get an absolution from a priest it just means you talk to God and you can tell him your complaints and you can tell him your frustrations and you can read his word and find his answers but God loves you and he will work in your life let's pray dear Lord thank you