

Exod 03-03-02b

Okay, we're ready now to resume our study in Exodus chapter four. Everything that we find by way of detail in the word of God has significance. There is a reason for every statement that is made, every detail that is provided.

God does not waste any words. He does not give us a story just for its own sake. Everything that is there is profitable, as it says, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

So we might at first look at the story and say, well, that's Moses and it's in some mountain between Egypt and Midian. It's a long time ago. He was called to be the leader of Israel and take them out of bondage.

None of that applies to me. But if you think about it, the situation is not that different from what you face and what I face right now. We are going to collect ourselves here in a half hour or so, pack up our books and go back to the, quote, normal routine of our lives.

We have obligations. We have things we have to get done. We have places we have to be, people we have to see and talk to and live with.

And that is our calling. That's the situation God has put us in. He didn't put me in your position and he didn't put you in my position.

And there's a reason for it. We're different. But because we're different and because our situations and challenges are different does not mean that one is more important than another.

Some people think that there's a special aura or halo effect that surrounds a pastor or a pastor's family, and it does not. A pastor isn't any more important than any other believer in the body of Christ. Each one of you has a gift that is just as important as my gift.

Each one of you has a calling that is just as important as my calling. And you know what? Your opportunities for advance and for growth and for blessing and reward and closeness to God are every bit as great as mine or Billy Graham's or any other great person you want to think of. All of us have a calling and all of us tend to have some of the same sorts of reactions.

I can sympathize with Moses, of course, on a smaller scale when some of the details of my life began to unfold and what it was that I needed to do. And I found it intimidating and I thought, well, maybe God should use someone else. All of us feel that way.

Sometimes we look at the road that lies ahead and we say, Lord, if it be your will, let this cup pass from me. The road ahead does not look pleasant. Maybe someone else could do this better.

But if God wanted someone else to do it, God would have put someone else there. And he didn't. He put us there.

You have your life to live. I have my life to live before the Lord. And the question is, are we going to succeed or are we going to fail? Are we going to have a life that we enjoy and a life that God enjoys? Because if God enjoys our life, if God is pleased with it, we are going to receive blessing untold.

You cannot even imagine how great life can be when God is pleased and when God chooses to bless. Happy is the man that God corrects because when he corrects him and he walks the right path, it is an unimaginably great blessing. There is no liposuction that can give you that happiness.

There is no nose job that can give you that happiness. There is no cosmetic surgery. There is no infusion of capital.

There is no business success. There is no personal success. There is no intimate relationship with a member of the opposite gender that can give you the happiness and the peace and the blessing that God can give.

And God can take all of those other things and make them a greater blessing. If there is one thing we take away from what we look at in God's word this morning, it is this. It is not the surface of things that counts.

It's not the actual circumstance, the actual situation, or even the actual person that we're dealing with. It is why we do what we do. It is the hidden spiritual component of things that counts.

Otherwise, we will be deceived. We spend a lot of time Friday night looking at Jesus' injunction in Luke chapter 21 saying, do not allow yourself to be deceived. Many deceivers will come.

We've got a deceiver receiver right here, the television. It's a deceit receiver. It's a deceiver receiver.

You turn it on and all it does is try to deceive you. The special effects they have now make you think that a man fell off a building backward and splattered on the ground when he didn't. Makes you think that if your teeth are whiter, your life will be happier.

Makes you think that if you're, you know, what did Mick Jagger say 30 years ago? Guy comes on and tells me that his laundry is whiter than mine. If I smoke his brand of cigarettes, I'll be cooler than I am. Remember that? I can't get no satisfaction.

Listen to the words of that song. He makes a good point. Somebody comes on the TV or the radio and says, his shirt's whiter than mine and his smokes are better than mine.

I can't get no satisfaction. Well, if we dwell on the surface and on the mundane component of

things, we never are going to be satisfied. God is in the business of making happy those who live to please him.

That's what he does. That's why he calls us. It is accomplishing his purpose and those who accomplish his purpose are richly blessed.

It's just that simple. Well, Moses decides he's going to opt out. When you get back to Exodus chapter four, he says, Lord, find somebody else.

This is the way all movies start where there's a quest, right? The lady's husband is locked up in jail and she goes to the big troubleshooter guy that's supposed to spring him out. Who is the guy, the gladiator? What's his name? Russell Crowe. She goes to Russell Crowe and says, my husband's been wrongly imprisoned, spring him out.

Russell Crowe says, I can't do it. Find somebody else. All of the movies start this way.

The great hero has to be reluctant. It's a part of the mythology. You have to have a reluctant hero, somebody that doesn't want the job.

Well, God doesn't deal in Hollywood fiction. If God calls you, he doesn't want you to be a reluctant hero. He wants you to be a willing hero.

And Moses, when he expresses reluctance, Oh Lord, find someone else. The anger of the Lord is kindled. Now, let me ask you this question.

Is it a good thing for the anger of the Lord to be kindled against you? In what way would this be good? What benefit attaches to having the God of the universe, the creator of all things, the one who holds your molecules together and allows you to keep breathing, to have him angry at you? Well, there is no upside to that situation. There is no benefit to the anger of God. The wrath of God has been a truism for centuries.

People, when they want to talk about something that's just awful, you know, they look at their wife who just crawled out of bed in the morning and say, boy, your hair looks like the wrath of God. I mean, it's the worst thing that you can think of. It is the standard by which all other things are compared.

You know, they say hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. Well, God has a fury that can easily exceed that of a woman scorned. And to scorn almighty God or to tell him that he doesn't know what he's doing, that he made a bad plan is a fearful thing.

Now think about it. Do you have in any part of your thinking an inferiority complex? Do you think that in some way your body is deficient or your brain is deficient or the things that you were born with are somehow not good? You are lining yourself up for the wrath of God. Who made you? Who designed your body? Who pre-planned every neuron that connects itself in your brain? Who mapped out your genome in eternity past? Who decided what family you

would be born into? Who decided what time and what century and what country in which each of us would be born? God did.

And to look at ourselves and say, well, you know, the Don Henley song, your mom is too fat and your daddy is too thin, you know, and then he goes on to say get over it. You know, quit blaming your problems on things over which you have no control because if you start to assign blame and you say, well, I'm a victim of this and I'm a victim of that, you're saying that God doesn't have control of your universe, that something slipped by him and the devil or outrageous fortune, slings and arrows, somehow created a situation that wasn't a part of the plan. Every circumstance, every situation, every factor you can think of, God already knew about and God either caused it or allowed it.

And whatever it is that we need to do, we can do it if we rely on divine power. Moses, by saying here, Lord, please send by the hand of someone else. Notice the language here.

He doesn't say call someone else. He doesn't say light another bush someplace, find another shepherd. He says send by the hand of whomever else.

What did we just have with the leprosy? Was the leprosy on his face? Was the leprosy on his feet? Where was the leprosy? It was on his hand. Why? What does the hand represent? Your strength. Moses says, find the human strength of someone else.

My mouth is inadequate. I can't speak well. He's saying, I'm not equipped for this task.

When God has just got through, he didn't get the message of the leprosy, did he? I'm the God that can kill your human strength. And I'm the God that can activate your human strength and use it for my purpose. So the anger of the Lord was kindled and he said, is not Aaron the Levite your brother? Now he says, I know that he can speak well.

And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. This is kind of a long verse, verse 14 of Exodus chapter four.

But I want to translate a little of this for you from the Hebrew. Because it's quite interesting. It says, the anger of the Lord, the word for anger in Hebrew is af, A-P-H, with a guttural at the beginning.

It's kind of like if you could scrunch up the back of your throat. If you've ever heard these Arabic speaking people and they have that guttural sound, it's like they bend their tongue way in the back of their throat. You have to learn that as a child, generally.

But it's a guttural sound. And the word for anger starts with a constricted throat, guttural and ends in af. So it's kind of like af, A-P-H.

That's how this sentence begins. And it says, yachar af Yahweh, and yachar is from the word that means to light on fire. The anger of the Lord was kindled, was set aflame, by Moshe, B-

Moshe.

And the prefix here is bait, which means in, by, or with. The anger of the Lord was kindled by Moses. And he said, is not, this is ha-lo, lo is the Hebrew negative.

And then he says, aharon ahikar ha-levi. If you listen to that carefully, he says, is not, and then he says, aharon, that's Aaron, ahikar, your brother. The word for brother is ahi, A-C-H-I, and then kar, K-A is the possessive.

And then he says, ha-levi, levi, of course, is the Levite. But look at the word order. He doesn't say, Aaron, the Levite, your brother.

He says, Aaron, your brother, ha-levi, your brother of Levi, your brother in Levi. The relationship of Aaron to Moses is not necessarily having the same mother and father. He is a brother Levite, your brother Levite.

He is not Aaron, your brother Levite. And literally this says, is there not Aaron, your brother Levite? Aaron is available. I know that he can speak well.

And look, he is coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. God has already, God knows that Moses is not the most eloquent speaker.

And God knows that Moses needs encouragement and support. Two heads are better than one. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth.

I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. Have you ever been trying to get something done and you had two or three people helping you and time was of the essence and you say, well, go down there and pick up the end of that thing. And I'm going to get this end and we're going to carry it from here to there.

And they say, well, now, wait a minute. And they start asking a whole bunch of questions. You give instructions to somebody, maybe you're running a crew.

You're trying to get a task accomplished. And you say, look, go do X. And they say, oh, but, you know, that won't work. Here's all the reasons why that can't happen.

And you don't, it makes you impatient to have to stop and try to explain the whole thing. And really the question, one of the reasons that it can incite impatience and anger is if you are the speaker, you can sometimes wrongly assume that the person does not have faith in your judgment. And they're sort of impugning your ability to plan and fulfill a task.

And sometimes you don't have time to explain, say, look, just take my word for it. If you do this, we can get this done. I don't have time to explain it.

And part of God's impatience here is that when Moses starts asking and saying, well, my mouth is weak. I can't speak. Do you think God didn't think of that? He did.

So just do what God says and trust in him for what you cannot see. That's what faith is, trusting for what you cannot see. God says, do this thing.

Remember Naaman, the leper? Later on, he comes, brings a lot of loot out to the prophet. The prophet says, I don't need your money. If you want to be cleansed of your leprosy, go dip yourself in the Jordan seven times.

Well, he's outraged. He's a Syrian general and they've got great, wide, beautiful, crystal clear rivers over there. And the Jordan is a muddy little creek.

You have to hunker down to even dip yourself in it. And he says, did I travel all this way for some guy to tell me to go to the mud hole and dump myself? And he's outraged. And one of his servants says, look, sir, if he had asked you to go climb a mountain and plant a flag or do some horrendous set of tasks, would you not have done it? Here's the simple thing.

Go dump yourself. How hard can it be? And so Naaman grudgingly goes down and does the thing that makes no sense to him. But after he dips the seventh time, he comes up and his skin is as fresh as a newborn baby.

All of his leprosy is gone. Moses may have thought, well, I'm not sure just speaking to a rock is going to make it crack open and do water. The last time I got water out of a rock, I had to whack it.

I think maybe the sympathetic vibrations and the, you know, resonant frequency of the mineral. And, you know, he's thinking all these rationalizations when God says speak. What about the Israelites marching around Jericho? God says, y'all go out there and march around the city and come back.

And tomorrow, go out and do the same thing. March around the city and come back and do this for a week. And then on the seventh time around, why are you going to do it seven times? Blow the trumpets and the city will be yours.

And people are saying now, what sort of cause and effect is going to make this turn into a military victory? God says, trust me. Well, now let's get out of the Old Testament and out of the New Testament and into the modern testament. We're living our lives.

We have different obstacles we are negotiating. And sometimes the policy demanded by the word of God doesn't seem to make a lot of sense from a human perspective. If I do the thing that reflects integrity, it's going to cost me.

If I explain to someone that I'm doing this because I'm a Christian and it's my understanding of the word of God, it's going to create all kinds of noise and flack. It's going to rock the boat. I need to compromise somehow or let somebody else do this.

God says, do what I ask you to do and let the chips fall where they may. Let God handle where

the chips fall. But it takes faith because we don't see a cause and effect.

We don't see that by simply learning God's word and trusting it, our life is going to improve. We don't see where adhering to divine guidance is going to accomplish God's purpose. But it does.

God says, look, let me explain. Aaron already has left Egypt. You think I haven't thought of these things? Aaron is already on his donkey.

He's already heading this way. You've got just about enough time to go check out with Jethro and turn over the flock to somebody else and get back here. And Aaron, your near kinsman, is going to be here.

Your kinsman in Levi. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Don't think that he's going to look at you as an outlaw criminal that he shouldn't associate with.

He's going to be pleased to see you. I'll be with your mouth. I'll be with his mouth.

I will teach you what you shall do. He shall be your spokesman to the people and he himself shall be as a mouth for you and you shall be to him as God. Now, this does, in fact, accomplish a purpose.

We say, well, but doesn't Moses do all the talking later on? God says he will be your spokesman to the people. Who do these people know? Aaron or Moses? Aaron has been with them these last 40 years and Moses has been gone. Nobody even knew if he was alive or dead, right? So who has the in and the ear of the people? It's Aaron.

Aaron will be able to explain. Aaron will be able to tell the story of when Moses was a child. Aaron will be able to communicate to them and have some credibility that Moses might lack initially because he's strange to them.

You shall take this rod in your hand with which you shall do the signs. So this finally gets Moses parking break off and gets his transmission in gear. And so he decides to go.

So verse 18, Moses went and returned to Jethro, his father in law, and said to him, please let me go and return to my brethren who are in Egypt and see whether they are still alive. Jethro said to Moses, go in peace. Now, there is a suggestion here that because Moses arrived in Midian with nothing and almost immediately married Zipporah, that there may have been a work for dowry arrangement with Jethro, much as Jacob had with Laban a few hundred years earlier.

You remember that? And when Jacob had completed his time of service, he sort of signed all of his paperwork and checked out, turned in all of his 782 gear and said, I want to go back and do something else now. My obligation is fulfilled. And even though it has been 40 years, we don't know what the nature of the arrangement might have been.

But unlike Laban, who doesn't want Jacob to leave, Jethro says to Moses, go in peace. Now, we have a little bit of confusion. Let's read these next few verses.

So, we have the burning bush. Moses finally says, okay, fine, if Aaron is coming, that will work. He goes back to Jethro.

So, now we would expect to hear Moses saddled his donkey and went to Egypt. But, look at verse 19. The Lord said to Moses, in Midian, go, return to Egypt, for all the men who sought your life are dead.

Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand. So, where should we be now at the end of verse 20? Where does the end of verse 20 leave us? If I tore out the page and you couldn't read anything else, where is Moses now? It doesn't say on his way, it says he returned to Egypt, right? Took his wife, sons, put them on a donkey, returned to the land of Egypt.

Took the rod of God in his hand. So, I would expect the next scene to be in Egypt. Meeting the elders or talking to Pharaoh or trying to get past the border guards or something.

But now, verse 21, the Lord said to Moses, when you go back to Egypt, see that you do all these wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. Then you shall say to Pharaoh, thus says the Lord.

Now, this seems like a rehash of what we just had back at the bush, right? What is this doing here? Well, the text scholars, the wise German and others that come in and try to say that this was written by several different people say, see, here is evidence that more than one hand is at work. There is some editorial misconduct here and the stories that they tried to blend together have kind of fractured here and we've got different pieces of two different accounts. And this really should have been up above.

Well, I don't think so. Thus says the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn, so I say to you, let my son go that he may serve me. If you refuse to let him go, indeed, I will kill your son, your firstborn.

Why do we have this sequence? Moses at the bush, Moses talking to Jethro, Moses returning to Egypt. Now we have God talking to Moses again and talking about this firstborn business. Well, you remember the reluctance that Moses got this commission with.

He wasn't all that keen on it and it was only with great persuasion that God got him to agree. And throwing Aaron in as another chip on the table, that finally kind of got him to agree. A lot of times we see the right path in our life.

We see what it is that we are called to do. It looks tough. We don't much want to do it.

But we finally close our eyes and grit our teeth and say, okay, I'll do that. Well, God did not just say, okay, I got Moses to sign on the dotted line here, so now I'm going to go in heaven and get busy doing some other things with the angels. God said, I will be with you.

I will be with your mouth. I will be with you through this. It's not your power, it's my power that's going to accomplish it.

God does not leave Moses. He doesn't just have one episode with him at the bush and then he doesn't talk to him anymore. Moses does not have to operate only on the strength of that initial revelation.

God continues to appear to Moses and encourage him. This is what the word of God does for you and for me. God will bring his word to our mind.

God the Holy Spirit will make us aware of his presence. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage.

Be not afraid. The Lord your God is with you whithersoever you go. That's the promise of God's word.

So, don't think that once you embark on something, well, now it's all up to me. God says, look, I'm here, I'm still talking to you. So, he goes and he checks out with Jethro and now the Lord says to him in Midian, now he's having to actually start to carry the thing out.

It's one thing to be at the bush and say, okay, I'll go. It's something else to go pull up roots that you've sunk into the soil for 40 years. Say goodbye to your father-in-law Jethro and all of the familiar surroundings and the familiarity of that life and actually roll up your tents and stow your gear and load up the donkeys.

Tell your family, I know you're in school here and you've got all your friends and stuff, but we have to leave. This is what Moses has to do. Well, that's a big hurdle for him.

So, God appears to him in Midian. And that's why it says in 19, the Lord said to Moses in Midian, let me just remind you again of what I told you. He's not saying so much new, but he says, go, return to Egypt.

Here's another encouragement we didn't talk about at the bush. You remember that death sentence you were worried about? Anybody that knew about that or cared about that is dead. You don't have to worry about getting executed for killing the taskmaster.

That's been forgiven and forgotten. So, don't worry about a consequence. It gives him an encouragement.

So, Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey and returned to the land of Egypt. Moses took the rod of God in his hand. Now, this you remember in Hebrew narrative.

We've seen this throughout Genesis. A lot of times when Hebrews are telling a story, when you get to a new section, they used to do this in books. If you've ever seen old-time books, if you've ever seen ones where at the beginning of a chapter, there's a little summary of what's going to take place and they separate it with dashes, it's in italics.

And so, it'll be talking about the story of something. Say, he's going to do this, he's going to do that, do the other. It gives you a little summary of the chapter at the beginning so that if you're browsing the book, you can find the place in the story to pick up.

Well, Hebrew narrative does the same thing. And remember, this was spoken. These stories were told and these scriptures were read out to people who didn't have a written copy.

And so, the summary here is Moses is packing up his family and he returns to the land of Egypt. Now, we're going to get the details of how that takes place. So, in verse 21, we have another detail.

And this has been scooted down to the end because it bears on this next section. When you go back to Egypt, do all the wonders before Pharaoh, which I put in your hand. How many wonders were there? Three wonders, right? The rod, the hand, and the water to blood.

Then say to Pharaoh, after you've done these wonders, thus says the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn. Let him go that he may serve me. If you refuse to let him go, I will kill your son, your firstborn.

You either give me my son and my firstborn or I'm going to take your son and your firstborn. This is the message that is going to be delivered to Pharaoh. So, what's the subject here? What's the big illustration? Firstborn sons, right? That's your future.

That's your heir. That's who you're going to give your inheritance and the promise of the future, right? God does that for Israel. Pharaoh's planning to put his son on the throne of Egypt.

So, this is a big deal. God says to Moses, Moses, knock, knock, knock on the cranium. It's about the firstborn son.

Israel is my firstborn son. Pharaoh's firstborn son's life is on the line here. Moses, get your brain turning over here.

Shake off the rust. Hit the starter. Crank it over a few times.

Get it moving. Firstborn son, duh, firstborn son. Does Moses have a firstborn son? Yes, he does.

Where was he born? Midian. Are they under the Abrahamic covenant in Midian? No, they're not. Do they circumcise their children in Midian? No, they don't.

Do they circumcise their children in Egypt? No, they don't. Does Moses have a firstborn son that under the instruction of God back in Genesis chapter 17 is supposed to be circumcised? Yes, he does. Has the son been circumcised? No, he hasn't.

Is Moses setting out like Balaam to accomplish a task of God's choosing and yet in the wrong way? He's about to take his firstborn son back to the Hebrews uncircumcised. How can Moses have credibility before the people of Israel and say, I'm speaking for God. Oh, but by the way, I

haven't made my household obey the law of God.

I haven't made my son circumcised on the eighth day according to the covenant of Abraham. I'm speaking for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but I have not been obedient in my own household. Is that going to work? No, it's not.

So look at verse 24. It came to pass on the way at the encampment or the lodging. And this has the definite article.

It means that there is sort of a standard stop. A day's journey that you could make with a load and animals and things was pretty well set. And this would be like, if you're going to make a long trip in a car, like you're going to drive out to the West Coast or something, well, you can't make it in a day.

So you say, well, I'm going to go as far as Albuquerque or I'm going to go as far as Tucson or whatever. And then I'm going to stop and I'll overnight there. Well, people traveling between Midian and Egypt, which was a regular caravan route, there was an intermediate stop.

It was right at the border of Egypt. And this is the lodging. This is the encampment.

So Moses pulls into the motel, the place where they typically stop. There's probably an oasis, probably a place where they could get some food for their animals and food for themselves. Probably some other tents and people around.

He gets that far. He's just about to cross into Egypt. And at the encampment, the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

Gracious sakes. This is the God who met him at the bush and said, Moses, deliver my people. Spoke to him in Midian and said, don't be afraid that somebody is going to kill you because all those who sought your life are dead.

And now God himself shows up and says, I'm going to kill you. Does this not shock? Does it not seem like a complete non sequitur to show up here in verse 24? Everything was going so well. And here's God showing up.

It's like the angel of the Lord with the sword in his hand. Does it kind of remind you of the Balaam story? This is a confrontation because Moses cannot fulfill the divine commission until Moses squares away his own household. What does the New Testament say about the qualifications for a pastor? If a pastor cannot rule well his own house, he has no business exerting authority over the house of God.

And a requirement for pastors or deacons or anyone else in a place of spiritual leadership in the church is that he be the husband of one wife, that his children be well managed. If he cannot manage his household, he needs to resign his pulpit. That's not the rule for everyone, but it's the rule for pastors.

In the same way that having a drink, there's nothing in the Bible that says you cannot have a drink of wine. But the Bible says kings and rulers should not drink. Why? They have a responsibility.

Their decisions affect a lot of people. You don't know at what hour of the day or night you may be called upon to make a decision or implement a policy that affects a lot of other people. And the Bible says if you're in authority, you shouldn't drink.

People generally are told don't get drunk, but certain ones in authority, they're told don't drink. It's not good for the king to drink. It's not good for those in authority to drink.

That's because you cannot afford to be impaired at any time when people are depending on you. Well, here Moses is supposed to go and be the spokesman for God and his own house is not in order. So the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

Now, why? Well, it comes out during this confrontation that the son is not circumcised. Well, Moses is kind of like wrestling with the angel of the Lord saying, oh, don't kill me. Give me a chance to explain.

I will tell you this, and this is one of those Sam theories that you can take or not take. But if you read the account from the time that Moses left Egypt after killing the taskmaster and marrying Zipporah in the 40 years, there is nothing in the Bible that says that he ever told Zipporah or Jethro that he was not an Egyptian. The daughters come back and tell Jethro an Egyptian delivered us from the shepherds at the well.

And it's possible that he didn't even tell Zipporah because the Midianites know the Israelites and know their customs. And maybe Zipporah kind of like had a thing about circumcision or bloodshed of any kind on her children. And so Moses thought, you know, why rock the boat? I'll just, you know, they think I'm from Egypt.

I'll just let that go on. And it's possible. There's nothing in the account that says Moses ever told him he was a Hebrew.

He showed up in the garb of an Egyptian. But Zipporah finds out on this occasion as Moses is about to be killed and is struggling with the angel of the Lord. Zipporah finds out, you know, that the dialogue is not given to us.

The camera comes back a bit. We don't have all the details. But Zipporah finds out that the whole reason for this and she's about to lose her husband and become a widow because her son has not been circumcised.

So she takes a flint. She takes a sharp stone and she cut off the foreskin of her son. He's still a small child.

He was supposed to have been circumcised on the eighth day because he's a Hebrew. He was

not. And so she took and cut off the foreskin.

She circumcised him. Now, I don't know about you, but I would not be keen on somebody with no practice and no prior experience performing a circumcision on me or anybody related to me. Any son that I might have.

We have no evidence that Zipporah had ever performed a circumcision or knew how it was done or any of those details. But she does it because Moses is about to die. So she took a sharp stone.

She cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at his feet. If your Bible says Moses, cross it out. It doesn't say Moses.

It says cast them at his feet. Who is the last he that was mentioned in the context? It's the Lord. The Lord met him in human form, the same form that Jacob wrestled with until dawn.

And this foreskin is cast at the feet of the attacker, the avenger, the Lord. And said to Moses, surely you are a husband of blood to me. Then in verse 26, he, the Lord, let him, Moses, go.

There is an offering, a blood offering, if you will, that is cast at the feet of the Lord and he lets him go. So obviously this was the issue. The circumcision satisfies the requirement and the Lord is no longer going to kill Moses.

So we can infer backward that the reason the Lord came to kill Moses is because his son was not circumcised. Our own house has to be in order before we try to go square away anything or anybody else. And otherwise we have no credibility and there will be no power because God cannot bless us when we are not obedient.

So, and it explains in verse 26, she said you are a bridegroom of blood, a husband of blood because of the circumcision. She was against it. And she is angry when she does this.

I will give you one other detail just in case you want to think about this further. The feet are often a euphemism for the genital area on a male. When they talk about someone, when Saul had to go in and use the bathroom in the cave and David had a chance to kill him, it said Saul went in to cover his feet.

Well, it means to uncover your, the part of your body that you can use to eliminate. And the feet is a, and you get the idea. The verb here means to touch.

It doesn't say she threw it at his feet or cast it at his feet. It literally says she touched his feet with it. And you get the idea that this is applied at the same point that the circumcision took place on someone else.

I will not pretend that I understand all of what's going on. This is a very sketchy account, but the principle is clear. We have to have done what God commands us to do, the basic fundamental things before we can tackle greater challenges.

Why did God not mention this at the bush? Why did God not mention it when He talked to Moses in Midian? Did you ever wonder that? Why did He get to the point of losing His life? And you think, well, Moses could say, well, Lord, why didn't you say this earlier? God already has said it earlier. Moses was trained and raised up knowing the story of Abraham and knowing the covenant. His mother taught him that.

His mother raised him before he went to the palace. He already knows this. He learned it when he acquired all of the materials that he wrote the book of Genesis with, which he has probably already compiled because he's not going to get any more chances to go into the libraries of Egypt.

Moses knows, he wrote the book of Genesis. He knows all about Genesis 15, Genesis 17, and the covenant and the circumcision. And he did not do what he already knew.

God should not have to tell him again. We are told to examine ourselves to be in the faith, to see if we are in the faith. It doesn't say if you're out of the faith, God's going to send an angel and whack you over the head with a bat.

There are things that we already know. And we're supposed to apply what we know and hold ourselves accountable. Moses should have held himself and his family accountable for this action.

And because he did not, and God gave him a hint, didn't He? He said, Israel is my firstborn son. Pharaoh has a firstborn son. It's going to be an exchange.

If he doesn't let mine go, I'm going to take his. There's a lot of talk about firstborn sons and it's kind of like, hey, Moses, what about your firstborn son? But God has to confront him before this takes place and Zipporah has to do the circumcision. So, what is the point for us? We have a responsibility to look at ourselves.

Do not wait for God to put an angel in the path with a sword. Do not wait for God to have to stand in front of us and threaten us with dire consequences before we go back and remember the basic things that we are called to by way of obedience and by way of knowledge of God's Word. It is not difficult.

It is not hard, but it is required. Well, it's plenty for us to think about. And so this is where we'll stop.

We're going to resume with the meeting of Moses and Aaron at the mountain of God next time. But let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for the truth that you have provided for us in your Word.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister it to our hearts, will impress it on our souls in such a way that we can see its application. We can see clearly what you would have us do in our own lives, in our own circumstances. We pray that you'll be with each one who is here, each one

who hears this lesson.

We pray that each one of us, as a result of learning your Word, will be able to live in a way that's pleasing in your sight and glorifying to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name. Amen.