

Confrontation

In the world you will have tribulation – big trouble – cruelty, slavery, injustice, discouragement ... you name it. But be of good cheer, Jesus has overcome them all. (John 16:33)

Revision

God called Moses, and eventually persuades Moses that God meant the business and really could use a failure like him.

Circumcision

You can read what lies Moses tells his father in law, of whom he is more afraid than he is afraid of God and along the way we read [Exodus 4:24-26](#)

In Chapter 17 of Genesis, God made a covenant with Abraham, which included the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. Genesis 17:7-8:

Abraham's part of the Covenant was to be the sign of circumcision, and this included all servants and foreigners in the household. Failure to circumcise meant that that male was to be cut off from Gods people and blessing Genesis 17:10-14:

"Cut off" in the Hebrew, means to be cut off by early death either by God or man. It doesn't mean to be shoved out of the tribe. It means dead, D-E-A-D. God is very serious about circumcision. It is the mark of a set-apart person. Moses has been set apart for God. He is to be the leader of his people, the Lawgiver, the deliverer of the nation, and he had not been exercising proper headship. He has not been obeying the Law of God. He has been circumcised, but that is because of his parents Amram and Jochebed. However, he married a Midianite girl and while he apparently circumcised his older son Gershom, he did not circumcise his youngest son Eliezer.

Now he is heading back to Egypt under the Abrahamic Covenant with a young son who has not been circumcised. God will not put up with that.

Apparently Zipporah, his wife, isn't too thrilled with circumcision and has talked him out of mutilating her offspring. Apparently Moses wasn't too strict about it either and isn't in the future, by the way. During the 40 years in the wilderness, the Jews kind of gave up on God and for 40 years out there they only circumcised a very few of their children and this while Moses was their leader. These are the children of God being led into the Promised Land as part of the Abrahamic covenant, but they refuse to get serious even about the mark of the covenant. The first thing Joshua does when they cross the Jordan and get into the land is stop at Gilgal, which means rolling, where the reproach of Egypt is rolled away. There they circumcise all the males who were born in the wilderness and not circumcised while Moses was in charge.

Moses became ill, to the point of death, an act of divine discipline for not keeping the most basic provision of the Abrahamic covenant. His wife discerned the problem and her actions save his life. But she is disgusted by this practice. After this incident Moses sends his wife and family back home and Moses goes on.

Moses failures – no problem

Moses fears – no problem

Moses mistakes – no problems

Moses' direct disobedience – BIG problem. Partial obedience is not enough

Moses and the Israelites

Moses meets Aaron, who has heard from God that Moses is coming home, and together tells the Israelites what God has said, perform the signs and they believe. Their prayers had finally been answered?

Bricks without straw

Full of confidence the pair go before Pharaoh with the message from God, but Pharaoh says no and calls on his taskmasters to make them work harder. Bricks without straw. Instead of freedom all they had was a daily beating for failing to accomplish the impossible. When the foremen appeal again, they fail, and on finding Moses and Aaron say **Exodus 5:21**

Archaeological evidence, such as the city of Pithom show lower courses of bricks made with straw in good condition even today, middle courses with just stubble and grass, and what remains of the upper and much deteriorated layers bricks with no vegetable matter at all.

Moses was at last doing God's will; God's way and everything went pear shaped. The oppression on the Hebrews increased, and they in turn turned against God's appointed leaders.

Did God have a purpose for giving the Israelites such a tough time? I often wondered why until the obvious was spelt out to me in my reading.

Make them go hunt for the straw they need. What does Pharaoh say, "Everywhere in Egypt [Verse 11]" And they went "everywhere in Egypt looking for straw. [Verse 12]" People would ask, "What are you doing way up here?" "Oh, we had a little hassle back there. Our God says we are to leave and your god says we have to stay." And so the issue between Yahweh and Pharaoh goes all the way up the Nile River. See how God works? Pharaoh thinks he is socking it to the Jews. No, he isn't. He is Chairman for the evangelisation of Egypt. All the Egyptians now understand the issue. The Jews may be knuckling under but God is going to reach out to the Egyptians too. When those Jews walk out of Egypt, they are going to have a lot of friends with them. A "mixed multitude" leaves because a lot of Egyptians believe

Moses reaction to the new situation

Moses did not look to himself, or run away. He has learnt to turn to god and dare even to ask God questions.

5:22 “O Lord why have you brought trouble on this people?” Is there the hint of I told you so God? Things had not gone well! Worse conditions for the Hebrews to work under, no freedom, and he had lost the support of his fellow Hebrews even after he had shared God’s promise of power and a plan.

Exodus 6:1-9

Five times God says to Moses I am the Lord. Focus on God and you can be confident that He is in control of circumstances.

Seven times he says I will.

1. STEP 1 I, the covenant keeping God will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians
2. I will free you from being slaves to them
3. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgement. God as their "kinsman redeemer." Would deliver them from bondage.

4. STEP 2 I will take you as My own people.
5. I will be your God, and you will know who delivered you. He is saying, "I'm not going to just save you from sin, self and bondage and then leave you. I am going to identify with you. You are going to be My people, and I am going to be your God. I am going to live in you. I am going to give you the indwelling life of God so you can live a life of positive righteousness, not just neutrality or absence of evil, but a life of power, a life of God, a life which will manifest Me in you. You are going to be My people, and I am going to be your God, and everybody is going to know it." And that is what God does. He not only pays the penalty for our sin, but He gives us a life of power to live above old self. We don't have to keep on sinning. He indwells us with His life, and we become identified with Christ, His death, His burial and His resurrection, so that as He walked in newness of life on the other side of the grave, so we are to walk in newness of life down here. We are to have victory in our Christian life over all the old habits and the old slavery.
6. STEP 3 I will bring you to the promised land
7. I will give you the Promised Land. The land of Canaan would have to be fought for by the Jews but had God said, "It is yours. I give it to you. Go in and take it. It is going to be a fight, but you are going to win. I have already given it to you." One of Egypt's military leaders had already rammed his way through Canaan smashing their city states and breaking up their coalition of armies. He left a bunch of petty kingdoms each with its own little police force and no alliances so another nation, 40 years later, could come in and pick them off one by one without having to face some gigantic force. God says, "I broke it all up for you." In Joshua He says, "I sent the hornet (Egypt) before you." God said, "I've done it; It's yours; So take it.

You'll have to fight for it, but I have already taken the land, and I have already given it to you. The Title Deed is yours. You are fighting a battle already won.

The Israelites did not have to believe. God had said what he was going to do and that was the end of it as far as God was concerned, although He did let Moses know more than once it wasn't going to be easy.

God did not need Moses to convince Pharaoh, or deliver the Israelites single-handed. He wanted a messenger boy not a company director. Eventually "Moses and Aaron did just what the Lord commanded them" 7:6

Conclusion

Do you notice the kind of God we have? He doesn't need our help. He doesn't need our resources. He doesn't want anything about us except US and our **obedience**. He doesn't mind our being afraid, scared to death, not trusting Him. He doesn't mind our blaming Him when things don't go according to our schedule. How wonderful it is to have a God that doesn't care about any of these things but takes us just as we are, feeling just as we are. A God who wants to shape us and use us to bring glory to Him, His name and His people. It may be hard to trust in God's plans and promises especially when everything seems to be going wrong. To think God has let us down or failed us in some way. It is possible to get into trouble by obeying God. The Israelites were only human **Exodus 6:9**, but God hears our prayers and remembers and keeps his promises.

(See ATG questions p34-5 Exodus '92)

Out of My rest."

So, how does a believer enter into the rest of God? Exactly the same way God entered into it. What do you think of the work of God? Is it adequate? Is it sufficient? Is it complete? Is it finished? Or does it need your desperate striving, manipulating, scheming, planning efforts in order to accomplish God's purpose in your life? That is your choice. You can live a life of activity totally in the will of God while at rest in the midst of the most troubling circumstances because you are trusting in the finished work of Christ and the adequacy of the indwelling God to do whatever is out there in front of you that needs doing. You are not trying to do it. You are obeying God and stepping out by faith letting the life of God through you do the job. You will discover in the midst of your activity, in the midst of the circumstances that are driving you nuts, that you have rest, just a quiet sense of settledness and assurance. That is what God wants. He wants you to have a life of rest. Not a life of ease, a life of rest, living a very active life out of someone else's power and life. The Jews, because of their unbelief, never got that even though He intended, in His three steps, for them to have it.