

The Redeemer Responds

Summary and Goal

God responded to Israel's terrible plight by listening to the prayers of His oppressed people, revealing His character to Moses, and promising to deliver and redeem them. Watching God reveal Himself and His justice should inspire us to worship our Redeemer and pursue His mission in the world.

Main Passage

Exodus 2:23–3:22

Session Outline

1. God responds by listening to the prayers of the oppressed (Ex. 2:23–3:10).
2. God responds by revealing His character (Ex. 3:11-15).
3. God responds by promising redemption (Ex. 3:16-22).

Theological Theme

God is good and just. He sees the suffering of the oppressed and promises redemption.

Christ Connection

God told Moses His name "I AM" as a revelation of His good and righteous character. Jesus is the great "I AM" who gave us an even greater revelation of God's goodness and righteousness.

Missional Application

God calls us to be conscious of the plight of the oppressed and, in response, to show and share the love of God.

Session Plan

The Redeemer Responds

Session 1

Pack Item 1: God Delivers

Display this poster in a place that will help group members follow the storyline of Scripture, to remember where we've been and where we are going.

Introduction Option

If you still have "The Promise of Genesis" on display, refer to it to help recount the storyline of Genesis and how the Israelites ended up in Egypt.

("The Promise of Genesis" was Pack Item 10 from "The Story Begins" Leader Pack.)

Pack Item 2: The Exodus Map

Display this map before the group meeting. Reference it as needed throughout Units 1 and 2 to help group members orient themselves to the people, places, and events written about in the Book of Exodus and the rest of the Pentateuch.

For this session, call attention to a possible location for *Horeb* (also *Mount Sinai*), the site of burning bush and later the giving of the law.

Introduction

Begin by calling to mind our lighthearted view of Egypt, and then contrast that with the serious circumstance in which the Israelites found themselves—under Egyptian slavery (leader p. 10; personal study guide [PSG] p. 10).

- ❓ Why were the Israelites in Egypt?
- ❓ How would their slavery have affected their view of God's covenant promise?

If helpful, recount the storyline of Genesis that led the Israelites to Egypt and into slavery (leader p. 10). Then summarize the session (leader pp. 10-11; PSG pp. 10-11).

1. God responds by listening to the prayers of the oppressed (Ex. 2:23–3:10).

Introduce and read Exodus 2:23-25 (leader p. 11). Note God's attentive nature in this passage and explain His concern as a continuation of His covenant with Abraham in Genesis (leader p. 11; PSG p. 11).

- ❓ Sinful, evil deeds often remain hidden in the world and in our lives. How does it comfort you to know God sees every sinful deed done against you?
- ❓ How does it challenge you to know that God sees every sinful deed you have done against Him and others?

Continue the reading of Exodus 3:1-6. Highlight God's holiness on display through fire and Moses' response of fear. Those who are in Christ, however, need not be afraid to approach our Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (leader pp. 12-13; PSG p. 12).

- ❓ What is the difference between being "terrified" by God and being "awed" by God?

Read Exodus 3:7-10. Explain God's *motive* and *purpose* in His planned response to the cry of His oppressed people (leader p. 13; PSG p. 13).

- How does it encourage you to know that God hears the cries of the oppressed?

2. God responds by revealing His character (Ex. 3:11-15).

Ask a volunteer to read Exodus 3:11-15. Show the weakness of Moses' excuse(s) in the light of God's promised presence (leader pp. 14-15; PSG p. 14).

- What are some areas in which you feel unqualified or unable to do what God has called you to do?
- How does God's presence and His promise enable you to go on?

Explain the significance of God's name—as near as we can tell—as a revelation of His character (leader p. 15; PSG p. 15).

- When we feel inadequate to obey God's call, what are some ways we can move our eyes from the magnitude of the task to the majesty of God Himself?

3. God responds by promising redemption (Ex. 3:16-22).

Read Exodus 3:16-22. Point out God's sovereign prediction about what was going to happen: the elders would listen; Pharaoh would not. God promised to perform wonders that would force Pharaoh to let the people go. Though Moses continued making excuses, God would use him to report His words of redemption (leader pp. 16-17; PSG p. 16).

- What are the fears that most hinder you from speaking on God's behalf?
- How can we overcome these excuses with faith in God's promised redemption?

Conclusion

Recap the session and show how these events point forward to the redemption from sin that comes through Jesus, the great I AM. *Emphasize the **Christ Connection** for this session and draw attention to **Pack Item 3: Seeing Jesus in the Exodus** to help group members begin looking for ways God is already pointing forward to the coming of Jesus.* Also show how our deliverance should shape the way we show and share the love of God (leader p. 17; PSG p. 17). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission" (PSG p. 18).*

Point 1 Option

Have group members read the "Essential Christian Doctrine" *Enslaved to Sin* (leader p. 13; PSG p. 13) and reflect on how slavery to sin compares to the Israelites' slavery in Egypt. After a moment, encourage them to pair up with someone and share their thoughts, and then have the pairs share one conclusion with the group.

Ask the following question:

- How should the cry of those enslaved to sin differ from the cry of those who have been liberated in Christ?

For Further Discussion

How would you describe the sign God gave to Moses in Exodus 3:12?

Would you find comfort in such a sign, that confirmation would come as the result of obedience rather than at the beginning of obedience? Why or why not?

Christ Connection: God told Moses His name "I AM" as a revelation of His good and righteous character. Jesus is the great "I AM" who gave us an even greater revelation of God's goodness and righteousness.

Missional Application: God calls us to be conscious of the plight of the oppressed and, in response, to show and share the love of God.

The Redeemer Responds

Session 1

Voices from the Church

“God is grieved by the sin, death, and power of hell that afflicts His world, and is sacrificially involved in the removal of all that destroys and alienates His world from Himself.”¹

—Joshua Ryan Butler

Introduction

In the 1980s, a song titled “Walk Like an Egyptian” by the Bangles shot up the charts and led to people of all ages doing the lighthearted “sand dance.” (The move was supposed to reflect ancient Egyptian art.) Even today, people unfamiliar with the song know the dance.

However, “Walk Like an Egyptian” doesn’t lead you to take Egypt very seriously. For many in the West, Egypt is known primarily for ancient pyramids or King Tut’s tomb. In the period of the exodus, however, people feared Egypt. Egypt had mighty Pharaohs, great building projects, and they were in touch with dark power. Everyone took Egypt seriously. Israel certainly wasn’t doing the Egyptian sand dance. They were enslaved to the Egyptians, and it’s the awfulness of their slavery that sets the dark backdrop for God’s glorious deliverance that takes place.

-  Why were the Israelites in Egypt?
-  How would their slavery have affected their view of God’s covenant promise?

In Genesis, we saw how Joseph, Jacob’s beloved son, was taken to Egypt because his jealous brothers sold him into slavery. After interpreting dreams, Joseph gained favor in the eyes of Pharaoh. Joseph ended up helping save lives by storing up food during the seven good years in preparation for a seven-year famine. So all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain (Gen. 41:57). During this time, Joseph’s family went to Egypt and Joseph provided food for them (Gen. 42). His family resettled in the Nile Delta. This family of 70 people entered Egypt (see Gen. 46), and from there, they multiplied greatly (Ex. 1:1-7).

In Exodus 1:8, we read that a new king over Egypt dealt harshly with the Israelites. As a result, Joseph’s family was brought under political slavery (1:8-10), economic slavery (1:11-14), social slavery (1:15-22), and spiritual slavery (3:18; 4:22-23; 5:8). They desperately needed to get out of Egypt.

Session Summary

“Exodus” means “a going out” or “departure.” This book of the Bible provides the historical account of God’s deliverance of His people from Egypt’s cruel slavery. In this session, we see how God responds to Israel’s terrible plight by listening to the prayers of His oppressed people, revealing His character to Moses, and promising to deliver and redeem them. Watching God reveal Himself and His justice should inspire us to worship our Redeemer and pursue His mission in the world.

1. God responds by listening to the prayers of the oppressed (Ex. 2:23–3:10).

In chapter 2 of the Book of Exodus, we read about Moses’ birth (2:1-10), his growth (2:11-15), and his flight from Egypt (2:15-22). The story continues in verse 23 with a new king ruling Egypt. Despite this change in government, slavery remains intense. As a result, Israel groans and cries out for help.

²³ During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. ²⁴ And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.

When the people cried out, God *heard* them. God also *saw* their oppression, and the writer said that God *took notice* of the situation (2:24-25). God heard. God saw. God knew. God’s attentive nature is revealed throughout the Scriptures. The psalmist said, “The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry” (Ps. 34:15). God’s people can cry out to their God and trust that He hears them and cares about their situation.

These cries were of particular interest to God because of His covenant with Abraham (2:24). The term “covenant” appears here for the first time in Exodus. It appears 27 times in Genesis. It may be best defined in *The Jesus Storybook Bible* as “a Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love.”² God’s purpose of redemption and mission given to Abraham in the Book of Genesis continues in the exodus story. God cares about His people.

 Sinful, evil deeds often remain hidden in the world and in our lives. How does it comfort you to know God sees every sinful deed done against you?

 How does it challenge you to know that God sees every sinful deed you have done against Him and others?

Further Commentary

“Chapter 3 begins by setting the scene of what is about to occur. Moses was leading the flock belonging to Jethro...It is important to note that Egyptians didn’t think highly at all of shepherds (see Gen. 46:34). It is also important to recognize the shepherding pattern being set here. Moses spent 40 years as a shepherd in Midian. David was also a shepherd who was taken from the sheepfolds to become king. God loves to use shepherds! He even refers to Himself as a shepherd (Ps. 23:1; Ezek. 34:13). Ultimately, salvation would come through Jesus, the good shepherd, who laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:11).”³

—Tony Merida

Further Commentary

“The possibility of danger implicit in human contact with God is reflected throughout Scripture (19:21-24; 24:11; 33:20-23; Gen. 32:30; Judg. 13:20-23; Isa. 6:5; Acts 9:3-9; 1 Tim. 6:15-16; Rev. 19:11-21). This place was holy, not because of any quality intrinsic to it, but because of God’s presence and activity. The tabernacle would be a place set apart by the Lord’s presence (Ex. 29:43-44). To stay at a distance and remove footwear was then and is now in many cultures a sign of respect and humility. The Lord’s self-identification, which began, I am the God of your father, connected this event with the past both by naming the patriarchs and by the wording of the statement (Gen. 15:7; 17:1; 26:24; 28:13; 31:13; 35:11; 46:3). It also had the ring of a formal pronouncement by a king (Gen. 41:44).”⁴

—Dorian G. Coover-Cox,
HCSB Study Bible

In chapter 3 we hear some of the same language, and we see the holy God to whom we pray. This time God told Moses that He had heard the groans of His people. God called Moses to serve as His agent of redemption and, in so doing, reminded Moses that He had heard Israel’s prayers. As a result of this, God told Moses of His plan to free them. The writer gave the description of Moses’ call this way:

¹ Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³ And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵ Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.



In this passage, we read of the burning bush and “the angel of the LORD” who appeared to Moses. The fire represents God’s holy presence. Fire is appropriate because we know that we are drawn to fire, amazed by fire, but we also have to tell children, “Don’t play with fire.” Fire must be taken seriously. And so is God. He is holy.

God spoke to Moses and called him to take his sandals off as an act of reverence (3:5; see Josh. 5:13-15). God then identified Himself with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (3:6). Before God entered into a relationship with Moses, He had entered into a relationship with Moses’ fathers (see 2:24). God was also giving Moses a bit of personal history of Himself.

The God of the burning bush wasn’t an unknown God; He was the God who acted on behalf of these men earlier in history. Notice that God did not say, “I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” but rather, “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” This indicates that God’s people never really die; they’re part of an eternal relationship with God.

When Moses encountered God, the Scripture says Moses “hid his face” (3:6). Why? Because Moses was in the presence of the Holy One. We should understand Moses’ fear. We should also maintain a sense of reverence before God. However, as believers, we don’t have to hide from God *in terror* because of the work of Christ. We are hidden *in Him* (Col. 3:3)! Therefore, we can seek God with confidence because of the work of Christ.



What is the difference between being “terrified” by God and being “awed” by God?

⁷ Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

In verses 7-10, this holy God responds to the cries of the oppressed by revealing His plan to Moses. God’s *motive* appears in verses 7 and 9. God told Moses that He was aware of the people’s desperate situation. He said, “I have surely seen...have heard...I know their sufferings...[their] cry...has come to me...I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.” These phrases echo the words of 2:23-25 and show us that God does indeed hear our cries.

Are you crying out to God personally? We should be encouraged by the fact that God hears those who humbly cry out to Him (see Luke 18:13-14). God is high and holy, yet He hears the prayers of the meek and lowly (see Isa. 57:15).

Next, God responded by explaining His *purpose* to Moses. His purpose was to relocate His people. He would take them out of Egypt and put them in a place with milk and honey (3:8-9). God was going to save them *from* something (slavery) *for* something (worship and witness).

That’s exactly what has happened to us through Christ’s work on our behalf. In Ephesians 2:1-10, Paul told the Ephesians that they had been saved (by grace through faith) *from wrath* and *for good works*. Paul also described this glorious transfer to the Colossians, saying: “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14).



Voices from Church History

“When the Holy One called Moses from the bush he said thus to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ When Death heard this utterance, he trembled and feared and was terrified and perturbed and knew that he had not become king forever over the children of Adam.”⁵

–Aphrahat (circa 230-360)

99 Essential Christian Doctrines

43. Enslaved to Sin

Because of the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, all of humanity has inherited a sin nature that inclines them toward sin and rebellion. Human beings are enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:17), continually living with the propensity to transgress God’s commandments whenever possible. It isn’t until one experiences salvation through the work of Christ that he or she is able to overcome sin’s enslavement through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:2).



How does it encourage you to know that God hears the cries of the oppressed?

Further Commentary

“I am who I am (Heb. *’ehyeh* ^{’asher} *’ehyeh*): possibly ‘I will be what I will be.’ This pithy clause is clearly a reference to the name YHWH...Since this is the only place in the Old Testament where there is any explanation of the meaning of the name YHWH, we ought therefore to take very seriously the association with ‘being’ which is clearly stated here...Granted, however, the general connection with ‘being,’ what is the exact meaning? Simplest of all, does it mean that God exists, as opposed to idols without being? Along these lines, Hyatt sees ‘I am He who is’ as a possible translation: he also sees Hosea 1:9 as a possible reference to this meaning (in a negative sense). Does it mean ‘I am incomparable, inscrutable to human eyes’ (Ex. 33:19)? This, though true, would hardly be a further revelation. Or does it mean ‘I will only be understood by my own subsequent acts and words of revelation’? This would seem to fit the biblical pattern, for in all subsequent Israelite history God would be known as the One who brought Israel from Egypt (Ex. 20:2). The revelation of the name therefore is not merely a deep theological truth; it is a call to the response of faith by Moses and by Israel.”⁶

—R. Alan Cole

2. God responds by revealing His character (Ex. 3:11-15).

We’ve seen how God responds to injustice by hearing the prayers of the oppressed. He hears, He sees, and He acts. But part of His action is to reveal His character. Take a look at how God reveals His character:

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”¹² He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?”¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

Moses wasn’t eager to go on mission. In the following dialogue, Moses made several excuses for not obeying God’s call. God responded to each of Moses’ excuses and questions with statements about His own sovereignty and power.

This section is deeply encouraging. If you feel as though God is sending you to do something beyond yourself, the key is to take your eyes off of your failures and weaknesses. Get a vision of God. Moses too had to recognize that God is enough.

Moses’ first argument was about himself. “Who am I?” he asked (3:11). He felt insufficient. He essentially asked, “Have you considered my resume? The last 40 years, I’ve been in a wilderness.” Stop and think about it. Moses was a shepherd. While he used to be a prince, he was now a humble shepherd. God asked this shepherd to confront the most powerful person in the world and tell him to let his slaves go free. This would be sort of like an average blue-collar worker declaring war on a president of a major country. Can you imagine your plumber declaring war on Russia?

Moses was an average guy, and he didn't have great influence. Yet God responded to Moses by revealing what's most important—Himself. God said, "I will be with you" (3:12). Throughout the Bible, this is what God's leaders need to lead—God's presence. It's the nonnegotiable for serving God. Think about Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Jehoshaphat, and the disciples. God was with them all.

In addition to God's presence, God also promised a sign. He said, "You shall serve God on this mountain" (3:12). God intended to bring His people back to this mountain to sing His praises.

- ? What are some areas in which you feel unqualified or unable to do what God has called you to do?
- ? How does God's presence and His promise enable you to go on?

Moses' next big question was "What is Your name?" (3:13). It was obviously important to know who God is, especially if you are going to tell a group of people that God sent you! Merely saying, "I heard a voice in a bush," wouldn't be very persuasive.

So God told Moses His name (3:14-15). God revealed His name as "Yahweh" (commonly rendered as "LORD" in English) in verse 15. Great mystery exists here. No one really knows how to pronounce God's name, and the meaning is mysterious also, but the meaning seems to be related to the idea of this verb "to be." In other words, "God is." He is central. He has no beginning. He causes everything to be. He alone is God.

Does it move you when you hear, "Tell them *I AM* sent you"? God was saying that He is absolutely central. Paul later said, "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36). Is God central in your life? Is He central in your marriage? Is He central in your ministry? God told Moses that the most important thing about his mission was God Himself!

Behold, the greatness of your God. God is self-existent and self-sufficient. God needs no air, no sleep, and no food. He doesn't need us, but we need Him! God wasn't like the Egyptian false gods. He was and is the one true God on whom all things depend. God is also majestic in His mysteriousness. We will never have God totally figured out. He doesn't involve us in His work because He needs us; He includes us because He loves us.

- ? When we feel inadequate to obey God's call, what are some ways we can move our eyes from the magnitude of the task to the majesty of God Himself?

Voices from Church History

"[God] needs no one, but when faith is present He works through anyone."⁷

—A. W. Tozer (1897-1963)

Further Commentary

"Tradition maintains that at the time of the Exodus Moses introduced his people to a new covenant name for God—*Yahweh* (pronounced Yah-way). When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, Moses asked Him for His name. God responded by giving him the name *Yahweh*...This word appears about 6,800 times in the Old Testament... Exodus 3:14 is the only real attempt made in the Old Testament to explain the meaning of the name *Yahweh*. In this verse, *YHWH* is translated as the great I AM."⁸

—Hershel H. Hobbs,
Biblical Illustrator

Further Commentary

“After God performed these wonders, the Egyptians would allow the Israelites to plunder them (Ex. 3:21-22)...God was setting another pattern: the idea of conquering and taking the spoils. Paul later said that after Jesus Christ conquered our greatest enemies of sin and death, ‘He took prisoners into captivity; He gave gifts to people’ (Eph. 4:8). What is amazing is that the Israelites are simply told to ask for it. God is fighting the battle for them, which is another pattern. Also noteworthy is that these precious metals will be used to construct the tabernacle (Ex. 35:4-9,20-29).”⁹

—Tony Merida

3. God responds by promising redemption (Ex. 3:16-22).

God responds to the cries of His people by hearing their prayers, by revealing His character, and finally by promising redemption. God gave Moses a message to give to the elders of Israel. Notice God’s sovereign prediction about what was going to happen:

16 Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, “I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt,”¹⁷ and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.”¹⁸ And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’¹⁹ But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.²⁰ So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go.²¹ And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty,²² but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians.”

In this striking promise, Moses was learning what it means to be a prophet: to declare God’s message and to trust in God to work in people’s hearts. Consider how God told Moses that the elders “will listen to your voice” (3:18). This wasn’t the last time God would promise Moses that people would respond to His message.

Notice also that Moses and the elders were going to say to Pharaoh: “Please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God” (3:18). We see here that Israel wasn’t just enslaved physically, but they were enslaved spiritually too. They needed to be freed in order to worship (see 7:16; 8:1,20; 9:1,13; 10:3).

It’s unclear why they only asked for a “three-day” trip. It may have been an ancient Near Eastern expression to mean a long journey of an indefinite period of time. What was important about the trip, however, was the purpose—*worship*.

Even though the elders would listen to Moses’ message, God reminded Moses that Pharaoh would not listen, at least not initially. God told Moses that in response to Pharaoh’s refusal, He would intervene with His “mighty hand” performing wonders (3:19-20).

Moses still wasn't convinced. In chapter 4, he argued with God. Moses complained that no one would believe his message (4:1-9). But God assured him that they would.

Then Moses used his speech problem as perhaps his most widely known excuse for not obeying God's plan (4:10-12). God told Moses that this excuse was *irrelevant* and *irreverent*. Concerning the latter, God said, "Who has made man's mouth?" (4:11). God told Moses that He formed him for a purpose. God knew about Moses' weakness. And it was precisely because of this weakness that God would gain much glory.

God told Moses that his excuse was *irrelevant*: "I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak" (4:12; cf. Jer. 1:4-10). When Moses again expressed reluctance, God responded to him with anger (4:14), but He was gracious here as well. He gave Moses some help by sending Aaron with him (4:14-16).

God is looking for reporters, not orators. We do not have to make fine speeches; we just give the news. Moses had to learn, like us, that "it's not about you!" It's about the I AM.

-  What are the fears that most hinder you from speaking on God's behalf?
-  How can we overcome these excuses with faith in God's promised redemption?

Conclusion

The plan was in place! God responded by revealing His promise of redemption to the reluctant shepherd-mediator, Moses. And here we look forward through the Scriptures to Jesus, the great I AM who gave us an even greater revelation of God's goodness and righteousness. He is the Good Shepherd who would lay down His life for His sheep in order to lead us out of a greater slavery into a greater freedom—from the kingdom of darkness into His kingdom of light.

As the people of God's kingdom, we are formed by God's deliverance. In this story, we see how God promised deliverance from (1) socio-political-physical-economic slavery and (2) from spiritual slavery. Christians should care about alleviating both types of human suffering: temporal suffering and especially eternal suffering. Let's do both in the power of our self-sufficient, prayer-hearing God.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God told Moses His name "I AM" as a revelation of His good and righteous character. Jesus is the great "I AM" who gave us an even greater revelation of God's goodness and righteousness.

Voices from the Church

*"Exodus-shaped redemption demands exodus-shaped mission. And that means that our commitment to mission must demonstrate the same broad totality of concern for human need that God demonstrated in what he did for Israel...Our mission must be derived from God's mission."*¹⁰

—Christopher Wright

Additional Resources

The Redeemer Responds

References

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3. Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Exodus* (Nashville: B&H, 2014), 22.
4. Dorian G. Coover-Cox, in *HCSB Study Bible* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 102, n. 3:6.
5. Aphrahat, *Demonstrations* 22.2, quoted in *Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*, ed. Joseph T. Lienhard, vol. III in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), 15-16.
6. R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, in *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1973), 69-70.
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8. Hershel H. Hobbs, "Yahweh," *Biblical Illustrator* (Fall 1974): 14.
9. Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Exodus*, 27-28.
10. Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), 275-76.



Get expert insights on weekly studies through Ministry Grid at MinistryGrid.com/web/TheGospelProject. Grow with other group leaders at the Group Ministry blog at LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry.

Study Material

- "Moses and the Deliverance"—Pages 61-66 from *Telling God's Story* by Preben Vang and Terry G. Carter
- "In the World: How Excellent Are Thy Names"—Article by Ken Hemphill; find a link to this article at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including "When God Speaks," can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator. Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

Sermon Podcast

Dhati Lewis: "Saved From, Saved For"

Find a link to this at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources

Tip of the Week

The Gospel Project Leader Pack

Throughout the session plans in this Leader Guide, you will see references to pack items that will enhance your group meeting and help group members gain more from this study of God's Word. These items are available in *The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack*.

- The posters and charts in the Leader Pack will help foster discussion within your group and make clear the connections throughout the Scriptures.
- The map will help put the stories of Scripture in geographical context.
- The pack also includes some take-away items so group members can recall what they learned in the session and be reminded to apply what they learned as they go about their mission of making Jesus known in the world.
- The DVD in the pack contains customizable files of the Leader session plans and commentary, as well as videos from our managing editor that will help leaders make the most efficient use of their group time.

The Gospel Project for Adults: Leader Pack is available in print and digital formats. Order today at GospelProject.com or by calling 800-458-2772.