



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

GOD'S EXIT PLAN • EXCUSES, EXCUSES... • EXODUS 4:1-17 • 2/9/2025

MAIN POINT

God hears and meets His people's needs.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Have you ever used an excuse to get out of school or homework or work? Did it work?

On a more serious note, when you are faced with what you perceive to be an inadequacy, do you tend to focus on your own ability, or what God can do when you're obedient? Why do you think that is?

What figures in the Bible can you think of that had glaring weaknesses, but were called to do incredible things for God?

Describe the first time you experienced God working through you to bring about results you couldn't have achieved on your own. Were you sharing your faith? Teaching the Bible? Serving in your community?

This passage picks up in the conversation between God and Moses, with Moses' protesting with objections as to why he would be a poor choice to serve as God's agent in delivering His people. Moses' reasons for protest ranged from skepticism over how he would be received, to lack of his ability to successfully serve in the role. God patiently heard Moses' pleas, and He provided divine equipping to meet each of those needs.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 4:1-9.

As chapter 4 opens, Moses protested God's choice of him as leader. The protests in chapter 4 began to convey the presence of timidity and self-doubt. To answer his specific question, God provided a series of signs that He would empower Moses to duplicate in front of various groups to give credibility to his story.

What does God's patience with Moses' initial hesitation regarding his assignment tell you about God? Specifically, what does it indicate about the things He is calling you to do that seem beyond your ability?

What are some ways that you remind yourself that the God who gave power to Moses to deliver His people is the same God who indwells you now, if you are a follower of Christ? How does it impact your willingness to trust Him with your most important decisions and wellbeing?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 4:10-12.

In a brief series of rhetorical questions, God reminded Moses whose might and power were ultimately ensuring the success of this commission. Moses' personal blockade at this point was his own assessment of himself. What mattered, however, was not his ability, but God's ability. The idea of creation is to ring in the ears of the reader as God asks who made the human mouth. The same sovereignty on display in creation, and again in the three signs Moses just received, was the same sovereignty that ensured that Moses was the perfect choice to lead this assignment.

Describe a time in which God prompted you to act in a situation that was intimidating for you. How did you overcome your personal intimidation? Who encouraged you to be faithful?

What regular activities or spiritual disciplines do you participate in to grow in your knowledge of God? How do those experiences help you trust Him when following Him requires great faith?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 4:13-17.

Having all of his previous protests answered with unanticipated wisdom, provision, and power, Moses made one final, blatant request of God: send someone else. Moses was desperate to be relieved of the commissioning. The next words recorded in Exodus must

be some of the most terrifying words in all of Scripture. The countenance of God had changed, so to speak. Moses' attempt to avoid obedience to God's calling resulted in a transition from patience to an imperative. Still, even in the midst of His anger, God extended grace to Moses.

What difference did Moses' continued delay and stubbornness make in this scenario? Was the certainty of his being sent impacted? What about the manner in which God spoke to him?

Why do you think God likes to do His work through ordinary people?

Read Luke 22:39-46. What similarities do you see between Moses and Jesus? What differences do you see?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What do you need to trust God to help you do this week? How might knowing that God will prepare you for that task give you confidence as you seek to serve Him?

When you consider God's provision to go with His calling, who are the people that God has placed in your life that encourage and enable you to be faithful to what God has called you to do?

How does consistent personal and corporate worship enable you to discern God's calling on your life more clearly? What other habits do? Why do you think that is true?

What truths about God from today's study do you need to remind yourself of this week as you seek to overcome fear of failure?

PRAYER

Pray that God will use the members of your group to encourage one another to say "yes" to the God-sized opportunities in their lives. Pray for a fixed gaze on God as you prayerfully consider those opportunities.

COMMENTARY

| EXODUS 4:1-17

4:1-9. The three signs the Lord gave Moses in verses 1-9 pertain to areas of common human vulnerability—attack by other creatures, illness, and the need for water—all of which are under the sovereign power of the Lord. The signs begin a pattern in Exodus of actions that are intended to prompt faith and obedience.

4:3-4. Moses ordinarily would have used his staff to defend himself and his flock from snakes; now his staff became a snake. Speculation that the command to catch the snake by the tail rather than some other method required more faith from Moses, or that the writer of Exodus was unfamiliar with snakes is unnecessary. As Moses reached out, the tail would have been closest to him and, in fact, snakes are often picked up tail first.

4:6-7. Traditionally and in many translations, Moses' disease has been called leprosy, though the Hebrew term used here covers a variety of severe afflictions, even problems found in garments and buildings (Lv 13-14; Num 12:10; Dt 24:8-9; 2Ki 5; 2Ch 26:19-21). The descriptions in Leviticus do not match the symptoms of leprosy, a condition also called Hansen's disease that is caused by bacteria.

4:10-12. Moses' next objection that he was slow... in speech returned to the problem of his personal identity and unsuitability (2:14; 3:11), as if God were dependent on him. God's answer returned attention to who He is and what He would do.

4:10. Moses began by saying he was not eloquent (lit "I am not a man of words"). Ironically, Moses used 21 Hebrew words arranged in somewhat complicated expressions to say that he could not speak well. He used a figure of speech referring to his mouth and tongue as "heavy" (lit "I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue"). The word for "heavy" also describes ears that do not hear (Isa 6:10; 59:1; Zech 7:11) and eyes that do not see (Gen 48:10). One might think of a tool that is too heavy to be used easily and so impedes the efforts that it ought to make easier.

4:11. The Lord answered by arguing from the greater to the lesser, implying that the Creator of all can deal with the problem of one. His rhetorical questions invited Moses to think and recognize that he was making a mistake by not viewing the situation from God's point of view.

4:12. The Lord's command and statement amount to a repeat of His promise to be with Moses (3:12). He applies it specifically to the problem of speaking, saying literally, "I will be with your mouth."

4:14-16. "I will help both you and him" repeats again His promise to be with Moses and applies it to Aaron as well. To help them speak well, God promised (lit), "I will be with your mouth and with his mouth." The promise that God would teach Moses and Aaron what to say and do has NT parallels (Lk 12:11-12; Jn 14:26). The working relationship that the Lord described for Aaron and Moses was analogous to that of a prophet with God. He will be your spokesman (lit "he will be a mouth for you"), and Moses would be like God for Aaron in telling him what to say to the people. Moses had complained of having a defective mouth; he would now have a new one to use.