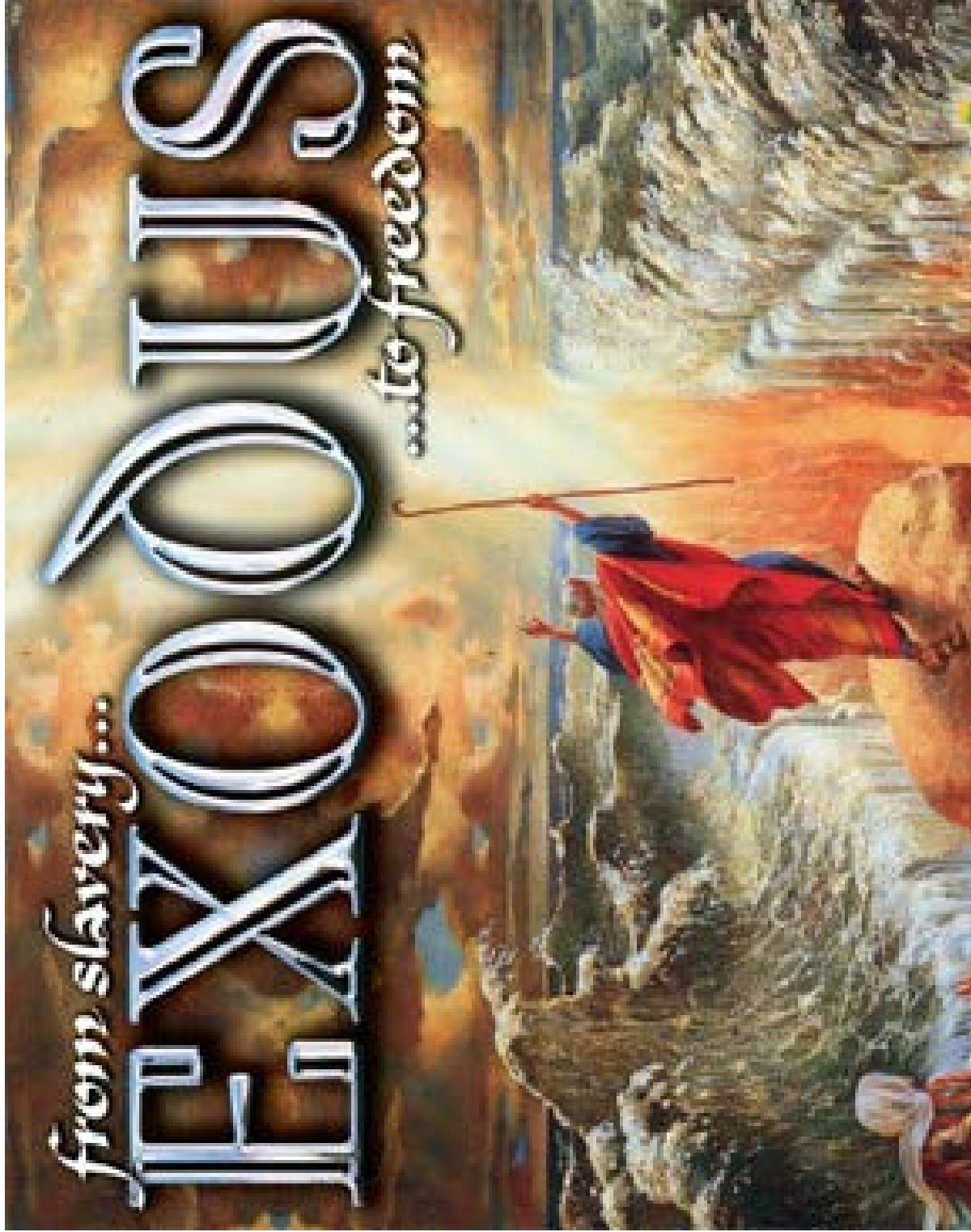


from slavery...
EXODUS
...to freedom



Book	Key Idea	The Nation	The People	God's Character	God's Role	God's Command
Genesis	Beginnings	Chosen	Prepared	Powerful Sovereign	Creator	"Let there be!"
Exodus	Redemption	Delivered	Redeemed	Merciful	Deliverer	"Let My people go!"
Leviticus	Worship	Set Apart	Taught	Holy	Sanctifier	"Be holy!"
Numbers	Wandering	Directed	Tested	Just	Sustainer	"Go in!"
Deuteronomy	Renewed Covenant	Made Ready	Retraught	Loving Lord	Rewarder	"Obey!"

Genesis 15:13-16

¹³ And God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ¹⁴ But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions. ¹⁵ And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

Bondage		Redemption						Revelation					
1	Bondage in Egypt	3	7	11	13	16	19	21	25	28	32	35	40
Call of Moses		Plagues		Passover		Red Sea Crossing		Journey to Mount Sinai		Ten Commandments		Book of the Covenant	
Incubation of the Nation		Inception of the Nation						Infancy of the Nation					
Preparation		Redemption						Instruction					
Bondage and Oppression		Deliverance and Provision						Law, Pattern and Construction					
God's People Enduring Bondage		God's Grace in Redemption						God's Glory Manifested in Worship					
Israel in Egypt		Israel to Sinai						Israel at Sinai					
430 years (15%)		2 months (30% of Exodus)						10 months (55% of Exodus)					

Redemption and Revelation

Exodus 1-18 The Redemption of God's People from Egypt
Exodus 19-40 The Revelation to God's People in Sinai

Bondage in Egypt (Exodus 1-6)

Exodus 1:1-22 A Deliverer Needed

1:1-7 **The Setting**

1:8-14 **The Slavery**

v8 The Pharaoh

v9-10 The Plot

v11-14 The Persecution

1:15-22 **The Slaying**

v15-16 The Charge

v17 The Contravention

v18 The Consternation

v19 The Cleverness

v20-21 The Commendation

v22 The Command

Exodus 2:1-10 The Deliverer Born

2:1-4 **The Parturition of Moses**

v1 Moses' Parents

v2 Faith of Moses' Parents

v3-4 Moses in a Basket

v5-10 **The Protection of Moses**

v5-6 Pharaoh's Daughter Finds Moses

v7-10 Pharaoh's Daughter Adopts Moses

Exodus 2:11-25 The Deliverer Prepared

2:11-14 **Moses in Egypt**

v11a Moses the Prince

v11b Moses the Deliverer

v12 Moses the Murderer

v13 Moses the Arbitrator

v14 Moses the Accused

2:15-25 **Moses in Midian**

v15 Moses the Refugee

v16-20 Moses the Stranger

v21-22 Moses the Shepherd

v23 Israel's Cruel Bondage

v24-25 God's Covenant Remembered

Exodus 3:1-4:17 The Deliverer Called

3:1-4:17 **Moses in the Wilderness**

v1-3 The Burning Bush

v4-6 Holy Ground

v7-10 Moses Commissioned

v11-14 I AM WHO I AM

v15-17 God's Concern for Israel

v18-22 Egypt will be Plundered

4:1-9 The Signs Given

4:10-17 Moses' Continued Refusal

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

4:18-31 **Moses in Egypt**

v18 Jethro Blesses Moses

v19-23 The LORD Instructs Moses

v24-26 Zipporah Saves Moses

v27 The LORD Instructs Aaron

v28-30 Aaron Speaks for Moses

v31 The People Worship the LORD

Moses' Objections Answered by God

1. the problem of complete unfitness for the task described.
Met by the promise of God's presence and a sign (3:11-12)
2. the people's unbelief
Met by God's disclosure of His covenant name, YHWH (3:13-22)
3. the people's response to Moses himself.
Met by the power to perform 3 signs (4:1-9)
4. Moses' lack of eloquence
Met by God promising to be his mouth (4:10-12)
5. Moses flat refuses to go
"Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses" and Aaron becomes his mouthpiece (4:10-17)

Review of Exodus 3:1-4:17



4:18-31 Moses in Egypt

v18 Jethro Blesses Moses

18 Then Moses departed and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said to him, "Please, let me go, **that** I may return to my brethren who are in Egypt, and see if they are still alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

4:18-31 Moses in Egypt

v19-23 The Lord Instructs Moses

19 Now the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, **for** all the men who were seeking your life are dead."

20 **So** Moses took his wife and **his sons** and mounted them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. Moses also took the staff of God in his hand.

Gershom & Eliezer (18:4) perhaps born after God appeared to Moses (3:1-17) when he returned to Jethro

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

21 And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; **but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.**

chazaq, 290x, to be strong, courageous, make firm or to be stubborn, to harden

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

- Reversal of Egyptian belief that when a person dies, his heart was weighed in the hall of judgment. If one's heart was "heavy" with sin, that person was judged. A stone beetle scarab was placed on the heart of a deceased person to suppress his natural tendency to confess sin which would subject himself to judgment. This "hardening of the heart" by the scarab would result in salvation. However God reversed the process. Instead of his heart being suppressed so that he was silent about his sin and thus delivered, his heart became hardened, he confessed his sin (9:27, 34; 10:16-17) and his sinfully heavy heart resulted in judgment.
- Note: "God does not harden men by infusing malice into them, but by not imparting mercy to them" (Clarke).

"I will harden his heart"



- **As God causes His earthly sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust (Mat 5:45), so He causes His sun of grace to shine upon all sinners, to lead them to life and salvation. But as the earthly sun produces different effects upon the earth, according to the nature of the soil upon which it shines, so the influence of the divine sun of grace manifests itself in different ways upon the human heart, according to its moral condition.**

– (Note: **“The sun, by the force of its heat, moistens the wax and dries the clay, softening the one and hardening the other; and as this produces opposite effects by the same power, so, through the long-suffering of God, which reaches to all, some receive good and others evil, some are softened and others hardened.” - (Theodoret, *quaest. 12 in Ex.*)**)

Keil and Delitzsch



Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

“22 **Then** you shall say to Pharaoh, **'Thus** says the LORD, "Israel is My son, My first-born. 23 **So** I said to you, 'Let My son go, that he may serve Me'; **but** you have refused to let him go. **Behold, I will kill your son, your first-born.**"”

Egyptians prize their firstborn sons, treating them as special and sacred, and the Pharaoh considered himself the only son of the gods. Now he heard of a whole nation designated as God's first born, meaning "declared and treated as first in rank, pre-eminent, in the rights and privileges and responsibilities of being actually the first born."

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

4:18-31 Moses in Egypt

v24-26 Zipporah Saves Moses

24 **Now** it came about at the lodging place on the way that the **LORD met him** and sought to put **him to death**. 25 **Then** Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses' feet, and she said, "You are indeed a bridegroom of blood to me." 26 **So** He let him alone. **At that time** she said, "You are a bridegroom of blood" – **because** of the circumcision.

“him” – Moses? Or Gershom? Eliezer?

Gershom & Eliezer (18:4) perhaps born after God appeared to Moses (3:1-17) when he returned to Jethro

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

Evidence For Moses Not Having Circumcised His Sons

Moses was forced to leave Egypt because Pharaoh wanted to kill him (Shemot / Exodus 2:15) on account of his killing of an Egyptian (Shemot / Exodus 2:12). We are told in Acts 7:23-25 that Moses supposed that his brothers understood that God was using him to deliver them (although his brothers didn't see it that way (Shemot / Exodus 2:13-14 also Acts 7:26-29) - he could have had some sort of revelation or insight into the plan of God or it might simply have been that since he was a learned person (Acts 7:22), then he probably knew the history of the promised redemption of the Israelites (Beresheet / Genesis 15:13-16) and saw himself, preserved as a child in such a special way (Shemot / Exodus 1:15-2:10), as the person that God would use to fulfill the promise. Whichever is closest to the actual truth we will never know except that Moses acted presumptuously in assuming that now was the time that God was going to deliver the Israelites. We know that it was presumption because Moses acted alone, highlighted by the description of how he struck down and killed the Egyptian (Shemot / Exodus 2:12) and as a result he had to flee in fear of his life - not something that would have happened had God initiated the redemption at that time.

<http://www.i-amfaithweb.net/>

god kill moses.htm

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He fled to Midian where he settled down and married a shepherd girl. There seems to be reason to believe that he had an identity crisis, not knowing if he was a Hebrew, an Egyptian (Zipporah told her father that it was an Egyptian that had rescued them (Shemot / Exodus 2:19)) or that perhaps after making such a grave mistake and having to flee for his life, that he should now become a Midianite and forget his past. We catch a glimpse of this identity crisis when Scripture tells us that "Moses was content to dwell with the man" (Shemot / Exodus 2:21), meaning that he decided for the time being to accept the authority and customs of his father-in-law Jethro. That Jethro also happened to be the priest of Midian would surely have had a tremendous impact on him to the point that his own, albeit remote, Israelite heritage would have been all but lost. We can surmise that his identity crisis continued for some time as he named his first son Gershom which means 'a stranger here' (Shemot / Exodus 2:22): Moses, although living with the Midianites and most likely as one, still recognized that he was not really one of them (Acts 7:29).

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The Midianites were descended from Midian, a son of Abraham through Keturah (Beresheet / Genesis 25:1-2) and were, with the rest of Abraham's children, the exception being Isaac, separate from the covenant promises (Beresheet / Genesis 17:19-21; 21:12; 25:5-6; Shemot / Exodus 2:24). Since the covenant was to be continued exclusively through Isaac it would not make any sense for the rest of Abraham's children to continue with the practice of circumcision. Circumcision was a token of the covenant from which they were excluded and their own circumcision would only serve as a reminder of that exclusion: therefore there is no reason, given Moses' willingness to live among the Midianites and Zipporah's ethnic seperation from God's covenant people, for them to have circumcised their sons.

If Moses had circumcised his sons in accordance with the Abrahamic Covenant, then it would have created a chasm between himself and Zipporah's family (bearing in mind that his father-in-law was the priest of Midian) that would have resulted in a situation whereby Moses would not have been able to continue to live with them any longer.

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It is worth noting that although Hebrews chapter 11 makes mention of Moses being a man of faith (vs. 24-28), a careful reading will show that the reference is to Moses after his return to Egypt. It is quite clear from Scripture that Moses did not have a great deal of faith prior to his encounter with God at the burning bush.

Zipporah's declarations, as recorded in verses 25 and 26, can also be seen as evidence to show that her two sons were not previously circumcised. It must be noted that according to the Hebrew text she referred to Moses as being to her, not a husband of blood but as a bridegroom of blood; the inference being of a new beginning in their relationship based upon the realisation that Moses' God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was the one true God. The LORD 'let him alone' as a direct result of Zipporah's actions and she gives glory to God by declaring [to Moses] "You are a bridegroom of blood, because of the circumcision." (the Hebrew Bible ascribes the whole quote to Zipporah) thus showing that she understood the significance of circumcision as the token of the Abrahamic covenant and it's promises (Beresheet / Genesis 17:7-14) and also the mercy and grace of God.

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 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

Question: "Why was God going to kill Moses in Exodus 4:24-26?"

Answer: The sin of Moses in Exodus 4:24-26 is not stated explicitly, but the surrounding events give substantial clues as to the nature of Moses' transgression. God had instructed his messenger to warn Pharaoh to free Israel, or risk losing his firstborn son (Exodus 4:21-24). Moses had been specially groomed by God for eighty years for this mission, and now the time for action had come.

Moses was to lead his people out of Egypt, and to be an example to Pharaoh's house, to the nation of Egypt, and to all the nations that heard of those happenings (Exodus 18:10-11; Joshua 2:10-11). Accordingly, Moses' personal life had to be in order before he could direct the spiritual lives of the Hebrew people. It seems that Moses had neglected to administer the sacred rite of circumcision, the act that symbolized the Almighty's covenant with His chosen people.

...Moses' outstanding sin made him unfit to serve as a spiritual leader, and the situation had to be rectified before he could carry out his mission effectively. Indeed, as soon as Zipporah performed the act, the Lord "let him go." In summary, God was going to kill Moses because Moses was supposed to teach the Israelites God's Law - yet Moses was not obeying God's Law himself.

<http://www.gotquestions.org/kill-Moses.html>

- Her words are more probably of relief and gratitude that her marriage, threatened with termination in the death of Moses, is thus renewed. He has become her bridegroom once again thanks to the blood of the circumcision. ..Deeply ingrained now in Moses' heart is the truth that it is the wrath of God (not of Pharaoh) from which man needs protection, and that God has Himself supplied sufficient protective covering in His covenant of grace and its ordinances. It is this truth which is seen in its perfection on Passover night and in connection with the blood of the lamb. (p. 124-125)

New Bible Commentary



Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

- “The meaning of this phrase is unknown, but some say it was used in a derogatory way to suggest that she did not favor the rite. (Yet she did it to save her husband’s life.) Others propose that she saw in the act a sort of redemption by which the blood of the youngster restored Moses to the Lord and also to her as a new bridegroom.
- “At this time Zipporah and the sons may have returned to jethro (18:2-3). Moses’ sudden illness was a warning that he must obey God wholly and fulfill his mission. Also this incident follows up the emphasis in 4:22-23 on sons (Pharaoh’s son, and Israel as God’s son.):

Bible Knowledge Commentary – John D Hannah

- “The presence of Zipporah’s name indicates that the personal pronouns refer to Moses. She, judging by her action of suddenly and swiftly circumcising her son, understood that the danger to her husband’s life was intimately connected to the family’s not bearing the sign of the covenant given to Abraham for all his descendants (Gen. 17:10-14). Her evaluation, “You are a husband of blood to me,” suggests her own revulsion with this rite of circumcision, which Moses should have performed. The result, however, was God’s forgoing the threat and letting Moses go (v.26a) The reaction of God at this point dramatically underscored the seriousness of the sign He had prescribed.”

John MacArthur



Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

This Portion is a very difficult one and has occupied the Commentators and Researchers since times immemorial until our day. It is not clear who is threatened by sudden death or for what and why he is punished, or who was circumcised and what the connection is between the threat of death and the circumcision which, as it seems, saved the one who was about to die....

The central point of vv.21-23 is that Pharaoh afflicted Israel, G-d's firstborn, and for that he would be punished, measure for measure - G-d will kill his firstborn. It follows that also in the "bridegroom of blood" passage which these verses explain, the killing of the firstborn is referred to. Hence, "G-d encountered him and sought to kill him" (v.24) refers to Gershom, Moses's firstborn. Gershom is the "bridegroom of blood", the one about to die. He is the firstborn who was attacked and who was circumcised....

http://www.moreshet.net/oldsite/nechama/gilyonot/5760/shemot_60_2.htm- Shemot (5727/1966) Chapter 4: Verses 20-26

The danger to Gershom's life is connected to the killing of Pharaoh's firstborn. Here we are reminded of Chapter 12, v.13: "And the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt". Here as there G-d goes out to smite the firstborn of Egypt, ... here as there the blood is the sign that there will not be plague to destroy; there on the two doorposts and the lintel (12:7,22), here the blood of circumcision. Here as there the Torah uses the verb *lehagia* (touch, apply to, cast), here "vataga *leraglav* - cast it at his feet" (4:25), there "vehigatem - apply of the blood to the lintel and the two doorposts" (12:22). The question is why the destroyer aimed at Moses's firstborn? We can only guess the reason. In my opinion it has to be sought in chapter 4, v.14: "And the anger of the Lord burned against Moses....".

It seems to me that the anger found its expression in the passage of "bridegroom of blood": Informing him of his firstborn son's sickness G-d forces Moses's hand to accept the mission. The destroyer that will smite Egypt's firstborn has so to speak started on his way and endangers Moses's own firstborn! After Moses insists on refusing the burden of the mission, G-d forces him to accept it.

http://www.moreshet.net/oldsite/nechama/gilyonot/5760/shemot_60_2.htm- Shemot (5727/1966) Chapter 4: Verses 20-26

The encounter in the inn signifies the renewed imposition of the mission on Moses. He cannot avoid it. The destroyer which Moses the messenger would eventually announce to Pharaoh has already started on his way and even endangers the life of the messenger's firstborn. With the sign of the blood from Gershom's foreskin which Tzipora magia (casts) at his feet she protects him, similarly to the sign of the blood on the lintel and the doorposts (Ex.12:22 - "and touch with the blood of it the lintel and the two doorposts"), and the destroyer lets him go...

Thus we see that the contemporary researcher and Radak's father, R. Yosef Kimhi share several elements.

Concerning Question II 3 we quote the author of Akedat Yits'hak's fine elucidation:

http://www.moreshet.net/oldsite/nechama/gilyonot/5760/shemot_60_2.htm- Shemot (5727/1966) Chapter 4: Verses 20-26

R. Yits'hak Arama in his Akedat Yits'hak, Section 35 (Pressburg 1849 ed., folio 20b): Verse 15: And Moses took his wife etc. In my opinion this was Moses's sin regarding whom it is stated "G-d encountered him and sought to kill him" because he should have circumcised his son at the proper time and leave his wife and children with his father-in-law. Why should she accompany him and go out with him (on this mission)? - it seems that she was more beloved to him at the beginning than later on. I think that this is the view of the one who says (Nedarim 32a), "Because he busied himself first in the inn" which ("busied himself") implies occupying oneself with homely things, that includes the company of the wife and children. Since this engaging himself (in family harmony and their wellbeing) was first and foremost in his mind he got his priorities confused, for he thought (ibid.31b), "If I circumcise and go on the journey there is danger for the child, if I circumcise and wait until he recovers, it would delay my mission" (see Rashi on this verse).

http://www.moreshet.net/oldsite/nechama/gilyonot/5760/shemot_60_2.htm- Shemot (5727/1966) Chapter 4: Verses 20-26

He overlooked the ideal solution, i.e., to circumcise the child and leave him there with his mother, for if it was right later to send them back, as Aharon advised (see 18:2 Rashi s.v. "After he had sent her back"), he should certainly have left her there when he departed. That is alluded to by, "And it was on the way, in the place where they spent the night that G-d encountered him and sought to kill him" in that he was punished because he was on the way in the inn, for he should have left them in Midyan and not delay the fulfillment of the commandment.

M.Buber has a similar explanation in his book Moses (Schocken, Jerusalem 1963, pgs.56-57).

It is characteristic of G-d to demand unconditionally from His chosen one. He seizes the one He speaks to... G-d chastises His messenger apparently because his dedication - from the time that G-d overcame his refusal - does not seem to Him to be total.

I think that this is also the meaning of 1 Kings 19:19-21.

Nehama Leibowitz

http://www.moreshet.net/oldsite/nechama/gilyonot/5760/shemot_60_2.htm- Shemot (5727/1966) Chapter 4: Verses 20-26

4:18-31 Moses in Egypt

v27 The Lord Instructs Aaron

27 **Now** the LORD said to Aaron, "Go to meet Moses in the wilderness." **So** he went and met him at the mountain of God, and he kissed him.

v28-30 Aaron Speaks for Moses

28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which He had sent him, and all the signs that He had commanded him to do. 29 **Then** Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the sons of Israel; 30 and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. He **then** performed the signs in the sight of the people.

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

4:18-31 Moses in Egypt

v31 The People Worship the LORD

31 **So** the people believed; and **when** they heard that the LORD was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, **then** they bowed low and worshiped (*shachah*).

Exodus 4:18-31 The Deliverer Sent

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

After the removal of the sin, which had excited the threatening wrath of Jehovah, Moses once more received a token of the divine favour in the arrival of Aaron, under the direction of God, to meet him at the Mount of God (Exo 3:1). To Aaron he related all the words of Jehovah, with which He had sent (commissioned) him (חַלַּשׁ with a double accusative, as in 2Sa 11:22; Jer 42:5), and all the signs which He had commanded him (צוּרֵי also with a double accusative, as in Gen 6:22). **Another proof of the favour of God consisted of the believing reception of his mission on the part of the elders and the people of Israel. “The people believed” (אִמְנָוּ) when Aaron communicated to them the words of Jehovah to Moses, and did the signs in their presence. “And when they heard that Jehovah had visited the children of Israel, and had looked upon their affliction, they bowed and worshipped.” (Knobel is wrong in proposing to alter אִמְנָוּ into אִמְנָוּ, according to the Sept. rendering, καὶ ἔχαρη). The faith of the people, and the worship by which their faith was expressed, proved that the promise of the fathers still lived in their hearts. And although this faith did not stand the subsequent test (Exo 5), yet, as the first expression of their feelings, it bore witness to the fact that Israel was willing to follow the call of God.**

Keil and Delitzsch



Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

Exodus 5:1-6:27 Pharaoh Rejects

God's Word

- 5:1-4 The First Confrontation
- 5:5-14 Pharaoh's First Act: Increased Workload
- 5:15-23 The First Response
 - v15-19 The Protest before Pharaoh
 - v20-21 The Protest Against Moses
 - v22-23 The Protest before the LORD
- 6:1:8 The Reassurance of the Lord
- 6:9 The Response of the People
- 6:10-13 The Recommissioning of Moses
- 6:14-19 The Records of Reuben, Simeon, Levi
- 6:20-25 The Records of Moses and Aaron
 - v20 Their Parents
 - v21-22 The Uncles and Cousins
 - v23 Aaron's Wife and Sons
 - v24-25 The Next Generation
- 6:26-27 The Reiteration of Moses' Call

Exodus 6:28-10:29 Pharaoh Rejects

God's Miracles

- 6:28-7:13 The Second Confrontation
- 6:28-30 Moses' Discouragement
- 7:1-5 The Lord's Pronouncement
- 7:6-7 Their Obedience
- 7:8-13 The Rod into Serpent
- 7:14-10:29 The Nine Plagues
 - 7:14-25 Water Turned to Blood
 - 8:1-15 Frogs
 - 8:16-19 Dust Turned to Gnats
 - 8:20-32 Swarm of Insects
 - 9:1-7 Pestilence on Livestock
 - 9:8-12 Boils on Man and Beast
 - 9:13-36 Great Hailstorm
 - 10:1-20 Locusts
 - 10:21-29 Darkness

A work of liberation rarely goes unopposed. It's true in warfare. It's true in spiritual warfare. In Exodus 5, a battle is joined. The battle is for the Israelites, the people of God. The question is, "Who do they belong to?" The Lord says, "They're mine." Satan, who uses his unwitting pawn, Pharaoh, says, "They're mine." When the Lord announces his intention to deliver his people from the Egyptians, Satan increases his opposition.

There is a similar battle for the modern-day people of God as well. The Lord would deliver us from bondage to sin, but his work of liberation does not go unopposed. When Satan gets a whiff of God's work of liberation, he turns up the opposition. The immediate result for God's people is affliction, sometimes tremendous pain and misery. But as can be expected in the case of any opposition to the work of God, it backfires.

<http://www.pbc.org/files/messages/10409/exo006.html>

5:1-4 The First Confrontation

1 And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides, I will not let Israel go."

distance from Goshen to Sinai

3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go **a three days' journey** into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, **lest** He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

to strike, hit against anyone, either by accident or with hostile intent / The same word used for "fall upon" (paga) is also used in 4:24, where it is reported that the Lord "met" (paga) Moses and sought to put him to death for his failure to circumcise his son.

4 **But** the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you draw the people away from their work? Get back to your labors!"

Moses made known to Pharaoh God's will without the accreditation of miracles. This incident shows Pharaoh's heart – see how he treats "nobodies". Cf. future encounters

Exodus 5:1-6:27 Pharaoh Rejects God's Word

 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

Pharaoh's response to the request is, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" He also says that he doesn't know the Lord. The Lord will address his question rather emphatically with the 10 plagues in Exodus 6 through 14. By then, Pharaoh will at least know who the Lord is. Pharaoh arrogantly adds that even if he did know the Lord, he still wouldn't let Israel go. What matters to Pharaoh is power, and he will consider no challenge to it, not even from the all-powerful God of the universe. It doesn't matter to Pharaoh who the Lord is but who Pharaoh is. And in Pharaoh's culture, and in his mind, he is a god.

What does Pharaoh represent to us? In Pharaoh and Egypt, we see a picture of the world, which is opposed to God and his people. Behind the world is the god of this world, Satan (John 12:31, 2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan directs the world's opposition to God and his people. Pharaoh, Egypt and the world are unwitting pawns who have no idea that they are being used by Satan.

<http://www.pbbc.org/files/messages/10409/exo006.html>

5:5-14 Pharaoh's First Act: Increased Workload

5 Again Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now many, and you would have them cease from their labors!" 6 **So** the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters over the people and their foremen, saying, 7 "You are no longer to give the people straw to make brick as previously; let them go and gather straw for themselves. 8 **But** the quota of bricks which they were making previously, you shall impose on them; you are not to reduce any of it. **Because** they are lazy, therefore they cry out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' 9 Let the labor be heavier on the men, and let them work at it **that** they may pay no attention to false words."

Exodus 5:1-6:27 Pharaoh Rejects God's Word



Through Moses and Aaron, the Lord demands that Pharaoh let the people go so that they can serve the Lord. The only place Pharaoh will let them go is to their labors. The battle is thus joined for the people of God. The Lord says, "They belong to me; they will serve me." Pharaoh says, "No, they belong to me; they will serve me." Behind Pharaoh is the real enemy, Satan, who says, "You're all wrong; they belong to me, and it is me they will serve." The question then becomes, "Who are the people of God going to serve?"

As the battle is joined, Pharaoh makes life more difficult for the Israelites. In their brickmaking tasks, they must now gather their own straw. Without straw, the clay bricks would shrink, develop cracks and lose their shape. In requiring the Israelites to gather their own straw, he also requires them to meet the same quota - an impossible demand. This is what the world does - it places impossible demands on us, expectations we cannot meet even if we wanted to.

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The people of God are in bondage to Egypt, serving Pharaoh. It is not a happy state of affairs. The Lord wants to do something about it. His word comes to Moses, and he proclaims to Pharaoh, "Let my people go." To one degree or another, we are all in bondage to sin. At the worst, we think we are serving ourselves, protecting ourselves or advancing ourselves, but in reality we are serving sin, which means we are serving Satan. This is not a happy state of affairs. The word of God comes to us in which God says, "You belong to me." When the word is met with faith, hope bubbles up.

If you were Satan, what would you do? You'd try to crush the hope by crushing the faith. And you'd crush the faith by plugging up the ears of the one who is listening to words that are being believed. That's exactly what Satan does: He hinders us from listening to the truth, which comes to us through the word of God. He even portrays the truth as "false words" (5:9).

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His strategy is rather ingenious. Consider his tactics through Pharaoh. Moses tells the people that the Lord will deliver them from bondage to Egypt. Pharaoh responds by making life more difficult for the Israelites, making the word of deliverance, which is the word of truth, look like nonsense. We look at all this wonderful, liberating, hopeful truth in the word of God; then we look at all the painful, constricting, crushing pain in life. The word of God looks like a lie, a collection of "false words."

Satan, then, uses affliction for the purposes of distraction. He wants to distract us from "paying attention" to the word of God, which is full of hope, by making life so miserable that the word of hope seems like nonsense. Through affliction, Satan is telling us, "Don't listen to the word. Don't read it. Don't believe it. Don't trust it. Discard it. Forget it. It's a lie! Don't believe God exists. Don't believe he's good. Don't believe he loves you. Don't believe he has good plans to take you to a better place. It's a lie!"

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Ellie Wiesel in his book "Night," which recounts his personal experience with the Holocaust, tells of a neighbor in a concentration camp who examined the painful evidence and decided that God was not to be believed. The man said, "Don't let yourself be fooled with illusions. Hitler has made it very clear that he will annihilate all the Jews before the clock strikes 12, before they can hear the last stroke. ... I've got more faith in Hitler than in anyone else. He's the only one who's kept his promises, all his promises, to the Jewish people."

The pain often makes it more difficult to believe the truth.

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5:5-14 Pharaoh's First Act: Increased Workload

10 **So** the taskmasters of the people and their foremen went out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I am not going to give you *any* straw. 11 'You go *and get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it*; **but none of your labor will be reduced.**'" 12 **So** the people scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw.

Straw serves as a bonding agent in the brick as it is heated. Without sufficient straw or with poor quality stubble, the bricks would not form as easily and a higher proportion would fall apart, thus making the quota harder to achieve – bricks were often dried in the sun.

The Egyptians normally cut off the ears of corn and leave the stalk standing

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5:5-14 Pharaoh's First Act: Increased Workload

13 And the taskmasters pressed them, saying, "Complete your work quota, your daily amount, just as when you had straw." 14 **Moreover**, the foremen of the sons of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, **were beaten** and were asked, "Why have you not completed your required amount either yesterday or today in making brick as previously?"

Early spring, after the barley or wheat harvest, toward Pharaoh's monopoly the end of April. At that season, the pestilential sand on bricks (stamped with his name) wind blows over Egypt some 50 days

The offender is laid flat on the ground, generally held by hands & feet while chastisement was administered; or probably bastinadoed – culprit lies on belly, legs turned up behind erect & he is beaten on the soles of his feet with a stick – can't walk for many weeks, some are lamed for life

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Opposition that is implemented (5:10-14)

Pharaoh's taskmasters implement his plan. The result for the Israelites is more work, unrealistic expectations and beatings for not meeting the unrealistic expectations.

When Moses and Aaron returned, the people embraced the word of deliverance. They believed the Lord was concerned about them, and they worshiped. Life was looking up. Immediately after believing the word and worshiping the Lord, life gets worse - a lot worse. This is worse than unfair; this is absurd. God announces his plans to deliver them, and life gets worse. From our perspective, this represents a cosmic contradiction. **Pain speaks louder than the word of God, and it often wins our ear.**

What do we do, then, as we listen to our pain? We get angry. What do we do with our anger? The same thing mankind has done from the beginning: look for someone to blame. Our minds race to blame with lightning speed and thunderous ferocity.

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5:15-23 The First Response

v15-19 The Protest Before Pharaoh

15 **Then** the foremen of the sons of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, **'Why** do you deal this way with your servants? 16 There is no straw given to your servants, **yet** they keep saying to us, 'Make bricks!' **And behold**, your servants are being beaten; **but** it is the fault of your own people."

Lodging a formal complaint before Pharaoh. They also had to care for their flocks for & work in the quarries as well.

17 **But** he said, "You are lazy, very lazy; therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' 18 **So** go now and work; **for** you shall be given no straw, **yet** you must deliver the quota of bricks."

According to Egyptian belief, laziness was among the great sins which brings condemnation in the final judgment. Egyptians knew how much public and private labors were impeded by festivals and other religious ceremonies.

19 And the foremen of the sons of Israel saw that they were in trouble **because** they were told, "You must not reduce *your* daily amount of bricks."

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5:15-23 The First Response

v20-21 The Protest Against Moses

20 **When** they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting for them. 21 And they said to them, "May the LORD look upon you and judge you, **for** you have made us odious in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."

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5:15-23 The First Response

v22-23 The Protest before the Lord

22 **Then** Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, **why** hast Thou brought harm to this people? **Why** didst Thou ever send me? 23 Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he has done harm to this people; and Thou hast not delivered Thy people at all."

Exodus 3:18-22 - ¹⁸"But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion. ²⁰So I will stretch out My hand, and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. ²¹And I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that **when you go, you will not go empty-handed.** ²²But every woman shall ask of her neighbor and the woman who lives in her house, articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; and you will put them on your sons and daughters. **Thus you will plunder the Egyptians.**"

Exodus 5:1-6:27 Pharaoh Rejects God's Word



Opposition that prompts blame (5:15-21)

There is an apparently clear line of responsibility for the people's pain. It can be traced through Pharaoh to Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh made life more difficult, and the demand of Moses and Aaron prompted Pharaoh to make life more difficult. It seems pretty obvious that blame should be placed at the feet of these three men, and that's exactly what the Israelites think. First they blame Pharaoh; then they blame Moses and Aaron.

Often, we don't have to look very hard for someone to blame: "My parents didn't love me. This man abused me. This teacher didn't choose me. This man abandoned me. This woman never wanted me. This church didn't encourage me. This employer didn't hire me. This friend didn't appreciate me. This person betrayed me. That one lied about me. The other one misunderstood me."

Although the pain is real, and there are real people who inflict pain, we're not seeing the big picture when we blame them for it. There are two other players in the blame game that the Israelites overlooked: God and themselves. The same is true for us. We forget about God, who wants to liberate, and we forget about ourselves, who need liberation but don't necessarily want it.

<http://www.pbc.org/files/messages/10409/exo006.html>

The question: 'Why?' (5:22-23)

Under affliction, the people cried out to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron but not to the Lord (5:15-21). Moses, though, knows who to cry out to: the Lord.

Forty years earlier, Moses attempted to deliver the people, but he failed and fled in fear (Exodus 2:11-15, Acts 7:25). For 40 years he has felt like a failure. The Lord convinces Moses to return to deliver the people, and it's the same old song. He must be thinking, "I'm a failure. I've always been a failure. I always will be a failure. Nothing has changed; nothing will change." ...

He asks the age-old question: "Why? Lord, if you knew I would be rejected again, why did you ever send me? Why did you allow me to get my hopes up?" ...

Like Moses, we ask the age-old question: "Why? Lord, if you knew I was going to be rejected again, why did you ever send me? Why did you send me to this person, to this interview, to this job, to this ministry, to this church, to these people? Why did you allow me to get my hopes up?" Perhaps we even ask, "Why did you ever send me into this world?"

<http://www.pbc.org/files/messages/10411/exo007.html>

6:1-8 The Reassurance fo the Lord

1 **Then** the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; **for** under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of his land."

2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "**I am the LORD**; 3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as **God Almighty**, **but by My name, LORD**, I did not make Myself known to them. 4 "And I also established **My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned.**
5 And furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, **because** the Egyptians are holding them in bondage; and I have remembered **My covenant.**

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6 “Say, **therefore**, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.”

Egyptians were very used to hearing of Pharaoh’s outstretched arm accomplishing mighty deeds.

7 **Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.”**

Exodus 5:1-6:27 Pharaoh Rejects God’s Word



6:9 The Response of the People

9 So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel,

but

they did not listen to Moses

on account of *their* despondency

and

cruel bondage.

Exodus 4:28-31 The People's First Response to God's Deliverance

²⁸ And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which He had sent him, and all the signs that He had commanded him *to do*. ²⁹ Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the sons of Israel; ³⁰ and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. He then performed the signs in the sight of the people. ³¹ So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, then they bowed low and worshiped (*shachah*).

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The answer: 'I am the Lord' (6:1-9)

The Lord's response to Moses' question is indirect. He doesn't say, "Oh, here's why I sent you, Moses." We find ourselves constantly asking the Lord "why" only to hear nothing in response.

The Lord is aiming for higher ground than "why." The better question is "who," as in, "Who is the Lord?" **The Lord says, "You don't need to know why; you need to know me." Four times in these verses the Lord says, "I am the Lord." He says, "Here's who I am, and here's what I'm going to do." He says, "You will see what I will do."** If we see what the Lord does, we can know who he is.

What will he do? Twice he says that Pharaoh's actions in releasing the people will be precipitated by the "mighty hand" of the Lord. If Pharaoh weren't resistant, the mighty hand of the Lord wouldn't be necessary, and Moses would never see it. **Because we face intense opposition in life - rejection from without and within - we have the opportunity to see the mighty hand of the Lord: the power of God to overcome opposition. This means, most importantly, that we have the opportunity to see him.**

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The Lord tells Moses that he knows the Lord, and will know the Lord, in a way that the patriarchs never did. God was known to the patriarchs as "God Almighty" but not "the Lord," or Yahweh. They evidently knew the name Yahweh, which is his intimate, relational, covenant name, but they more closely identified him as "God Almighty." To the patriarchs, he was the covenant-making God who promised to give them, among other things, the land of Canaan, but they only lived there as aliens, not residents. **To Moses, God is going to show himself to be the covenant-keeping God.** The Lord tells Moses, "I have remembered my covenant."

The Lord tells Moses what he will do in keeping the covenant: He will bring them out, free them, redeem them, take them to himself, be their God and give them the land he promised to the patriarchs. "**Bringing out**" may be a reference to the Lord's bringing them out of Egypt by means of the 10 plagues; "**freeing**" may be a reference to his freeing them from the Egyptians in the collapsing of the Red Sea. The purpose of this bringing out and freeing was to "redeem" them. "Redemption" involves the restoring of something to its original purpose for the payment of a price. The price was evidently the first-born of Egypt (Isaiah 43:3).

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 Entrusting the Word to the Faithful

What purpose is the Lord restoring them to? He says, "I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God." He's restoring them to relationship with him.

The Lord says, "Then you will know that I am the Lord *your* God." This is not a bad definition for the meaning of life: **To know the Lord, and to know that he is the Lord *your* God.** How is Moses going to know this? Because he will see that the Lord has brought the people "out from under the yoke of the Egyptians." By seeing what the Lord does on his and the people's behalf, Moses can know who God is, that he is the Lord *his* God. Then the Lord says he will give them the land he has promised. In this intimate covenant relationship, the Lord just wants to give.

Let's return to Moses' original "why" question and see how the Lord addresses our "why" questions. We ask the age-old question: "Why? If you knew I was going to be rejected again, why did you ever send me? Why did you send me to this person, to this interview, to this job, to this ministry, to this church, to these people? Why did you allow me to get my hopes up?" In other words, "Why is there such opposition?"

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The answer goes like this: So that we can see the Lord overcome the opposition. Not only does he overcome the opposition, he brings us to himself and gives us good gifts. Seeing all this, we can know that he is the Lord our God, the Lord your God, the Lord my God.

...The Lord delivers us from our fears to show himself to us: to show us his mighty hand, which he uses on our behalf. And if we see his mighty hand, with sleeves rolled up for work on our behalf, we see him and we know more fully that he is the Lord our God.

So why do we face such fierce opposition? The answer is that we may know the Lord, and that we may know that he is the Lord our God, and that is all we need to know.

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After feeling like failures for years, we get the courage up to move toward people and situations only to face rejection and feel like failures all over again. We ask, "Why?" The Lord answers: **"I am the Lord, who wants to be known, and who you need to know. You don't need to know why, you need to know me."** In order for us to know him, the Lord reveals himself to us in mighty acts against fierce opposition. And any opposition that we face in life simply inspires the true opposition: our own flesh, which, prompted by the world and the devil, fills our minds with fear. Our own fear is the fiercest opposition of all.

...Moses returns to the people, but they are too despondent to receive any message of hope. **But the Lord tells Moses in so many words, "Based on who I am, act. Keep moving forward. Don't give up."**

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