

## STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF MOSES

**Taught in Ambassador's Class of Peninsula Bible Church, Palo Alto, California  
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**by  
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### **Lesson #5, Exodus 4;1-17 - February 3, 1980, God calls Moses to deliver Israelites, Part II**

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Up to Chapter 4 we have had Moses confronted by the burning bush and God calling him to become the great Lawgiver, the great leader of his country. As you know, Moses has been 40 years in the wilderness keeping sheep. He is kind of semi-retired and doesn't want to be a great leader any more. Beyond that, he has been roundly rejected, has a price on his head back in Egypt and is without self-worth. He is afraid of rejection and afraid of Pharaoh, and God is trying to send him back now. Remember last week when God first called him to go back he said, "Who am I? I have been rejected by the Jews, rejected by the Egyptians and I have a price on my head. Sure, 40 years ago when you first called me I was a general in Egypt, the son of Pharaoh's daughter, had all this administrative experience and was a man of power in word and deed, but now I am 80 years old. For the last 40 years I have been out in the desert just herding a bunch of sheep around." God said, "I will take care of it. I will do these things for you." Then Moses said, "Well, who are you?" This man doesn't have guts, he's got gall. However, that actually is a pretty valid question. Most of the Jews are living in idolatry in Egypt, as we find from God's warning to them and also Ezekiel's warning to them. They did go after the gods of Egypt. Those gods were very attractive because worshipping them involved all kinds of licentious rites. With them you didn't have to be holy and dedicated and set apart to God. You paid your dues and you did your thing. So very naturally if someone came to those Jews and said, "God sent me," they'd more than likely say, "Which one?" They had a whole Sunday smorgasbord of gods, so they'd want to know, "Which one are you?"

Under the old patriarchal system whenever God appeared in a revelational sense or to reclaim his people, He got an appropriate title, a new name based upon what phase of redemption He was bringing out, like, say, El Shaddai. So He said, "I AM. [I AM what I AM, or I will be that I will be. I am the eternally existing God who is increasingly coming to be in the way of revelation. I am a God who will always be there. I am a God who wants to be known by you as being there, and if you walk with Me, you will increasingly come to know Me.] You tell them, 'I AM' sent you."

This week we'll pick up in Exodus 4, Verse 1. You would think by now Moses should have enough information to be satisfied. God even laid out, as we saw last time, the very order of events in Egypt, so Moses knows exactly what is going to happen. But even that is not good enough. Moses really does not want to go. So Chapter 4, Verse 1, third objection.

Exodus 4:1:

**Then Moses answered and said, "What if they will not believe me, or listen to what I say? For they may say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.'"**

It is a very strong negative in the Hebrew, "The Lord has not appeared to you positively! What if they say that?" That is also a valid question, by the way, but, of course, he is using it for invalid purposes. Moses has probably had God appear to him in some form, or communicate with him in some form, twice in the last 40 years. Once when he was 40 years old God told him he would be the deliverer of Egypt, and he went out in his own strength, as a prince of Egypt and a general of Egypt with a tremendous track record, and got in trouble right off the bat. 40 years later, now, at 80 years of age God appears to him again in a burning bush and tells him to go to Egypt. So he has had two revelations of God in a 40 year period. But the Jews in Egypt have had no revelation from God in 430 years, and Moses isn't that big a deal to them. When he was in Egypt, he was on the Egyptian side as far as they were concerned. He was a son of Pharaoh's daughter. He was living in the palace when they were living in mud huts. He was floating down the Nile in a barge while slaves pulled the oars, and they were the slaves. Why should they accept him? Why should God reveal Himself to a traitorous Jew when He hadn't revealed Himself to them? So it is a valid question. He is not using it validly. He is using it to get out of going to Egypt, but it is a real issue, and that is why God gives him these signs. God knows there is a problem in Egypt, that Moses has never been one of the boys but always been on the other side. So God says, "O.K. we'll deal with that problem."

Exodus 4:2:

**And the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." Then He said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent [Of the viper family, a deadly poisonous family]; and Moses fled from it [He knows lots about vicious**

snakes out in that desert. This is the same family as the one that Cleopatra used to dispatch herself]. **But the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grasp it by its tail" --so he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand--"that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."**

Why does God deliberately demand that of Moses? In what kind of position does God deliberately demand that Moses put himself? When Moses delivered Egypt from the Ethiopians, you remember, he delivered Egypt through his own training, through the Egyptian resources, through his own cunning, his brilliance as a general, and he has the concept that if God is going to work through him, he has to have the adequacy. "I have to have these resources. I have to have the knowledge. I have to have the manpower. God is going to lead me, sure, but I have to have an army back there."

So, what is God requiring of Moses here? Let me ask you a question? What happens if there is a cobra slithering along and you reach out and grab it by its tail? Cobras don't care to be grabbed by their tails. What is that cobra going to do? He is going to whip around and sink his fangs in you, and you are a dead man. They didn't have snake healing kits in those days. What is God requiring of Moses here? Vulnerability. Wide open vulnerability. He is totally helpless in dealing with a snake with his bare hands. He is not allowed to take his staff and beat it over the head. He is not even allowed to sneak up and get it by its neck. He has to grab the snake in the most vulnerable part for him, the tail, which gives the snake all that whipping room. Why is God trying to make Moses realize that in his vulnerability there lies strength, there lies the purpose of God, the promise of God, the program of God? What is Moses going to have to do down the road a piece?

**Class comment:** Depend on God.

**Bob's response:** Yeah! Depend on God in Egypt and also depend on God in a howling wilderness for 40 years with 2.5-3 million people who are worse than dumb sheep. They gripe all the time and are obedient to God only on rare occasions. He is going to be put in a totally impossible situation in Egypt as a prelude to 40 years of herding people in a totally impossible situation. He has got to understand that he cannot be standing on his own resources at all and that God can use anything, an 80 year old shepherd or a "What's that in your hand?" It could have been a rock. It could have been a toothpick. He is trying to tell Moses, "Whatever you have is all I need. Whatever you are is all I need. All I need is you. I will take care of the rest." We do not need a Seminary training, my friend. We do not need to know Greek and Hebrew and exposition and hermeneutics and homiletics and eschatology and systematic theology and all the other "ologies" to be a godly woman or a godly man. All we need to be is God's. That is possessive case, and whatever you are He sanctifies That is what He is trying to teach Moses here, so He gives him a little snake trip.

Then He says, verse 6:

Exodus 4:6:

**And the LORD furthermore said to him, "Now put your hand into your bosom." [Right inside next to your skin by your heart.] So he put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow.**

Moses was totally horrified. This was the white leprosy. While you were still a living human being capable of doing things, you were totally isolated from society. You were defiled. You had to stay outside the camp. Your body may be white as snow but you were still a real human being, and you had to sit outside camp until the disease had run its full course. You were a defiled outcast, a rejected person. Now, Moses has had all the rejection he can handle. And what does he do? He pulls his hand out and, "Boy, the last thing I need going back to Egypt to reach the Jews is a good case of leprosy. I am supposed to be 'one sent with credentials.' That's a credential? That's a catastrophe!"

Who else, along about 55 A.D., petitioned the Lord three times and was denied three times. Another tremendous "one sent with credentials." The verb is "*apostolos*"

**Class comment:** Paul

**Bob's response:** Yeah! Paul, the traveling evangelist. He didn't have one church his whole life. He was a hit and run crusader. He came into town, stood up in front of the people and gave his spiel. Half the group consisted of Jews who hated him, who considered him a traitor, and the other half of Greeks who worshipped the body and oratory. Paul, as described by a writer in the 2nd century, was small in size, with bowed legs, a big red nose and a bald head, and some thorn in the flesh, possibly some eye affliction, which he had petitioned the Lord three times to take away but without success. That's a credential? No! "Hey, Lord, you don't seem to understand. I'm an evangelist. I need to have a good appearance, and here I am with a bald head, a big nose, bandy legs, "contemptible" speech [untrained in speech] and I'm a Jew teaching Gentiles. The whole audience hates me the moment I get up to speak. Who needs this!" The Lord said, "This is exactly what you need. My strength is perfected [comes to completion, is the concept, reaches an established goal. We get the word teleo-logical from it] in your weakness. This is how My power is perfected." See, God never works as a partner. You can be dominated by the Spirit or dominated by the flesh. You cannot be dominated by the Spirit-flesh. The Spirit will not in anyway cooperate with the flesh. You add the tiniest bit of flesh and you have 100% flesh whether you like it or not. The Spirit of God will never, ever get together with the flesh.

Galatians 5 says they are constantly at war. That is why God wipes us out. We must get the flesh out of the act or the Spirit cannot dominate. So when our human resources are totally wiped out, God says, "Hallelujah, now I can be 100% in your life and your heart, and I can be Lord God Almighty." That is exactly what we need to know. So, an outcast, a leper, can be used of God to lead Jews out of Egypt.

But God doesn't leave Moses there. He says, "Put your hand in your bosom again." Moses has this horrible looking infected thoroughly defiled hand, and now God asks him to put it back in against his nice clean body. Everything in him cries out, "No way!" It's like having a hand covered with poison oak and being told to stick it against your nice clean chest. But God tells him to. He makes himself vulnerable again, and his hand comes out "...restored like the rest of his flesh."

Do you notice what God is trying to teach Moses? "Even the most defiled person, in My hands, can be exactly what I want. Even a leper who is shut outside the camp, made to cover his lip [which probably meant his mouth], who isn't allowed to breathe on people, has to go around saying, 'Unclean,' who defiles anything or anybody he touches, a total outcast, I can use." God is trying to tell us, "I don't care what sin is driving you up the wall; I don't care about your past or how dirty or defiled you think you are, how disabling you think your sin is, or how much you think it separates you from Me, I can heal, I can restore, and I can use you." There is a wonderful passage in Scripture that I love, "God will restore the years the locust has eaten." Now it doesn't say you won't suffer loss because you usually do, but you can repent, come back to your Lord, confess your sin, put it away and be totally usable again. Yes, you have wasted years, and they are gone, and you will lose the rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but your future can be glorious. God can cleanse "leprosy"! Any "Leprosy"!

Exodus 4:8:

**And it shall come about that if they will not believe you or heed the witness of the first sign [literally, listen to the voice of the first sign], they may believe the witness of the last sign. "But it shall be that if they will not believe even these two signs or heed what you say, then you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground"**

God says to Moses, "O.K., if they won't believe the first two signs, I'll give you a third sign, the ultimate sign, and that they'll certainly believe." At this point in time, what is the problem with this sign as far as Moses is concerned? He knows the first two will work. He has had a trial run. But what about this third sign? God says, "O.K., Moses, you want this third sign, which I guarantee will work, you have to go to Egypt to find out because it has to be water from the Nile." Now that is quite a different story, isn't it? That is called faith. The first two are sight by now. He grabbed by faith and it became sight. So he is feeling pretty secure. He put his hand in his bosom not knowing what was going to happen. That wasn't even faith, then. But it took faith to put it back in. So now he is walking by sight with two of the signs, but God says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is [that He is God], and that He is a rewarder of those [and the verb is in the continuing tense, that keep on coming back and back and back] who seek Him." He says, "Moses, I gave you two out of three, now I expect, on that basis, for you to act on the third in faith, because faith is the only thing that is going to please Me, and you are going to Egypt in faith even if I have to kill you," which He attempts to do here later on.

Now, what is the symbolic meaning? Why serpent? Why leprosy? Why blood? I don't know, but I will give you an RST, Roe Sanctified Theory. I don't think any of the commentators adequately handle this. I'm not trying to say I'm smarter than they are, but I have really been thinking this through. They seem to miss the fact that these signs were for Jews and Egyptians in their cultures 3500 years ago. In trying to determine what the symbol of the serpent and Moses running like crazy brings to mind, obviously in Scripture the serpent is a picture of Satan, but I'm not sure that is the main thing here. Hebrews 2 tells us that Satan holds all mankind in bondage to the fear of death, and that's what Moses fears. He doesn't fear the snake per se. He fears the death that is going to result from that snake, and I think God is trying to tell him, "Hey, when I deliver, I will deliver you from the bondage of Satan which he uses through the fear of death. You are going to be freed from Satanic bondage." Leprosy, defilement, separation, to the Jew it meant a castaway sitting outside the camp. I think God was trying to tell Moses, "I am going to cure any and every defilement, even to the point of this ultimate defilement." The Jews had all kinds of defilements. If you touched a dead body, you were defiled for a certain period of time. If you had any kind of discharge from your body, you were defiled for a certain period of time. There were all levels of defilement in Jewish law, but leprosy defiled you until it had run its full course, until it was no longer infectious. He is trying to show that as a Holy God who has been emphasizing His holiness that He will cure any defilement that separates man from God.

As to blood here. I struggled with this one, and yet I think I know what I feel is right. He demands, number one that the water be taken out of the Nile. It is not just water, but water out of the Nile. What does the Nile mean to the Egyptians and the Israelites living in Egypt?

**Class comment:** Life

**Bob's response:** Life! And He says, "You are to take that water out of the Nile, the source of life, and you are to pour it on dry ground so it shows up, so it sticks out like a sore thumb. It's not to be poured on wet ground where it might be hidden with the other water. No, it is to stand out like a sore thumb, and if it doesn't work and still soaks right into the ground everybody is going to know it. But if it turns into blood and coagulates, it is going to lie there." What is blood in the Scripture? What does it symbolize?

**Class comment:** Life

**Bob's response:** And life how? This isn't blood on the ground. This is like blood inside me. What does spilled blood symbolize in Scripture?

**Class comment:** Sacrifice.

**Bob's response:** Sacrifice. A life poured out. Here is the source of life poured out. What does that tell you? To me it is basic. God is going to do something that they won't believe. The very source of life is going to have to die. That is the ultimate redemption. God is going to redeem us from Satan and the fear of death. God is going to redeem us from the defilement of sin which separates us from Him. But what is really awesome is that I think God wants to redeem us from ourselves. I have two sources of life in me, my friends. One is Bob the Slob the other is resurrection life but until Bob the Slob is dealt with I will never experience the other source, resurrection life. I may be saved and therefore no longer fear death and no longer under the bond to Satan. I may be saved and confess my sins, and confess my sins, and confess my sins, and I John 1:9 through my whole life and never have a walk of victory. I would always just be getting even. Until the source of my life is slain, I shall never have victorious Christian life. I shall never live above me and in the Spirit of God. My Lord had to die, not just to pay for my sins, but to give me power to live pleasing to God. As He had to die to free me from sin and Satan, I have to die to free me from myself and that is why I am identified with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. When He died, I died. When He was buried, I was buried. When He rose in newness of life, so did I. And the ultimate redemption is when I begin to appreciate the fact that my source of life has got to be killed, put to death daily, momentarily, so that I might have LIFE.

Now that is what I feel is the symbolism in this passage. Many good and godly men have other ideas, but putting myself back 3500 years, I think, "What kind of an impact would those things have had on people of that day?" And as I try to think through their minds, I believe that is what this passage means. That is an RST. It is not what the Scripture says. It is a Roe Sanctified Theory. I have prayerfully considered it. I have prayed over it, but I have been wrong before, so don't blame the Bible.

You would think that what God has said and done so far would be enough for Moses, wouldn't you? How much of Moses' personal power, previous unbringing, dedicated zeal is involved in these signs?

**Class comment:** None

**Bob's response:** Nothing! Just a simple trust in God. What kind of a witness will these signs be to the Jews? We're talking about a dead hunk of wood, probably a gnarled old acacia shaft. It is not a beautiful shepherd's crook like Little Bo Peep had. My dad had a shillelagh, a good old Irish club. He used it for a cane. It was all scarred from where the thorns had been removed, but to an Irishman it was lovely. If you couldn't win with your fist, you'd win with your shillelagh, but you always won the argument. Moses had an old gnarled staff from an acacia tree. They don't grow nice and straight either, so it was probably scarred and crooked too, but God took it and made it alive. God took an incurable disease, a progressive disease, gave it to Moses immediately and then took it away immediately. Then God said, "You go to the Nile and take inorganic matter and it will become organic." How can you explain the life of Moses in human terms when God does something like that? You can't, can you?

What is the best witness that God has appeared to you in your life? A life that cannot be explained until the Lord returns. It is a life you cannot explain in human terms. Now you can't go around grabbing snakes by the tail and live very long. [Unfortunately people have tried it and some have died.] But you can have a life that cannot be explained up and down the street by human terms. And that is the witness God wants. Obviously not us. We are just not that good or capable of handling it. Yet there it is. It can't be explained. That is the witness of God.

Now, you would think finally Moses would begin to see the light.

**Class comment:** Now wouldn't what you are talking about not only be a witness to others but be a witness to yourself?

**Bob's response:** Sure!! For believers the indwelling Spirit of God, the inner witness of the Spirit, is far more important than the external witness of signs. A person has to actually reach the stage of dying to self. When you die to self, the Spirit of God becomes your life, and that makes the indwelling Spirit of God, the indwelling life of Christ, real in your experience. Then the life of Christ becomes your life. That is power, and it produces fruit every time. It can't help it. It is omnipotence!

I have fruit trees at home. This is the time of year when the leaves are gone, but almond trees are early budders. My almond tree, up to recently, was just a dead old tree like all the rest of the trees. But then that sap began climbing up the trunk and out into the little branches and POW! it is covered with white blossoms. Irresistible force! When a lot of Jesus Christ gets into your system and you allow it to become your life, POW! it will produce fruit whether you like it or not. It has to. It is LIFE! And if you are kind of sitting there as a bystander choosing to be available and obeying and watching God operate, there is nothing like it!

**Class comment:** I don't think Moses was at all at that stage though. You mentioned he trusted when he grabbed the stick. I don't think he did. I think he feared God more than he feared the snake so he did as God told him to. I don't think he had any faith at all at this point.

**Bob's response:** I think there was a fear of God, yes, but he still had to reach out and grab that snake. He is not quite that afraid of God.

**Class comment:** Well, he is very insolent. There's no question about that.

**Bob's response:** Yeah! He actually was more afraid of Pharaoh and the rest of them than he was of God at this moment. In the very next verse he is going to rebuke God. This man has gall you wouldn't believe. He rebukes God in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. He actually rebukes the living God. But, see, God doesn't mind that. God understands the emotions. God understands Moses is scared to death, and this doesn't make God angry. Look at this next passage, verse 10, fourth objection. This is where he says, "It's all your fault, God."

Exodus 4:10:

**Then Moses said to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently [He's been talking to sheep for 40 years and that is not exactly brilliant conversation] nor in time past, [That is a direct lie. Moses was "powerful in words and deeds" it says in Scripture.] nor since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."**

"Hey, we've been talking face-to-face here, God, and you still haven't given me eloquence. I'm supposed to go back and talk to Pharaoh, and I'm still slow of speech and slow of tongue. Sure, I've got signs which will get his attention, but what am I going to say?" Now there is a real ego trip in this. We know from Egyptian documents that eloquence was taught in the courts of Egypt. It was an activity to be cultivated. Moses grew up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He had the best voice teachers in town, and when he got up to give a spiel in the courts or in the palace, he could hold them in the palm of his hand. He was an articulate and powerful speaker. Everybody respected his oratory. Like the Greeks did later when Apollos spoke. Paul, Ugh! Apollos, Yeah! By now Moses has forgotten his oratorical skills. He has had no practice in 40 years, and he is going back to a court that puts a very high premium on oratory. They don't listen to men with funny accents. Moses has been living with the Midianites all these years, and frankly he is afraid he will lose face, be laughed at and rejected again. You don't go into Pharaoh's court and just speak in everyday language. We know that from the records. Well, God knew that too, verse 11.

Exodus 4:11:

**And the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes *him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?*"**

"I'm not looking for your talent, Moses. I'm looking for obedience. You're not going in your power. You're going in Mine."

Exodus 4:12:

**"Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, [I'll give you the eloquence you need. I don't need your talent.] and teach you what you are to say." [I'll even give you the wisdom you need to tell Pharaoh]**

God doesn't try to destroy the Egyptian culture and demand that Pharaoh and all the Egyptians stoop to the level of a shepherd who has spent the last 40 years talking to sheep. No, He goes right into Pharaoh's culture and equips His servant supernaturally to handle Pharaoh in Pharaoh's own culture. Moses is going to be back again as a man of power in words and deeds. God wants Pharaoh to believe. He wants Pharaoh to agree. He wants Pharaoh to become His. He doesn't love Pharaoh less than He loves Moses. He loves Pharaoh just as much as Moses. So, He is going to go to Pharaoh in his own culture and try to reach him through an eloquent, wise man.

Verse 13, fifth objection. This is where the roof caves in.

Exodus 4:13:

**But he said, "Please, Lord, now send *the message by whomever Thou wilt.*"**

Now that sounds all right in English. In the Hebrew it means, "Send it by somebody else." In the idiom, "No way, Lord!" Now, I have learned one thing in life if nothing else. You never say never to Jesus Christ. If you don't want to do something, don't ever say, "No way, Lord," because you are going to do whatever it is. I guarantee it! He may have to get you down and jump on you, but you will end up doing it, my friends. Never say never to Jesus Christ. God might have been inclined to listen to Moses' first four arguments, but He will never back down now. He can't. The issue is Moses' will or God's will, and He is not going to put up with that.

Exodus 4:14:

**Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses,**

Boy, if Moses was scared before he ought to be really terrified now. God is mad. He didn't get mad when Moses had no self-worth, "Who am I, Lord," in his rejection, or, "Who are you, Lord? I'm really not so sure they will accept You even," or back there, "What if they say you haven't appeared to me? What do I do stand there with egg on my face?" or finally, "I'm not eloquent any more. I've lost my oratorical ability." God doesn't mind any of those objections even though they are fallacious in the sight of God since He had said, "I'm going to do all

these things." It is only when Moses says, "No," that God gets mad. And not just slightly ticked off. It says, "The anger of the Lord burned against Moses."

Exodus 4:14:

**Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. [He has a very good tongue. By the way, that is all He can say about Aaron. He is a born loser] And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. And you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and it shall come about that he shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be as God to him. And you shall take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs."**

God says, "You want a spokesman? I'll give you Aaron, the Levite, but I am not going to talk to Aaron. I am going to talk to you. You are going to Egypt, and you are going to be the spokesman, and you are going to be as God to Aaron. I am going to tell you what to say to Aaron and Aaron is going to say it glibly to them. But, Moses, you are going, and that is it."

Now this is where I'm going to give you another RST. I think this is where Moses was disqualified as High Priest. Let me give you a little reason why. In the Book of Hebrews, the author compares Jesus Christ, first of all to the prophets, then to the angels, then, in Chapter 3, he compares Jesus Christ to Moses.

Hebrews 3:1:

**Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, [#1] the Apostle [The Sent One with credentials which Moses is] and [#2] High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house.**

There is this comparison with Moses. The author begins by saying Christ is both an Apostle, the sent One with credentials, and High Priest. There are examples in Scripture that bear on my theory. Paul in I Corinthians 9:27, says that he ran his life as a race such as they ran in the Isthmian games in Corinth, "I buffet my body [bruise it, keep it in subjection] and make it my slave [don't you become its slave], lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified." Paul had a fantastic ministry and yet he still had a fear that if he didn't keep his eye on God he might wind up doing something that would disqualify him for a portion of it still to come. You see this with Esau who was Isaac's first born. The first born had the right of the first rights [birthright] and the right of the blessing. Esau was a man of the field, a hunter, a man interested in secular things only. Jacob was a man of the household, kind of a momma's boy, but he understood spiritual things to some degree. Now, he had the wrong way of getting things, but he wanted that birthright. The birthright and the blessing were two different things. The birthright made you head of the house, priest of the family and mediator for your family. The blessing was the father's Last Will and Testament. It says that Esau despised his birthright and coming in from the field hungry, he sold it for a mess of lentil. Why? Because he figured, as the first born, he would surely get the blessing. In those days it was oral, and the blessing of the patriarch was a binding, valid contract [We have found that in the tablets of that day.] It was THE Last Will and Testament, and Esau figured, as the first born, he would surely get the blessing and the double portion of the estate that went with it and not get stuck with all the nonsense of being the priest of the family. Because Esau despised his birthright, however, Jacob was allowed to also steal the blessing. Even though Isaac [whose "eyes were too dim to see"] suspected he was being tricked by Jacob pretending to be Esau, he accepted the delicious savory meat he had asked for, ate it and then gave Jacob the blessing. In came Esau to get his blessing, and Isaac said, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Esau you first born." Isaac didn't even investigate. Right away he knew Jacob had tricked him, but he said, "I blessed him and Jacob is blessed. I will not take back my word." God allowed Esau to lose both his birthright and his blessing because he despised his birthright. Way over in Hebrews Esau is called "immoral" nor necessarily a fornicator because the word can also mean metaphorically pagan idolatry. He is also called "godless." The word literally means secular or profane, common. It comes from the word for threshold, something you step on all the time. Esau considered the things of God something to step on, to walk on. They were normal, common everyday things. They had nothing special about them. It is the opposite of the word for Sacred. So God reject him because he rejected God.

Now, how can God possibly take a man like Aaron and make him High Priest, an Old Testament preview of Jesus Christ, but He does. Moses will become a great man of God, an extraordinary Lawgiver, the greatest man of God in the Scriptures outside of Jesus Christ, one with whom God speaks face-to-face. Moses is a mediator between God and his people. Moses offers his life for the people when they rebel. He says to God, "But now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin--and if not, please blot me out from Thy **book** which Thou hast written!" Aaron is a nothing, an idolatrous person. He is the one who makes the golden calf for the people's orgy which almost gets them killed. He deliberately designed it with a graven tool, then lies about having done it, so he's also a liar. He's jealous of his brother, speaks against him. He is a racist, speaking against Moses because he married a Cushite. Aaron's a nothing. So why on earth would God pick a nothing to be a preview of Jesus Christ when He had Moses? The only thing I can suggest is I really don't think God intended, humanly speaking of course, to have Aaron as High Priest. I think Moses insisted upon it by his rebellion. I frankly believe that Jesus Christ, the Apostle and High Priest would have been compared to Moses the Apostle and High Priest of Israel in Hebrews 3, but Moses played around with God just one time too many. When he finally said, "No!" to God that was it. God understands our weaknesses. God understands our fears. God understands our lack of self-worth. All these things He will take into account. But one thing God will never put up with is rebellion. Proof! when He offered the sacrificial system right along with the Law, no sacrifice was offered for sins of what are called the "High Hand." If you

did something in rebellion against the known will of God, you were slain, and there was no recourse. There is no sacrifice for sins of rebellion in the Old Testament. You could confess your sin and go to be with the Lord, but you were slain, and He did that too. He wiped out Achan [Joshua 7]. He wiped out Korah and Dathan for rebellion [Numbers 16] He destroyed families involved. There was no sacrifice they could make. Yes, God understands our problems, our weaknesses, but, my friends, God will not put up with rebellion. Do not say, "No!" to God. You may be disqualified for a beautiful ministry that might have been yours. I don't think Paul was kidding when he had that fear, "I pummel my body," and the word he uses is "bruise." The Greek's boxing gloves were brass knuckles strapped on a leather thong which tore your opponent's face to ribbons. That is the word he uses, "I rip my body to ribbons. I make it my slave, not me its slave lest after I have preached to others I might myself be disqualified." I think he meant what he said. He had a long and fruitful ministry, but he was still afraid he could miss part of it. And I think Moses did. Now, this is an RST, Roe Sanctified Theory. The Bible doesn't say this, but I think I can lead you wisely through the Scripture to the point that it is not an invalid theory. I think it is the real one.

OK let's pick up at verse 18 next week and go on to Chapter 5

**Prayer:**

Father, we just thank you so much for the way Your words of Scripture grip our hearts. What a loving and long suffering God you are and yet a God of holiness, and You never never ever, Father, impugn Your holiness. So we can always know that You are there, that Your standard never fails, and that You are not going to compromise with any sin in our lives.. Therefore, when You dealt with it in Jesus Christ, You dealt with every sin, and You dealt with it perfectly or You couldn't deal with us at all. What a secure feeling that is, Father, to know that all of my sins are dealt with, totally, securely, perfectly and permanently in You. Nothing left over. Thank you so much, Father, for both Your severity and Your grace. Thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

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