**The Book of Exodus**

**Introduction**

**Background**

The name *Exodus* is a Greek word which means exit or departure and occurs in Lk. 9:31 (Heb. 11:22; II Pet. 1:15) referring to the Lord’s *“decease”* (*exodon* [3x]). The *Book of Exodus* received its name from the *LXX* and its name continued in the Vulgate and into English translations. The Hebrew name is *Shemoth* meaning *“names,”* and connects to the *shemoth* or *“the* ***names*** *of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt”* (Gen. 46:8). The Hebrew conjunction *“now”* (*KJV*) or *“and”* connects Exodus with Genesis as its continuation.

**The Author**

The author was *“Moses”* (766x), the one “drawn out” (*mashah*) of the water (Ex. 2:10), as Scripture revealed. He was told to write certain sections of it (Ex. 17:14; 20:22-23; 24:4; 34:4, 27-29). OT writers alluded to the Mosaic authorship (Josh. 1:7; 8:31-32; I Ki. 2:3; Mal. 4:4). NT writers as well attributed Exodus to Moses. For instance Mark attributed Ex. 3:6 to *“the book of Moses”* (Mk. 12:26). See also other writers (Lk. 2:22-23; Jn. 5:46-47; 7:19; Acts 3:22; Rom. 10:5).

**The Date of Writing and the Exodus**

The date of the writing of Exodus occurred obviously during the lifetime of Moses, sometime between his eightieth birthday (Ex. 7:7) and the end of his life at one hundred and twenty (Dt. 34:7).

The biblical date for the Exodus was about 1447/6 BC, based on receiving literally Jeremiah’s statement, saying, *“And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD”* (I Ki. 6:1).Therefore, since Saul and David had forty-year reigns each, Solomon began his reign about 967/6 BC and began building the Temple in 963/2 BC, which harmonizes with 42 generations (about 50 years each = 2100 years (Mt. 1:1-17) from the time of Abraham (2100 BC) to the time of Christ, and allows for the literal times of the Judges (Jdg. 11:26) and of the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel (967-40 = 927- 586 = 341 years).

**The Perspective of Exodus**

After the Noachic Flood, the LORD chose a son of Noah to be His peculiar people, namely *Shem* (“name”) to bear His special name *Jehovah.* He called Abraham and made an unconditional covenant with him that his physical and spiritual descendants would ultimately live in the Promised Land during the Millennium and throughout eternity in the New Jerusalem. The LORD gave him the special piece of prized real estate in Canaan for the descendents to dwell with the LORD in the greatest city Jebus (Jerusalem = “city of peace”) in time and in eternity (Gen. 12:1-3; Rev. 21:1 ff.). The *Book of Exodus* prepared the Jews for their new home!

**The Chiasmus of Exodus**

A. The Presentation of the Person: Moses (Ex. 1:1-6)

B. The Deliverance by Moses (Ex. 1:7-15:21)

C. The Need for Worship (Ex. 15:22-18:27)

D. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 19-24:18)

C.’ The Need for Worship (Ex. 25:1-31:18)

B.’ The Deliverance of Moses (Ex. 32-34)

A. The Presentation of the Person: Messiah (Ex. 35-40:38)

**Chapter One**

**Ex. 1:1-5**

\*The three great themes of Exodus are deliverance, morality, and worship for the LORD’s people. \*Jehovah had promised great increase for the descendents of Abraham (Gen. 12:2; 15:5).

\*Moses began to list the names (*shemoh* [Gen. 46:8]) of the people of the *“Name”* (Gen. 12:8: *Shem > Jehovah* [Ex. 6:3]), the *“children of Israel”* (644x).

\*He started with the households of the eleven sons of Jacob/Israel (since Joseph was already in Egypt) and totaled the descendents as seventy (Gen. 46:26; Acts 7:14).

\*Moses revealed that the three sons of Noah constituted seventy descendents (Gen. 10:1 ff.): Japheth (14x [vv. 2-5]), Ham (30x [vv. 6-20]) and Shem (26x [vv. 21-31) and he confirmed the seventy nations in Dt. 32:8). Perhaps the Lord sent out the seventy to reach the seventy nations (Lk. 10:1).

**Ex. 1:6-7**

\*Moses recorded the death of Joseph (Gen. 50:26 [110 years]) and the other eleven sons and that generation.

\*Nevertheless, the Israelites grew as the LORD had promised. He told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). Likewise He required Noah (Gen. 8:17; 9:1, 7), Abraham (Gen. 17:2-6; 22:17), Isaac (Gen. 26:4) and Jacob (Gen. 28:3, 14; 48:4). This occurred during the 430 hiatus in Egypt (Ex. 12:40-41).

**Ex 1:8-14**

\*The first problem that Israel faced was their size. The new king or Pharaoh did not know of Joseph or his contribution. He may have been Amenhotep I (1546-1525 BC).

\*Moses recorded that the king called the Jews *“the people”* (*`am*) and realized that they were greater than the Egyptians in number and were mightier (i.e., stronger).

\*Pharaoh thought that in time of war the Jews may side with the enemy (vv. 10-11). He decided to use taskmasters to afflict the Israelites. They forced the Jews to construct treasure cities (probably containing weapons in case of an attack), namely Pithom and Raamses. (They did not build the great pyramids!)

\*The more they were afflicted the more Jehovah countered with increase (vv. 12-14). The Egyptians were grieved with the increased Jews as the Jews were grieved with increased rigour!

\*Israel’s bondage was with mortar and brick and working in the fields. They needed a deliverer!

A. The Presentation of the Person: Moses (Ex. 1:1-6)

B. The Deliverance by Moses (Ex. 1:7-15:21)

C. The Need for Worship (Ex. 15:22-18:27)

**D. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 19-24:18)**

C.’ The Need for Worship (Ex. 25:1-31:18)

B.’ The Deliverance of Moses (Ex. 32-34)

A. The Presentation of the Person: Messiah (Ex. 35-40:38)

**Ex. 1:15-16**

\*The preparation of deliverance by Moses was beginning to develop. The LORD allowed for the second problem for the fruitful Israelis which was the extermination of male babies. *“The king of Egypt”* (16x), i.e., (*mitzrayim* [681x] with a dual ending and means “two straits” [i.e., upper and lower straits of Nile] was the son of Ham [Gen. 10:6] and he settled in the land of “two straits”) saw the increase and spoke to the two heads of the Hebrew midwives, *Shiphrah* (“fair”) and *Puah* (“splendid”).

\*He commanded them and obviously wanted them to pass the message along; that as the midwives helped the women with child-birth they were to kill the baby boys. The word *“stools”* (*ha’avnayim* literally “the two stones”) refers to two stones upon which the mother crouched or squatted as she pushed out the baby.

\*The midwives were to kill a boy but allow a daughter to live. This was post-birth abortion dictated by a pagan with the intention of reducing the population. Abortion is murder and is anti*-“be fruitful and multiply.”* Any intentional harm after conception is murder (Ps. 139:13-16 [see Margaret Sanger]).

**Ex. 1:17**

\*The midwives feared God more than they feared man (Prov. 29:25)! They rejected the command of the king and spared the baby boys (Heb. 11:23).

\*The theme of the *“fear of God”* began with Abraham (Gen. 20:11), David claimed he ruled in the *“fear of God”* (II Sam. 23:3), Paul asserted that wicked mankind lacks the *“fear of God”* (Rom. 3:18), and enjoined Christians that the manifestation of Spirit-filled living is the *“fear of God”* (Eph. 5:21).

**Ex. 1:18-19**

\*The king of Egypt demanded accountability from the midwives and accused them of rejecting his command to murder the male babies. Instead, they *“have saved…alive”* (*Piel* or intensive verb *chayah*)!

\*The midwives had an explanation which ***may have been true***. They responded to *Pharaoh* (“large house” [268x]) and contrasted the Hebrew women with the Egyptian women, claiming that they had fast or *“lively”* births and delivered quickly and spared their sons. With so many Jewish women giving birth the midwives were spread thin and could not keep up with the fruitful women!

\*Although the midwives ***may have lied***, deception was acceptable in times of war when the LORD’s people were under attack! For instance, Joshua set up a deceptive military ambush (Josh. 8:2, 4, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21 [7x]), the *“LORD set ambushments”* (II Chr. 20:22), and Michal deceived Saul with the dummy image of David (I Sam. 19:11-17). The Christians feigned to send Paul by sea (*“as it were”*) to deceive the Jews pursuing him (Acts 17:14-15). But, *“Thou shalt not bear false witness”* (Ex. 20:16).

**Ex. 1:20-22**

\*The LORD blessed the midwives with houses and the people with children.

\*Pharaoh wanted all baby boys drowned in the *“river”* (*ye’or* [64x]); i.e., “Nile” (*nahar* > n-h-r > n-h-l > n-l; see also Rhine > r-n > n-l > n-r > r-n). Confound: words by interchange and reversing (Gen. 11:9)!

**Ex. 2:1-2**

\*In the Chiastic flow of the *Book of Exodus* the presentation of the need (1:1-6) and the person of deliverance, Moses (1:7-15:21), began to develop especially in 2:1 ff., with an unknown couple. Within the tribe of Levi a man (*Amram* “great people” [Ex. 6:20]) took and married a woman (*Jochebed* “glory of Jehovah” [Num. 26:59]).

\*Jochebed was one of the fruitful Jewish women who conceived and bore in order Miriam, Aaron (Num. 33:39), and Moses.

\*She saw something special in Moses (v. 10) that he was *“goodly”* (*tov*) as the LORD saw His creation as *“good”* (cf. Gen. 1:31). Stephen said that Moses was *“exceeding fair”* (*asteios to Theo* or “beautiful to God” [Acts 7:20]) and Paul said that he was a *“proper”* (*asteios*) child (Heb. 11:23)! Because Moses was a boy baby, Jochebed hid him for three months from the ruthless Egyptians who wanted him dead!

**Ex. 2:3-4**

\*One should notice the loving plan of believing Jochebed that she had for the protection of her baby as it became apparent that she had a boy (cf. Heb. 11:23). Egyptian women probably were scouting throughout Goshen for violations. Moses recorded four actions of his mother for protecting him: “she took, she daubed, she put, and she laid.”

\*His mother made a small *“ark”* (*tebah* [28x]), like the ark of Noah, from papyrus reeds and covered it with pitch (tar-like substance) to make it watertight. She put it in the weeds near the shore where it would be easily found. Jochebed also put the older sister of Moses near the spot to watch over the baby. Obviously, they knew crocodiles were not prevalent and that royalty would wash in the “sacred” waters of the Nile blessed by the deity *Hapi*.

**Ex. 2:5-6**

\*The Syrian Naaman gave the biblical backdrop of pagans washing in deity-blessed rivers such as *“Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus”* (II Ki. 5:6-12). Likewise, the unnamed “daughter of Pharaoh” came for her daily ablation or washing (*rachatz* > “rinse”) and her attendants spotted the fragile ark in the precarious waters. The princess was concerned and sent her maid to fetch the ark (the LORD saves inhabitants in arks [Heb. 11:7; I Pet. 3:20]!).

\*The Egyptian princess opened up the ark and found a baby boy! Significant in the history of God’s chosen people and the ultimate salvation of the race of Adam was a *“babe”* (*na`ar* = boy) that *“wept”* (*bacah* [114x]). *“Jesus wept”* (Jn. 11:35)!

\*Her response saved the baby and the nation: *“she had compassion* (*chamal* [41x]) *on him”* > (Mal. 3:17). The princess knew her father’s command to slay Hebrew *“children”* (*yeled* = male) and yet because Moses cried, her God-given female emotions overcame her fear of the pharaoh.

**Ex. 2:7-10**

\*The Lord honored the faith of Jochebed and Miriam as the sister inquired of the princess about finding a Jewish wet-nurse to nurse instead of the princess. Obviously, the princess wanted to keep the baby boy! She instructed Miriam thusly, who retrieved Jochebed to nurse her own baby!

\*Furthermore, Jochebed would receive wages for nursing her baby boy! The blessings of the LORD are *More* than sufficient (Prov. 10:22; Eph. 1:7)!

\*The godly family raised the son and the princess adopted him and gave him the name *“Moses”* because she had drawn him out (*mashah* [3x] not an Egyptian “loan” word) of the Nile (cf. Heb. 11:24-27)!

**Ex. 2:11-14**

\*The providential protection and preparation for the man Moses jumped from his birth, nativity, youth, and now manhood (cf. Ex. 1:7-15:21) in the swift narrative. Somehow and at sometime Moses became aware of his Jewish roots: *“****By faith*** *Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.* ***By faith*** *he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible”* (Heb. 11:24-27). How long could he be bought out by Egypt? Young Christians query how long can I be bought out by secular “Egypt”?

\*At forty, he killed an Egyptian and expected the Jews to understand that he was their deliverer, but instead was rebuked for the killing of the Egyptian, and therefore fled (Acts 7:21-29). He had seen the burdens upon the Jews by the Egyptians and desired to correct the injustices. Upon killing the Egyptian he buried him in the sand (killing an enemy in *“war”* was not murder [Dt. 7:2; 13:15]).

\*Upon seeing two Jews fighting he asked the culprit and was rebuffed with questioning if he were prince and judge over Israel—which he was ultimately! Challenged about a second killing, Moses recognized that the deed was known and feared for his life.

**Ex. 2:15**

\*The knowledge that Moses killed an Egyptian reached Pharaoh who was keen on watching this adopted and prominent Jew. He wanted to slay this betrayer apparently because Pharaoh understood the influence of Moses as potential leader.

\*Moses left Goshen and went to the Arabian Peninsula of the Land of Midian (cf. Gen. 25:2) and finally rested at a well. He feared the king at this point but he did not fear Pharaoh when he brought the Jews out of Egypt (Heb. 11:27). There is no discrepancy!

**Ex. 2:16-19**

\*Moses ran into another injustice. The seven daughters of the priest of Midian (*Reuel* [10x] > “friend of God” also *Jethro* [9x] > “his abundance” [see Ex. 3:1]) drew water for their father’s flocks but were confronted by shepherds. Moses stepped in and *“helped”* (*yasha`* [205x] = *“saviour”*) the daughters and watered their flocks. He finished their watering task quickly.

\*Apparently, the daughters and the shepherds thought he was an Egyptian since he was still wearing Egyptian clothes. He probably scared the shepherds and impressed the daughters!

**Ex. 2:20-22**

\*Jethro wanted to meet Moses and the daughters called him for bread. Moses married *Zipporah* (3x) or literally female bird (“Lady Bird”). She birthed *Gershom* ([14x] literally “a stranger here”) after Moses’ own testimony *“I have been a stranger in a strange land,”* and *Eliezer* (I Chr. 23:15).

**Ex. 2:23-25**

\*Finally Pharaoh died, and in the mean time the Jews were still in bondage and they sighed and cried to the Lord for deliverance (1446 BC). He began to prepare the people for a deliverer while He prepared the deliverer for deliverance! Moses needed forty years of mundane servitude for preparation as the great deliverer. At 40 he fled Egypt (Acts 7:30), at 80 he delivered Israel from Egypt into the wilderness (Acts 7:36), and at 120 he died before entering the Promise Land (Dt. 34:7). Moses: 1526-1406 BC. The LORD remembered the patriarchs and delivered Israel (Gen. 12:1-3).

**Ex. 3:1**

\*For the next forty years Moses (829x [Ex. > Rev.]) was faithful in his task of caring for the flock of someone else (a priest) in the desert! Although he had sensed his responsibility to deliver the Jews from Egypt, he was now taking care of sheep and goats in obscurity!

\*After eighty years Moses had became knowledgeable in the ways of Egypt and in the ways of desert life! For what could the LORD be preparing him? For what task is the Lord preparing you, young person?

\*From Pharaoh’s palace to the backside of the desert the LORD wanted to meet with His servant at Horeb (“desert” [17x] = Sinai [Dt. 5:2]), *“the mountain of God”* (Ex. 4:27; 18:5; I Ki. 19:8).

**Ex. 3:2**

\*The Jews sought and received miraculous signs to accredit the will of the LORD (I Cor. 1:22). The *“angel of the LORD”* (Christophany) appeared to Moses as a flame (Dt. 4:24; Heb. 12:29) in the midst of a burning bush. The bush burned but was not consumed. Why some worthless shrub? Or why some *“still small voice”* (cf. I Ki. 19:12). The Lord begins to deal with His saints in some inexplicable way when they are in the place of God’s presence with His truth (i.e., Baptist assembly).

**Ex. 3:3-4**

\*The narrative seemed to start slow (“I will now turn…”) and became very developed. Moses remembered the details of his thought process and actions (cf. Acts 7:30-36)!

\*The LORD saw him turned and called him from the midst of the bush, attracting his attention with the double *“Moses, Moses”* (cf. Gen. 22:11; 46:2; I Sam. 3:19; Lk. 10:41; 22:31; Acts 9:4). The duplication was for identification and urgency! He responded *“Here am I.”*

**Ex. 3:5-6**

\*The LORD began teaching Moses that the approach to the presence of Jehovah was sanctified (Ex. 40:12, 34-38) and that the mountain of God was “holy ground.”

\*Jehovah identified Himself as the God of the *“father”* (collective singular) of patriarchs about whom Moses would know from his godly Jewish parents. Moses feared to look at the representation of God as the burning bush.

**Ex. 3:7-8**

\*The LORD began to unfold His pity, plan, and person to deal with the problem of the Jews. The family of Jacob has now become *“my people”* as a *“nation”* (Ex. 19:6)! The LORD had not forgotten the affliction, cry, and sorrows of Israel (cf. Heb. 13:5-6).

\*The Lord elaborated on His special plan for His special people. He personally would come down to deliver them from Egypt to the good land, which was large, with milk and honey, a choice piece of real-estate, inhabited by the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (in Jerusalem!).

**Ex. 3:9-10**

\*Jehovah repeated His burden for the cry of Israel because of oppression of Egypt to Moses. The Lord wanted a human vessel to carry out the heavenly vision for deliverance. Who would volunteer for this audacious plan?

\*There was only one man in human history that had been sufficiently prepared, and that man was *“thee”*! The plan is simple: go to Pharaoh and deliver the Lord’s people! Any questions! Moses had the divine command and the presence of Jehovah. These were all that Moses needed.

**Ex. 3:11**

\*After 40 years of shepherding sheep and goats, Moses apparently thought he was a “nobody,” and his zeal to deliverer the Jews had waned and basically was gone (2:13-14)! The LORD is not looking for “hot shots” who have all the answers!

\*Moses had five protests against the will of the LORD (cf. 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13)! He set the stage for future servants to resist the Lord’s will for one’s life (with “clever/irrefutable” excuses! Can’t means won’t; challenge the LORD! See how that works out!) > Isa. 6:5; Jer. 1:5-7; 20:7-9; Amos 3:8; 7:14-15;

\*First, repeating the divine commission, either in fear or false humility, Moses said, *“Who am I”* (II Cor. 2:16). Consider the magnitude of the call and the insufficiency of the vessel!

**Ex. 3:12**

\*The LORD had a ready two-fold response: His presence (*“I will be with thee”* [Gen. 26:3; 31:3; Dt. 31:23; Josh. 1:5; Jdg. 6:16]) and a *“token”* (i.e., sign > “burning bush” [?]) or something more on Mount Sinai? > Ex. 24:9-10!

**Ex. 3:13**

\*The 2nd objection was the authority by which he would lead Israel. Although the name Jehovah was known by Adam and Eve (Gen. 4:1) and Cain and his descendants (Gen. 4:26), the Jews would apparently want to know the meaning of His name in their present circumstance (cf. Ex. 6:3; 9:27-28). \*Egypt had their “gods” (*‘elohiym*) but the LORD was the “LORD of LORDS” (Rev. 19:16).

**Ex. 3:14-15**

\*The LORD responded with two answers: 1) the meaning of Jehovah, and 2) the expansion of v. 13, and including the past and future reality of His Person.

\*The proper name *Jehovah* is built off of the Hebrew “to be” verb *hayah* (74x) and means literally “the ever being One.” The *KJV* rendering “I AM THAT I AM” is the exact and perfect rendering of the Hebrew text. It prepared for the future *“I am”* expressions of the Lord Jesus of the Greek *ego eimi* (Jn. 6:48; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 18:6).

\*He expanded on “The LORD God of your fathers” and promised this name as a *“memorial”* for ever to the Jews. Satan has attacked the memorial name *Jehovah*, replacing it with the non-biblical name “Yahweh” made up by apostates in the middle of the 19th century.

\*Ryrie gives the common heretical argument for replacing *Jehovah* with Yahweh, saying, “The LORD (Heb., Yahweh) was not pronounced in later years by pious Jews for fear of violating the command in Ex. 20:7. Instead, they substituted the word *Adonai* (Lord) whenever Yahweh occurred.” **NO**, they did not! The last writing prophet Malachi (c. 450 BC) used Jehovah in 1:1. Ryrie and the “scholars’ union”

have rejected the Masoretic Hebrew and follow the unpointed Hebrew, extra biblical sources, & *LXX*!

\*Bible Critics have alleged that Jews followed the teaching or sentiments of the “pre-first century *LXX*” (*sic*) which reads “he that **names** the name of the Lord, let him die the death” (Lev. 24:16). Therefore Jews substitute “Hashem” (“the name”) or “G-D” for the name Jehovah. The redeemed Bride of Christ will sing throughout eternity *Alleluia* (literally “praise Jehovah” [Rev. 19:1, ff.)!

**Ex. 3:16**

\*The LORD gave additional detail to the plan for deliverance, saying *“go, and gather”* the elders (heads of 12 tribes) and tell them of the visit of the *LORD God* (*Jehovah ‘Elohiym*= God the Son) and Jesus’ desire to deliver them from Egypt for all that they have done (cf. Gen. 50:24).

**Ex. 3:17**

\*Moses was to deliver the message from Jehovah to the elders and have them accompany him before Pharaoh. The plan was simple: Go to Pharaoh and deliver Israel (v. 10). Moses and the elders were the human vessels but the LORD would bring them out of the affliction of Egypt!

\*The LORD had already promised a glorious future to the descendents of Abraham about their own piece of real estate: from the Nile to the Euphrates (Gen. 15:18-21). Although there were the dreaded “ites” in the Land, it flowed with milk and honey (Ex. 3:8).

**Ex. 3:18**

\*The LORD had prepared the people and the elders for deliverance (v. 7) and assured Moses of their support as they confronted Pharaoh. The Lord gave them the message of authority (*“LORD God of the Hebrews”* [God the Son]), the request (*“let us go”*), the details (*“three days’ journey”*), and the reason (to “sacrifice to the LORD our God”). Would the elders go back to Egypt? Apparently, they would!

**Ex. 3:19**

\*The LORD knew that the elders would hearken to Moses but that Pharaoh would not! In fact, Pharaoh would not respond initially to the mighty hand of the LORD until His ten plagues were accomplished.

\*Jehovah forewarned Moses and the elders about Pharaoh’s rejection so that they would not misconstrue the divine call (cf. Amos 3:7)! The call of God is not about immediate success, but about putting forth truth to an audience that might reject (cf. Ex. 5:22-23). This was the beginning of the “Jeremiah Syndrome” (Jer. 20:7-9; cf. also Isa. 55:11)!

**Ex. 3:20-22**

\*The LORD promised to stretch out his mighty hand in the judgments on the plagues, allowing Pharaoh to resist the wonders (plagues) which were against his deities (Ex. 12:12; Num. 33:4). The mighty hand of God will free the Israelites! The promise of victory after 400 years of enslavement was about to be fulfilled (Gen. 15:13; cf. Acts 7:6). The Lord repeated patriarchal promises to encourage Moses.

\*In Israel’s departure from Egypt, the people would *“come out with great substance”* (cf. Gen. 15:14). As a victorious people, the Jews would *“borrow”* or plunder defeated Egypt spoiling her to the extent that the women would take the fine jewelry and deck out their children (Ex. 11:2-3; 12:35-36).

**Ex. 4:1**

\*With the 400 year hiatus of no divine revelation, Moses therefore had more concerns about his divine call. His third protest required credentials for the unbelief of the people of Israel. He anticipated that the people would deny any divine appearance of the LORD. The extensive and detailed call of Moses allowed the audience and Moses to recognize and Jehovah to reveal the great historical and eschatological significance of Israel’s exodus!

\*The first half of this chapter divides into three parts: 1) The Powerful Signs for confirmation (vv. 1-9), 2) The Problem Solving of Moses’ speech (vv. 10-12), and 3) The Provisional Servant of Aaron (vv. 13-17).

**Ex. 4:2-5**

\*The LORD accredited His prophets with signs and wonders (Dt. 13:1-3) and He gave the prophet Moses (Dt. 18:15; 34:10) the first of three signs. The *“rod”* was a shepherd’s staff of authority.

\*He cast the rod to the ground and it became a *“serpent”* (*nachash* [Gen. 3:1]), and he caught it by the tail and it became his rod, showing authority over the demonic Egyptians to the Jews (see Ex. 7:15)!

**Ex. 4:6-7**

\*Jehovah continued to deal with His reluctant servant who had five protests against the will of the LORD (cf. 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13)! Who am I?, what authority?, what credentials?, can’t speak!, and send Aaron! The gracious God gave *three signs* for credentials to Moses including the **first sign** of the staff/serpent miracle (the Shepherd is superior to the serpent!).

\*The **second sign** was that of *“leprosy”* (6x) which turned his hand *“leprous as snow”* (cf. also Lev. 13:44; Num. 12:10). Leprosy affected skin and health, making garments and houses unclean!

\*As he put his hand in his bosom and pulled it out and then put it in again, the LORD showed Moses that he had miraculous power to inflict judgment and/or restore deliverance, through *plagues* (Ex. 9:28)!

**Ex. 4:8-9**

\*The Lord recognized the response of the Jewish brethren and anticipated their rejection with His **third sign** of affirmation. The *“voice”* of Moses declaring *I AM* sent me would have the affirmation of *three miracles* of establishing testimony or witnesses that Jehovah had indeed called and sent Moses. \*Jehovah’s *three voices* of miracles substantiated *His voice* from the burning bush calling Moses!

\*The third sign was the miracle of turning the water of the Nile into blood on the dry land. The blood of the innocent male babies drowned in the Nile (cf. 1:22) witnessed to their murder. Jehovah reminded that Abel’s blood *“crieth unto me from the ground”* (Gen. 4:10)! The first plague was judgment on the Egyptians for their infanticide (Ex. 7:17-25) and the repudiation of the Nile deity *Hapi*.

**Ex. 4:10**

\*Nevertheless, Moses had the 4th excuse about his voice, albeit speaking *eloquently* with *ready speech* and a *quick tongue*. The prophet Moses with the gift of prophecy attempted to excuse himself, perhaps challenged by his spiritual gift, saying he was *“not eloquent”* (“not a man of words”). Furthermore, he argued wordily, *“neither heretofore, nor since”* (literally “that also from yesterday also from three days ago”).

\*Moses admitted to Jehovah that he was *“thy servant”* but that he just could not serve in that capacity!

\*In addition, he rapidly claimed he was *“slow of speech”* (“heavy mouth”) and eloquently averred that he was *“of a slow tongue”* (“heavy tongue”). In contradiction, Stephen observed that Moses *“was mighty in words and in deeds”* (Acts 7:22)!

\*The servant of the LORD feared he could not readily answer objections from the Jews and Pharaoh, although he had rapid fire responses to Jehovah! *“Who is sufficient for these things?”* (II Cor. 2:16; 3:5; 12:9). Who better than Moses to speak to Pharaoh since he was experienced in the royal court?!

**Ex. 4:11-12**

\*The LORD queried Moses in response his 4th objection! The man Moses was the manifestation of the vibrating words of the Creator God who made man to function as a servant. Who created the mouth? Obviously, Jehovah made the mouth, ears, and eyes of fallen man, so that even with adamic disabilities he may serve in some capacity. The Lord is not interested in “golden tongues,” but in faithful servants!

\*The Lord had an answer to all four objections. The issue was not about the power of man but the power of the Messiah. Moses became the *case study* in refusing the divine call of God! How will this turn out!

**Ex. 4:13**

\*The former burden of proud Moses to be a “deliverer” of his brethren was gone! Finally, Moses revealed the real reason—**rebellion**! Literally, he said “by the hand of anyone else send’!

**Ex. 4:14-17**

\*Jehovah’s call and commission to Moses was audible and clear: out of the miraculous burning bush came the clear plan to use Moses, the former wannabe “deliverer” (2:11-14), to go to Pharaoh and deliver the Jews! After the Lord’s servant said *“Here am I”* (3:4; 4:10), heart rebellion began! “Clever” Moses had 5 solid and irrefutable excuses for refusal (cf. 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13)!

\*The LORD mercifully exposed the rebellious heart of Moses and *“kindled”* (literally “burned”) *“anger”* (literally “had long nostrils of His nose”) against His “servant” Moses!

\*Rebellion brought consequences! 1) Eloquent and quick tongued Moses would still have to go to Egypt and speak (no more excuses or discussion!). 2) His brother Aaron the *“Levite”* (26x) was coming to meet Moses, but he would have the honor of the Levitical priesthood (I Chr. 23:13), and not Moses! 3) Aaron would have a glad heart (to serve)! 4) God would speak to Moses who would speak to Aaron who would speak to the people. 5) Moses would still have to perform signs with his rod (4:2)!

\*Moses would be the representation of God (cf. Ex. 7:1) and Aaron would be the representation of the mouth of Moses. Furthermore, the LORD would teach them what to say!

**Ex. 4:18**

**\***The battle of “wills” was over! “Moses went.” How profitable is refusing the Lord’s will?!

\*He went to Jethro and requested leave to go to Egypt and check on the existence of the Jews. After serving 40 years and now 80 years old, Moses found Jethro ready to relinquish him and said, *“Go in peace.”* In the sovereignty of Jehovah He worked in the hearts of Aaron and Jethro to execute his plan with Moses. All the principals in the scenario were in harmony with the divine plan including Moses!

**Ex. 4:19-20**

\*Leaving Sinai and returning to Midian for approval, the Lord told Moses that his enemies had died.

\*Showing respect to Jethro, he took his wife Zipporah (Lady Bird) and sons Gershom and Eliezer and returned to Egypt with his ordinary rod which Jehovah would empower!

**Ex. 4:21-23**

\*The LORD rehearsed the essential plan and the reaction of Pharaoh. Moses was to go to Egypt, meet Pharaoh, and do wonders in his presence with the rod. Nevertheless, the Lord would *“harden his heart”* and he would not let the people go. The expression *“I will harden”* (*chazaq* [290x]) would result when Jehovah brings spiritual truth into all men’s lives to see if they will “strengthen” their unbelief or their faith. Ten times Jehovah hardened his heart, and ten times Pharaoh hardened his heart (e.g., Ex. 8:15). The Lord told Joshua to *“be strong”* (*chazaq*) in faith and cross the Jordan (Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18).

\*He was to claim for Jehovah that all of “Israel is my son” and they are *“my firstborn”* or pre-eminent one. The Gnostic Pharaoh no doubt thought that he was the pre-eminent “son of the gods” of Egypt (Ex. 12:12)! The firstborn had all rights, privileges, and responsibilities. David (Ps. 89:26-27), NK (Jer. 31:9), and Jesus (Rom 8:29) are called the LORD’s firstborn!

\*Pharaoh was warned to free the Lord’s firstborn or He would slay Pharaoh’s firstborn (Ex.11:5).

**Ex. 4:24-26**

\*Rebellious Moses was also disobedient! He disobeyed the command to circumcise Gershom (Gen. 17:10). How could Jehovah deal with His firstborn if his servant Moses would not obey with Gershom?

While on his way to Egypt at the inn, the Lord wanted to slay Moses. Disgusted Zipporah recognized the peril of disobedience and circumcised their firstborn to spare the life of her *“bloody husband”* Moses.