

THE STORY OF MOSES



**PART 5: REPENTANCE, MORE THAN
JUST A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION**

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EXODUS 4:18-31

NIV

¹⁸ Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Let me return to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.” Jethro said, “Go, and I wish you well.”

¹⁹ Now the Lord had said to Moses in Midian, “Go back to Egypt, for all those who wanted to kill you are dead.” ²⁰ So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand.

EXODUS 4:18-31

NIV

²¹ The Lord said to Moses, “When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. ²² Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son, ²³ and I told you, “Let my son go, so he may worship me.” But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.’”

EXODUS 4:18-31

NIV

²⁴ At a lodging place on the way, the Lord met Moses and was about to kill him. ²⁵ But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. ²⁶ So the Lord let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

EXODUS 4:18-31

NIV

²⁷ The Lord said to Aaron, “Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. ²⁸ Then Moses told Aaron everything the Lord had sent him to say, and also about all the signs he had commanded him to perform.

EXODUS 4:18-31

NIV

²⁹ Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, ³⁰ and Aaron told them everything the Lord had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, ³¹ and they believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

REPENTANCE

...MORE THAN A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

- Moses has been protected, prepared called and brought to a place of faith.
- He is now eager to get on with the task he has been called for.
- Moses now faces make or break as God focuses in on his life.



REPENTANCE

...MORE THAN A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

1. What was the problem?
2. How does this apply to us today?



WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

- One of Moses' sons had not been circumcised, provoking God's anger.
 - *"...the LORD met him and sought to put him to death."*
- Why was circumcision so important to God?



WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

Genesis 17:9-11 it says:

Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. ¹⁰ This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.”

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

A few verses later in Genesis 17:13-14 it says:

“...¹³ Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

LET'S SPECULATE...

- Why did Moses choose not to circumcise one of his sons?
 - He had been away from his people for over 40 years. No longer relevant?
 - Maybe he circumcised his first son and Zipporah found it abhorrent?
 - Maybe it was a battle Moses didn't want to fight a second time?
 - Maybe after failing to lead his people 40 years earlier, he never imagined going back?

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

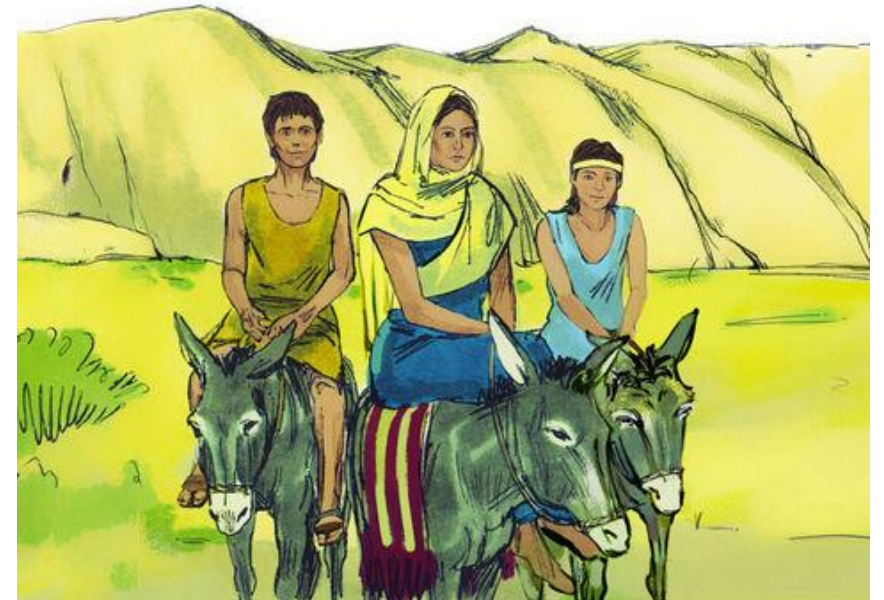
CIRCUMCISION – MORE THAN AN OUTWARD ACT ON THE BODY

- Deuteronomy 30:6 *The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.*
- Jeremiah 4:4 *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts, you people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or my wrath will flare up and burn like fire because of the evil you have done.*

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?

CIRCUMCISION – MORE THAN AN OUTWARD ACT ON THE BODY

- At some point after this encounter with God, Zipporah is sent home with her sons (Exodus 18:2)
- True circumcision of the heart can be sacrificial.



HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO US TODAY?

- God still requires circumcision of the heart
- Romans 2:28-29 (NLT) - ²⁸ *For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. ²⁹ No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.*

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO US TODAY?

- Is there something I need to put right with God before moving forward?
- Am I avoiding or putting off something that is important to God?
- Does God keep bringing me back to something but I keep resisting?
- Have I simply let things slip because of my circumstances?
- Have my past failures caused me to think God can't use me anymore?
- Is there something in my life, good or bad, that needs to be laid down?

SUMMARY

- At the beginning of 2023 it's time to reflect.
 - What is God saying to me?
 - Is there anything in my life that God needs to deal with?
- Circumcision of the heart means...
 - holding nothing back, hiding nothing from God
 - total surrender, all in, total commitment, open hands and open heart.
- What is your response?

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

- Would God have challenged Moses over his uncircumcised son if he had chosen not to step into what God was calling him to do?
- If you don't want God's challenge, remain on the periphery; but who knows what could have been?
- It's time to pursue the Holy Spirit's presence - "*God, unless you go with us, don't send us*".
- God wants to go with us, but on his terms not ours