

The unlikely servant (*Moses*)

1. As the book of Exodus opens, God is blessing Israel in Egypt and Pharaoh is doing everything he can to thwart that blessing. He has enslaved the Israelites, putting them to work making bricks and doing everything he can to break their spirits. God though is always working for good ('what you intended for harm, God intended for good'). **How do these circumstances reveal God's (sovereign and even humorous) ability to override and thwart man's evil plans?**

- Pharaoh's command in 1:22 and Moses' mom's action in 2:3
- The arrangements made by Moses' sister (2:7-9)
- Pharaoh's daughter's role in the whole affair (2:1-10)

2. The circumstances of Moses' birth suggest that there is something special about him, and yet in many ways, he is not the divinely appointed redeemer that one might expect. First off, God responded to Israel's cry for help by sending a baby? That's His plan for rescue?! Why not a military war lord? **In what way is Moses' birth similar to Jesus'? What does this suggest about God's way of doing things?**

3. Moses' 'early career' further suggests that he is an unlikely candidate for the position of 'redeemer and mediator.' **How does his first mediation go?** (See Exodus 2:11-14).

4. At the burning bush, Moses shows himself to be an unlikely servant of God. Five times (!) he resists God's call to action: 3:11, 3:13, 4:1, 4:10 and 4:13. (Maybe he's thinking back to Exodus 2:11-14). Look at God's response to him though, especially 3:11-12 and 4:10-12.

- **What assurances does God give Moses?**
- **Does it encourage you to know that even Moses was reluctant to serve?**
- **How can God's promises here encourage us as we serve Him today?**

5. One of Moses' 'concerns' (excuses?) is that people will want to know who has sent him.

- **Who does God say He is (3:14)?**
- **How is He connected to the people of Israel (3:6, 15, 16; see also 2:24 and 4:5)?**
- **How is this related to the Abrahamic covenant?** (See Genesis 12:1-3).

6. In Exodus 3:16-22, God lays out His rescue plan. **What exactly is He going to do when He rescues His people?**

"I-AM-WHO-I-AM"

"The force is not simply that God is or that God is present but that God will be faithfully God for them... God will be God with and for the people at all times and places. The formulation suggests a divine faithfulness to self: where God is being God, God will be the kind of God God is. Israel need not be concerned about divine arbitrariness or capriciousness. God can be counted on to be who God is; God will be faithful" (Terence Fretheim, *Exodus* [Interpretation], 63).

7. Moses eventually became a great leader of God's people, but great as he was, he anticipated someone even greater than him. Look at Deuteronomy 18:18 (also quoted in Deuteronomy 18:15, Acts 3:22 and Acts 7:37 and implied in John 1:45). **Who is this 'one yet to come?' In what ways is He like Moses?**

8. While Moses is a little like Jesus, he's also a lot like us. He models a life of faith. Read Moses' entry in the 'Hebrews Faith Hall of Fame' (Hebrews 11:24-26). **What does he teach us about living by faith?**