



Series: Exodus: Out of Egypt

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Text: Exodus 4:1-17

Title: What if God doesn't need you?

INTRO

- What's up NE
- Man, y'all are my people
- Y'all ready to dive in

- I want to start with a **thought experiment**
 - if you would close your eyes
 - Consider this question
 - **Who do you want to be?**
 - **In a perfect world who are you**
 - are you **strong**?
 - strong enough to generally **determine the outcomes** of your life
 - are you progressively **becoming stronger** as you target and eliminate your weaknesses?
 - Are you **Fearless**?

- Becoming more and more **secure in your future** as you overcome your past in innovative ways
- are you **facing your failure** and plotting an alternate course to ensure you don't fail again?

- Now Ponder with me
 - Who are you **now**?
 - **...Strong**
- or are you **Fragile**
 - easily blown off course by **Winds of circumstance** and **gust of depression**
 - are you deathly **afraid of who you are becoming**?
 - Because you were keenly aware of who you have been
- are you **weak**?
 - a **compilation** of your **inadequacies and failures**
 - terrified that people will **see your weakness** and **determine your value** accordingly

- What are you to do with the **gap between**?



- Who You Are... and who you want to be?
 - he needs **my efforts** to accomplish his **purposes**
- Who are you?
 - Strong or weak
 - Fearless of fragile...
 - are you a combination of it all seeing in between Triumph and failure... who are you
- Now open your eyes and consider...Who does God need you to be
 - does he need you to be **powerful**?
 - Does he want you to be **frail**?
- Or let me ask it more like this
 - **what does God need from you?**
- You know how I would typically answer that question
 - I would say that he needs me to be strong
 - to overcome my sin
 - he needs **my Ingenuity** to bring about his **kingdom**
- But let us consider what we said last week
 - if God is all-powerful
 - All knowing
 - Almighty
- if God is Holy
 - Sovereign
 - Immanent
 - Eternal...
- then why would he need me to also be strong?
- So then... does God need for us to be
 - Powerful
 - Innovative
 - And fearless
- or is that what we need from ourselves
- Today I want to ask us a **question**
 - And it's a scary question
- Today I want to ask
 - **What if God doesn't need us**



- ...Strong
- ...Sturdy
- ...At All

● **What if God doesn't need us** that's the title for today

- In this sermon I want to chase down two answers
- 1) If God doesn't need us... **He can work out our baggage AS he uses us**
- And If God doesn't need us... **He can work through your weakness for the sake of your good his glory**

- So, let's PRAY and dive into the text and see how we arrive here

GOD doesn't need you

- So, before we answer the question... What **if God doesn't need you**
 - we must **first answer** the question
 - Does God need you
- Here in verse 1, we are picking up in the middle of a conversation

- Last week first half
- last week we learned that Moses was minding **his business**
- As an assistant Shepherd
- when he stumbled upon a **bush** that was set on fire yet not consumed

- The text tells us that the angel of the Lord saw that Moses turned aside
 - and called his name
- and what we have learned in the conversation to this point is that
 - God has Heard the groanings of the people of Israel
 - he has **remembered his Covenant**
 - he **sees the people**
 - he **knows their pain**
 - and he **knows exactly what** he's going to do about it.
- And I want us to review the conversation
 - ...**See just how serious God** is about freeing the people
 - V7, I have seen heard and known the suffering of my people



- And he says in verse 7 I have come down to deliver them out of Egypt and bring them to a good and broad land
- V9 behold the Cry of the people have come to me I have seen their oppression
- And then God extends **this gracious invitation** to Moses
 - I will send you
 - In other words
 - I have heard
 - I have seen
 - I have known
 - I Have come
 - and I want you to come with me
 - Moses responds who am I that I should go to pharaoh
 - And God responds
 - Moses Relax you're going with me
- And so, the conversation goes on
 - God tells him his name
 - God's name is super dope

■ Last week's sermon I AM

- Anyway, conversation continues ...God continues on the **same line of thinking**
 - Saying in v16 I have observed what's being done to the people
 - I promise I will bring you up out of the affliction of the land of Egypt
 - to a **different and better** land
 - A land flowing with milk and honey
- Then God turns to Moses and says Moses when you tell the people of Israel this
 - THEY will listen to you
 - I will make sure of it
- Pharaoh won't listen at first
 - I'm going to have to **twist his arm**
 - I will **stretch out my hand** and strike Egypt
 - I will do **wonders** among you
- And believe it or not
 - you will **plunder** Egypt on your way out



- God is like Moses this thing that I am calling you to
 - it's going to be **awesome**
 - So, go... I will be with you, and you will be with me
 - And that's the end of Ch 3
- What I want to draw our attention to saints
 - is that this is clearly a work of God
 - How many times does God say...? **I WILL**
 - Moses is **kind of just along** for the ride
 - His **primary responsibility** will be to **trust God**
- And so can we conclude that...
 - God didn't need Moses to free the people of Israel
 - And if he didn't need MOSES
 - he doesn't need you
 - And he doesn't need me
- There's something so **beautifully freeing** about not being needed by God
- his sufficiency means
 - that his dealings with us are not flowing from a place of desperation or a place of necessity
 - rather a place of Desire and grace

- That's where this whole thing is going
 - **What if God doesn't need us is a scary question**
 - **to be needed** is to be **valued**
 - To be needed is to **secure one's position**
 - if God doesn't need us, why does he
 - **engage** with us
 - **deal** with us
 - **put up** with us at all
 - Ohh friend it must be because he wants us
 - And so, with that backdrop we get to our first point
- If God doesn't need us... He can work out *our* Baggage AS he uses us**
- Let's pick back up the conversation in verse 1



Then Moses answered, “But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you.’ ”

- I think the CSB translates this a little more accurately by **phrasing it as a question**
 - What if they won’t believe me and will not obey me but say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you?’”
- Now whether this is a question or a statement it directly contradicts what God just told him.
- Looking at verse 18 of chapter 3
 - And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us;
- Apparently, Moses was doing that thing
 - you know when someone's talking and you're not really listening
 - you're just waiting to give your rebuttal
- The God of the universe is in his present
 - making Moses promises about the future
 - but Moses is stuck in the fears of his past

- God has promised
 - I will do it
 - and Moses’ responses
 - but what if I let you down again
- Imagine you're watching the filming of a movie
 - and this movie has the greatest **director** of all time
 - the greatest **story writer** of all time
 - the greatest **lead actor** of all time
 - and therefore, will be without a doubt the greatest movie ever created
- But as you're watching the making of This film
 - there is an extra
 - someone with barely even a speaking role
 - and he is slowing the production of the movie because he keeps yelling cut
- can you see it
 - Cut I think my shoe is untied
 - Cut I’m not sure if you're filming my good side
 - Cut what if I forget my line
- This is Moses



- and this is you and I
- forgetting the role, we play
- God is the Author
 - Director
 - and climax of all of human history
 - We don't need to yell cut
 - He's got things under control
 - Only question ...Will we trust him?
- the issue For Moses was
 - Moses feared as if he had a lead role
 - He yelled cut
 - Because he thought it depended on him
 - He feared something
- A **deep dive** into the text shows us **what's really going on** here

Then Moses answered, "But behold, **THEY** will not believe me or listen to my voice, for **THEY** will say, 'The Lord did not appear to **YOU**.'"

2 The Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." **3** And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So, he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it.

- By the way this was the moment historians concluded that Moses was black
- **Black tendencies** on full display
- he saw a stick turn into a snake, and he took off
- he didn't ask any questions
- I digress

4 But the Lord said to Moses, "Put out your hand and catch it by the tail"—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand—

- And why is God doing this

5 "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**." **6** Again, the Lord said to him, "Put your hand inside your cloak." [a] And he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous [b] like snow. **7** Then God said, "Put your hand back inside your cloak." So, he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh.

- And why does God do this

8 "If **THEY** will not believe **YOU**," God said, "or listen to the first sign, **THEY** may believe the latter sign. **9** If **THEY** will not believe even these two signs or listen to **YOUR** voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the



dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

- Do yall see this
 - 3 signs ... 1 purpose... all that... THEY may believe
- But why does God go to such lengths
 - God said I will I will I will
 - And somehow the conversation has shifted to being about THEY
- And who is they?
 - They are the people of Israel
 - Like isn't it crazy that pharaoh isn't even mentioned in this section
 - Moses isn't pressed about Pharaoh
 - He's pressed about the people of Israel
 - He's pressed about they
- But why do they matter so much
- let's unpack this
 - Moses is a Hebrew Egyptian
 - Who had been rejected by his people

- After he went out on a limb and committed murder on their behalf
- Needless to say, he had baggage
- Baggage that prevented him from believing THEY would ever accept him
- You see Moses cries out to God, they won't believe me
 - Because in the **back of his mind** he is **replaying the words THEY** said to him in chapter 2
 - when he was trying to stop a fight
 - Trying to fit in
 - “Who made you a prince and a judge over us?
 - You ain't one of us bro...
 - (BOOCK) Baggage
- His baggage was heavy
 - The weight of his failure
 - Pressure of his people
 - The burden of his past
 - The disapproval of THEY



-
- THEY represented his identity crisis
 - Am I Egyptian or Hebrew?
 - They represent his greatest pain
 - Rejection by his own
 - They represented his greatest failure
 - Prince/
 - murderer
 - exile
 - They said you don't belong
 - **and he believed them**
 - And so, when God came along
 - with the work for him to do
 - he said...
 - I am too old
 - Too Egyptian
 - Too irrelevant
 - I have too much ... baggage
 - **they won't believe**
 - But let's look at the graciousness of Gods response
 - God starts in chi 3...THEY will believe you
 - But Moses is like Nahh
 - And so, God gave him three miracles
 - For the faith of the people
 - and for the faith of MOSES
 - With each Miracle God is proven to be **powerful and trustworthy**
 - God has **graciously coaxing** Moses out of **unbelief**
 - beckoning him to take a step of trust
 - Moses was petrified to return back to his people
 - But God refuses to let him stay there
 - Because here is what the Lord knows
 - He knows **he can work out his baggage as he uses him**
 - And he has the **Luxury** to do so because the **success of the mission does not** depend on him
-



- It depends on God
- What might God be calling you to do
 - Biblical community...
 - Repent and confess sin...
 - Ask someone you hurt for forgiveness...
- What are you afraid of?
 - What baggage is holding you back
- By focusing on what THEY might say
 - Moses was diminishing reality with hypotheticals
 - And **God is calling** Moses
 - to **lift his eyes up** from the **wreckage of his past**
 - To the **God of FIRE** who stood before him
- Can I just talk to you for a second?
 - you who think you have too much baggage to be used by the Lord
- Gods not waiting on you to fix yourself
 - He's waiting for you to trust him

- God doesn't need you
- He wants you
- Because God doesn't need you, he can work out your baggage as he uses you
- what if
 - The healing you think you need
 - In order to do the thing God is calling you to do
 - will only come through doing the thing God has called you to
- What if healing comes through obedience?
 - or better yet what if healing comes through going with God to EGYPT
- I'm not saying
 - Run head long
 - **without consideration** into whatever you think God is calling you to
 - I'm saying walk with God
 - Take a step of obedience and see what he will do



- Do yall want to know a secret
 - Moses never got what he thought he needed
 - The people never accepted Moses
- all throughout Exodus the people are trying to
 - kill him
 - and replace him...
 - they constantly Grumble against him
- But in Moses obedience he recognized
 - That he didn't need the acceptance of THEY
 - because he had the acceptance of God
- Hear me
 - God didn't undo the baggage of Moses
 - Instead, he healed the damage that his baggage had caused
- God doesn't need you to get your stuff together before he will use you
 - We Just need trust him
- Dane Ortland says it like this
 - (God) loves to respond to his people if they would but dump in his lap the ruin and wreckage of their lives! He intends to restore

you into the radiant resplendence for which you were created. And that is dependent not on you keeping yourself clean but on you taking your mess to him. He doesn't limit himself to working with the unspoiled parts of us that remain after a lifetime of sinning. His power runs so deep that he is able to redeem the very worst parts of our past into the most radiant parts of our future.

- This is our God
 - This is how Moses went from the man who covered his face at the burning bush
 - To the man who longed to see the face of God on the mountain
- God wasn't just concerned about what Moses was doing
 - but who he was becoming
- He didn't want to just work through him
 - he wanted to work in him
- And the man once Frozen by his past



- would become a man formed by his past for the work of God

- **If God doesn't need us, He can work out our baggage as he uses us**

- But Moses 's baggage isn't worked out yet
- his response to God's gracious miracles...
 - to Gods show of power on the behalf of his faith
 - is not actually trust its further rebuttal
- In essence Moses yells cut again
 - v 10

¹⁰ But Moses said to the Lord, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue."

- Moses's first rebuttal is
 - God I'm not the one you need... I have too much baggage
- and his second rebuttal is

- Lord I'm not the one you need... I have too much weakness

- And again tied up and Moses's assumption is that God needs
 - As if God could only **use** a **FINISHED** product devoid of weakness
 - as if God was somehow **limited** by Moses's capacity
- was he shy?
 - did he stutter
 - had he lost his command or the Egyptian language
- we don't know
 - but we do know is that God didn't view it as a limiting factor
- If God is needy... then Moses rational makes perfect sense
 - this was in many ways a **DIPLOMATIC** mission
 - it required a public spokesperson
 - Ideally with **oratory** skills



- and an ability to persuade the most powerful man in the world
 - To do something he **WASN'T INTERESTED** in doing

- That's a difficult task.
- BUT

If God doesn't need us...He can work through our weakness for the sake of our good His glory

- As we examine the text there's something very interesting going on here
 - Notice what Moses says
 - V10
 - I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant,
- In other words
 - God I've never been eloquent
 - And we've been standing here for 15 min, and I still stutter
- Moses is questioning God ...
 - have you even **thought this through?**
 - Am I your **only option?**
 - **Plan not great**
 - I don't talk good

- ...Don't you think you should get somebody else
 - And if I, am you last resort
 - Could you at least fix my lips?
- Have you ever found yourself there?
 - complaining... against... the way... God created you
 - or **asserting** that **before he uses** you
 - he could at least fix your shortcomings

- Hear what God says
 - It may shock you

11 Then the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

- Whoooo
- God **responds** to Moses's frustration
 - With paradigm shifting reality
- Moses, don't you get it I made you that way
- God asserts that he is **not only creator**, but he is
 - Creator
 - Sustainer
 - And the **sovereign** all in one



- For from Him
- and through Him
- and to Him are all things
 - And in him all things hold together
- And so, when WE'RE tempted to complain about our weakness
 - Or our inadequacies
- Hear Gods response
 - I made you just as you are
- Your weakness that **brings** about **insecurity**>>>
 - and causes you anxiety...
 - was given to you intentionally by God
- in other words, God made you weak
 - ... just sit in that for a moment
- Name your weakness
 - Identify it
 - Grasp it
- What if its ok for us to be weak?
- What if we don't have to
 - **cover** the incompetencies we don't **want people** to see
- Numb our pain
- spend all our strength just holding it together
- the good God who only gives good gifts
 - create us with a blessed endowment of weakness...
 - He makes us weak... for our good
 - & for his glory
- This is the testimony of scripture
- Take pauls words in 2 cor for example (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
 - He **tells of the good** our weakness brings
- Carried up to the third heaven
 - Paul was in a League of his own
- And in v 7 he says
 - **7** So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations,[a] a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. **8** Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. **9** But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is



made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **10** For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- This passage is **replete** with the **benefits of weakness** for mortal man
- ... **weakness teaches humility**
 - To keep me from becoming conceited Paul says
 - God gave me a thorn which he later described as weakness
- So that thing that you hate about yourself (Slow)
 - it's teaching you something
 - Through our **infirmities** we learn of **Gods** perfection
 - Weakness draws us nearer to God
 - As we learn humility
- Moses's **stuttering** and **stammering** would **remind** him that >>>

- the **freedom of the Israelite** people **did not depend** on his **eloquence**
- but on the power of God

- And God makes us weak>>>
 - so that we may know the **grace upon grace** that is given to the **humble**
- And Humility is **just one** of the **many benefits** of weakness
 - Paul also highlights
 - the **sufficiency of God's** grace
 - The **joy of dependency**
 - And the **perfect power of God ...**
 - And he concludes
 - That he will boast in his weakness
 - For his weakness **doesn't make him weak** it makes him **strong**
- Hear me friend it is good that you are weak
 - It is for your Good (Slow)
 - But it is also for God's glory
- Moses's weakness will lead him to depend on God>>>



- in a way that only the slow of speech would understand
- God tells Moses
 - ¹² Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.”
- Do you see **how Moses leaning into his weakness (Slow)?**
 - will cause him to **fall into the strength of God**
- Therefore, all that he accomplishes
 - **would lead...** to the **Glory...** of the Everlasting God
- Let us remember the words of Jesus
- (John 9:1-3)
 - As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. **2** And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”
 - Why was he was born weak
 - And hear the Echo of YHWH in Jesus’s response
 - **3** Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”
 - Who made man's mouth?
 - who makes him seeing or blind?
 - Is it not...?!
- And why does God make us weak
 - **So that he can work through our weakness for his glory**
 - Because who gets the glory when the blind see
 - The deaf hear
 - When the words of the ineloquent and inarticulate move the hearts of kings
 - Who gets the glory when
 - We’re willing to fail
 - Embracing our limits
 - Stop pretending like we have it all together
 - Who gets the glory when
 - Cancer breeds contentment
 - The Barren continue to pray



- When the widow finds comfort in the cross
- Depression leads to a **desperation** for Jesus
- Who gets the glory when we
 - **lean into our weakness**
 - knowing on the **other side** ...is the **strength of God**
 - Is it not I says the Lord
- We hear so often glorify God with your strengths
 - But the Bible teaches us with equal force
 - that we must glorify God with our weakness

Because God doesn't need us...He can work through our weakness for the sake of our good His glory

- And after all this Moses says
 - send me God I'll go
 - No, he says

¹³ "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else."

- And the anger of the Lord is kindled

- Y'all want to know what the issue is
 - Moses is **still not seeing God** rightly
- God had sought to **compel** Moses with **promises**
 - **grant confidence** with **power**
 - **give comfort** with his very presence
 - yet Moses still does not believe (**Slow**)
- And the anger of the Lord is kindled Because Moses simply refuses to trust God
 - God is slow to anger but our disbelief will get him there
- But notice why God is angry
 - He's not like Moses
 - Dagnabit... you heavy lipped Bum
 - No ...it's not his weakness
 - It's his posture that angers God
- We 2 really important things about God here
 - We learn
 - **It's not our brokenness that angers God but our refusal to trust him with it**
 - **The Abundant provision of God even in the midst of our disbelief that drives him to anger**



- I'm wrapping up but **let us gaze** at the grace of our God.
- The text says

¹⁴Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. ¹⁶He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him. ¹⁷And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs."

- At the Conclusion of this text
 - we see the **Magnificent grace of God on display >>>**
 - through God's provision of Aaron to Moses... even in his anger
- **Why doesn't God move on?**
 - We know he **doesn't need Moses**
 - Why doesn't he just... **find somebody else?**

- God's response
 - Even in anger
 - tells us something **glorious about God**
 - **namely that though he doesn't need us... he wants us**
- That is the great conclusion of this story.

Why does all this matter

- **If God doesn't need us**
- **but still comes after us**
 - **with such fervor**
 - **and passion**
 - **and determination**
- **he must want us... despite... our**
 - **...fears**
 - **...weakness**
 - **...mistakes**
- For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son
 - as we ring the bells of this Old Testament narrative
 - we hear the **clear and resounding** echo of the Gospel



-
- Jesus says come to me all who are weary and heavy-laden
 - and I will give you rest
 - your baggage he says I'll take that
 - your weakness he says I'll take that too

 - And the profound nature of God's love and desire was displayed for us
 - 2000 years ago

 - Not out of **obligation**
 - Not out of **necessity**
 - But out of the sheer desire for us to dwell with him forever

 - Jesus Christ
 - God wrapped in flesh
 - Took the punishment for our sin
 - Received the full brunt of the anger of God

 - He was like Aaron
 - God's provision
 - despite our sin/
 - /Weakness
 - Disbelief
 - And he purchased for us reconciliation back to our creator

 - God so loved us the world
 - that **even though he did not need us**
 - he gave his only son **as a sacrifice for us**
 - so that all who repent and believe may have eternal life

 - Jesus the son of God
 - Lived the life we couldn't live
 - Died the death that we deserved
 - And busted out of the tomb
 - Defeating sin
 - Death
 - grave

 - so, trust Mercy... that as you walk with him
 - he can work out your baggage
 - ... he can work through your weakness

 - trust him Mercy
 - Trust him enough to take a step
 - Trust enough to go with God
 - and trust him enough to receive his love

 - Let us pray
-