

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church
107 East Austin
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624
830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

C0607.1 – February 15, 2006 – Ex 4:24-31 – Supplemental Exegesis

So, Moses obediently left for Egypt with his wife, Zipporah, and two sons, Gershom and Eliezer (4:20).

²⁴ Now it came about at the lodging place on the way that the LORD met him and sought to put him to death.

²⁵ Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses' feet, and she said, "You are indeed a bridegroom of blood to me."

²⁶ So He let him alone. At that time she said, "You are a bridegroom of blood "-- because of the circumcision.

All those in Egypt who desired to kill him were dead but YHWH **met him and sought to** kill him. Why? Because he disobeyed YHWH's terms laid out in the Abrahamic Covenant. YHWH stated that on the eighth day the male children were to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant.ⁱ "Circumcision was the knife right by which the Abrahamic Covenant was ratified (lit., "cut")."ⁱⁱ Those who were not circumcised were separated from the covenanted people Israel (Gen 17:9-14).ⁱⁱⁱ Thus, YHWH **sought to put Moses to death** for his disobedience. This was such a serious sin it was a sin unto death. The deliverer of Israel would have to be obedient to YHWH's terms laid out in the Abrahamic Covenant since he would be instrumental in bringing it to fulfillment.

According to verse 25 it is apparent that Moses and Ziporrah had a disagreement as to what people their son would be identified. Would he be an Israelite or a Midianite? Circumcision would bring that son into the covenanted people of Israel. Non-circumcision would cut him off from that people. YHWH wanted the former, Zipporah the latter. Up to this point Moses was not ruling his household well but was letting Zipporah make the important decisions.

PRINCIPLE: Normally before God will use a man publicly he must first be able to manage his home well (1 Tim 3:4-5).

Up to this point Moses had been pleasing Zipporah but not God.

PRINCIPLE: We must please God not men. When the issue is between pleasing God or even those closest to us, such as our wives, we must choose to please God to remain in divine favor. Otherwise, as Moses, we put ourselves in a position of discipline. In this case the sin was serious and God considered it “a sin unto death” (1 John 5:16ff).

PRINCIPLE: God desires us to be equally yoked. Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Cor 6:14)

Zipporah unwillingly and angrily performed the circumcision **and threw it at Moses’ feet.**^{iv} One author said that this was akin to throwing it at the feet of the pre-incarnate Christ.^v She was not sympathetic to the religion of Israel. **You are indeed a bridegroom of blood to me** signifies that she had first married a bridegroom, but now it is as if she has married a different bridegroom, one of blood. She thought of Moses as a bloody husband addicted to a bloody religion and bloody God.

As a result of the obedience Moses’ life was saved. Most likely Moses sent his wife and sons back to Midian at this point. Exod 18:2-6 says that Jethro later brought Moses wife and his sons to meet him at Mt Sinai after the deliverance (cf 3:12). This incident shows that God would rather us die than take up His work with unconsecrated hearts and unconsecrated wills (Meyer). God doesn’t call anyone and everyone into vocational ministry. Some people go into the ministry to accomplish their own desires. They may be sincere but sincerity and desire is not enough. It must be the only thing you can do. If there is anything else you can do then you should do that. God calls men who have consecrated their hearts and wills to Him and His purposes (that’s why we teach line by line here). Jesus said “do you love Me?”...”feed My sheep.”

²⁷ Now the LORD said to Aaron, "Go to meet Moses in the wilderness." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.

²⁸ Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which He had sent him, and all the signs that He had commanded him to do.

²⁹ Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the sons of Israel;

³⁰ **and Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. He then performed the signs in the sight of the people.**

YHWH had told Moses that Aaron would be coming out to meet him (4:14)^{vi}. Now YHWH explicitly speaks to **Aaron** commanding him to **Go...meet Moses in the wilderness**. It had been at least forty years since Aaron and Moses had seen one another. Perhaps Aaron went to see if Moses was still alive as Moses went to see if his brethren were still alive. They **met...at the mountain of God** (Mt Sinai) and Aaron **kissed him**.

There at the foot of Mt Sinai **Moses** told him all that YHWH had told him and about all **the signs that YHWH commanded him to do**.

When they arrived in Egypt they rounded up **all the elders of the sons of Israel**, just as YHWH had commanded and **Aaron** became Moses mouthpiece and spoke all that **YHWH had spoken to Moses**. *After* he spoke the words to the elders then he performed the signs in the sight of all the people. The signs came after the message and confirmed the message. And just as YHWH had predicted...

³¹ **So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, then they bowed low and worshiped.**

They **believed** that YHWH had appeared to Moses in the burning bush and that YHWH designated Moses to be their deliverer. Later their belief will waver (cf 5:21; 6:9, 12; 14:11-12; 15:24; 16:2; Ps 106:7).

When Aaron told them about how YHWH was concerned about their bondage in Egypt and had heard their cries and groaning, they knew that God had heard their prayers and that He was a faithful God who answered prayers. As a result **they bowed low and worshiped** Him. This is worship before YHWH actually delivers them. They had such faith in the word of God confirmed by the signs that at this point they believe it is certain that YHWH will deliver them through Moses. They will worship with a new song after the deliverance (Exod 15). But between here and there their faith will waver.

The major theme of chapters 1-4 is God's preparation of Israel and Moses. God prepared Israel by increasing the bondage. This implanted in their hearts a desire to be released from bondage. They began to pray and God heard their prayers and began to prepare

Moses, a baby boy who had the marks of a deliverer. God gave Moses some help in Aaron, his mouthpiece, and together they and the nation are prepared for the deliverance.

ⁱ Circumcision was common among other nations at the time but was instilled with special covenantal significance with reference to Abraham and his descendants.

ⁱⁱ Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 64.

ⁱⁱⁱ As the rainbow is the sign of the Noahic Covenant so circumcision is the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant.

^{iv} Rabbi's still perform this right with flint knives.

^v Ronald B. Allen, "The 'Bloody Bridegroom' in Exodus 4:24-26," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153:611 (July-September 1996):259-69,

^{vi} God knew that Aaron would obey.

[Back To The Top](#)

Click [Here](#) to return to other lessons.

[Return to Fredericksburg Bible Church Web Site](#)