**Session 7: Week 4b**

**Start at 26:00**

***God of Deliverance***

**Exodus 4:18-31**

**26-27 September 2022**

**A Curious Incident** – We have just seen that God refers to the nation of Israel as His firstborn Son and that if Pharaoh does not do as God asks, then his own firstborn son will be killed. And then we come to the curious account about God trying to put *Moses* to death until Zipporah circumcises their son with a flint knife. Why does Moses choose to include this incident? Whenever we encounter something like this, we should ask ourselves, “How would this story be lacking if this were not in it? What would we lose if this were dropped out?” So let’s examine the story and see what we can learn.

**The Incident Examined** – Moses and his family are on their way to Egypt in obedience to God’s instruction when suddenly God meets Moses and tries to put him to death. Feel the irony of this statement: God has just told Moses that “all the men seeking to kill you are dead” (vs 19), and now He Himself is seeking to kill him (vs 24). Why? The issue is the fact that Moses has never circumcised his son, despite all he has been taught about the importance and significance of circumcision. His failure to obey this clear command of God is a grievous thing, and God is calling him to account for his disobedience. Zipporah then immediately takes a knife, circumcises her son, and literally throws the severed foreskin, covered in blood, at Moses’ feet. Remember that the act of circumcision is a physical symbol of cutting (breaking) a covenant; it involves the cutting of flesh and the shedding of blood. So **this incident portrays someone who intervenes on Moses’ behalf with the blood of another**, and God spares his life. Here we have yet another female deliverer stepping in to save his life. We also see that when Moses was arguing with God, he gave five objections or five reasons why following God is not safe. God now responds to that by doing something that says in essence: “You know what is *really* not safe? Disobeying Me is not safe!” The safest place that Moses can be is following God’s explicit will. This incident is a very timely reminder for a man who is bent on doing the will of God.

**The Predicted Arrival of Aaron** – God had told Moses earlier that Aaron would come to meet him, and now we see God prompting Aaron to find his brother in the wilderness. This is yet another incidence of the rhythm we encountered in Genesis time and again: “And God said…and it was so.” God had said that Aaron would come, and now it is happening. Moses then tells Aaron *all* that God had said and *all* the things they are to do…and they obeyed them *all*. So the pattern of Genesis continues to play out through the lives of the two brothers.

**The People’s Response** – When the Israelites heard what Moses and Aaron had to share, they *believed* it, and they bowed their heads in *worship* because they knew that God sees, He hears, He knows, and He *will* deliver. Imagine what life would have been like in Jesus’ day if everyone who heard Him had believed and worshiped Him. What would life be like for us if we were always quick to believe and to respond in worship? We know that this moment of belief and worship in the lives of the Israelites will be sorely tried in the future, and they will often fail. But **I AM** is with them, and the outcome is sure.