

A photograph of a field of purple lupine flowers in the foreground, with a stone wall and a large log in the background. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a garden or a rural setting.

Excuses  
Can Keep Us  
in a Rut

For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.

Acts 17:28



A photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, there are several purple lupine flowers with green foliage. Behind them is a large, weathered log. The background is a dense forest with green trees and foliage, slightly out of focus.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and  
with all your soul and with all your mind and  
with all your strength.

Mark 12:30

# Balanced



# Unbalanced



FLAT

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>1</sup> One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God.

<sup>2</sup> There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>3</sup> "This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it."

<sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>5</sup> "Do not come any closer," the LORD warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground.

<sup>6</sup> I am the God of your father--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering.

<sup>8</sup> So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey--the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>9</sup> Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them.

<sup>10</sup> Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt."

<sup>11</sup> But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?"

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>12</sup> God answered, "I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain."

<sup>13</sup> But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?"

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>14</sup> God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you."

<sup>15</sup> God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>16</sup> "Now go and call together all the elders of Israel. Tell them, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors--the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob--has appeared to me. He told me, "I have been watching closely, and I see how the Egyptians are treating you.

<sup>17</sup> I have promised to rescue you from your oppression in Egypt. I will lead you to a land flowing with milk and honey--the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live."

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>18</sup> "The elders of Israel will accept your message. Then you and the elders must go to the king of Egypt and tell him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So please let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD, our God.'

<sup>19</sup> "But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand forces him.

<sup>20</sup> So I will raise my hand and strike the Egyptians, performing all kinds of miracles among them. Then at last he will let you go.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>21</sup> And I will cause the Egyptians to look favorably on you. They will give you gifts when you go so you will not leave empty-handed.

<sup>22</sup> Every Israelite woman will ask for articles of silver and gold and fine clothing from her Egyptian neighbors and from the foreign women in their houses. You will dress your sons and daughters with these, stripping the Egyptians of their wealth."

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>1</sup> But Moses protested again, "What if they won't believe me or listen to me? What if they say, 'The LORD never appeared to you'?"

<sup>2</sup> Then the LORD asked him, "What is that in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied.

<sup>3</sup> "Throw it down on the ground," the LORD told him. So Moses threw down the staff, and it turned into a snake! Moses jumped back.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

4 Then the LORD told him, "Reach out and grab its tail." So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a shepherd's staff in his hand.

5 "Perform this sign," the LORD told him. "Then they will believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob--really has appeared to you."

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out again, his hand was white as snow with a severe skin disease. ...

<sup>7</sup> "Now put your hand back into your cloak," the LORD said. So Moses put his hand back in, and when he took it out again, it was as healthy as the rest of his body.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "If they do not believe you and are not convinced by the first miraculous sign, they will be convinced by the second sign.

<sup>9</sup> And if they don't believe you or listen to you even after these two signs, then take some water from the Nile River and pour it out on the dry ground. When you do, the water from the Nile will turn to blood on the ground."

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>10</sup> But Moses pleaded with the LORD, "O Lord, I'm not very good with words. I never have been, and I'm not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled."

<sup>11</sup> Then the LORD asked Moses, "Who makes a person's mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the LORD?"

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>12</sup> Now go! I will be with you as you speak, and I will instruct you in what to say."

<sup>13</sup> But Moses again pleaded, "Lord, please! Send anyone else."

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD became angry with Moses. "All right," he said. "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he speaks well. And look! He is on his way to meet you now. He will be delighted to see you.

# Exodus 3:1-4:17

<sup>15</sup> Talk to him, and put the words in his mouth. I will be with both of you as you speak, and I will instruct you both in what to do.

<sup>16</sup> Aaron will be your spokesman to the people. He will be your mouthpiece, and you will stand in the place of God for him, telling him what to say.

<sup>17</sup> And take your shepherd's staff with you, and use it to perform the miraculous signs I have shown you."

# Moses Heard From God



# Moses Used Excuses to Try to Stay in a Rut



# Excuses Can Be Based on Strength



# Excuses Can Be Based on Mind



# Excuses Can Be Based on Heart



**Do You Make Excuses?**





# God Bless You

Have A Great Week