

MOSES

A Man of Selfless Dedication

STUDY EIGHT

God's Will, God's Way

Exodus 4:18–31

When we say to God, “I’m going to do Your will Your way,” it’s remarkable how He takes care of the barriers when they arise . . . and in the most surprising ways.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

SOLOMON summed up a life of faith in two verses.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart;
do not depend on your own understanding.
Seek his will in all you do,
and he will show you which path to take. (Proverbs 3:5–6)*

Many Christians recite Solomon’s words as their life motto, but what do these verses mean? Suppose Solomon himself could join you for a cup of coffee and explain what he wrote. Maybe he would say something like this:

Really trust the Lord, and don’t just say you do. Take Him at His word. Rest completely in His grace. If doubts surface, choose to believe Him anyway. When obstacles arise, look to Him alone to take you through.

Don’t lean on your wits or your ability to manipulate others to get your way. Don’t try to steer the situation or fret about what to do next. Instead, have this as a singular objective: to seek God’s will.

Most of all, recognize God as your King. He’s in charge of all things, which includes your life and the lives of those you love. See Him for who He really is, Almighty God, and determine to do what He says, even in small ways.

God will honor your obedient faith by making your next steps clear. You won’t have to wonder. He will show you His path, and all you must do is walk in it.



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What a beautiful way to live! Trusting. Acknowledging. Obeying. Confidently taking the next step.

Moses modeled Proverbs 3:5–6 when he left the burning bush. He had a renewed dependence on His Lord and the determination to obey Him. In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll see how the Lord honored Moses' life of obedience by leading him back to Egypt—back to the purpose for which he was born.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and “opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24:45). As you open God's Word, invite the Lord to open your mind to understand the Scriptures.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

At the burning bush, Moses laid out all his reasons that he was the wrong man to rescue God's people. “Who am I?” Moses objected (Exodus 3:11). The Lord responded (in so many words), “Moses, Moses, the mission doesn't depend on who you are but on who *I* am.”

The ever-present, all-powerful “I AM WHO I AM” was sending Moses (3:14). Still, Moses wrestled with God: “What if they won't believe me?” (4:1); “I'm not very good with words” (4:10); “Lord, please! Send anyone else” (4:13).

God countered each objection until Moses had nothing else to say. Finally, Moses put his full trust in the Lord and stopped leaning on his own understanding. At the burning bush, he offered himself as a sacrifice ready to do God's will, God's way. The flames of God's holy presence consumed Moses' self-will, and his fight with the Lord was over.

Let's see how the Lord honored Moses' obedience by sending him first to the doorstep of his father-in-law, Jethro.

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Observation: Journey to Egypt

Observation helps us see a passage plainly so we can understand more clearly what the passage means.¹ Observe the action, notice how the biblical characters relate to one another, and, most of all, see God's hand guiding His people.

Explanation to Jethro—Exodus 4:18–19

What did Moses say to Jethro without revealing the real reason he was leaving, according to [Exodus 4:18](#)? How did Jethro bless Moses after forty years of faithful service?

What blessing of assurance did God give Moses in [4:19](#)?

Thutmose III died in 1436 BC, and his death sentence for Moses died with him. The new pharaoh, Amunhotep II, was “the pharaoh of the Exodus,” and he was even crueler than his predecessor.²

Enroute to Egypt—Exodus 4:20–26

What was the message God told Moses to give Pharaoh, according to [Exodus 4:20–23](#)? What is the significance of the “firstborn”? What did Moses carry with him, and why was it significant?

Moses' staff was now the “staff of God,” because God had touched it. Friends, when your life is marked by God, whatever you use for Him becomes His property. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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A puzzling incident occurred enroute to Egypt. Read what happened in [Exodus 4:24–26](#) in the NET Bible, along with the footnote that explains it. Summarize your understanding of this event, and in the interpretation section, we'll probe the meaning more deeply.

It was a wonderful day when I finally realized that I don't have to explain the will of God. My job is simply to obey it. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Encounter with Aaron—Exodus 4:27–28

At this point, Zipporah must have returned to Midian with her sons for their safety. Later, Jethro would bring Moses' family to him in the wilderness ([Exodus 18:1–5](#)). After Zipporah left, Moses' brother joined him. What happened in Aaron's visit with Moses in [Exodus 4:27–28](#)?

Experience with the Hebrews—Exodus 4:29–31

Finally, Moses' sojourn to Midian was over. Forty years after "Moses fled from Pharaoh" ([Exodus 2:15](#)), he was back in the land of his birth with his own people. How did the elders of Israel receive him and Aaron, according to [Exodus 4:29–31](#)?

How do you see God directing Moses' path and honoring his obedience in all these events?

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When you're at the center of God's will, the plan flows. It doesn't have to be forced. It flows. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: An Issue of Obedience

Once Moses fully trusted the Lord and committed to obeying the Lord, the Lord could now show him issues in his life that needed attention. One issue was circumcision. We're not told the specifics, but apparently, Moses had neglected to circumcise one of his sons or, perhaps Moses' parents had neglected to circumcise him.

Read about the rite of circumcision in [Genesis 17:3–14](#). What is its relationship to the covenant God gave Abraham? What is its meaning? What are the consequences for those who neglect it?

It's shocking to read that the Lord “was about to kill [Moses]” after selecting him as Israel's deliverer (Exodus 4:24). Zipporah saved her husband by obeying the terms of the Abrahamic covenant on his behalf. Bible scholars speculate about the meaning of her actions, which you can read at [Constable's Notes](#) at netbible.org. Research possible interpretations and record the insights you discover.

Moses had to fully enter God's covenant through circumcision before God could use him. What broader principle about our walk with God can you draw from this incident?

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Correlation: Quietness and Confidence

Only when Moses completely trusted God, could he find rest from his inner turmoil and find peace. What will those who live under God's righteous rule experience, according to *Isaiah 32:17*?

Moses experienced the quiet confidence of one who rested in God. Our King is Jesus, the One who has come and will come again to reign in righteousness and peace. Until that day, we, too, can live in quietness and confidence as we trust and follow Him.

Have you stepped out in faith lately? God honors an obedient walk. He will honor your faith if you will trust Him with an obedient kind of walk.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Applying Moses' Example

Once Moses broke through his fear, he could submit his will to the Lord and follow Him in obedience. He demonstrated his submissive attitude:

- First, *in discussing his new course of life with his family*
- Second, *in following God's command to go to Egypt*
- Third, *in dealing with issues he had neglected*

In what ways does Moses offer an example for you?

In response to Moses' faithful obedience, God honored Moses by:

- First, *reassuring him*
- Second, *giving him an emblem of His presence and power: the staff of God*
- Third, *bringing Aaron to support him*
- Fourth, *giving him favor with the Israelites*

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How has God honored your faith and obedience? What blessings has He provided to you which you can be grateful for?

In what ways is God making “your paths straight” in your current situation (Proverbs 3:6 NASB)?

Moses left his life of tending sheep in Midian to follow His Shepherd into a new future. What fears and shame can you leave behind today as you walk in God's new way for you?

Moses trusted in the Lord with his whole heart and no longer leaned on his own understanding. He learned to do God's will, God's way, fully recognizing God as his master over all things and as his faithful guide through life. You can do that too!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I do trust You with my whole heart. Help me to lean only on You and not worldly devices and contrived plans that seem sturdy but are unreliable. You are my Rock. My Deliverer. My righteous King. Lead me in Your everlasting way. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"
2. Ronald F. Youngblood, *Exodus* (Chicago, Moody Press, 1983), 24, 31.

For the 2024–2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1975, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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