

Introduction

- Here we are again, looking at the great themes that Exodus brings out:
 - themes of **deliverance...**
 - *(put up slide of other sermons in the series...)*
 - prototype of God's dealings with his people over the generations
 - echoes of Exodus ring throughout Scripture...
- And after last week, the stage is set for the deliverance for God to come:
 - the people are enslaved
 - the deliverer has been delivered...
 - *(admittedly he's still a bit on the young side as we left things in 2:10!)*
 - now we are all ready for God's great plan to swing into action...
- So what happens?
 - it all seems to go horribly wrong!

The Developing Story

- Moses grown-up
 - **Acts 7:23** tells us he was 40 years old
 - seems he knew his identity as a Jew, even though he was also a member of the royal household
 - has he gone out of his way to go out to where his people were? The scholars debate whether there was planning or intent, or an overflow of temper, or what...
 - but Moses kills the Egyptian - **murder**
 - next day he finds out his crime has not gone unnoticed
 - which sets in train the events leading to Moses' exile
- *Far from being someone of power and influence, Moses has become a **bent nail***

Flight to Midian: A Bent Nail

- *(picture of bent nail)*
- A bent nail isn't any real use - can't hammer it in...
- That "bentness" continues:
 - now in Midian, Moses ends up as a shepherd, part of a tribe of nomads living hand to mouth out in the desert
 - his education won't have helped much - he'll have had to learn the ways of the desert from scratch
 - his family connections don't help - he is fleeing Pharaoh, possibly even afraid now to say who he was in Egypt...
 - and his enthusiasm for freeing his people wanes over time - see **2:23** - a long time (again **Acts 7:30** tells us it was a further 40 years later)
- Here is someone emptied of every human advantage:
 - go back to D.L. Moody's quote from last week, "**Moses spent forty years thinking he was somebody, forty years learning he was nobody, and forty years learning what God can do with a nobody.**"
- Jesus too became empty of every human advantage before being used by God as deliverer:
 - Philippians 2, **kenosis**, emptied himself
 - **chosen by Jesus, rather than imposed, of course**
 - God's weakness is stronger than our strength (**1 Cor 1:25**)
- *Have we come to the end of ourselves?*

Burning Bush: Meeting God

- Encountering living reality of God
 - no mere book, intellectual encounter
 - overwhelmingly aware of God's presence
 - of his **identity** and his **holiness**
- Note too God's concern and compassion on his people
 - rekindling that concern in Moses...

Doubts and Encouragement

- Moses doubts, God's reassurances - but danger of resisting God

Conclusion

- Have we come to the end of all our human resources?
- Have we encountered the living reality God, holy, awesome, and personal?
- Have we known the reassurance that God will use us even in our weakness?
 - and not resisted him using us, stepping out in faith?