

Comments on Genesis 4:21-26

"God had made [a covenant] with Abraham and reiterated to the patriarchs and now, through Moses, to the people of God, the Israelites. Circumcision was the sign of the covenant, an evidence of the parents' faith in the promise of God to Abraham that through his seed blessings would come to Israel and to the whole world (cf. Gen. 12:1-3). As a testimony of the parents' faith in God's covenant promise, every male in Israel was to be circumcised: (Gen. 17:9-14)..."

The covenant was...the promise of blessing and salvation which every Israelite was called upon to believe and whose belief was symbolized by the circumcision of his sons and all the males in his household. Moses was to go to Egypt and tell the Israelites that God was about to fulfill His promises, based upon His covenant. And yet Moses had not yet circumcised his son. And if this son is his firstborn, he has had many years in which to do so.

If God takes the 'hardness of Pharaoh's heart' so seriously as to kill his firstborn son (Exod. 4:21-23), then He must likewise deal with the sin of Moses who by not circumcising his son has endangered him greatly. According to the word of the LORD recorded in Genesis 17, his son should have been 'cut off from his people.' The holiness of God is clearly manifested in the near fatal illness of Moses. God does not look lightly on any sin.

Moses' wife rightly perceived the problem and spared the life of her husband by her prompt action. The great man Moses was saved by his wife's keen perception and decisive measures. Her rebuke was well-deserved, and Moses was man enough to record it for posterity...

We find that Moses' problems with regard to his public work (returning to Egypt to rescue Israel) are all rooted in his private walk. His son is not circumcised. He cannot challenge men and women to step out in obedience, based upon their faith in God's covenant promises when he has not yet even circumcised his son as an evidence of his faith....The cure for the problem was not hidden, not deep, not profound. Zipporah knew what needed to be done by Moses and did it for him when he was stricken."

- Bob Deffinbaugh

<https://bible.org/seriespage/4-beating-around-burning-bush-exodus-3-and-4>

"Why was this child not circumcised? We don't know. It's possible that Zipporah didn't want to have her child go through this rite, or that Moses was negligent and just ignored doing it. We don't know, but how could the Deliverer, the leader of the Exodus, representative of the nation, not have his son carry the covenantal sign? For Moses to have ignored this requirement was unacceptable, open disobedience.

F. B. Meyer states 'How insignificant this omission may have appeared in itself, it could not be tolerated in one who was to stand out as God's chosen and honoured servant. If God remembered the Covenant, it was surely necessary that His servant should...'

- Dianne Miller

<https://bible.org/seriespage/4-zipporah-exodus-424-26>

"I don't want to skim over Zipporah's involvement in this incident. It wasn't pleasant or easy for her. It probably shook her to the core. But she got involve, stepped into the situation, and as far as we can tell from Scripture, saved her husband's life."

- Charles Swindoll (143)