

“The Call of Moses”

Part 1

Exodus 3

Introduction: Last week in our study of the life of Moses we considered the purpose for the 40 years in which he spent as a shepherd taking care of the flock of his father-in-law. There were 3 reasons for the 40-year delay:

1. **There was a need for the change of leadership in Egypt.**

Notice Exodus 2:23

Moses would have never had an audience with the Pharaoh who sought his life. So there needed to be a change in leadership so that Moses would be tolerated. God allowed this Pharaoh to live for another 40-years because there were 2 other changes which needed to take place.

2. **The people of Israel needed to change.**

When Moses was 40-years of age the people of Israel were not ready to leave Egypt. They were rooted and grounded in the ways of Egypt and they had settled into their surroundings. Most likely they had the hope that eventually the affliction would cease. But after 80-years it was still there and so now the people were ready to turn to God.

Notice Exodus 2:22-23

Now after 80-years they were crying out to God for deliverance. They had now come to the place where they hated Egypt and so now, they were closer to being ready to come out.

3. **Moses needed to change.**

If we were to back up 40-years we would be reminded that at the age of 40 Moses had hot blood running through his veins. He was trusting in his power and his ability to lead the people out of Egypt. But it would not be in his power or his ability. Moses would lead Israel out, but it would be in the power of God. When Israel would leave it would be God who received the glory and not Moses. So, Moses had much to learn and his classroom became the wilderness. It would there that he would take up the profession that was despised in Egypt and that was shepherding.

Genesis 46:34

³⁴ *That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.*

I. The Call
A. "Getting Moses' Attention"

Notice Exodus 3:1-2

As we step into chapter 3, we see that Moses is busy with his daily routine and in the middle of his routine the Angel of the Lord appears to him in a flaming bush that is not consumed with the fire. The question which comes to mind here is, "Why did God present Himself in the burning bush to Moses?" He could have presented Himself in a very spectacular way but instead He uses a little acacia bush. He does not use some majestic tree or a massive stone but a simple little bush.

Many see the bush as being symbolic. They see the bush representing the nation of Israel. Israel had been under the fires of affliction from Egypt, but they were not consumed. Like the bush, they had not brought forth any fruit in the land of Egypt but only thorns, do to their involvement in the idolatry of Egypt. Let me show you a few other applications from the burning bush.

Some see a picture of the church/body of Jesus Christ here. Through out the years the church has passed through the fire of persecution, but it has never been destroyed.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9

⁸ *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

⁹ *Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;*

Some see the burning bush as symbolic of the Word of God/the Bible. The Bible has come under many attacks. It has been banned, burned and buried, but it has never been destroyed.

Mark 13:30-31

³⁰ *Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.*

³¹ *Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*

In our study tonight we are going to just take the burning bush as a means of God getting the attention of Moses.

Application:

As I read this text, I am reminded that God often does things to get the attention of His people today also. He may have something special for you to do as in going to your neighbor to share your testimony or maybe just pray with them. Now you and I are not going to be confronted with a burning bush, but God will light a special fire within you to get you stirred up spiritually. Let me share with you some Words from Jeremiah when he became frustrated with his ministry.

Jeremiah 20:7-9

⁷ *O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.*

⁸ *For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.*

⁹ *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*

God has gifted everyone of His people and so there is a fire within each of us. But the problem is that many have quenched the fire. They have poured the waters of the world and the waters of self upon the fire. Now there is nothing more than smoldering coals that exist.

Illustration:

I remember a story from many years ago concerning a man who had grown cold in his service for the Lord and even in his church attendance. The Pastor visited him in the winter time and there were very few words exchanged. But while the Pastor was there, he opens the man's coal burner and with a set of tongs he pulled from the fire one glowing piece of coal and he laid it on the hearth in front of the stove. As the coal lay there the glow continued to diminish until it only remained warm. The Pastor then picked it up and placed it back in the fire where it began to glow again as it came in contact with the hot coals.

That story is a picture of how easy it is for a believer to step away and grow cold. The fire that God had ignited and that years ago burned like a raging wildfire becomes lukewarm. The church at Laodicea allowed this to happen.

Revelation 3:

¹⁴ *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

¹⁵ *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

¹⁶ *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

¹⁷ *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

¹⁸ *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

¹⁹ *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*

²⁰ *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

B. The Announcement

Notice Exodus 3:3-9

Once God had the attention of Moses he then made the announcement that He had heard the cries of Israel and He had seen the affliction which they were going through and now He had come down to deliver them from the oppression and to take them to the land of Canaan that was flowing with milk and honey. Moses found himself standing on holy ground and I picture him face down and flat on the ground as he realizes he is speaking with God.

Application:

As I read this passage, I cannot help but wonder what was going through the mind of Moses at this time. You and I can look ahead and read the entire story and know how it is going to unfold. But what if we did not have the Bible to read ahead? Our question would be, "God, how are you going to deliver your people from the oppression of the Egyptians?"

He could have brought a deadly plague upon the Egyptians, He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy the Egyptians, He could have taken on the form of a man and He Himself could have led them out, or He could have just used His mighty power to devastate them. But God would not use any of these means.

Notice Exodus 3:10

Here God announces that He is going to use a man and Moses is THAT MAN. What an honor and what a privilege to be used of God to bring the Nation of Israel out of Egypt. Here is a lowly shepherd and God reaches down and says, "MOSES, I WANT YOU TO SERVE ME!"

Application:

I am reminded here of what unfolded in the New Testament.

Jesus stood before His disciples and He announced that God was going to open the door for Jews and Gentiles alike to be saved.

Ephesians 3:1-6

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

² *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:*

³ *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,*

⁴ *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)*

⁵ *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*

⁶ *That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:*

The church would be His ELECT. Just as Israel was His ELECT and the righteous angels are His ELECT.

Isaiah 45:4

⁴ *For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*

1 Timothy 5:21

²¹ *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

Romans 8:33

³³ *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

As the ELECT of God, we are His representatives. Just as Israel was in the Old Testament and just as the angels are His heavenly representatives.

He would bless the church/body of Jesus Christ with all spiritual blessings, He would assure them that they would have an eternal inheritance that would never fade away, He

would give to them one day new, glorified bodies and allow them to live in New Jerusalem for all eternity. One of the amazing things about this plan was that God would use MEN.

Mark 16:14-18

¹⁴ *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*

¹⁵ *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

¹⁶ *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

¹⁷ *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

¹⁸ *They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

God could have used many ways to spread the Gospel, but He chose to do it through man. He chose to do it through you and me. He gives to us His presence, His power and His promises. That places a great responsibility upon us to take the Gospel into the world.

Romans 10:11-14

¹¹ *For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

¹² *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

¹³ *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

¹⁴ *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

Ephesians 1:12-13a

¹² *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

¹³ *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation:*

What a privilege we have. There is no higher privilege higher than this, there is no honor greater than this. We are called to represent the Almighty God, the Creator of the world. Moses would be used by God to bring God's people out of slavery. That is the very opportunity set before us also. God has gifted us with spiritual gifts, and He has given to us His Holy Spirit and yet we make excuses, just as Moses did.

I am going to stop here for this evening and next week we shall look at the response of Moses to this calling. I want to share a story with you in closing that I happened upon this week.

*"The coronation of a monarch is the most celebrated of all events to those of the British Empire. In 1953 there was a letter sent out to friends and celebrities around the world to invite them to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Here is how the invitation read, "We greet you well whereas we have appointed the 2nd day of June 1953 for the solemnity of our coronation, these are therefore to will and command you, **all excuses set apart**, that you make your personal attendance upon us at the time above mentioned furnished and appointed as to your rank and quality appertaineth there to do and perform such services as shall be required."*

Those who were invited to the coronation of the Queen were to be there and all excuses were to be set apart. Let us be sure to set "all excuses apart" as we step into service for our Lord.