

"The Call of Moses"

Part 5

Exodus 3-4

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of the Life of Moses we are going to revisit the 3rd objection which Moses offered to God at the burning bush. We are also going to look in greater detail at the 3 miraculous signs that God would permit Moses to perform to see the meaning behind each one.

In our look at the call of Moses so far, we have looked at all 4 of the objections which he offered to God and last week we were able to see that the underlying problem was UNBELIEF. God had made many promises to Moses, but Moses still refused to believe that God would use him to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Let us notice the promises which God gave to Moses.

Notice Exodus 3:16-22

Previously God had promised that He would be with Moses, then God assured Moses that he would be acting under the authority of the sovereign God of the universe. Then in this text God gives to Moses a detailed blueprint as to how the deliverance is going to unfold.

Notice the words of D. Young on Moses' objections:

"As fast as one difficulty is swept away, his fearful fertile mind has another ready to take its place."

We however cannot be too critical of Moses for we have all been guilty of doing the very same thing. Notice the words of Joseph Parker:

"How inventive we are in finding excuses for not doing the will of God."

Last week we briefly discussed how unbelief will paralyze the believer and instead of following the will of God they will do nothing. Notice what C. H. Mackintosh says concerning unbelief:

"How hard it is to overcome the unbelief of the human heart. How difficult man ever finds it to trust God. How slow he is to venture upon the naked promise of Jehovah."

When Moses first started to offer his objections, they sounded rather acceptable. His first objection was, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" This seems rather acceptable until we continue to read the text. Then in chapter 4 we come to find this objection is also rooted in unbelief. Moses objections have been used by many down through the ages of time and

these objections have manifest a heart of unbelief and have robbed many of the blessings of serving the Lord. Let us now take a deeper look at Moses' 3rd objection.

I. The 3rd Objection Revisited

Notice Exodus 4:1

It is interesting here that Moses offers this 3rd objection assuming the people of Israel would not believe. I point this out because **he** does not believe the promises of God!

a. The Contradiction of Moses' Objection

Moses' words are a contradiction of God's Word.

Notice Exodus 3:18

God had just told him that the people would believe and here we find Moses suggesting to God that they might not believe.

Application:

It is one thing to express your doubts to God but when you express doubts which are contrary to what God has told you then it becomes a very serious matter. When God makes a promise and we do not believe it we are calling God a liar. We are saying, "God I know what you said but I do not believe it to be true." Let me give you an example.

Let's say that I am going through a difficult and painful experience in my life and I read through Romans 8 and I come to verse 28.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I read this verse and I step back and say, "Well, that may be true in some situations and for some believers, but there is no way that what I am going through could ever be worked together for good." That statement is the same as saying, "God I know what is written in your Word, but I don't believe it to be true." That is the same as calling God a liar.

Think about something for a moment; if we call our fellow man a liar he or she is greatly offended by that accusation. I wonder how God feels when in our unbelief we accuse Him of being a liar?

Notice the words of John Butler:

"Unbelief always corrupts the tongue. Moses said a terrible thing about God because of unbelief in his heart. We hear a lot of bad things said about God today-all the way from

gross profanity by men of the world to denials of the great attributes of God by apostate ministers. It is all promoted by unbelief. Faith cleans up the tongue and helps it speak honorably about God. But unbelief does the opposite. Listen to what most men say today: and you will perceive that unbelief, not faith, predominates among men. The tongue says so."

b. The Condition of Moses' Objection

Notice Exodus 4:1 again.

Moses based his objection upon his belief that the people of Israel would not listen. Let me word his objection in a little different way then we can see better what he is saying. Moses was saying, "God, I would go, and I would serve you if the people would believe my message, but since they will not believe I am making the choice to not serve."

Now what I want you to see is that Moses service was conditional. He would only serve the Lord if he could see results of his service.

Application:

There are 2 points here which we need to see and apply to our lives.

1. Our service cannot be controlled by the people whom we witness to.

There are always going to be people who criticize and people who reject the Gospel. There will be people who are totally against anyone proclaiming the Truth of the Bible.

Illustration:

When I preached my father's funeral there were family members there who did not like the fact that I shared the Truth of the Gospel. Several years later one of their family members died and I was asked to do the funeral but there was a stipulation which was stated. The stipulation was that they did not want to hear the sermon which they heard at my father's funeral. I simply sent word back that I could not do the funeral if I was not permitted to speak what God laid on my heart. They still allowed me to do the funeral and I shared the Gospel as I had planned. I knew there were people there who hated what I was saying but I was determined that I had to serve to please God and not men.

If our service is going to be controlled by what people think then we would rarely be able to proclaim the Truth because the Truth cuts deep.

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

God's Word cuts two ways. With some it convicts and converts and with others it convicts and condemns because they reject it. Remember how Stephen was treated in Acts 7 because he spoke the Truth?

Acts 7:54-60

54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The point is there are always going to be those who despise the message of the Gospel, but we must not allow them to shut our mouths.

2. Our service must be conditioned upon God's orders alone.

Moses was basically telling God he would not serve Him because there would be no results. We must not base our service upon results, numbers, popularity or success. We must condition our service on God's orders. When condition our service upon God's orders then we will not be quitters. When people do not respond as we wish or when we do not see the results which we desire, and our service is conditioned upon God's orders then we can continue to serve no matter the situation. Let me show you what God commanded Isaiah.

Isaiah 11:8-12

⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

⁹ And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

¹⁰ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

¹¹ Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

¹² And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

Let me word what God said to Isaiah in contemporary terms. "Isaiah, I want you to preach until every last person leaves the church!" Isaiah was to preach until all the people were gone. He was not to grow weary and quit but his service was to be conditioned upon God's orders and he was to persevere.

Another man who persevered was Noah.

2 Peter 2:5

⁵ And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Noah preached for 120 years and only his family listened and believed the message. He worked on building the ark as a means of salvation from the coming flood. I am sure he was mocked for his faith and his message, but he never quit. His service was conditioned upon God's orders alone.

Now in all of Moses' objections God could have chose to smite him and let him lay in the wilderness to decay. But that is not God's way. God delights in showing grace. He would continue to work with Moses in his unbelief and He would give him more chances to accept the call. This is the way God works with unbelievers today. If someone dies and goes to hell in their sin it is certainly not God's fault. It is their fault for God giveth more grace. God often counters man's objections with an even greater extension of His grace. God gives one chance after another but there will come a day for the sinner when grace will cease and there will come a day for the believer when the window of opportunity to serve will close.

As God extended His grace to Moses, He will do so by empowering him to perform miracles. It is interesting to note that Moses' life will be the beginning of man performing miracles in the Bible. There are no examples before Moses.

For the remainder of tonight's message and for next week I want to look closer at these three miraculous signs given to Moses.

1. The Rod.

Notice Exodus 4:2

I first of all want to draw your attention to the question which God asked to Moses here. God asked Moses what was in his hand. God did not ask because He wanted to know. He already knew what was in his hand. But God asked the question to make Moses aware that he had something which God desired to use. Moses had to be willing to give the rod to God if there was going to be any miracles.

Application:

There are times when God asks us. "What is in your hand, what is in your bank account, what are you going to do with your day off, what is that talent that you have, how are you going to use your retirement days?" These are just a few of the questions He asks us, and it is because He desires to use what we have. He wants us to be willing to surrender what we have. Until what we have is surrendered, we are missing out on seeing the power of God in our lives.

John 6:3-9

³ *And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.*

⁴ *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.*

⁵ *When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*

⁶ *And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.*

⁷ *Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.*

⁸ *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,*

⁹ *There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?*

It was with these 5 barley loaves and the 2 small fish that more than 5000 were fed. But one of the keys to this miracle was the young boy's willingness to surrender what he had to the Lord.

Notice Exodus 4:2 again.

To Moses it was just a "rod" which was his shepherd's staff. But it would be far more than a "rod" when surrendered to God. This simple shepherd's staff would become known as the "ROD OF GOD". It would be used for many miracles. It will be turned to a snake and then back to a rod. The rod would be used in the great plagues brought upon Egypt, it would be used at the parting of the Red Sea, it would be used to bring water from the Rock, it would be used in the defeat of the Amalekites.

Moses saw the rod as a simple shepherd's staff, but God saw it as something to be used in a miraculous way.

Conclusion:

What is in your hand that God is asking for? It may seem very insignificant but when you surrender it to God only He knows how it can be used. Let us remember that David only had a sling and 5 stones, Ehud had a small dagger, Samson only had the jawbone of a donkey and Gideon and his men had pitchers, lamps, and trumpets. What you hold may not seem like much, but let me challenge you to give it to God to see what He can do with it.