

**"The Call of Moses"**

**Part 6**

**Exodus 3-4**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of the life of Moses we revisited the 3<sup>rd</sup> objection which Moses offered to God at the burning bush. We have already looked at all 4 of his objections and we were able to see that unbelief was at the root of every objection. Every time God countered his objection with a Word of assurance Moses was quick to sweep away the assurance and offer another objection. God had spelled it out clearly what was going to happen.

**Notice Exodus 3:16-22**

Even after this revelation Moses still did not believe. Let us again notice his objection.

**I. The 3rd Objection Revisited**

**Part 2**

**Notice Exodus 4:1**

It is interesting here that Moses offers this 3<sup>rd</sup> objection assuming the people of Israel would not believe. I point this out because **he himself** 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. This was the same as calling God a liar. God told Moses what was going to unfold and then Moses said he did not believe God's Word.

**b. The Condition of Moses' Objection**

**Notice Exodus 4:1 again.**

Moses was basically saying, "Lord, I would go IF they would believe but I know they won't believe so I am not going to go." We look at some very valuable lessons from what Moses said here:

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

There will always be critics and sceptics, but we are not to please people, but we are to serve to please God.

**Acts 5:27-29**

*<sup>27</sup> And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,*

*<sup>28</sup> Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.*

*<sup>29</sup> Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

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

Moses was saying to God that because they will not believe I will not go. Basically, Moses was basing his service upon how others would respond and because he believed there would be no results of his service he was refusing to go.

This is exactly what happens when they make their service conditioned upon results. When they see no results, they quit. But when our service is conditioned upon God's orders then even when we see no results, we will not quit for we are serving because God commissioned us to serve. Therefore, we condition our service upon God's orders alone.

Now at the close of the message last week we were starting to look at the 3 miraculous signs which God gave Moses to use to confirm his message and his authority.

**1. The Rod**

**Notice Exodus 4:2**

God asked the question not because he wanted to know for, He already knew what was in Moses' hand. He asked because He desired to use what was in the hand of Moses. Moses saw the shepherd's staff as only a rod, but God saw much more. God wanted Moses to give to Him what he had and then God would do wonderful things with the rod. 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.

**Application:**

Last week we considered how God desires that which is in our hand also. What we have may be very insignificant but when it is surrendered over to the Lord it can be used in miraculous ways. God may be asking for you time, your finances, your talents, your possessions or something else and when He asks, we must give it into His hands. It may seem very small and insignificant to us but in God's hands it becomes a powerful tool.

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. The key is not how impressive the object is which we hold but the key is what we do with it. The most impressive gifts when not given to the Lord are of little value.

There is much more to consider concerning the rod.

#### **a. The Character of Egypt's Government**

##### **Notice Exodus 4:3-4**

God told Moses to cast it down and when he did it turned into a serpent and when he took it by the tail it turned back to a rod. In the Bible the ROD is often symbolic of government. Here in our text the ROD is symbolic of the Egyptian government. The fact that it turned into a snake speaks of what happens to many governments over time as they are under the control of man. They turn serpentine and they turn on the people and become a means of oppression and terror.

I will just take a moment and say that in our own nation we see this very thing happening. Evil today is like water behind a dam and it is pushing against the dam desiring to break loose. We are at a place in our day where the government could very quickly turn into a serpentine government and life could become very difficult in a short period of time. We can hear the hiss of the snake and we can see his head at times as he raises it up.

Egypt had turned into a serpentine government with the change of one Pharaoh who did not know Joseph. Under this Pharaoh the government became venomous toward the children of Israel. So, the serpent showed the character of Egypt's government.

#### **b. The Conquering of Egypt's Government**

##### **Notice Exodus 4:3-4**

When the rod became a serpent, God commanded Moses to catch it by the tail and when he did it changed back to a rod. This was a picture of what was about to happen. Moses would be successful in conquering the Egyptian government. There are two stages of Moses' life depicted here. When he flees from the serpent that is a picture of what happened forty years earlier. When he takes the snake by the tail that is a picture of what is going to happen as he faces the serpentine government in the power of God.

Now there is something else here that we need to see and that was how Moses picked up the snake. He took it by the tail. This is the most dangerous way to catch a snake for when it is grabbed by the tail the head can come around and bite the hand which has grabbed it.

**Notice Exodus 4:4**

I want you to notice that it was God's command for him to take it by the tail. There was a message in all of this for Moses. The mission he was being called to would be dangerous. That is what is meant by the command to take it by the tail. What God was calling Moses to do would be dangerous for he was being called to stand up to the serpentine government. Moses would need to stand in front of the head of the serpentine government and the head would be Pharaoh. It would be dangerous but let us also remember that God had promised that He would be with Moses.

**Notice Exodus 3:10-12**

**Application:**

When I stop and consider the danger of Moses' mission, I am reminded that we too are often commissioned to go into situations that are dangerous. This should not be a surprise to us for we are in a spiritual battle and as we serve the Lord, we become a threat to Satan and his plans. Therefore, we can expect to stand facing the head of the serpent at times. I am reminded of what Paul said about his own ministry.

**2 Corinthians 11:24-27**

*<sup>24</sup> Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*

*<sup>25</sup> Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

*<sup>26</sup> In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;*

*<sup>27</sup> In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

I underlined the "perils in the city" because we need to know some information about what Paul is saying here. Paul faced opposition wherever he went but one of the most dangerous areas which he would have stepped into were the cities. We know what it is like in the inner cities today, such as Chicago or other cities like this. It was the same in Paul's day and probably even worse. The sanitary conditions would have been terrible, there were

homeless people, there was robbery and murder. Paul often found himself in such places for he was determined to reach the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Getting back to Moses, his calling was dangerous, but he would not be alone, and neither are we step onto enemy territory. It takes courage and faith to walk in obedience to God's orders.

## **2. The Leprosy**

### **Notice Exodus 4:6-7**

Now God will give to Moses another sign to affirm his message. God turned his hand white with leprosy and then completely healed his hand. The meaning behind this sign was "RESTORATION".

When God made Moses' hand leprous, He made it white with leprosy which was the most severe form of leprosy there was. It was believed in Moses' day that apart from God there was no hope for those who had leprosy. Only God's power could heal the leper. So, when God healed Moses' hand it was a sign that Moses would not be going in his own power, but he would have the power of God with him.

### **Application:**

This is also true of you and me as we serve the Lord. God does not call us to serve in our power, but He provides us with His own power to serve. This is exactly what we looked at in Ephesians 1 in Paul's prayer.

### **Ephesians 1:18-22**

*<sup>18</sup> The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,*

*<sup>19</sup> And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*

*<sup>20</sup> Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

*<sup>21</sup> Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*

*<sup>22</sup> And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*

The very power of God which raised Jesus from the dead and set Him at His own right hand, is the very power which God has given to us to use as we serve Him. This is:

- a. Power to overcome sin.
- b. Power to resist temptation.
- c. Power to resist Satan.
- d. Power to stand against the attacks of the demonic world.
- e. Power in the message of the Gospel which we share.

We have all the power which we need to serve. We are fully equipped for the mission which God has for us to do.

Now let me get you back to the thought of restoration. The healing of the leprosy was a picture of the power of God and also the restoration of Israel. The people of Israel had become rooted into Egypt. They had adopted the religious practices of Egypt and they were deep into idolatry.

#### **Ezekiel 20:6-9**

<sup>6</sup> *In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:*

<sup>7</sup> *Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

<sup>8</sup> *But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.*

<sup>9</sup> **But** *I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.*

Israel rebelled against God, but God would still bring them out and He would restore the nation. These were His people and He would not forsake them, and He would not give up on them.

#### **Application:**

When I consider this, I am reminded that God will never give up on us and He will never forsake us.

**Philippians 1:6**

*<sup>6</sup> Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

**3. Water to blood.**

**Notice Exodus 4:8-9**

This miracle speaks of judgment and consequences. The serpent would change back to the harmless rod, Moses' hand would be healed. But there is no reversing this miracle. The water would be turned to blood and poured out with no remedy.

This miracle would be a warning to Israel if they did not hearken to the first two.

**Application:**

In this miracle is the warning against unbelief. In the unsaved unbelief will bring eternal consequences for those who die in their sin. For the believer unbelief also brings consequences.

**Hebrews 4:1-3, 6**

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

*<sup>2</sup> For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

*<sup>3</sup> For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

*<sup>6</sup> Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:*

Israel, under Moses, was not able to enter their rest/Canaan because of unbelief. God has a rest for us today and it is in Jesus Christ. We enter into God's rest by trusting our Lord with every situation believing that He is in control. When we refuse to believe we miss the rest which God has for us. That is just one of the consequences of unbelief.

**Conclusion:**

Let us learn to trust God with whatever He calls us to do.