

**"Lessons for Moses"**

**Part 1**

**Exodus 4-6**

**Introduction:** The last time we were together looking at Moses we were looking at his objections which he offered to God's calling. Moses' objections came to an end in Exodus 4 when Moses insisted that God send someone else to be the emancipator of Israel and God announced that Moses' brother Aaron would join Moses to be the spokesman.

**Notice Exodus 4:13-17**

Moses' refusal to answer God's call as God had originally planned and the joint leadership with Aaron would soon bring great heartache to Moses. That heartache will come when Aaron makes the golden calf. We will look at that account at a later date. Moses would need to teach his brother all along the journey which would be an added labor for Moses.

Moses was not concerned with this at the moment and he accepts the calling as his brother is commissioned with him. But Moses was not yet ready to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. There was more which Moses needed to learn and he will be taught these Truths in three encounters with God.

Now, before we look at these three encounters which Moses had with God there is something which we need to consider. If a man or a woman is going to serve the Lord there is one point that is vitally important for the servant. That one point is that the one who is going to serve needs to have a deep personal knowledge of God. To be an effective servant of the Lord we must have a deep personal knowledge about the One whom we are serving. I am not talking about a saving knowledge for that goes without saying, but I am talking about a deeper personal knowledge about who God is and how He works. This knowledge is put forth by God and must be desired by the servant. As God puts this knowledge forth it is our responsibility to pursue this knowledge with our entire being.

**Proverbs 2:3-9**

<sup>3</sup> *Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;*

<sup>4</sup> *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

<sup>5</sup> *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

<sup>6</sup> *For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

<sup>7</sup> *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*

<sup>8</sup> *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

<sup>9</sup> Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

**Proverbs 3:13-18**

<sup>13</sup> Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

<sup>14</sup> For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

<sup>15</sup> She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

<sup>16</sup> Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

<sup>17</sup> Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

<sup>18</sup> She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

God is about to give to Moses knowledge that will be vital for his ministry. The first thing which God is going to teach Moses is in 4:18-23.

**Notice Exodus 4:18-19**

Moses was employed by his father-in-law so he certainly did the right thing by letting him know that he would be leaving. If there was any anxiety with returning Egypt God gave words of comfort to Moses by letting him know that all who sought his life were now dead.

**Application:**

When I stop and consider Moses return to Egypt, I can just imagine how he would battle with anxiety because he would not know what to expect as he went back to the place where they sought to take his life. But God knew what was in the heart of Moses and so He provided the encouragement and the comfort which he needed.

All of this reminds me of how God is faithful to encourage and comfort us in the midst of the battle. There are however two problems which man has with this:

1. Many miss the encouragement because God often encourages His people through His Word and many neglect to read their Bible.
2. Then there are those who get the Words of encouragement, but they do not believe it is for them. So, unbelief keeps them in a state of anxiety or keeps them from walking in obedience to God's will for their lives.

**Notice Exodus 4:20-23**

Here within these verses we see the knowledge which God gave to Moses and the important lesson which Moses needed to learn.

**Lesson #1 - God is Sovereign.**

God told Moses that He would harden the heart of Pharaoh so that he would not let the people of Israel go. Now many have had problems with this over the years. There have been many attempts to explain this away because many do not want to think that God would harden a man's heart. Some of taught that Pharaoh hardened his own heart first and that is the reason why God then hardened his heart. But that is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible is very clear that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh so that he would not allow the people to go.

Now we are told in God's Word about 4 times that Pharaoh did harden his own heart. But we are also told first that God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

**Exodus 7:13-14, 22**

<sup>13</sup> And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

<sup>14</sup> And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.

<sup>22</sup> And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said.

Then in Romans 9 we read these words concerning Pharaoh.

**Romans 9:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

I want to take some time this evening and help you to understand these verses. First of all, we know that it was not the will of God that Pharaoh would die in his sins and go to hell.

**John 3:16**

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Ezekiel 33:11a**

<sup>11</sup> *Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live:*

## 2 Peter 3:9

<sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

So, the question is, "How do we harmonize God's love and His desire that all be saved, with the fact that He hardened Pharaoh's heart?"

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart was the judgment of God upon the sin of Pharaoh. Pharaoh was a sinner and God had every right to judge his sin how He saw fit. If God would have taken his life he would have died and went to hell and we would accept that and move on. So why do we have a hard time with God hardening his heart? Because we don't stop to think about the fact that this was also God's judgment upon the man's sin and God has every right to judge sin however He decides to do so. God is sovereign. In the case of Pharaoh, God could have killed him before the Red Sea experience but instead He chose to judge his sin by hardening his heart. This does not mean that Pharaoh was not responsible for his sins because he was. It was his sin that brought upon him the judgment of God and even while God hardened his heart Pharaoh also hardened his own heart. This sovereign act of God would do two things which we can see on the surface:

1. It would be through Pharaoh's rebellion that God's power would be seen by all who read the Word of God.
2. It would be a warning to all unbelievers of the danger of living in rebellion against God.

Both of these statements are supported by Paul in Romans 9.

## Romans 9:17-18

<sup>17</sup> *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

<sup>18</sup> *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

God used the rebellion of Pharaoh to make His mighty power known to the world. In verse 18 there is a very frightening warning. God can harden the heart of whomever He desires. This is one reason why it is so dangerous for the sinner to continue to live in rebellion against God and reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God may choose to harden the heart of

that individual and I believe a person can go so far that it becomes impossible to turn to God.

**Proverbs 29:1**

*He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

In Romans 1 we read of God's judgment being brought upon the unsaved in another way.

**Romans 1:18-19, 24, 26, 28**

*<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

*<sup>19</sup> Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*

*<sup>24</sup> Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

*<sup>26</sup> For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:*

*<sup>28</sup> And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;*

Let us now get back to Moses. God was making it known to him that He was sovereign over man but what did all of this mean for Moses?

Moses was just to do as he was commissioned to do, and the results were to be left to the Lord. Moses could not in anyway convince Pharaoh to let the people go unless God moved in the heart of Pharaoh to do so. Moses was just to walk in obedience to the commands which God would give to him and allow God work everything out in His timing and in His way.

**Application:**

Let me just say that if you and I were to really grasp this Truth we would be relieved of much pressure that we have placed upon ourselves. It is our responsibility to walk in obedience to God's Word and let God bring about the results.

**1 Corinthians 3:4-7**

*<sup>4</sup> For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

<sup>5</sup> *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?*

<sup>6</sup> *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.*

<sup>7</sup> *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

Many in the church desire to see people saved and so they have developed their own "ways" of getting people saved. They have decision cards to fill out, prayers to repeat, isles to walk and so forth. Too many times God is not in any of this and so a person walks away with a false sense of security because of something they "did" or "said". I cannot in any way coerce someone into salvation if God is not working in that person's life to open their eyes and draw them to Jesus Christ.

My responsibility is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and let it in the hands of God. That can be difficult to do if you are looking to have a number of converts which you can post on a board or somewhere in a bulletin. We must be so careful that we do not step in and try and play the part of the Holy Spirit in someone's life. It is our responsibility to proclaim the Truth and wait upon the Lord to work.

Moses needed to know this because if not he would feel as though his ministry was not effective when he saw Pharaoh refuse to let Israel go. Let me remind you of one of Moses' objections.

#### **Notice Exodus 4:1**

Remember this objection? Moses was making his obedience conditional. In other words, he was stating, "I would go to the people, but they will not believe. If I knew there would be a result of my labor I would go."

This statement about God's sovereignty is letting Moses know that the results are God's responsibility and not Moses'.

#### **Conclusion:**

I came upon something this past week that fits this message so well and I wanted to share it with you. Notice the words of an unnamed teacher.

*"Self-righteous service comes through human effort. True service comes from a relationship with the divine Other deep inside.*

*Self-righteous service is impressed with the "big deal." True service finds it almost impossible to distinguish the small from the large service.*

**Self-righteous service requires external rewards.** *True service rests contented in*

hiddenness.

**Self-righteous service is highly concerned about results. True service is free of the need to calculate results.**

Self-righteous service picks and chooses whom to serve. True service is indiscriminate in its ministry.

Self-righteous service is affected by moods and whims. **True service ministers simply and faithfully because there is a need.**

Self-righteous service is temporary. True service is a life-style.

Self-righteous service is without sensitivity. It insists on meeting the need even when to do so would be destructive. True service can withhold the service as freely as perform it.

Self-righteous service fractures relationships. True service, on the other hand, builds relationships."

Let us remember what David said to Goliath:

**1 Samuel 17:47**

<sup>47</sup> And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: **for the battle is the LORD's**, and he will give you into our hands.