

MUCH LIKE MOSES 06/21/15

Text: Exodus 3:1-4:17 **Reading:** Exodus 3:1-10

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is drawn from the life of a father as recorded in the Old Testament. We typically do not think of this character as a father but in fact he had at least two sons, Gershom and Eliezer (**Exodus 18:3,4**). The father in our lesson is Moses and his story, or at least the part we will examine today, is found in **Exodus 3** and **4**.

1. When God appeared to Moses at the burning bush...

- a. He called him to the task of leading the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage.
- b. In a similar way, as God's people today, we have received from God a special calling.
- c. Not to go to a country to deliver those in physical bondage, but to a world to deliver those in the bondage of sin:

“But you are a chosen race, A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”¹ **Peter 2:9-10**

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; “nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” **Matthew 5:14-16**

-- Too often, though, we behave just like Moses, making the very same excuses!

[Let's turn and read **Exodus 3:1-10**, to see how God called Moses. With this scene in mind, we are now ready to consider the response given by Moses...]

I. WHO AM I?

A. FOUND IN EXODUS 3:11

1. Though Moses was once a member of the ruling house of Egypt...

a. He was now but a lowly shepherd

b. 40 years had passed since he had been in Egypt

c. He was an 80 year old man, already past the average life span for his generation -- This prompted Moses to wonder whether he was the right man for the job

2. But God's response was quick, and should have been adequate...

a. **"I will certainly be with you..." - [Exodus 3:12](#)**

b. God promised to be with Moses, and this alone should have been sufficient because it was all about Moses and God.

c. As Paul later wrote, **"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."** - [Romans 8:28](#)

d. **"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?"** [Romans 8:31](#)

B. SOME USE THIS SAME EXCUSE TODAY...

1. Trying to excuse ourselves by claiming we are insufficient for the task and ignoring the fact that it is not about us.

a. It is true that by ourselves that we are insufficient but it's not who we are, it is WHOSE we are!

b. God makes us sufficient:

"Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

[2 Corinthians 3:5-6](#)

c. Look what He did with the apostles! **(recognized as uneducated and untrained men - [Acts 4:13](#))**

2. With His help, we can accomplish anything He wants us to do!

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." [Philippians 4:13](#)

3. Just as Moses was then, we are God's chosen today.

4. Through Jesus, God has provided us the same assurance given Moses: **"...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."** [Matthew 28:20b](#) (The great commission.)

[But Moses wasn't ready to accept his responsibility to follow the will of God and he quickly jumps to another excuse...]

II. WHAT SHALL I SAY?

A. THIS EXCUSE IS FOUND IN [EXODUS 3:13](#)...

1. Moses knew that when he went to the children of Israel, there were bound to be questions

a. Such as, "Who is this God who sent you to us?"

b. And perhaps, "Why are we to leave this country we have come to consider our home for over 400 years?" -
- Moses expresses inadequacy in knowing what to say

2. Again, God's response was quick...

a. **"Thus you shall say..." - [Exodus 3:14-15](#)**

b. God tells Moses what he needs to say in response to their questions.

B. AGAIN, A SIMILAR EXCUSE IS SOMETIMES GIVEN TODAY...

1. We try to excuse ourselves by saying our knowledge is inadequate

2. But God has told us what to say...

a. We have been given the words:

"...but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." [John 20:31](#)

b. The message is really quite simple - **"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."** [Mark 16:16](#)

c. What are we to believe? - [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#)

[And so, as with Moses, we have no reason for saying "what shall I say?" As we return to Moses, we see that despite God instructing him what to say, he soon raises a third objection...]

III. SUPPOSE THEY WILL NOT BELIEVE ME?

A. THIS EXCUSE IS FOUND IN [EXODUS 4:1](#)...

1. Now that he knows what to say, he balks at the idea that the people may not listen.

a. Moses fled Egypt a murderer 40 years before, why would the people believe him?

b. He has already forgotten that God will be with him!

2. The LORD said to him, **"What is that in your hand?"** [4:2a](#)

NOTE – When God asks a Question – it's never because he doesn't know the Answer...The answer is Always for YOU!

a. The ROD, which turns into a serpent - [Exodus 4:2-5](#)

1) With this rod Moses produced locusts, divided the sea, called forth water from a rock, and defeated the Amalekites.

b. His OWN HAND, which turns into leprosy - [Exodus 4:6-8](#)

c. The WATER, which will turn to blood when dropped on the dry ground - [Exodus 4:9](#)

B. SOME HESITATE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL FOR THE SAME REASON...

1. Our own ego's fear of failure keeps us from trying

2. But just as God gave Moses convincing proofs, so He has given us the evidences necessary to convince the honest and sincere person...

a. [John 20:31](#)

b. The Word of God, able to produce faith:

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." - [Romans 10:17](#)

c. Especially its evidences concerning the resurrection of Christ, fulfilled prophecy, etc. -- With such aids, we cannot justify our inactivity in sharing the gospel with others!

3. We ALL have something in our hand to use for God!

- a. Often we wait for God to GIVE us some great gift or call and the work of the Lord goes undone.
- b. We need to put the talents God has given us to work as He sees fit (“**But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. ‘Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. Matthew 25:26-7 – parable of the talents.)**
- c. If God can take an Ex-Murderer – Who doesn’t want to be used - & USE HIM then imagine what God can do with those that want to be used. Those that will simply say YES!
[You would think by now Moses would accept the call; but a fourth excuse is quickly given...]

IV. I AM SLOW OF SPEECH AND SLOW OF TONGUE

A. WE FIND THIS EXCUSE IN EXODUS 4:10...

1. Moses claims that he is not an eloquent speaker
2. But God is not moved by this objection...
 - a. “Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.” [Acts 7:22](#)
 - b. He already knows the level of ability in those He calls:

“The LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?” - [Exodus 4:11](#)

c. **But He is able to make up for anyone’s shortcomings**

2) **Again, promising to be with Moses - [Exodus 4:12](#)**

3) **He had even arranged for Aaron to be Moses’ mouthpiece - [Exodus 4:14-16](#)**

B. SOME CHRISTIANS TRY TO USE THIS EXCUSE AS WELL...

1. **But it did not stop the apostle Paul - cf. [1 Corinthians 2:1,3-4](#)**

2. **It has not stopped others**

a. There are those who overcame speech impediments to become preachers.

3. At the very least, we can make use of those who can speak by arranging studies for them with others.

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;” [Ephesians 4:11-12](#)

[We have considered four excuses that Moses gave; but these were just smokescreens. The true reason for all these excuses is revealed in: **“But he said, “Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will.” Exodus 4:13...**]

V. PLEASE SEND...WHOMEVER ELSE YOU MAY SEND

A. MOSES SIMPLY DID NOT WANT TO GO!

1. The previous excuses were simply a smokescreen attempt to hide this fact!
2. Now that the smokescreen is removed, God's impatience with Moses becomes evident
 - a. **His anger was kindled against Moses - Exodus 4:14a**
 - b. **Read verses 15-17 with an emphasis on the word "shall" to appreciate the anger of the Lord**

B. THE SAME IS TRUE WITH US TODAY!

1. Any and every excuse we could offer is only a smokescreen.
2. We really would rather that God use someone else!
3. We really don't want to do what God has called us to do!
4. If we do not live up to the calling of the Lord, His anger will be kindled against us just as it was with Moses!

Conclusion

1. With Moses, we know the rest of the story...
 - a. He answered the call, and went to Egypt
 - b. With the help of God, he delivered the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage

2. But what about us? What will be the rest of our story?

a. I hope we can learn from the example of Moses and leave the excuses behind and do the work of the Lord.

Invitation

What about the call to obey the gospel of Christ?

Are you making excuses for not responding as you know you should?

If you know what you should do, the time to act is today!