

THE CALLING

Presbyter Timothy Flowers

When we read about the calling of Moses in Exodus 3 and 4, we read about a man who struggled with the call, doubting both himself and God! Moses transition from shepherding sheep to shepherding people was anything but a smooth one. It is this reason the story of Moses' calling should give us some hope and help, for it is a great lesson about God qualifying the unqualified. Let's look at seven lessons that we can learn from Moses' calling and apply them to our own calling.

1. God **Encounter** Moses

Although God purposed to use Moses from his birth and though Moses at times felt that purpose surging through his veins, it was a personal encounter with God that altered the course of his life, that served as the beginning of his public ministry.

It is worth noting that when God encountered Moses, He found him **working**. Moses was found tending sheep on the backside of the wilderness all alone! Many of us may feel the purpose of God long before it becomes manifest, sometimes causing us to think we are wasting our time with menial tasks and jobs. We must understand that we are being prepped for the purpose of God and that there is a perfect timing to God's plans for our lives. In the mean time our work ethics and diligence are being tested and it would be wise to apply Ecclesiastes 9:10 to our lives, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might..."

When God called Moses He gave him reason to "**turn aside**." I've never seen a burning bush, but I've had an encounter that left no doubt in my mind as to my calling. Are there any two callings just alike? I doubt it. I would also guess that most true callings, whatever form they take, give each one of us reason to "turn aside." These are moments in time and encounters that we simply cannot deny.

When God encountered Moses, He called a man who was **submissive**. Think about it. Moses was 80 years old when he asked permission from his father-in-law to go back to Egypt to do God's will! Even though God himself spoke to Moses, Moses went back to Egypt with the full blessings of his elder, after Jethro told Moses, "go in peace!"



Moses' encounter with God left him completely postured in **faith!** Moses would go on to perform mighty deeds and miracles that would be absolutely impossible for him to perform without God's help. My experience tells me that God demands faith from his servants and often postures us in faith because it is in the realm of faith that he does His greatest work! Furthermore, the works we will witness as we step out in faith is what proves the Lord is at work and guarantees that He gets all the glory!

2. God **Enabled** Moses

Moses spent 40 years gaining some of the best education in the courts of Pharaoh and another 40 in Midian's sheepfolds, but neither the chaos of city life nor the desert's solitude left Moses fully equipped. Moses simply could not rely on the training of the world to prepare him for the work of God. And while 40 years on "the backside of the desert" tempered him some, when God called him he was still full of doubts, fears, and anger.

Moses' struggles and objections at the time of his calling:

3:11 SELFISHNESS "Who am I that I should..."

3:13 DOUBT Who shall I say sent me?

4:1 FEAR "But...they will not believe me or listen to me."

4:10 PRIDE "Oh, My Lord, I am not eloquent..."

Moses lack of confidence was on full display when he approached his father-in-law (4:18). One would think that holding a staff that could turn into a snake and possessing power over leprosy, as well as having the name of God personally revealed to him would be all Moses needed to be fully convinced of his call however, his approach to Jethro was shallow and one that revealed a man still struggling with his calling. He asked Jethro for permission to go see if his brothers were still alive! He KNEW they were alive but lacked the courage and confidence to declare his true mission!

It did take some time for Moses to come around to trusting God completely however that initial enabling was not derived from mere book knowledge but through a powerful encounter with God himself!

3. God **Equipped** Moses

Exodus 4:12-14 tells us that God grew very angry with Moses because even after God promised Moses that He would speak on his behalf and teach him what to say, Moses still insisted on human assistance and the presence of mortal man by his side. God



gave Moses his Aaron understanding that Aaron could never do what Moses was called to do and in fact, it was still Moses to whom God spoke. Aaron merely repeated what Moses relayed to him from the Lord.

No one can substitute you if indeed yours is a true calling from the Lord and if we are to experience the supernatural in our ministries, we must not rely on the arm of the flesh! The miraculous is not the result of human ability and if we insist on using the arm of the flesh, we do so at the risk of incurring the anger of the Lord!

The fact that Aaron could never take the place of Moses is evidenced when the Children of Israel were left in his charge while Moses was on an 80 day sabbatical! That's not to say Moses did not need Aaron! It does seem that God gave Aaron to Moses as a strong support, knowing we all need one at times.

We see Jesus sending out the disciples in pairs of two and the Apostles are also often seen in pairs. In Moses case, it appears that God moved upon Aaron to meet up with Moses, even before Moses was asking for his help! That tells me the God is working on the other end of the line to give us the help that we need, when we need it.

Furthermore, chances are that before you have help with fulfilling your dreams, you will be called upon to help someone else fulfill theirs.

4. God **Endowed** Moses

Not only did God provide Moses natural help, he also gave him supernatural help. God endowed Moses with 3 supernatural signs; the hybrid snake rod, the leprous hand, and the water turned blood when drawn from the mighty Nile.

God always endows His people with supernatural help whether they live 1400 BC or the 21st century. In fact, the very signs accompanying Moses are mirrored in the signs that Jesus said would follow them that believe.

According to Mark 16:17-18 we too shall:

- take authority over demons (commanding Pharaoh to let God's people free)
- speak with new tongues (Ex 4:12 "I will be your mouth and teach you what to say.")
- take up serpents (power over the snake-rod)
- lay hands on the sick (leprous hand that was cleansed)
- if we drink any deadly thing it will not hurt us (blood drawn from the Nile River)

These signs WILL WORK for those who are walking faith!

5. God **Emboldened** Moses

Not only did God personally reveal Himself to Moses by giving him His name, not only did God provide detailed instruction along the way, not only did God equip Moses with natural assistance and endowed him with supernatural signs, He emboldened Moses!



He reassured Moses many times over that He was right by his side and when Moses walked back into Egypt, he did so with the full backing of God almighty! The Lord's description of this transformation is read in Exodus 7:1 *"And the Lord said to Moses, 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh...'"*

The boldness we read of in the early church was not a natural boldness, but one that came upon the church as a result of prayer! (Acts 4:13, 29, 31) It was God who emboldened Moses and it is God who emboldens His Church today, as we pray!

6. God **Expected** Moses

The most shocking words we read in the account of Moses' calling is found in 4:24, *"... the Lord met him and sought to kill him."* After all God had done for Moses, convincing him, empowering him and emboldening him, God tried to kill him! What would warrant this drastic action?

This is in context of Moses failing to circumcise his own son. God did not try to kill Moses when Moses grew angry and killed a man or when he broke the two tablets with God's own handwriting on them, but He did try to kill him when Moses neglected to attend to his families personal salvation. God expected Moses to first lead his family before he lead His family as He expects the same out of us!

According to 1 Timothy 3:4, our ministries start at our own homes! Moses gave his wife reason to be angry at him and it appears that after this event she went back home until a later time. Echoing Paul, how will we garner respect from God's family if we don't have respect from our own? God expects that the first in line of those we lead, is our own families!

7. God **Empowered** Moses

It would pay us to read Exodus 4:27 very slowly. *"And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him."*

Did you catch that? Before Moses went back to Egypt he stopped back by Mt. Sinai! God directed Aaron to Sinai and there Moses and Aaron met "in the mount of God" where it all first began! This underscores the fact that we can't lead others where we ourselves have never been!

Before Moses challenged God's people, he himself was challenged by God on the mount and when Moses told Pharaoh that they wanted to worship in the wilderness, he had already been there and done that! Not only did Moses see a burning bush when he was first called but he led millions back to see a burning mountain! This time however, he did not just approach the fire, he was caught up in it!

Conclusion

The calling of God is a most powerful and sacred thing a person can ever experience outside of personal salvation. When Moses walked back into Egypt, it wasn't a man who was on dodge and running in fear of his life, but it was a man who came ready to route the enemies of God because of his calling.

The drowning of the entire Egyptian army in the Red Sea...coincidence? I don't think so. God was repaying Pharaoh for drowning an army of Israelite babies in the Nile!

Well, all but one at least.

Pharaoh was arrogant enough to challenge God, claiming to not know who he was but when God got done with Pharaoh, all Israel and Egypt knew who He was and ironically enough, we don't even know the name of the Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus today! Moses, just mortal man with a calling of God on his life, what a powerful instrument and when Moses walked out of Egypt he led million to freedom and left the enemy completely defeated!