

# What's in Your Hand? Responding to God's Call

Sunday, February 9, 2020

## **Exodus 3:1-4; 11-12 New International Version (NIV)**

**3** Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

**2** There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. **3** So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

**4** When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, **God called to him** from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

**11** But Moses said to God, "**Who am I** that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

**12** And God said, "**I will be with you.**"

## **Exodus 4:1-4; 10-13 New International Version (NIV)**

**4** Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you'?"

**2** Then the LORD said to him, "**What is that in your hand?**"

"A staff," he replied.

**3** The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground."

Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and **he ran from it.** **4** Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand.

**10** Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

**11** The LORD said to him, "Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD? **12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.**"

**13** But Moses said, "Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else."

Like Moses God is calling to us and wants to use us for His purposes. Like Moses, we struggle with responding to that call. Last week said that...

**1. God wants to use YOU**

And asked the **Question:** How does God want to use me?

**2. There is GREAT NEED all around us**

And asked the **Question:** What needs can you see around you?

**3. You HAVE SOMETHING to offer**

Ordinary things become extraordinary when put into Gods hands

And asked the **Question:** What tools do I have in my life that could be used for God?

**4. Stop making EXCUSES**

And asked the **Question:** What excuses have I been making to God?

**5. Each of us have DIFFERENT GIFTS**

And asked the **Question:** What gifts do I see in others?

Today I want to continue our discussion of God's call on our life and how we can learn to respond to that call

**1. You will make mistakes**

**Exodus 4:24-31 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>24</sup> At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses<sup>[a]</sup> and was about to kill him.

<sup>25</sup> But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. <sup>26</sup> So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

<sup>27</sup> The LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. <sup>28</sup> Then Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say, and also about all the signs he had commanded him to perform.

<sup>29</sup> Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, <sup>30</sup> and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, <sup>31</sup> and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

Mistakes do not mean that God is finished with us and will no longer use us; but neither is God interested in allowing those mistakes to remain uncorrected in our lives. They can greatly affect our effectiveness for the purposes to which God has called us and thus God will be serious about bringing correction into our lives.

But read the next few verses, we immediately see God at work continuing to fulfill the call he had placed on Moses' life. We see a favorable and loving reunion between brothers, and we see the excitement of the Israelite Elders.

Don't let the fear of making a mistake nor the fact that you have made mistakes deter you from being used of God

## 2. Not everyone will believe in you

### **Exodus 5:19-21 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>19</sup> The Israelite overseers realized they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day." <sup>20</sup> When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, <sup>21</sup> and they said, "May the LORD look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

### **Exodus 6:6-9 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup> "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup> I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.'"

<sup>9</sup> Moses reported this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and harsh labor.

It can be discouraging when others don't support us in the call that God has put upon our lives. But we must remember that not everyone will understand; that many can't see what God is doing because of the heavy burden that their own lives are under. Our job is not to get everyone on board, but to make sure that we are on board with God.

The enemy will attempt to discourage us through the discouragement of others. Hold on to God's purposes and continue to press forward in faith

### 3. There will be God sized challenges along the way

Moses call involved one God sized challenge after another. Just getting the Children of Israel out of Egypt required many mighty miracles of God. But for some reason the one that captures my attention most happened after God brought them out.

#### **Exodus 14:1-18 New International Version (NIV)**

**14** Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. <sup>3</sup> Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.’ <sup>4</sup> And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” So the Israelites did this.

<sup>5</sup> When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, “What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!” <sup>6</sup> So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. <sup>7</sup> He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. <sup>8</sup> The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. <sup>9</sup> The Egyptians—all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots, horsemen<sup>[a]</sup> and troops—pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon.

<sup>10</sup> As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. <sup>11</sup> They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? <sup>12</sup> Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!”

<sup>13</sup> Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. <sup>14</sup> The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. <sup>16</sup> Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the

water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. <sup>17</sup> I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. <sup>18</sup> The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

#### 4. Two are better than one

Sometime we feel like responding to the call of God means doing it all ourselves. But God wants us to work together to fulfill His purposes. He designed it that way. It is better that way.

Remember last week we asked the question; “What gifts do I see in others.” That’s because God wants us to be a team.

#### **Exodus 18:17-23 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup> Moses’ father-in-law replied, “What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup> You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. <sup>19</sup> Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. <sup>20</sup> Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. <sup>21</sup> But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>22</sup> Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. <sup>23</sup> If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied.”

#### 5. The greatest commandment must be our guide

#### **Matthew 22:37-39 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>[b]</sup>

## 6. Don't try to do this in your own strength

### **Numbers 20:1-12 New International Version (NIV)**

#### Water From the Rock

**20** In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

<sup>2</sup> Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. <sup>3</sup> They quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD! <sup>4</sup> Why did you bring the LORD’s community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? <sup>5</sup> Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!”

<sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. <sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>8</sup> “Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink.”

<sup>9</sup> So Moses took the staff from the LORD’s presence, just as he commanded him. <sup>10</sup> He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, “Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?” <sup>11</sup> Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.

<sup>12</sup> But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.”

### **Zechariah 4:6 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup> So he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.