

Message One

A Complete View of God's Calling of Moses as the Standard Model of God's Servant

Scripture Reading: Exo. 3:2, 6, 8, 14-15; 4:3-4, 6-7, 9, 14b-16, 24-26

I. The case of Moses is the best one to illustrate the matter of rejecting the natural strength and ability; no other person in the Bible is as good as Moses in this aspect:

- A. The natural strength and ability have no divine element.
- B. The natural strength and ability act on their own, not according to God's will.
- C. The natural strength and ability seek their own glory and satisfy their own desire.
- D. The natural strength and ability become useful in resurrection for our service to the Lord.
- E. Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and works—Acts 7:22.
- F. Moses did something for God's people according to his own will—vv. 23-26.
- G. Moses was put aside by God for forty years—Exo. 2:14-15; Acts 7:27-30:
 - 1. Moses, as a man who had been educated in the palace of Egypt, was forced by God to live as a shepherd in the wilderness; as the years went by, he lost everything—his confidence, his future, his interest, and his goal—Exo. 3:11; cf. 2:11-13.
 - 2. Everyone called by the Lord must pass through a period of time in which he loses his confidence, realizes his inability, and considers himself good only for death.
 - 3. Moses learned to serve God according to His leading and to trust in Him—Acts 7:34-36; Heb. 11:28:
 - a. Moses' natural ability was dealt with, so it became an ability in resurrection; the ability in resurrection corresponds with God's move.
 - b. Actually, God was wrought into Moses' ability; his ability eventually was full of God.

II. The record of God's calling of Moses is longer than the record of His calling of any other person in the Bible; Moses was the first complete, qualified, and perfected servant of God in history; because he was the first fully qualified servant of God in the Bible, Moses is the standard model of God's servant, and God's calling of him is the standard for His calling of all His servants:

- A. The place of God's calling was the back of the wilderness (Exo. 3:1); to be at the back side means that we are discontented and dissatisfied with our present situation.
- B. When Moses came to the back of the wilderness, he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb (v. 1); many times the back side of our situation turns out to be the mountain of God.
- C. In Exodus 3:5 God said to Moses, "Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground"; *holy ground* in this verse refers to land untouched by man:
 - 1. This indicates that God's calling occurs in a place where there is no human interference and no human manipulation or opinion; if we would be called by God, we must be in a place reserved wholly for Him.
 - 2. The fact that God called Moses from the midst of a thornbush indicates that the place of God's calling is within us.

III. A person who is called by God must see the vision of the burning thornbush—Acts 7:22-36; Exo. 3:2-6a:

- A. Everyone who is called by God must realize that he is a redeemed thornbush (a redeemed sinner who was under God's curse—Gen. 3:17-18) with a fire burning within him and that this fire is the Triune God Himself, the God of resurrection—Deut. 33:16; Mark 12:26:
1. The fact that the thornbush burned without being consumed indicates that God does not want to use our natural life as fuel; He will burn only with Himself as fuel—Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:7; Col. 1:29; Isa. 4:4; Rev. 3:15-19.
 2. We have to be hot in our spirit, not in our natural life (Rom. 12:11); any hotness in our natural life is strange fire to God, and this brings in death (Lev. 10:1-11; 16:12).
 3. The fact that the thornbush burned without being consumed indicates that the God of glory, as the holy fire, should burn within us but that we should not be exhausted; if a servant of God is exhausted, it may mean that he is using his own energy to do something for God—cf. 1 Cor. 15:10, 58.
 4. The memory of this vision must have worked within Moses constantly to remind him not to use his natural strength or ability.
 5. Through the sign of the burning thornbush, God impressed Moses that he was a vessel, a channel, through which God was to be manifested—2 Cor. 4:7; Phil. 1:20, 22-25.
 6. Throughout the years we need to be learning one lesson: to work for God without using the natural life as the fuel but by letting God burn within us.
 7. The record of the burning thornbush is to be a continuing memorial and testimony to God's called ones—Deut. 33:1, 16; Mark 12:26.
 8. May this record of the burning thornbush make such a deep impression upon us that we never forget it; this vision needs to be stamped upon our being.
- B. The church is a corporate thornbush burning with the God of resurrection—cf. Gen. 2:22; Eph. 2:6:
1. God's ultimate goal is to obtain a dwelling place, to build up His habitation—John 1:14; 2:19; 1 Cor. 3:16; Rev. 21:3, 22.
 2. The church is the Triune God burning within redeemed humanity; this is the divine economy—Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4.

IV. A person who is called by God must have a revelation of who God is:

- A. The One who called Moses was first the Angel of Jehovah—Exo. 3:2:
1. The title *the Angel of Jehovah* refers mainly to Christ, the Son of God, as the One sent by God (cf. John 8:42) to save His people from their situation of suffering (cf. Judg. 6:12-22; 13:3-22).
 2. According to Exodus 3:2 and 6, the Angel of Jehovah, the sent One, was Jehovah Himself, the sending One (cf. Zech. 2:6-11), and Jehovah is the Triune God (Exo. 3:6, 15).
 3. For the purpose of calling and sending Moses, God, the sending One, appeared to him as the sent One.
- B. The name of the One who called Moses was I Am—vv. 14-15:
1. The name I Am indicates that God, Christ, is the reality of every positive thing—John 8:58; 6:35; 8:12; 15:1; Col. 2:16-17.
 2. We must know that the God who calls us is and that we are not—Heb. 11:6.
- C. The One who called Moses was the God of his father—Exo. 3:6:
1. *The God of your father* denotes history with God.

2. In the eyes of God, the Lord who calls you is the God of your spiritual father—1 Cor. 4:15, 17; Psa. 103:7; Phil. 2:19-22.

D. The One who called Moses was the God of resurrection:

1. We must know the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—the resurrecting Triune God:
 - a. The God of Abraham signifies God the Father who calls man, justifies man, and equips man to live by faith and live in fellowship with Him—Gen. 12:1; 15:6; chs. 17—18; 19:29; 21:1-13; 22:1-18.
 - b. The God of Isaac signifies God the Son who blesses man with the inheritance of all His riches, with a life of the enjoyment of His abundance, and with a life in peace—25:5; 26:3-4, 12-33.
 - c. The God of Jacob signifies God the Spirit who works in all things for the good of His lovers, transforms man, and makes man mature in the divine life so that man may be able to bless all the people, to rule over all the earth, and to satisfy all the people with God the Son as the life supply—27:41; 28:1—35:10; chs. 37; 39—49; Rom. 8:28-29.
2. A called one of God must be in resurrection and do everything in resurrection for the building up of the church, which is altogether in resurrection—Eph. 1:19-23; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:45b, 58.

V. **A person who is called by God must know the purpose of God's calling—Exo. 3:8:**

- A. The purpose of God's calling, negatively, is to deliver God's chosen people out of the usurpation and tyranny of Satan and the world, typified by Pharaoh and Egypt—Rom. 1:16.
- B. The purpose of God's calling, positively, is to bring God's chosen people into the all-inclusive Christ realized as the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit, typified by the land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey—Col. 2:6; Gal. 3:14.

VI. **A person who is called by God must know how to deal with Satan, the flesh, and the world—1 John 3:8; Gal. 5:17; 1 John 2:15:**

- A. Anything that we rely on apart from God is a hiding place for the serpent—Exo. 4:3-4; Luke 10:19.
- B. Our flesh is a constitution of leprosy—sin, rottenness, and corruption—Exo. 4:6-7; Rom. 7:17-18, 24-25; Isa. 6:5.
- C. The world with its supply, entertainment, and amusement is filled with the blood of death—Exo. 4:9; 1 John 5:19; Gal. 6:14.

VII. **A person who is called by God needs the experience of matching and cutting:**

- A. A called one must have someone to match him in the principle of the Body for his restriction, safeguard, and protection—Exo. 4:14b-16; Luke 10:1; Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12.
- B. A called one must be willing to have the subjective experience of the circumcision of his natural life in order to become useful in the hand of the Lord for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose and to be prepared to carry out God's commission—Exo. 4:24-26.
- C. May every aspect of God's calling be our experience in the Lord's recovery today.