

One of a Kind: Moses 2

The accounts of the lives of men and women in the Bible are a gift to us. There is so much that we can glean about God and his heart, his priorities, his purposes, and processes in dealing with us. Last week we began to walk through the pages of the life of a great leader in the Old Testament. Moses. We will continue to look at His life today, and the dealings of God with him and through Him. I encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and to apply what you learn from the life of this great man.

We pick up the account of the life of Moses when he is at the back side of the desert and God appears to him in a burning bush and speaks to him, giving him a call to bring God's people out of Egypt. Moses was alone when God gave Him this call. It was a massive event in the history of God's chosen people. Yet there were no crowds to witness it. No TV crew to record it. God doesn't need these things to validate Himself or His workings. He doesn't need popularity or majority vote. He just needs one man. Or one woman.

Moses had reservations about God using him. Remember we looked at Moses at 40 years of age living in the palace.... He so quickly took matters into his own hands and killed the Egyptian who was beating his fellow Israelite. Now at 80 years of age after the process of God he is a different man.

He is vocal about his reservations:

1. Who am I that I should go?

Exo 3:10-11 NKJV

¹⁰Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." ¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

God's response: I will be with you

Jdg 6:11-16 NKJV

¹¹Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. ¹²And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!" ¹³Gideon said to Him, "O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about,

saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." ¹⁴Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?" ¹⁵So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." ¹⁶And the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

2. When I tell them this and that you have sent me to them and they ask me "What is His name, what shall I say?"

What if they ask me by whose authority am I saying these thing to them? Who has sent me? They will obviously know I am a nobody, so who am I representing?

God's response: I AM has sent me to you.

Gal 1:1 NKJV

Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),...

Do you know who has sent you?

Who has appointed you? Has God appointed you?

Whom has he sent you to?

1 Co 1:1-2 NKJV

¹*Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, ²To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

3. What if they don't believe me?

Exo 4:1 NKJV

Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.' "

God's response: We'll show them a few things (miracles).

God commands Moses to take the rod in his hand and throw it on the ground. It becomes a snake. He picks it up and it becomes a rod. The God commands Moses

to put his hand inside his tunic. When he brings it out, it is leprous. He puts it back into his tunic and when he brings it out, it is clean and healthy.

The Lord then says to Moses:

Exo 4:9 NKJV

And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land."

I love how God doesn't pacify Moses or reassure Him that it will all go smoothly. He actually hints that they might still not believe Moses! He told Mo the truth!

The call of Ezekiel.

Eze 2:2-5 NKJV

²Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. ³And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. ⁴For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' ⁵As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

4. But I can't speak well

Exo 4:10-12 NKJV

¹⁰Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." ¹¹So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? ¹²Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."

God's response: I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say.

Mat 10:18-20 NKJV

¹⁸You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Act 4:31 NKJV

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Act 4:7-8 NKJV

⁷And when they had set them in the midst, they(the religious leaders) asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:...

Act 4:13 NKJV

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

5. I am not the man. Please send someone else? Anyone else whom you choose (just not me).

Exo 4:13-16 NKJV

¹³But he said, "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send." ¹⁴So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. ¹⁶So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.

God's response: I will give you Aaron. You will tell him what to say. He will be your spokesperson.

God hadn't prepared Aaron for the job. He had prepared Moses. God was secure in His ability to use Moses. Not in Moses ability.

The point is that God is enough. Whatever God has called you to. When you are ready and he is ready to perform His Word, He is enough. Think of the main reason why you believe you can't be used by God the way He has spoken to you? God's response is most likely that He will be with you and He will be enough!

When I think about God's processes to bringing a Word to fruition, I see 2 processes happening. The first is the process of preparation and calling and shaping of the man

or woman. Bringing that person to a place of readiness and also to a place of receiving and accepting the call. The second is the process of the fulfilment of the Word. Maybe they coincide and overlap a bit. Maybe the latter assists in the former to some extent and in some instances. In the case of Moses, we see that in His eyes after the process of God, he felt less prepared and more inadequate to fulfil God's purpose. The process of his preparation took many years. I think God likes it when we are aware of our inadequacy. It means that we will rely on Him and do what we need to in faith without claiming glory for ourselves. In terms of the process of fulfilment of the Word of God, when God looked down and "saw it was time to act" to free His people, Mo was ready, but it still took at least another 40 years to bring His people into their promised land. God is a God of process. He loves using process to shape our hearts.

Let's look back at Moses in Exodus 3.

Exo 3:1 NKJV

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

What a contrast between Moses' life as an Egyptian prince and his life as a Midianite shepherd! As a prince he had everything done for him; he was the famous son of an Egyptian princess. As a shepherd he had to do everything for himself; he was holding the very job he had been taught to despise (Gen 43:32; Gen 46:33-34), and he lived as an unknown foreigner.

Gen 46:33-34 NKJV

³³*So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?'* ³⁴*that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."*

Gen 43:32 NKJV

So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.

What a humbling experience this must have been for Moses! But God was preparing him for leadership. Living the life of a shepherd and nomad, Moses learned about life in the wilderness. Moses probably wouldn't appreciate this lesson, but God was getting him ready for his destiny.

The process of preparation for God's call is never easy. It will likely not be a smooth path. There will be pruning and shaping and reshaping. You may feel less and less qualified or able. But I want to encourage you in the midst of God's process, to submit to God's Word, to walk humbly with Him and obey Him.

We have been looking at the process of God as it pertains to Moses' life. I now would like to continue and look at the process of God in terms of the fulfilment of the Word of God to Moses and His people.

Exo 3:7-8 NKJV

⁷And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. ⁸So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

Prophetic Words

Have you ever noticed how God speaks? Have you observed that in many of His prophetic words or declarations or prophecies, He gives us the picture at the end, but not so much the details of path and process from here to there?

In so many of the accounts in the Bible when God declares what He is going to do, He doesn't give all the small print and in-between happenings.

Then God in His mercy told Moses a few more details: The elders of the Israelites will go with you and you will go before Pharaoh to ask Him to let your people go for 3 days to sacrifice to your Lord. He will not let you go. Not even by a mighty hand. I will strike Egypt with wonders, and then you will go, and you will not go empty handed.

God gave Moses the main points, the highlights of what he needed to know, but not necessarily all the details. If He gave us all the details, we wouldn't need Him. We wouldn't need to rely on Him and trust Him and be in faith. You see:

Heb 11:1 NKJV

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Heb 11:11 NLT

It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep His promise.

Contained within those 2 lines, that one sentence, is 25 years of heart-ache and being in faith and then unbelief and making a plan through their own wisdom and strength and then when it seemed most impossible, with Abraham being 100 and Sarah 90, they become pregnant. 25 years after God gave Abram the promise!

1 Ki 17:1 NLT

Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, "As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives—the God I serve—there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!"

Those who worshipped Baal believed he was the god who brought the rains and bountiful harvests. So when Elijah walked into the presence of this Baal-worshipping king and told him there would be no rain for several years, Ahab was shocked.

1 Ki 18:1 NLT

Later on, in the third year of the drought, the LORD said to Elijah, "Go and present yourself to King Ahab. Tell him that I will soon send rain!"

1 Ki 18:41-44 NLT

⁴¹*Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go get something to eat and drink, for I hear a mighty rainstorm coming!"* ⁴²*So Ahab went to eat and drink. But Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel and bowed low to the ground and prayed with his face between his knees.* ⁴³*Then he said to his servant, "Go and look out toward the sea." The servant went and looked, then returned to Elijah and said, "I didn't see anything." Seven times Elijah told him to go and look.* ⁴⁴*Finally the seventh time, his servant told him, "I saw a little cloud about the size of a man's hand rising from the sea." Then Elijah shouted, "Hurry to Ahab and tell him, 'Climb into your chariot and go back home. If you don't hurry, the rain will stop you!'"*

There's always a process to the fulfilment of a Word from the Lord. There's always warfare associated with it. Faith required for it. Prayer required for it. And a journey with waiting and trusting in the Lord. And God doesn't always give us the details up front!

We see with Moses:

He asked Jethro, his father-in-law if he could make his way back to Egypt. Obtains his blessing and sets out for Egypt with his family. As he embarks on this journey, his heart already set on obedience, the Lord begins to divulge a few more details:

Exo 4:20-21 NKJV

²⁰Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand. ²¹And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.

I don't know about you, but I possibly would have wondered, if the goal is to get the people out of Egypt, why harden Pharaoh's heart and make it difficult for ourselves? Why not keep the main thing the main thing, keep the main purpose in focus, leave Pharaoh's heart alone and let's get the Israelites out? But God is secure in His own power and abilities to bring His purposes to fruition. He knew that whatever the state of Pharaoh's heart, when the time came, he could make His purposes happen.

So, Moses and Aaron make their way to the elders of the Israelites in Egypt, get their buy in on the plan. They receive Moses and his ideas and worship the Lord. Then they go to Pharaoh and request what God told them to request.

Pharaoh responds with 2 questions and then his response to their request:

- Who is the Lord?
- Why should I obey him?
- And no. The Israelites can't go.

Exo 5:2 NKJV

And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go."

In summary: It was a closed door.

God had told them to go. The door was closed in their faces. A closed door doesn't mean God is not in it!

Moses and Aaron appeal again. Pharaoh's response was to increase the workload of the Israelites to impossible proportions. Once again we see God about to do

something miraculous, to bring breakthrough that His people had been crying out for. What happens? The assignment against the people of God, was intensified. The closed door was locked. What did the Israelites do? They turned on Moses. They blamed Moses. They desired the judgement of the Lord on Moses. Moses was the one God had prepared his whole life to deliver them. He was God's chosen instrument to deliver them. He had gone through a very difficult process so that he would be qualified to help them. They still turned on him! Effectively he would pour out his life for these people and they didn't see it, or understand it, or want him to do it anymore.

#leadershiplessons

- When God calls you to something great, the process of preparation will likely be hard
- When God calls you to lead His people where they need to go, they may not receive you, even though God has sent you. They may not appreciate what you have done or been through for them. They may not see what you see. They may not follow easily. They may backbite and complain.
- But obedience to God is what counts!

Exo 5:21 NKJV

And they said to them, "Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."

Why do we seek celebration and acceptance from those we are called to? It is a snare.

Pro 29:25 NKJV

The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

Eze 2:3-7 NKJV

³And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. ⁴For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' ⁵As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them. ⁶"And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their

words or dismayed by their looks, though they are a rebellious house. ⁷You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious.

We need to be faithful to what God has called us to. Faithful to speak what He has given us to speak, do what He has charged you to do, regardless of the reception from man.

As the Lord promised, Pharoah's heart was hardened and as a result, many wonders were done in Egypt.

1. The Nile was turned to blood
2. Frogs

Pharoah promised that if Moses and Aaron interceded and asked the Lord to take away the frogs, he would let the Israelites go. When the frogs had died, his heart was hardened as the Lord had promised and he went back on his word and wouldn't let the Israelites go.

3. All the dust became lice on man and beast
4. Swarms of flies over the Egyptians, but no flies in Goshen where the Israelites lived.

Pharoah tried to get the Israelites to compromise: he said they could sacrifice to their God but nearby, not leaving. But God had been clear, the Israelites needed to travel 3 days into the wilderness to sacrifice. If Moses had been willing to compromise, the Israelites would not have been positioned for their deliverance. Sometimes compromise, although it feels easier, actually short-circuits the fullness of the plans and purposes of God.

Finally Pharoah agrees to let the people go if Moses will only intercede to God to remove the flies. Which he does. Pharoah hardens his heart and refuses to let the people go.

5. All the livestock of Egypt died. No Israelite livestock died.
6. Boils broke out on all the Egyptians and their animals. They did not break out on the Lord's people.

Pharoah hardened his heart.

7. The Lord sent hail: on man and beast and every tree and plant in the Egyptians land. The Land of Goshen was untouched.

Pharoah said he would let the children of Israel go if the hail stopped. As soon as it stopped, he hardened his heart.

8. Locusts.

Pharoah promised to let the people go if the locusts were taken away. When the Lord used a wind to take them away, Pharoah hardened his heart.

9. Darkness for 3 days.

Pharoah still refused to let the Israelites go.

Exo 11:1 NKJV

And the LORD said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.

God already knew the number of wonders he would perform in Egypt. He knew how many times He would harden Pharoah's heart. He just didn't tell Moses all the details beforehand. He doesn't have to tell us all the details beforehand and seldom does!

10. The Lord struck the first-born of Egypt: from Pharoah, to every family, to the livestock.

Exo 12:31-32 NKJV

³¹Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said. ³²Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also."

Breakthrough! worshipped What a process.

God's word -

Exo 3:7-8 NKJV

⁷And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. ⁸So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk

and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

We don't see any of this fine print in there.

Exo 3:20 NKJV

So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go.

God had mentioned it here. He didn't give the details either.

- God is a God of process
- God is a God of purpose
- God knows what is going to happen
- God is well able to fulfil His plans and purposes through us as long as we walk in obedience and submit to His Word. He doesn't rely on our ability, rather our hearts, our full commitment (without compromise), our submission and obedience and availability will provide Him with what He needs to accomplish His plans and purposes.
- In the midst of the process to the fulfilment of whatever Word God has given us, we need to keep on keeping on. Keep on trusting God. Never give up. Never quit.