

Feb 21st 2010: God's Commanding Voice: Exodus 3:1-14

**Sometimes an event can occur in your life.....that is so traumatic....de-habilitating.....
that afterwards.....you are never the same ever again
It leaves you a broken.....damaged person...whose self-esteem is shattered....confidence is lost**

If you are thinking.....sounds a bit like me...or like someone I know.....then be encouraged
for such was the story of Moses**....before he heard God's Commanding Voice
.....**and he is** considered by the Jews...to be one of the greatest leaders who ever lived**

**The story of Moses begins in the land of Egypt....where his parents...along with.....were slaves
And were having to deal with a cruel tyrant.....who ordered that.....**

Moses was saved from that fate.....and went on to be brought up...

It is in Acts 7 that we find some extra info....about the life of Moses in Egypt as he developed
Acts 7:22 says:-

***Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in
speech and action.***

The Contemporary English version says:

***Moses was given the best education in Egypt. He was a strong man and a
powerful speaker.***

• **NOW it's Josephus**...the Jewish historian.....who tells us the reason for this.
It seems that the Pharaoh only had one child....his daughter....and she had no children of her own

So Moses had been groomed for this position.....All the hopes of the Pharaoh...found in him

- **But then at the age of 40**.....accord to Hebrews 11:24....he made a life changing decision
that emphasizes his strength of character....His fearlessness.....inner power

***By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of
Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God
rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.***

This was for him a religious transformation.....**A conversion**.....He went back to his roots
And immediately he begins to look for ways that he can be.....the Saviour for his people
So we read this in Exodus 2:11-12

***One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were
and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew,***

one of his own people. ¹² Glancing this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

Most of us know what happened next.....

..and the Hebrews didn't want a self-appointed...**And surely**....if he killed an Egyptian so callously ??

So Moses fled into the desert.....connected himself with the family of a priest of Midian

This manJethro was **not** a priest of Almighty God....**Later in chapter 18....conversion**

• **Anyhow one of the** things we notice in Ex 2.....is that Moses is referred to as an Egyptian **And** a powerful one at that.....**Which** of course was not the message that Moses wanted spread

So Moses would have quickly buried..... In the shifting sands of that desert area **that persona**....of a strong, wise, powerful Egyptian **who** had made such a dreadful mistake.....and was now wanted for murder by an angry Pharaoh

With the additional thought I'm sure.....that if that's what he got from trying to serve God..... **and help save his people**.....then he would never ever put himself in such a position again **He had been hurt once....that was enough for a lifetime**

40 years later....and not much has changed for Moses.....

HE is 80 now...**expecting to do little more** with his life.....than he has for the last 40yrs ..and then we read this in **3:1-2**

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 desert 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.

The first thing we notice.....is that this Moses....once so great and powerful....a potential Rulerstill...**after 40 years**.....is caring for another man's flock of sheep

Then he sees the bush....that burns but is not consumed

He turns towards it.....and then the Lord calls to him from within the bush

He calls to Moses....and uses his name.....HE doesn't say –hay you-

Here at 80.....and God has a job that this poor broken man.....**who had** tried and failed
Who had been content to live out the rest....in obscurity.....**alone could do**

Just goes to show doesn't it.....that you might feel that God has no further use for you

Perhaps because you let him down.....Or because others rejected....hurt you...when you tried
Or may be....because you feel past it.....**Too** old.....Time for a rest

Then God calls your name _____ **(Clyde....not even 80 yet)**

The fascinating thing I note here though....is Moses initial reaction to the voice from the bush—v4..

***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."***

It's a pretty low key response(I wonder whether Moses thought at first that it was just someone playing a trick on him)

But then God speaks with His commanding voice....and there can be no doubt...and Moses reaction 3:5-6

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." 6 Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

- **Here we find God declaring**.....I am the Almighty and Holy God
And you are to come before me....humbled....and ready to do my will
- **Then God outlined** what He was about to do....and the part Moses was to play.....
And Moses is horrified.....

Five times he tries to talk God out of using him.....**not** realizing that this is not a request
It's a command.....**And when God uses His Commanding voice**.....**we need to obey**

- **We can understand Moses' reluctance**
We know he tried once and failed.....**we** know that he lacks the confidence he once had
He is no longer 40.....and full of strength and passion.....**He is 80**...hurt...broken...fearful

And in v11 Moses says to God

"Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

And there is nothing wrong in speaking that way to God.....

He delights when we express our weakness.....for only then can He make us strong

- **And in v12 God** responds to Moses as He still responds to each of us:
And God said, "I will be with you.

Whoever you are.....and whatever God has called you to do for Him.....or is calling....

Take this phrase to heart.....For God never commands anything.....from being baptized to
WITHOUT IT

Alan Cole in his commentary on Exodus says:-

***"After this Moses had no right to protest further. It is now no longer lack of self
reliance(which is good), but lack of faith(which is a sin)".***

Thankfully it was a sin that God forgave....and Moses went on to serve the Lord faithfully
And that is the most encouraging thing about God's Commanding Voice

He won't take No for an answer.....

He will persevere with us...forgive our reluctance and lack of faith....and in the end He will use us
For He is able to do with us.....as He did with Moses

..much more than we could ever ask...imagine...or guess at
For the Lord will work within us to the Praise of His Eternal Glory

Ephesians 3:20-21

***²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.***