

THE CALL OF MOSES 4

GOD ASKS MOSES WHAT IS IN HIS HAND

Exod 4:1-2

1 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. (NIV)

Moses was a broken man. He had fallen a long way. He could think he was just a low down good for nothing who had blown it in Egypt and had now swapped his posh clothes for a shepherd's smock and his servants for sheep. He seemed convinced he couldn't do anything God was asking and, anyway, didn't want to!

What is in Your Hand?

Moses wants to know what he should do if the Egyptians don't believe him when he goes back to what God is saying? God then asks Moses "What is that in your hand?" What indeed! Just a plain old staff. His faithful old stick. However with the power of God upon it, the old stick had great potential.

Exod 4:3-4

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. (NIV)

God did something with that old staff that Moses could never have expected. He ran from it. It scared him. He may not have run from other snakes.

Eventually, when Moses and Aaron went into Pharaoh and threw stick down it became a snake and ate up the snakes of the Egyptian magicians.

Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded. He raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials and struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into blood.

Exod 8:17

17 They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came upon men and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats. (NIV)

Exod 9:23-24

23 When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the LORD sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground. So the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt;

24 hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

(NIV)

Exod 10:13

13 So Moses stretched out his staff over Egypt, and the LORD made an east wind blow across the land all that day and all that night. By morning the wind had brought the locusts;

(NIV)

Exod 14:16

16 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.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided,

(NIV)

Exod 17:5-6

5 The LORD answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.

(NIV)

God did great things with such simple instrument.

God Uses Simple Instruments

It is interesting that God has done that sort of thing a number of times in the Bible and still does similar things today. It's just that, like Moses, we can sometimes have such a low opinion of ourselves and particularly when we fail to meet what we see as God's acceptable standard. A wealthy workaholic was once asked "How much money is enough?" The reply from was "just a little more than I have now". If we are constantly thinking that we have to be a little better than we are now before God will use us, we will never get there.

That kind of thinking has to stop. We have to take stock now because it is simply not true that God will only begin to use you only when you are a bit better than you are now. He will use the simplest one who is willing to be an instrument in His hand.

So, What have you in your hand?

With David it was only a sling and he was only a boy and looked down upon by his relations. Yet in God's hand it became a powerful weapon.

What do you have in your house?

II Ki 4:1

1 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered

the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."

2 Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?" "Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a little oil."

3 Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few.

4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."

5 She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring.

6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

7 She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."

(NIV)

What do you have to give?

John 6:9-13

9 "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and the men sat down, about five thousand of them.

11 Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."

13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

(NIV)

He was only a boy. He had hardly anything to give. What he could give was not regarded as important by others around. The situation prevailing was such that even the boy himself could not see the relevance of what he had to give. He was willing for Jesus to take and use what he had.

When God takes hold of simple gifts which He has planted in our lives He makes a lot out of a little. There is something about gifts which God is blessing which makes them different from the same gifts which He is not asked to.

So What is in *Your* Hand that the Lord Will Use

It's so easy to say "Lord, I don't know what I can do. I've never thought myself to be talented in any way. I know that you said to Moses "What is that in your hand" but I feel like the old hymn which says "Nothing in my hand I bring." Lord, I'm no good, I'll never be any good, you'll need to use someone else".

It's not that we should be looking to say "What *can* I do, what *can* I do, I'll go crazy if I can't think of something I can do, I am just existing".

This is what you can say:-

“Lord, there is nothing right now that I see in my hand that you can use. However, just now I just want to enjoy knowing you. You know the giftings in me even though I can’t see them myself at this present time. So, Lord, I’m not going to get worked up comparing myself with others and setting standards that I can’t keep and which You never set anyway. But I’m determined to pray that you will use me in Your way and in Your time. In the meantime I’m going to watch out for any opportunity You provided for me to use any ability which I recognize that I have at that time”.

Don’t be discouraged. Your Goliath may come and when he does you will have in your hand the very thing God needs to use at that time if you are willing that God should use you.

You will almost certainly be placed in situations where what you have to give is nowhere near enough, in your opinion, to be much use but God will use it to great effect. It’s not essential even to search for such a thing beforehand because you won’t know what gifting God will use and it may not even be given until that very moment. If, however, you feel that you want God to use you in a particular way, do pray and ask Him for the gifting you need to be able to do it.

Moses had no idea that he held in his hand day in day out the very thing that would be a primary tool in setting millions of people free and he didn’t even

want to do it. We may be everyday people with little talent and gifting compared to some and yet for reasons we cannot understand people like us are the kind that God chooses to use. So don't look down on yourself, criticise your abilities or look down on your achievements, God has very interesting things lined up for us all and at the time, guess what, the very tool we need will appear in our hands and God will turn it into something we never thought was possible.