

THE CALL OF MOSES 1

FROM EGYPT TO HOREB

SUMMARY OF HIS LIFE. Acts 7: 1-7 and 17-36

The Israelites suffered terribly in Egypt. Years before, God had said this to Abraham:-

Gen 15:13

13 Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years.

(NIV)

Moses himself suffered none of that but he knew he wasn't an Egyptian and he was clever enough to be a thinking person.

He could think "I know all the right people to get on my side to secure the release of the Israelites. I walk in high places. I rub shoulders with those in authority. In fact, I myself am a man in authority. Lord just look at the beatings beatings, the cruelty, the children, the mothers. I guess I could just go to the elders and let them know I'm here to help". They would say "But prince Moses, who's going to get us out of here" and I will say "I am. I

know the right people. I've got the right contacts. Why else do you think God has got me into this position. It's obvious if you think about it. I'm the kingpin in the plan. Think it through and, when you're ready, let me know. We'll make plans to get you out of this place with the help of God."

Then one day, he sees the beating of a slave and he murders the Egyptian responsible. It is seen and he runs away. He blew it. Moses you blew it!

Now we see him years later, a much older man walking his sheep in the desert. It all happened so long ago. Things could have been so much better. What a mistake. What a failure. Just look at Moses now. Some prince now. He could have said to himself "Moses you're hopeless. Gen 15:13. you'll never be any use now and time is just slipping away.

SPOILED OPPORTUNITIES

What about us. It's so easy to look back at a spoiled opportunity, something you tried to do and it all went wrong. It can even be a simple thing like trying to bring a word of prophecy, even praying for someone and it all seemed to go wrong. It may have caused real embarrassment and when you look back you think "O God how could it all have happened. Will I ever be any use - and time is just slipping away. If I could just have the opportunity again. Things would be so different next time." Passing of time can take the edge off the incident but, somehow, disappointment just has the habit of raising its head time and again.

Do you ever feel that you're in the desert place and what you're doing now seems far from what could be God's best for you? Moses must have felt like it daily. I guess first off he just hoped he would never bump into those who he had offended. He would just imagine the Egyptians combing the country just for him. Any stranger he saw he could think "Is it a spy from Egypt." Likewise when you feel you did something which embarrasses you when you think of it you can often live in the hope that you don't bump into the people who saw you do it even though it may have been a long time ago. Actually, in the Christian circle, you can often beat yourself up over something which happened years ago but God doesn't expect you do it and nor does anyone else. The wonderful thing about being a Christian is that the Lord has in place a mechanism of repentance and forgiveness by which Christians forgive each other and God forgive us too.

DOING HUMBLE WORK

Moses had been 40 years in Egypt and now spends 40 years in the desert. Sometimes it is long time before God calls Christians into the specific work He planned them for, and has been preparing them for. Moses was born to be Israel's deliverer, and yet not a word is said of it to him until he is eighty years old when, normally, you would think it was now too late and God had put him on one side for good. Now, notice this.

- I. Even though he wasn't doing what he thought God intended for him to do, he did something. He didn't sit back and say, "Well I failed at trying to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt, I'll never be any good and I don't want to do anything!" Moses was tending sheep near mount Horeb. Not much**

of a job for someone “Educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” but he does it and learns humility in doing it. He learns to live in the desert, in discomfort, to care for sheep and lambs. That is no high profile job but he gets on with it and apparently does it willingly. Even if we feel that somehow we have missed the real work that God really wanted us to do it is honourable to do humble work in God’s kingdom. Even though we might prefer not be seen doing it.

II. Next see that he was doing a humble job for a long time. It’s good that what we do we do well. Luke 16:10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much" (NIV)

III. Even those that are qualified for more important things may find that God places them in some humble job in some obscure place - like here at Coundon Fellow-and we shouldn’t think that strange. As far as Moses was concerned, he had made an error in the past and could well have thought that he would probably even die of old age, just a shepherd and a husband and father. Nothing more than that. However, what he did he did faithfully. Sometimes we must be content to do the humble thing in the kingdom even when there is no sign of anything different ever happening. It was while Moses was faithfully doing a humble job when he was honoured by a personal visitation from God. Interesting that Shepherds were watching their flocks by night when they received the news that Jesus had been born. Perhaps it’s worthwhile looking for the humble job we can do. Someone has to put the chairs out and make the tea.

It's a bit like Ps 84:10

**Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.
(NIV)**

In his humble job, I shouldn't be surprised if Moses spent more time whispering to The Lord than he did when he was a prince walking in the corridors of Egyptian palaces.

Well, look what was eventually written about this humble shepherd who believed he had blown it and now there was only life in the desert.

10 Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

11 who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt-- to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land.

12 For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

(NIV) Deut 34

That is the person Moses became. So what happened to the one who felt the failure and hopeless individual in the desert of Horeb with his sheep?

MEETING GOD IN UNEXPECTED WAYS

It was just an ordinary day. Desert heat and like every day, there would nearly always be the fleeting thought of *that* incident in Egypt, the thing that

changed everything. And then God turned up at a time when he never expected. When he had done nothing to deserve it and in a way that he had never experienced.

It's amazing how God turns up in ways we don't expect. There was no scripture as far as we know suggesting that God might do such a thing as appear in a burning bush but He did. Moses could have walked right past but something in his curiosity made him investigate rather than ignore it as being nothing of importance. It's a good job because his life was about to be changed by it.

It's possible to be deceived by many things. However one of the saddest deceptions is to fail to recognize a move of God when he comes in a way that people didn't expect. That's what has happened in the last few years. God turns up in a way that makes some people laugh, roar, weep profusely. Some have criticised the name "Toronto blessing" but have no problem with "Welsh Revival". Perhaps it's because the Welsh Revival began in Wales!

Well Moses is about to undergo a life changing experience and next time we will see how he handles an encounter with God.