



When He calls, do you hear the call and ride towards the sound of gunfire or away?

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15)

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

Our calling in God is always an impossibility except He be with us, and He is, indeed, with us every moment. When He calls us to a work, He will *“go with us”* in that work so the work will not be our own, but His! God has called many men to the ministry, and many women to a mission, which both are reluctant to accept. They invent excuse after excuse as to why the thing cannot be accomplished by them – *“perhaps another can do it, but not me!”* I am not a polished speaker, I lack education, I have a family to care for, etc, etc. Please know that to whatever the Lord calls us, He will make us worthy of accomplishing. Moses, just like every man called of God, questions the calling. In fact, it is proper to question whether it is God, or our own vain imaginations, that call us to His service.

Please observe some of the reservations and excuses Moses makes as to why God has sought out the wrong man for the mission of going down into Egypt. In the first instance, note the wonder and mystery of the calling of God to Moses from out of a burning bush: *“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.”* (Ex 3:2) This is an intimate and personal calling – not one of public revelation – because no one will believe us when we relate how God called us. The calling of God is a personal calling!

Response # 1

“And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (Ex 3:11) It may seem too fantastic to us that God would find us worthy of any calling. The first impulse is to question the

wisdom of God in calling US! Yes, Moses was once living in the palaces of Egypt, but that was forty years ago. He is now an eighty year-old shepherd in Midian. It is incredible to his mind that God could have such a use for him. This is actually questioning the wisdom and providence of God, is it not? But God reassures: *"Certainly I will be with thee."* (Ex 3:12) This fact should resolve all doubt, but does it?

Response # 2

"Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?" (Ex 3:13) Is it possible that Israel has forgotten the God of Abraham. Yes, it may be true owing to years of bondage in Egypt. But is it not also true that Moses, being called by God, needs some reinforcing knowledge of the Great Being who has called him? We are not called of God for our great depth of knowledge, spirituality, or respectability; but for reasons known only to God and which may not be fathomed by man. *"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* (2 Cor 3:5-6) On the other hand, some clergy presume that they are better than they are in seeking the highest seats at the feasts, or the front seats on every occasion. Should we not be humble servants to the people of God and put ourselves down that God might lift us up? *"What shall I say?"* Moses asks. Do not worry, God will fill your cup to over-brimming with the beauty of His Word. We have the same call: *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* (Mark 16:15-16)

Note: Though we have made reference to the principle many times before, please take note of the two cutting edges of this counsel of God. Remember the two-edged sword that cuts both ways, and consider the purpose of preaching. We are to go into all the world and preach the Gospel; but to what end and purpose? First of all, to reveal faith that leads to baptism and salvation. Secondly, to remove any excuse of ignorance of God's Word from the wicked. They cannot say, on the Last Day, "Nobody ever told me!"

Beginning with our present chapter 4, we read further of Moses' reluctance: *"But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee."* (Ex 4:1) This is a strawman that most raise up at the call of God. No one will hear, or believe, me. That is not our concern. That is the role and mission of the Holy Ghost. We plant the seed and allow the Holy Ghost to germinate that seed in the dark soil of the human heart! Whether accepted or rejected, the preaching of the Word has achieved its intended purpose. But God will, nonetheless, give the man called by Him convincing proofs of the call. No one goes into ministry with his eyes closed. *"And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:"* (Ex 4:2-4) This, and other proofs, were shown to Moses that he might have confidence in his calling. He does the same with you and me. And God showed Moses other proofs as well in verses six through ten. But fear of failure is never a reason to forbear preaching the Gospel. God's Word does not fail of its purpose.

Response # 3

"And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." (Ex 4:10) How many men, when called by God, are terrified that they

cannot speak before an audience? It is a normal emotion. But it is not the minister's voice that convicts, but the Lord's speaking through His vessel. *"And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."* (Ex 4:11-12)

Response #4

The Lord will abide a man wanting evidence of, and confirming, his calling to ministry; but He will not abide an unwilling heart. *"And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses."* (Ex 4:13-14 (KJV) Moses desires that God will send someone ELSE! Moses doubts the wisdom of God as a judge of character perhaps. But Moses has taken one step too far here. *" . . . he (God) said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."* (Ex 4:14-16) Even as they speak, God has made provision for Aaron to come and meet Moses out of Egypt. None of us are indispensable, though we would like men to believe so. When asked to rebuke His disciples for preaching, Jesus answered: *"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."* (Luke 19:40) So God's Word will be preached with, or without, your complicity. This last response of Moses was his cause from the beginning. He did not want to do as God said and preferred God send another instead.

What does one learn from this account of Moses? We learn that every excuse not to answer the call of God is merely a smokescreen of defiance. We really have no desire to do as God has commanded – neither did Jonah! The Anger of the Lord is kindled against all to whom the Lord issues a calling, and God will not relent in pursuit of that person until the response is made.

As Paul Harvey used to say, *"Here is the rest of the story."* Moses, a mere shepherd from Midian did answer God's call and went down into Egypt and confronted the mightiest sovereign of that day – with the success that God granted! Has God called us to lead a Bible Study/Prayer Group, to be a teacher in Sunday School, or to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? How did WE respond. Have we done so faithfully, or are we still on the ship with Jonah to Tarshish? The Call of God is not a matter to be trifled with. You WILL answer the call, only after how much trouble and energy in attempting to evade that Call?