

MOSES ASSUMES HIS RESPONSIBILITY

BIBLE TEXT : Exodus 4:1-23, 27-31

LESSON 49 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Exodus 4:1-23, 27-31

¹ And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

² And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

³ 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.

⁴ 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:

⁵ That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

⁶ And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow.

⁷ And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.

⁸ And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

⁹ And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the

NOTES:

Moses Encouraged

When Moses answered the Lord, "Here am I," he did not realise the great responsibility God was about to put upon him. He told God that the people would not believe he had been divinely sent. But God takes care of every little detail; and if we are willing to be used of Him, He will fulfil His plan in us.

God gave Moses some signs to encourage his faith. He told him to throw upon the ground the stick he held in his hand. When he did, it became a snake, which frightened Moses, and he ran from it. But God did not want Moses to be afraid of anything, and He told him to pick up the serpent by its tail; and when he did, it became a rod again. That was a wonderful miracle, and should have given Moses all the courage he needed; but God gave him even more.

When Moses put his hand inside his robes and brought it out again in answer to God's command, "behold, his hand was leprous as snow. "We have studied before about what a terrible disease leprosy is, and how almost incurable it is unless the Lord heals it. Moses must surely have been astonished to see that disease on his hand, but God told him again to put his hand into his bosom, and when he drew it out, it was clean. Those were miracles indeed, and God promised He would repeat them before the Children of Israel and before Pharaoh, so they all might believe that the supernatural God was with Moses. If they still would not believe, Moses was to take water from the river and pour it on the land, and it would become blood. Surely no one could doubt after all that.

Obedience Necessary

But still Moses pleaded his weakness. He believed in God, but he did not seem to believe that he could do the work God wanted him to do. It is important that we be humble before the Lord; but it is also necessary to be willing to do what God wants us to do even when we think we cannot, if we want to please Him. We must be as the willing clay that the potter can mould any way he wishes to make it a useful vessel.

We learned that when Jesus was calling His disciples about Him He did not choose the men who already were wise in the letter of the Law, who had an office in the Temple, but He went among the lowly people who would be willing to preach the preaching He would give them.

Examples of Courage

When David went out to slay the giant, he did not choose the weapons that soldiers usually used, but the smooth pebbles he picked up by the river's edge for his slingshot made him a weapon great enough to defeat the enemy. Samson took the jawbone of an ass and used it for a weapon that slew one thousand men. He did not make the excuse that he was helpless because he had no firearms, but used the implement that was at hand, and God blessed it. God does not ask more of us than we can do, but wants us to use to the best advantage that which He has given to us to use. God can use little things to do a great work. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak

water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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?

¹² Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

¹³ And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send.

¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he 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.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

¹⁸ And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

¹⁹ And the LORD said unto Moses

things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (I Corinthians 1:27).

The Spirit Bears Witness

Moses thought he was not an eloquent speaker, and no one would want to listen to him. The Lord thinks more of the spirit in the man than the manner in which he says it. Again we quote Paul: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (I Corinthians 13:1). If a man can sound as eloquent as an angel, and not have the Spirit of God with him, he sounds like an empty tin can to God.

God was displeased with Moses because of all his excuses. After all had not God made the mouth of Moses, and would He not give him the words to say? Nevertheless, He did relieve Moses of doing the talking, and sent his brother Aaron to be his mouthpiece. They were to work together, Aaron being the mouth for Moses, and Moses telling Aaron all the words that God would give him.

No doubt, Moses had never seen his brother since the time he left Egypt forty years before, but God told him that Aaron was on his way to meet him. Moses took leave of his father-in-law, took his family and started his return to Egypt. When he met Aaron, they greeted each other fondly, and Moses told Aaron everything that God had made known to him.

Used of God

After Moses and Aaron arrived in Goshen, Aaron told the children of Israel all that God had told Moses; and they did the miracles of changing the rod into a serpent, and of Moses' leprous hand, before the elders of the people, and they believed that God had sent them. They humbly bowed to worship God, with grateful hearts, when they heard that the Lord was taking notice of their afflictions and was going to deliver them from slavery.

QUESTIONS

1. What excuses did Moses offer the Lord when He called him?
2. Did the Lord accept these excuses?
3. Did the people believe when they saw the signs?
4. When we give a testimony, what is far more important than eloquence?
5. What spiritual weapons does God give His children?

in Midian, Go, return into Egypt:
for all the men are dead which
sought thy life.

²⁰ And Moses took his wife and his
sons, and set them upon an ass,
and he returned to the land of
Egypt: and Moses took the rod of
God in his hand.

²¹ And the LORD said unto Moses,
When thou goest to return into
Egypt, see that thou do all those
wonders before Pharaoh, which I
have put in thine hand: but I will
harden his heart, that he shall not
let the people go.

²² And thou shalt say unto
Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD,
Israel *is* my son, *even* my
firstborn:

²³ And I say unto thee, Let my son
go, that he may serve me: and if
thou refuse to let him go, behold,
I will slay thy son, *even* thy
firstborn.

²⁷ And the LORD said to Aaron, Go
into the wilderness to meet Moses.
And he went, and met him in the
mount of God, and kissed him.

²⁸ And Moses told Aaron all the
words of the LORD who had sent
him, and all the signs which he
had commanded him.

²⁹ And Moses and Aaron went and
gathered together all the elders of
the children of Israel:

³⁰ And Aaron spake all the words
which the LORD had spoken unto
Moses, and did the signs in the
sight of the people.

³¹ And the people believed: and
when they heard that the LORD
had visited the children of Israel,
and that he had looked upon their
affliction, then they bowed their
heads and worshipped.