

Moses' response

Exodus 3:7-14 and 4:8-17

Last week we focused on God, today we focus on Moses. The story of his calling stretches all the way from Exodus 2:23 to 4:17. The burning bush is a red herring, a mere signal.

Unlike what you expect after the revelation of his Name (Jahweh), God is open to dialogue!

Someone said: 'Encounters with the living God do not end in personal satisfaction or fulfilment – they end with calling.' Yes, but they also end with 'concessions' from God and equipping. The way God tolerates Moses' endless objections reminds me of Abraham's bargaining in Genesis 18. So this part of the sermon was still about God...

As a young person, Moses was keen to take things in his own hands; he even killed an Egyptian (2:11-15). Now he is unwilling even to go when God calls him. He becomes a prophet / leader against his will. Now everything happens at God's initiative.

Moses raises not just three, but four or five objections against God's plan to send him:

Moses has various excuses:

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| 3:11 Who am I? | Response: You are going in my authority |
| 3:13 The people and I don't know God | Response: God reveals his Name |
| 4:1 What if they don't believe me? | Response: Three signs Moses can perform |
| 4:10 I am not eloquent | Response: I will equip you |
| 4:13 Please send someone else | Response: Moses gets Aaron as helper |

In response God does take ample time and a really long dialogue ensues. But the bottom line is God's command: 'Go!'

Why this reluctance of Moses? As so often, the Bible is silent on this, so we can only guess.

- Is it his age? Unlikely - He may be 80 but he is still fit.
- Does the magnitude of the task frighten him? Leading a nation is not a sinecure!
- Is he afraid of Pharaoh? That would be understandable, think of the magnificent Egyptian society with its pyramids.
- Does he really feel unworthy? He is after all a murderer.
- Maybe he does not know the cause himself. That would be recognisable to many of us. Sometimes we know we need to do something but we just don't want to do it.

So over to us. Is God calling you to do something? In the community? In the church on his behalf? Or to pray more / give more / forgive someone? It does not need to be anything spectacular, but you have to obey his call. He will equip you. Age is no issue: Moses is 80.

Back to God. The exodus is his doing from begin to end. He uses and equips people. If it depended on Moses, nothing would ever have happened. If it depended on us, not much would happen here. Yet this is how God works in the world: he involved people. This is what Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 1:25-30a [read].