

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

05 November 2023

Give What You Have to God.

God only asks us to give to him all we have and all we can be.

His name is, "I am that I am".

The Great "I AM".

He wants us to say to Him, "Here is all I have, use it to your honor and glory."

He is, that we can be.

This morning we find ourselves with Moses as God is asking him to go back and be his representative to Pharaoh to get His people freed.

Moses is resisting the assignment.

The scripture for today is: "What is that in your hand?"

Can you recall the scene?

Let's see how it develops and what we can learn from it for us today.

Moses went from being a prince of Egypt to a runaway fugitive hiding in the desert.

We find him looking after sheep in the desert.

He has gone far from the center of life in Egypt.

What brought him to this place?

He was raised by the daughter of Pharaoh and his mother was his nanny.

It is possible that in those formative years she was whispering to him that he should remember that he was a Hebrew and that someday God would raise up someone to deliver the Hebrews from bondage?

Did Moses ever think it could be him that God would use to deliver his people?

Why was Moses then in the desert?

He began to identify with his people and one day as an Egyptian was beating a Hebrew slave

Moses killed that Egyptian and buried his body in the sand.

Later another Egyptian asked Moses if he was going to kill him as he did the other man.

In fear of his life Moses fled to the desert.

God did have a plan for Moses and one day Moses saw a sight he did not understand.

A bush seemed to be on fire but was not consumed.

He turned aside to see this strange thing.

Through this bush God intended to thrust Moses into the service he had planned for him.

What ground was Moses standing on?

God said, Moses, remove your sandals for you are standing on holy ground.

God works all things together for good to those who love him, and even the forty years of discipline in the desert served as a great school for the man who would later lead his fellow Hebrews throughout this very area.

God needs people to do his work.

Of course God could have reached down with his strong hand and rescued his chosen people any way he desired.

There is no limit to what God can do.

Likewise, God could send angels to herald his message of salvation through the sky if he wished.

But he doesn't want to do it that way.

God uses people to do his work.

People like you and me.

People who are willing, for he makes them able.

There is a story that when Jesus returned to heaven. all of the hosts turned out to greet him.

He explained to them the plan of salvation, how he had died and had risen from the grave, and that now salvation was possible for all the world.

They were all rejoicing until one angel said, "But Jesus, how will the world know what you have done?"

Jesus replied, "I told my friends to tell others. Then they will tell still others and the message will be told around the world."

The angel asked once more, "But suppose they don't do it? Suppose they are too busy or too careless, what then? How will the world know about you?"

Jesus paused a moment, looked down, then raised his eyes and said, "They're my friends. They won't disappoint me. I have no other plan."

Stewardship is humankind's acceptance of the responsibility to do with our lives what God has planned for us.

Of course, it involves material possessions.

We cannot do everything that needs to be done ourselves.

We can, however, give our money so that those who can give full-time service may be able to devote themselves completely to the Lord's work.

This does not exempt us from volunteer work, but it does enable us to have a share in the full-time work of those whom God has chosen for this ministry.

God supplies answers for our excuses.

Most of us are much like Moses.

We hold back from accepting responsibility.

Notice the excuses Moses set forth and how God answered them.

When the first call came, Moses seems to have had an identity crisis.

He asked, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

God did not tell him who he was but rather promised to be with him and guide him.

Likewise, we will never discover the full truth about ourselves until we commit to the Lord the abilities we possess.

Next Moses wanted to be assured of the authority for his work.

God gave him a new revelation of himself, insisting this was all the credentials he needed.

Moses insisted further that the people would not believe him or listen to his voice, God worked two miracles for him.

Let us learn a lesson about miracles at this point.

God will provide the miracle if we need it, but he will only do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

When Moses pled his lack of eloquence, God promised to be with him, which he had already assured him he would do in a previous statement.

Moses' final plea was that God send somebody else.

At this point, Aaron suddenly appeared.

An interesting, almost amusing, scene took place.

God promised Moses that Aaron would be his spokesman.

The curtain of charity is drawn over the rest of the scene.

One wonders if perhaps Moses suddenly realized that if he did not accept God's call, God might turn to Aaron.

This is not stated in the text, of course, but it may have crossed Moses' mind.

At any rate, Moses was now ready for the task.

Excuses are seldom, if ever, the real reasons why we hold back and refuse to accept God's will for our lives.

The chief problem involved with stewardship is that it means we accept responsibility, and few people are eager to do that.

What is in your hand?

Moses' rod has become a symbol.

Like David's small sling, what we have, little though it may be or seem, can be used tremendously if we will give it unreservedly to the Lord to use for his purposes.

The small boy had only five loaves and two fish, but he gave them to the Master. Someone has suggested that the boy went home and told his mother of the miraculous feeding. When he had finished, he said, "Mother, I wonder if he could do the same if I gave him everything I have."

Of course, God can do with us far more than we can ever do ourselves.

What motivated Moses to a life of commitment?

Two things seem to have merged.

First, he saw the need.

Second, he knew that, in God, he had resources available.

These two things will likewise lead us to discharge our stewardship.

God will take care of us if we are faithful in doing our duty, whether it be the bringing of financial gifts for God's work to be carried on or by laying ourselves on the altar for service, or both.

The Apostle Paul offers a challenge to all believers in *Eph. 4:1*.

"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling where with you were called."

Like Moses God will call us to do things that we deem to much for us.

Beyond our ability or too difficult for such as we are.

But if God calls, he equips.

All God asks of us is the same as he asked of Moses.

Are you willing?

We have a hymn about this.

Are you able said the master.

It should be, are you willing?

For God will make us able.

Just give what you have and watch God make it what is needed for the situation of the moment. To honor God, through Jesus His Son, and benefit those around us.