



# The Lord is My Strength

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## *The Reluctant Leader*

### Exodus 4

- Remember what you talked about last week?
- God tells Moses that the job ahead of him is quite tough
- Moses said, "I need something to show them"
- Moses felt like he needed some kind of credentials to go before the people
- Exodus 4:2-9 KJV
  - 2) And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.
- God provides for what Moses needs and wants right from out of his own hand
- "I am going to give you some credentials, Moses, and I am going to give them to you out of what you already possess."
- God turns the rod into a snake, and then asks Moses to pick it up - by the tail!
- From that point forward it's referred to as the Rod of the Lord
- If you give it to God, God will give it back to you, whatever that little is that He can use, but from that point forward it will be God's talent. It will be God's money. It will be God's background. It will be God's education or whatever it is that you laid down as yours when God gives it back.
- Moses lost his place in the Promised Land because he used God Rod for his own use
- God will never be able to accomplish through you what He wants to accomplish if you take back the rod that is now the rod of God and begin to use it for your own purposes
- In verses 10-17, the other part of God's supply of credentials is what I refer to as *The Reluctant Leader*

- Exodus 4:10 KJV

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.

- We now see the reticence of Moses

- ``Lord, I just can't do it. You have given me a sign of your power. You have given me something I can demonstrate to the people with, but even with that, I cannot carry out the job. I can't talk well enough."

- Look at the God's reassurance in Verse 11:

- Exodus 4:11-12 KJV

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.

- We don't know for sure whether or not Moses had a speech impediment, or if he was just making an excuse for not wanting to go

- What difference would it really have made to his mission if he did stutter?

- Either way, it's interesting to notice God's response

- ``Moses, who made your mouth in the first place? So you have a speech impediment. So what! Do you think I didn't know that when I called you?"

- Moses may have thought that God would have said, ``Oh yeah, I forgot about that. I can't use you after all. Here I have been training you for forty years, and I totally forgot your speech impediment. I will have to find somebody else."

- That sounds ludicrous, but I am afraid that too often we think like that.

God puts something in our path, and it is obviously what God wants us to do and we say, ``Lord, I can't do that," as if we expected God to say, ``Ah, I forgot. You can't do that. I must have made a mistake."

- If God brings it into your life, God knew your limitations when He brought it.

- If Moses really did have a speech impediment, God knew that, and God called him anyway.

- That is exactly what He says in verse 11: ``Who has made your mouth, and who made speech impediments and who made the inability to speak and who made the ability to speak? Moses, you go, and I will be with you as you go."
- "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."
- Again, it is interesting to assume that Moses may have had a speech impediment, and God didn't even necessarily promise to do away with the speech impediment, but He just said, ``Moses, you go and I will be with you."
- There is a very important application here and the application is this: God is not necessarily looking for men with great ability. God is looking for men who are willing to be yielded to Him. God said, ``Moses, I am going to use you anyway. I made your mouth, and I know whatever problems are with it. I am going to use you anyway."
- There is a great saying that goes, ``While men seek better methods, God seeks better men."
- Sometimes the only reason God is not able to use an individual is that that person simply will not let God use him. He may think that he is unqualified. He may not believe the direction of God, but for whatever reason, he is the person who stands in the way of God's being able to use him.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:9 KJV
  - 9) And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for **my strength is made perfect in weakness**. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
- Moses reluctantly agrees...
- Exodus 4:13 KJV
  - 13) And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send.
- Can you think of a less positive way to say "Yes"?
- You almost get the feeling that Moses still wasn't really convinced that God could do it, but his idea was, ``All right, God. If that is who You have chosen, okay, but I still don't see how you can do it."
- Look at God's reaction to that in verse 14:

- Exodus 4:14 KJV

14) And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, /s 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.

- Verse 13 was not a statement of faith; it was a statement of doubt. ``Okay, Lord. If that is the best you can do, I'll go," and so God gets angry with Moses.
- God does something that is going to be a reminder to Moses for the rest of his life of God's power. God gives Moses a spokesman. God had already clearly revealed to Moses what He wanted him to do, and Moses was afraid to do what God wanted him to do, so God gave him something that was clearly second best.
- In the last part of the verse, God said: "Is not Aaron your brother? I know that he can speak well."
- What's interesting to note is that as you read through Exodus you find that Aaron is a very superficial spokesman.
- Aaron could speak eloquently, but his very eloquence continually got him in trouble.
- Over and over again we find that Aaron was a constant hindrance to the ministry of Moses
- He was the one who, in Exodus, chapter 32, while Moses was up on the mountain getting the commandments from God, led the people into idol worship.
- Because of his eloquence, because he could speak well, he was able to persuade the people to do good, but he led them directly away from God's plan for them.
- In Numbers, chapter 12, Aaron became convinced that he didn't have an important enough place in the program, so he led a rebellion against Moses.
- You get the feeling that Moses would have been much better off without this type of assistance
- Another thing for us to notice, as we come back to Exodus, chapter 4, is not only was he a hindrance, but really he was helpless anyway.
- What God did was to put Moses in a position that he had to constantly think about something that he probably would not have had to give much thought to otherwise.
- Notice the next two verses:

- Exodus 4:15 KJV

- 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.

- Notice that Moses was going to have to tell Aaron what to say. Aaron was never supposed to speak on his own. God said, ``All right, Moses, you can't talk well. I tell you what to say and then you tell Aaron what to say and Aaron will tell the people." Then He said, ``I'll strengthen Aaron in order to say it."
- So you see, God provided him a spokesman, but he was a very supernatural spokesman. Moses, because of his unbelief, because of his unwillingness to follow God's specific program, had to settle for something that was second best.
- But the wonderful thing is that God, in His grace, used Moses anyway.
- God still was able to use Moses to, in a miraculous way, bring the people out of their slavery and guide the people through all those years. He had that excess baggage of having to stop and tell Aaron every time he wanted to tell the people something, and he had the excess baggage of trying to straighten Aaron out when Aaron got himself and the people into trouble, but God was able to use Moses anyway.
- The final thing that I want us to think about in regards to Aaron is this: How much better would it have been if Moses hadn't been so uncertain and if Moses had believed God when God said, ``Moses, I will be with your mouth, and I will tell you what to say."
- He could have eliminated the middleman. He could have avoided a lot of problems.
- You may not have much to give God. Many of you say, ``There is not much for which God can use me."
- Some of you may have much to give God, from a human standpoint, and you are aware of that
- But whether you have much or whether you have little, God is going to say to you, ``If you want to use it for My glory, if you want to be My man, put it down." Then God is going to give it back to you and it is going to be God's rod in your hand.
- If, by faith, you follow God to that extent, don't continue to put demands on God.
- If you will take that rod back, God's rod in your hand, be prepared for God to do things in your life and through your life that you never dreamed possible.

- Never forget that if God gives His rod back to you, He will use you in a mighty way, but He knows exactly how He can use you.
- Some of us have had the experience of facing situations that are bigger than we think we are able to handle, but God would say to us as He said to Moses, ``Moses, who made your mouth? You think you can't talk plain. Moses, I knew that when I called you. Moses, I knew that when I put you in this situation."
- You may think that you can't handle that which God has given you to do.
- You may think you have a shortcoming that prevents you from that.
- Don't you think God knew that when He brought that thing into your life?
- God wants to use you. God want to use what you have given to Him to bring honor and glory to Himself. The first lesson you need to learn, if you have not already done it, is to give what little you have to God.
- Moses gave his Rod to God, and now he takes a different rod back
- Exodus 4:17 KJV
  - 17) And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.
- Moses tells Jethro that it is time for him to return to Egypt
- Exodus 4:18 KJV
  - 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.
- God tells Moses that the "coast is clear"
- Exodus 4:19 KJV
  - 19) And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.
- So Moses and his family heads back down to Egypt
- Exodus 4:20 KJV
  - 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.
- And God gives Moses some final instructions:

- Exodus 4:21-23 KJV

- 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.

- Then there's this story...

- Exodus 4:24-26 KJV

- 24) And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.
- 25) Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.
- 26) So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

- Then Aaron meets Moses...

- Exodus 4:27-28 KJV

- 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.

- It was important to make sure that THIS TIME, the people were ready to be lead, so they told the Israelites what they were up to...

- Exodus 4:29-31 KJV

- 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.

- And now everyone is ready to begin the Exodus...