

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 1

Israel under Slavery in the World

Scripture Reading: Exo. 1:6-22; 5:6-9; John 12:31; 14:30; Gen. 11:3;
Rev. 21:11, 19; Matt. 12:19

- I. Exodus begins with a poor situation, giving us a detailed record of the activities of God's people in their situation of slavery and death in Egypt under Pharaoh's usurpation; people are firstly enslaved by the world and then they are deadened and killed by it—Exo. 1:6-14:**
 - A. The Israelites were born in Canaan but because of a food shortage, they were forced to go down to Egypt, where they eventually were enslaved; people become enslaved primarily out of the need to maintain their livelihood, the need to make a living.
 - B. According to the Bible, the world has at least three aspects: the aspect of rebellion and idolatry, signified by Babel; the aspect of sinfulness, signified by Sodom; and the aspect of enjoyment and pleasure, signified by Egypt—cf. Gen. 11: 1-4; 19:1-29; Exo. 1:6-14; Gen. 12:10; 42:1; Num. 11:4-5:
 1. Egypt signifies the world of enjoyment, the world of pleasure; those who are involved with this aspect of the world are not ensnared primarily by rebellion or idolatry but by pleasure, by the rich material supply and physical enjoyment of the world—Gen. 12:10; 42:1; Num. 11:4-5.
 2. In Egypt they made a good living and they enjoyed the riches of the world; but Egypt kept them from fulfilling the purpose for which God had originally called them—Exo. 5:6-9.
 3. Because of their need to maintain their livelihood, the children of Israel fell into Egyptian tyranny—Exo. 1:10-11.
- II. The children of Israel were under the enslavement of Pharaoh who typifies Satan, the ruler of the world—Exo. 1:8-11, 13-14; John 12:31; 14:30; Eph. 2:2:**
 - A. Pharaoh forced God's people to work for him—Exo. 1:10-11, 13-14.
 - B. Pharaoh was wise in his dealing with God's people; in the same way Satan deals with people to usurp them, to occupy them, and to enslave them—v. 10.
 - C. "The Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with harshness"; this word indicates that the children of Israel had no liberty, no rights, and no rest—v. 13:
 1. Pharaoh made the lives of the Israelites bitter with hard labor in mortar and in brick and in all kinds of labor in the field—v. 14:
 - a. According to the revelation of the Bible, God's building is never made of bricks; God's building is always made of stones—Rev. 21:11, 19a.

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GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 1—Verse Sheet

Israel under Slavery in the World

Scripture Reading:

Exodus 1:6-22

- 6 And Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation.
- 7 But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly and multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, and the land was filled with them.
- 8 And a new king rose up over Egypt, who did not know of Joseph.
- 9 And he said to his people, The people of the children of Israel are now more numerous and stronger than we.
- 10 Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply and, when some war occurs, they also join themselves to those who hate us and fight against us and go up from the land.
- 11 So they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built storage cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Raamses.
- 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out so that they came to dread the children of Israel.
- 13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with harshness,
- 14 And they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and in brick and in all kinds of labor in the field; all their labor with which they made them serve was with harshness.
- 15 And the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one whose name was Shiphrah and the other whose name was Puah;
- 16 And he said, When you act as midwives for the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.
- 17 But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them but let the male children live.
- 18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, Why have you done this thing and let the male children live?
- 19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous: before the midwife comes to them, they give birth.
- 20 And God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very strong.
- 21 And because the midwives feared God, He established households for them.
- 22 And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, Every son who is born you shall cast into the River, but every daughter you shall let live.

Exodus 5:6-9

- 6 And the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying,
- 7 You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks as previously; let them go and gather straw for themselves.

- 8 And the quota of the bricks which they made previously, you shall still place upon them; you shall not diminish any of it, for they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God.
- 9 Let the work be laid more heavily upon such men, so that they do it and not pay attention to false words.

John 12:31

Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.

John 14:30

I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing.

Genesis 11:3

And they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and they had tar for mortar.

Revelation 21:11, 19

11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald.

Matthew 12:19

He will not strive nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 1 - Ministry Reading

Israel under Slavery in the World

Verses for Pray-reading:

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.

John 14:30 I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing.

ISRAEL UNDER SLAVERY— RELATED TO THEIR LIVELIHOOD

In this message we shall consider the slavery of the children of Israel. The Israelites were born in Canaan. Because of a food shortage, they were forced to go down to Egypt, where they eventually were enslaved. By this we see that people become enslaved primarily out of the need to maintain their livelihood, out of the need to make a living. Worldly people are drawn to various entertainments because they desire a better living. Likewise, people today pursue higher education or technical training in order to secure a good living, even the best living. Throughout the world, whether in developed nations or in backward countries, people are enslaved due to the need to earn a living. This was also the situation with the children of Israel in Egypt.

The exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt represents another aspect. Egypt signifies the world of enjoyment, the world of pleasure. Those who are involved with this aspect of the world are not ensnared primarily by rebellion or idolatry; they are fully occupied by pleasure, by the rich material supply and physical enjoyment of the world (Gen. 12:10; 42:1; Num. 11:4-5). The river Nile, which irrigates the land of Egypt, makes the land rich in produce. When the children of Israel were wandering in the

wilderness, they said, "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic" (Num. 11:5). All these items represent the material riches of the world for enjoyment and pleasure.

Before we were saved, we were not only in the world of rebellion and idolatry, but also in the world of riches and enjoyment. Abraham was called out of the rebellious world, but the children of Israel made their exodus out of the world of enjoyment. Egypt was rich not only in food supply but also in gold. This is proved by the fact that the Egyptians gave gold to the Israelites at the time of the exodus.

The world typified by Egypt usurps the people whom God created and chose for His purpose (5:6-9). The children of Israel were enslaved to that aspect of the world which gave them their livelihood and afforded them their enjoyment. Whether they are rich or poor, many today are slaves to money. They work hard to earn a large amount of money and then in a short time they spend all they have to indulge in the pleasures of the world. Thus many today do not serve God, but mammon. This was the situation among the ancient Israelites in the land of Egypt. In Egypt they made a good living and they enjoyed the riches of the world. But Egypt kept them from fulfilling the

purpose for which God had originally called them.

In Egypt the children of Israel became strong. Exodus 1:7 says, "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and grew strong exceedingly; and the land was filled with them" (Heb.). In one sense, to become strong is to become rich. Without money, a nation cannot be strong. For example, the United States is a strong nation because of its economy.

The children of Israel enjoyed the aspect of the world typified by Egypt. They were not in the first aspect of the world, typified by Babel, nor in the second aspect, represented by Sodom. But they were enslaved in the third aspect, signified by Egypt. Because they were occupied by the riches and enjoyment of the world, they were kept from fulfilling the purpose for which God had created and chosen them. In the same principle, all the worldly people today have been usurped by Satan. As a result, they do not know God's purpose. How we need to thank the Lord for delivering us from slavery in the world and for setting us free from the usurping hand of Satan!

Because of their need to maintain their livelihood, the children of Israel fell into Egyptian tyranny (1:10-11). The worldly people today are also under tyranny. Even their occupation with worldly amusements is a sign that they are under Satan's tyranny. Forced to follow a course that holds them under Satan's tyranny and that keeps them from God's purpose, they have no freedom and do not make the proper choices.

PHARAOH'S ENSLAVEMENT OF ISRAEL

The children of Israel were under the enslavement of Pharaoh (1:8-11, 13-14), who typifies Satan, the ruler of the

world (John 12:31; Eph. 2:2). Because Pharaoh is the embodiment of Satan, he is a picture of Satan in Exodus, a book of pictures.

Pharaoh forced God's people to work for him (1:10-11, 13-14). In verse 10 Pharaoh said, "Let us deal wisely with them." The worldly people do not realize how wise Satan is and how wisely he deals with people to usurp them, to occupy them, and to enslave them. The goal of Satan's wise dealings is the enslavement of mankind.

Verse 13 says, "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor." Some versions translate the Hebrew word for "rigor" as "harshness." This word indicates that the children of Israel had no liberty, no rights, and no rest. No matter what their circumstances were, they had to labor as slaves. They had to do what Pharaoh demanded.

Pharaoh made the lives of the Israelites bitter with hard labor. Today, in the eyes of God, all the people are laboring in the "field." You may work in a hospital, factory, or office, but actually you are laboring in the "field" making "bricks" and cementing them with "mortar."

As slaves in Egypt, the children of Israel "built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses" (v. 11). Pithom means "mouth of integrity," and Raamses means "thunder of the standard." These names indicate that Pharaoh's treasure cities were built for pride and boastful display, just as the pyramids were. I believe that, under Pharaoh, the Egyptians had these treasure cities built in order to boast of their integrity, honesty, and goodness and also to propagate their cultural standard. The mouth of integrity is still sounding forth in the world today. Every race and nation boasts of its goodness. Furthermore, every country, developed or undeveloped, is proud of its standard

of attainment. For thousands of years the world has been boasting of its goodness and thundering out its standard. Today the worldly people are building treasure cities for Satan because of pride in their integrity and standard.

In contrast to the worldly people, the Lord Jesus did not boast of His integrity. Instead of boasts, words of grace issued

from His mouth (Luke 4:22). Moreover, with the Lord there was no thundering of the standard. Matthew 12:19 says of Him, "He shall not strive nor cry out, nor shall anyone hear His voice in the streets." (*Life-study of Exodus*, pp. 14-19)

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GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 2

The Preparation of Moses

Scripture Reading: Exo. 2:1-25; Acts 7:20-29; Heb. 11:23-27; Dan. 1:3-4; 1 Tim. 4:12;
2 Tim. 2:20-22

- I. **In Exodus we see that Pharaoh held the children of Israel in slavery and sought to kill all the baby boys born to the Hebrew mothers; in such a situation there was an urgent need for a savior (Moses)—Exo. 2:1-10:**
 - A. In preparing the savior, God used the female life to preserve him—vv. 1-10.
 - B. Under God's sovereignty, Moses learned all the Egyptian wisdom while staying in the royal palace as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; through this Egyptian education, he became highly cultured and received the highest learning in the world—Acts 7:22.
 - C. Moses was further prepared by being rejected by his brothers—Exo. 2:11-15:
 1. When Moses was forty years old, he was confident that he had been furnished, equipped, qualified, and perfected to save the children of Israel; he expected that his brothers would understand that God through him would save them—Acts 7:23, 25.
 2. However, they did not understand but rejected him; this forced Moses to flee from Egypt and in order to break down Moses' natural strength, God arranged to have him work as a shepherd in the land of Midian—Exo. 2:15-17.
 - D. Moses paid a price to stand with the people of God preferring to suffer affliction with God's people rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin; he was steadfast, persevering because the invisible God was working on him—Heb. 11:24-27.
 - E. The persecuted children of God were crying out to God for deliverance and the God of mercy, grace, and love was eager to rescue them, but God had to wait until Moses was fully prepared—Exo. 2:23-25.
- II. **Character has very much to do with the Lord's service; consider those persons in the Bible whom God used; they were used by God because they possessed a character that was fit for His use—Dan. 1:3-4; Phil. 2:17; 2 1 Tim. 4:12; Tim. 2:20-21:**
 - A. Since Abraham, Moses, and Paul all had an excellent character, God greatly used them; the destiny of our usefulness to the Lord hinges on our character—Acts 15:40; Matt. 1:2; cf. Heb. 11:17-19, 24-27; 2 Tim. 4:7-8.
 - B. Moses' character was nearly perfect, as we see in the Old Testament—cf. Heb. 11:23-27:

1. First, he received the knowledge of God from his parents when he was young; this is a factor that contributed to the development of his character—cf. Acts 7:20-21.
 2. Second, God prepared an environment, bringing him to the Egyptian palace to learn the culture of that age; this also was a factor in the cultivation of his character—cf. vv. 22-23.
 3. Third, God sent him to the wilderness for forty years for character training—cf. vv. 23-29.
 4. Once a prince in the Egyptian palace, he now shepherded a flock, learning patience and humility and spontaneously acquiring a lowly character—Num. 12:3.
- C. Paul in the New Testament was a man who is tender, helpful, accommodating, and frank; he was full of Christ, and the fire of Christ was burning within him and upon him.

NOTES

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 2—Verse Sheet

The Preparation of Moses

Scripture reading:

Exodus 2:1-25

- 1 And a man of the house of Levi went and took a daughter of Levi as wife.
- 2 And the woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months.
- 3 And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him a papyrus basket and plastered it with tar and pitch; and she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the River.
- 4 And his sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.
- 5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the River while her maidens walked alongside the River. And she saw the basket in the midst of the reeds and sent her female servant, and she brought it to her.
- 6 And she opened it and saw the child, and there was the boy, weeping. And she had compassion on him and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.
- 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call a nurse from the Hebrew women for you that she may nurse the child for you?
- 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the girl went and called the child's mother.
- 9 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages. So the woman took the child and nursed him.
- 10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses and said, Because I drew him out of the water.
- 11 And in those days, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his brothers and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brothers.
- 12 And he looked this way and that, and when he saw that there was no one there, he struck the Egyptian down and hid him in the sand.
- 13 And he went out the next day, and there were two Hebrew men struggling together; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, Why are you beating your companion?
- 14 And he said, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you thinking to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? And Moses became frightened and said, Surely the matter is known.
- 15 Now when Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh to dwell in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.
- 16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.
- 17 And the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses rose up and helped them and watered their flock.
- 18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, Why have you come back so quickly today?

- 19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and he even drew water for us as well and watered the flock.
- 20 And he said to his daughters, And where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to eat a meal.
- 21 And Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.
- 22 And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.
- 23 And in the course of those many days the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage. And they cried out, and their cry went up to God because of their bondage.
- 24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
- 25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God took notice of them.

Acts 7:20-29

- 20 At this time Moses was born and was lovely to God. And he was nurtured three months in his father's house.
- 21 And when he was thrown out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nurtured him as a son for herself.
- 22 And Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in his words and works.
- 23 But when he was approaching forty years of age, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel.
- 24 And when he saw one of them being wronged, he defended him, and he avenged him who was being oppressed by striking the Egyptian dead.
- 25 And he supposed that his brothers understood that God through his hand was giving salvation to them; but they did not understand.
- 26 And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting and tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, Men, you are brothers. Why are you wronging one another?
- 27 But the one who was wronging his neighbor pushed him away, saying, "Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?"
- 28 Do you want to do away with me the same way you did away with the Egyptian yesterday?"
- 29 And Moses fled at this word and became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begot two sons.

Hebrews 11:23-27

- 23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw that the child was lovely, and they did not fear the king's decree.
- 24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,
- 25 Choosing rather to be ill treated with the people of God than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin,
- 26 Considering the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked away to the reward.

27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he persevered as one seeing the unseen One.

Daniel 1:3-4

- 3 Then the king told Ashpenaz, the chief of his eunuchs, to bring some of the sons of Israel, including some from the royal seed and from the nobility,
- 4 Children in whom was no defect, who were good in appearance, who showed insight in all wisdom, understanding in knowledge, and apprehension in thought, and in whom was the ability to stand in the king's palace. And he told him to teach them the learning and language of the Chaldeans.

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

2 Timothy 2:20-22

- 20 But in a great house there are not only gold and silver vessels but also wooden and earthen; and some are unto honor, and some unto dishonor.
- 21 If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work.
- 22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

NOTES

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GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 2- Ministry Reading

The Preparation of Moses

Verses for Pray-reading:

Heb. 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Choosing rather to be ill treated with the people of God than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, Considering the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked away to the reward.

After forty years of his life had gone by, Moses could no longer wait to deliver the children of Israel. He had received the highest education, and he had become a man powerful in words and in deeds (Acts 7:22). According to his own estimation, no doubt he thought he was qualified and ready to act on behalf of his people. But God set Moses aside for another forty years, until he was fully prepared according to God's standard. In this we see the patience of our God.

What made it necessary for God to wait those eighty years? None of us would have been willing to wait such a long time. Surely God wanted a way to come in earlier than He did, but there was no one among the children of Israel to whom He could come. Therefore, God had to wait until Moses was born. Forty years later Moses was there, and had grown up, but God still had to wait because Moses was so natural. God had to wait because there was the lack of a prepared one.

Here we see a principle. In every age God has desired to do something. The problem has not been on His side; it has always been on the side of His people. The question has always been this: where is one who is ready to receive God's call? In our age also God is eager to do certain things. But who is ready for His call? More than nineteen centuries ago the Lord Jesus said that He was coming quickly (Rev. 22:7). But He still has not

come. If we ask the Lord why His coming back has been delayed so long, He may reply, "Where are those who are ready for Me to come back? When I see that a sufficient number are ready, I shall come. I am very eager to come back, but there must be something for Me to come back to."

In Exodus God could not come in when Moses was a child or when he was still trusting in his natural strength and ability. God had to wait until Moses was eighty years of age. Then, after Moses had been prepared, God came in to call him. The children of Israel cried out because of the tyranny, the persecution, and the oppression, but God still had to wait for Moses to be prepared. In the same principle, the Lord continues to delay His coming back because not enough of His people are ready for Him to return.

In chapters two and three of Exodus we see that the persecuted children of God were crying out to Him and that the God of mercy, grace, and love was eager to rescue them. But Moses was growing slowly unto maturity. The cry of the Israelites was desperate and the eagerness of God was great, but the growth of Moses was slow. The situation is the same today. Many saints have been sighing and longing for the Lord to come back, and the Lord is yearning to come back. But where are the prepared ones? Therefore, instead of complaining

to the Lord about today's situation, we should give ourselves to grow in life.

When by God's sovereignty Moses was set aside, he must have been very disappointed and he must have lost all hope. Having lost hope, he became content to be a shepherd caring for the flock in the land of Midian. A man who had been educated in the royal palace was now forced to live as a shepherd in the wilderness. As the years went by, he lost everything—his confidence, his future, his interest, his goal. Eventually, Moses probably reached the point where he had no further thought that he was the one whom God would use to rescue the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt. Moses might have said to himself, "I must care for this flock. But not even this flock is mine; it belongs to my father-in-law. I have no empire, no kingdom. There is nothing left for me to do except to labor in support of my family. My immediate concern is to find fresh grass for the flock and water for them to drink." But one day, when Moses had been thoroughly processed, God appeared to him and called him. At the age of eighty, in the eyes of God Moses was fully prepared and qualified, and at the precise time He came to him.

The record of God's calling of Moses is longer than the record of His calling of any other person in the Bible. The record of His calling of Abraham is brief, and so is that of Isaiah. The same is true of the

calling of Peter and of Saul of Tarsus. But the record of the calling of Moses is lengthy and detailed. In this account we find all the basic points concerning God's calling. Thus, if we would know the full significance of God's calling, we must pay close attention to God's calling of Moses in Exodus 3.

Moses was the first complete, qualified, and perfected servant of God in history. Noah was used by God to build the ark, but he was not the kind of servant Moses was. Not even Abraham, the father of faith, was perfected as a servant of God in the way Moses was. Because he was the first fully qualified servant of God in the Bible, Moses is the standard model of God's servant, and God's calling of him is the standard for His calling of all His servants. In principle, we all need to be called the way Moses was.

One day Moses led the flock to the back side of the desert. This indicates that we can be called only when we are at the back side of our situation, never when we are at the front. I believe that Moses led the flock to the back side of the desert because he was looking for the best pasture. He might have been dissatisfied with the familiar places, and he might have desired a new place. Thus, he went to the back side. (*Life-study of Exodus*, pp. 50-53)

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GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 3

God's Calling Moses

Scripture Reading: Exo. 3:1-22; 4:1-9; Heb. 11:6; John 8:12, 58; 6:35

- I. **Moses is the standard model of God's servant, and God's calling of him is the standard for His calling of all His servants; in principle, we all need to be called the way Moses was—Exo. 3:1-22:**
 - A. The place of God's calling of Moses was the back side of the wilderness indicating that we can be called only when we are at the back side of our situation, never when we are at the front—vv. 1-2:
 - B. At the back side of the wilderness was the mountain of God; many times the back side of our situation turns out to be the mountain of God; to be at the back side means that we are not content with our present situation—v. 1.
 - C. The place of God's calling was "holy ground" indicating that God's calling comes to us in a place where there is no human interference—v. 5.
 - D. God's calling comes from within a thornbush that is burning and not being consumed; the thornbush represents Moses himself and the fact that God called from the midst of a thornbush indicates that the place of God's calling is from within us—v. 2; Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; Col. 1:29.
 - E. God's calling came ultimately from the flame of fire; in the fire God was calling Moses for the voice which called Moses came out of the fire—Gen. 3:2.
- II. **When God called Moses out of the burning thornbush, he wanted to know the name of God; it is of vital importance that the one who is called know the name of the One who is calling him—Exo. 3:2, 4, 6, 14-15, 18:**
 - A. The One who called Moses was firstly the Angel of Jehovah; the Angel of Jehovah is actually Jehovah Himself—v. 2.
 - B. The second title revealed to Moses was Jehovah which means, "He who was, who is, and who will be"; this title is composed basically of the verb "to be"—Heb. 11:6.
 - C. The calling God is also the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—Gen. 3:6:
 1. This title indicates that He is the God of resurrection, the resurrecting Triune God—Matt. 22:32
 2. The phrase "the God of your father" indicates a history with God; when God comes to call you, He should not be a stranger to you.
 3. This title also means that God is the God of every kind of person; whatever we are, God is our God.
 4. This title of God also indicates the God of the covenant; the covenanting God is for everyone.
 - D. The calling God calls Himself "I AM WHO I AM;" this is the most wonderful title of God—v. 14; John 8:58; 6:35; 8:12:

- III. Although Moses had seen a most marvelous sign and had heard the voice of God, he had not been inspired or moved; for this reason, God gave him three signs to be the conclusive evidence that he had been called by God:

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GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 3—Verse Sheet

God's Calling of Moses

Scripture Reading:

Exodus 3:1-22

- 1 Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb.
- 2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.
- 3 And Moses said, I must turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thornbush does not burn up.
- 4 And when Jehovah saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the midst of the thornbush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am.
- 5 And He said, Do not come near here. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
- 6 And He said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
- 7 And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.
- 8 And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.
- 9 And now the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.
- 10 So come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.
- 11 But Moses said to God, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?
- 12 And He said, Surely I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God upon this mountain.
- 13 Then Moses said to God, If I come to the children of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they say to me, What is His name? what shall I say to them?
- 14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
- 15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.

- 16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.
- 17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.
- 18 And they will listen to your voice, and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God.
- 19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even when compelled by a mighty hand.
- 20 So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will perform in the midst of it, and after that he will let you go.
- 21 And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that when you go, you will not go empty-handed.
- 22 But every woman will ask of her neighbor and of any woman living in her house for articles of silver and articles of gold and clothing, and you will put them on your sons and on your daughters, and thus plunder the Egyptians.

Exodus 4:1-9

- 1 Then Moses answered and said, What if they do not believe me or listen to my voice, but say, Jehovah has not appeared to you?
- 2 And Jehovah said to him, What is this in your hand? And he said, A staff.
- 3 And He said, Throw it on the ground. And he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses recoiled from it.
- 4 And Jehovah said to Moses, Stretch out your hand, and take it by its tail - so he stretched out his hand and seized it, and it became a staff in his hand -
- 5 That they may believe that Jehovah, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.
- 6 And Jehovah further said to him, Now put your hand into your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, there his hand was, leprous like snow.
- 7 And He said, Put your hand into your bosom again - so he put his hand into his bosom again, and when he took it out of his bosom, there it was, restored like the rest of his flesh -
- 8 And if they do not believe you or heed the first sign, then they may believe the next sign.
- 9 And if they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, then you shall take some of the water of the River and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you take out of the River will become blood upon the dry ground.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

John 8:12, 58

12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

John 6:35

Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 3—Ministry Reading

God's Calling Moses

Verses for Pray-reading:

Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

If we would receive God's calling, we also must be in the proper place. This place is firstly the back side of our situation. If you are a teacher, God cannot call you at the front side of your teaching profession. You must be at the back side. In the same principle, if you are a businessman, you must go to the back side of your business in order to be called by God.

To be at the back side means that we are not content with our present situation. For years Moses fed the flock on the front side of the desert. But one day, discontented and dissatisfied, he decided to go to the back side to see what was there. If you are dissatisfied with your occupation or with your marriage, this dissatisfaction may turn you to the back side. Every one who has been called by God can testify that he was called at the back side.

In the calling of Moses, who came to whom? Did Moses come to God, or did God come to Moses? I would say that both were traveling, and they eventually met at a certain spot. God traveled there from the heavens, and Moses traveled there from where he was living. Thus, it is difficult to say who came to whom. According to our experience, we one day came to a certain place, and there we met God.

When Moses went to the back side of the desert, he "came to the mountain of

God, even to Horeb." Many times the back side of our situation turns out to be the mountain of God. Moses, however, did not know that the mountain of God was at the back side of the desert. Nevertheless, as Moses was slowly making his journey with the flock to the mountain of God, God was already there waiting for him.

It is of vital importance that the one who is called know the name of the One who is calling him. Exodus 3 reveals the name of God, the calling One, in a full way, more fully perhaps than any other portion of the Word. When God called Moses, Moses said, "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 unto me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?" (v. 13). Here we see Moses' concern with the divine name. He wanted to know the name of the One calling him.

The One who called Moses was firstly the Angel of Jehovah (v. 2). In his translation, Darby capitalizes the word "Angel" to indicate that this Angel was someone unique. Actually, it was Christ, the Son of God, who is God's Angel, the unique sent One. According to the Bible, an angel is a messenger, that is, one who is sent. In the book of Revelation the leading ones in the churches are called angels, messengers, sent ones. The

Angel of the Lord, therefore, in 3:2 is God's sent One.

When we put verses 2 and 4 together, we see that this sent One, the Angel of Jehovah, is actually Jehovah Himself. Verse 4 says, "And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the thorn-bush" (Heb.). This proves that the Angel of Jehovah is Jehovah Himself and that Jehovah is God. The New Testament reveals that the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, came as the Father's sent One. As God's sent One, He was God Himself.

For the purpose of calling and sending Moses, God, the sending One, appeared to him as the sent One. Only the One who has been sent can send out the sent ones. For example, the apostles, the sent ones in the New Testament, were sent out by the Lord Jesus, God's sent One. In John 20:21 the Lord Jesus said to the disciples, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Therefore, we, the Lord's disciples, are sent out by God's sent One, who is Christ as the Angel of Jehovah.

According to Exodus 3, the calling One is the sent One. This is a crucial point in God's calling. The one who knows how to use his employees and how to properly supervise them is the one who has done their particular job already. In the same principle, because Christ is God's sent One, only He knows how to send forth others.

Regarding creation, Genesis 1 says that in the beginning it was God who created the heavens and the earth. But in Genesis 2, when God came to contact man and to develop a relationship with him, the name "Jehovah" is used. Here in Exodus 3 God came in to call Moses, not directly in the name of God nor firstly in the name of Jehovah, but in the name of the Angel of Jehovah. In this chapter it is not a matter of creation nor of

developing a relationship with man; it is a matter of calling Moses. To be such a calling One there is the need for someone with the qualifications of a sent one, qualifications met uniquely by Christ as the Angel of Jehovah. Because it is the sent One who calls the sent one, the Angel of Jehovah, the Son of God, came to send Moses.

Why is the title "the Angel of Jehovah" not used in the first two chapters of Exodus? It is not until chapter three that Moses was prepared and ready. Therefore, God came to him as the Angel of Jehovah to call him and to send him. For the sending of Moses, there was the need of One with the experience of having been sent. According to Zechariah 2, the sending One is the sent One, and the sent One is the sending One. We see the same principle at work in chapter three of Exodus. The Angel of Jehovah is Jehovah Himself. The sent One of God, the Son of God, is actually God Himself. The very One who was in the beginning with God and who is God Himself was sent by God.

The title "the Angel of Jehovah" mainly refers to Christ, the Son of God, sent to save God's people from their situation of suffering (see Judg. 6:12, 22; 13:3-5, 16-22). Here in Exodus 3 the Lord came to call Moses for the delivery of the children of Israel from bondage. Hence, He came as the Angel of Jehovah.

The second title revealed in this chapter is Jehovah, which means "He who was, who is, and who will be." This title is composed basically of the verb "to be." Apart from the Lord, all else is nothing. He is the only One who is, the only One who has reality of being. The verb "to be" should not be applied absolutely to anyone or anything except to Him. He is the only self-existent being. In the universe all things are nothing. Only Jehovah is "He who was, who is,

and who will be.” In the past, He was; in the present, He is; and in the future, He will be.

Hebrews 11:6 says that “he who comes forward to God must believe that He is.” According to this verse, God is, and we must believe that He is. God is, but we are not.

If we would be called by God, we must know that the calling One is firstly the sent One of God and secondly, Jehovah, the One who was, who is, and who will be. We must know that the God who calls us is and that we are not. We all need to know God in such a way. (*Life-study of Exodus*, pp. 52-53, 55-60)

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 4

The Purpose of God's Calling

Scripture Reading: Exo. 3:8, 17; John 12:31; Acts 26:18; Coil. 1:13; 2 Cor. 6:17-18; 1 John 2:15-17; Rom. 1:16; Exo. 3:18; 19:1-2, 11; 24:16-18; Exo. 25:8-9, 40

I. The purpose of God's calling is firstly to deliver His chosen people out of the usurpation and tyranny of Pharaoh and Egypt—Exo. 3:8, 17:

- A. Pharaoh was a type of Satan, and Egypt was a type of the world. Just as Pharaoh was the ruler of Egypt, so Satan is the ruler of this world; God is still seeking to deliver His chosen people out of the usurping hand of Satan and out of the tyranny of the world—John 12:31:
 - 1. The world is not a source of enjoyment; it is a place of tyranny; in the world Satan is keeping God's chosen people, those destined for the fulfillment of God's purpose, under his usurping hand.
 - 2. God is still seeking to deliver His chosen people out of the usurping hand of Satan and out of the tyranny of the world; one aspect of God's purpose in His calling is to use us to bring others out of the usurpation and tyranny of Satan and the world—Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13.
- B. Another aspect of God's calling is to bring His chosen people into the wilderness by a journey of three days; here the wilderness is opposed to the world; it is the place of separation from the world where there is no Egyptian element—2 Cor. 6:17-18; 1 John 2:15-17:
 - 1. A complete and perfect salvation must involve a three days' journey, that is, a journey in resurrection; in our preaching of the gospel, there must be the power of resurrection.
 - 2. However, our gospel preaching today is short of impact; people can listen to our preaching and even repent and receive the Lord, but still remain in their tombs in Egypt—Rom. 1:16; cf. Luke 19:8-9.
- C. The purpose of God's calling is also to bring His chosen people to the mountain, where they may serve Him and sacrifice to Him—Exo. 3:18; 19:1-2, 11; 24:16-18:
 - 1. The mountain refers to an elevation in the wilderness; not only do we need to be separated from the world, but we need to ascend to an elevated place; only when we are on such a high level can we receive the revelation regarding God's eternal purpose.
 - 2. Here on the mountain, where the sky is clear, we see the vision of God's economy; here we come to know what is on God's heart, and we see what God desires to have on earth today.
 - 3. Here on the mountain we realize that He desires to have a people who walk according to His statutes and who build Him a tabernacle that He may dwell among them—Exo. 24:10.
- D. The purpose of God's calling is also to build a tabernacle to be God's dwelling place on earth—Exo. 25:8-9, 40.

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NOTES

GOD'S CALLING OF MOSES

Message 4—Verse Sheet

The Purpose of God's Calling

Scripture Reading:

Exodus 3:8, 17

- 8 And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.
- 17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.

John 12:31

Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.

Acts 26:18

To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Colossians 1:13

Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

- 17 Therefore "come out from their midst and be separated, says the Lord, and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you";
- 18 "And I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty."

1 John 2:15-17

- 15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him;
- 16 Because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.
- 17 And the world is passing away, and its lust, but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, both to Jew first and to Greek.

Exodus 3:18

And they will listen to your voice, and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God.

Exodus 19:1-2, 11

- 1 In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.
- 2 And when they had journeyed from Rephidim and had come to the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped in front of the mountain.
- 11 And be ready for the third day; for the third day Jehovah will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

Exodus 24:16-18

- 16 And the glory of Jehovah settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.
- 17 And the appearance of the glory of Jehovah was like consuming fire on the top of the mountain to the eyes of the children of Israel.
- 18 And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and went up on the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Exodus 25:8-9, 40

- 8 And let them make a sanctuary for Me that I may dwell in their midst.
- 9 According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its utensils, even so you shall make it.
- 40 And see that you make them according to their pattern, which was shown to you in the mountain.