

Lenten Devotional 2020

Tuesday, March 3, 2020
Day 6, Exodus 6

Treasures in Clay Jars

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country." (Exodus 6:1)

There is no question about it. Moses was shook. His worst fears had come to pass. He went back to Egypt, spoke to the Israelite elders, and confronted Pharaoh. And it all went wrong. Rather than freedom, Israel had harder labour. Now the people won't listen to Moses anymore, but God still wants Moses to go and confront Pharaoh again. Moses has given up on himself. He tells God that he cannot speak with Pharaoh. He just doesn't have the diplomatic skills required.

Those of us who have experienced failure can relate to Moses's attitude of "I just don't have what it takes to do the job." The subtext is to allow retreat or find someone else. But, that isn't God's solution. Rather, he refocuses the job. The success of the exodus was never dependant on Moses's skills as a diplomat or a wonderworker. It was always God's job. That is what YHWH (the name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush) had always intended to do. He reminds Moses that the pressure is on YHWH not Moses. YHWH promised the patriarchs, YHWH made the covenant (and will keep it), YHWH heard the groaning of Israel, so YHWH will redeem and deliver them. The result will be that Israel will know that it was their God who delivered them—not Moses!

Everyday we seem to be faced with six impossible things before breakfast. The demands placed on us as God's people can feel weighty. We are supposed to be disciplined people in the midst of a culture that demands us to do what feels good or right to us. We are supposed to conform to the values of God's kingdom rather than to the culture. We are supposed to be an influence on a society that wants us to remain silent, and we are supposed to lead people to confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour—categories that are nonsensical today. It's no wonder we echo Moses and take ourselves out of the game. Lord, I don't have what it takes.

The answer is the same to us as it was to Moses. The job was never yours. There is only one deliverer—Israel's God. Moses is right, we are right; we don't have what it takes. That is why he gives us his Spirit. It is the Spirit of Christ in us that has the power to do what we the church are called to do. The best thing we can do is to recognize that we don't have the skills for the job because the job is not our, so that we can give the job over to the Spirit. Then all we have to do is submit and cooperate with the Spirit in our daily walk.

Prayer

YHWH, show us your divine power of redemption and deliverance. Help us to give up the notion that we might have what it takes to conform ourselves to your image. Instead, let us submit ourselves to the power of your Spirit. Holy Spirit, move in us and through us to your world in rescue. Amen.