

Lenten Devotional March 18, 2018

Scripture

Exodus 3:16-4:12

¹⁶“Go and assemble the elders of Israel, and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying: I have given heed to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷I declare that I will bring you up out of the misery of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ ¹⁸They will listen to your voice; and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’ ¹⁹I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. ²⁰So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go. ²¹I will bring this people into such favor with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed; ²²each woman shall ask her neighbor and any woman living in the neighbor’s house for jewelry of silver and of gold, and clothing, and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters; and so you shall plunder the Egyptians.” ¹Then Moses answered, “But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you.’” ²The LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” ³And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. ⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail”—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand—⁵“so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” ⁶Again, the LORD said to him, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous, as white as snow. ⁷Then God said, “Put your hand back into your cloak”—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body—⁸“If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. ⁹If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.” ¹⁰But Moses said to the LORD, “O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” ¹¹Then the LORD said to him, “Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹²Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.”

Devotional

Robin Sharp, Senior M.Div. Student

Like so many of us do, Moses is trying to convince God that He has chosen the wrong person for the job. Moses sounds like someone trying to worm his way out of a responsibility so he can just continue to enjoy the calm life he knows. First, in so many words, he asks the Lord, “Why should anybody believe me?” The Lord responds with three tools to show His power in Moses. None of them are delightful: a staff that becomes a snake, a hand that turns leprous, and water that changes to blood when poured on the dry ground. Three signs showing the power of God, and *still* Moses argues. “I am not eloquent of speech.”

How many tools has God given each one of us for responding to His call? How many times do we hesitate in answering that call? How many times do we find excuses for answering “No” just to stay in our comfort zones?

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for your persistence in pursuing us to be active parts of your ministry and for providing us with the tools we need. The places to which you call us and the instruments you provide are not always ones we would choose, so help us to recognize that you know best—and to answer “Yes.” Amen.