

5/28/23- - "I AM" Series

PASTOR LEE

Recap:
God's
(Perfect)
Plan

Moses
Calling

- Today, share story of God's goodness, His protection and His faithfulness.
- Background references to history of God's promise to Abraham and His ensuing Plan...reflecting on family's ultimate appearance in Egypt...there, that family is protected and grows almost exponentially consistent with God's promises.....through which the Messiah would ultimately emerge. With Joseph's contributions faded in history, a new Pharaoh....out of fear...attempts to control Hebrews, first thru slavery, then progressive cruelty including killing of Hebrew boy 'new borns'. Recap of Moses survival and adoption into royalty...his sympathy for Hebrew plight, killing of Egyptian and, rejected by his own people, flight out of Egypt. 40 years in desert...lowly Shepherd...(what a contrast/sacrifice to his royal upbringing!).....marries/has family...very ordinary...who then meets God in burning bush!!!
- Coming face to face with God (the great "I AM"), everything changes. God conveys His witnessing of the Hebrew nations pain/suffering in Egypt....call Moses to return and be His vessel in rescuing them out of Egypt and into 'Promised Land'. Moses hesitates...God gives him signs (ie. the staff, blood of the Nile, leprous hand).

Moses
Says "YES"!

- After multitude of excuses and with the grace of God's patience, he says "YES". A moment just like the one(s) in our lives when God challenges us to say "YES".

God
Empowers
& Instructs

EXODUS 4:18 *Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said to him, "please let me go back to my brothers in Egypt to see whether they are still alive". And Jethro said to him "go in peace". (19) And the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead". (20) So Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of God in his hand. (21) And the LORD said to Moses, "when you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. (Note: God FORETELLS the following) But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. (22) Then you shall say to Pharaoh, "thus says the LORD, Israel is my first born son, (23) and I say to you "let my son go that he may serve me. If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'*

God is
Right...
Always!

- Sound harsh?! No! GOD IS ALWAYS RIGHT!!!! Right with Moses, right with Pharaoh- and today, in all that we see, read or experience, GOD IS ALWAYS RIGHT!!!! This is a foundations fact with which we all have to come to terms!

- EXODUS 4:24 *At a lodging place on the way the LORD and sought to put him to death. (COMMENTARY: SOUNDS SO UNBELIEVABLY CONTRADICTIONARY—THE LORD WOULD PUT TO DEATH THE MAN HE HAD JUST CALLED AND INSTRUCTED?!— — — BOTTOM-LINE: GOD IS GOOD; GOD IS ALWAYS RIGHT.*
- EVEN scholars puzzled by the passage.....two hypothetical sensical 'takes': (NOTE: wait for it)

EXODUS 4:25 *Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses feet with it and said "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" (26) So He let him alone. It was then that she said "a bridegroom of blood," because of the circumcision.*

- 'TAKE'/THEORY #1: Moses at death's door..writhing in pain.... (if God wants to put you to death; you WILL be put to death)..but the circumcision was a sign of the Covenant with Abraham and of mandatory obedience....death to the flesh and

Even when
we Don't
Understand

fulfillment of the Covenant. In this context, remember that Moses left his own people, fled to foreign land of people who were probably NOT God-followers. Marrying such a person (or a non-believer in the New Testament) was inconsistent with God's instructions. Zipporah MIGHT have been trying to negate Moses' acquiescence to his new life/abdication of his old life and her own prior rejection of his belief system having made a connection between Moses terminal state and their lack of adherence. Further, in throwing foreskin at his feet, could have been an angry, resentful gesture (ie. Something HE should have done!).

- 'TAKE'/THEORY #2: (OR) Maybe her 'dis-belief' is stunned into 'belief'...by the events of burning bush, calling, signs, Moses at death's door. Note translation more to original scriptural language that she 'touched' him with the foreskin- -not 'thrown' at him.

Obedience
Out of
Faith

God's
Perfect
Purpose!

- And, either way, from that moment on, Moses is healed! Our take?...either way, FOLLOWING GOD IS ALWAYS ABOUT FAITH!doesn't have to make sense to us....God blesses people who trust Him and who know that he is ALWAYS RIGHT.
- So, when we live 'outside' His way, He can't use us/can't bless us to the fullest extent! Question #1: do we pick/chose when we obey God....perhaps some category of sin that we see as an exception...perhaps to accommodate culture or our life style?? Question #2 Assuming so, what is that exception in your own life?
- Just as our parents (or caregiver) would...in such cases, discipline us...with infinitely more at stake, God disciplines us! We-as parents- sometimes struggle with notion of discipline.

Discipline
of Moses
(and us!)
Painful/
Good!

- Discipline...See HEBREWS 12:5-11 *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by Him. (6) For the Lord disciplines the one He loves and chastises every son whom he receives." (7) It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (8) If you are left without discipline in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (9) Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live?" (10) For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.(11) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Prepares,
teaches
& Protects

- We understand discipline in our own lives.....parallels (in a small way) God's discipline of us! Pastor Lee tells 'Itchy Ball Story'- -his point: discipline your kids early and firmly- smaller impacts/ramifications and easier! Bigger point: we have a God who wants to see us share in His holiness and have a 'fruit of righteousness-toward that end, He disciplines us.
- Dispel the notion that God is just 'nice'...your struggles couldn't be discipline....accept that He might be trying to get your attention --as part of His 'process' to grow us (in righteousness) and protect us. Especially possible when things are going good in our lives and we feel blessed! A 'teaching moment'? God disciplines Moses AND us! (Referencing back to TAKE/THEORIES #1 and 2)....in preparation for his tremendous challenges- -and ours! Discipline your kids!!!
- Moses, or we, want to lead?.....must have our own house(s) in order!

Fruits!

- EXODUS 4:31 *And the people believed, and when they heard that the Lord has visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped.*

Fruits!

- God pulls back on Moses' discipline....He brings blessings...the people believe and wondrous things result. Likewise, we need to share the fruits of our discipline and belief.

Thank
God

His Goodness,
Protection,
Faithfulness

!!

- Pastor Lee: tells story of kidney transplant surgery/friend's donation... underwhelming thanks.....contrasts God's wondrous support of Moses/Hebrews and their (initial) stupendous, positive, worshipping-full of joy/gratitude- response. How do we, today, respond to wondrous blessings?

Rejoice In Christ!!!