

THE MAN MOSES: LEARNING HOW TO BE USED OF GOD

Part III: After Ministry Failure, Being Mightily Used By God

C. Step Three - The Necessity Of Righteousness In Family Relations For Serving God (Exodus 4:18-28)

I. Introduction

- A. When God calls a believer to use him mightily in service, He challenges him, equips him with the supernatural ability to do the job, and encourages him to fulfill his mission.
- B. But mingled with all of this edifying buildup is an enormous **threat!** Exodus 4:18-27 explains it:

II. The Necessity Of Righteousness In Family Relations For Serving God, Exodus 4:18-28:

- A. God prepared Moses for Effective spiritual service as Israel's Deliverer from Egypt, Ex. 4:18-23,27-28:
 - 1. God encouraged Moses to return to Egypt to deliver the Hebrews as the men who had wanted Moses dead before were now deceased themselves, Ex. 4:19.
 - 2. God reminded Moses to use the rod in his hand for effective service, Ex. 4:21a,b.
 - 3. God also forewarned Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart against letting Israel leave the land, v. 21c. This would have equipped Moses to brace for a tough time with Pharaoh so that he would not quit once he started his ministry!
 - 4. In fact, God directed Aaron to meet Moses in the wilderness, Ex. 4:27. God had told Moses that Aaron would be glad to see him, another encouragement along the way, Ex. 4:14c.
- B. However, **as Moses returned to Egypt en route to performing his service, God met him in the way and sought to KILL him**, Exodus 4:24. Moses had neglected to obey God's command to all the Hebrew people regarding the **family responsibility** to circumcise his son, and this disobedience in the life of the LEADER of His people was absolutely intolerable, cf. James 3:1.
- C. Zipporah, Moses' wife, salvaged her husband's life by using a flint knife to circumcise her son, Ex. 4:25. This fact coupled with her rather curt deposit of the removed foreskin at Moses' feet together with the statement that Moses was a bridegroom of blood reveals **a problem in the marriage** (as follows):
 - 1. Apparently Zipporah had resisted letting her son be circumcised, and Moses had not insisted upon it to keep relationships smooth with his wife (McGee, Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee, vol. 1, Genesis-Deuteronomy, p. 214-215).
 - 2. However, Zipporah needed to come around before God could use Moses, for the headship of the home was **Moses'** responsibility!
 - 3. The problem all began when Moses married into his Arabian host family, cf. Ex. 2:21 (Ibid., McGee). They did not have the rite of circumcision as their own as did the Hebrew people; accordingly, there was little agreement on Zipporah's part with Moses regarding a custom that seemed cruel to her!
- D. God released Moses to continue serving Him, but at the cost of really comfortable ties in the marriage: Zipporah **repeated** her charge of Moses being a husband of blood to her in Ex. 4:26!

Lesson: All of the confidence and encouragement and gifting that God can and will supply us for serving Him cannot carry us through into effective service production if we harbor sin in our family ties! Righteousness is priority number one with a holy God, and we have got to be right with Him not only personally, but in how we relate to our family members as well!

Application: (1) If we have sin between us and the Lord, we must confess it to be effectively used in serving the Lord. (2) If there are things that we are doing that are wrong, but we are doing them to keep the peace even with close family members, we must put those family ties on the rack and purify ourselves before the Lord. It is better to be right with God and at odds with even marriage partners than vice-versa! (3) It goes without saying that we need to be careful to marry only godly partners as marriage to the carnal believer can be a real bane against our qualifying to be useful to God! (4) If we are holding our spouse back from being effectively used of God due to our own hardness of heart, if we really care about our partner, we need to confess it as sin!