

## What's your excuse?

### Exodus 3 - NIV

**1** Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. **2** There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. **3** So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

**4** When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

**5** "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." **6** Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

**7** The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. **8** So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. **9** And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. **10** So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

Let me try and set up the background a little to this story. Moses was in early retirement. He had come out of Egypt after unsuccessfully trying to help the Israelite people, he was now working for his father-in-law, helping watch the sheep. When suddenly he found himself, out in the wilderness, all by himself, when a bush suddenly burst into flames and a voice started speaking out of it. The God appears in this flame and God speaks to Moses through this Burning Bush.

Now why did God chose such a way to speak to Moses? When we read about these superhero Bible caricatures, we build them up greater than life, we think in our minds that they were amazing people, much better than us. We think that we could never have the courage which they have. We believe that we could never do the things which they do. We could never be used by God in the way 'Great Moses was' or 'Paul' or 'Joseph' or, or..

But I want to say to you, that this could not be further from the truth. The people who God used in the bible were not super extraordinary people, they were just normal people, just like us.

Why Do you think God went to such extraordinary means and lengths to try and speak to Moses. I mean why didn't God just give him a dream, or send a prophet. Why would he do all this supernatural stuff just to get a man's attention?

If your writing notes, then write this down. Point number 1

### 1)When God gets your attention, pay attention

The whole reason why God lit this bush up in the middle of the desert was to get Moses attention, and when He lights a fire in your heart about an individual, about a friend who is going through a time of hurt, a workmate who is sick, a family member who is in a struggle, a situation in your country, a ministry in your church, I mean when you are just 'minding you own business' then this person or this thought jumps into your mind, and your start getting concerned for it PAY ATTENTION! That is god trying to give you a burning bush. God is trying to get your attention!

God speaks to Moses through this burning bush and says 'I have seen the suffering of my people, I have heard their cry, and I have come down to rescue them.' Listen to this wording. **'I have, I have,**

**I have'** this must have excited Moses. I mean he was the one who saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, which upset him so much he killed the Egyptian before running for his life. He had seen the suffering! He had seen with his own eyes the mistreatment of his people, their beatings, their lack of food, he had seen the kids with swollen bellies, the obsession. And now, after all this God speaks to him, and say '**I have come down to rescue my people'**

And I totally believe Moses was there, like 'Yes, God, that is awesome, go and get them!' but notice then the very next verse.

*"I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering, and have come down to rescue them.. 'So now you go. I am sending you'*

What do you think Moses thought? I mean do you think he thought 'yes, I will go, I shall be proud to go'. He thought just like you would think. If God spoke audibly and said 'I have come down to rescue my people' and then turned around and said 'and now go'. We would think 'what do you mean now go?, I though you said, **you** were coming down? I thought **you** said **you** were going to rescue **your** people.' Why are you telling me to go?

## Point 2 – Moses going was God coming down

God's answer is you! You are the answer to the problem in your family. You are the answer to the drug problem in your city, to the alcohol problem, to the homeless, to the hurting and to the lost. You are the answer people starving in Africa, you are the answer kids locked up institutions in Eastern Europe. You are the answer!

It's not that God is going to come down and fix your life. God has already come down. He heard our cries and then 2000 years ago he sent his son down, to die on the cross, and now he turns to us, and says 'I have saved you with my blood, now I have given you my authority, then go. (Matthew 28)

Now you go, and when we go, God comes with us. Moses going, was God coming down. We would

think he would go neh? But not Moses. I mean after that supernatural encounter with a burning bush, Moses then turns around and offers God four excuses why he can not do it.

### Excuse number 1

He said 'who am I, that I must go?' in other words, I am nobody! And you only use special people, who are amazingly gifted, and I am just Moses. I am no Noah, I am not a Abraham, I am just me, this guy who has a beard, that guy who looks a little like Charlton Heston. I am just Moses, I am nothing special!

I love God's response to this. Tell me, have you ever used this excuse with God, when he has told you to do something? I am nobody, I can't do that God' When God calls you to preach, and you think 'I can't do that, that is for the pastor' I am a nobody' or to teach in the Sunday school, and your like 'Joe is amazing for that, but not me, I can't do that'. One of the first things you need to overcome for God to use you, is this 'I am a nobody attitude!'

But lets us look what God says, when we use this excuse, he says 'I know'. He doesn't try to build Moses up. He simple says 'I will go with you'. Now I just want to ask you again, how many of you would do something, when you see God speaking to you through something on fire'. I mean you would have thought Moses would have jumped and started running to Egypt, or? But not Moses, and this is why I think we have a wrong idea of Moses.

[>run clip<](#)

For most of us, when we picture Moses in our heads we think of someone like Charlton Heston in the film 'Ten Commandments'. We see a 6ft 4, muscle man, with a beard blowing in the wind, holding the staff in the air, telling the water to part as in the clip And he just looks the part. But I think when they chose, they chose the wrong actor, they should have looked for someone small and totally normal, because when God said 'Go' and Moses said 'I am a nobody'. God answer 'I shall go with you' and what happens? He comes up with Excuse number 2

## Excuse 2

'I don't know what to say'. Isn't that what we do when God tells us to do something. 'I don't know what to say, I don't know how to do that. Someone once said 'Anything that is worth doing, is worth doing not perfect the first time.' meaning if your just sitting wait for perfect conditions you will sit there your whole life. You got to get going. God's answer is 'I shall tell you what to say'. I can't tell you how many times, I have had to speak to a group and really have no idea what to prepare, and then God speaks. Or How many times, I have been speaking randomly to someone, and God says 'say this' God speaks to us, and tells us what to say.

I don't know what to say → I shall tell you what to say!

What comes next?

## Excuse 3

So if I go, you shall come with me, God answer 'yeah, I shall go with you'. So if I don't know what to say, you will tell me what to say, 'God confirms 'I shall tell you what to say'. So Moses starts with excuse number 3 'What if they don't believe me'. God's answer, it's not your job.

It not your job to twist someone's arm, so they become saved. It's not your job to heal anybody. To repair someone's marriage, to heal someone's drug abuse problem. It's not your job. It's not your job to preform a huge miracle for somebody.

God says 'you do what I tell you to do, and I shall do the rest.' God asks Moses 'what do you have in your hand.' Moses answers, this is a sheep stick.' God says 'throw it down.' So Moses throws it down and it turns into a snake, I believe he was running again. I mean, what would we do? Then God speaks to him again and says, pick it up, so he picks it up, and it turns back into a rod. God was showing him 'It's not your job, I shall do the supernatural, you just do what I tell you to do.

Next God says to Moses 'put your hand in your coat', and I bet you Moses was like 'please don't let my fingers turn into little snakes'. But Moses did what God told him, and he put his hand in his coat, and when he pulled it out, it was leprous! What we need to realise, is that in this time, this was your death sentence, it meant you will never see your family again, you will always live on the

outside of the city, and what you walk, you must shout, so that people can run out of your way.

God tells Moses put your arm back in. Moses puts his arm back inside his coat, pull is back out, and was perfectly clean.

Do you realise, that we were eaten up with the leprosy of sin, and this is why we should be so full of joy. Because when Jesus died, he cleared our sin with his blood, that we must no longer be unclean but we can be perfectly restored.

What if they don't believe me. What if they don't believe me in the street ministry, what if they don't believe me in the Uni, What if they don't believe me in my family. It's not your job to make them believe you, it's your job to be obedient.

#### Excuse 4

He said but.... 'I mean Moses is here, quarrelling with a burning bush, he has just had his rod turn into a snake, and back again. He had caught leprosy and got healed again, all in the last few moments, and now he says 'buuutt I aamm slloooww iinnn ssppeeacchh'. I am not eloquent in speaking, I freeze up in front of crowds, even my friends don't always understand me.' In other words he was saying 'I am not capable!'

That is the fourth excuse, we reason with God why we are not capable to do what he has called us to do 'I am too fat, I am too skinny, I am too old, I am too young. I am not clever enough – I am too clever, I am not, I am not.... you use extraordinary people and I am not even just ordinary. And God says to him one question 'who made you?, Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD ?'

Example of Christians who have over come – David ring – [video 1](#)

Then Moses offers the last and final excuse, and this is when God gets angry. Again God tells Moses 'Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.'

Then Moses says 'send someone else' this is one of a few times in the Bible when we read that God got angry, but God gets angry because Man is speaking back to God saying 'I am not capable to do,

that for which you made me.'

I just wonder how many of us are running God hot with anger? We are the Moses from our generation, God has seen the pain and the suffering of our world and our countries, and this suffering has come up before him. And God is saying to us also today 'YES, I have come down, now GO! Its scary isn't it, but we are God's answer!

Finally Moses answers 'here am I'. Never let yourself hear of a need and think, I got to find someone to pray for that, or I got to find someone to do that. To pray with you is great, but when God gets your attention, act upon it.

This is more than a sermon, this is a way off life. I continually need to beat down all those voices, telling me, I can't do that, that there is someone better than me to do this, I don't know how to do that and just say 'I don't know what I am doing, but here I go, God I trust you to come with me'.