

- *Summary: Now, through Moses, God begins the process of deliverance he has long had in mind. Can we learn anything about stepping out in faith in serving God? Issues of partnership - working with Aaron, and not on his own. Issues of discouragements - the people not responding, Pharaoh opposing God's plan.*
- *Actually read: Exodus 4:18-5:2, 5:6-9, 5:17-6:12, 7:6-7*

## Introduction

- Now, through Moses, God begins the process of deliverance he has long had in mind.
  - but the deliverance hasn't happened in what we have read!
  - and it won't come for a couple of weeks yet, in our series!!
  - so why are we bothering with this section?
  - because Moses, through whom God will bring deliverance, models four characteristics of those who would be used by God in his service, characteristics we should learn from

## Working in Partnership

- First thing Moses learns is working in partnership:
  - up till now he's been a solo operative - Moses and the Egyptian, Moses at the well helping Jethro's daughters, Moses at the burning bush...
  - but from now on its to be Moses and Aaron
- Admittedly Moses kind of brough Aaron into the equation as he tried to back out of going back to Egypt (4:13-17)
  - but I don't think what Moses had in mind was partnership!
  - he wanted someone else to go for him!!
- God set-up the partnership
  - Moses and Aaron, brothers who can hardly have known each other
  - who probably hadn't seen each other in at least forty years, and quite possibly very little while Moses was a Prince in Egypt
- Yet Moses took on working in partnership:
  - with all the complications of communication, of misunderstanding, of different expectations, of lack of independence that this brings
  - but God seems to want us to work in partnership with each other, not as soloists, but as part of a group, whether it is a duo or an orchestra!
- Do we?

## Stepping out in Faith

- Leaving Midian, taking his family, speaking to Pharaoh, engaging with the Israelites!
  - none of these was without risk!
  - family out of Midian...
  - speaking to Pharaoh - a new Pharaoh (cf 2:23), perhaps even someone who Moses had grown up with, as portrayed in the Prince of Egypt film - certainly someone with power
  - engaging with the Israel - his last dealings with his people had resulted in them saying "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" (2:14), and Moses having to flee...
- Yet, however reluctantly, Moses took the step of faith:
  - when God said "Go" Moses went... (4:20)
- Do we?

## Facing Opposition

- Pharaoh, and the resulting disquiet amongst the Jews (5:21)
  - in other words, some of Moses' fears came true!

- what is striking in the whole portrayal of Moses facing the opposition is that he is **not** a hero figure, manfully disdainful of the doubters....
- rather **Moses is wracked by doubts, fears and insecurities yet still carries on!**
- And that's much closer to our experience of opposition:
  - whether external (which in many ways is easier, especially if you are working in partnership!)
  - or internal
- **Its just hard...**
- **But Moses example calls us to face it, not fudge it, and see God work through us**
  
- Are we facing opposition, external or internal?
  - how are we facing it?

## **Trusting God's Promises**

- Listening for God's voice, not the voice of opposition or discouragement
  - kind of related to the stepping out in faith, but later in the process...
  - Moses has taken the risk, he's learning to work in partnership, he's faced the opposition - surely now it will all work out?
  - well it hasn't....
  - so....
- For a start (5:22-23) Moses spoke (complained?!) to God
  - but God then reminded Moses of his promises - rooted in who he is, the covenant making God, the faithful God of long term relationship with and commitment to his people (6:2-6) <black>
  - and out of who God is comes God's promise of action - **deliverance and a new land** (6:6-8)
- And Moses eventually trusted in the Lord's promises:
  - not easily! (6:12)
  - but finally... (7:6)
  
- Do we?

## **Conclusion**

- **Are we learning to work in partnership, with one another, and not try to go it alone?**
- **Are we stepping out in faith, as God calls us?**
- **Are we facing up to opposition, not ducking out of it?**
- **Are we trusting in God's promises, even when things seem dire?**