

Sermon Sunday 18th February 2024

Exodus 7:1-13 and Hebrews 11: 1-3 and 24-28

Belief and Bravery

Over the past weeks we have read and heard about Moses and his life initially of wealth and then of exile as he saw the suffering of his own people under Pharaoh. He had been called by God to lead his people from Egypt. Last week Jenny recounted how help was available to Moses and was introduced to his brother Aaron who would help Moses in his God given task.

Moses and Aaron both had to believe in God and be brave in doing His work. When I played rugby there were occasions when I did not want to join a ruck or maul as I could see flying boots and fists which could hurt but I did, some may call this stupidity but I like to call this bravery, as I knew the possible consequences, but I had a duty to my teammates, so I joined in, I believed not so much bravery.

In verse 30 Moses said to the Lord 'SINCE I SPEAK WITH FALTERING LIPS, WHY WOULD PHARAOH LISTEN TO ME?' Moses had doubts, he needed reassurance from God or stronger belief. The answer from God is unequivocal 'SEE I HAVE MADE YOU LIKE GOD TO PHARAOH, AND YOUR BROTHER AARON WILL BE YOUR PROPHET.' Pharaoh was considered a God by the Egyptians and Pharaoh must have recognised Moses as an equal which surely made him afraid. Furthermore, Moses had Aaron to aid and assist him in all the signs God called down on Egypt.

How often I ask myself do I really believe and can I do what God expects of me and wants me to do- belief and bravery lacking on my part! Yet through prayer and study and discussion with others I have found my way through such moments; however, is this belief and bravery like Moses? Belief certainly but bravery? Yes, I think it is as I am taking on a task God wants me to do and who knows where it will take me.

Moses knew deep down he had to take the Israelites out of Egypt eventually but he had to persuade Pharaoh to let them go. So, God told him 'AND THE EGYPTIANS WILL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD, WHEN I STRETCH OUT MY HAND AGAINST EGYPT AND BRING THE ISRAELITES OUT OF IT.'

Pharaoh demanded a sign or miracle, so as instructed by God, Aron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and it turned into a snake. However, the Egyptian magicians could do this as well, but with trickery, deception, or plain manmade magic. We to can be deceived by deception and trickery which come from the Devil but we must stand strong in our faith and belief in God and His Son Jesus Christ which will overcome this, no matter how tough this may be. We must believe and be brave. If you are struggling, I invite you to join me in discussion and prayer in the Chapel after I have finished.

Look at what happened to the Egyptian snakes; Aaron's staff swallowed them up, God overcame them and God will overcome the difficulties we may face in our lives, just as he did with the Egyptian snakes, all we must do is believe in God, bravely let him into our lives totally and we will get through those difficulties. Like Moses and Aaron, we must believe and be brave and follow God.

During the Exodus from Egypt many times the Israelites turned against Moses and more importantly God. They worshipped idols, would not believe Moses after God had spoken to him and that generation did not enter the promised land. I wonder how often Moses doubted his belief in God? Yet he persevered, despite the setbacks from the Israelites, he took Gods word and bravely told the Israelites what they had to do. I say bravely because at times the Israelites were angry and could have killed or harmed Moses. Moses believed and was brave.

So, the story of Moses continues but because of Pharaoh's unyielding heart he would not listen to Moses and Aaron's words and signs from God and release the Israelites, this needed more signs from God the Israelites are released from captivity.

There are many barriers, the Bible refers to the veils in the Temple, but these are not substantial, they were rent asunder on Jesus' death on the cross. Here is our encouragement as Lent begins. What divides us from God however substantial it may seem is in fact insubstantial. Like Moses and Aaron IS THE must believe in God and be brave what He wants us to do. As we find this reassurance remember 'JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD.' The same light which guided Moses and guides us today.

Let us pray

Heavenly Father, give us all the strength to believe and be brave when called upon to serve you AND LET YOUR GUIDING LIGHT INTO ALL WE DO AND SPEAK.
Amen.