

MOSES ... who tried to get out of a job
MOSES ... who tried to get out of a job

(EXODUS 3-4)

It is surprising what God can do with a man who thinks he is useless. Self-confidence is an advertisement of impotence ; but a sense of insufficiency more often than not prepares the way to greatness. Moses was one of the greatest of men, yet he argued with God about the advisability of his being commissioned to deliver Israel. When Moses turned aside to see the burning- bush, he heard a voice saying, " I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob . . . I am come down to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh " (Exod. 3: 6, 8, 10).

ARGUMENT 1. I'm a nobody

"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And God said, Certainly I will be with thee" (vv. 11-12). There is reason to believe that God had been specially training this man for the greater part of eighty years. Forty years had been spent in Pharaoh's palace, and a similar period had elapsed while he shepherded the flocks of his father-in-law. He had experimental knowledge of the military affairs of Egypt ; he had enjoyed access to Egypt's palace ; and through all the subsequent years had been patiently trained in the art of leading sheep. Undoubtedly he was the man fitted for the task.

ARGUMENT 2. I have no message

" And Moses said unto God, Behold when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say unto me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?" (v. 13). In other words-0 God, this is fantastic. I am a mere nobody, and I have nothing to say. How can I go to thy people? "And God said unto Moses, I AM @T I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you " (vv. 13, 14). Moses had yet to learn that since the Commissioner was the eternally present-not the " I was " nor the " I will be," but the ever-present i AM, He would be always near to whisper the message needed. Most preachers who fail, do so because their preconceived notions crowd out God's whispers.

ARGUMENT 3. The people are too difficult

" And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee " (4: 1). This statement was based upon a sound knowledge of human nature. The prediction of the anxious man came true, for the reactions of the people of God were exactly as he expected. They were difficult people indeed. But Moses had yet to discover that he was not expected to lead them alone. God would go with him into Egypt, and divine strength would be manifest in human weakness. No man is expected to be a hermit when he undertakes God's affairs.

ARGUMENT 4. I am not a preacher

"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue "

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(4: 10). Oh, Moses, you make us smile! You stated that
you could not speak eloquently, and yet you seemed to be
speaking very well indeed in the attempt to get out of a job!
Whatever made you doubt your powers of expression? No
wonder the Lord answered, " Who hath made man's mouth?
. . . Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and
teach thee what thou shalt say" (vv. 11, 12). Successful
preaching does not depend entirely upon human eloquence.
A few halting words spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit
can perform miracles, whereas the most elaborate oration
may be a tinkling cymbal falling upon deaf ears.

ARGUMENT 5. Send somebody else

" And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand
of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord
was kindled against Moses . . . " (vv. 13, 14). Send anybody,
but don't send me. I am no use for that task. Poor old
Moses, we can see his shaking head and hear his mutterings.
No argument prevails against a call from heaven. Reluc-
tantly Moses went down to Egypt, and God made him mighty.

Oh to be nothing, nothing!
Simply to lie at His feet,
A broken and emptied vessel,
For the Master's use made meet.

Emptied that He might fill me,
As forth to His service I go;
Broken, that so unhindered
His life through me might flow.

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