

God Is Dependent on Broken Men for His Work on Earth

by Zac Poonen

God's plan for our lives will never be fulfilled until we are broken and submit to His will.

Scripture: Exodus 1:22, Exodus 4:10

Topics: "Brokenness", "God's Preparation"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that God relies on broken individuals to fulfill His purposes on Earth, using the life of Moses as a prime example. He illustrates how Moses' early life in Pharaoh's palace, despite his education and abilities, did not prepare him for God's work until he underwent 40 years of humbling experiences in the wilderness. Poonen warns that many Christians mistakenly believe that their talents and knowledge qualify them for service, but true readiness comes through brokenness and submission to God's will. He encourages believers to embrace the challenges and circumstances God places in their lives, as these are essential for spiritual growth and preparation for His calling.

Transcript

We see in Exodus 1:22, that it was because Pharaoh had passed an order that all male babies should be killed, that Moses' mother put Moses into a little basket and floated it down the river with a prayer to God. If it were not for that evil edict, she would never have done such a thing. But because she did that, Moses was picked up by Pharaoh's daughter, and grew up in Pharaoh's palace - the place where God wanted him to be trained for the first 40 years of his life. That could never have happened if Pharaoh had not passed that evil law, for then Moses would have grown up to be just another slave. Do you see how God's purposes are fulfilled through what Satan does?

There is a great lesson here for all of us - that we see in church history too. Whenever God wants to do something for His people, He always begins with a man. He had to find a suitable man before He could deliver the Israelites. The training of that man took 80 years - and it wasn't academic training alone. Moses was trained in the best academies of Egypt, but that did not qualify him for God's work. In Acts 7, Stephen says that Moses was mighty in both word and deed. He was a strong man, and an eloquent speaker at the age of 40. He was a great military leader, a very rich person, and had been educated with the best education that the most advanced country in the world could give -for Egypt was the world's only superpower in those days. At the end of it all, he was unfit to serve God. Stephen says that Moses thought

that the Israelites would recognise that God had raised him up to deliver them. But they did not recognise him as their leader. All his earthly fame and abilities could not prepare him for the task God had prepared for him.

Today many Christians imagine that they can serve God just because they have Bible-knowledge, musical ability and plenty of money. But they're mistaken. They need to learn a lesson from Moses' life: 40 years of the best that this world could give him could not prepare him for God's service.

God had to take him through another 40 years in the wilderness, in a totally different environment from the palace, in order to equip him. He had to be broken of his human strength. And God accomplished this by making him look after sheep and by allowing him to live with his father-in-law and work for him - for 40 long years. Living with one's father-in-law for even one year can be quite humiliating for a man! I know that many married women in India live with their fathers-in-law all their lives. But it's different when a man has to live with his wife's father and work for him as well. That can be quite a humbling experience for a man. But that's how God broke Moses. You remember that was how God broke Jacob too. He too had to live with his father-in-law for 20 years. God uses fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law to break His children.

What all the universities in Egypt could not teach Moses, he learnt in the wilderness, looking after sheep and working for his father-in-law. At the end of those 40 years, Moses is so broken that he who was once so eloquent and who thought he could deliver Israel, now says, "Lord, I am unfit. I cannot speak properly. Please send somebody else to lead your people." It was then that God said, "At last you are ready. I will send you to Pharaoh now" (Exodus 4:10-17).

What is the lesson we learn from Jacob and Moses? Just this: When you think you are ready, you are not. When you think you are capable, that you are strong, that you have knowledge, that you can speak and sing and play musical instruments, and do wonderful things for God, God says, "You are unfit. I have to wait until you are broken." With Jacob that process took 20 years, with Moses it took 40 years, with Peter it took 3 years, and with Paul at least 3 years. How long will it take with us? That depends on how quickly we learn to submit under God's mighty hand.

How long does it take to go through school from First Standard (Grade) to Twelfth Standard (Grade) ? 12 years? Yes, if you pass each year. But I know children who have taken 16 years to complete 12 classes in school. I know medical students who have taken up to 15 years to complete a 5-year medical course!! How long anyone takes to finish school depends on how quickly he learns his lessons. It is the same in the Christian life too.

It says in Ex.12 :40 , "The time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years." However when God spoke to Abraham, He had told him that his descendants would be in another land for just 400 years (Gen.15:13). But here we read that they were actually there for 430 years. Did God make a mistake? No. God is very exact in his timetable. God doesn't make any mistakes. When God spoke to Abraham, His perfect will for the Israelites was that they should be in Egypt for 400 years. Why then did they stay an extra 30 years?

To find the answer to that, let us consider another example. When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt His plan for them was that they should be only 2 years in the wilderness. But how many years did they actually spend in the wilderness? 40 years. (See Deut. 2:14). God may plan to break you in 2 years. But it may actually take 40 years. God may want to begin to use you 2 years after you are converted. But He may not be able to use you for 40 years. It all depends on how quickly you are broken. So also, God's plan

for Israel was that they should stay 400 years in Egypt. But they had to stay for 430 years.

I believe the reason was that their leader Moses was not yet ready. I believe that when Moses left Egypt at the age of 40, God had wanted to break him through a 10-year course with his father-in-law in the wilderness, so that he could be ready at the age of 50 to be Israel's leader. But Moses did not learn his lesson in 10 years. His father-in-law had to humble him some more, before Moses was broken enough. It took Moses 40 years to complete that 10-year course! Therefore the Israelites had to wait 30 more years. God is dependent on broken men for His work on earth.

This has a message and a warning for us. God may have a plan for your life. But it will never be fulfilled till you are broken. What He has planned to do in you in 10 years may take 40 years. So, it is good to be quick to humble ourselves always under God's mighty hand - which refers to the circumstances He sends across our path.

Lamentations 3:27 says, "It is good for a man to bear the yoke (humble himself and be broken) in his youth." Allow God to break you when you are young. Don't fight against the circumstances God permits in your life, for that will only delay God's plan. All your Bible knowledge, musical abilities and money cannot equip you for God's service. Brokenness is essential. Jacob could become an Israel only when he was broken. Moses could become a leader and a prophet only when he was broken.

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