

How to prepare oneself to be listened to



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John 15:20-21 (TLB)

²⁰ Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave isn’t greater than his master!’ So since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you! ²¹ The people of the world will persecute you because you belong to me, for they don’t know God who sent me.

Exodus 3:1-6 (NIV)

The Encounter

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 wilderness 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.

The Lord has many assignments to accomplish here on earth and He is looking for willing hearts, ready to fulfil these assignments. As children of God, when it comes to fulfilling assignments here on earth, always remember, the assignments are God-given. The assignments are His and He is looking for a trustworthy person in order to entrust him or her with His assignments. It is always a privilege to be chosen by God for a specific assignment. The

choosing process might be in the form of an encounter with the Lord in order to gain our attention, as in the case of Moses.

Exodus 3:7-9 (NIV)

The Assignment

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.

Moses' assignment was from the Lord and it was clearly stated. We may never know the full picture of an assignment given to us, however, before launching endeavor to receive a word upon which to stand and begin, then progress.

Exodus 3:10 (NIV)

The Mission

¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

Proceeding an assignment or assignments from the Lord, the individual ought to be sent by the Lord on a specific mission. Assignments are sometimes very challenging to accomplish; therefore, we need every support possible in order to make it a success. Therefore, when the Lord sends you, you can be sure He will be with you and provide every support you need in the process.

Exodus 3:11 (NIV)

The Limitation(s)

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

Man’s standard of qualification for God-given assignments are quite different from God’s. This is an area where we sometimes get it wrong. Quite often, what we consider a limitation in us, is what God is getting ready to highlight by showing Himself strong in our weakness(es).

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (NKJV)

⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

⁹ And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Exodus 3:12 (NIV)

The Lord’s Guarantee to His Sent

¹² And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

The Lord’s guarantee to His sent one (Moses), was that He will be with Moses. Also, He equipped Moses with a sign of how the result will look like. “When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain (**Exodus 3:12b NIV**).” So, Moses, knew His assignment, knew that the Lord will be with Him, and he also knew the expected outcome.

Subsequently, we will see that the Lord will give Moses specific instructions and strategies (**Exodus 3:16-21 NIV**) on how to go about the assignment.

This is not an unusual pattern from the Lord. A similar situation happened to Abraham (**Genesis 12:1-3 NIV**). There is usually an appointment of the person for the assignment, a beginning instruction, instructions/strategies and a clearly stated outcome. What we usually do not know are the challenges we may encounter along the way. If Abraham, Moses and the many others chosen for an assignment by the Lord knew or know the mountains of trials they will face in the process,

- 1) They may reconsider (**Hebrews 10:38**).
- 2) It will no longer be a faith walk and so it will be displeasing to God (**2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:6**).

Exodus 3:13-15 (NIV)

Man's Fears and Questions. God's Response.

¹³ Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’ ‘This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

When we have a personal revelation of the Lord, it builds up confidence within us to a place where we can boldly communicate to our audience about the God, we “know” not the God we are “told” about. Moses needed that, so do we. “The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob” was already known to the people. The new revelation to Moses was “I AM WHO I AM”.

Exodus 3:16-22 (NIV)

The Specific Instruction (s) / Strategies

16 “Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.

17 And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.’

18 “The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.’

19 But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him.

20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

21 “And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed.

22 Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so you will plunder the Egyptians.”

Success in every God-given assignment is embedded in total obedience to the Lord, even when we do not fully understand. Moses had a very big and challenging assignment, nevertheless, his success was dependent on his obedience to God. Moses received instructions every step of the way, implemented and received outstanding results.

Today, we like Moses will receive assignments from the Lord and the expectation is for us to be obedient every step of the way. How then should we prepare ourselves such that our audience will listen to us? This is a real problem faced by many who seek to fulfill their God-

given assignment(s) yet are concerned about whether their audience will listen to them. Scripture provides a vast number of people with such challenges and their strategies of success. Let's look at a few together.

Exodus 3:18 (NIV)

18 “The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.’

The Israelites listened to Moses, however, did the Egyptians listen to him?

1) Moses' concern was his speech

After being sent and equipped with his assignment, Moses still thought he will not be listened to.

Exodus 4:1 (NIV)

1 Moses answered, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you?’”

Moses complained about his inability to speak eloquently. This is a real problem among those on an assignment from the Lord. It could be that a person is inarticulate, it could be the lack of the proper vocabulary, etc. Most assignments require that we talk, however, in the absence of eloquence, it does not mean, it is impossible.

Exodus 4:10 (NIV)

10 Moses said to the LORD, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.”

God reasoned with Moses and provided additional help to care for his speech deficiency.

Exodus 4:14-17 (NIV)

¹⁴ Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you.

¹⁵ You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.

¹⁶ He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him.

¹⁷ But take this staff in your hand so you can perform the signs with it."

2) Gideon's concern was that of identity

Lack of fame (recognition) and popularity (reputation) is not a legitimate reason to shy away from an assignment from the Lord. Gideon thought he could not save Israel because his clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and he was the least in his family.

Judges 6:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

The Lord addressed Gideon's concern (identity) from the very beginning and that set the foundation upon which Gideon functioned subsequently.

Judges 6:12 (NIV)

¹² When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."

3) Timothy's concern was that of youthfulness

Timothy was faced with the responsibility of leadership over a new church at his young age. Being young is coupled with a degree of inexperience and possible disrespect from older individuals in your audience. Through Paul's encouragement, Timothy was able to stay the course and eventually succeeded in his assignment. Paul encourages him to fight the good fight of faith and not fear.

1 Timothy 1:18 (NIV)

¹⁸Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well.

1 Timothy 6:12 (NIV)

¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1 Timothy 1:7-8 (NIV)

⁷For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

4) Esther was a foreigner

There are many stereotypical scenarios linked to being a foreigner. Depending on the country, the privileges may not be equal. Esther did not allow her status and other surrounding circumstance define her life. Her strategy was fasting, prayer and a courageous move towards the king. She was received, as a result.

Esther 4:15-16 (NIV)

¹⁵Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:

¹⁶ “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

Esther 5:2 (NIV)

² When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

5) Onesimus was an ex-slave and ex-convict

Paul pleads to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus, asking Philemon to receive Onesimus not as a slave, rather a fellow brother in the Lord. Paul in this epistle, called on Philemon to credit his account on any charges owed by Onesimus to Philemon and him (Paul) will pay on behalf of Onesimus. Onesimus met Paul in prison where he received his transformation. When anyone receives the message of salvation, it is required that they go back and spread the good news. Paul mediated the gap between Philemon and Onesimus.

Philemon 1:8-11 (NIV)

⁸ Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do,

⁹ yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—

¹⁰ that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

¹¹ Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

There are many scriptural examples that can be examined. However, based on the examples we have seen so far, we can safely conclude that God does not choose the

“perfect” for His assignment (s). Every individual face unique challenge nevertheless, the Lord has a solution for each of us. For Moses’ challenge, God promised Moses that He will be with Him; God provided a helper (Aaron) and gave Moses a staff to perform signs. For Gideon, the Lord reassured Gideon that He was with him and re-established his identity (calling Gideon, the mighty man of valor). Fasting, prayer and a courageous move towards the king was Esther’s move to gain her audience as she solely depended on God. Paul was used by God to encourage Timothy and as a mediator between Philemon and Onesimus.

Just as the Lord prepared His children in the past to be listened to, He is preparing you, using unique strategies so that your audience will listen to you. Your cooperation is necessary and needed during the season when the Lord prepares you for the audience, He is assigning you to. Glory to God!

Today

In addition to every unique strategy or strategies that the Lord gives us today, we should consider the following.

1) Receive the approval of God.

God approved Jesus prior to Him starting His assignment.

Matthew 3:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**”

2) Minister Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophet (Elijah). He is the balance we need in any assignment.

Matthew 17:3-5 (NIV)

³ Just then there appeared before them **Moses** and **Elijah**, talking with **Jesus**.

⁴ Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"