

Slow Down

Rushing Means You Miss the Moment

Lessons in Pace



Exodus 2:11-15

Introduction:

It is one thing to do the will of God. It is another thing entirely to do it God's way in God's time.

Power Point: Called to a Christian Vocation

Let's imagine God calls you into vocational Christian service. You know in your heart it is His plan for you one day to embrace some aspect of full-time ministry. But if you aren't careful, you could easily begin to pull strings behind the scenes. You could find yourself competing for some plum assignment or prestigious pulpit. You could even begin to push & shove & manipulate, until over time you actually prostituted the calling you received from God. You wanted to do the will of God, but bent on carrying out that plan in your own way; you took matters into your own hands and wound up losing His blessing.

Power Point: Finding a Mate

Let's make it a little more personal. God has made it clear to you that He neither desires nor requires you to remain single. He knows you are lonely, knows you do not possess the gift of celibacy, and knows that time IS passing and prospects are narrowing.

At some point, if you do not guard your heart, you may say to the Lord, in effect, **"Okay, God, I know Your plan. You want me married. Now, please just step aside for a few months. When I get to the altar, I'll whistle. At that time, I'd like You to come back and bless the union, and we'll slip back into Your plans and pursue Your will."**

You see how that works? You say you want the will of God, but through manipulation, compromise, matchmaking, and game-playing, you get the one of your choice. Only then do you suddenly rediscover God and pray, *"O Lord, please bless this union. Make it strong and great because, as You have led me, I am getting married today."*

An Old Pattern

Now it may bring you a bit of comfort to know that this is nothing new. It goes as far back as a man who worked to become highly qualified in his field of endeavor but proved himself completely useless, despite his credentials as a polished, capable, well-educated leader of men. As you've probably guessed, I'm referring to Moses.

Let's pick up the biblical account back in **Exodus chapter 2**.

Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were

fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?" But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known." When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well. (Exodus 2:11-15)

Before we move on, we need to take a look at the same event from a different angle, through the lens of another camera. In the New Testament book of Acts, Stephen the deacon also gives an inspired account of the same story. Take time to read his words carefully:

It was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of God, and he was nurtured three months in his father's home. And after he had been set outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son. Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.

Bur when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand. On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, "Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?"

Bur the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, "Who made you a ruler and judge over us? You do not mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?" At this remark, Moses fled and became an alien in the land of Midian. (Acts 7:20-29)

After Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses, she immediately began to prepare him for a proper life in Pharaoh's court. The historian Josephus tells us that because the Pharaoh had no son and heir, Moses was being nurtured for the throne. That seems like a sound assumption; no doubt, historians bear this out. Whatever the case, Moses experienced a radical change of lifestyle. Consider these two verses, one immediately following the other:

He was BORN ... he was NURTURED three months in his father's home. After he was EXPOSED, [Pharaoh's] daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son. (Acts 7: 20-21)

The word **"nurture"** means to **"rear, to educate, to train."** Pharaoh's daughter put him through the training of an Egyptian home, a wholly different proposition from a Hebrew home. Moses moved from a humble little shack in what we might call the ghetto of Goshen, where his mom and dad lived, to the stately and elegant court of the king.

FROM THE GHETTO TO THE COURTSIDE

It taxes the imagination to identify a similar, contemporary situation. We might think, for instance, of an abandoned child from the gutters of Calcutta suddenly whisked by military aircraft to the White House to be adopted by the President and First Lady. But even that doesn't do justice to the contrast. What happened, according to the account in the Book of Exodus simply astonishes and can only be attributed to the hand of a sovereign God.

Little Moses probably got not only his own room, but a suite of rooms. No longer home-schooled under the care of Jochebed, he fell into the hands of polished Egyptian tutors. They immediately began to instruct the bewildered young lad in the protocol, lifestyle, and culture of Egyptian life. He inducted a whole process of reorientation in his preparation for the throne.

The next verse tells us that **"Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians"** (Acts 7:22). The original text says, **"...in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."** In a colloquialism of that day, people referred to a brilliant person as having **"the wisdom of the Egyptians."**

Hieroglyphics 101

A boy reared in Egypt with a silver spoon in his mouth attended the Temple of the Sun. Archaeologists and historians have done us a great service in unearthing and bringing to our attention some facts concerning this premier educational center.

The Temple of the Sun has been called by some **"the Oxford of the ancient world."** The course of study at Sun Temple U began with what we would call Hieroglyphics 101. Some have said that this language is the most difficult ever put into writing. It does not use characters; it uses pictographs highly stylized symbols that represent complex ideas.

While working my way through this portion of Scripture, I pulled a book off my study shelf to look for a sample of this unique writing. It's incredible! I have seen many computer fonts while playing with my word processing program, but I have never seen a font like that. Just for fun, I picked out one line to see if I might make anything of it. The line began with three pelican-type creatures, followed by a crow's foot, three dashes, and a disembodied head.

My translation would have read, **"Take a hike, Delbert. You'll never get it"** One scholar of antiquities says it takes some people a lifetime to master hieroglyphics. I am now convinced of that.

Egyptian Learning

Moses began to learn the language of the Egyptians at the temple. He also would have plunged into the sciences, medicine, astronomy, chemistry, theology, philosophy, and law. He most certainly took the Egyptian equivalent of ROTC, studying the battles, combat tactics, and foes of that nation's proud military history. On top of that, he would have dabbled in the arts—sculpture, music, and painting. The whole world of Egyptian literature was opened to him. The adopted son of the princess found himself immersed in Egyptian learning. It became his life.

Although it isn't verified in Scripture, some historians claim Moses was a quick study. It didn't take long for the former Hebrew slave to grasp the content of these heavy courses. For one thing, he found few distractions at the Temple of the Sun. This was no party school. With such a heavy course load, who could find time for sports contests, fraternity functions, or chariot races? And no one majored in basket-weaving, line dancing, or other such light fare. You really had to study back then. So Moses became a keen thinking man, learned in **"all the wisdom of the Egyptians."**

Earned the Egyptians' Respect

The Bible also tells us that Moses' diligent study and preparation made him into a man **"mighty in words and deeds."** He made a name for himself and earned the Egyptians' respect. Early on, it became obvious that this son of the princess wielded both power and influence. By the time he reached thirty, extra-biblical historians tell us, he had already led the Egyptian army to a smashing victory over the Ethiopians. A bold military strategist. Highly valued. Bronzed by the sun. Scarred by battle. Wise in worldly matters. Competent as a leader. And inspiring to boot. Yes, this certainly was one highly qualified young man.

When the text calls him **"a man of power in words and deeds,"** it implies an ability to sway the masses. It means he not only possessed intellect, he oozed charisma. He spoke with ease, and his walk backed up his talk. Everyone knew about his courage and heroism. Moses—primed for the throne. The pride of Egypt!

Problem Outside of God's Will

But he was also vulnerable. He had no idea how vulnerable. But that would soon become obvious to the whole nation. Some teachers suggest Moses did not know the will of God for his life until his encounter at the burning bush, at age eighty. That's what I heard all through my growing-up years, and I believed it. Everyone assumed that Moses first realized he was to deliver Israel at that amazing moment in the desert of Midian when the voice of God called to him from the flames.

I no longer believe that to be true. Though I don't have a specific verse to back up my position, I believe Scripture strongly implies Moses had begun to understand his destiny while still a young man being educated in the Egyptian court. Before he reached the age of forty, I am convinced

God had already put it into Moses' mind that he would one day, through some as-yet-unrevealed manner, lead his people out of bondage.

He knew God's will. But the problem was, he did not bother to seek God's way and God's timing. Instead, Moses began to carry out that plan according to Moses' way and Moses' schedule. As he did, sadly, many things came unraveled for him.

Allow me to explain the steps that led me to this conclusion.

I. Steps that Lead Outside of God's Will

A. Step One: Self-Initiated (Acts 7:23, Exodus 2:11-12)

This couldn't have been the first time such a thought occurred to Moses. He had certainly seen Hebrews before. How could you miss them? They were all over the place-building, carrying, chopping, sweeping, shoveling, hauling, dragging stones, and working the landscape. In short, they were doing all the Egyptians' dirty work. And why not? They were slaves of Egypt.

Somewhere along the line, Scripture doesn't say when, a plan began to form in this powerful young man's mind. The trouble is, when you know the ultimate will of God for your life and things aren't happening fast enough to suit you, you become anxious. You begin looking for ways to jumpstart the process. You will not read in Acts or Exodus or in any other portion of Scripture that God led Moses to kill an Egyptian. Moses was strictly a freelance murderer.

Verse 23 tells us: **"It entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel"**. Without realizing it, Moses entered a vulnerable, dangerous time of life. While I'm convinced he knew he was to redeem Israel, I also believe he grew antsy about it. Anxious. Impatient. And in that state of mind, he launched a premature strike that resulted in disaster ... and a forty-year setback. Desiring to carry out the will of God, eager to do great things for God, he forced a situation, which led to personal disaster. Notice again what it says in **verse 11**: **"He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren."**

Because the mistreated slave also descended from Jacob, Moses' heart went out to him. Suddenly it happened. Moses gripped the wheel of his life and flipped it over at high speed, like a car hitting a patch of black ice and careening over a bank. There was no going back.

It would be easy to explain it all by saying something suddenly snapped. But that's not how Scripture explains it. Moses acted deliberately according to plan. His plan. Verse 12 tells us that "he looked this way and that." Picture that in your mind. In that moment, Moses became man-conscious. He saw abuse going on and he thought, Now's my chance to make my move. So he rolled up his sleeves and took on the inequity. Enough of all this unfair treatment!

B. Step Two: The Procedure is Energized by the Flesh (Exodus 2:12)

So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. (vs.12)

Did Moses depend on the man with the practiced toss of a spear? Did he run him through from behind with a sword? Did he strike him with a killing blow from a powerful fist? The Bible doesn't say. Yet it is clear the idea came from and was implemented by Moses, energized by the flesh. Nowhere do you read where God said to Moses, "Move into this situation and make it right." Moses made that decision entirely on his own. He looked this way, and he looked that way ... then reacted swiftly, viciously.

Having established that fact, we need to be a little careful here. We ought not to go overboard criticizing the motives of this young man's heart. I'm convinced Moses was doing more than grandstanding. I believe he was absolutely sincere. He didn't see himself murdering a cruel slave-driver as much as courageously striking a blow for God's people. The desire to do something right overcame him. His problem? He dedicated himself to the will of God, but not to the God whose will it was. Let that thought sink in. You and I can become so dedicated to the will of God, we can be so driven by a false sense of purpose, that we might inadvertently take matters into our own hands and leave God completely out of the loop. Been there, done that?

Did that cruel taskmaster need to be punished? Yes. Was it wrong to beat that Hebrew as he did? Certainly. But when Moses stepped in and began his own Operation Deliverance, he was energized by the flesh, not the Spirit. How easily this can happen to good people, to men and women with the highest motives and the best of intentions.

Picture this: You're a gifted and highly qualified teacher. In your heart, you ache to be in front of a classroom again. With all your soul, you want to feel that lectern beneath your hands and the minds of those eager students absorbing your knowledge. And suddenly, seemingly out of the blue, an opportunity presents itself. If you don't watch it, my friend, you'll find yourself elbowing your way through that "open door." But all the while, God waits for you to seek His counsel. If you act without discerning His timing, you may lose the smile of divine favor. He will not bless what He has not ordained. You may truly sense that God has something for you to accomplish in a certain area. But if you aren't vigilant, if you aren't daily humbling yourself before Him, seeking His face, discerning His timing, operating under the Spirit's control, you may push and shove and force your way prematurely into that place where God wanted you, but you will not have arrived in His own time.

How critical is this issue of God's timing! A later biblical hero, who well understood his crucial role, once asked a frightened child of God, "Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14)?

And the apostle Paul deepened our appreciation for this mys-tery when he wrote of Christ's birth, "But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). At the right time, untold blessing! But at the wrong time

Moses looked this way, and he looked that way. Isn't it interesting? He didn't look up, did he? He looked in both directions horizontally, but left the vertical completely out of it. And what did he do with the results of his murderous anger? Scripture says "he hid the Egyptian in the sand."

Invariably, when you act in the flesh, you have something to cover up.

- You have to bury your motive.
- You have to conceal a lie or half-truth.
- You have to backtrack on a boast.
- You have to cover up the corpse your fleshly procedure has created.

It's just a matter of time before truth catches up with you. The sand always yields its secrets.

Moses Can't Get the Job Done—Egyptian Burial

This is a good time to emphasize that the capable and gifted are also cursed with vulnerability. The highly qualified live on the cutting edge of the enemy's subtle attack—the very adversary who prods you to act in the flesh, to do the right thing at the wrong time. And how does he operate? Most of us know the drill. You find yourself moved by a sense of need.

You utter a foolish vow, like Jephthah, and live to keenly regret it for the rest of your days. You hurry the process along, as Abram and Sarai did, and later find yourself with an Ishmael on your hands, mocking the child of promise.

Neglecting to ask God's counsel, neglecting to seek God's timing, you step in to handle things. And by and by, you've got a mess on your hands. You're stuck with a corpse, with a shovel in your hands and a shallow grave at your feet.

You know the odd thing about it all? Most of us aren't very clever at cover-ups anyway. It amazes me that Moses couldn't even bury an Egyptian right. Makes me wonder if he left the guy's toes sticking out of the sand. He failed simply to cover up the corpse. **God Gets the Job Done—Red Sea Burial**

But what about years and years later, when God took charge and Moses acted according to His timing? Was God able to cover up the Egyptians? God buried their entire army under the Red Sea, horses, weapons, chariots, and all! When God's in it, the job gets done. With the Lord in charge, failure flees.

When the flesh rules, however, you can't even bury the consequences. They haunt you! They dog your steps! That is why Moses "looked this way and that." Operating in the flesh, he had to make sure the coast was clear before he acted. But it caught up with him.

C. Step Three: An Act Leading to Confusion and Failure (Acts 7:24-27)

Don't miss this point. This is where the misery really kicks in. Up to this point, Moses may have felt as if he'd pulled off something pretty slick. He'd made a bold gesture and felt pretty good about it. He had no idea that confusion, failure, and grief lurked like a leopard just around the corner. Let me remind you again that Moses thought he was doing God's will.

And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand. (Acts 7:24-25)

Moses believed he was to be the deliverer, many years before he received his re-commission at the burning bush. He assumed everyone else would realize it, too. He thought all he had to do was start the ball rolling and the Hebrews would rally around him, hailing him as their champion. "All right, Prince Moses, let's march on the palace! Grab those hammers and pitch-forks, everybody. Let's go! Lead us, O mighty Prince!" But what does Scripture say? It reports, "They did not understand."

They didn't put it together. Then their confusion spread to Moses. He knew God desired to use him mightily; so why wasn't this working? He'd struck the match, but the wood refused to burn. What could possibly have gone wrong? How could he have miscalculated? Confusion replaced confidence. What was happening? The passage goes on to tell us; ***"On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting ..."*** (Acts 7:26).

Now why did he go back to the scene of the crime? I think he returned to carry out his plan. He'd proved his loyalty to the Hebrews by striking down an Egyptian official. That was Plan A. Now for Plan B. He would return to the scene of his action and rally the troops.

As it happened, however, he arrived in the middle of a fight. Can't you see him frowning as he stepped down out of his official chariot? Fighting that wasn't in the script. The grateful population should have been gathering themselves together, readying themselves for the Great Rebellion.

"Here now," he said as he bullied into their midst. ***"This shouldn't be happening. We've got to work together, men."*** But they didn't listen to his counsel. In fact, they didn't respect him at all. ***"But the one who was mistreating his neighbor pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us'"*** (Acts 7:27)? What a crushing put-down! ***"Hey, Fancy Boy, back off. Who died and left you in charge? Where do you get off? You're not our leader. Who do you think you are, anyway?"***

How those words must have stung a man who had just risked everything.

When We Move in Flesh We are Destined to Fail

Quote: Phyllis Thompson

In her book D. E. Haste, Phyllis Thompson describes the characteristics of spiritual leadership. She wrote, "I suppose if you really want to know who is a spiritual leader, you ought to look around and see how many who are spiritual are following him."

It's a pretty simple plan, isn't it? A meat-and-potatoes sort of proposition. If you're a spiritual leader, spiritual people will follow you. That's true of any leader. If you've got the goods, people follow. But they didn't follow Moses. At that point, the prince of Egypt led a lonely one-man parade. The bills of the flesh are now coming due.

Let's level with each other. Have you ever experienced something like that? Most of us have been there. You get all ready to pull off something big for God. You set goals. You spend time and money. You tell a bunch of people. But as painful as it may be for us to admit it, goals not bathed in prayer or brought in humility before the Lord turn out to be downright useless. They don't go anywhere. They don't accomplish anything. They generate heat but no light. And you're left with confusion and defeat.

Maybe you make plans for a big Bible class in your home. You send out the invitations-7:30 P.M. sharp-you talk it up. The night comes and you have the living room all arranged-flowers on the table, fire on the grate, refreshments in the kitchen. Then 7:30 comes ... and goes. The clock in the hall tolls eight bells, and still nobody shows. The hands grind around to 8:30 and silence reigns. The fire dies down. The fizz goes out of the punch. The coffee gets cold. The refreshments dry up on the table. And your heart sinks.

A fellow told me some time ago about planning a big rally with a group of collegians. "Man," he said, "we made all sorts of arrangements. Neat stuff Arranged for a room that seated two hundred fifty people. Publicized it like crazy. We had huge plans and record-breaking ideas. And eight people showed up."

Talk about confusion! That sort of thing will set you back on your heels. And frankly, it ought to! That's the time when you need to face the music, get quiet, fall back to your knees, and ask: **"Lord, are You in this? Or is this just someone's great idea?"**

Let me pass along an old motto of mine. It's guided me for well over twenty years and remains as appropriate now as the day it first slapped me alongside the head.

I try, I fail.

I trust, He succeeds!

Isn't that true? What simple counsel. Only eight words, yet how profound. The old hymn says it well: ***"The arm of flesh will fail you; you cannot trust your own."*** It's just a matter of time before they'll dig up the corpse, with your fingerprints all over the knife. But when you trust the Lord God to give you the next step, when you wait in humility upon Him, He will open the doors or close them, and you'll get to rest and relax until He says, ***"Go."***

D. Step Four: An Unbearable Result (Exodus 2:14-15)

Then Moses was afraid and said, ***"Surely the matter has become known"*** (Exodus 2:14-15). First surprise. Next confusion, followed by fear, like icy fingers around the heart. When Moses' well-kept secret hit the primetime networks, he got the shakes. And acting on fear, the biblical account states that ***"he fled from the presence of Pharaoh."***

Why did he run? **Verse 15** tells us, ***"Pharaoh tried to kill Moses."*** Now that Moses had tipped his hand and shown his true loyalties, Pharaoh couldn't stomach having such a man around. In the king's eyes, a disloyal and out-of-control prince was better off dead. What awful repercussions grew out of Moses' ill-considered action.

Sow to Wind, Reap Whirlwind—Deal w/ Consequences

It is very possible that you, too, have been forced to deal with such consequences. Your track record may reflect a pattern of:

- Great ambition but little knowledge.
- Great desire but little discernment.
- Great aspirations but little humility.
- Great zeal and energy but little wisdom.

And so you have to run the rabbit trails right to the bitter dead-ends, one after another. You've run faster each time, but never succeeded. None has taken you where you wanted to go. And if the truth were known, your impulsive actions have resulted in an unbearable situation. There's only one thing worse than being at the end of a self-directed life, and that's being in the middle of one.

- You say, ***"Well, I'm in my thirties, I ought to know better than that."*** Moses was forty.
- You say, ***"Hey, I'm no novice! I've got education and training like you wouldn't believe!"***

Bigger than Our Pants—Unwise Choices

Better than Moses? Remember, by this time in his career, he was ***"educated in all the learning of the Egyptians."***

You see, our impressive resume is part of the problem. Sometimes we're educated beyond our own intelligence. We know more than we're safe to handle! The truth is, when you rely on the flesh to get a job done, you don't need more schooling. You don't need another degree. You don't need more training seminars. Plain and simple, you need wisdom. So do I. So do all of God's people.

But discerning wisdom takes time. It takes some major bumps in the road. It takes enduring some failures and swallowing big and bitter doses of humility.

II. Steps that Lead Back to God's Hope

Finding himself highly qualified to be completely useless, Moses tucked up his royal robes and ran like a scared coyote. Did he take off on foot, throw himself on the back of a horse, or borrow a royal chariot and ride it until the wheels fell off? Scripture doesn't say. We're told only that he ***"settled in the land of Midian; and sat down by a well"*** (Exodus 2:15).

Have you wondered just where Moses landed when he finally stopped running? What was that Midian desert like? You wouldn't believe the photographs. They remind me of those Viking shots from the surface of Mars. What a bleak, desolate place! Maybe our government didn't need to spend all that money to put a little robot on the red planet. They could have saved a bundle by dropping that same robot out of a Piper Cub somewhere north of the Arabian Peninsula. Midian! It makes the desert around Palm Springs look like British Columbia.

Incredibly barren. Hot, arid sand and gravel, punctuated by craggy chunks of rock, with an occasional scraggly bush somehow clinging to life. Can you visualize Moses stumbling through that wasteland, catching his tailored clothing on thorns, tripping and lurching over half submerged rocks, picking his way through that tortured wilderness?

Moses wasn't strutting down the road singing, ***"I Did It My Way."*** He was a frightened and disillusioned fugitive running, escaping for his very life. His vaunted education now meant nothing to him. His knowledge of hieroglyphics and Egyptian poetry gave him no comfort. His military victories seemed hollow. Thanks to his rash act of violence, that same military wanted to kill him. And with every step, he probably groaned within himself over his untimely deed, saying things like, ***"Life is over. God can never, never use me. I'm absolutely finished."*** He was wrong, of course. But it would be many weary years before he fully realized that fact.

Maybe that's where you are today as you read these words. This man Moses lived thousands of years ago, but the situation I've just described may seem as contemporary to you as today's stale bread in your kitchen. You say, ***"I've worked so hard. Tried so many things. Pushed myself so relentlessly. But it's gotten me nowhere. Nothing has worked for me. It's curtains."***

Believe it or not, you may be closer than ever in your life to a spiritual breakthrough. Before we wrap up this chapter, I'd like to share two final thoughts.

A. When the Self Lift has Run its Course, We Settle in a Desert (Exodus 2:14-15)

You won't quit running in the flesh until you get to the endless, waterless sand dunes. When you finally get there, when you finally stumble to a stop in the pitiful shade of some sun-scorched rock, you will be saying to yourself, "Will God ever, ever use me?" And there you'll sit.

But did you notice where Moses sat down? The Bible tells us it was *"by a well."* Doesn't that seem significant?

B. When the Self Lift Finally Sits Down, the Well of a New Lift Lies Near (Exodus 2:14-15)

When will we ever learn that? Highly qualified, capable people prefer to be on the move; sitting down goes against the grain. Yet when that broken forty-year-old named Moses finally slumped to the ground at the end of a self-driven life, fresh, cool drinking water was available right next to him. Moses was out of touch with God. So he fled, and crossed the desert that lay between him and the eastern frontier; threaded the mountain passes of the Sinai tic peninsula, through which in after years he was to lead his people; and at last sat wearily down by a well in the land of Midian.

Such experiences come to us all. We rush forward, thinking to carry all before us; we strike a few blows in vain; we are staggered with disappointment, and reel back; we are afraid at the first breath of human disapprobation; we flee from the scene ... to hide ourselves in chagrin. Then we are hidden in the secret of God's presence from the pride of man. And there our vision clears; the silt drops from the current of our life ... our self-life dies down; our spirit drinks of the river of God, which is full of water; our faith begins to grasp His arm, to be the channel for the manifestation of His power; and thus at last we emerge to be His hand to lead an Exodus.

Conclusion:

I close this message with a strange but strong request. Sit down. That's right, my friend, sit down! You have run far enough. You have stood long enough. You have fought, pushed, and manipulated your way for too many years. God has finally grabbed your attention. He is saying, *"Quit! Stop! Let Me handle it! Sit there on the hot sands of the desert where you have brought yourself Look at what lies next to you. It is a well, full of fresh water."* Soon it will be God's delight to bring that bucket up and refresh your soul. Sit still. Stay there. Be quiet.

Perhaps for the first time in your adult life, obey His words: *"Cease striving and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)*. Cease all the striving. Relax. Be contented by that well, and drink deeply. You are thirstier than you realize.