

What Is in Your Hand?

There are a few people whom God chose for a particular purpose. To a few, God provided tools to do the work. However, God expected most people to use what they already had to accomplish the task. Let us review a few examples.

Moses: When God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, Moses said he had no talent to speak or lead the people. However, he had a rod in his hand. God used that rod to convince Israel that God had sent him and Pharaoh that God had the power to save whom He would. Through that rod, God used Moses to bring the plagues on Egypt and lead Israel to the Plain of Moab. So a simple shepherd's rod showed the power of the invisible God (Exodus).

Gideon: At first, Gideon was a man with little faith. He changed into a formidable leader by believing the signs that God gave him. Then he used what was available, clay pots, trumpets, and torches, to confuse the Midianites and run them out of Israel (Judges 6-7).

David: The youngest and smallest of Jesse's sons was just a shepherd boy, while the older boys were off fighting the Philistines. Earlier, the prophet Samuel overlooked David as he went to anoint the next king of Israel. But the Lord, referring to the oldest and tallest of the brothers, said to Samuel, *"Do not look at his appearance or the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart"* (1 Samuel 16:7). In addition to a heart that pleased God, David had a sling with him when he visited his brothers on the battlefield. Seeing Saul's army afraid of a giant Philistine from Gath, David took his sling, selected five smooth river stones, met the giant, and with God's help, killed the giant. He had four stones leftover (1 Samuel 17).

Ezra: When the king of Persia gave the articles of the temple to Ezra so that he could return them to Jerusalem, the commission stated that he should do what was *"according to the law of your God which is in your hand"* (Ezra 7:14). Ezra was a priest and scribe. From the beginning, Ezra, *"had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel"* (Ezra 7:10). Therefore, Ezra took the scrolls of the law, studied them, and was able to lead the priests of Israel to re-establish the worship of God in the temple as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah.

A Small Boy: Jesus asked His disciples to feed about five thousand people. They had no idea how to do it. There was a small boy present with five barley loaves and two fish. That would be just enough for a lad on a journey by foot. Jesus used those five loaves and two fish to feed the 5,000 and then had the disciples gather up the leftover fragments, twelve full baskets (John 6:1-13).

A Small Girl: A young slave from Israel living in Syria had nothing in her hand, but she did have God in her heart. She could not cure her master's leprosy, but she knew who could. She told her mistress, *"I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy"* (2 Kings 5:3). That suggestion caused the king of Syria to send Naaman to Elisha in Israel. After finally obeying instructions, Naaman learned that there is one true God, and his leprosy disappeared, all because a small girl told what she knew (2 Kings 5:4-18).

What you have is enough: What has God placed in your hand? Do you have a copy of the Bible? God does not expect us to do anything beyond our ability or capacity (Matthew 25:14-30; Ephesians

4:11-12). If we know there is a God, that Jesus is His Son, that all have sinned and Jesus died for us, and that a plan for us to share eternal life with God is available, we can tell it to others or invite them to study.