

Moses – Part 1

We just finished a series on Joseph, just got to the happy ending at the end of the book of Genesis ... and by the time we turn the page to Exodus 1, God's people are in trouble again. Ever feel like that? Well, you're not alone, because life is like that. God's people have problems just like everyone else.

VIDEO CLIP: PRINCE OF EGYPT (Exodus 1:6-8, 6:9-14, 1:22, 2:1-4)

And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

God had told Abraham, years before, that all this would happen to Israel. God knows exactly what is going on in each of our lives today; none of our problems, feelings or situations is a surprise to Him. Best of all, He has a great plan for our future – in spite of the difficulties of the present.

Genesis 15:13-14 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Today, we begin our journey through a book named Exodus, which means “a way out.” Have you ever needed a way out? Israel did! A few hundred years between the last page of Genesis and the first page of Exodus have taken them from enjoying the good life to enduring horrible slavery. They need deliverance! They need a way out! And so, God does what He always does ... He sends them a messenger to say to their enemy, “Let my people go!”

Today, we also begin our journey through the life of a man named Moses, who God used as Israel's deliverer. And the message today is for anyone who has ever wanted to be significant, for anyone who ever wanted their life to count, for anyone who ever wanted to be used by God ... by has been haunted by crippling failure. Did you know that, before Moses could ever become a deliverer, he had to be delivered himself?

Exodus proves three things to us: (1) that God never forgets or breaks a promise, (2) that His timing and methods are seldom according to our preferences, and (3) that He uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect will.

Recount Moses' early life ... then a sudden adjustment as he is taken from all that is familiar to a strange new home in the courts of Pharaoh.

Exodus 2:10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

When Moses came of age, he had to make a decision as to which way he was going to go. As usual, the easy way was not the best way!

Hebrews 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

From his early upbringing, Moses knew that the One True God wanted to use him. But Moses forgot about God's timing and God's method, and tried to do things his own way ...

Exodus 2:11-12 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

Moses looked “this way and that way,” but He didn’t look UP! He tried to take matters into His own hands – just like some of us – and ended up with something that he had to bury. If he had just waited on God’s timing and God’s method, he would have seen the entire Egyptian army buried under the waters of the Red Sea. Moses couldn’t even bury one soldier.

When we operate according to the flesh, we can’t bury the consequences of our own actions. Our failures haunt us, follow us, and cripple us. You see, hiding wrong doesn’t erase wrong, it only postpones its discovery. The human family has had this trait of “hiding” ever since our first parents, Adam and Eve. “Hiding” is the classic response of sinners!

Exodus 2:15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

So Moses begins running from his past – and he never stops for forty years. And he ends up where we all end up ... in the wilderness. Did you know that the Hebrew word for desert comes from a root word meaning “to speak”?

It’s in the middle of our mistakes that God communicates some of His most important messages to us, and prepares us to be used for great things in the future.

Years later, Moses would lead the entire nation of Israel through exactly the same experience – a forty-year wilderness journey. God was preparing him, even though he couldn’t see it. It was true for Moses, it was true for Israel, and it is true for you – **the wilderness is the way to the Promised Land!**

How do you know when you are in the wilderness? In the wilderness, God gives you only what you NEED to survive, but not what you WANT!

Deuteronomy 8:3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Israel never missed a meal, but it was the same menu for 40 years! Their clothes and shoes never wore out, but their wardrobe was quite outdated after 40 years! And the scenery stayed the same every single day! That’s how God tests us - we get only what our flesh NEEDS, not what it WANTS. They were HUNGRY because God had removed what they DESIRED. When they kept murmuring, He finally gave it to them, but allowed them to suffer the consequences.

Psalm 106:13-15 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

Be careful about complaining when you are in a wilderness! Remember that God has a purpose, not just in the good things but in the bad as well!

Deuteronomy 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no.

All The Way My Savior Leads Me

Fanny (Frances) Jane Crosby, 1820-1915

All the way my savior leads me; What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy, Who thro' life has been my guide?
Heav'nly peace divinest comfort, Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well;
For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.

All the way my Savior leads me; Cheers each winding path I tread,
Gives me grace for ev'ry trial, Feeds me with the living bread;
Tho' my weary steps may falter, And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me, Lo! a spring of joy I see;
Gushing from the Rock before me, Lo! a spring of joy I see.

All the way, my Savior leads me; Oh, the fullness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised, In my Father's house above:
When my spirit, clothed immortal, Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song thro' endless ages: Jesus led me all the way;
This my song thro' endless ages: Jesus led me all the way.

Deuteronomy 32:9-12 For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple (PUPIL) of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

All things are not “good,” but all things “work together for good” when we serve God through our wilderness times!