

Christ Greater than Treasures of Egypt (Exodus 2:11-22)

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How many of you have read the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn?

- It's a sequel to Tom Sawyer and Huck is a bit of a juvenile delinquent without parents so the Widow Douglas takes him in.
- As the book starts, he's bent out of shape she won't let him smoke though she takes snuff
- She tells him about the good place and bad place where she's sure Tom is going and tries to talk Huck out of going to the bad place.
- He's not interested in spiritual things until family devotions one day in Exodus 2, and let's all turn to Ex 2 to see it.
- Huck said 'After supper she got out her book and learned me about Moses and the Bulrushers, and I was in a sweat to find out all about him; but by and by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time; so then I didn't care no more about him, because I don't take no stock in dead people... Here she was a-bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see...'

Mark Twain probably spoke for many who don't care about the Moses they learned about when they were kids. They don't see how he could be a use to anybody, and they think of the Bible as boring stories of dead people.

- But this is a living book of great use to us and relatable to us
- This is applicable to us and this is our family of faith.
- I think Huck heard the word bulrushes in v. 3 and thought it was an action story of 'bulrushers' who rush up to fight others.
 - o So he's bummed the story ends in v. 10 with just some women and a boy long gone from a long time ago.
 - o But if he had kept reading, the rest of ch 2 has exciting action and adventure, a man who rushes to get involved in 3 fights, a fugitive manhunt and an outlaw gets in-laws after rescuing from bad guys – and in the end of this study we'll see great treasure and an even greater reward that's for us all
 - o **There's entertainment in v. 9, a mom paid to do kiddie care for her own kid**
 - o There's drama in v. 10: the king orders Israel's boys to be killed, but the king's daughter saves and adopts one who God will use to save Israel.

¹¹ One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. ¹² He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³ When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?" ¹⁴ He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known." ¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well. ¹⁶ Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷ The shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses

stood up and saved them, and watered their flock. ¹⁸ When they came home to their father Reuel, he said, “How is it that you have come home so soon today?” ¹⁹ They said, “An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and even drew water for us and watered the flock.” ²⁰ He said to his daughters, “Then where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.” ²¹ And Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. ²² She gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, “I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.”

TALK ABOUT BACK TO SCHOOL

- Moses went to the finest schools of the mightiest nation on earth
- But he’s going back to school in this story to learn life lessons and what really matters.
- No Egyptian Ivy League university could teach him God’s wisdom or waiting on the Lord or how to bring justice about or how to manage conflict biblically.
- Moses fails a test here but God will help him learn from his mistakes, study from what he got wrong, and get a second chance. It will take 40+ years before he passes.
- But what he gets is better than student loans funded by Egyptian taxpayers, he gets true forgiveness of his sin.
- And God will give him a job despite his criminal background.
- But first God enrolls him in classes he didn’t want, but needed: Escape 101, Desert Survival 102, and a hands-on long-term residency. He meets his wife and has kids.

And before he can graduate there’s a final exam with questions he must answer rightly:

- Who are your people? What’s your identity (who are you really)?
- When will salvation come and how?
- Where is your treasure and your heart? How do riches compare to the reproach of Christ?
- Why doesn’t God stop evil oppression, and should we step in, and if so, how?
- Moses wants a good thing in this text, but it’s a God thing he can’t take into his own hands to do in his own strength or own way or on his own timetable. God’s servants need to know their role and their readiness.

2 big ideas / lessons: **1. Deliverance and vengeance belongs to God, not man (v. 11-14)**
 2. God’s servants need to learn their need and place (v. 15-22)
Application: What’s your life and identity? Where’s your treasure?

The context of ch 2 starts with a baby in a basket in the Nile hidden from the Egyptian Gestapo.

- Last week I mentioned a book on pregnant women in Nazi camps, but I misspoke: they were pregnant in camp from their husbands months earlier, but actually delivered their babies right after they and the prisoners were delivered at the end of the war.
- I mentioned hiding Jews; after the service I learned Elizabeth (new member this month) is from Holland and her parents were involved in hiding Jews in WWII and they knew the ten Boom family. Small world and big God

Hitler was a German but we saw a lot of similarities and ironies like the Egyptians last time

In 2:11 Moses sees a Jewish brother being beaten, same word for what Moses will do in v. 12 to give the abuser a taste of his own medicine.

In this context it maybe looked like this slave was being beaten to death, if someone doesn't deliver? Ex 2:12 says Moses *'looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.'*

- 'Struck down' is the same verb in v. 11 for what the Egyptian was doing striking down
- It's not the word in Ex 20 *'thou shalt not commit murder.'*
- But it's at least manslaughter and he covers it up by covering the guy with sand.
- Heard of a skeleton in closet? Moses has a skeleton in the sand.

The movie 'Prince of Egypt' makes this scene look like an accident, but there's 2 other ways to read v. 12 *'He looked this way and that, and seeing no one...'*

- 1) criminal cold-blooded murder he wants to make sure there's no witnesses of.
- 2) he sees no one else stopping potential murder, so he intervenes to defend the innocent victim and stop the criminal Egyptian dead in his tracks.

In other words, is he trying to be a hero, an avenger, a deliverer? Moses is adopted and there's a history of stories where the adopted becomes a hero fighting bad guys

- like Greek mythology, Sargon
- Spiderman raised by his aunt and uncle, Superman raised by humans, sidekick Robin who Batman takes under his wing to fight crime, and other DC/MCU superheroes¹).

Is Moses standing up for truth, justice and the Hebrew way? Will Israel welcome him as a hero?
¹³ *When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?"* ¹⁴ *He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"*

- The word *prince* is later used for a captain of soldiers.
- A *judge* by law was to avenge injustice. He isn't law enforcement.
- Who made you an avenger? When did you become Captain Moses? Where's your cape as a prince or where's your robe as a judge or where's your badge or the guy's body?

Who appointed you to be our mediator, we heard you're a murderer?

One translation has *'who made you ruler...?'* There was a prophecy in Gen 49 of a ruler to rise, robes stained with blood, a lion of Judah to defeat enemies. That's the Messiah, it's not Moses. Gen 3:15 promised a son born of a woman who would crush the serpent's head. Later prophecy spoke of a coming **'Prince of Peace'** (same word as here, but Moses hasn't been made that guy)

He tries to be peacemaker with these 2 Hebrews but they say 'who made you a prince'?

Listen to another prophecy from Isaiah and look at v. 12 again, same language, Messiah **'looked and was displeased that there was no justice. He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation...'** (Isa 59:15-16 NIV).

- It may be echoing this event, there was appalling injustice for Israel, Moses looked this way and that and could see no one else would do anything or intervene so he brings deliverance himself.
- The problem is Moses isn't the Messiah or Savior. Deliverance and vengeance is God's
God will use Moses later to deliver, but He hasn't called Moses to that in a burning bush yet

Acts 7 is Stephen's inspired commentary: *'seeing one of them suffer wrong, he **defended and avenged** him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. For [Moses] supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge' (NKJV)*
Who are you to judge when you have a log in your own eye – like you just killed a guy!

Moses tried to help deliver and make right the wrongs,

- but it's the right idea in the wrong way. It's not the right time.
- He will be a mediator and judge in ch 18 to reconcile disputes of the Jews
- he'll later write if a slave is beaten and loses his tooth, he goes free
- But he'll also write in the Law there can't be revenge like he did
- His instinct for justice is good but Israel doesn't see good in a Johnny-come-lately judge whose hands are tainted with blood.
- He acts outside the law and like he's above the law so they don't trust.
- Quarrelers don't want a counselor who's a killer.

Who wants to listen to a peacemaker who just did violence and vengeance the day before?

Moses still has much to learn in the 2nd point but what can we learn by application this 1st point?

- How are you doing with patience? Where do you take things into your own hands?
- Or try to do it by your own strength or timing? Where do you play God or take His place?
- Do you pridefully see yourself as The Solution to other people's problems?
- Do you meddle? Where do you judge others? Who made you a ruler?
- Where do you get ahead of God and not wait or let Him work, because you want to force it now? God doesn't need your help, you need His help!

Moses tries to help deliver, but Moses needs help delivering!

That takes us to our 2nd big idea/lesson: God's servants need to learn their need and place

¹⁵ *When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses [why? He fears revolt or rival. Ex 1 says he feared they'd turn against]. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian.*

TALK ABOUT MIDIAN → GEOGRAPHY → ANCESTRY → OBSCURITY

Jesus later lived 30 years in obscurity (Nazareth) then 40 days of wilderness before ministry.

John the Baptist spent over 30 years in the wilderness before his public ministry and message.

Midian is in Arabia and Paul spent 3 years in Arabia as a new Christian where he was developed. And there's lessons in this wilderness-desert that would develop Moses for his future ministry.

God's servants need to learn their need for God and their place, not to take God's place

For the first time in his life, Moses learned hunger, thirst, and feared death. He went:

- from the house of the King to homeless
- from royalty and prosperity to adversity, dependency, humility.

Time alone developed a man of prayer. That wasn't his early life but prayer marks his later life.

Young Moses from the palace had unrestrained pride and power, he was zealous and reckless, but older Moses in the wilderness developed humble meekness, that's power under control.

His trials and years in a desert made him the meekest man on earth (Num 12:3, not overnight). Voddie says in Midian's desert 'God was getting Moses out of Egypt and he was getting Egypt out of Moses. Amen? God is getting Moses away from the privilege...and paganism of Egypt.'²

Calvin: 'brought up delicately and luxuriously in the Court, he was not yet accustomed to the great and continual anxieties...God in a manner withdrew him, that he might gradually render him fit and equal to undertake so difficult a task. The experience of 40 years in such a laborious and ascetic mode of life, did...prepare him for any hardships; so that the Desert may well be called the school in which he was taught, until he was invited to his more difficult charge.'³

Acts 7: *Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. When Moses was **forty years old**...he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons [God's back to school program]. **After forty years had passed**, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert...He was sent...He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for **forty years in the desert***

...

So that's the big picture and biblical timeline of Exodus to Deuteronomy. It's been said that

- Moses spent his first 40 years in Egypt learning something
- then the next 40 years in the desert learning to be nothing
- then the last 40 years of his life teaching others that God is everything.

In Egypt he's somebody, in Midian he became nobody, so he could proclaim God to everybody. Moses spends 4 decades in the wilderness, learning the land he would later lead Israel through. Mt. Sinai is in Midian, it became his stomping grounds, he knew the land, where water was, etc.

PATIENCE? He waits 40 years. PRIDE? He's a shepherd (abominable job to Egyptians)⁴

Moses would learn suffering outside the palace and self-restraint and how to be a servant leader.

¹⁶ *Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷ The shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and saved them, and watered their flock. ¹⁸ When they came home to their father Reuel, he said, "How is it that you have come home so soon today?" ¹⁹ They said, "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and even drew water for us and watered the flock*

...

Watering the flock was the work of servants and women

- these women were surprised that this stranger even drew water for them and even did the menial manual work of watering their flock
- First he drives away the bullies, but this time he doesn't beat anyone to death.
- He stands up like a man, saves them from harassment, and serves them.
- Want to be a leader? Be a servant first.

In v. 20-21 this guy catches the eye of this family and joins them and soon has a family of his own. Being a faithful husband and a father is another sanctifying test of a servant leader (1 Tim 3). Heb 3 says '**Moses also was faithful in all His house...Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward...**' He was faithful in God's house, and as Paul says, being faithful in your own house is where it starts

Ch 3 starts with Moses as a shepherd of sheep

- That also would have prepared him to later lead and shepherd Israel through that same wilderness.
- They were prone to wander, go astray, bite like sheep and they weren't very smart.
- But he learned how to deal with the stubborn and heal the hurting and gently lead the struggling and be patient (1 Thess 5:14)
- He learned his need for daily bread. He learned his place and was content to live in a tent. He now identifies with Israel.

In the palace Moses couldn't relate to Israel with sympathy, but now he can

Ex 1 starts with the name Jacob, who was renamed Israel and was the original Israel. In Gen 28 Jacob also met God in the wilderness much like Moses meets God in the wilderness. It's been pointed out: 'Moses is a new Jacob. Like [Jacob in Gen 29 Moses also] flees his homeland for his life, comes to a well, encounters female shepherds in some distress, resolves their problem, and waters their sheep. After that, he is taken to the home of the father of the shepherdess, and he subsequently takes the young woman as his wife. The parallels between Jacob and Moses are numerous and obvious. The significance is that Moses has the status of being a new father to Israel. He will lead them out of Egypt, just as Jacob had led them into Egypt.'⁵

It's marvelous the details God uses to prepare His servant and his life to lead His people!

- Moses can now empathize with and embody God's plan
- He'll take them where God already took him.
- Ex 2 is his own personal exodus, he fled to this desert from Pharaoh wanting to kill him.
- Just like Israel will later flee Pharaoh wanting to kill them and spend 40 years in this land

Be encouraged: what you're going through now God is preparing you to minister to others later.

Application: where is your life and identity? Our text begins and ends with an identity question.

In v. 22 Moses's son is *Gershom*, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."

- That name shows he knows this isn't his home.
- He's out of place, journeying. It's not his final home.
- His identity and life isn't ultimately Midianite. Nor was it Egyptian, though he looked it.
- Who are his people? ¹¹ *One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to **his people** and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a **Hebrew, one of his people** [Lit. 'his brothers']*

This phrase for Moses when he grew up is used in another place. Turn to Heb 11 and remember

- Moses was well educated in mathematics before he grew up
- He could count the cost of Egypt's pleasures and treasures and mentally calculate the wealth and riches he'd lose if he renounced his Egyptian inheritance and identity
- He knew there was reproach with the Lord and His people and he also knew there was risk if he made angry the King of the world's mightiest nation
- But Moses also knew there was reward and a Messiah to come, a Christ, promised to his forefathers through this people
- Moses had faith in a future serpent crusher and ruler like a lion (Gen 3, 49).

Heb 11:24 *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.* There's more than we see in Ex 2. Moses had faith in Christ to come, Messiah. He refused to identify as the daughter of the king of a vast domain, refused to be held in sin's dread sway, or anything the world afforded that day

Is your life and identity in Christ your treasure?

- Choose His reproach over worldly respect?
- Would you rather have Jesus than silver or gold, or riches untold?
- Do you choose being faithful to His cause over men's applause? It's one thing to sing that, it's another thing to see reproach and mistreatment of Christians and to speak up and identify with them as your people even as they're being beat down (at least verbally).
- Pressure in school or the workplace can be great to give into sin's fleeting pleasures.
- There can be loss on many levels if you don't identify with the LGBT+ or liberal as your people or even don't identify other people with their made up identity

But if Christ is really your treasure

- you don't need to give in to the fear of man or their anger at you
- Moses endured seeing the Lord Jesus who is invisible, looking to His reward and treasure in heaven
- He chose the reproach of Christ and His reproached mistreated people Moses wasn't ashamed to call brothers
- That's Heb 11, Heb 2: *'Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.'*¹⁶

That's better than Moses, if we identify with Jesus by faith, He calls us *my brothers/my people*

Jesus calls us to be willing to give up everything for Him, all we have with joy for the treasure in a field. If you haven't yet, turn from the fleeting pleasures of sin to trust and treasure Him!

Give all that you are for all that he is, Steve Camp says 'that is the gospel according to Jesus.' You'll find unsearchable riches in Christ, and you'll find His people a great value to your soul. Maybe you've heard these words before but let them challenge us to identify with God's people

The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made ...

I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still ...

I'm finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees ...

my way is rough, my companions few, but my Guide reliable, my mission clear.

I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, diluted, or delayed.

I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits ... or praise.

I don't have to be first, I don't have to be right, recognized, regarded, or rewarded.

I now live by presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by power.

I won't give up, back up, shut up, or let up, until I've preached up, stayed up, prayed up and paid up for the cause of Christ... until He comes ... my colors [side I'm on] will be clear.'

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Superheroes_who_are_adopted

² “God Prepares Moses,” by Voddie Baucham, www.sermonaudio.com

³ Calvin’s Commentaries, volume 2, p. 51.

⁴ Genesis 46:34.

⁵ Duane A. Garrett, *A Commentary on Exodus*: Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2014), 187.

⁶ Hebrews 2:17 NIV84.