

Exodus 2:11–22

“The Kind of Man That God Uses”

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What kind of man does God use to lead families, churches, and nations? Pastor leads his family in today’s “Hopewell @Home” passage. Exodus 2:11–22 prepares us for the first serial Scripture reading in public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these twelve verses of holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit introduces us to Moses’s character, teaching us that God uses godly men (conviction, compassion, courage), imperfect men, and opposed men. Most of all, we learn that God ultimately uses Christ alone and that, clinging to Him, we needn’t be discouraged by shortcomings or opposition.

Wednesday, July 28, 2021 • Read Exodus 2:11–22

Questions from the Scripture text: When does v11 take place? Where did Moses go? At what did he look? What did he see? Where does Moses now look in v12? What does he see? What does he do to the Egyptian? What does he do with the body? What day is it in v13? What does he do? What does he see? What does he do to the man in the wrong this time? But with what question does that man respond (v14a)? What second question does he ask (v14b)? How does Moses feel now? What does he say? Who hears about this (v15)? What does Pharaoh seek to do? Now how does Moses respond? Where does Moses go to dwell? What does he do there, at the end of v15? Whom does v16 introduce? What did he have? What did the daughters do (v16)? Once the troughs were filled, what happened (v17)? What three things does v17 tell us Moses did? To whom do the daughters come in v18? What does he ask them? What is their answer (v19)? What three things do they say “the Egyptian” did? Now what two questions does their father ask (v20)? And what does he tell them to do? For what purpose does he suggest that they call him? What change does v21a bring? And what does Reuel do in v21b? What does Zipporah do in v22a? What does Moses call him? Why?

With what kind of man does God deliver Israel? That is the question here in our first introduction to the character of Moses.

God uses a convicted, compassionate, courageous man. Moses has strong convictions. Heb 11:24–26 tells us that this identification with God’s afflicted people was a rejection of the pleasures of sin and treasures of Egypt in order to be reproached with Christ, which he counted great riches. Moses is also compassionate. He cares not only about afflicted Israelites as his brethren, but also for Midianite shepherdesses. And Moses is courageous. The hiding of the body and the surprise about it being known suggests that he as yet feared Pharaoh. It would take a face-to-face meeting with Yahweh to overcome that. But as a newcomer to the northwestern-Sinai desert, he is willing to make enemies of those in local control in order to do the right thing. The courage that grace would later grow, the Lord had already given him in his character.

God uses an imperfect man. His killing the Egyptian may or may not have been murder. There are enough legitimate ways to understand what Exodus 2 and Acts 7 say about the incident that we must conclude that we simply don’t have enough information to judge. But certainly, Moses was a sinner. As we noted above, he fears prospectively (hiding the body), and then he also fears retrospectively (fleeing when Pharaoh seeks to kill him). Acts 7:25 tells us that he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand. But if Moses himself was fully confident of this, he would have stood against Egypt and Israel simultaneously—as he would later have to do. Moses has his own share of both wickedness and weakness.

God uses an opposed man. In every age, there have been those in the church who oppose the men whom God sets over them to do them good. This is why the incident in vv11–15 gets seven verses (Ac 7:23–29) in Stephen’s speech about how Israel’s betraying and murdering Christ was just the most recent incident in a long history of the same behavior (cf. Ac 7:52).

We will see each of these things magnified as Moses’s story goes on. And each of them highlights Christ to us. Christ’s perfect conviction, compassion, and courage. Christ’s sinless imperfection—the only One Who can save us, for ultimately even one like Moses is flawed. Christ as the One Who overcomes all opposition in the world and the church. So, let us seek to have the Spirit produce Christ’s character in us, turning to Him with all that we are; but, let us not despair over our flaws, trusting Him to overcome all that we lack. And let us pray to God for, and thank God for, godly servants like Moses, despite their flaws.

In what character traits are you seeking to grow by God’s grace? What keeps you from being discouraged about your failings?

Suggested songs: ARP1 “How Blessed the Man” or TPH260 “All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall”

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