**BCM Bible Study: September 2/3, 2020**

**Exodus 2: The Humiliation and Preparation of Moses**

Reflection: Touch base about the written prayer from last week’s challenge. How was their experience writing the letter? What kind of things did they talk to God about?

Moses’ Birth: **Read Exodus 2:1-10**

* What hurdles does baby Moses have to overcome to survive?
  + What are some other Biblical births that occurred against the odds? (Isaac, Samson, Obed (to Ruth), Samuel, Jesus)
  + Consider the story of Obed who was born to Ruth. The story of Ruth marrying Boaz and giving birth to Obed is nothing short of miraculous. The end of Ruth tells us the significance of this birth: **Read Ruth 4:18-21**.
    - According to the author of Ruth, what is significant about Obed’s birth?
  + What do we learn about God’s character from the miraculous way he raises up these important people? What does he communication to us by doing things this way?
* How do you see God working Pharaoh’s own plans against him in this story?
  + Even after Moses was brought into Pharaoh’s house, oppression continued a long time, maybe as much as eighty years. The plan was in process, but no one would have been able to tell.
  + How does the unexpected and surprising nature of God’s working give you hope during challenging times?
  + What is powerful about God bringing his servant right into the house of Pharaoh?
    - What does this tell you about the way that God renders salvation? How does Jesus embody this? (more on this later)

Moses’ Humiliation and Preparation: **Read Exodus 2:11-15**

* Moses commits a heinous act and pays the price. What does he lose by killing the Egyptian?
  + Not only is Moses rejected by the Egyptians, he is rejected by his own people. He lost everything because of this murder. When have you experienced great loss because of your choices? (tell them to hang onto this idea as we consider Moses’ life)

**Read Exodus 2:16-22**.

* God blesses Moses in Midian with the favor of Reuel. In many ways, this time of Moses’ life is important preparation for him acting as Israel’s deliverer. How is Moses now better able to identify with his people by means of his time in Midian? (see esp. v22)
  + Peter Enns states Moses’ position this way: “Moses is an alien as are his Israelite countrymen in Egypt; he is finally experiencing their plight…By attempting to interfere with Egyptian policy, he pays the price for his zeal: he assumes their lowly position.”
* CS Lewis defines humility this way: “Humility is not thinking less about ourselves; it is thinking about ourselves less.”
  + What do you think of this definition? Do you agree?
* Think again of the situations where you have experienced pain or great loss. In what way did you grow in humility through experiencing those situations?
  + **Read Romans 8:28**. What does this verse mean? How have you heard it misused?
  + Consider another quote from Peter Enns: “The mark of a Christian life is not in what happens to us…Too frequently passages such as Romans 8:28 are thought to mean that God works *against* our everyday trials to bring some good out of it…It is more common for the Lord to work *through* our circumstances; indeed he puts us *in* certain circumstances precisely because he plans to work some good in our lives. And the “good” is not a temporary shot in the arm but nothing less than God’s conforming us ever more to the image of his Son.”
  + Notice that humility is not primarily for the sake of Moses’ personal spiritual life; it is for the purpose of advancing God’s purposes. How might God be redeeming your past hurts to serve others?

Seeing Jesus in the Story

One of the big themes we see in this chapter is that Moses begins to embody Israel’s life before he leads them through it. Consider these parallels:

* Both are saved by passing through reeds of some sort (Moses in the basket amongst reeds and Israel in the Red Sea/Sea of reeds)
* Both lived in exile in a foreign land.
* Both will come out of Egypt to live in the desert for 40 years.

At the same time, Moses is prototype of Christ:

* Jesus comes out of Egypt as a child and escapes being killed as an infant
* Jesus passes through the waters in baptism
* Jesus is in the desert for 40 days
* ***Both Jesus and Moses are rejected by their people, but things rejection serves as the means for bringing about God’s purposes.***

* In what way was Jesus’ incarnation an act of humble identification with you and all mankind?
* Jesus is the Savior through suffering – what does this mean?
* Christ could only defeat death by enduring it. Light must go into the darkness to shine. How does this inform the way we should carry out our call to be a light and make disciples?

God Hears: **Read Exodus 2:23-25**

* In what way are these verses comforting to you? In what way might they be frustrating?
* How does this chapter encourage you to trust God when you don’t understand his timing or the suffering around you?

Challenge

* Take time to think about/write out how God has redeemed or is redeeming your suffering. Consider these questions as you write:
  + How might God form through trials to serve others?
  + Who do you need to connect with in light of this?

Extra Notes:

* The fact that Moses is a Levite will become important as Exodus unfolds and the Levites are given priestly responsibilities.
* Moses’ mother thought he was “fine” which in Hebrew is *tov*, the same word used to describe creation as good. Connecting with the creation language in the first chapter, it seems that Moses is bringing about a sort of new creation for God’s people.
* The literary link between the reed that Moses is placed in and the Sea of reeds is notable.
* Note that Moses’ mother is paid to nurse her own child! The heartbreak must have been substantial, but God is bringing some good out of this situation even on the level of the mother.
* We don’t know much about the details of Pharaoh’s house. Did Pharaoh not know Moses was Hebrew? How did he survive? These questions are not important to the author. We also don’t know the details of why Pharaoh tried to kill Moses. Was it illegal to kill someone? Were Moses’ true colors finally shown? We are left to guess.
* It is notable that Moses becomes a shepherd since, as the study notes, he is a prototype of Christ, the Shepherd.