



Takeaway Thought: Purpose isn't defined by perfection; it's defined by God's presence.

Scripture: Exodus 1-4

INTRO

Have you ever learned something about a historical figure that changed how you thought about them? Do you remember learning about Christopher Columbus in grade school? He looked like an innocent explorer with good intentions, and he discovered the Americas. Columbus could do no wrong! That is, until you later learned that he wasn't the first to discover the Americas. He found the Americas by mistake, meaning he was terrible at his job, and he was a bad person who enslaved people. He was different from the polished and perfect person you learned about in school.

When I learn the truth about historic figures, sometimes I feel betrayed that everything I thought I knew was a lie. It changes the whole story and feels like people are hiding the ugly truth with their own version of history. That's why I appreciate everything in the Bible. If you really read the Bible, the historic people being described are never painted as perfect. In fact, all their flaws are displayed clearly and openly.

Moses was one of these imperfect people we get to read about. The crazy part about it is that he documented all his flaws. Exodus is a book about Moses' life, written by Moses. All his fears and failures are available for your viewing pleasure. The crazier part of this is that Moses is deemed as the highest standard of what a prophet should look like. Every prophet after Moses did not meet his criteria:

Deuteronomy 34:10 – There has not arisen a prophet like Moses who knew the Lord face to face.

We are introduced to Moses in the book of "Exodus." Here is the backstory. The tribes of Israel had settled in the country of Egypt because of a famine in their homeland. They ended up staying there for a number of generations (400 years) and God's blessing was on them. Everything they touched becomes better. The ruler of Egypt was called "Pharaoh;"

pharaohs were considered kings and high priests of every temple. Some pharaohs even thought they were gods. In Exodus, we find that the old pharaoh who allowed the Israelites to stay in Egypt, died, and a new pharaoh took over.

The new Pharaoh noticed that the Israelites were doing better financially than his own people and that they were growing in number. So, this new Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites and forced them into torturous labor. To send a message, he issued an edict that all newborn Israelite boys were to be thrown into the Nile River. He created racial division, enslaved these people, and committed genocide against God's chosen people.

Here's where the drama gets good. In **Exodus 2:1-3**, an Israelite woman gave birth to a baby boy and she could tell that God had a purpose for him. She hid him for three months and when she couldn't hide him any longer, she made a little basket to put him in and she put him in the Nile River.

This baby could have been swallowed by crocodiles, but instead, he floated into the lap of Pharaoh's daughter and she took him as her own son. The family that ordered an entire generation be murdered by the Nile River had pulled in an Israelite baby from that same river; and that baby would be God's tool for much destruction in Egypt. The baby's name was Moses.

To make things even juicier, pharaoh's daughter hired an Israelite woman to nurse her newly adopted son, and the woman she hired was Moses' real mom. I told you the drama was thick.

TENSION

Moses grew up with an Egyptian education. He wore the finest clothes and held power in Egypt. But Moses was faced with a tension. He knew that his skin color didn't match his adopted parents. He knew that he was Hebrew and not Egyptian. There was a hidden purpose in Moses' life that God had set in motion in order to set God's people free.

Every person here, right now, needs to know that God has a purpose for you. If you have a pulse, then you have a purpose. But sometimes, we confuse power and perfection with purpose. Everywhere you look in life, there are successful people. They weave their stories of power and they have massive followings. So, with the deafening success of others it's easy to confuse power and position with purpose.

Moses had bought into that very narrative. He was smart, wealthy, and he was in the perfect position to cause change. But in this next part, we see that Moses was not perfect.

*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. 12He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. **Exodus 2:11-12 ESV***

Moses murdered a guy! His anger rose and he took matters into his own hands. Then, he hid the body thinking he'd done a good deed for his people.

But wait, there's more. The next day, he saw two Israelites fighting and he called them out. This spoiled Hebrew dressed as an Egyptian prince lectured these blue-collar slaves on morality.

Instead of thanking him for his wisdom, they called him out on murdering someone the day before. It turned out that Moses' secret crime was not a secret. Everybody was talking about it! We learn that Pharaoh heard about everything and he sought to kill Moses, but Moses had already skipped town. "Sorry about the whole slavery thing fellow Hebrews, but I've got to go!" This is the guy who was supposed to free Egypt!

TRUTH

This is not your typical prophet story where the prophet lived a righteous life and followed God with perfect obedience. Moses ran away from his power and position and was left with nothing.

Have you ever felt like your life had purpose and then you made a mistake that made that purpose feel unachievable? Have you ever felt powerless and far away from the goals you wanted to achieve? That's where Moses was.

He fled and eventually found himself at a well outside of the town of Midian. There, he saw some women trying to give their sheep water, but some men were keeping them from doing their chores. Moses stood up for the women and helped them give their herd water. It turned out these women were the daughters of a priest that lived in Midian, and he was not a priest of the



1. Would you rather swim with sharks in a cage or go skydiving? Why?
2. Have you ever done a sport or club where you had to trust others? What made it hard or easy to do that?
3. Is it easy for you to trust other people? Why or why not?
4. When do you feel like you trust God the most? When do you trust God the least?
5. How do you build trust with God? What would it take to trust Him more?

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