

Exodus Chapter 2 v 11 - 25

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- [0 : 00] Praise my soul, the King of heaven, to this beat of tribute ring.
Ransom, healed, restored, forgiven, who I knew his gracious name. Praise him, praise him, praise him, praise the everlasting King.
Praise him for his grace and favour, still our fathers in distress.
Praise him still and stay forever, so to shine and swift to bless.
Praise him, praise him, praise him, praise him, for else in his faithfulness.
- [1 : 08] Father, like he tends and spares us, when our people pray he knows.
In his hands he gently bears us, rescues us from all our goals. Praise him, praise him, praise him, praise him, widely as his mercy flows.
Praise him, praise him, praise him, praise him.
Praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, our eternal God. Angels help us to adore Him, We behold Him face to face, Starring the damned before Him, We're at all in time and space, Praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, Praise Him, our Lord.
Praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, Praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, Colossians chapter 1, and I'm going to read verses 3 to 14.
- [3 : 02] This is one of Paul's prayers in his letters. He often starts his letters with a prayer for the church, expressing his desires for the church, his love for the church, and what he's praying for them.
And I particularly chose this one this morning because in the message later on, we're going to be thinking about God's rescue, and how God is our rescuer, and what He's done for us in sending Jesus to be our rescuer.
And right at the end of Paul's prayer, Paul speaks of that rescue that God has brought about. So Colossians chapter 1, beginning in verse 3.
We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.
Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing, as it does also among you since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant.
- [4 : 19] He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.
May you be strengthened with all power according to His glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

To us, through His Word. So we're going to look at Exodus chapter 2, verses 11 to 25. Just to set the context before I read, the situation is that the Israelites, God's people, are in Egypt.

They went there because Joseph brought his father and his brothers to Egypt many hundreds of years ago. They've grown up in Egypt over those years.

[5 : 48] They've got bigger and bigger and more and more numerous. And they've gone from being sort of guests to be slaves in Egypt. They've been enslaved by Pharaoh. He controls their labor.

And he seeks in chapter 1 to control their population for this awful act of seeking to have the Israelite baby boys killed when they're born.

So that's the start of chapter 1. And then at the beginning of chapter 2, we read the account of the birth of Moses, God's rescuer. But of course, Moses being an Israelite boy is in danger also from Pharaoh and his desire to get rid of the Israelite boys.

And so God protects Moses through the wisdom of his mother and sister. And perhaps you know the story of him being placed in a basket and of Pharaoh's daughter seeing him and bringing her into her own household as her own son.

And Moses grows up. And then as we begin our reading in verse 11, Moses has grown up and he begins to see what's happening to his people.

[6 : 53] So Moses is an Israelite, but he's grown up as an Egyptian in Pharaoh's daughter's house. So picking up the reading in chapter 2, verse 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. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, why did you strike your companion?

He answered, who made you a prince and 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.

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.

[8 : 03] Now, the priest of Midian had seven daughters and they came and they drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

The shepherds came and drove them away. But Moses stood up and saved them and watered their flock. When they came home to their father, Raul, he said, how is it you have come home so soon today?

They said, an Egyptian delivered us out of the hands of the shepherds and even drew water for us and watered the flock. He said to his daughters, then where is he?

Why have you left the man? Call him that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah.

She gave birth to a son and he called his name Gershon. For he said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land. During those many days, the king of Egypt died and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help.

[9 : 17] Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God and God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.

God saw the people of Israel and God knew. If you turn the Bibles to Exodus chapter 2, we're going to look at those verses together from verse 11 through to verse 25.

And my title this morning is The Kind of Hero We Need. The Kind of Hero We Need. We all need heroes.

We love to watch films about heroes who rescue people who are in trouble. We love to read books where there's a hero who comes and brings about an amazing rescue.

And in real life, we need our heroes too. We need people who can step in for us when we're in trouble, who can be there to rescue us when we're in difficulty.

[10 : 45] Heroes are a deep part of our culture. In fact, they've been a part of human culture for thousands of years. My son Noah has been studying Greek myths in primary school.

And if you think about many of those stories, they're hero stories, aren't they? They're rescue stories where the people are in difficulty and someone comes to bring about an amazing rescue.

Now, why is it that heroes are such a big part of our culture and history? Why is it that all the blockbusters, so many of them, are hero stories?

Well, as I was thinking about that, it occurred to me that part of our need for heroes is actually quite a significant, quite a significant admission of our own frailty, of our own acceptance that we can't do everything that we'd like to do, that we can't control all the events we'd like to control, that we can't bring about all the outcomes we want, that we can't save ourselves and others from trouble.

And so, we need heroes. But what kind of heroes do we need? What kind of heroes do we need?

[12 : 04] One of the interesting things about a good rescue story is a way in which the hero or heroine is portrayed. What is their character like?

Are they a reluctant hero who doesn't really want to rescue, but it brings about an amazing rescue? Are they a flawed hero with weaknesses? And that's what we're going to think about this morning.

We're going to think about what kind of hero we need. We're going to look at Exodus chapter 2 and as we look at it we're going to see what kind of person God's people need.

The Israelites need to rescue them. And as we look at that person who of course is Moses, we're going to see a picture of a kind of hero that we need to rescue us.

Because of course one of the wonderful things about the Old Testament is that it's full of pictures of the Lord Jesus. And as you read the Old Testament you find page after page pictures of Jesus and what he's done.

[13 : 08] And Moses is one of the strongest pictures of Jesus. So as we look at Moses as a hero and a rescuer we're going to see a picture of the Lord Jesus and the rescue that he brings about for his people when we come and we trust in him.

So before we do that let's think about the background to this passage. We said a bit about it didn't we before we read. But at the start of the book of Exodus we find God's people in dire need of rescue.

They're in an awful situation. They find themselves oppressed and abused by the Egyptians. They came to Egypt hundreds of years ago as guests but now they find themselves to be slaves in Egypt.

And Pharaoh who is the king of Egypt is seeking to be God over the Israelites. He controls their labor through slavery.

He seeks to control their population through his plan to murder the Israelite boys. And so God's people are in huge need they're in a real difficult situation.

[14 : 18] And there seems to be no one who will stand up against Pharaoh. Pharaoh. Where are the leaders of God's people?

Where are those who will come and stand before Pharaoh and tell him he is wrong to be doing what he is doing? That he's wrong to be enslaving God's people? That he's wrong to seek to murder God's people?

In fact who is it who stands up against Pharaoh? Well in chapter 1 it's two young leading Hebrew midwives. Now these women showed great courage but it should never have come to that should it if you think about it?

They should never have been called to stand before Pharaoh. And it is a significant criticism of the Israelites that there are no leaders who will stand there for them.

There are no leaders who will protect them. And of course in chapter 2 where are the leaders to rescue these Israelite boys? Well it's left to Moses' mother and sister to save him.

[15 : 32] They're the ones the leaders should be making plans to save their children to protect their children but they're nowhere to be seen. So what will God do?

What will happen? How will he save his people? Well God will raise up a hero. That's what God does. That's how he rescues his people.

He sends a hero to rescue them. Whenever his people are in need of rescue he raises up an instrument to be the means of their deliverance. And we see the story of the birth of that hero at the start of chapter 2.

God preserves the life of a baby Israelite boy called Moses. And he grows up not as an Israelite but as a child of Pharaoh's own daughter.

But until this point in the story we know very little about Moses. What is he like? In fact all we've been told about Moses is this little line in verse 2 of chapter 2 that he was a fine child.

[16 : 37] That's all we know. His mother clearly loved him and then when Pharaoh's daughter saw him she thought he's a nice baby I'll rescue him. But in our passage the passage we're going to look in verses 11 to 25 we learn more about Moses.

We begin to see the kind of man he is and the kind of rescuer he's going to be for God's people. But of course this passage isn't just about some amazing events that happened about three and a half thousand years ago.

this passage is here to teach us it's here to teach you about your need for a rescuer. It's here to tell us more about the rescuer whom God has provided and that of course is the Lord Jesus.

So we're going to ask the question what kind of hero do we need and see what kind of hero Moses was but as we see the hero Moses was we will also see a picture of the hero that Jesus is.

So first of all the kind of hero we need we need a hero who will identify with us. My first point we need a hero who will identify with us. Moses chose to identify with God's people even when that didn't seem like a good choice.

[18 : 00] Now to this point Moses has spent his entire life as a member of Pharaoh's household. He's grown up as an Egyptian and he's in a very privileged position and it would have been so easy for Moses to have remained an Egyptian.

He would have had everything he could have needed. He would have had money, power, protection. We might have said all the pleasures of Egypt could have been his.

But in verse 11 we find Moses going out to see his own people. And we're told he went out and he looked on their burdens.

He wants to go and see first hand how his people are being treated. And as he's walking he comes across an Egyptian beating one of the Israelites.

Perhaps this Egyptian is a slave master and this is one of the slaves he's responsible for and so he beats him for that reason. Or perhaps he's just an ordinary Egyptian exploiting one of the Hebrews.

[19 : 06] But in that moment when Moses sees what's going on he has a choice. Who will be his people? Will he walk by and do nothing and continue as an Egyptian?

will he show no concern and continue to live and identify as an Egyptian so that the Egyptians are his people? Or will he defend this Hebrew who is being so cruelly treated?

Will he defend one of his own people and so identify with them? This is a huge choice isn't it? I wonder what would you do if you're in that situation?

Moses knows that it has massive implications. That's why he looks in verse 12 this way and that to see if anyone is watching. If others see him acting to save an Israelite and if Pharaoh hears of that he knows he could be in real trouble.

He thinks that no one is seeing him and so he strikes the Egyptian and we're told that he kills him. Now it's not clear that Moses really was trying to kill the Egyptian here.

[20 : 24] When we look at the word that's used of what the Egyptian is doing to this Hebrew first of all it says that he was striking him and beating him and the same word that's used of what the Egyptian was doing to the Hebrew is used of what Moses does to defend the Hebrew.

So it could be that he's just trying to use proportionate force to stop this beating. So his intention isn't to kill but actually is just to protect but it ends up with the Egyptian being killed.

Now some people say Moses here is taking matters into his own hands. God hasn't commanded him to do this and they think he's wrong. But I think actually he's right to do this because he's defending his own people against oppression.

He's beginning to be the kind of hero that God's people needed. You know if you saw someone harming or perhaps even killing someone you wouldn't wait for God to command you to stop it would you?

You'd get involved and stop that harm being caused. And so what Moses is doing here is that he is acting to rescue the Israelites and crucially when he makes that choice he is identifying with them as one of their people.

[21 : 45] He's choosing to be an Israelite not to be an Egyptian. He's choosing to be linked to them to be one of them and of course that's confirmed in what we read about Moses in Hebrews chapter 11 verse 24 we read by faith Moses when he had grown up refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

So Moses chooses the people of God instead of the people and the pleasures of Egypt and because Moses does that because he identifies with the Israelites that makes him such a suitable hero to be their rescuer.

He's not away from them apart from them he's not living as an Egyptian with no identification with them instead he identifies with them as his people and just like the Israelites needed a hero who was like them we need a hero who is like us we don't want someone who is separate from us but rather someone who is connected to us we want someone who is concerned for us who is one of us that's deep in our culture if you think about those hero and rescue stories about books and films that are about heroes the overriding thing that goes on again and again is that the hero is one of us he's an ordinary person who rescues the best heroes are identified with their people and the amazing message of the Bible is that God is that kind of hero he's not just brought about a rescue while staying in heaven he's come down to the earth as the

Lord Jesus he's shown himself to be one of us the Lord Jesus became a real human being he lived on this earth he breathed the air of this earth he went through life as we know it and the book of Hebrews puts it like this therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect speaking of Jesus so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of the people Jesus has come to be our hero and to rescue us and he comes as one of us he comes and he draws alongside us he experiences the struggles of this world and he offers us a salvation he offers us a rescue that lifts us from our sin and suffering and promises that future hope of glory we need a hero who is identified with us and Jesus is that hero that's the first point the second point is this we need a hero who will rescue us we need a hero who will rescue us

Moses was a hero who was prepared to stand and fight for those who were oppressed and enslaved now we see in this passage Moses acts as a rescuer a couple of times the first of course is when he rescues the Hebrew from this beating from the Egyptian but I want to think about a second event where Moses shows himself to be a rescuer and that's where he rescues the daughters of Reul in verse so in verse 15 we find out that Pharaoh hears about what Moses done so he hears that this Egyptian has been killed and he seeks to kill Moses because of it and so Moses has to run away and he flees east of Egypt to a land called Midian and when he gets to his place he sits down by a well we're told and as he's sitting there by this well the daughters of the priest of Midian come in order to get water for their sheep they're looking after their father's flocks and so they need water and so they draw up the water from the well now you might wonder who is this priest of Midian well he uses the name

[26 : 24] Reul in verse 18 but we later come to know him as Jethro and that's the name used of him in chapter three so these young women the daughters of Jethro have come to get water for their animals they draw up the water from the well they do all the hard work there's no motorized pumps it's all by hand you've got to draw it up they get the water up and then they put the water into the troughs around the well so the sheep can come and get a drink but just as their animals are about to get this drink what happens these shepherds show up and just when the women have done all this hard work of drawing up the water the shepherds turn up and their timing is perfect when it's all there and ready they drive the women away in their flocks and they want the water for themselves really exploit the situation it's not quite the same but it reminds you sometimes of how children seem to turn up just when the meal's ready you know that feeling yeah you say can you set the table can you get things ready you hear nothing and then when you say food's ready boom suddenly they arrive and of course they disappear very quickly afterwards don't they as well now it's not the same but that's a bit of the picture here in so far as everything is ready for these sheep to get their water and these shepherds cruelly come and drive the women away but who's there who's sat by the well

Moses and Moses will not allow this he stops it and he saves the women from these cruel shepherds and what's going on here is that Moses is acting as a rescuer he's a hero who rescues the oppressed and these women are being really awfully treated by the shepherds they should have been cared for by the shepherds but instead they're exploited and it seems actually this happens quite a lot it's interesting that when the women the daughters get back to their father Jethro he's surprised they've come home so quickly you notice that in verse 18 and he says how is it you come home so quickly it seems to suggest that this went on a lot that it took him a long time to water the flocks because they had the problem with these local shepherds so they're disadvantaged marginalized people who are being rescued by Moses and notice how the language really emphasizes a rescue look at verse 18 it's very clear sorry verse 17 sorry the shepherds came and drove them away but

Moses stood up and saved them language of being saved and then in verse 19 when the daughters give the account to their father they say an Egyptian delivered us out of the hands of the shepherds so all this language has to do with rescue and Moses being a rescuer and this is an unusual quality you don't find this every day when Jethro hears a report of what's happened of Moses actions he asked his daughters why did you leave that man behind when he's done all that for you now he's pretty upset actually the way he speaks he's quite upset with them he clearly wants to thank Moses but there's also a sense in which he doesn't want to let Moses go he knows a good thing when he sees it a man who's going to be a hero and a rescuer he could use a man with a kind of qualities like this and so he invites him to his house and he has some bread and he stays and eventually marries one of his daughter and remains with Jethro what are being shown here is that Moses is a hero who rescues the oppressed and this is what the

Israelites will need and just like the Israelites needed that kind of hero who's going to rescue them we need that kind of hero as well the Bible says that we are captives and slaves we're like the Israelites we're oppressed not by Pharaoh in Egypt but by sin and the Bible says also by the devil and we need God's rescue we need to be freed from Satan's power we need to be freed from the captivity to sin and just like the Israelites we're helpless we can do nothing and Jesus comes and is that kind of hero he's a hero who rescues us from captivity to sin because in his death on the cross he breaks the power of sin because he pays the penalty that our sin deserves so that we're no longer guilty and condemned instead we are forgiven and free and in his cross

Jesus rescues us from the power of Satan because he delivers us from the kingdom of darkness and transfers us into his kingdom if you're not a Christian this morning if you're not trusting in Jesus this is why you need Jesus you need rescue as I talk to people particularly as I speak to people who aren't Christians trying to reach them with the gospel I find that many people recognize that sin is a problem many people will acknowledge there is something deep down wrong in our hearts and however hard we try we can't seem to fix it we know we do things we shouldn't do we know we're upset by our behaviors and we don't like what we are we don't like what we do but we can't find someone to fix it we just think of all the songs and music that speak about the need for someone to come and save us will someone be our rescue will someone be our hero we know we have a problem we know that we're in trouble we don't know where to find a hero we don't know where to get that rescue we look for it in all these different places but the one place where we can be rescued is in the Lord

[33 : 11] Jesus only Jesus can deal with that sin problem that problem with our hearts the bad things that we know that we do that we can't get away from only Jesus can deliver us from that and only Jesus can bring us freedom that we need only Jesus can rescue us from the captivity to sin you know you ever see sometimes you know at school fairs sometimes or fun days where there's a pole somewhere or a pillar and they get a bungee rope and they tie it round the pillar and they put a plastic sheet on the floor and water and washing up liquid and they say run along the plastic sheet to get something yeah and of course you get so far and suddenly it snaps and gets you back sin's a bit like that isn't it it's got a hold over us and maybe you feel that this morning you feel that the hold of sin on your life you feel the captivity to sin you can't break free of it well Jesus is the rescuer that you need

Jesus is the one who can free you from that and what we're seeing here is that he is the only one so have you come to Jesus for that rescue have you trusted in what he's done on the cross and known that freedom that comes through belief in him so we need a hero who is one of us we need a hero who will rescue us and lastly and briefly we need a hero who is committed to us we need a hero a rescuer who is committed to us Moses was committed to the Israelites even when they weren't committed to him we see that in what happens the day after Moses' rescue of the slave who's being beaten he comes out the following day Moses and he walks around and he sees not an Egyptian and a Hebrew involved in battle but rather two Hebrews who are fighting each other two of his own people who are fighting and Moses seeks to bring rescue for them in their conflict he tries to be their leader to bring about justice and so he says why did you strike your companion he tries to sort it out to rescue them but their response to

Moses is to reject him as their leader and judge he says who made you a prince and judge over us are you going to kill us like you killed the Egyptian now that's a striking thing isn't it because the previous day Moses has just rescued one of their brothers and they show no gratitude for that instead they try to push Moses away they reject his leadership they reject his rescue and as we go through as you know having studied the book of Exodus one of the repeated patterns is Moses is good and kind to God's people and they reject him again and again as leader they don't treat him as they should as leader but Moses has a vital quality of a hero he is committed to his people now the Israelites treat Moses like this because they have wandered far from God sad thing is there's no sign of spiritual life in them they're fighting and falling out and even when they cry out for help in verse 23 and 24 it's not clear who they're crying to they groan because of their slavery and cry out to help it doesn't say they cried out to God for help it just says they cried out and yet and here's the amazing thing

God hears and responds to their cry even when there seems very little reason for him to do it and why does God do this well he does it because just as Moses is committed to them God is committed to them and the reason God is committed to them is because of his covenant with them I read about his covenant in verse 24 that when he hears their cry because of their trouble he remembers his covenant now what does that mean well what that's speaking about is promises God has made before this point to the Israelites he's made promises to Abraham Isaac and Jacob and the promises were that when they're in trouble and they needed God God would come and help and rescue and because the Hebrews the Israelites are descendants of Abraham Isaac and Jacob they can claim those promises also because God has made them he's promised to be committed to his people he's promised to rescue them and just as God was committed to Israel his people then he is committed to his people today and that's such an important truth to remember especially when we struggle with sin in the

Christian life you know we need God to rescue us every day don't we we need God to rescue us hundreds of times each day because every time we find ourselves back in sin we know we need God's rescue again we need God to come and to cleanse us from sin to help us to change and bring about change in our lives and we need that rescue every day and what this is saying to us this passage is saying that just as God was committed to the Israelites and their rescue he is committed to God's people and their rescue also he's committed to Christians today and their rescue such that when we call out to God to help us and we call out to God to rescue us from our sin he promises to do that again and again and again there's something about the human heart that thinks that we have to be worthy of God's rescue we know we need help but we feel like we have to show that we're worth helping we feel like we have to show some promise or to show something good in order for

[39 : 57] God to be interested in helping us I think many Christians believe that God saves freely and without condition when we first come to Jesus but then we think that we have to revert back and we have to be worthy in some way of God's ongoing rescue each day well the wonderful message of the Bible is very different to that it tells us that none of us is worthy of God's rescue whether we are a Christian or we're not a Christian and it tells us that Christ has come to rescue us and he brings that rescue to us fresh every day he cleanses us from our sin he brings us away from it and that applies every point in the Christian life not just when we first come to Jesus but as we go on with the Lord Jesus so as we continue as

Christians as we need that daily rescue we can do it with the precious knowledge that God is committed to saving us each day because of his promises and if we're not a Christian this morning what this passage says to us is that God's rescue is being held forth for us in the Lord Jesus it's being offered to us in Jesus if you feel that captivity to sin if you feel that need for rescue you then come to Jesus believe in him trust in him and the wonderful promise is that all who come he will not cast out so what have we seen this morning we've seen three characteristics of Moses as a hero that he identifies with God's people that he rescues God's people and that he is committed to

God's people and in seeing those three things we've seen a picture of Jesus and what he has done for us we've seen that Jesus is a hero who identifies with us and comes to be one of us we've seen that Jesus is a hero who rescues us from our sin and we've seen that Jesus is a hero who is committed to us such that he will continue to rescue us each day when we return to him and call out for that rescue well let's pray together and thank him for that and then we'll sing to praise him for that in our closing hymn Lord God how thankful we are that you sent Jesus to be the rescuer that we need Lord we confess that like the Israelites we have nothing deserving in us to make us worthy of your rescue and yet out of your kindness and goodness and free and abundant mercy you've sent

Jesus to do everything needed to make us right with you Lord how we pray that you would help us if we don't know you if we're not trusting in you if we're not believing in Jesus how we pray that you'd help us to look to Jesus for the first time to believe in him and find that rescue and Lord as we go on with you each day Lord we feel that need of rescue because we feel that battle with sin inside of us Lord thank you that you sent Jesus to pay for all our sin and that he offers that rescue every day as we come to him so help us we pray to look to him day by day help us we pray to trust in him day by day and may our faith in him be strengthened as we seek to go on with him so receive our thanks and seal your word to our hearts and use it for good and we ask it in Jesus name Amen