

Individual Discouragement and Personal Growth

. . . when Moses was grown . . . he went out to his brethren and looked at their
burdens
—Exodus 2:11

Moses saw the oppression of his people and felt certain that he was the one to deliver them, and in the righteous indignation of his own spirit he started to right their wrongs. After he launched his first strike for God and for what was right, God allowed Moses to be driven into empty discouragement, sending him into the desert to feed sheep for forty years. At the end of that time, God appeared to Moses and said to him, " ' . . . bring My people . . . out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I that I should go . . . ?' " (Exodus 3:10-11). In the beginning Moses had realized that he was the one to deliver the people, but he had to be trained and disciplined by God first. He was right in his individual perspective, but he was not the person for the work until he had learned true fellowship and oneness with God.

We may have the vision of God and a very clear understanding of what God wants, and yet when we start to do it, there comes to us something equivalent to Moses' forty years in the wilderness. It's as if God had ignored the entire thing, and when we are thoroughly discouraged, God comes back and revives His call to us. And then we begin to tremble and say, "Who am I that I should go . . . ?" We must learn that God's great stride is summed up in these words—"I AM WHO I AM . . . has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14). We must also learn that our individual effort for God shows nothing but disrespect for Him—our individuality is to be rendered radiant through a personal relationship with God, so that He may be "well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). We are focused on the right individual perspective of things; we have the vision and can say, "I know this is what God wants me to do." But we have not yet learned to get into God's stride. If you are going through a time of discouragement, there is a time of great personal growth ahead

***From: My Utmost for His Highest, updated ed. hardcover
Chambers, Oswald***

Trusting God's Timing Greg Laurie

Day 2

I have discovered that just as important as God's will is God's timing. In fact, the Bible talks a lot about timing. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven."

The Bible talks about a man of God who had really bad timing. If this man were in a race, he would have been the one to come out of nowhere, take the lead, and then suddenly self-destruct. The man I'm speaking of is Moses.

Although Moses was one of the greatest men of God, he also was a man who had some serious setbacks and committed serious sin. It is worth noting that along with Saul of Tarsus, Moses is one of the men God used who actually was guilty of murder.

Moses was a bit on the impulsive side. I can understand that, because I share that characteristic with him. I can be impulsive. But being impulsive has its drawbacks, and Moses' impulsiveness brought some devastating results.

Moses was born at a time of extreme hardship in Israel's history. The descendents of Jacob had grown to about three million in Egypt and had been forced into slavery. Pharaoh, seeing the Hebrews as a potential threat, decreed that newborn Hebrew boys were to be drowned in the Nile River.

As the children of Israel cried out to God for deliverance, enter Moses, the man of God. First he was the baby protected by God and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. The Jewish historian, Josephus, tells us that this Pharaoh had no son or heir; therefore, Moses was being groomed to become the next Pharaoh of Egypt. He was being raised as royalty, which meant that he would have been schooled in all that Egypt had to offer. But Moses still knew who he was. He was a true believer in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Underneath those Egyptian robes beat the heart of a Hebrew.

Maybe that's what caused him to swing into action when he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. The Bible says he looked "this way and that way," and then killed the Egyptian. Moses' heart was in the right place, but his actions were foolish, to say the least. Clearly, the Lord had not told Moses to do this. Instead of looking around, Moses should have been looking up.

Moses probably thought that his fellow Hebrews would be grateful for what he had done, but things didn't turn out that way. Everyone knew what he did, but no one applauded. When Pharaoh heard what had happened, Moses had to flee for his life. Off he went, into the wilderness.

God wants us to do His will in His way in His timing.

Moses was a leader in training, but he wasn't ready yet. He had lost his people. He had lost his reputation. But he had not lost God. What looked like the end was actually the beginning.

Forty years later, God appointed Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. What Moses did not realize was that God had been preparing him during that time. Notice what God said to him: "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:6). What was God saying? *I am the God of ordinary men who have accomplished some extraordinary things. There is hope for you. I am not just the God of Abraham. I am not just the God of Isaac and Jacob. I am the God of Moses. I am calling you. I am giving you a second chance.*

God still uses ordinary people today. Even people who have made mistakes. Even people who have sinned. Maybe you are in a situation right now in which you can identify with Moses. Can I make a suggestion? Confess your sins to God. Deal with them and learn from your mistakes. And know this: God can still use you. He gives second chances. Maybe you need one today.

C. H. Spurgeon's Morning & Evening Devotional

"And his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."
--Exodus 17:12

So mighty was the prayer of Moses, that all depended upon it. The petitions of Moses discomfited the enemy more than the fighting of Joshua. Yet both were needed. No, in the soul's conflict, force and fervour, decision and devotion, valour and vehemence, must join their forces, and all will be well. You must wrestle with your sin, but the major part of the wrestling must be done alone in private with God. Prayer, like Moses', holds up the token of the covenant before the Lord. The rod was the emblem of God's working with Moses, the symbol of God's government in Israel. Learn, O pleading saint, to hold up the promise and the oath of God before Him. The Lord cannot deny His own declarations. Hold up the rod of promise, and have what you will.

Moses grew weary, and then his friends assisted him. When at any time your prayer flags, let faith support one hand, and let holy hope uplift the other, and prayer seating itself upon the stone of Israel, the rock of our salvation, will persevere and prevail. Beware of faintness in devotion; if Moses felt it, who can escape? It is far easier to fight with sin in public, than to pray against it in private. It is remarked that Joshua never grew weary in the fighting, but Moses did grow weary in the praying; the more spiritual an exercise, the more difficult it is for flesh and blood to maintain it. Let us cry, then, for special strength, and may the Spirit of God, who helpeth our infirmities, as He allowed help to Moses, enable us like him to continue with our hands steady "*until the going down of the sun;*" till the evening of life is over; till we shall come to the rising of a better sun in the land where prayer is swallowed up in praise.

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)