

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***  
*107 East Austin*  
*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*  
*830-997-8834    jthomas@fbgbible.org*

**C0604 – January 25, 2006 – Exodus 2 – God Raises A Deliverer Under Pharaoh’s  
Nose**

Last week we explored Exod 1 where God built a nation during oppression. The central idea of chapter 1 is that God is faithful to fulfill “His covenant promises in spite of severe and life-threatening opposition. Even Pharaoh, the most powerful man on earth could do nothing to thwart God's purpose. In fact, God actually used Pharaoh's opposition as a means of carrying out His promises.”<sup>i</sup> No one can destroy the Jews no matter what tactic they implement. The less prominent but important doctrines include:

1. The doctrine of anti-Semitism. Unbelievers and carnal believers may be anti-Semitic to a greater or lesser degree. Satan and the world are at enmity with Israel and the Jewish Messiah, Jesus. We have to always guard ourselves against anti-Semitism (Gen 12:3).
2. The doctrine of deception. Unbelievers and carnal believers can be satanically deceived and can be instruments in carrying out Satan’s plans (which include anti-Semitism). We must have sound biblical doctrine and speak it in love in order to avoid being deceived by his doctrines (Eph 4:14-15).
3. The doctrine of Satan. Man is made in God’s image and Satan loves to murder men because every man is an evidence of God (John 8:44). The NT says that if Christians hate a fellow brother then we are murderers (1 John 3:10b-15).
4. The doctrine of God’s omnipotence. Regardless of Satan’s destructive power it cannot compare to the King’s omnipotence. What He has promised He will accomplish (Num 14:35; Isa 46:11).
5. The doctrine of sin and salvation. Sinners enslaved to Satan do nothing but reap death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23).
6. The doctrine of obedience. The commandments of God always take precedence over the commandments of men (Acts 5:29).
7. The doctrine of blessing. Obeying God’s commandments always results in God’s blessing (John 14:21).

Remember that the first four chapters are preparatory for the nation of Israel and Moses. God is implanting in the heart of His people a desire to be delivered from bondage and

tonight we will see that God was preparing a man with the proper characteristics to serve as the “deliverer”. The ironic think about this chapter is that God raises a leader right underneath Pharaoh’s nose. You’ll want to recall that in chapter 1 Pharaoh was carrying out a satanically inspired strategy to destroy the Messiah at His birth (also cf Rev 12:4). And ironically, the “deliverer” whom Satan intended to murder was rescued by Pharaoh’s own daughter and raised in his own home for the first 40 years of his life. The chapter covers Moses life from his birth until 80 years of age, so that by the end of chapter 2 we will have covered 400 years.<sup>ii</sup>

## **B. God Raises a Leader Under Pharaoh’s Nose (2:1-25)**

- 1. Moses’ Birth and Rescue (2:1-10)**
- 2. Moses’ Attempt to Rescue His Brethren (2:11-15)**
- 3. Moses’ Life in Midian (2:16-22)**
- 4. God Remembers the Abrahamic Covenant (2:23-25)**

## **B. GOD RAISES A LEADER UNDER PHARAOH’S NOSE (2:1-25)**

### **1. MOSES’ BIRTH AND RESCUE (2:1-10)**

Verses 1-2 give the parents and tribe of Moses and the time between Moses’ conception until he was three months old, a period of approximately 1 year. Verses 1-10 describe the birth and rescue of Moses from the waters of the Nile.

<sup>1</sup> **Now a man from the house of Levi went and married the daughter of Levi.**

<sup>2</sup> **The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months.**

<sup>3</sup> **But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it and set *it* among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.**

<sup>4</sup> **His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.**

<sup>5</sup> **The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it *to her*.**

<sup>6</sup> **When she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, *the* boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."**

<sup>7</sup> **Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?"**

**<sup>8</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go ahead." So the girl went and called the child's mother.**

**<sup>9</sup> Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.**

**<sup>10</sup> The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."**

v. 1 begins by recounting the marriage of an ordinary man to an ordinary woman, both of the tribe of Levi, a marriage that results in the birth of Israel's redeemer.<sup>iii</sup> This is similar to the story of Mary and Joseph, an ordinary couple who lived in the little town of Nazareth through whom God brought the Redeemer of the world.

v. 2. The woman (Jochebed, cf Exod 6:20) conceived and bore a son. This was not her first child. She already had a daughter Miriam and a son, Aaron who will come into the story later (Num. 26:59; cf. 4:14; 15:2). Miriam was the oldest and Aaron was three years older than the son conceived in v. 2. So, she must have conceived just before or after Pharaoh issued the decree to his people to murder every Hebrew son by casting them alive into the Nile River (1:22).

When this son was born the mother saw that he was **beautiful**. This seems to be the main reason for her hiding him for three months (also cf Heb 11:23). The Hebrew word for **beautiful** is difficult.<sup>iv</sup> Stephen, in his speech in Acts 7 described him as "lovely in the sight of God" (Acts 7:20). The description means that he was "well-bred for fulfilling God's purposes" (BAGD). This son had the marks of a "deliverer". This will prove to be true in the following chapters. He turns out to be a man of "power in words and deeds" and a "ruler and deliverer and judge" of God's people (cf Acts 7:22, 35ff). So, because his mother recognized he was **well-bred** for fulfilling God's purposes she hid him for three months. The author of Hebrews said this was an act of faith on the part of Moses parents.

**Hebrews 11:23** By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

This verse only makes sense if one realizes that there was something special about the child that enabled the parents to know that this son had an important role to play in God's plan.

PRINCIPLE: Walk by Faith Not by Sight (2 Cor 5:7). The natural thing was to preserve their own lives from Pharaoh's judgment by tossing their son in the Nile. The supernatural thing was to trust God's word and respect the sanctity of human life (Gen 1:26-28) and to not slay innocent life (Gen 9:1, 5, 6).

PRINCIPLE: Obey God's Commandments when they Conflict with Men's Commandments (Acts 5:29). The king of Egypt said "murder baby boys". The King of the Universe said "do not destroy innocent life made in His image".

PRINCIPLE: Fear God not men (Ecc 12:13; 1 Pt 2:17). They did not fear the king of Egypt but the King of the Universe. The king of Egypt could punish them for disobeying his edict but they feared what God would do to them if they violated His principles.

v. 3. By the time her son was three months old his cries had become louder and could be heard through the walls of the house. Therefore **she could hide him no longer**. I'm sure many Hebrew women tried to hide their sons and when caught their sons were cast alive into the Nile. So, she had to do something. She got him a **wicker basket**. The actual words say she got him an "ark of bulrushes" (KJV). Bulrushes were a papyrus reed with three edges that could be weaved together. The word **basket** here is the same word used of Noah's ark (*tehvah*). So, she got a little ark for her son. In Noah's ark God delivered the human and animal kingdoms. In Moses ark God preserved one man who would deliver the nation of Israel. She covered the little ark with some kind of asphalt or mud from the Nile and then after it dried she covered it with tar in order to waterproof it. **Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile**. The words **she put the child into it** indicate anxiety on her part because she didn't know what would happen to her son whom she was already deeply attached to. The words **set it among the reeds** indicate the motherly tenderness used to place the little ark carrying her son in the Nile. "Ironically Jochebed, putting her son into the Nile, was in one sense obeying the Pharaoh's edict to 'throw' baby boys into the river! (Ex. 1:22)"<sup>v</sup>

PRINCIPLE: Parents Should Cast Their Children Wholly Upon God. God gives us children to take care of but we must give them back to God. As much as we would like to always keep watch over our children we are not always able to. Therefore, we must entrust our children to His care, casting them wholly upon Him. I always suggest doing this as soon as you discover you have conceived a child. Sit down with your wife and together let the Lord know that this is His child and that you will do all that is humanly possible to raise him/her in accordance with His word. However, casting our children wholly upon God does not mean lack of responsibility in the least because...

v. 4. Jochebed stationed her oldest daughter Miriam **at a distance to find out what would happen to him**. She was to watch over the situation and report back what happened. Would God answer their prayers for this baby boy? What they hoped for was God's intervention on the waters of the Nile.

v. 5. And sure enough, **the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile**. The Egyptians worshipped the Nile as a god and the royalty bathed in it because they believed it could impart fruitfulness and prolong their lives. Apparently, this arm of the Nile was not infested by crocodiles and so it was safe for the daughter of Pharaoh to bathe.<sup>vi</sup> This daughter is, of course, Hatshepsut, daughter of Thutmose I and the year is 1526BC. As **her maidens walked alongside the Nile...she saw the ark among the reeds**.

Apparently the little ark never made it out into the flow of the Nile. So, Hatshepsut **sent her maid and she brought** the little ark to her. Observe the many women involved in rescuing this son (his mother, his sister, Pharaoh's daughter, and one of the daughter's maidens). This is similar to all the women surrounding our Savior Jesus Christ's entrance into the world.

v. 6. **When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."** This verse reveals a woman's compassion. A crying baby irresistibly pulls on the heart of a woman. Her motherly instinct drives her to have pity on the crying baby and to console him. It would be heartless to pick him up and toss him in the river. So, here we have the first impressionable event in this child's life. This boy was looked upon with pity and delivered by a compassionate heart. Later he will look upon his people with pity and deliver them from bondage.

Who could have known that such a miracle would happen? This is an example of the victory of faith. The satanically inspired plan of Pharaoh to stop the 'deliverer' from being born was foiled by the parents' faith and now the parents have wholly cast their child upon God with the result that God miraculously turns an opportunity for murder into a case of deliverance in the compassionate arms of the Pharaoh's own daughter.

v. 7. If that were not enough, Miriam, the boy's sister saw the whole thing, and once seeing that all was ok she approached and **said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?"** There were no doubt many Hebrew women who had recently given birth and had lost their child to the Nile and could nurse this one. What a clever suggestion.

v. 8. **Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go."** Pharaoh's daughter liked the suggestion. So, the girl (from the perspective of Pharaoh's daughter this was just a girl) went with haste and called the boy's mother.

v. 9. The mother came and **Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.** Now the child is entrusted to its own mother's care by the daughter of the Pharaoh who sought to destroy his life. "So marvelous are the ways of God."<sup>vii</sup> The fact that Pharaoh's daughter wants him nursed on her behalf and that she is willing to pay for this service indicates that she lays complete claim to this son. This discovered son is now her son by adoption as verse 10 says. So the woman (this is just a Hebrew woman from Pharaoh's daughters' perspective) **takes the child and nurses him.** She had already been nursing him up until this day. She has probably only been apart from the child for a few hours. He probably didn't even miss a feeding! (A three-month old baby needs to nurse about every 2-3 hours). Jochebed has seen the miraculous hand of God. What seemed like a hopeless situation has now turned into a blessing.<sup>viii</sup> Now his very mother has the protection of Pharaoh's house over the life of her son. He can cry as loud as he wants and her son will be safe.

**PRINCIPLE:** Obeying God's Commandments Always Results in Divine Blessing. How could the parents have ever imagined how God would work this out? Yet that is what it means to walk by faith and obey God's commandments. The results are marvelous when we obey Him and entrust the results to Him and watch Him work things out for the good. But this does not mean sitting by and doing nothing! Jochebed stationed her daughter Miriam nearby and as such she played an intimate role in bringing God's purposes to pass. So, we always need to remember the principle that obeying God's commandments always results in divine blessing. Who could have imagined that the mother would not only get to nurse her son but also get paid for it and remain under the protection of Pharaoh's household!

v. 10. **The child grew** and was weaned. Hebrew mothers nurse their babies for three years. These first three years were crucial for this boy as his later life shows. Apparently his parents taught him Israel's history including the covenant promises of YHWH made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and how they came into bondage in Egypt.

**PRINCIPLE:** We should never underestimate the power of parental influence even in early life.

So, the son was brought to **Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son**, that is, she adopted him. Pharaoh's daughter then **named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water"**.<sup>ix</sup> The name Moses is significant for four reasons. *First*, **Moses** means "one who draws out". Since Pharaoh's daughter drew him out of water she named him Moses. His name reflects her act. *Second*, notice that the name **Moses** is similar to the Pharaohs names Ahmose, Thutmose, et. al. The Pharaoh's were considered divine and the Pharaoh's daughter must have considered this son a gift from the Nile-god. As such she gives him a divine name. *Third*, when **Moses** grew up he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

**Hebrews 11:24** By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

In essence **Moses** was refusing to be called "an Egyptian god". Instead of identifying with Egyptian royalty He identified with the Hebrew slaves. *Fourth*, the name has prophetic significance because this child who was "drawn out" of water would be the one who "drew out" his people from the Red Sea.<sup>x</sup>

## 2. MOSES ATTEMPT TO RESCUE HIS BRETHREN (2:11-15)

**<sup>11</sup> Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren.**

**<sup>12</sup> So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one *around*, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.**

**<sup>13</sup> He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?"**

**<sup>14</sup> But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known."**

**<sup>15</sup> When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.**

Moses was 40 years old at this time (Acts 7:23). Even though Moses was brought up in the Pharaoh's house he still remembered that he was a Hebrew and not an Egyptian. His parents were the first to give him his identity while he was home for the first three years

of his life. And so, being a mature man, he went out to **his brethren and looked on their hard labors. His brethren** were still under the Egyptian taskmasters hard labor (1:11).

Here is where we get our first glimpse at **Moses** character. He looked on his brethren the same way Pharaoh's daughter had looked upon him in the little ark. He felt compassion and pity for their heavy oppression coupled with a desire to relieve that oppression. He has the marks of the Savior. And **he saw an Egyptian** (taskmaster) **beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren**. He was not just a Hebrew slave to Moses but he was **one of his brethren**. Moses was identifying with his people. Moses faith had been latent for years but was being tested and was about to spring forth into action (Heb. 11:23-24).

PRINCIPLE: Faith Can Grow Stronger when Tested by an Ungodly Environment. I have been a Christian since I was eight years old. I was raised in a secure and good moral environment and my parents took me to church every Sunday and most Wednesdays. I had faith but it was weak because untested. When I went on the university campus and was rejected a recommendation to medical school because I was convinced that man came about by direct creation and not chance evolutionary processes my faith became much stronger. It became much stronger because the anti-Christian environment pushed me to learn about my faith and arm myself to defend it. Such was the case with Moses. His faith was being tested as he saw the oppression of his people. So, what did he do?

v. 12. **He looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.** There are some very important lessons here. You've got to remember that Moses was raised in the luxuries of the royal palace. He had all the riches of Egypt at his fingertips. He had been trained in all the learning of the Egyptians under the best professors for 40 years. He was so well educated that he became "a man of power in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22).<sup>xi</sup>

The question Moses had to answer for himself at this point was whether he was going to identify himself with Egypt or with Israel. Standing there watching one of his brethren get beaten he must have considered whether he could accomplish more for them as a high administrator in Egypt or as a servile Hebrew. Would he have to make a physical break with Egypt or not? Joseph and Daniel accomplished much as administrators in Egypt and Babylon respectively. What would Moses do? Moses looks **this way and that way, and when he saw there was no one around, he murdered an Egyptian and hid the body in the sand**. He chose to break with Egypt and identify himself with Israel. He kissed his royalty and education goodbye and chose to be a slave.



This act, although sinful, is the beginning of a pattern we see in Moses' character.

1. Moses demonstrates a desire for swift justice
2. Moses demonstrates a love for freedom
3. Moses demonstrates courage to rise up against tyrants
4. Moses demonstrates compassion for the oppressed
5. Moses demonstrates a desire to relieve the oppressed

What other person has these same characteristics? Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

PRINCIPLE: Mercy is Seeing the Afflicted and Desiring to Relieve Them

However, while his aim was admirable his methods were deplorable. He **looked this way and that** but he forgot to look up! In delivering his brother he murdered an Egyptian and put his own life in jeopardy. He took things into his own hands rather than putting them in God's hands. He resorted to brute force to save one Israelite. Moses would have to learn that God's plan must be fulfilled in God's time and in accordance with God's means which are spiritual and not carnal. Moses needed divine preparation and so God drove him into the desert of Midian. Moses had to learn how to trust in God's strategy and strength and obey God's commandments. After learning these lessons Moses would be prepared to follow God's strategy of delivering the whole nation of Israel, not just one Israelite.

PRINCIPLE: Young or Immature Christians Often Have Noble Desires but Have Yet to Learn How to Accomplish those Desires by Noble Means. I was one of those immature Christians who felt a call of God on my life at an early age. I had many people tell me I ought to go into "ministry". But having a call on your life is not enough. To be effective and to operate spiritually rather than carnally you have to undergo God's training. Moses was sent to Midian for forty years to get trained. While a carnal believer he could rescue one Israelite, with God's training he would become spiritual and rescue all Israel.

v. 13. **He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?"** This is the second time we see Moses character. Again, he desires swift justice. He desires the freedom of the oppressed. He demonstrates compassion toward the oppressed. He demonstrates courage to step in and do something. He has the character of the Savior.

v. 14. The offender replies **"Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"** The accused turns accuser.<sup>xii</sup> Moses

was not a prince or judge over the Hebrews at this time. It is ironic that eventually God made him a prince, a judge, and a deliverer.

**Acts 7:35** "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?' is the one whom God sent *to be* both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush.

**Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known."** So, Moses murder has been made known and this is his tip off that he better get out of town.

v. 15. **When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses.** Apparently, the Hebrew whom Moses protected told others. Word got around pretty fast about this Hebrew bully. The news continued to spread through the Hebrew camps and into the ranks of the Egyptian taskmasters on up to Pharaoh himself (Thutmose III). When Pharaoh heard of the matter, he tried to kill Moses in accordance with the Egyptian law of 'measure for measure, life for life'. The year was 1486BC, Moses was 40 years old (cf Acts 7:23).

Moses did not leave Egypt for fear of Pharaoh (Heb. 11:27). He left because of his faith in God.

**Hebrews 11:24-26** By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

Although Moses had the right to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he refused it. His name was a name of Egyptian deity and Moses refused to be a divine being. Instead he chose to endure the ill-treatment with his people. He considered being afflicted as Christ to be greater than all the riches of Egypt because he was looking for reward.

**PRINCIPLE:** Are You Banking on the Treasures of the World or are You Building up Rewards in Heaven?

**Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.** "The land of Midian lay to the east of the Sinai Peninsula and

probably flanked the Gulf of Aqabah on both sides. Moses ran a long way. The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through Keturah (Gen. 25:1-2).<sup>xiii</sup>

### 3. MOSES' LIFE IN MIDIAN (2:16-22)

This next section picks up on the day Moses sat down at the well and the events that transpired in the following 40 years as God trained him in the desert.

**<sup>16</sup> Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.**

**<sup>17</sup> Then the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock.**

**<sup>18</sup> When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "Why have you come *back* so soon today?"**

**<sup>19</sup> So they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and what is more, he even drew the water for us and watered the flock."**

**<sup>20</sup> He said to his daughters, "Where is he then? Why is it that you have left the man behind? Invite him to have something to eat."**

**<sup>21</sup> Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses.**

**<sup>22</sup> Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."**

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters is probably meant to tell us that he had no sons, only daughters. Since he had no sons his daughters had to go and **draw water and fill the troughs to water their father's flock** (sheep and goats). Moses was sitting at the well.

v. 17. About that time some shepherds arrived and, as was their usual custom, they drove the seven daughters away. They were aggressive, tyrannical men. Once again Moses is confronted with an oppressive situation and he just can't stop himself, he has to do something about it.

1. Moses demonstrates compassion for the weak
2. Moses demonstrates courage to rise up against tyrants
3. Moses demonstrates a desire to deliver the oppressed

Moses was a man of justice and mercy just like the Lord Jesus Christ. Then Moses watered their flock.

v. 18. The daughters apparently got home much earlier than usual. Thus, Reuel (friend of God) asks **"Why have you come *back* so soon today?"**

v. 19. His seven daughters explain that **an Egyptian delivered** them from the tyrannical shepherds. Although Moses was not **an Egyptian** they supposed him to be because of his clothing and his speech. They also saved time because Moses both **drew water and watered the flock**. Moses had served as their **deliverer** by running off the tyrants and doing all their work.

v. 20. Because of this kindness Reuel asked **"Where is he then? Why is it that you have left the man behind? Invite him to have something to eat."** A man of such high character should be thanked for his kindness and so his daughters went back to the well and invited Moses to come to their home and eat. Over the course of dinner Reuel apparently asked him to dwell with him.

v. 21. **Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses.** Moses accepted and then we are introduced to Moses wife, Zipporah ("bird"). I don't know why he married this woman. Spiritually she was an idiot. We find out later she had a terrible temper and no sympathy for the Hebrew religion. She probably met him and fell in love with his bravery at the well but after awhile when she saw that his deepest aims were for the deliverance of his people she probably considered him a gloomy fanatic who busied his mind with visionary schemes.<sup>xiv</sup>

v. 22. **Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."** Moses had two sons by Zipporah, the first here, he named **Gershom**, the second, later, Eliezer. **Gershom**<sup>xv</sup> means "to drive away, to banish" and is indicative of Moses situation. Moses named him this because it sounds like the verb for sojourn; *gur*. Since Moses was a sojourner he named him after his circumstances.<sup>xvi</sup> There is no doubt that this time of his life was one spent in loneliness and humiliation. But we require times of humiliation and loneliness to become fully dependent upon God and that is what will happen to Moses during the second 40 years of his life.

These three episodes in Exodus 2 record Moses rescue, his character, and training as the future deliverer of Israel. Throughout Moses demonstrates desire for justice, his love for

freedom, his compassion for the oppressed, and his courage to relieve the oppressed from tyrants. These characteristics are fully in line with his mission of deliverance and are closely akin to the character of Jesus Christ. It is therefore highly significant that the next chapter introduces the important words *salvation* and *deliverance*.

#### 4. God Remembers the Abrahamic Covenant (2:23-25)

Remember here that the events in Exod 1-4 are designed by God to prepare the nation and Moses. We've seen a lot about Moses tonight but these verses deal with the nation. We see here that the people are beginning to call upon God for deliverance.

**23 Now it came about in *the course of* those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of *their* bondage rose up to God.**

**24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**

**25 God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice *of them*.**

v. 23. The king who died here is Thutmose III, the king who tried to kill Moses. There was no longer any justifiable excuse for Moses to not go back to Egypt. The bondage that God permitted was so great that Israel began to **sigh** and **cry out** to God. The cries of the sons of Israel rise up to the throne room of God.<sup>xvii</sup>

v. 24. **So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** First, **God heard their groaning.** God hears our prayers. He even knows our prayers before we pray them. But His knowledge is not causative. He doesn't answer to His knowledge He answers human prayer. Second, **God remembered the Abrahamic Covenant.** It is not that God forgot it. He's omniscient. But He had not been tending to it because the Israelites had not been calling upon Him for deliverance. When they began to call upon Him **God** began tending to it again. Why? Because it is only the basis of **His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** that deliverance can take place. This covenant was first made with Abram (Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 13:14-17; 15:1-5, 17-21; 17:1-16; 18:18; 22:17-18), then to Isaac (Gen. 26:24), and finally to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15). The covenant was then confirmed to all 12 sons of Jacob, that is, the **sons of Israel**. It was not made to the Arab peoples.

PRINCIPLE: There is Enough Flexibility in God's Plan for God to Answer Prayer. God has conditioned some aspects of His plan on human prayer. If He did not then human

prayer is just a farce. When James said, “you do not have because you do not ask” he should have known that all was determined and that when we pray we are just doing what we have to do and therefore it is not really us doing it, in which case the verse makes no sense. Commands to pray become a farce because either we were determined to pray or not to pray, in which case it is not really us who is obeying or disobeying the command to pray! Answers to prayer become a farce too since God had already determined that course of action.

v. 25 **God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.** **God saw** doesn’t mean God didn’t know what was going on. God is omniscient. Rather, it means that God looked upon **the sons of Israel** as a father looks upon a son. Lastly, **God took notice of them**, meaning that God decided to intervene in the matter.

The verbs **to hear**, **to remember**, and **to see** occur a number of times in the “Book of Genesis to indicate the paternal relationship of God to his suffering, pain-racked creatures.”<sup>xviii</sup>

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| God remembered Noah and the beasts  | Gen. 8:1       |
| God remembered Abraham              | Gen. 19:29     |
| God saw Leah’s barrenness           | Gen. 29:31     |
| God remembered Rachel               | Gen. 30:22     |
| God saw Jacob’s suffering           | Gen. 31:12, 42 |
| God heard Hagar’s affliction        | Gen. 16:11     |
| God heard Ishmael                   | Gen. 21:17     |
| God saw and heard Leah’s affliction | Gen. 29:32-33  |
| God heard Rachel                    | Gen. 30:6      |
| God heard Rachel and Leah’s prayers | Gen. 30:17-22  |

These words occur in Exodus as well in relation to Israel’s bondage (cf. Exod. 3:7, 9; 4:31; 5:5)

## CONCLUSION

The central idea of chapter 2 is that “God raises leaders to accomplish His works”. God providentially brought into the world a beautiful child, one who had the marks of a deliverer. By the age of 40 his character was like that of the Savior. Yet that character had to be trained. Character alone is not enough and leadership is not reached overnight. It takes getting alone with God and being humbled. God took Moses to the deserts of

Midian to train him. Next week we will see that God answers the nations prayer by commissioning Moses and making him the kind of leader who could lead a nation from oppression. The less prominent but important doctrines include:

1. The Doctrine of Faith. We are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5:7). The world walks by sight attempting to predict every outcome but we are called to walk by faith in God's promises as Amram and Jochebed.
2. The Doctrine of Obedience. We are to obey God's commandments when they conflict with men's commandments (Acts 5:29).
3. The Doctrine of Divine Blessing. Obedience to God's commandments always results in divine blessing (John 14:21). When we obey him we can enjoy watching His marvelous work.
4. The Doctrine of Fear. We are to fear God not men (Ecc 12:13). When we fear men we compromise Christ and can be put under divine discipline.
5. The Doctrine of Child Dedication. Christian parents should cast their children wholly upon God.
6. The Doctrine of Parenting. We should never underestimate the power of parental influence even in early life.
7. The Doctrine of Faith. Our faith can grow stronger when tested by an ungodly environment.
8. The Doctrine of Mercy. We should show mercy to others. This means that when we see the afflicted we desire to relieve them.
9. The Doctrine of Spirituality. Young or immature Christians often have noble desires but have yet to learn how to accomplish those desires by noble means. We have to learn to wait on God's timing and God's methods.
10. The Doctrine of Rewards. Our life-direction should consider affliction leading to future reward as higher than treasures in this world (Heb 11:25-26). Though this comes with affliction it should take precedence over earthly pleasures.
11. The Doctrine of Prayer. There is enough flexibility in God's plan for Him to answer prayer and not alter the ultimate destination of His plan. God has conditioned some aspects of His plan on human prayer (Exod 3:7-9).

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<sup>i</sup> Gordon H. Johnston, "I Will Multiply Your Seed [Exodus 1]," *Exegesis and Exposition* 1:1 (Fall, 1986), 27.

<sup>ii</sup> In Lesson 1 of this series I said that the events in the Book of Exodus cover 430 years. Now I think that the events cover a period of 400 years. In the Masoretic Text Exod 12:40-41 indicates that the Israelites lived in Egypt for 430 years. However, if you see Lesson 2 you find that the bondage in Egypt was only 400 years. The 30 extra years can be accounted for by the fact that Jacob and his family roamed about in Canaan for 30 years before entering Egypt in 1845BC (see charts, argument and discussion in Lesson 2). The Samaritan Pentateuch and the LXX have Exod 12:40-41 reading that they "sojourned" in Canaan and Egypt for 430 years. Although usually these two texts are less reliable the evidence lies in their favor in this case.

<sup>iii</sup> U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of EXODUS* (Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, 1997), 17.

<sup>iv</sup> Some say it refers to his physical beauty, others say it means he was "healthy" rather than sickly, some think that she looked upon him and realized he played some important part in God's plan.

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- <sup>v</sup> Hannah, John D. "Exodus." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, p 109. Edited by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: Scripture Press Publications, Victor Books, 1985.
- <sup>vi</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Old Testament Bible History*, 97.
- <sup>vii</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Old Testament Bible History*, 98.
- <sup>viii</sup> Just think of all the scenarios that must have run through the parents minds when they laid him in the little ark in the Nile! The baby may not have been found and died of starvation. He could have been found and thrown in the river. The baby may have washed out in the current and eventually drowned. But no, he was found crying and the compassionate arms of Pharaoh's own daughter swept him up.
- <sup>ix</sup> However, the name *Mose* does not mean 'drawn out of water' but 'one who draws out'. The Hebrew word *Masuy* means "drawn out of water".
- <sup>x</sup> "This apart, the Bible possibly intends to indicate, by inference if not expressly, that this child was destined to be 'the deliverer [*mose*] of his people' (Isa. 63:11) from the sea of servitude. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of EXODUS* (Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, 1997), 21.
- <sup>xi</sup> We know that he was taught mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine and other sciences as well as theology, philosophy, and law. He had learned the advanced writing skills of hieroglyphics (pictorial languages are very complex and take a lifetime to master).
- <sup>xii</sup> U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of EXODUS* (Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, 1997).
- <sup>xiii</sup> Tom Constable, *Notes on Exodus* (<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf>)
- <sup>xiv</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Old Testament Bible History*, 100.
- <sup>xv</sup> The name **Gershom** is derived from the verb *garas* [in the Piel, meaning to 'drive away', 'to banish'].
- <sup>xvi</sup> Additionally, this name, or a derivative of it, was already a part of Moses family. Levi had named one of his sons *Gershon* (Gen. 46:11).
- <sup>xvii</sup> God refers to them as the **sons of Israel** which is their honored title and not their slave title. This looks forward to their deliverance.
- <sup>xviii</sup> U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of EXODUS* (Jerusalem, Israel: The Magnes Press, 1997), 29.

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