

## Baby Moses Miraculously Spared

### Exodus 2:1-10

December 6, 2023

In Genesis, God repeatedly revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob His purpose to multiply their descendants.

In Exodus 1, the king(s) of Egypt foolishly tried to oppose God's purpose

1. Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites (**1:8-12**)
2. Pharaoh ordered the midwives to secretly kill the Hebrew baby boys (**1:15-20**)
3. Pharaoh commanded all the people of Egypt to be involved in killing the Hebrew baby boys (**1:22**)

This escalation of evil against the Israelites is similar to the escalation of evil against the Jews in the Holocaust, though far less severe in its effects than the Holocaust

- *Goran Larsson*: "The gradual escalation in Nazi Germany from hate propaganda to trade boycott, the banning of Jews from certain occupations, the steps toward racial segregation, the open violence of *Kristallnacht*, the ghettos, the labor camps, and finally Auschwitz and the so-called final solution, are certainly unique in their ghastly dimensions. However, the basic pattern can be discerned in the tragic drama enacted three thousand years earlier."<sup>1</sup>

This escalation of evil at the hand of Pharaoh is the immediate context for our text

The wider context includes God's promise to Abraham, **Gen. 15:13-14** "Then the LORD said to Abram, 'Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.'"

In our text, God does not speak. He apparently has not spoken for over 300 years. Rather, He acts providentially to fulfill His promise.

*Question*: What is amazing about the event in Exodus 2:1-10?

### **Moses hidden (1-4)**

#### verse 1

- Amram and Jochebed (6:20)

#### verse 2

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<sup>1</sup> Larsson, in Philip Ryken, *Exodus*, 45.

By faith, Jochebed viewed Moses as a gift entrusted to her by God.

Jochebed defied Pharaoh's decree, hiding her son for three months

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

### verse 3

"basket"

1. Not the normal Hebrew word for basket
2. The only other passage is Genesis 6-7, where the word is used 28x and translated, "ark"
3. Jochebed made a small ark
4. NKJV "ark"

"bulrushes"

- Papyrus reeds, which grew abundantly on the banks of the Nile

"daubed it with bitumen and pitch"

- To seal water out

"placed it among the reeds by the river bank"

1. The reeds may have kept Moses from floating away
2. Probably intentionally in a place where Egyptian women were expected to come to the river, in hope that an Egyptian woman would have sympathy on the baby

### verse 4

- Miriam (15:20)

*Question:* What is indicated by the fact that Moses' mother put him in the basket in the river?

### **Moses found (5-9)**

#### verse 5

"to bathe at the river"

1. The Egyptians regarded the Nile as sacred
2. Possibly not only for physical cleansing, but ceremonial cleansing as well
3. This is almost certainly not what Amram and Jochebed expected
4. Yet in God's providence, the right person came to the right place at the right time

**verse 6**

“She took pity on him”

- Rather than submitting to her father’s evil plan

**verse 7**

- Courage

**vv 8-9**

Pharaoh’s daughter defied his orders

In God’s providence the princess did not ask Jochebed to come and be a nurse for Moses in the palace, but rather to take Moses and care for him in Jochebed’s home

We do not know how many years Jochebed took care of Moses. But it appears to have been long enough for Moses’ parents to effectively teach him about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

1. During this time Moses learned about his true identity as an Israelite, and the promises God had given to His people
2. Moses’ worldview was shaped by his parents’ teaching, which provided the basis for the faith he would later exercise
3. Because of this teaching Moses received, later God could meaningfully identify Himself to Moses at the burning bush with the words, **Ex. 3:6** “**I am the God of your father**, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

**Moses named (10)****verse 10**

Pharaoh’s daughter adopted Moses as her own son

*Question:* If you had been in Jochebed’s position, think of what may have made it very hard for you to bring your son to Pharaoh’s daughter. What would have enabled Jochebed to do this?

As the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, Moses would have been educated accordingly

1. **Acts 7:17-22**
2. Another part of God’s providential preparation of Moses for the task for which God had chosen Moses

Pharaoh's daughter sealed the adoption by naming the child, Moses

1. She chose the name intentionally
2. ESV footnote
3. Moses was drawn out of the water which Pharaoh intended as an instrument of death

### **Conclusion**

In this text, God overrules and thwarts Pharaoh's purposes

Not only does God spare one of the baby boys, He spares the one through whom He will bring judgment on Egypt and will deliver all the Israelites

God spares him in a most remarkable way

*Peter Enns*: "Pharaoh wishes to counter God's plan by casting infants *into* the Nile. God saves Moses by casting him *onto* the Nile and bringing him to Pharaoh's front door."<sup>2</sup>

The plan of Moses' parents to rescue him from Pharaoh's decree unexpectedly results in Moses being raised in Pharaoh's palace

*John Durham*: Moses "is spared by being cast on the very Nile that was to drown him, is treated with maternal kindness by the daughter of the very king who had condemned him and to whose descendants he would become a nemesis, and is assigned as a responsibility with pay to the one woman in all the world who most wanted the best for him, his own mother." Who else but God could bring this about?<sup>3</sup>

All this occurred in God's providence, as God was unfolding His great plan for saving the Israelites through the deliverer He was preparing.

This future divine salvation through Moses would prefigure the greater divine salvation through the greater Savior, who also would be miraculously preserved shortly after birth from the decree of an evil ruler seeking to put Him to death!

### Application

1. We serve a sovereign God whose purposes cannot be thwarted (Job 42:2)
2. He is an all-wise God whose ways are higher than our ways, and whose thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isa 55:8-9)
3. Unlike God, we only see part of the picture
4. It is for us to trust and hope in the Lord, and to act on such trust and hope

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<sup>2</sup> Enns, *Exodus*, 71.

<sup>3</sup> In Ryken, 46.