

EXODUS: The Person, Promise, and Power of God

Exodus 2: The Birth of a Savior

The Promise as Background to the Exodus:

In Genesis 12, 15, and 17 God made a promise to Abraham and sealed that promise in a covenant. There were three key components to God's promise:

1. The promise of a _____ – Abraham would become a great nation.
2. The promise of a _____ – Abraham's family would inherit the land of Canaan.
3. The promise of a "_____" – a Savior will defeat Satan, just as God promised even further back in history (Genesis 3:15). Thru this "seed", God promises to bless all nations, by fulfilling all his purposes through Abraham's family.

As we approach chapter 2 in Exodus, one facet of that promise has been clearly fulfilled. Another seems farther away than ever before. And it would have been nearly impossible for God's people to envision the third becoming a reality, given their current condition.

The Progression of Egyptian Oppression of the Hebrews:

"... they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens ..." (1:11)

"... they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves ..." (1:13)

"When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." (1:16)

"Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile ..."

The Greatest Redemptive Event in the Old Testament Begins:

¹³ Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? ¹⁴ You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples. ¹⁵ You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah ¹⁶ When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled. ¹⁷ The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side. ¹⁸ The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook. ¹⁹ Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen. ²⁰ You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (Psalm 77:13-20)

²² Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, ²³ and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me."' (Exodus 4:22-23a)

When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. (Hosea 11:1)

And It Foreshadows the Greatest Redemptive Event in History:

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." (Matthew 2:13-15)

The Providence of God and the Birth of a Hero

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. 2 The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. 3 When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. 4 And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. 5 Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. 6 When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. 9 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. 10 When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water." (Exodus 2:1-10)

The pharaoh of Egypt orders genocide against the Hebrews, but two heroic midwives, Shiprah and Puah, feared God more than any man, and so intervene. God uses them to change history. (Exodus 1:15-21).

Then there was the resolute Jochebed, Moses' mother, who loved her baby and recognized something special about him. She could not even think of throwing him into the river, or allowing anybody else to do it (2:2).

And what of faithful, resources Miriam, who was looking out for her brother from birth?

Finally, there was Pharaoh's daughter herself, who was much more than a 'minor miracle'. Out of the core of the genocidal royal family came this precious person, a tender-hearted princess. Her father could, apparently without pity, consign 'sons' to the Nile and 'daughters' to slavery, but his own daughter had not inherited his personality.¹

Tim Chester summarizes this amazing confluence of personalities and events:

"... behind all of this, we are meant to see the providential hand of God. It is a remarkable sequence of events: the coincidences of Pharaoh's daughter coming, the pitiful cries of the baby, the provision of a wet-nurse. And it leads to a remarkable scenario: Moses being cared for by his mother and her being paid to do so. This means that Moses is raised a Hebrew with the privileges of Egypt. In Acts 7:22, the early Christian (and first martyr) Stephen says that Moses "was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action". Moses is saved from Pharaoh to live in his court, and one day he will defeat him, rescuing God's people."²

Note God's providence (What God, in His sovereignty, "sees to"):

Over every _____, great and small ...

Over every _____, including the pagans ...

Over every part of _____ ...

Over every _____ made ...

Over _____ and _____ ...

¹ Alec Motyer, *The Message of Exodus: The Days of Our Pilgrimage*, 30.

² Tim Chester, *Exodus for You*, 14.

The Defiance of Moses:

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. ¹² He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

¹³ When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?"

¹⁴ He answered, "Who made you a prince and a 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."

¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. (Exodus 2:11-15a)

We know *what* Moses did. It's fairly explicit in the text. But the Exodus account doesn't tell us all the reasons *why* he did it. Obviously, he was empathetic to the suffering of his people and even enraged at what he saw. One might rightly call this a "crime of passion". But there's more. That Moses was willing to act so decisively and in a manner that was so costly did not spring up out of nowhere.

Consider Acts 7:22-25:

²² And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

²³ "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. ²⁴ And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.

²⁵ He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.

Moses already saw it as his calling to be a _____ for his people. This was his first act. But Moses would have to learn an essential lesson ...

Also consider Hebrews 11:24-26:

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses knew Egypt was not his _____.

Moses knew that Egyptian was not his _____.

Moses knew that a life of pleasure was not his _____.

Moses knew that only God was to be _____.

But now Moses has two major problems:

- 1) He has become an _____ of Egypt – he is a _____.
- 2) The Hebrews do not respect him as a leader but instead hold in _____.

Moses' violent act would lead to a 40-year exile.

The Flight of Moses:

But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well ... ¹⁶ Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷ The shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and saved them, and watered their flock. ¹⁸ When they came home to their father Reuel, he said, "How is it that you have come home so soon today?"

¹⁹ They said, "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and even drew water for us and watered the flock."

²⁰ He said to his daughters, "Then where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread."

²¹ And Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. ²² She gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land." (Exodus 2:15b-22)

Moses had to learn that salvation does not come thru _____. His rash act had likely delayed their deliverance by an entire _____.

Moses' problem was never _____. But it was _____.

Now, assigned the wilderness, he must learn to live by _____. He will have to become _____ so that God can become _____.

Already, Moses clearly recognizes one thing: "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land"

Some personal application:

Notice some ways **God matured Moses** over these 40 years:

- 1) He _____ him ...
- 2) He got _____ ...
- 3) He became a _____ ...
- 4) He had to _____ ...

Meanwhile ...The Unfathomable Grace of God:

²³ During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. ²⁴ And **God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.**

²⁵ **God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.** (Exodus 2:23-25)

The people cried out to God ...

And God heard, remembered, saw, knew ...

Why would God deliver them?