

# Exodus 2 Commentary

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Summary Chart of The Book of Exodus									
DELIVERANCE FROM OPPRESSION						PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP			
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Moses and Burdens of Israel		Pharaoh and Plagues Upon Egypt		Red Sea Deliverance	Wilderness Provision	Sinai Instructions			
Bondage and Oppression				Deliverance and Provision		Law Pattern and Construction			
Israel in Egypt Ex 1:1-13:16				Israel to Sinai Ex 13:17-18:27		Israel at Sinai Ex 19:1-40:38			
God's People Enduring Bondage				God's Grace Revealed in Redemption		God's Glory Manifested in Worship			
Egypt 430 Years (15% of Exodus)				Wilderness 2 Months (30% of Exodus)		Mt Sinai 10 Months (55% of Exodus)			
From Groaning									To Glory!

- [Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament](#) - online

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GENESIS	EXODUS
human effort and failure	divine power and triumph
word of promise	work of fulfillment
a people chosen	a people called
God's electing mercy	God's electing manner
revelation of nationality	realization of nationality

SUMMARY OF THE PENTATEUCH  
(from Believer's Study Bible)

**Exodus 2:1 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi.**

- **from the house** - Ex 6:16-20 Nu 26:59 1Chr 6:1-3 23:12-14
- Exodus 2 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Source: [Ryrie Study Bible](#)

## GOD PREPARES THE PARENTS

**Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi-** We learn in Ex 6:20 that Moses' parents were named Amram and Jochebed (Amram's aunt) and that they had two sons Moses and Aaron (3 years older than Moses - Ex 7:7) and one daughter, Miriam (Ex 15:20). While the text does not give us the details, the writer of Hebrews makes it clear that both of these parents remained true to the God of Israel in the midst of a pagan culture. Their subsequent actions with Moses clearly indicate that they trusted God in some way to preserve Moses' life. The text is silent on how the life of Aaron was preserved, which it obviously was. The writer of Hebrews says "**By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because**

they saw he was a beautiful ([asteios](#)) child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict" (Heb 11:23<sup>+</sup>) They were not afraid of the king's edict because they had a healthy, holy, reverential fear of God.

**THOUGHT** - Note Moses' parents were not afraid. The antonym of and antidote for **fear** is **faith** (see related study on [Fear, How to Handle It](#)) The Greek word for "**not**" is "ouk" signifying they were **absolutely not** afraid! Why not? They were parents of faith. They feared God which is the greatest weapon against the fear of man, for he who fears God, fears nothing else! Or as **Spurgeon** phrased it fear of God "is a blessed fear which drives us to trust (for)...unregenerate fear drives from God (and), gracious fear drives to Him." And in light of his God fearing parent's faith, we are not surprised that the "apple" did not fall far from the tree (so to speak) as we see Moses exercise a similar faith in Hebrews 11:27<sup>+</sup>.

As the proverb says "**The fear of man brings a snare ([moqesh](#)) , But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.**" (Pr 29:25) Amram and Jochebed trusted in Jehovah! And they were exalted to the Hebrews "Hall of Faith" in chapter 11. It will be a joy to talk with them in the future about their experience!

**Getz** makes a good point that the parent of Moses and Aaron "grew up in a pagan and wicked environment—not only among the Egyptians but among their kinfolk. After living in Egypt for more than four hundred years and watching the Egyptians worship their heathen deities and engage in evil practices, most of the children of Israel became like their pagan counterparts. This evil influence lingered on for years to come. This is why Joshua, even after they had settled in the land of Canaan, charged Israel to "fear the Lord" and to "throw away the gods" their "forefathers worshiped ... in Egypt" (Josh. 24:14). The sinful practices these people had learned in this pagan culture were so entrenched in their hearts and minds that they appeared years later in their children. Remember, too, that this kind of idolatry and immorality took place even after God had appeared to Israel at Mt. Sinai and had revealed His divine Laws."

**Keil and Delitzsch** - "Whilst Pharaoh was urging forward the extermination of the Israelites, God was preparing their emancipator."

**Hannah** has a note related to dating these event - "Assuming that the Exodus occurred in 1446 BC (ED: SOME REFERENCE USE 1445) and since Moses was 80 years old at that time (Ex 7:7), he was born in 1526 b.c. at the beginning of the reign of [Thutmose I](#) (1526-1512) or at the end of [Amenhotep I](#)'s reign (1545-1526). (BKC)

#### Related Resource:

- [Who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus?](#)

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#### Rod Mattoon - A look at Moses' life presents a series of striking contrasts.

- Moses was the child of a slave and the son of a queen.
- He was born in a hut, and lived in a palace.
- He inherited poverty, yet, enjoyed unlimited wealth.
- Moses was the leader of armies, yet a keeper of flocks.
- This man was the mightiest of warriors and the meekest of men.
- He was educated in the court of the king and dwelt in the desert.
- Moses had the wisdom of Egypt and the faith of a child.
- He was fitted for the city but wandered in the wilderness.
- This man was tempted with the pleasures of sin and he endured the hardships of virtue.
- Moses was backward in speech, yet talked with God.
- He was a fugitive from Pharaoh and an ambassador of Heaven.
- Moses was the giver of the law and the forerunner of grace.

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

**The woman conceived and bore a son** - Children are a gift from the LORD (Ps 127:3) and the sovereign God gave Jochebed a son, not a daughter.

**And when she saw that he was beautiful - He was beautiful** = lovely in the sight of God (Acts 7:20<sup>+</sup>) = a beautiful child (Heb 11:23<sup>+</sup>). As noted above they did this because they trusted God not man. Man's edict was evil and they took the approach of Peter and the apostles in Acts 5:29<sup>+</sup> who declared "We must obey God rather than men."

**THOUGHT** - One act of faith by God-fearing, God-trusting parents! While they may have had an "inkling" that

their son was destined for some divine duty ("he was beautiful" Ex 2:2, Acts 7:20), they could not have fully comprehended the bountiful fruit the sowing of their seeds of faith would one day bring forth for the entire nation of Israel (ISRAEL'S EXODUS WOULD HAVE BEEN SOME 80 YEARS LATER AND LIKELY MOSES PARENTS NEVER LIVED TO SEE THE EFFECT OF THEIR ONE DECISION WHICH HAD GLOBAL AND ETERNAL IMPACT!)! Oh, how we all need to be reminded of the importance of remaining faithful in our daily lives. Only time will reveal what to us at the moment may have seemed like such a small act of faithful obedience and yet what God used to bring forth a bountiful harvest of righteousness. (cp Mt 25:21, 23, 38, 39). God give us all the grace to persevere in faithful obedience moment by moment, day by day, until our last breath opens the way into your glorious Presence. Amen. We may never know what eternal blessings will flow from our choice to obey God by faith. But His blessings flow through such choices. (Play [Steve Green's great ballad on faithfulness](#) and make it your prayer today!)

**She hid him for three months** - Note that God uses women to bless Moses and He uses women in our lives as men to bless us. In this case God used the faith of Jochebed (Heb 11:23 - this of course implies Moses' father Amram was also faithful) and the pity of Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:4, 7-8). Later God used his wife Zipporah (Ex 2:21-11, Ex 4:24-26) to deliver Moses from death. Finally used his sister Miriam to assist in worship of God after He had delivered the Hebrews (Ex 15:20-21).

**Spurgeon** - Their (MOSES' PARENTS) faith made them hide him, for that faith laid hold of God, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. Faith makes a person wise. It is one of the notable points about faith that it is **sanctified common sense**. That is not at all a bad definition of faith. It is not fanaticism; it is not absurdity. **It is making God the grandest asset in our account, and then reckoning according to the soundest logic. It is not putting my hands into boiling water with the impression that it will not scald me; it is not doing foolish and absurd things. Faith is believing in God and acting toward God as we ought to do.** It is treating Him, not as a [cipher](#), but as a grand overtopping numeral in all our additions and subtractions. It is realizing God—that is what it is. And in that sense, faith is the truest reason, spiritualized and lifted up out of the ordinary sphere in which godless men choose to indulge in it. **It is sanctified reason, enlightened from on high.** ([The Hiding of Moses by Faith](#))

**THOUGHT** - How can we apply the lessons from this godly example of faith?

(1) **Do not fear** the Pharaoh's in your life (cp Pr 29:25, Mt 10:28+, Ps 25:15+).

(2) **Entrust** your children into God's watch care! And for all of you who were born into "Moses-like" godly homes where both parents were believers (I was not so blessed), let your praise and thanksgiving for such a wonderful gift continually resound to the Giver of all good gifts! (Jas 1:17+)

Luke gives us the background story writing

"But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, 18 until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER EGYPT WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT JOSEPH. 19 "It was he who took shrewd advantage of our race and mistreated our fathers so that they would expose their infants and they would not survive (REFERRING TO THE THIRD ["POGROM"](#) TO DECREASE THE NUMBER OF HEBREWS). 20 "It was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of God, and he was nurtured three months in his father's home." (Acts 7:17-20+)

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**ILLUSTRATION** - We all have to make choices in life, and often those choices result in significant consequences. In 1920, the management of the Boston Red Sox made the bad choice to sell Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees. After joining the Yankees, in 10 out of the next 12 seasons Ruth hit more home runs than the entire Red Sox team! Boston had not won a World Series since 1918, when Ruth was on the team, until this week! In 1938, Joe Schuster and Jerry Siegel sold all their rights for a comic book character that they had invented for \$130. The character's name? Superman! In 1955, Sam Phillips sold to RCA Victor Records his exclusive contract with a young singer named Elvis Presley, thus forfeiting royalties on more than a billion records (Reader's Digest [7/85], p. 173). Bad choices! Our text tells us about two good choices that greatly affected world history. The first choice was relatively routine at the time. Two slaves in ancient Egypt chose to defy the king's edict to kill all male Hebrew babies by hiding their son. That son turned out to be Moses, the great deliverer of his people. The second choice was that of Moses himself, and it was more difficult. He chose to give up his position of influence and wealth in the Egyptian court in order to side with the enslaved people of God. ([Faith's Choice](#))

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**Rod Mattoon** - Moses did not come from the most popular or prominent tribe of Israel. The prominent tribes of the Israelites at this time were such tribes as Reuben, Judah, Joseph, and Benjamin. However, littleness or obscurity is not a hindrance to being used of God. Gideon complained that he was the least in his father's house (Judges 6:15), but that did not stop God from using him. David

was the last of eight sons and was considered so insignificant that he was not even called to the meeting when Samuel came to look for a king among David's brothers. That which keeps us from effectively serving God is not our lack of fame, but our lack of faith. Beloved, if God wants us to be known, He will take care of it in a very effective way.

Joshua 3:7KJV - And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

Psalms 75:6KJV -. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. [7] But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

Our concern as Christians and servants of the Lord is to be about our faith in the Lord and not our fame among men. Take care of the faith part and God will take care of the fame part. God often causes obscure folk to be mighty in His service in order that He might better get the glory.

When we look at the parents of Moses, we find they were going hand-in-hand together in faith. We should too! Jesus should be first in your home. They faced their problems head-on by faith. They overcame their fear of the king and trusted in God's protection and preservation of their child. We too, are to confront our problems by faith. Their lives demonstrated characteristics of genuine faith. In fact, faith does a number of things.

#### **A. Faith Sees**

They saw a proper child. Those who have faith see what others do not. When Jehoshaphat was being attacked by multitudes of Moabites, and Ammonites, matters looked helpless, but Jehoshaphat depended upon the Lord. He realized that God was working behind the scenes.

2 Chronicles 20:12KJV -... O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

Faith sees the Lord and focuses upon Him. This is the challenge of Scripture.

Hebrews 12:2KJV -Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 11:1KJV -Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

#### **B. Faith Acts**

They acted to save Moses' life. They were convinced God had a special purpose for him. Faith produces courage and confidence to swallow up our fears. How? We do this by focusing our lives on the Lord. Moses' parents took an ark of bulrushes or papyrus plants to save Moses' life. Why were they doing this now after three months? Babies cry and it would be difficult to conceal Moses as he grew.

The Egyptians used these papyrus plants to make very light and swift boats. It had a triangular stalk about the thickness of a finger, which grew to the height of ten feet; and from this, the lighter Nile boats were made. The peeling of the plant was used for sails, mattresses, mats, sandals, and other articles, but chiefly for the preparation of paper. They daubed the ark of the bulrushes with slime and pitch. The "slime" is probably the mud, of which bricks were usually made in Egypt, and which in this case was used to bind the stalks of the papyrus into a compact mass, and perhaps also to make the surface of the ark smooth for the infant. The pitch was bitumen, a tar-like substance that would waterproof the ark. This same material was used to embalm the dead and now was used to protect and spare the life of a baby.

#### **C. Faith Risks**

Moses was put among the reeds or flags in the shallow waters of the Nile River. The word "flags" is translated from a word which refers to a smaller species of papyrus. This was a smart place to place the ark, for the "flags" would protect the ark from drifting down stream with the current. The current is mild in these reeds and they would offer protection and keep it stationary. The brink of the river was the lip of the river.

Hold the phone for a minute here! Think about this plan. What has been happening at the river? Babies have been drowned by the people. This baby was taken to the last spot which carnal reasoning would have suggested. The place of death becomes the place of life, deliverance, and freedom. Pharaoh's command was to put the boy babies in the river and technically, the mother of Moses did this.

Beloved, we have eternal life because someone died for us. At the cross, the place of death, there is life, deliverance, and freedom from the bondage of sin when we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though Moses was brought to the place of death, he was secure in the ark. The word "ark" is the same word for Noah's ark. It is a picture of Christ. We are secure in the Lord Jesus

Christ.

John 6:37-All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

**Exodus 2:3 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.**

- **But when she could hide him no longer** - Ex 1:22 Mt 2:13,16 Ac 7:19
- **she got him a wicker basket** - Isa 18:2
- **covered it over with tar and pitch** - Ge 6:14 11:3 14:10



MOSES DISCOVERED

### **JOCHEBED OBEYS ORDER TO CAST SON INTO NILE!**

How ironic that she obeyed the pharaoh's edict, but added a touch of her own! There is no record that pharaoh had prohibited Jochebed's method of child disposal! As explained below the actions of these godly parents in the midst of the crooked and perverse generation (Egyptian idolatry which was even corrupting the hearts of many of the sons of Israel) was an act of faith. They prove once again that genuine faith is an action word. It is not passively sitting around doing nothing! " By faith these parents displayed great courage and boldness which enabled them to overcome the fear of man, even when it meant the certain death of their son and themselves. We learn from these parents that real faith operates in spite of adversity....Was it Moses' beauty that caused the parents to hide him? I think not, but it was their faith in the living God that caused them to do this mighty act. Amram and Jochebed were true believers and knew of God's promises and predictions that Israel would be delivered out of Egypt. (Read Ge 15:13-14, Ge 50:24) They believed that the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning the promised land would come to pass." ([Jack Arnold](#))

**But when she could hide him no longer** - The text does not tell us why Jochebed could no longer hide Moses. It is possible that the cries of 3 month old Moses were loud enough to attract attention of the infant killers among the Egyptians.

As alluded to above the parents are listed in Hebrews 11 "Hall of Faith," so clearly they trusted God which led them to hide him, an act which could have put their lives in jeopardy. Hebrews 11:23<sup>+</sup> says "**By faith (pistis)** 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 was not Moses' faith but the faith of his parents. And although Exodus 2:3 describes the acts of Moses' mother, the Hebrews passage indicates it was the faith of both parents

**Jack Arnold** comments on Moses' parents in Hebrews 11:23 - They may be obscure people to you and me but they are precious saints in the sight of God, for He thought enough of them to put them in the believer's hall of fame. **Amram and Jochebed** were the parents of Moses. ....Amram and Jochebed were common folks but they were mightily used of God to accomplish His purposes. They are an example of persevering faith in God, which gives one great courage and causes him to do what he would not normally do. Persevering faith is courageous in suffering, hardships and tribulations so that one accomplishes things that seem humanly impossible. They believed that the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning the promised land would come to pass. While the record does not state specifically, it could well be that Amram and Jochebed were given a direct revelation from God that Moses had a special destiny among the people of God. Whatever the means, Moses' parents knew that Moses was "lovely unto God" (Acts 7:20) and that he had a special place in God's program. The point of significance is that it was not primarily because of his external beauty or their natural affections towards Moses that his parents hid him, but it was because of their faith -- they believed God! They trusted God for a humanly impossible situation and God supernaturally took

care of the situation. Notice carefully that Amram and Jochebed exercised faith and acted because true faith always acts. Faith is not sitting around twiddling our thumbs waiting for something to happen. In fact, that kind of a concept of faith is fatalism. Faith works, faith acts, and faith is doing something now, for faith is acting upon the promises of God now! It took great faith for Jochebed to put her child in the little ark in the high grass at the bank of the river. She was believing God but she also probably knew that Pharaoh's daughter came regularly to that area to bathe and she was believing God for a supernatural intervention, even though humanly it seemed as though Moses would be put to death. ([Sermon](#))

**Spurgeon on by faith of Amram and Jochebed** the names of Moses' parents who believed God's promises to Abraham - The stress in these passages of sacred biography should be laid upon the words "by faith." The mighty deeds of heroes and the obedient acts of pilgrim fathers are only told to us because they spring out of faith. It is to commend the root that the fruits are mentioned. The children are named one by one that the mother may have the praise, for faith is the mother of all virtues. The Lord is not praising the natural affection, but the supernatural faith. A very strong current is seen when nature and faith both set the same way, yet it is not nature but faith that bears the sway. Sometimes faith has to go against nature, as in the case of Abraham when he was bidden to offer up his son (Heb 11:17), and then faith wins the victory. Here, though faith and nature ran together and so made the current stronger, still the text does not say, "**By the force of nature, by the natural love of parents for their child, Moses was hidden for three months.**" No, but they did it "**by faith.**" Both the parents of Moses believed, and both acted by faith in disobeying the cruel order of the king. If they had not agreed about it, I do not see how Moses could have been concealed. But they both went together in the hiding of the child, and how well it will be if we all go together in the endeavor to bring our children to Christ. If our prayers are united, if our example is one, if our teaching is never contradictory, if both parents are with like earnestness seeking the salvation of their little ones, we may rest assured the promise will be kept, "Train the child concerning his way; even when he is old, he will not stray from it" (Prov 22:6). ([The Hiding of Moses by Faith](#))

**THOUGHT - Faith** is *believing* that God will keep His promises, *despite* circumstances that seem to be to the contrary! May the faith of these godly OT couple encourage all parents that they can still train up their children to be friends and servants of God even in the darkest of days (even as we see America, "one nation **under** God", in effect becoming "one nation" that is no longer **under** God but **under** the rule of rebellious, God-rejecting men!)

**She got him a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch** - The term for **basket** ([tebah](#)) "is used elsewhere only to refer to the ark of Noah. It may be connected to the Egyptian word for "chest."" This recalls God's order to Noah in Ge 6:14 "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with **pitch**" ([koper](#))."

**Wiersbe** comments that "Jochebed obeyed the letter of the law when she put Moses in the waters of the Nile, but certainly she was defying Pharaoh's orders in the way she did it."

**John Phillips** has an interesting suggestion on why they hid Moses in a basket - How does God save a person condemned to death? they asked themselves. Then they thought of Noah and his ark. "We will do that!" they said. "We will make a little ark. We'll put Moses in the river, as commanded by Pharaoh, but we'll put him in the ark first. We'll put the ark between him and the waters of death, and we'll trust God to do for Moses what He did for Noah." (Exploring Hebrews)

**Basket** ([08392](#))([tebah](#)) is a box like structure which is used in only two settings in the OT - a "big box" referring to Noah's Ark (26 times) and a little basket (2 times). In both situations the occupants were in danger of dying (God's judgment in the flood and Pharaoh's decree to kill the male infants) and in both situations the occupants were rescued from the water. So in both "divine rescues" the result was not just salvation for Noah and Moses, but respectfully the salvation and perpetuation of the human race and the deliverance of the Chose People. (See [Epic of Gilgamesh](#) which is a secular writing that parallels the Biblical account of the flood). Ronald Youngblood adds that "Noah's ark as a symbol of salvation is compared to the ordinance of baptism in 1 Peter 3:20<sup>f</sup>, and as a symbol of God's protection from external evil, it was frequently sketched by the early Christians on the walls of the catacombs under the streets of ancient Rome." (TWOT)

**Tebah** - ark(26), basket(2). - Gen. 6:14; Gen. 6:15; Gen. 6:16; Gen. 6:18; Gen. 6:19; Gen. 7:1; Gen. 7:7; Gen. 7:9; Gen. 7:13; Gen. 7:15; Gen. 7:17; Gen. 7:18; Gen. 7:23; Gen. 8:1; Gen. 8:4; Gen. 8:6; Gen. 8:9; Gen. 8:10; Gen. 8:13; Gen. 8:16; Gen. 8:19; Gen. 9:10; Gen. 9:18; Exod. 2:3; Exod. 2:5

**Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile** - Bush writes that Jochebed's attention to detail is a "beautiful illustration of the connection which should always exist between the diligent use of means and a pious trust in providence. Instead of sitting down in sullen despair, or passive dependence on divine interposition to do all the work, everything is



done which can be done by human agency" (Bush, *Exodus* 1:25).

Expositor's Bible Commentary, The - The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 2: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers.

**Jack Arnold** rightly observes that "This is a beautiful picture of God's sovereignty and human responsibility working side by side. Jochebed was expecting a supernatural intervention but she sent Miriam, Moses' sister, to see how it would all turn out and perhaps do something about the situation." ([Sermon](#))

#### Exodus 2:4 His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

- Ex 15:20 Nu 12:1-15 20:1 26:59 Mic 6:4

**His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him-** Moses' sister Miriam (Ex 15:20) was watching. Undoubtedly the mother had planned this detail also.

**Wiersbe** "The phrase "as weak as a baby" doesn't apply in the kingdom of God; for when the Lord wants to accomplish a mighty work, He often starts by sending a baby. This was true when He sent Isaac, Joseph, Samuel, John the Baptist, and especially Jesus. God can use the weakest things to defeat the mightiest enemies [1Co 1:25, 26, 27, 28, 29]. A baby's tears were God's first weapons in His war against Egypt.

**Rod Mattoon** - Miriam watched what would happen to the ark, standing at a distance so she would not be noticed or create suspicion. The Nile was regarded as sacred, and its water as health-giving and fructifying. The daughter of the king himself came to bathe at the river and the little ark was noticed by the princess. It is possible that the bathing habits of the princess were known, but even if this is true, God was still working behind the scenes on their behalf. He does this for you too!

Jeremiah 10:23KJV -O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

We are not able to completely plan our own course. Life is full of surprises and unexpected events that leave us out of control.

Romans 8:28KJV -And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The princess was in the right place at the right time and responded the right way toward baby Moses. The tears of Moses melted her heart and she had compassion upon him. The blessing of God was upon this little baby's life. **The princess defied her father's edict to kill the Hebrew baby boy**, and took the child for herself into the palace of the Pharaoh. **God was getting the last laugh with this tyrant king.**

#### Exodus 2:5 Then 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.

- **daughter of Pharaoh** - Ac 7:21
- **and she saw** - 1Ki 17:6 Ps 9:9 12:5 46:1 76:10 Pr 21:1 Jon 1:17 2:10

### GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL MEETING WITH DAUGHTER OF PHARAOH

The Greek word for **providence** ([pronoia](#)) is found only once in the Bible, a usage which refers to human providence (Acts 24:2), and yet **Divine Providence** permeates the pages of Holy Writ from Genesis to Revelation! God's gracious oversight of the universe. Indeed a healthy understanding of God's providence should produce praise from His people, for as **John Piper** rightly said "In all the setbacks of your life as a believer, God is plotting for your joy." This great truth ought to cause all of God's children to shout "Hallelujah! Our God Reigns!" Amen.

- Our God upholds all things.
- Our God governs all events.
- Our God directs everything to its appointed end.
- Our God does this all the time and in every circumstance.



- Our God does it always for His own glory.

**Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile-** Some have argued this would have been unlikely since there were crocodiles in the Nile. However it is known that not all areas of the Nile are infested with crocodiles, so it is clearly what transpired.

**And she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it to her - Arnold** - Humanly speaking, Pharaoh's daughter should have thrown Moses in the Nile because the king had commanded this, but God has control even over the hearts of royalty and can change their thinking. "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes"(Pr 21:1). God alone can soften an unbeliever's heart.

#### Related Resource:

- [The Providence of God](#)

**Exodus 2:6** 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."

- **she had pity** - 1Ki 8:50 Ne 1:11 Ps 106:46 Pr 21:1 Ac 7:21 1Pe 3:8

**When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying** - This is interesting that she **saw** before she heard.

**And she had pity on him** - Where did this pity originate. Recall that God is behind the scenes raising up His deliverer to fulfill the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."** - With this acknowledgement, she should have thrown the infant in the Nile, but once again God was overruling human wisdom and preserving His deliverer!

**Exodus 2:7** 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?"

- Ex 2:4 15:20 Nu 12:1 26:59

**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?"** - While Moses' mother may have "set this up," clearly it is still example of the providence of God.

**Exodus 2:8** Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go ahead." So the girl went and called the child's mother.

- **Go ahead** - Ps 27:10 Isa 46:3,4 Eze 16:8
- **child's mother** - Ex 6:20

**Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go ahead."** - The Lord continues to work behind the scenes as the Princess consents to Miriam's suggestion. This reminds me of the truth that "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes." (Pr 21:1) So we should not be surprised that the princess' heart is also in God's hand.

**So the girl went and called the child's mother.** - This is Moses' sister Miriam who brings her mother Jochebed to Pharaoh's daughter. We see God honoring her desire to preserve her child's life by giving her favor with the ruling authorities, the very ones who had instructed her to kill her son.

**Exodus 2:9** 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.

- **Take** - Jdg 13:8

## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

**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.** - God kept Moses alive and provided for Moses family. "God again has another laugh as the mother of Moses is paid for caring for her child. The king's daughter will pay money from the king's treasury to defy his own commandment! The Lord has a great sense of humor." (Mattoon)

Job 5:13 He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.

**Exodus 2:10 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."**

- **and he** - Ge 48:5 Ac 7:21,22 Ga 4:5 Heb 11:24 1Jn 3:1
- **Because** - Ge 4:25 16:11 1Sa 1:20 Mt 1:21

## MOSES NAMED BY EGYPTIAN PRINCESS

**The child grew** - While the Scripture does not tell us specifically how Moses learned about God (for he certainly did not do so once in Pharaoh's court!), by default, it had to have been when his parents raised him for the Pharaoh's daughter. Note the phrase the child grew which is the Hebrew verb gadal meaning to grow up or to become great. The Septuagint translates **grew** with the verb **adruno** (not found in the NT - 3 other OT uses - Jdg 11:2+ Jdg 13:24+ = Samson, 2 Sa 12:3) and it means to "grow ripe" as of corn, etc, and of humans speaks of to come to maturity. It therefore seems clear that was Moses was "fed" not just his mother's milk but the pure milk of the Word ("Old Testament style" possibly only verbal since Moses would later write the Pentateuch) and by the nourishing word Moses grew in respect to salvation (and faith – Ro 10:17<sup>+</sup>) as Peter describes (1 Peter 2:2<sup>+</sup>).

**Mattoon** - The princess named the baby "Moses" which means "to draw forth or pull out." His name was a forecast of his own life. God would pull him out of Egypt. He would be used to pull his people out of Egypt and out of the Red Sea. God's hand was working in Moses' life. These were difficult times, dangerous, discouraging, distressing, and depressing circumstances. Yet, God was still working behind the scenes. He used a daughter of Egypt, of Levi, of Jochabed, and of Pharaoh to deliver Moses.

**THOUGHT** - You may be going through the ringer right now. Realize this that the Lord is working behind the scenes. If you will just look for His hand of blessing, you will see it. Don't let your problems cloud your vision. God is working to help you to grow in your faith and be a better servant of Christ. If you do not know the Lord, He is working to bring you to a point where you will trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. The camel is one of the ugliest, most stubborn and dangerous of all the so-called tame animals. It is also one of the most useful animals. It is used as food, a desert "freight car" and "passenger bus." Many people drink camel's milk. When the camel is too old and feeble to continue carrying loads and passengers, it is butchered. The meat is eaten, and the skin is tanned to make beautiful leather. The camel can kick sideways as well as forward and backward, and it has a very nasty bite. The camel can turn its head full around and stare its rider in the face. It can stretch its long, goosy neck around and bite at the flies that are nibbling its tail. It can drop its head between the two front legs and look backward with an upside-down face. Ugly, but very useful, is the camel. Like the camel, our problems tend to be ugly, but useful. They can strengthen our relationship with the Lord and our patience. What God wants us to realize is that no matter what we are facing, He is working behind the scenes.

**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."** - Moses is adopted into aristocracy for the next 40 years. Notice in Scripture names are often filled with meaning, which is often explained in the text as in this case with [Moses](#). Indeed water would play a significant role in his life -- Moses was delivered by pharaoh's daughter from water and Moses would deliver (through the power of God) Israel through water (Red Sea) from the Egyptians.

**THOUGHT** - What an encouragement for those of us who are attempting to raise a godly family in today's secular desert. The faith and actions based on faith by Moses' parents are a great reminder to us not to complain about how bad our society has become and to start being creative on how to pour into our children – and many of you are already doing that by HOME SCHOOLING your children – THEY MAY NOT BE "MOSES"

WHEN THEY GROW UP BUT THEY CAN STILL BE USED MIGHTILY BY THE LORD WHEREVER HE CHOOSES TO PLACE THEM! SO BE ENCOURAGED! PERSEVERE IN FAITH LIKE JOCHEBED AND AMRAM DID! So Don't Fear the Pharaoh's. Entrust your children into God's care. New mom's & dad's, since your children are only yours "on loan"...Entrust God with your child & show your faith, by making a little ark, (so to speak) and floating your child in the reeds of God's Nile when asked. Of course you can come up with many reasons why you can't -- what if waves come, what if it's not-waterproof, what if he's found, taken, or drowned by the Egyptians, what if? Don't Fear the worlds Pharaoh's. As parents, we should live by faith and ask God to make our children "beautiful for Him." At first, like Moses' parents, we have to protect them from this evil world. We teach them His ways and pray for their salvation. Eventually, we have to launch them, trusting God to take care of them. Even after Pharaoh's daughter rescued Moses from the river, his parents must have prayed for many years, "Lord, keep him from the many spiritual dangers in Pharaoh's court and teach him to follow You!" Obey God by faith and entrust your children to His care. He may use them mightily for His kingdom!

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**Rod Mattoon** - The so-called wisdom of Pharaoh is turned into foolishness. The king's daughter delivers the child that he is trying to kill by his own command. The Egyptian treasury is paying the mother to care for her own baby. Pharaoh was compelled to give room and board, proper training and education to the person who is going to accomplish the exact thing that he was trying to prevent.... the freedom of the Hebrew slaves and the defeat of Egypt. The Lord is more or less saying, "In your face Pharaoh! You will see who is the boss around here and who is the real God!" God often works through those that the world considers to be foolish in order to bring to foolishness what the world considers wise. All throughout history this pattern is seen as the plan's of God's enemies backfire in their faces.

- In 1525, the Bishop of London purchased as many of Tyndale's New Testament translations that he could find for the purpose of keeping them out of the people's hands and destroying them. Tyndale used this money to correct his translation mistakes and print more New Testaments.
- Haman set out to destroy Mordecai and the Jews by Persian law. His plan backfired and he was hung on the gallows and Persian law enabled the Jews to legally destroy their enemies.
- The accusers of Daniel that set out to destroy him were killed by the same lions that did not harm Daniel in their den.
- Voltaire set out to exterminate the Bible, yet, after his death, the Geneva Bible Society purchased and used his home to print and warehouse Bibles.
- The radio station of Nazi Germany is now used by Trans-World Radio to preach the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 1:26-28 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are

Why does God do this? Notice, "so that no man may boast before God." (1 Cor 1:29).

**Exodus 2:11 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.**

- **Moses** - Ac 7:22-24 Heb 11:24-26
- **on their hard labors** - Ex 1:11 3:7 5:9,14 Isa 58:6 Mt 11:28 Lu 4:18

### **MOSES' PERSONAL CONCERN FOR HIS PEOPLE**

**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** - Those days refers to the days when the Hebrews were suffering as slaves to the Egyptians. Notice even though Moses was being raised in learning and culture of the Egyptians, he himself (Moses is writing these words) records that he still identified with his Hebrew brethren. Notice also we see Moses' compassion for his brethren. "This journey of Moses to see his people is an indication that he had become aware of his destiny to deliver them." (NET)

**Mattoon** - The king who issued the death decree to have him destroyed is now financing his care, training, and education. God

loves to prove who is in charge. He delights in revealing the foolishness of the "so called" wisdom and schemes of this world in order to show that His way is best. Blessings come from the backfired plans of Satan. The hand of the Lord is upon His future deliverer. The baby is a man who is about to enter into the second stage of his life... the pruning and training stage for God's service. We begin this section looking at a serious blunder of Moses.

Regarding the phrase **when Moses had grown up** we are reminded of Hebrews 11:24-25<sup>+</sup> "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin."

That Moses **went out to his brethren** indicates he was experiencing (perhaps it was just beginning or had been in existence) a close kinship with his Hebrew relatives. As the Hebrews 11 passage states it is clear that "by faith" Moses deliberately sought to identify with the people of Israel rather than the palace of Pharaoh. This is no small matter, for he was giving up access to the richest treasures in the known world. His action (faith is always an "action verb") remind me of Jesus' words in Luke 14:33+ "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions" as well as Jesus' words in Luke 14:26+ because Moses was willing to leave the mother who had adopted him. (cf 1 Jn 2:15-17<sup>+</sup>).

**Brethren** does not refer to literal blood brothers (Aaron was Moses only brother and he was 3 years older) but is a reference to Moses' fellow Hebrews, the people with whom Moses felt close ties of kinship despite being in the palace of Pharaoh for 40 years.

Moses **looked on their hard labors**- This is the same verb used to describe God's looking upon the plight of Israel in Ex 2:25 - "God **saw** ([raah](#)) the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them." The Septuagint of Ex 2:25 translates saw with the verb epeidon which means to fix one's gaze on, to look at with concern and so to concern one's self with what is seen. A great picture of God's eye on Israel.

**NET Note on looked** - The verb רָאָה ([raah](#), "to see") followed by the preposition bet (ב) can indicate looking on something as an overseer, or supervising, or investigating. Here the emphasis is on Moses' observing their labor with sympathy or grief. It means more than that he simply saw the way his fellow Hebrews were being treated (cf. Ex 2:25). (**ED**: This Hebrew verb [raah](#) is used frequently in Exodus 2, 3 and 4 = Ex. 2:2; Ex 2:5; Ex 2:6; Ex 2:11; Ex 2:12; Ex 2:25; Ex 3:2; Ex 3:3; Ex 3:4; Ex 3:7; Ex 3:9; Ex 3:16; Ex 4:1; Ex 4:5; Ex 4:14; Ex 4:18; Ex 4:21; Ex 4:31)

The Septuagint translates **looked** here in Ex 2:11 with the verb [katanoeo](#) (**kata** = down [kata can be used to intensify the meaning] + **noéo** = to perceive or think) means literally to put the mind down on something and so to observe or consider carefully and attentively. This is what Moses was doing, fixing his eyes and mind upon the situation and perceiving it clearly. **Katanoeo** means to look carefully, cautiously, observantly. The idea is to think about something very carefully or consider closely which denotes the action of one's mind apprehending certain facts about a thing so as to give one the proper and decisive thought about the thing considered.

Luke elaborates on this event (and helps give us the timing in Moses' life) writing "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds. "But when he was **approaching the age of forty**, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian." (Acts 7:22-24+)

**NET Note on beating** - The verb מָכָה (makkeh) is the Hiphil participle of the root נָכַח (nakha). It may be translated "strike, smite, beat, attack." It can be used with the sense of killing (as in the next verse, which says Moses hid the body), but it does not necessarily indicate here that the Egyptian killed the Hebrew. (**ED Note** - The first use of this verb in OT is in Ge 4:15 is translated "slay" but generally means to beat, strike or wound and hear is translated with the Greek verb [tupto/typto](#) which means literally to smite, strike, beat or otherwise inflict a blow as when Paul was beaten in Acts (Acts 21:32<sup>+</sup>, Acts 23:2<sup>+</sup>).)

As **Guzik** says "Moses knew who he was. As much allure and ease there was in life as an Egyptian, he knew "That's not me." His faith in the God he served helped him to know who he was."

**NET Note** - Chapter 1 described how Israel was flourishing in spite of the bondage. Chapter 2 first told how God providentially provided the deliverer, but now when this deliverer attempted to deliver one of his people, it turned out badly, and he had to flee for his life. This section makes an interesting study in the presumption of the leader, what Christian expositors would rightly describe as trying to do God's work by the flesh. The section has two parts to it: the flight from Egypt over the failed attempt to deliver (Ex 2:11–15), and Moses' introduction to life as the deliverer in Midian (Ex 2:16–22).

**Grown up** ([01431](#))(**gadal**) means "(qal) be great, exalted, i.e., be in a state of honor, glory, and so have high status (2Sa 7:22); (piel) make great, exalt, honor, glorify, make much of, i.e., cause one to have high status (Ge 12:2); (hif) make great (1Ch 22:5); (hitp) make oneself great, exalt oneself (Eze 38:23; Da 11:36, 37+); 2. (piel) boast, i.e., make oneself great, and at the same time speak disparagingly of another's trouble (Ob 12);

(hif) boast, i.e., improperly speak of oneself favorably especially in contrast to another (Eze 35:13); (hitp) boast of oneself (Isa 10:15); 3. (piel) grow long, i.e., cause the extension of a length as a spatial dimensions (Nu 6:5), note: for the Q in 2Sa 22:51 see 4460; for MT text in SS 5:13, see 4463; 4. (qal) be reared, i.e., raise a child and care for them, in all respects, not mere room and board (Job 31:18); (piel) rear, nurture, train, formally, cause to grow tall (2Ki 10:6; Isa 1:2; 23:4; Da 1:5); 5..196 (qal) grow up, i.e., be in a state of physically growing larger (Ge 21:8); (piel) make grow, i.e., cause another physical object to grow bigger (Isa 44:14; Eze 31:4; Jnh 4:10); (pual) well-nurtured, i.e., pertaining to being in a state that promotes growth (Ps 144:12); 6. (qal) be great, i.e., be of a high degree or extent on a relatively scale (Ge 19:13); 7. (hif) show great (1Sa 12:24); 8. (qal) be rich, be wealthy, i.e., be in a state which one has much more than what is normal (Ge 24:35; 26:13); 9. (hif) triumph, formally, make great, i.e., conquer an enemy and so have victory (La 1:9); 10. (hif) reach, stretch, extend up, i.e., an extension from a source to a goal (Ezr 9:6); 11. LN 81.3–81.11 (hif) lift up, i.e., make a non-linear movement causing an object to become higher (Ps 41:10; Eze 24:9); 12. unit: גָּדַל גָּדַל (gā-dāl ‘āl)2 threaten, formally, boast against, i.e., to make verbal statements of harm to another, with a possible focus of arrogance and excessive confidence on the part of the speaker (Zep 2:8); 13. : גָּדַל גָּדַל (gā-dāl ‘āl)2 defy, formally, boast against, i.e., refuse to obey or submit to a superior (Jer 48:26,42); 14. unit: מִן גָּדַל (gā-dāl min) greater, i.e., a degree which surpasses another point in degree or intensity (1Ki 1:37); 15. unit: מִן גָּדַל בְּ- (gā-dāl b- ‘ă-yin)1 esteem, value, formally, be great in the eye, i.e., consider something of a comparable merit or worth (1Sa 26:24); 16. unit: לָקַח גָּדַל (gā-dāl šē-qēl) increase cost, formally, raise up the shekel, i.e., increase the amount of a quantity of something (Am 8:5) (Swanson - Semantic Domains)

**Vine** has a lengthy discussion - **gadal** (1431 ,גָּדַל), “to become strong, grow up, be great or wealthy, evidence oneself as great (magnified), be powerful, significant, or valuable.” This verb occurs elsewhere only in Ugaritic and Arabic; it is not attested in biblical Aramaic or post-biblical Hebrew. In other Semitic languages the meaning of the word is generally represented by roots with the radicals rbh, and such a root exists in biblical Hebrew as a synonym of gadal. These two synonyms differ, however, inasmuch as gadal does not refer to numerical increase (except perhaps in Gen. 48:19). The Bible attests gadal about 120 times and in every period.

This verb can signify the increasing of size and age as with the maturing process of human life: “And the child grew, and was weaned ...” (Gen. 21:8). The word also depicts the “growing up” of animals (2 Sam. 12:3) and plants (Isa. 44:14) and the maturing of animal horns (Dan. 8:9) and other growing things. In the intensive stem gadal indicates that this rearing has occurred: “... I have nourished and brought up children ...” (Isa. 1:2). This stem may also imply permission: “... [He] shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow” (Num. 6:5).

Gadal can represent the status of “being great or wealthy.” Abraham’s servant reported: “And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great ...” (Gen. 24:35)—here the word represents the conclusion of a process. In the intensive stem the verb sets forth a fact, as when God said: “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great ...” (Gen. 12:2—the first biblical occurrence of the verb).

This word is sometimes used with the meaning “to be great, to evidence oneself as great”: “And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken ...” (Num. 14:17). Moses is praying that God will demonstrate that He is truly great, even as He has said, and do so not by destroying His people. Such an act (destroying Israel) would make onlookers conclude that God was not able to accomplish what He had promised. If, however, He would bring Israel into Palestine, this would exhibit His greatness before the nations. This same sense appears in 2 Sam. 7:22, except with the added overtone of “magnified,” “praised as great”: “Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.”

Another emphasis of gadal is “to be great, powerful, important, or valuable.” This nuance arises when the word is applied to kings. Pharaoh said to Joseph: “Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater [more powerful and honored] than thou” (Gen. 41:40). The Messiah “shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth” (Mic. 5:4); He will be powerful to the ends of the earth. The nuance “to be valuable” appears in 1 Sam. 26:24 when David said to Saul: “And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.” In this statement the second use of the verb is in the intensive stem. Perhaps the force of this could be expressed if one were to translate: “So may my life be very highly valued....”

In the reflexive stem gadal may signify “to magnify oneself.” God says: “Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify

myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations ..." (Ezek. 38:23). The context shows that He will bring judgment. In this way He "magnifies Himself," or shows Himself to be great and powerful. On the other hand, a false statement of greatness and power is an empty boast. So gadal can mean "to boast": "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" (Isa. 10:15). In the causative stem the verb may signify "to assume great airs": "If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me, and plead against me my reproach ..." (Job 19:5). A nuance appears in Job 7:17, where gadal is in the intensive stem, suggesting an estimation of greatness: "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?" (Ps. 8:4). When man is so insignificant, why then does God esteem him so important? ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#) online)

**Gadal** -111v - advanced(1), arrogantly(1), became great(1), became greater(2), became rich(1), became tall(1), became...wealthy(1), become arrogant(4), become great(1), become rich(1), become so great(1), bigger(1), boast\*(1), bring(1), brought(1), educated(1), enlarged(1), exalt(2), exalted(4), great(10), great things(5), great things he has done(1), greater(4), grew(15), grew...great(1), grow(2), grow long(1), grown(5), grown-up(1), grows(1), highly valued(2), increase(1), lifted(1), magnificent(1), magnified(15), magnify(9), make his greater(1), make the great(2), make your great(1), make great(1), makes it grow(1), more(1), promoted(1), reared(3), rearing(1), spoken\*(1), vaunt(1). Gen. 12:2; Gen. 19:13; Gen. 19:19; Gen. 21:8; Gen. 21:20; Gen. 24:35; Gen. 25:27; Gen. 26:13; Gen. 38:11; Gen. 38:14; Gen. 41:40; Gen. 48:19; Exod. 2:10; Exod. 2:11; Num. 6:5; Num. 14:17; Jos. 3:7; Jos. 4:14; Jdg. 11:2; Jdg. 13:24; Ruth 1:13; 1 Sam. 2:21; 1 Sam. 3:19; 1 Sam. 12:24; 1 Sam. 20:41; 1 Sam. 26:24; 2 Sam. 7:22; 2 Sam. 7:26; 2 Sam. 12:3; 1 Ki. 1:37; 1 Ki. 1:47; 1 Ki. 10:23; 1 Ki. 12:8; 1 Ki. 12:10; 2 Ki. 4:18; 2 Ki. 10:6; 1 Chr. 17:24; 1 Chr. 22:5; 1 Chr. 29:12; 1 Chr. 29:25; 2 Chr. 1:1; 2 Chr. 9:22; 2 Chr. 10:8; 2 Chr. 10:10; Ezr. 9:6; Est. 3:1; Est. 5:11; Est. 10:2; Job 2:13; Job 7:17; Job 19:5; Job 31:18; Ps. 18:50; Ps. 34:3; Ps. 35:26; Ps. 35:27; Ps. 38:16; Ps. 40:16; Ps. 41:9; Ps. 55:12; Ps. 69:30; Ps. 70:4; Ps. 92:5; Ps. 104:1; Ps. 126:2; Ps. 126:3; Ps. 138:2; Ps. 144:12; Eccl. 1:16; Eccl. 2:4; Eccl. 2:9; Isa. 1:2; Isa. 9:3; Isa. 10:15; Isa. 23:4; Isa. 28:29; Isa. 42:21; Isa. 44:14; Isa. 49:21; Isa. 51:18; Jer. 5:27; Jer. 48:26; Jer. 48:42; Lam. 1:9; Lam. 4:6; Ezek. 16:7; Ezek. 24:9; Ezek. 31:4; Ezek. 35:13; Ezek. 38:23; Dan. 1:5; Dan. 8:4; Dan. 8:8; Dan. 8:9; Dan. 8:10; Dan. 8:11; Dan. 8:25; Dan. 11:36; Dan. 11:37; Hos. 9:12; Joel 2:20; Joel 2:21; Amos 8:5; Obad. 1:12; Jon. 4:10; Mic. 5:4; Zeph. 2:8; Zeph. 2:10; Zech. 12:7; Zech. 12:11; Mal. 1:5

**Exodus 2:12 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.**

- **So he looked this way and that** - Ac 7:24-26
- **he struck down the Egyptian** - If the Egyptian killed the Hebrew, Moses only acted agreeably to the divine law (Ge 9:6) in thus slaying the Egyptian; nor did he violate the law of Egypt; for, according to Diodorus Siculus (1. 117), "he who saw a man killed, or violently assaulted on the highway, and did not rescue him, if he could, was punished with death." Moses, therefore, in this transaction, acted as a brave and good man; especially as at this time there was little probability of obtaining justice on an Egyptian murderer.

#### MOSES LOOKING THIS WAY AND THAT

**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.** - Clearly the fact that he looked this way and that indicates he knew this was not a lawful thing to do. Moses had a troubled conscience! And yet he killed the Egyptian and thought he could keep it secret by hiding him in the sand.

**Mattoon** - The fact that Moses looked both ways revealed his conscience was not clear. When a person is unsure of God's will or of their actions, usually they are apprehensive of the opinions of others. When we know God's will, there is conviction and certainty. There is an unconcern for the opinions of men because the Lord is leading. Moses had his eyes on men and not God at this time.

**Guzik** - The Bible itself explains some of Moses' thinking behind this action. Acts 7:23–25 explains that Moses did this to defend and avenge the beaten Israelite, but also with the expectation that his fellow Israelites would recognize him as their deliverer.

**NET Note** - The verb וַיַּךְ (vayyakh) is from the root נָכַח ([nakhah](#), "to smite, attack") which is used in Ex 2:11. This new attack is fatal. The repetition of the verb, especially in Exodus, anticipates the idea of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth." The problem is, however, that Moses was not authorized to take this matter into his own hands in this way. The question the next day was appropriate: "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?" The answer? No one—yet.



**Hid him in the sand.** - He buried him so as to conceal what he had done, lest it be discovered. God had other plans and allowed it to be discovered because God knew it was now time for Moses to take his "graduate class" in shepherding sheep for 40 years! This would be good preparation for delivering Israel, which all too often would act like dumb sheep!

**THOUGHT** - If we have to look this way and that before we do something, **we had best not do it!**

**Mattoon** - There are several lessons we can learn from untempered, uncontrolled zeal. Zeal that is Out of Control

1. It leads to hasty actions: It is uncontrolled, impulsive, and impatient.
2. It makes one unfit for God's service: It relies too much upon self and takes matters in one's own hands without the leading of the Lord. The key words of verse 11-12, looked and saw, reveal this truth. Moses walked by sight. Nothing is mentioned about getting direction from God at this point in his life.
3. The hasty actions of uncontrolled zeal retard accomplishments rather than furthering God's purposes. It makes a mess.

Another lesson from the blunders or failures of Moses is that spiritual ends are not achieved by carnal means. His scheme led to sin, not deliverance. It's never right, to do wrong, in order to do right. Sensual, worldly, carnal methods that contradict Bible principles are not to be used to reach people for Christ. They grieve the Holy Spirit and create confusion.

Moses also reminds us of the fact that when you conceal your sin, you will eventually get caught as we will now see. It will come out into the open eventually. Moses was spotted and confronted about his crime.

**Exodus 2:13** 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?"

- and he said - Ac 7:26 1Co 6:7,8

## **MOSES THE MURDERER NOW BECOMES A MEDDLER!**

**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?"** - Moses was clearly associating with his Hebrew brethren and sought to be a reconciler in this situation. Presumably Moses believed his high position in Egypt would give him credibility with the sons of Israel, but that would not prove to be the case. The Hebrew word for **companion** ([rea](#)) means a fellow countryman, a neighbor and even a friend, as it does in its use in Ex 33:11 "the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his **friend**."

**NET Note on offender** - The word רָשָׁע ([rasha'](#)) is a legal term, meaning the guilty. This guilty man rejects Moses' intervention for much the same reason Pharaoh will later (Ex 5:2)—he does not recognize his authority. Later Pharaoh will use this term ([rasha'](#)) to declare himself as in the wrong (Ex 9:27) and God in the right.

Acts 7:26+ - "On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?'

**Exodus 2:14** 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."

- Who - Ge 19:9 37:8-11,19,20 Nu 16:3,13 Ps 2:2-6 Mt 21:23 Lu 12:14 Lu 19:14,27 Ac 7:26-28,35
- a prince - Heb. a man
- a prince - Ge 13:8
- Moses - Pr 19:12 29:25

**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."** - Moses' good intentions were not received by the Hebrew brethren and it became clear to Moses that his killing of the Egyptian had spread far and wide. The wrong-doers unjustifiably accused Moses of wanting to kill them. Moses' actions were misunderstood, opposed, and rejected. How many times does this



happen when we try to win others to Christ or help other people?

**Afraid** (03372) (**yare**) fear as when one senses a threat to one's life as in the present context, but in other contexts expresses the idea of reverence and deep respect (as in Ps 25:14+). In the OT fear of the Lord involves a person's total response to the Lord. It is notable that more than 75% of the over 370 uses (see below) of yare are in the context of reverencing the Lord. In English our word **reverence** (from Latin reverentia "awe, respect," from revereri "to stand in awe of, respect, honor, fear, be afraid of; revere,") refers to a feeling of profound respect for someone or something, and with yare in the OT as noted this is most often to God. The classic use is Pr 1:7+ "The **fear** (yare) of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Notice that a genuine holy fear of the Lord is often equated with believers (e.g. Mal 3:16+, Mal 4:2+, Eccl 8:12-13, cf the last worldwide proclamation of the Gospel which says "Fear God..." - Rev 14:6-7+)

**Yare in Exodus** - Exod. 1:17; Exod. 1:21; Exod. 2:14; Exod. 3:6; Exod. 9:20; Exod. 9:30; Exod. 14:10; Exod. 14:13; Exod. 14:31; Exod. 15:11; Exod. 18:21; Exod. 20:20; Exod. 34:10; Exod. 34:30;

**Guzik** - Moses seemed to act like a prince given his royal background. He acted like a judge in that he determined that one of these men did the wrong. He seemed to be the perfect prince and judge for Israel, but they did not want him.. A prince has the right to rule and expects your loyalty. A judge has the right to tell you what to do, and to punish you if you don't do it. In rejecting Moses they said to him, "We don't want you to rule over us or tell us what to do." People reject Jesus on the same thinking, and just like Moses Jesus was rejected at His first coming. Both Moses and Jesus were:

- Favored by God from birth
- Miraculously preserved in childhood
- Mighty in words and deed
- Offered deliverance to Israel
- Rejected with spite
- Rejected in their right to be prince and a judge over Israel

Just like Jesus after him, Moses could not deliver when he lived in the palaces of glory. He had to come down off the throne, away from the palace and into a humble place before he could deliver his people. Moses planned the deliverance of Israel the way any man would, and logically saw himself as the key man—because of his royal background, education, success, and sympathy for his people. Moses had his plans, and they made sense from his perspective. Yet God's plan was radically different. 40 years later, God led Moses and his brother Aaron to Pharaoh with a special stick that turned into a snake. Moses asked Pharaoh to let Israel go back to Canaan; Pharaoh said no, so God brought plagues of blood, frogs, mosquitoes, flies, cattle disease, boils, hail, locusts, and darkness. Finally God judged stubborn Pharaoh and Egypt with a plague on the firstborn of Egypt, Israel escaped across the Red Sea. The waters of the Red Sea came back and killed the Egyptian army, and the Israelites crossed the wilderness and came to Canaan. Such an unlikely plan would never come from man. ([Exodus 2](#))

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## **Mattoon - Important Lessons from Moses**

### **Lesson 1-Hiding the wrong does not erase it.**

Moses tried to literally cover up his sin and it failed. It almost always does fail. The natural tendency of men is to hide what they have done wrong. Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with fig leaves and hide from God. Cain tried to bury Abel, but Abel's blood cried from the ground to the Lord. The cardinal law of the Bible is sin cannot be covered by men.

- Numbers 32:23-But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out.
- Ecclesiastes 12:14-For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.
- Luke 12:2-For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.
- Proverbs 28:13-He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Moses did not prosper because he tried to cover his sin.

### **Lesson 2-Timing is as important as action.**

Moses failed because he got ahead of God. He pushed his way into leadership prematurely. The result was rejection. No one followed him. Whoops! Ouch! God's timing is important. Jesus responded more than once,

"My time is not yet come." God's work must be done God's way in God's time. As a pastor, you need to be in the Word, in prayer, and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading in your life. The problem in this situation is the nation of Israel is not ready for deliverance. Moses is not ready either for he has lessons that he needs to learn in the desert. Both the nation and Moses have forty years to go before they are ready to exit Egypt and attend the University of the Sinai Desert.

### **Lesson 3-Spiritual leadership is God appointed, not self assumed.**

Moses had a great resume. He was a leader and physically attractive. Yet, one cannot lead God's people unless one is a consistent follower of the Lord. Are you following the Lord? If not, you should not be pastoring or teaching the Word.

Portia, a beautiful, wealthy heiress, is the heroine of Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice. She had many suitors of noble birth who wanted to marry her, but her father decreed that her husband would be chosen by a certain test. She would belong to the one who chose the right chest out of three that were prepared by the father. One chest was of gold and inscribed with "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire." On the inside was a skull. The second chest was made of silver, engraved with the words, "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves." On the inside was a picture of a fool. The third chest or winning chest was made of lead and held Portia's picture within it. It was engraved with the words, "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all that he hath." All the suitors but one chose the first two chests because the precious metals and inscriptions were so attractive. Bassanio, however, picked the chest of lead and got Portia's hand in marriage, because he was willing to give everything he had for the sake of the one he loved. We should have this attitude toward the Lord. Are you like Moses and willing to forsake everything to follow Him?

**Exodus 2:15 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.**

- **fled** - Ex 4:19 Ge 28:6,7 1Ki 19:1-3,13,14 Pr 22:3 Jer 26:21-23 Mt 10:23 Ac 7:29 Heb 11:27
- **Midian** - Ge 25:2,4
- **sat down** - Ge 24:11 29:2 Joh 4:6

PROBABLE LOCATION OF MIDIAN

## **MOSES FLEES FOR HIS LIFE**

**Mattoon** entitles Exodus 2:15-25 "Lessons from a Desert University"

**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' assumption that his killing of the Egyptian had become common knowledge is proven true for it eventually was told to the Pharaoh, who sought to avenge the death of a native Egyptian. Moses may have been the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, but he was still a Hebrew. One cannot help but see the hand of evil one behind the scene for the devil knew if he could have Moses killed, it would thwart the deliverance of Israel and their return to the promised land. See the map above for the likely location of Midian, outside the domain of the nation of Egypt. Surely we see God's hand of protection in this escape to Midian, for Pharaoh was powerful enough to send an army in search of Moses, but there is not record of any such attempt. God had a purpose for Moses and was his Protection. The life of a saint is immortal until his work is done just as in the case of God's two witness in the time of the tribulation John recording that "**When they have finished their testimony**, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them." (Rev 11:7+) They were "immortal" until their work was accomplished!

**Mattoon** has some interesting thoughts - The circumstances were not ripe for Israel's deliverance. The nation was not sufficiently humbled, nor increased in population to the point of God's plan. Moses was not ready for the task at hand yet. Moses was rejected by his own people and now the Egyptians. The dream of deliverance seemed dead. The nightmare of his rejection was very real. God is using the situation to prepare his servant for a great task. Beloved, rejection will make or break you. God may allow you to suffer rejection so you will seek His fellowship and comfort. He will use the rejection to teach you to draw strength and joy from Him. God will also use our rejection to remind us of how He feels when we reject Him. Another lesson we will note here is sin leads to wandering. Sin creates instability, restlessness, and fear. It disrupts your home too. Imagine the pain and hurt of Moses' parents, Miriam, Aaron, and friends upon hearing about what he has done. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds, for God is working behind the scenes.

**Guzik** has a good point - Moses, fleeing for his life, probably felt that God's plan for his life was completely defeated. He probably believed that every chance he ever had to deliver his people was now over and there was nothing he could do. At this point, Moses was right where God wanted him. Moses probably had little idea of it at the time, but he was too big for God to use. Moses tried to do the Lord's work in man's wisdom and power and it didn't work. After 40 years of seemingly perfect preparation, God had another period of preparation for both Moses and the people of Israel, to make them ready to receive Moses

**ESV Study Bible** - God brings deliverance through his power and in his way, through the weakness of the cross, not through merely human impulses for justice (1 Cor. 1:25 = "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.").

Why did he go to **Midian** "If Moses went into the area of Canaan and Syria, he would have found no refuge—there was a treaty between Rameses II and the Hittite king to the effect that fugitives along the northern route to Syria would be arrested and extradited. So Moses went southeast instead, to Midian." (Guzik)

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## The Power In Meekness

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. — Isaiah 30:15

Today's Scripture: Exodus 2:11-15; 3:7-12

Niagara Falls is one of the most spectacular sights I have ever seen. The roar of 6 million cubic feet of water each minute makes it the most powerful waterfall in North America. Few people, however, know that more than 50 percent of the river's water is diverted before it reaches those falls via four huge tunnels. This water passes through hydroelectric turbines that supply power to nearby areas in the US and Canada before returning to the river well past the Falls.

Some would love to have others think of their lives like Niagara Falls— wild, spectacular, and loud. But power without control dissipates into useless energy. Moses thought he could use his royal power to bring about deliverance for God's people from slavery.

**He misused his power by killing an Egyptian, which only dissipated his power because he lost the respect of his own people** (Ex. 2:11-15). God had to teach him meekness (Num. 12:3).

The meek prosper because they are the ones who have power under control. Our Lord said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). You may be trying to live in this world by your own power. Let God teach you meekness so that you can live in, and depend on, His strength. By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We strive to do the will of God  
And struggle to succeed;  
But we may fail to recognize  
God's strength is what we need.  
—D. De Haan

Nothing is stronger than strength under God's control.

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## What Have We Learned?

Read: Exodus 2:11-25

You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years . . . , to humble you and test you. —Dt. 8:2

The often quoted statement "Nice guys finish last" seems all too true to the fullback of a high school football team. After they lost a game to a team that seemed intent on breaking all the rules, he asked, "Why didn't God honor us by giving us the win?"

Moses could have asked a similar question. Although brought up in the home of Egypt's king, he had chosen to identify himself with his own people, the oppressed Israelites. When he saw an Egyptian mercilessly beating an Israelite, Moses killed the man. But instead of being rewarded by God, he fled from Egypt and spent 40 years as a shepherd in Midian.

Eighty years after Moses left Egypt, he finally knew why God had allowed him to be humiliated. He understood why the Lord had permitted the Israelites to go through 40 more years of oppression and then 40 years of wilderness wandering. Just before the Jews crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land, Moses told them that God's goal was to humble them and strengthen them through the long years of testing (Dt. 8:2) so they would know God in a new way and rely fully on Him.

The Lord places a higher value on our long-term moral and spiritual development than on our short-term happiness. What have we learned in our days of testing? By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Our God works to transform us,  
Until that work is done;  
He uses trials and testings  
To make us like His Son.  
—Sper

God uses life's setbacks to help us move ahead.

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**Moses, a type of Christ** - Rod Mattoon (ED: BE CAREFUL WITH TYPOLOGY! I WOULD RATHER CALL THE THINGS BELOW PARALLELS IN THE LIFE OF MOSES AND THE LIFE OF CHRIST).

1. Their births and infancy were under Gentile domain.
  2. Edicts were issued at their births for the destruction of all male babies by the rulers of the land.
  3. Both of them had peculiar beds. One had a basket in the bulrushes and the other had a feeding trough or manger in a stable.
  4. Both Moses and Jesus were miraculously saved from death when they were children.
  5. Moses and Jesus were raised in homes of men who were not their real fathers. They were both adopted.
  6. Both of them left high and exalted positions to suffer with and for Israel. One left the throne of Egypt and the other the throne of Heaven.
  7. Both Jesus and Moses refused a kingdom. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and Jesus refused the kingdom that the Devil offered Him.
  8. Jesus and Moses were rejected by their brethren at their first advent.
  9. Moses and Jesus were both Hebrews who spent time in Egypt while they were children. For Moses, Egypt was a place of rearing and for Jesus, it was a place of refuge.
  10. Both of these men took Gentile brides. Jesus' bride is the church composed of Jews and Gentiles.
- 

**Question:** "[Who were the Midianites?](#)"

**Answer:** Abraham had more sons than just Isaac (by Sarah) and Ishmael (by Hagar). He also had six sons by Keturah, his wife after the death of Sarah: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah (Genesis 25:2). The Midianites were the descendants of Midian and therefore children of Abraham. They settled in "the land of the east" (Genesis 25:6). Most scholars believe the land of Midian was officially on both sides of the Gulf of Aqaba, although the Midianites showed nomadic tendencies later in their history (see Habakkuk 3:7, ESV).

When Moses fled the wrath of Pharaoh, he traveled to Midian (Exodus 2:15). There, Moses met and married his wife, Zipporah, and served his father-in-law, Jethro, as a shepherd for forty years. The fact that Jethro was "a priest of Midian" (Exodus 2:16) indicates that the Midianites, at least during Moses' time, still retained the knowledge of the God of their father Abraham (cf. Jethro's words and actions in Exodus 18). At the end of Moses' time in Midian, God appeared to Moses—still in Midian—and commissioned him to lead the Israelites out of slavery (Exodus 3—4).

As the children of Israel traveled through the wilderness, they employed the services of a guide familiar with the desert—Moses' Midianite brother-in-law, Hobab (Numbers 10:29). However, the relations between the Israelites and the Midianites began to sour when the Midianites joined forces with the Moabites in order to hire Balaam to curse Israel (Numbers 22). Later, when Israel fell into idolatry and sexual sin with the Moabite women (Numbers 25), we find that a prominent Midianite woman was also involved (Numbers 25:6). The Lord then told Moses to wage war against the Midianites: "Treat the Midianites as enemies and kill them. They treated you as enemies when they deceived you in the Peor incident involving their sister Kozbi, the daughter of a Midianite leader" (Numbers 25:17–19). The Israelites did eventually attack the Midianites, meting out divine retribution against their enemies (Numbers 31). Five kings of the Midianites were killed, as was Balaam (Numbers 31:8). This battle was one of the last things Moses accomplished as leader of the Israelites.

During the time of the judges, "the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country" and plundered the land (Judges 6:3). For seven years, "Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help" (verse 6). God answered their cries and raised up Gideon as a deliverer. With just 300 men, Gideon defeated the armies of the Midianites, although the foe was "thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore" (Judges 7:12). Of course, God

was involved, and He was the One who granted the victory over the Midianites (verse 22).

Later references to the Midianites include allusions to God's victory over them (Psalm 83:9; Isaiah 10:26). And, in a prophecy of Israel's future glory in the Messianic kingdom, Isaiah writes, "Herds of camels will cover your land, / young camels of Midian and Ephah. / And all from Sheba will come, / bearing gold and incense / and proclaiming the praise of the Lord" (Isaiah 60:6).

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**Cyril Barber** writes...

In Hebrews 11:24, 25, 26 the writer gives us a very clear picture of temptation. Temptation can only come to a believer through three channels. These channels are (1) the lust of the flesh—what I want to do, (2) the lust of the eyes—what I want to have, and (3) the pride of life—what I want to be.<sup>15</sup>

When Moses chose to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, he faced and overcame the "lusts of the flesh"—what he wanted to do. He did this with the clear realization that he was choosing the eternal rather than the temporal and committing himself to the path of duty rather than to all the pleasures which may have been his in the palace of the king.

Secondly, when Moses reckoned the reproach of the Messiah a greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, he overcame "the lust of the eyes"—what he wanted to have. Archaeologists have given us some idea of the wealth and treasure of Egypt. Moses was perfectly conscious of what he was doing. He was turning his back on the "Fort Knox" of his day, and spurning all the influence and power which money could have obtained for him.

Lastly, his faith and foresight helped him to set his mind upon future rewards and rise above any personal desires which he may have had for his own temporal advancement. In so doing he overcame the pride of life—what he wanted to be.

What reason is given for these actions? The inspired writer attributes it solely to **faith**. **By faith**, Moses could see that the temporal things were going to pass away and that only that which was eternal would last. He overcame the temptation of selfish ambition, worldly pleasure and carnal possession because he did everything in life with a view to receiving God's approval. ([Moses A Study of Hebrews 11:23–29a -- By Cyril J. Barber](#))

**Exodus 2:16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.**

- **the priest** - or, prince, Ex 3:1 Ge 14:18 41:45
- **they came** - Ge 24:11,14-20 29:6-10 1Sa 9:11

### A WELL SCENE

**Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock** - The priest of Midian was named Reul or Jethro. Clearly God led Moses to this specific family at this specific time.

**Constable on priest of Midian** - He appears to have been a worshipper of the true God (cf. Ex 18:12–23). At this time he may simply have been a God-fearing Semite.

**Exodus 2:17 Then the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock.**

- **shepherds** - Ge 21:25 26:15-22
- **watered** - Ex 2:12 Ge 29:10

### MOSES REHEARSES HIS ROLE AS A DELIVERER

**Then the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock.** - When did

the shepherds come? After the women did the difficult task of drawing water and then were driven off. Moses shows himself to be a successful "deliverer" of Jethro's daughters. Even here he was being prepared to deliver Israel. He had failed in his attempt to deliver the sons of Israel (Ex 2) but was successful in delivering the daughters of Reuel (Jethro). God was teaching him step by step. We also see Moses begin to function as a servant (after surely being served day and night in Pharaoh's court!) which was good preparation for the name God later bestowed on him "**My servant Moses**" (Nu 12:7, 8, Ps 105:26)

**Helped** is the verb (**yasha'**) and is used one other time in Exodus speaking of God's saving Israel - "Thus the LORD **saved** (**yasha'**; Lxx = **rhumi**) Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore." (Ex 14:30). Here in Ex 2:17 the verb **yasha'** is translated in the Septuagint with **rhumi** (from **rhúo** = to draw, drag along the ground) means to draw or snatch to oneself and invariably refers to a snatching from danger, evil or an enemy. This basic idea is that of bringing someone out of severe and acute danger, and so to save, rescue, deliver, preserve. **Rhumi** emphasizes greatness of peril from which deliverance is given by a mighty act of power. In the NT **rhumi** is always associated with God as the Deliverer and with a person as the object of His deliverance as when God "**delivered** us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col 1:13+). Here in Exodus 2:17 **rhumi** is used to describe Moses as the one who rescued Reuel's (Jethro's) daughters out of danger.

**Helped** (delivered, saved) (03467) (**yasha'** See also **yeshua** from which we get our word "Jesus") is an important Hebrew verb which means to help, to save, to deliver. The root in Arabic is "make wide" which underscores the main thought of **yasha'** as to bring to a place of safety or broad pasture in contrast to a narrow strait which symbolizes distress or danger.

**Moses stood up** - This means he "sprang to his feet" when he saw the injustice and intervened.

**NET Note** on **drove away** (**garash**)....**helped** - Some shepherds came and drove the daughters away. The choice of this verb (**garash**) in the narrative has a tie with the name of Moses' first son, Gershom. Moses senses very clearly that he is a sojourner in a strange land – he has been driven away. The verb used here is וַיַּשִּׁי' (vayyoshi'an, "and he saved them"). The word (for **helped**) means that he came to their rescue and delivered them. By the choice of words the narrator is portraying Moses as the **deliverer**—he is just not yet ready to deliver Israel from its oppressors.

**Exodus 2:18 When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "Why have you come back so soon today?"**

- Ex 3:1 4:18 18:1-12, Jethro, or, Jether, Nu 19:20, Raguel

## WE HAD A MEETING AT THE WELL

**When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "Why have you come back so soon today?"**- **NET Note** - Two observations should be made at this point. First, it seems that the oppression at the well was a regular part of their routine because their father was surprised at their early return, and their answer alluded to the shepherds rather automatically. Secondly, the story is another meeting-at-the-well account. Continuity with the patriarchs is thereby kept in the mind of the reader (cf. Isaac's future wife Rebekah = Gen 24:11, 20; Jacob and Rachel = Ge 29:1–12).

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**Question:** "[Who was Jethro \(Ex 3:1\) \(Reuel\) in the Bible?](#)"

**Answer:** Jethro was the father-in-law of Moses and father of Zipporah. Jethro is first mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 2:16 where he is described as "a priest of Midian." He is also referred to as Reuel (verse 18), which could indicate the equivalent of a last name. The name Reuel means "friend of God," so the fact that the Bible calls him first by this name may mean that he was a priest of the Most High God, rather than a pagan deity as some have suggested. Many people in the Bible were called by two names such as Jacob (Israel, Genesis 35:10), Simon (Peter, Luke 6:14), Matthew (Levi, Mark 2:14; Matthew 9:9), and Paul (Saul, Acts 13:9). Sometimes the name change was due to an encounter with God. Other times it may have simply been a second name, in the way that a man named Ben Jones may be called both "Ben" and "Jones."

Exodus 2 details the account of Moses' first encounter with Jethro. When Moses was on the run from Pharaoh, after having killed an Egyptian, he found himself in Midian by a well. Jethro's seven daughters were shepherdesses who came to the well to water their sheep. However, some men chased the women away, and Moses came to their defense. In gratitude for Moses' care of his daughters, Jethro invited him for dinner.



Over the course of time, Jethro gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses for a wife, and they had two sons (Exodus 2:21; 4:20). Moses stayed with the Midianites for forty years until God called to him from the burning bush (Exodus 3). Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, gave him his blessing to return to his people in obedience to God (Exodus 4:18).

Jethro is highlighted again in Exodus chapter 18. Moses had sent Zipporah and their sons back to Midian, rather than take them to Egypt, perhaps due to the dangers he would face in leading an entire nation out of slavery. Moses clearly trusted Jethro to take good care of his family and use wisdom in knowing when to reunite them. In Exodus 18, Jethro brings Zipporah and the children to Moses at Sinai. The relationship between Moses and Jethro was always cordial (verses 7–8), and Jethro offers some fatherly advice when he sees the overwhelming responsibility facing his son-in-law (verses 13–27). Moses takes Jethro's advice on how to delegate authority: "Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said" (verse 24). Moses then sends Jethro back to Midian with his blessing (verse 27).

From all we can tell in the Bible, Jethro was a godly man of integrity who played a small part in God's great story of deliverance for the Israelites. He is a good role model for in-laws. He offered wise counsel, stepped in to help when needed, and then got out of the way. ([Got Questions](#))

**Exodus 2:19 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."**

- **an Egyptian** - Ge 50:11
- **and also** - Ge 29:10

## AN EGYPTIAN "DELIVERER"

**So they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds-** Delivered is the same verb used to describe God's deliverance of Israel from the power of Egypt using the man Moses as His "deliverer." It is as if Moses was already demonstrating a trait which would be fully utilized when empowered by Jehovah, he delivered Israel from the power of Egypt. This is in a sense Moses second deliverance, the first being when he killed the Egyptian who was mistreating one of his brothers. In that episode he was relying on his human strength, but in the final deliverance of the sons of Israel we see that he learns to rely on the power of God to bring about the deliverance. In God's "eulogy" for Moses in Joshua 1:2 He says "Moses My servant is dead." What greater name could be given to a man in this short sojourn on earth than the servant of Jehovah? (See "My servant Moses" - Nu 12:7-8)

The **hand of the shepherds** does not suggest necessarily that they grasped the daughters with their hands (this is unlikely), but speaks of the exertion of strength or power of the shepherds which caused the daughters to back off. The word **hand (yad)** is feminine noun meaning **hand** and figuratively as in this context meaning strength or power in Ex 4:21+ speaking of the wonders (miracles) that God put in Moses' **power** (hand-yad).

Notice they called Moses **an Egyptian** possibly because he was dressed in clothing typical of Egypt.

**Guzik** - In Egypt Moses enjoyed life as one of the royal family and was waited on hand and foot. In the distant desert of Midian, Moses finally had an opportunity to be a servant and he did a good job, working hard to help water the flocks of Reuel's daughters.

**And what is more, he even drew the water for us and watered the flock-** What do we see in the character of Moses? Is this not a servant's heart, and but a faint picture of the servant into which he will be transformed over the next 40 years in the divine classroom in the desert?

**Delivered** (05337)([natsal](#)) means primarily to deliver, often by the power of one entity overcoming another. Deliverance from the hand or power (Ge 32:11, Hos 2:10). Idols and human might cannot deliver (1 Sa 12:21, Ps 33:16). The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) of Ex 2:19 translates **delivered** with [rhuomai](#) which means to draw to oneself from danger, evil or an enemy, and is the very word Paul used of believers who have been "**delivered** ([rhuomai](#)) from the domain ([exousia](#) = right and might, power, authority) of darkness (kingdom ruled by the devil - 1 Jn 5:19+)." (Col 1:13+)

**NET Note** adds "Continuing the theme of Moses as the deliverer, the text now uses another word for salvation (לָצַד, [natsal](#), "to deliver, rescue") in the sense of plucking out or away, snatching out of danger."



**Natsal in Exodus** - Ex 2:19; Ex 3:8; Exod. 3:22; Exod. 5:23; Exod. 6:6; Exod. 12:27; Exod. 12:36; Exod. 18:4; Exod. 18:8; Exod. 18:9; Exod. 18:10; Exod. 33:6

**NET Note on he even drew** - The construction is emphatic with the use of the perfect tense and its infinitive absolute: דָּלַח דָּלַח (daloh dalah). B. Jacob says, "They showed their enthusiasm through the use of the infinitive absolute—*And think of that, he even drew water for us; a man did this for us girls*" (Exodus, 41).

**Exodus 2:20 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."**

- **invite him** - Ge 24:31-33 18:5 19:2,3 29:13 31:54 43:25 Job 31:32 42:11 1Ti 5:10 Heb 13:2

**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."** - Fathers should always be on the lookout for good men for their daughters!

**Exodus 2:21 Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses.**

- **willing** - Ex 2:10 Ge 31:38-40 Php 4:11,12 1Ti 6:6 Heb 11:25 13:5 Jas 1:10
- **Zipporah** - Ex 4:20-25 18:2-6 Nu 12:1

**Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses.**- "By taking a wife and having a son, Moses seems to give up on Egypt and his hope of being a deliverer for Israel. Moses was content with where God put him, even though Midian was very different from Egypt." (Guzik)

**NET Note on Moses was willing to dwell with the man** - The Talmud understood this to mean that he swore, and so when it came time to leave he had to have a word from God and permission from his father-in-law (Ex 4:18–19).

**Cole on Zipporah** - "We might translate as 'warbler' or, less kindly, 'twitterer'; it is the name of a small bird." Mattoon adds "Her name means 'sparrow or bird' and may possibly indicate a small, nervous person. Moses married Lady Bird."

**Keil** - The pride and self-will with which he had offered himself in Egypt as the deliverer and judge of his oppressed brethren, had been broken down by the feeling of exile.

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**Question:** ["Who was Zipporah in the Bible?"](#)

**Answer:** Zipporah in the Bible was the wife of Moses and the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. When Moses fled from Egypt to the land of Midian, he met Jethro's seven daughters, who were having some trouble getting enough water for their flocks (Exodus 2). In that area, the troughs for watering flocks were being monopolized by some shepherds who denied Jethro's daughters access to the troughs. Moses assisted the women by driving the shepherds away so their flocks could be watered. Zipporah was among the sisters helped by Moses.

Zipporah and her sisters brought Moses back to their tent to meet their father, the priest of Midian, who liked Moses. Moses was content to stay there in Midian (Exodus 2:21). Moses later married Zipporah and began a new life. Zipporah gave birth to a son. Moses named him Gershom, a name that sounds like the Hebrew word meaning "a foreigner there." Gershom's name was a reminder that Moses was a foreigner and living among foreigners. Later, Zipporah had another son named Eliezer (Exodus 18:4).

Later in the book of Exodus, there is a strange passage involving Zipporah. Moses and his wife are traveling to Egypt because God had told Moses to bring the Israelites out of bondage (Exodus 3). On the way, Moses and Zipporah stop at an inn, and the Lord meets Moses there, seeking to kill him. Perceiving that Moses was in mortal danger, Zipporah takes a sharp stone and circumcises her son. She takes her son's foreskin and, touching Moses' feet with it, she utters the enigmatic statement, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" (Exodus 4:25). Her action worked. After Zipporah's intervention, the Lord left Moses alone. The Bible does not explicitly explain why the Lord desired to kill Moses, but it was probably because Moses had not performed the rite of circumcision. Circumcision was an important symbol of the Abrahamic Covenant, and the lack of circumcision would mark a person as cut off from God's people (Genesis 17:9–14). For Moses to neglect to circumcise his son was an affront to God, as if he were saying that he and his family did not truly belong to God. How could Moses be an effective leader of God's people if he were in

violation of God's clear command?

Zipporah's words to Moses are puzzling, but the text explains that "she said 'bridegroom of blood,' referring to circumcision" (Exodus 4:26). It seems that Zipporah was angry at having to perform the rite, which should have been completed by Moses. Sometime after this incident, Moses sent Zipporah and his two sons back to Midian to stay with Zipporah's father (see Exodus 18:2-3). ([Gotquestions](#))

**Exodus 2:22 Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."**

- Gershom - i.e. a stranger here, 1Ch 23:14-17
- for he said - Ex 2:10 18:3 22:21 1Ch 16:20 29:15 Ps 39:12 119:19 Ac 7:29 Heb 11:13,14

**Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."** Gershom's name means "banishment," "expulsion," "stranger," "resident alien there," "sojourner there." The birth of Gershom seemed to be a sign for Moses that he had done the right thing by fleeing from Egypt. On the other hand the name that Moses gave his son may indicate how he feels at this time of his life. He may have a sense of loneliness.

**Guzik** suggest that the name Gershom "meaning "stranger"—was evidence of some loneliness, living apart from either the Egyptians or the Hebrews."

"Gershom was born to Levi before Jacob and his family moved to Goshen in Egypt (Gen. 46:11). Since Levi was to become the head of the priestly line in Israel, the OT contains many genealogical references to him which include his son, Gershon (e.g. Exo. 6:16f; Num. 3:18f; 4:22, 38, 41, 26:57; 1 Chr. 6:1; 23:7 etc.)" (Gilbrant)

**NET Note on he named him Gershom** (NOTICE MOSES GAVE THIS NAME NOT ZIPPORAH) - He chose the name because its sounds reflected his sentiment at that time. But to what was Moses referring? In view of naming customs among the Semites, he was most likely referring to Midian as the foreign land. If Egypt had been the strange land, and he had now found his place, he would not have given the lad such a name. Personal names reflect the present or recent experiences, or the hope for the future. **So this naming is a clear expression by Moses that he knows he is not where he is supposed to be.** That this is what he meant is supported in the NT by Stephen ("alien" in Acts 7:29+). So the choice of the name **Gershom**, the explanation of it, and the wordplay before it, all serve to stress the point that Moses had been driven away from his proper place of service.

**Guzik** - We make a mistake when we think that the years in Midian were a "waiting" time for Moses. They were instead, working years; he had never worked this hard in his life! God trained him, shaping him for his future calling, but Moses was certainly not "on the shelf." In Egypt Moses learned how to be somebody. In Midian he learned how to be nobody. "Much he had learned in Egypt, but more in Midian." (Trapp)

**Constable** - Moses' years in Midian were years of bitter humiliation. He gave expression to his feelings by naming his first son Gershom (v. 22), meaning "banishment."

**Gershom** (Gereshom) - 14x in 14v - Exod. 2:22; Exod. 18:3; Jdg. 18:30; 1 Chr. 6:16; 1 Chr. 6:17; 1 Chr. 6:20; 1 Chr. 6:43; 1 Chr. 6:62; 1 Chr. 6:71; 1 Chr. 15:7; 1 Chr. 23:15; 1 Chr. 23:16; 1 Chr. 26:24; Ezr. 8:2

**Mattoon** suggests the following lessons from this period of Moses' life -

1. He developed a servant's attitude. At the well, he took the first steps of becoming a servant.
2. He developed a willingness to be obscure, dwelling in a barren desert, away from the limelight. He was also a shepherd which was considered the lowest rung on the ladder of the Egyptian social scale. God was developing humility in Moses' life. In this desert, he gained valuable knowledge of the topography of the Sinai Peninsula which would come in handy later in his life.
3. Moses learned the ability to rest and rely upon God. The desert gave him time to think and reflect upon past mistakes and learn from them. Our problems arise when we make mistakes and fail to learn from them

**Exodus 2:23 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.**

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BGT Exodus 2:23 μετ' ὅ τ' ἡ μὲν βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου καὶ κατέστ' ἔθανο ὁ ὁ  
Ἰσραὴλ πένοντων καὶ ἔβησαν καὶ ἔβη βοᾶν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν πένοντων

NET Exodus 2:23 During that long period of time the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out, and their desperate cry because of their slave labor went up to God.

LXE Exodus 2:23 And in those days after a length of time, the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel groaned because of their tasks, and cried, and their cry because of their tasks went up to God.

NLT Exodus 2:23 Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God.

KJV Exodus 2:23 And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

ESV Exodus 2:23 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.

NIV Exodus 2:23 During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God.

ASV Exodus 2:23 And it came to pass in the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

CSB Exodus 2:23 After a long time, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned because of their difficult labor, and they cried out; and their cry for help ascended to God because of the difficult labor.

NKJ Exodus 2:23 Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.

NRS Exodus 2:23 After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God.

YLT Exodus 2:23 And it cometh to pass during these many days, that the king of Egypt dieth, and the sons of Israel sigh because of the service, and cry, and their cry goeth up unto God, because of the service;

- **in the course of those many days** - Ex 7:7 Ac 7:30
- **the king of Egypt died** - Ex 4:19 Mt 2:19,20 Ac 12:23,24
- **sons of Israel sighed** - Ge 16:11 Nu 20:16 De 26:6,7 Ps 12:5
- **cry for help** - Ex 3:7-9 Ex 22:22-27 Ge 4:10 Ge 18:20,21 De 24:15 Jdg 10:11,12 Ne 9:9 Ps 18:6 81:6,7 107:19,20 Isa 5:7 19:20 Jas 5:4

## SONS OF ISRAEL SIGHING AND CRYING!

**Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died-** This refers to the **king** who had attempted to kill Moses was dead. In the parallel passage in Exodus 4:19+ we read "Now the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead."

**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. - Many days** is 40 years in Acts 7:30+ and Moses is now the ripe age of 80 (Ex 7:7), a good age to deliver the sons of Israel.

**NET Note** - The next section of the book is often referred to as the **Call of Moses**," and that is certainly true. But it is much more than that. It is the divine preparation of the servant of God, a servant who already knew what his destiny was. In this section Moses is shown how his destiny will be accomplished. It will be accomplished because the divine presence will guarantee the power, and the promise of that presence comes with the important "I AM" revelation. The message that comes through in this, and other "I will be with you" passages, is that when the promise of God's presence is correctly appropriated by faith, the servant of God can begin to build confidence for the task that lies ahead. It will no longer be, "Who am I that I should go?" but "I AM with you" that matters. The first little section, 2:23–25, serves as a transition and introduction, for it records the LORD's response to Israel in her affliction. The

second part is the revelation to Moses at the burning bush (3:1–10), which is one of the most significant theological sections in the Torah. Finally, the record of Moses' response to the call with his objections (3:11–22), makes up the third part, and in a way, is a transition to the next section, where God supplies proof of his power.

**Sighed** (groaned - ESV)(0584)(**anach**) means to groan or moan. "indicates a universal response to grave oppression or despair as when Israel was in Egypt (Ex. 2:23). More generally, it is also the response of a people when they are ruled by a wicked government or of persons who are deprived of their pleasures or addictions (Isa. 24:7). Groaning or moaning is the response of a people whom God judges, much as Lebanon (Jer. 22:23), or a desolated city (Lam. 1:4, 8, 11, 21), such as Jerusalem. Even animals moan because of destruction (Joel 1:18). The righteous groan because of injustice and corruption (Ezek. 9:4), and especially God's righteous prophets (Ezek. 21:6[11]) groan over the rebellion of God's people." (Baker)

The usages can be categorized into three types of contexts. First, there is the picture of sighing and groaning of people in economic and political hardships. Exodus 2:23 records the plight of the enslaved Israelites in Egypt....Second, the word expresses the verbal groaning of animals or people in dire straits of God's judgment. Joel 1:18....Third, most of the references occur in Ezekiel (four times) and Lamentations (four times) in lament passages dealing with the fall and destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

**Anach** - 12x in 11v - groan(7), groaning(1), groans(1), sigh(2), sighed(1). Ex 2:23; Pr 29:2; Isa. 24:7; Lam 1:4; Lam 1:8; Lam 1:11; Lam. 1:21; Ezek. 9:4; Ezek. 21:6; Ezek. 21:7; Joel 1:18

**Cried out** (02199) (**za'aq**) means to cry out, to call out for help (especially when in distress), to appeal (even making public sounds of physical and/or emotional anguish - Ex 2:23, 2Chr 20:9, Job 35:9). The **Septuagint** (**Lxx**) translates **za'aq** in Ex 2:23 with the verb **anaboao** (related to **boao** which means to cry out for help, to cry out in anguish and was used when "Jesus **cried out** "with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Mt 27:46)

**Cry for help** (07775)(**shavah** from **shava'/sawa'**) The noun is used exclusively of humans who cry out to gods. When the Philistines were plagued by Yahweh after they seized the Ark of the Covenant after the defeat of the Israelites at Aphek, they raised their cries to heaven for deliverance (1 Sam. 5:12). All other occurrences involve one crying out to Yahweh in distress. (see verse below) The Septuagint uses **boe** in Ex 2:23 and it means a cry, an outcry or an exclamation as for help. The only NT use is in (James 5:4+) In secular Greek **boé** referred to a loud cry, shout, a battle-cry, the roar of the sea, the sound of musical instruments, the cry of birds or beasts.

**Shavah** - 7x in 7v - cry(6), cry for help(5). Exod. 2:23; 1 Sam. 5:12; 2 Sam. 22:7; Ps. 18:6; Ps. 34:15; Ps. 39:12; Ps. 40:1; Ps. 102:1; Ps. 145:19; Jer. 8:19; Lam. 3:56

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[John MacArthur's Outline](#) of the first portion of Exodus...

#### Israel in Egypt (Ex 1:1–12:36)

- A. The Population Explosion (Ex 1:1–7)
- B. The Oppression Under the Pharaohs (Ex 1:8–22)
- C. The Maturation of a Deliverer (Ex 2:1–4:31)
- D. The Confrontation with Pharaoh (Ex 5:1–11:10)
- E. The Preparation for Departure (Ex 12:1–36)

**Exodus 2:24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**

- **God heard** - Ex 6:5 Jdg 2:18 Ne 9:27,28 Ps 22:5,24 79:11 102:20 138:3
- **remembered** - Ge 15:14-18 17:7 18:18 26:3,24 28:12-14 32:28 46:2-4 Ne 9:8,9 Ps 105:6-13,42 106:45 Lu 1:72,73

### GOD HEARS AND REMEMBERS

**John Hannah** says that "Exodus 2:24–25 is a hinge in the narrative. Suppression, slavery, and death were dominant themes in 1:1–2:23. Now deliverance and triumph will be major emphases. God in His sovereign power was ready to act in accord with His

promises to deliver and preserve His people." (BKC)

**Reformation Study Bible** agrees noting that Exodus 2:24-25 "prepares for the call of Moses and underscores the book's theme of divine faithfulness to the covenant promises."

**So God heard their groaning** - **Walter Kaiser** quips "Misery finally found a voice." The Septuagint translates **groaning** with **stenagmos** (from **stenazo** = to groan) describes groaning, signing both involuntary expressions of great stress in Acts 7:34 (Ex 2:24, 6:5, cf Israel's groaning when enemy raised up against them - Jdg 2:18+). The only other NT use describes the groans of the Holy Spirit in prayer "the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with **groanings** too deep for words." (Ro 8:26+). When Israel returns to Jehovah at the end of this age Isaiah says "sorrow and sighing will flee away." (Isa 51:11, Isa 35:10+ during the **Millennium!**).

**Groaning** (05009)(**neaqah**) means to utter sounds of despair, especially because of oppression. The word for this painfully intense "groaning" appears to describe a response to having two broken arms (Ezek 30:24). In three of these occurrences, the groaning is by the Israelites, on account of political and physical oppression. The narrative of the plight of the Israelites under the Pharaoh who did not know Joseph announces that they groaned under their bondage (Exo. 2:24). In Yahweh's commissioning of Moses, He declares that Moses will go to Pharaoh because He has "heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold in bondage" (Exo. 6:5). In the formula that foreshadows the Book and period of Judges, the author announces that the political dominance of other nations over the Israelites was the result of their covenantal infidelity: specifically, their pursuing other gods (Judg. 2:16ff). The period of dominance would end when Israel turned back to the Lord. When they cried out, God eventually acted "because Yahweh was moved to pity by their groanings because of those who afflicted and oppressed them." (Gilbrant)

#### Only 4 uses in the OT:

1. Exodus 2:24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
2. Exodus 6:5 "Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.
3. Judges 2:18 When the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.
4. Ezekiel 30:24 'For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he will groan before him with the groanings of a wounded man.

**And God remembered His covenant** (see **berit/berith/beriyth**) **with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** - Mark down WHY God remembered -- it was not because the sons of Israel were so good, but because He was so **good** to cut an everlasting, unconditional covenant with them. God interacted (and was about to act) with Israel on the basis of the **Abrahamic Covenant**. As **Guzik** rightly reminds us God "gives His love and attention to us on the same basis—the **(New)** covenant relationship we have with God through Jesus." (Lk 22:20+).

Note God's response(s) to Israel's anguished cry is balanced by a fourfold description of God's response - (1) heard, (2) remembered covenant. We are in the New Covenant today and rest assured that God still remembers covenant. So if you are in affliction, cry out to Him. The next verse mentions the other responses of God = (3) He saw and (4) God took notice. We see this same thought in Ex 3:7-9+. It is interesting that when God **remembered** in Genesis 8:1 and it marked the turning point in the flood story.

**NET Note** - The two verbs "**heard**" and "**remembered**," both **preterites**, say far more than they seem to say. The verb שָׁמַע (shama', "to hear") ordinarily includes responding to what is heard. It can even be found in idiomatic constructions meaning "to obey." To say God heard their complaint means that God responded to it. Likewise, the verb זָכַר (zakhar, "to remember") means to begin to act on the basis of what is remembered. A prayer to God that says, "Remember me," is asking for more than mere recollection. The structure of this section at the end of the chapter is powerful. There are four descriptions of the Israelites, with a fourfold reaction from God. On the Israelites' side, they groaned (אָנַח [anakh], נָאָה [né'aqah]) and cried out (זָעַק [za'aq], שָׁוָה [shav'ah]) to God. On the divine side God heard (שָׁמַע, shama') their groaning, remembered (זָכַר, zakhar) his covenant, looked (רָאָה, ra'ah) at the Israelites, and took notice (יָדַע, yada') of them. These verbs emphasize God's sympathy and compassion for the people. God is near to those in need; in fact, the deliverer had already been chosen. It is important to note at this point the repetition of the word "God." The text is waiting to introduce the name "Yahweh" in a special way. Meanwhile, the fourfold repetition of "God" in Ex 2:24–25 is unusual and draws attention to the statements about his attention to Israel's plight.

**ESV Study Bible** comments that "When the Bible says that God **'remembers'** someone or his covenant with someone, it indicates

that he is about to take action for that person's welfare (cf. Ge 9:15; 19:29; 30:22; Ex. 2:24; 32:13; Ps. 25:6–7; Ps 74:2)."

**Constable** reminds us that God's response "is another of the many references in Scripture that indicate that prayer affects some of God's actions. Remembering His covenant with the patriarchs God acted for the Israelites by commissioning Moses."

**MacArthur** on **remembered covenant** - The unilateral covenant God made with Abraham (Ge 12:1–3; Ge 15:1–21; Ge 17:1–22) and confirmed with Isaac (Ge 26:2–5, Ge 17:21) and with Jacob (Ge 28:10–15; Ge 35:9–15) specifically promised a geographically recognizable territory to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Through them, too, the world would be blessed. (MSB)

**Spurgeon** - I wish I knew how to preach on this verse. He looked on the children of Israel, and he did not remember their sins—their practically becoming Egyptians, their loving Egypt and Egypt's idols—but he did remember his friend, Abraham. He remembered Isaac. He remembered Jacob whom he loved, and he remembered how he had promised to bless them and to make them a blessing—not because of any merit in the Israelites but for the sake of those whom he had loved and honored. For the sake of the covenant that he had made with them, he said, "I will break the power of Pharaoh, and I will bless my people; I will bring them out of bondage and set them at liberty." If God were to look on a sinner for all eternity, he could not see anything in him but what he is bound to punish. But when he looks on his dear Son whom he loves—and remembers how he lived and loved, and bled and died, and made atonement for the guilty—and when he remembers his covenant with his well-beloved, he says, "I will bless these people whom I gave to him by an everlasting covenant. I promised that he would see of the travail of his soul, and so he will. I will break the power of sin, and I will set these captives free to the praise of the glory of my grace. And they will be accepted in the beloved."

**Remembered** (02142)(**zakar**) means to recall, call to mind or to be brought to remembrance. The first use of **zakar** is wonderful for it says "God remembered Noah" remembering His covenant (Ge 6:18), declaring later "I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 "When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." (Ge 9:15-16) Similarly we see "that God remembered Abraham" and for that reason (based on covenant), He spared Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19:29). When Israel was in bondage in Egypt "God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." (Ex 2:24, Ex 6:5, cp Lev 26:42, 45, Ps 98:3 [lovingkindness = covenant term] Ps 105:5, 106:45, 109:16, Ezek 16:60) Moses interceded for Israel asking God to "remember" the Abrahamic covenant and pass over their stubbornness, wickedness and sin (Dt 9:27) Thus we see these many of the early uses of **zakar** speak of God's good memory (so to speak - for His memory is perfect) is based on the fact that He is in covenant with those He recalls to mind. If you are like me and from time to time think God has forgotten you, recall to mind that you are in covenant with Him (New Covenant) and on that basis He will (forever) remember you! I love Hezekiah's prayer "Remember now, O LORD, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly." (2Ki 20:3) King David called on the people - "Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done, His marvels and the judgments from His mouth...Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations." (1Chr 16:12, 15) Nehemiah repeatedly called on God to remember in his prayers (Neh 1:8, 4:14, 5:19, 6:14, 13:14, 13:22, 29, 31). I think Nehemiah gives us a good "template" to imitate when we make petition to the Most High God! I love David's prayer to God not to forget and then to remember (Ps 25:6-7). Korah gives us a great pattern to imitate when we are downcast in Ps 42:4, 6. Many of the psalms (see 49 uses below) speak of either men remembering God (often in form of a prayer) or of God remembering men (e.g., Ps 78:35, 39) Ps 78:42 is a warning to all believers = "They did not remember His power, The day when He redeemed them from the adversary." Have you been saved? Then you have experienced His power! And doubtless there are countless other instances we could all remember (if we chose to!) in which His great power has been palpably present to enable or deliver us!

**Lord, give us ready recall of Your past power in our life that we might apply it to our present circumstances. Amen**

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic](#)
  - [Covenant: New Covenant in the Old Testament](#)
  - [Covenant: Why the New is Better](#)
  - [Covenant: Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#)
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## Exodus 2:25 God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.

BGT Exodus 2:25 καὶ πᾶς δὲν θεὸς τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ καὶ γινώσκων αὐτοὺς

NET Exodus 2:25 God saw the Israelites, and God understood....

LXE Exodus 2:25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and was made known to them.

NLT Exodus 2:25 He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.

KJV Exodus 2:25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

ESV Exodus 2:25 God saw the people of Israel-- and God knew.

NIV Exodus 2:25 So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

ASV Exodus 2:25 And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them.

CSB Exodus 2:25 God saw the Israelites, and He took notice.

NKJ Exodus 2:25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.

NRS Exodus 2:25 God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

YLT Exodus 2:25 and God seeth the sons of Israel, and God knoweth.

NAB Exodus 2:25 He saw the Israelites and knew....

NJB Exodus 2:25 God saw the Israelites and took note.

GWN Exodus 2:25 God saw the Israelites being oppressed and was concerned about them.

BHT Exodus 2:25 wayyaʿr ʾēlōhīm ʾet-Bünê yiSrāʾēl wayyēʾda ʾēlōhīm s

BBE Exodus 2:25 And God's eyes were turned to the children of Israel and he gave them the knowledge of himself.

- **God saw** - Ex 4:31 1Sa 1:11 2Sa 16:12 Job 33:27 Lu 1:25
- **took notice** - Ex 1:8 3:7,8 Ps 1:6 55:22 Mt 7:23

## GOD SAW AND GOD UNDERSTOOD

**God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them** - God is [omniscient](#) and He **ALWAYS** sees **EVERYTHING**! He sees the good, the bad and the ugly. He sees our sorrows and our sins! Earlier we saw Moses **looked** ([raah](#)) **on their hard labors** using the same verb used to describe God's looking upon the plight of Israel here in Ex 2:25 "God **saw** ([raah](#))" where the Septuagint **saw** with the verb **epēidon** (only NT use Acts 4:29+ in a prayer by the believers) which pictures God as fixing His gaze, looking with concern with the suffering He saw. A great picture of God's eye on Israel. Are you suffering did child of God? Rest assured He is looking and even doing so with an eye of concern and a heart of compassion (even though it may not "feel" like it because of what you are experiencing. Do like Israel did - **cry out** - play song [Cry Out!](#))

**THOUGHT** - God saw the affliction of His people, and He heard their cries. Then why didn't He act sooner? Because He was following a perfect timetable (Gen. 15:13–16+). You must learn to wait on the Lord. (See Ps. 37:7 - Play and ponder the words of [Wait on the Lord](#) based on Isaiah 40:31+; Another song = [I Waited](#))

**Constable** - God graciously and sovereignly used Moses' sin (evidently manslaughter, Ex 2:12) to bring ultimate blessing for His chosen people (cf. Rom. 5:20). This is important to observe as we seek to understand God's ways.

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### Sovereign Intervention

God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them. Exodus 2:25

Today's Scripture & Insight: Exodus 3:1–9

Barbara grew up under the care of the British government in the 1960s, but when she turned sixteen, she and her newborn son, Simon, became homeless. The state was no longer obligated to provide for her at that age. Barbara wrote to the Queen of England for help and received a response! The Queen compassionately arranged for Barbara to be given a house of her own.



The Queen of England had the right resources to help Barbara, and her compassionate assistance can be seen as a small picture of God's help. The King of heaven knows all of our needs and sovereignly works out His plans in our lives. As He does, however, He longs for us to come to Him—sharing our needs and other concerns—as part of our loving relationship with Him.

The Israelites brought their need for deliverance to God. They were suffering under the burden of Egyptian slavery and cried out for help. He heard them and remembered His promise: "God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them" (Exodus 2:25). He instructed Moses to bring liberty to His people and declared that He would once again release them "into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey" (3:8).

Our King loves it when we come to Him! He wisely provides what we need, not necessarily what we want. Let's rest in His sovereign, loving provision.: Ruth O'Reilly-Smith ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Why is it important for us to bring our needs to God in prayer? How can you learn to rest in God's provision—whatever that may be?

Loving God, thank You that I can bring my needs to You. Help me to be content in whatever paths and provisions You choose.