

Exodus 1:1-2:10

A Man Named Moses
“A God Who is Present”

Introduction: Today we begin 8 weeks of delving into the life of “A Man Named Moses”.

A. Some things Moses is known for

1. 10 Commandments (picture)
2. Red Sea dividing (picture)
3. Wonder if his mom gave him this advice? (picture)

B. Some less known things about Moses

1. First abandoned child in the Bible
2. 80 when he led Israel out of Egypt
3. Had leprosy (briefly)
4. Likely stuttered
5. Not allowed to enter the Promised Land
6. Location of tomb is unknown

(ILL) **Golda Meir—4th Prime Minister of Israel**

“Let me tell you the one thing I have against Moses. He took us forty years into the desert in order to bring us to the one place in the Middle East that had no oil.”

I. The Story of Moses’ Beginning

A. His birth took place amid tragedy

1. Hebrew people in Egypt because of Joseph
2. 70 had come—now there were many
3. New King (Pharaoh) didn’t know Joseph and threatened by Hebrews
4. Great numbers, great faith in God
5. Great confidence in His Lordship and history
6. Pharaoh insecure—afraid the Hebrews would threaten his rule
7. A terrible decree

Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. 13 So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. 14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage — in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. Exodus 1:10-14 NKJV

8. That didn't work
9. Decree of death

Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiprah and the name of the other Puah; 16 and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." Exodus 1:15-16 NKJV

B. The midwives feared God

But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. Exodus 1:17 NKJV

1. They knew the devotion of the Hebrews and their faith
2. They wanted no part in this scheme
3. First mention of God in Exodus—His agents 2 women against the empire of Pharaoh (victory in Bible does not depend on numbers and strength but on alignment with God's will).

NOTE: First Choice for Women

4. Shrewdness of midwives matches Pharaoh's

So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" 19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." Exodus 1:18-19 NKJV

- a. Their names mentioned (Shiprah, Puah)
- b. Not Pharaoh

5. God blessed them

Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21 And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. Exodus 1:20-21 NKJV

C. The new edict of Pharaoh

So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive." Exodus 1:22 NKJV

NOTE: Interesting truth—let the women live—but they will be the real force threatening Pharaoh

D. Moses is born (and protected)

1. She hid him for 3 months
2. Places him in an ark she prepared and placed it among the bulrushes
 - Ark, basket (tebah)—in Noah story
 - Life endangered in waters preserved by God
3. Miriam waits 20 yards away
4. Daughter of Pharaoh (princess of land) bathing by Nile—sees basket

NOTE: Miriam—“ Oh, no! We are doomed!”

5. Baby captures the heart of the princess
 - a. She broke her father’s command
 - b. She had compassion

E. Miraculous Providence

And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 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. 10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." Exodus 2:8-10 NKJV

1. She gets paid to nurse her own baby
2. Paid by the man who ordered him killed

F. Moses’ mother (Jochabed) knows God’s hand was on Moses

1. Knew death warrant—faithful midwives
2. 3 months hidden—not found
3. Now this!
4. What do you think she did while nursing?
5. Told him of Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Jacob

G. Moses is named (Mosheh)

And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." Exodus 2:10 NKJV

1. One who pulls out or draws from
2. I drew him out
3. Later will draw Hebrews out of Egypt

II. The Challenge of Moses Beginning

- A. Moses knew the sacred name Yahweh before he was able to talk.
- B. His mother, knowing the world that he would someday face, told him who he was and whose he was
- C. When called at the age of 80 at the burning bush

Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:13-14 NKJV

Hayah hayeh—God's covenant name

1. He knew it as a child
2. His mom whispered it to him

D. Who is whispering the name Jesus to our children today?

1. Telling the stories
2. Difficult world, pain, violence
3. Who will keep his name alive?
4. Secular gods prolific lures, materialistic expectations—who will say Jesus
5. Trappings of luxury and careless lifestyles, who will say Jesus?

III. The Message of Moses' Beginning

- A. A story of providential care
- B. God is intimately and intensely involved in our lives
- C. See how He was present

1. Clever midwives
2. Softened heart of Pharaoh's daughter
3. Quick thinking of older sister
4. Religious fervor of a mother

NOTE: All women

“If true, at least four good women to build one good man.”

D. God is PRESENT—That’s the Gospel

Conclusion: He is present—The Good News

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. Psalms 139:7-10 NKJV

- A. God is present
- B. God is at work in your life
- C. Sometimes it’s dark, but He is present
- D. Story of Moses—a story of presence

Knowing God is Present

Writer Kenneth Wilson tells of growing up in Pittsburg:

That house in which we lived on the side of one of Pittsburgh’s hills was three stories high in the front and four in the back. The bottom layer was the cellar and the top was what we called the third floor, really a finished attic, the ceiling of which was cut into shadowed geometric shapes by dormer windows. Up there were two bedrooms, a hallway, and a mysterious storage room for trunks that always smelled of mothballs and history. Our family slept there, because the second floor was usually rented out for a tenant to help pay the rent.

Kenneth remembers that, being the youngest, he had to go to bed first, braving the floor of dark bedrooms. It felt like a long way up the steps, especially because they did not have electricity above the second floor, and a gas light had to be turned on, then turned off once the boy was settled.

That bed in that room on the third floor seemed to be at the end of the earth, remote from human habitation, close to unexplained noises and dark secrets. At my urging, my father would try to stop the windows from rattling, wedging wooden matchsticks into the cracks. But they always rattled in spite of his efforts. Sometimes he would read me a story, but inevitably the time would come when he would turn out the light and shut the door, and I would hear his steps on the stairs, growing fainter and fainter. Then all would be quiet, except for the rattling windows and my covering imagination.

Once I remember, my father said, “Would you rather I leave the light on and go downstairs, or turn the light out and stay with you for awhile?”... [I chose] presence with darkness, over absence with light.

Is that not what we really want most when we pray—the assurance that Someone is there?