

## **Exodus Series 1 - The Birth of Moses - Exodus 2:1-10**

### **Intro**

Most of us have strong opinions about leaders, about our bosses at work, our parents, our church leaders about orchestral leaders, about sports leaders, school and university leaders. Most of you will have an opinion about me!!.....If I asked you what you honestly thought about Boris Johnson or any other leaders.....the answers would vary massively in this room. (filtered by our own lens and experiences)

Most people would agree that the world is crying out for wise, principled, visionary, inspiring, effective leadership in every facet of our society. How do you and I grow into that? Every single follower of Jesus Christ is going to need to be a leader at some time in their life. Now, I'm not suggesting that every one ought to aspire to be a vicar or missionary, but how are you going to lead others to Christ? How are you going to lead your own life? How are you going to influence and impact every environment you find yourself in for Christ.

This morning we start working through Exodus, with the account of the birth of a New Leader.....

### **Providence**

Now one thing that is interesting in this text is that none of the actors are named until verse 10 where we come upon the name Moses. We don't learn the name of Moses' parents until Exodus 6 or Moses' sister until Exodus 15 and nowhere is the name of Pharaoh's daughter. Why is this important?, because right at the beginning of this account the Author is communicating that while people play a role in this story, the focus of our attention needs to be on God and God's activity.

Now you'll also notice that God isn't mentioned either, but it is God's hidden activity, what theologians call God's providence that we need to pay attention to. By providence, I mean = God's overseeing care and direction of all of creation and of our own lives.

Exodus 2 takes place during the very darkest days in the history of Israel. God's people were living in slavery in Egypt and the Pharaoh, the dictator who ruled Egypt, had just issued a genocidal decree ordering that all of the male babies born to the Israelites be murdered. During dark days, it is easy to begin to wonder if God is present, at work and in charge? Christians don't believe that the world is governed by chance of fate, Christians aren't Deists (heretics) believing God created the world and then abandoned it. Christians believe the world is overseen, ruled and governed by an infinitely wise, infinitely powerful Father in heaven, who loves us and who has a good and gracious plan for our lives. What this doesn't mean is God takes away our choices, but God oversees and rules, God has a plan for creation and your life and my life

### **What does God's providence mean?**

It's a horrific time for Moses to be born. But believing in God's providence means God is at work in the background even when it might not look like it. You may have been born out of wedlock. you may never have known your father. You may have been unplanned by your parents or the result of an affair. But whatever your circumstances, you are no accident to God. Do you believe that your existence in this world is the result of Almighty God's plan and purpose? God intended you. Christians need to believe this with all of your heart that your life is no accident to God. Otherwise, you will live like an accident believing your choices and decisions don't matter

But if your life was planned by Almighty God from all of eternity, if God had a purpose in mind for your existence, and you believe that with all your heart, then you will live with a passion to discover that purpose and live according it. You are going to cry out to God and say, "Show me what you made me for; let my life make a difference; let my life bring you glory."

The children of Israel were going through a hard time. You may be going through a hard time today. But while their experiences and our experiences may come as a surprise to us, they are no surprise to God. God told their forefather, Abraham, hundreds of years before that the children of Israel would go through a terrible time of slavery. We read in Genesis 15:13-14. God is never taken by surprise. Despite the hardship that was appearing in the lives of the people of Israel would have known that in the end everything would work out well. For those who trust and obey God.....all will be well in the end, God is faithful to His promises, things will work out..... **Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

It means that all the Pharaohs in your life, all the horrible bosses, all the abusive spouses, all the cancer, all the family problems, all the health problems, all the downturns in the economy, your future is not determined by any of these things. God promises that if you love and obey him, everything will turn out well for you in the end. God is secretly working in your life, God's providence is at work.

### **Moses' Family**

**We read in Ex 2:1-4 Now a man of the house of Levi married a Levite woman, 2 and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. 3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. 4 His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.**

When God wants to do something great, he begins with a child. Verse 2, says:...When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. The words literally in the original Hebrew read: When she saw that the child was good, she hid him for three months. The words in Hebrew are: "Ki tov" These are the same words that God spoke over creation. He saw that the creation was good. These are the words used of Moses.... The author is deliberately echoing the early words of the book of Genesis. God is beginning a new and good creation. The original creation was good, but then it was ruined by the Fall. And God's people were in bondage, but now God is starting a new creation, a new thing.

Notice, it begins with a child. God didn't say, "let me find the strongest and most gifted." God makes leaders from the ground up. He starts with children. That's not how the world sees it. Let me challenge each of you today, if starts with a child, Pray for our children at church, in St Andrews. Consider getting involved in our children's ministry. Take our children seriously

Who are these parents of Moses? – this man from the house of Levi married to a Levite woman? Moses parents were people of faith Here is what it says in Hebrews 11:23:**By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.** In raising up Moses, God is at work providing Moses parents of faith.

Now, there are tons of books on child-raising. About parenting well, put love at the centre, about discipline, about routine, or prayer, but what about FAITH at the centre? Often the birth of a child is the occasion of great joy, but here with a genocidal dictator for a leader it's a very dark time. Yet, Moses' father and mother are said to be people of faith. What does it mean to have faith especially during a hard time in your life?

One writer said it comes down to two things believing in God's rule and reign (sovereignty and control) over the universe and my life and that person is good and committed to my good. Two things. Faith doesn't mean that I understand everything.

Especially during hard times, how could you possibly bring a child into this kind of world? Children cost money, ruin my freedoms, may have complex needs.....if you have no faith why bring children into this

uncertain world? As Europeans have lost their faith, they've lost their desire to have kids. The demographics are saying that in many European nations, the population will be cut in half in the next 50 years, apart from immigration. No faith, I'm going to pursue personal pleasure.

Faith sees there's a good God ultimately ruling, where God can be trusted even in the darkness. There comes a point when Moses' parents, had to release their child. They had to release Moses to the care and sovereignty of God. I don't know what your picture is of how they put Moses into the Nile River in a basket. But the typical image that people have is that Moses was put into the river and pushed off; there he was sailing down the Nile River. But the text doesn't say this. <sup>v3</sup> She placed her child in the papyrus reeds that used to grow in Egypt. Why these particular reeds at that particular spot? Mum knew that Pharaoh's daughter bathed at that spot. She had a plan for her baby's life?

Releasing control of your children doesn't mean that you have no plan for their future. There are many dangers in this world. And you work for their good, protecting them but releasing them to be adults, trusting God for them. We don't have to smother and crush our child with a thousand controls because of fear, but raise them in faith.

### **Unexpected help in unlikely places.**

*Then, we read this in Exodus 2:5-10: Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. 6 She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said. 7 Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" 8 "Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother. 9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. 10 When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."*

As God is making a new leader, he brings along unexpected supporters in unlikely places. In Egypt there was a genocidal dictator. He has spies going into the homes of the Israelites, grabbing their kids and throwing them in the water, murdering them. And from the most unlikely place, God brings about support from the unlikeliest place. The support came from the king's own family, Pharaoh's daughter. Just consider that for a minute.....

So when God calls us to lead lives of purpose, he can put supporters for us in the most unlikely places, don't just look for the obvious. You are in a tough spot. You need a miracle in your life. In my experience God often sends unexpected help in unexpected places.

If God has put you in a decision-making capacity. He has put you in a strategic place, or with influence use it for his glory. God knows how to take care of his own. He took care of Moses. He put him under the protection of Pharaoh's daughter.

Do you believe God has got you this morning?. Has had his hand on your life from the beginning and is continuing to call you into a life of purpose? Accept the help God sends.....

**Let's pray**