Exodus 004

Spiritual Education

Exodus 2:1-12

June 8, 2025

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Let us take our Bibles this morning and open them to Exodus 2:1.

| Exodus Structure/Outline |
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| ■ Redemption (1–18)<br>◆ Redemption (1:1–12:30)<br>◆ Liberation (12:31–15:21)<br>◆ Preservation (15:22–18:27)<br>■ Mosaic Covenant (19–40)<br>◆ Law (19–24)<br>◆ Tabernacle instructions (25–31)<br>◆ Apostasy (32–34)<br>◆ Tabernacle building (35–40) |

The title of our message this morning is "Spiritual Education." We are in the Book of Exodus, and we are now inching into that first part of the book, dealing with redemption—how God redeemed His people from a state of bondage through the Exodus. As we look at that redemption section in Exodus 1, we learned why the Nation of Israel needs redemption. They needed redemption for the same reason we need spiritual redemption: they were in a state of bondage (Exodus 1), through a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph. He Put the nation into that state of bondage, and that sets the stage, or the table, for the rest of the book describing what I think is the greatest redemptive act in human history other than the cross of Jesus Christ.

It is what we are reading about here in the Book of Exodus. The miraculous redemption of God's people from bondage would not make sense until we first understood why they were in bondage. That is what Exodus 1 reveals.

Now we move into Exodus 2-4 where we have the development of the deliverer. When God seeks to do a work, typically what He does is He selects, or finds, a person—a

human being—that He can work through. We have seen that all the way through our study in the Book of Genesis. We saw how God raised up Noah; God raised up Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc. God now is raising up somebody else—a man named Moses.

This section becomes a great teaching device for us in terms of how God prepares people for ministry, how God prepares people for leadership, because it is not the way the world prepares people. God has a different methodology, a different standard. We are going to learn about His development of this man Moses, to the point where God is going to raise him up and he will be Israel's deliverer, as God is using him; he will be Israel's lawgiver as God will use him; and if that were not enough, he is going to actually author, or write, the first five books of the Bible that we call Torah, or sometimes Pentateuch.

If God had not used Moses and worked through Moses in a very special and significant way, much of the biblical understanding that we have today would be lost. How does God use people? How does God work through people? How does God prepare people? That is what we learn in Exodus 2-4.

We are moving now into Exodus 2, where we are going to see Moses' birth, rearing, flight to Midian, his marriage, and then at the end of the chapter, God makes an observation about the Nation of Israel and why He seeks to redeem them, using Moses as his instrument.

Moses' Birth, Rearing, Marriage, and Training (Exodus 2:1-25)

I. Moses' birth (1-5)
   - A. Moses' parents (1-2)
   - B. Moses adrift (3-4)

II. Moses' rearing (6-10)
   - A. Rescue (5-6)
   - B. Raising (7-10)

III. Moses' flight (11-15)
   - A. Moses' murder (11-12)
   - B. Moses' fear (13-15)

IV. Moses' marriage (16-22)

V. God's observation (23-25)

Let us go ahead and start with Moses' birth (Exodus 2:1-4). We have two things going on here: Moses' parents, (Exodus 2:1-2), and then Moses is set adrift (Exodus 1:3-4). Notice the information that we have about Moses' parents. Exodus 2:1 says,

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

The year here would be, we think, 1526 BC. We get that date because, if you followed what we said in our introductory lesson on the Book of Exodus, we can anchor the date

down for the Exodus event as 1446 BC. We know from Exodus 7:7 that Moses was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus. If you take 1446 BC and you go back 80 years, it takes you to the date of 1526 BC. That is when he was brought into this world; that is when he was conceived; that is when he was born.

| AGE OF THE EARTH? |
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| **971-931 BC=Solomonic reign**<br>966=Solomon rebuilds temple (1 Kgs 6:1b)<br>- 480 years for the Exodus' date (1 Kgs 6:1a)<br>= 1446 BC for Exodus' date<br>- 430 years for Jacob's migration to Egypt (Exod 12:40)<br>= 1876 BC for Jacob's migration to Egypt (Gen 46)<br>Genealogies of Gen 5; 11<br>= 4000 BC for the earth's age |

He had two parents, both of whom were Levites. Now, you might remember in our study of the Book of Genesis, that God in the Book of Genesis, through Jacob's sons—Jacob's Dozen—put into place the foundation of what would become the Twelve Tribes of Israel. We learn, as we move through the Bible, that the kings are going to come from Judah, and the priests are going to come from Levi. If you want to be a priest, you have got to have Levi "genes" so to speak.

That actually becomes a big deal, because later on in the Book of Exodus, Moses is going to get really discouraged. There is nothing that discourages you more than when your people, that you are supposed to be leading, rebel against you. God is going to actually use this Levitical genealogy in Moses' heritage to encourage him. In other words, "Moses, you are special. You are from the priestly tribe." Tuck that into your memory banks; that is going to happen in Exodus 6:10-17. By the way, we do know the names of Moses' parents. Not here, but you know it from Exodus 6:20. His parents are named Amram and Jochebed. Their names are given.

You move on into Exodus 2:2, which says,

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

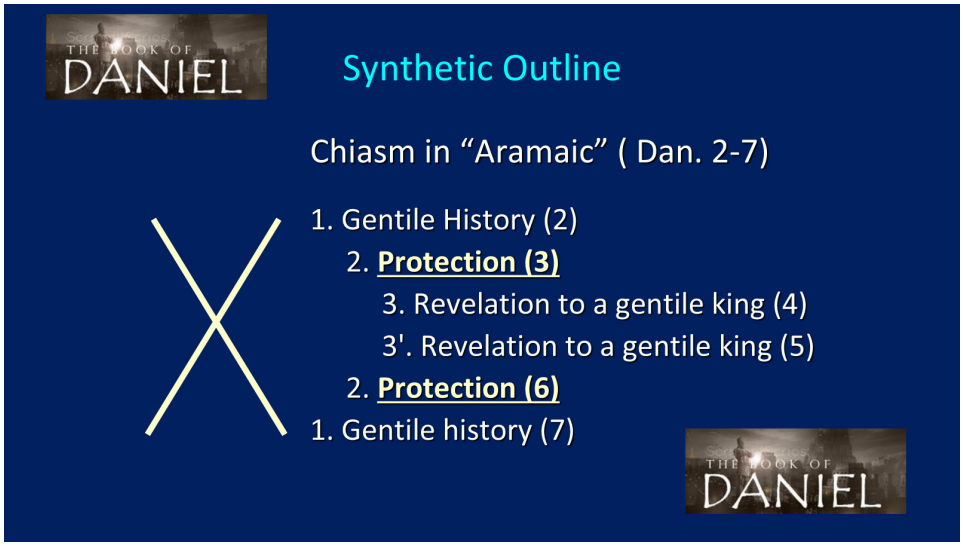
Why is she hiding him? Because when you go back to the end of the Exodus 1, the Pharaoh that did not know Joseph, threatened by the rapidly growing Israeli Hebrew

population, issued an order of male infanticide. Any child that is born that happens to be a male, is to be cast into and drowned in the Nile.

You will notice Moses' parents, particularly his mother here because it says *"when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months."* You will notice that his mother said to the state, "No." It was not just the midwives, who are usually credited for one of the first acts of civil disobedience in the Bible, that said no to the state, as we studied last week; but Moses' own mother said no to the state.

As we detailed last week, there are grounds by which a Bible believer can say no to human government. Romans 13:1-5 tells people to be in subjection to the government. We find that described in Titus 3:1, where we are told to be subject to rulers and to authorities. First Peter 2:13, related to government, says we should submit ourselves to the government. That is the general rule, but there are examples in the Bible where God's people said to the government, "No."

One of the major examples took place in the Book of Daniel, as the Nation of Israel was taken into captivity in Babylon. As I tried to explain last time, Daniel 3 and Daniel 6 harmonize with each other. The themes of Daniel 3 are repeated in Daniel 6. What you will see in both of those chapters is God's people saying no.




Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were their Babylonian names, but their Hebrew names were Azariah, Hananiah, and Mishael. Nebuchadnezzar wanted to rename them to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to show them that he was in charge of them. The rest of the Book of Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, "No, you are not in charge; God is in charge." In Daniel 3, Nebuchadnezzar created this giant, gold statue. He said that when the instruments played, everybody was supposed to bow down and worship this statue. If you did that, of course you would violate the first two commandments in the Decalogue: "No graven images and no gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3-4; Deuteronomy 5:7-8).

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—said, no. They said, "You can throw us into the fiery furnace all you want, Nebuchadnezzar, and God can rescue us; but even if He does not, we are not going to bow down to that statue." What you see developing here in the Bible is this case for civil disobedience.

In Daniel 6, which harmonizes with Daniel 3, the same thing happened. They passed a law behind Daniel's back, making public prayer illegal. Daniel, aware of that law, went and prayed publicly, facing towards Jerusalem anyway. Of course, that is what got him thrown into the lion's den. My point is, there are cases in the Bible where a Christian has a duty, has a right, and really has a duty to tell the state no.

I have four principles that I tried to articulate last week, in which cases civil disobedience is appropriate. There has to be a clear conflict between man's law and God's law. There has to be an exhaustion of all creative legal remedies, meaning civil disobedience is a last resort rather than a first resort. Should it reach a point where we tell the state, no, we have to be willing to pay the consequences.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, their Jewish names—were willing to be thrown into the fiery furnace. Even as that happened, they continued to maintain respect for the authorities, referring to Nebuchadnezzar by his appropriate title.

To bring you up to speed on that, I would encourage you, if you did not have a chance to listen to last week's sermon. I went into this not only because it is in the text that we are teaching from, but I went into this because this is a very real reality now in the United States of America, where we are running into situations where we have to decide, are we going to please God or please man?

Certainly, we saw a lot of that during the 2020 lockdowns where we were told not to go to church. We have to think that one through because my Bible says, "[Do not forsake your] *own assembling together"* (Hebrews 10:25). We were told how loud we could sing, related to allegedly spreading the virus. By the way, they kept the casinos open, kept the bars open, and kept the liquor stores open. Pretty smart virus that only hides in churches. Did you notice that some of the big retail outlets open, but churches, "You better shut down."

I have never seen anything like that in my lifetime in the United States. For the first time, as an American evangelical Christian, I am having to think through these issues. Can we disobey the state or not? A lot of people, as all of that was happening, said you have to submit no matter what. I do not think that is the Biblical case; I do not think that is the Biblical position. You see it with the midwives (Exodus 1); and you see it with Moses' own parents (Exodus 2), where they did not allow their son to be killed, which is logical and normal.

You might remember the Nuremberg trials, where the Nazis were put on trial after World War II. A lot of the Nazis put on trial, when they were asked for some kind of

explanation as to why they committed the horrors of the Holocaust, said, "I was just following orders." Check the legal record. The Nuremberg trial said, "That is not a valid defense."

You cannot say you are following orders; you cannot just mindlessly quote Romans 13, if you are a Christian, because the Nuremberg trials indicated that you have a conscience, and in your conscience—it is right out of Romans 2:14-15—you have a biblical standard of right and wrong. You should have obeyed conscience—a higher law which is in your heart and mind, according to Scripture (Romans 2). This idea that I was just following orders is an insufficient excuse.

Believe me, folks, I want to get along with the state as much as we can. Paul tells us that as much *"as it depends upon you, be at peace with all men"* (Romans 12:18); but sometimes the state goes too far. The state went too far here in Egypt. God's people told the state no.

That is a little bit about Moses' parents. Now you go down to Exodus 2:3-4 and you learn about Moses adrift. Notice what it says in Exodus 2:3:

> *"But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered over it with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds of the bank of the Nile."*

"Either I do this," she said, "Or Moses is going to die."

What is a wicker basket? It is a basket that is basically a papyrus basket. It is very interesting to me that the same Hebrew word for basket is used to describe Noah's Ark in Genesis 6. Obviously that ark was a lot bigger; this is like a miniature Noah's Ark, a baby infant Noah's ark. She did not know what to do, so she took baby Moses, and put him into this papyrus basket and set it adrift, I would say, but it is more accurate that it went among the reeds of the Nile.

Where is the Nile? You will notice what the Nile does: as it flows, it breaks off into several parts connecting with the Mediterranean Sea. That is the Nile Delta. That is some part of it where Moses' mother set him adrift. The Nile is a place that you can visit today. When the Bible is describing these things for us, it uses real places of geography, the Nile River.

A little bit later on in the chapter, we are going to learn about the land of Midian. We have already learned about Goshen. You might as well take out Google Maps and locate all these places, because they are real places on planet Earth. That is how the biblical story unfolds. This is not "Tall Tales" or "Veggie Tales" or "Jack and the Beanstalk." This is not just spiritual truth—it is that—but it took place in a real archeological, geographical setting that is easily corroborated and vindicated.

This is how Moses and his life began. You go down to Exodus 2:4, and it says,

> *"His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him."*
> (Exodus 2:4)

Moses had a brother. His name was Aaron. He had a sister named Miriam. I believe both of them were a little older than Moses. Exodus 7:7 tells us that when Moses was 80, Aaron was 83. This sister of his, Miriam, is mentioned. Her name, I do not think, is given here, although it will become prominent later on in the Biblical journey. She is mentioned because God is going to use her to do something outstanding, miraculous, and providential in Exodus 2:7-9. Tuck her away into your memory banks, just for a little bit.

Then we move into Moses' rearing. You will notice there, in Exodus 2:5-10, the rearing of Moses, what the first part of Exodus 2:5 says:

> *"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."*

Who is this daughter of Pharaoh bathing, taking this basket out of the Nile? If Thutmose I is the pharaoh that was in existence when Moses was born (and there is good evidence indicating that he was), then this daughter would be a woman named Hatshepsut. I bring these things up to you because these are real people that can be validated through the Egyptian chronological record.

Notice what she says in Exodus 2:5-6:

> "[She] *came down to bathe in the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it to her. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying"—*

I would be too, if I was stuck in a basket on the Nile at that age. Even at this age, I would be crying.

> *"And she had pity on him and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.'"* (Exodus 2:6)

That is what the Jewish people were referred to by the Egyptians. They are referred to as the Hebrews. This special nation that God has raised up—the Nation of Israel—the Egyptians and the people of the ancient Near East at that time referred to them as Hebrews.

Remember what Potiphar's wife said concerning Joseph? Genesis 39:17:

> *"Then she spoke to him with these words, 'The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make sport of me.'"*

She identified Joseph as a Hebrew, and the Hebrews were the ones that were in incarceration. This is how Pharaoh's daughter, arguably, Hatshepsut refers to God's special nation, the Nation of Israel, the Hebrews.

What a coincidence it is that she happened to be bathing, and she finds this basket. I am here to tell you that this is no coincidence whatsoever. This is the providential hand of God.

We see a rescue operation Exodus 2:5-6. She takes him into the royal court, and there Moses is raised for 40 years. He is raised as if he was born with a silver spoon in his

mouth for 40 years. This is the direct plan of God, and the providential will of God, as God is working behind the scenes, which God always does.

One of the things we introduced last week is the seed of the woman, the seed of the serpent conflict. In Genesis 3:15 put Satan on notice. Right after the fall of man, god says this to the serpent:

> *"'And I will put enmity*
> *between you and the woman,*
> *And between your seed and her seed;*
> *He shall bruise you on the head,*
> *And you shall bruise him on the heel.'"* (Genesis 3:15)

"Satan, there is coming a "Him," a male who is going to take your head, and crush it." What does Satan—who was standing there in the form of the serpent when this prophecy was made—do? It is a prophecy, by the way, of the coming Messiah, none other than Jesus Christ. Satan says, "I am going to shut the whole thing down. I am going to work preemptively so that prophecy can never come to pass, because I do not want my head crushed."

That becomes the explanation of everything else that takes place in the Bible. Have you ever gone to the movies, and you get there late and you miss maybe the first five minutes of the movie? Let us say you miss the first five minutes of the movie and you missed a key fact at the beginning. For the rest of the movie, you are confused as to what is happening. That is what happens to the mind of the modern Bible reader. They just rush over Genesis 3:15, when God put Genesis 3:15 at the beginning for a reason.

The rest of Scripture is simply an exposition of Genesis 3:15, Satan working in history to stop the birth of Jesus Christ. That is the bruising of the heel. We know how it is going to end. God is always going to work; He is always going to preserve the Messianic line. The serpent's head will be crushed, but there is a spiritual conflict along the way.

That is why Cain murders Abel (Genesis 4); that is why the sons of God contaminated the pre-flood gene pool (Genesis 6); and it is happening right now in Exodus 2. The names changed a little bit, but it is just another development in this ongoing saga. It is why Pharaoh is persecuting Israel by wiping out all of the males; it is why Joash was almost killed under the despicable reign of Athaliah in 2 Chronicles 22-23, Joash being the last surviving Davidic descendant on planet Earth.

Satan, in 2 Chronicles, was within a millimeter of achieving his objective of stopping the Messianic line. Once he understood that the Messiah was going to come into the world through the Nation of Israel, which the rest of Scripture is very clear on, he has worked in history to destroy Israel.

It is why Haman marked Israel for destruction in the Book of Esther.;It is why a tyrant named Antiochus Epiphanes arose in the Intertestamental period and had a desire to

wipe Israel out; it is why Herod, at Christmas time was persecuting the Christ child; yet, in every single case where it looked like Satan had the upper hand and was about to win—but God. God opened some kind of door, and as that door was opened, miraculously, the lineage leading to Jesus was preserved.

God got around the murder of Abel through the birth of Seth (Genesis 4). God got around the sons of God genetic contamination through a man named Noah and his three sons, in particular one named Shem. The Messiah will come through Shem's line (Genesis 9:26). God got around Joash almost dying because as a little kid, baby Joash was protected by a priest named Jehoiada. They hid Joash in the temple until Athalia's rampage was over and she was deposed from the throne.

God got around the certain destruction of the Nation of Israel in the Book of Esther through His work with Mordecai and Esther. God got around the diabolical Antiochus Epiphanes in the Intertestamental period through something called the Maccabean Revolt, which is where Hanukkah comes from. God got around the Herodian attempt to kill all of the male children, innocent infants in Bethlehem, by having the royal family flee to Egypt until Herod was no longer there.

It is the same story; the names and the faces change, but it is part of an ongoing conflict. You are watching the same thing happen right here in Exodus 2. Pharaoh says male infanticide. All the Hebrew male infants are to be thrown into the Nile; they are to be killed. That would have stopped the Messianic line dead in its tracks. God, when it looks the bleakest and the darkest, starts to work through the Hebrew midwives as they engage in civil disobedience; and He starts to work through Moses' parents, particularly his mother, who said no to the state and put Moses into the Nile.

That baby Moses is not going to be baby Moses forever; he is going to grow into a fully mature man, and he will be the instrument that God will use as Israel's deliverer, Israel's lawgiver, and Israel's writer—preserving the record for us in Torah, Pentateuch.

What you are seeing here in Exodus 2 is just the same story as Genesis 3:15, you are just watching the movie in color—more detail. But God, long ago in Eden, said to the serpent that this conflict would materialize. That is why it is so helpful to understand Genesis 3:15 before you read the rest of the Bible. If you understand it, the Bible will make sense to you. If you come to the movie too late and you miss that key point, the rest of the Bible is a mystery. Why does the Cain Abel thing happen in Genesis 4? Why does the flood happen? It just does not make sense, but Genesis 3:15 unlocks the meaning to all of these stories, accounts, and sagas in the Bible.

Here comes Moses, after being rescued. He is being raised in royalty in Egypt. Notice, if you will, Exodus 2:7-9. Watch the providence of God here; it is just unbelievable.

> *"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? Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go ahead.' So the girl went and called the*

> *child's mother. 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."* (Exodus 2:7-9)

Now you understand why Moses' sister is mentioned in Exodus 2:4. She is the one that dropped this idea, having seen what was happening here, into the mind of the daughter of Pharaoh. "Let us go get a nurse for this crying baby boy, who is very beautiful, in this wicker basket." Who does the sister get? She gets Moses' mother as the nurse. Have you ever seen such a thing? It is actually Moses' mother that is doing the nursing.

Charles Ryrie says this:

> "How gracious of the sovereign God to reunite Moses and his mother, who was paid for nursing him."[1]

Why did God do that? God, I believe, did it for this reason: God providentially allowed Moses' mother's involvement so that Moses would not forget his Hebrew roots, which would be easy to forget, having a beautiful existence in Egypt. Being born with a silver spoon in your mouth, you could forget you were Hebrew. If you forget you are a Hebrew, then you do not understand why God called you as a deliverer to the Hebrews. God providentially allowed Moses' mother's involvement so that he would not forget his Hebrew roots, since he was to be Israel's deliverer, lawgiver, and ultimately author.

What happens now to Moses as he is being raised? Look at what Exodus 2:10 says,

> *"The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son."*

What does that mean that he became her son? He became part of the royal family. He enjoyed a life of privilege for 40 years, something that he would later renounce. Hebrews 11:24-27 adds some light to this. It says,

> *"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, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to a reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is unseen."* (Hebrews 11:24-27)

Moses is going to become aware of his calling, he is going to go back to his Hebrew roots, and he is going to renounce his Egyptian upbringing; but although all of that is coming, it is part of God's plan and purpose in preparing Moses for his leadership position. This is what the Book of Acts says concerning Moses' education in Egypt. It is in Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin in Acts 7:21-22:.

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[1] Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*, page 92.

*"'And after he had been outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son. Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.'"*

God providentially took Moses from a slavery environment where he probably would have grown up with no education—no literacy, no writing ability. Through this act of setting him adrift on the Nile and then him becoming a member of the royal family under Pharaoh's daughter, he was now given the best education in the world at that time could ever give. This is where he learned to write; this is where we learn to read; this is the tutelage and the tutoring that was given to him round the clock.

Stephen brings this out and says *"Moses was educated in all learning of the Egyptians"* (Acts 7:22). Now, why is that such a big deal? Because Moses is not just the deliverer; he is not just the lawgiver; he is the writer. He is going to write the first five books of the Bible. Now, how do you do that if you cannot write? How do you do that if you cannot read? God worked providentially to give Moses this education.

The higher critics look at this and say, "This is ridiculous. There was no writing in the time of Moses." That has been disproven up one side and down the other. There is something that is very well known that has been discovered called the Babylonian Hammurabi Code, a legal code which predates the life of Moses by 400 years. This idea that there was no writing in the time of Moses should not be dismissed, or else you would have to dismiss the findings of modern archeology concerning the Hammurabi Code. I had a chance to read some of this when I was in school in seminary. It is an in-depth legal code. Some of it sounds a little bit like the Book of Exodus, to be honest with you—not exactly, but there are a lot of points of similarity.

There was writing in the time of Moses, and God wanted Moses to have this ability because God knew what he was going to do through this man, Moses. He put him in this providential circumstance, preparing him for the future. By the way, beloved, that is why God has you in the circumstances you are in today. Do not look at your circumstances as the enemy. God is preparing you for something that is bigger than you. He is preparing Moses for something that was bigger than himself. Moses had no idea of his future, but God did; and God put him in the right circumstances to have the right education so he could be Israel's author.

We praise God for his sovereignty. There something that could not happen had Moses stayed in enslavement. There are a lot of Christians that look at education as unspiritual; they look at education as the enemy. I have heard Christians say, "I have my H.S. Degree, that is all that matters." They are talking about their Holy Spirit degree. "Education, studying under somebody, learning something is an unspiritual pursuit."

I have been in environments where Christians put down the educational process. I am here to tell you that God can use anyone to do His will, educated or uneducated; but the

truth of the matter is God is not anti-education. Moses, from what I can gather, probably received a pagan education, polytheistic, but God allowed it to happen.

There is another guy in the Bible that got a pagan education. You know who I am speaking of? Daniel and his three friends. Daniel 1:4-5 say they were:

> *"youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the King's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and the language of the Chaldeans. The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food, and from the wine which he drank, and appointed that they should be educated for three years, at the end of which they were to enter the King's personal service."* (Daniel 1:4-5)

God providentially allowed that to happen to Daniel and his friends. The same thing is happening with Moses as he is being educated in all the learning of the Egyptians.

Paul was an educated man. In Acts 22:3 Paul says,

> *"'I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel* [one of the top rabbinical teachers of the time], *strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.'"* (Acts 22:3)

If the Holy Spirit is leading you towards education, that has happened in my life when I was contemplating more education, and I had a chorus of voices saying, it is unspiritual to do that. It is not necessarily unspiritual. God can use education in a person's life. He can use pagan education; He can use woke education. You do not have to absorb everything you are taught by a professor or a teacher or an academic program, but sometimes God wants you to pick up certain skills that an uneducated person does not have.

We do not want to be elitist about it and say, "This is the only way God works. God cannot use uneducated people," because He does; but we do not want to switch to the other end of the extreme and start frowning upon education as if it is something unspiritual.

This is what is happening now with Moses. 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.'"*

Now we have the meaning of Moses' name. The word Moses means "one who draws out." There is a lot of confusion on this, because a lot of people think that Moses got his

name because it sounds like the "mose" on Thutmose, but the biblical text indicates that that is not true. She gave him his name because that is what his name means "to draw out of the water."

> "Some believe that Moses got his name from the word 'mose' found in Thutmose. However, according to Exodus 2:10, his name actually comes from the fact that Hatshepsut had drawn him out of the water. In Hebrew, his name means 'to draw forth' and in Egyptian it means 'son of the water.'"[2]

I am quoting there from the great Gleason Archer, a great Old Testament scholar, in his survey of "Old Testament Introduction."

Then we continue to move on here, and we see Moses' flight (Exodus 2:11-15). The reason he must flee is because he murdered somebody. You mean God can use a murderer? Let us keep reading here. Exodus 2:11 says,

> *"Now it came about in those days"—*

What days would those be? Those days would be at the age of 40. We know from Acts 7:23 that these things occurred in Moses' life at the age of 40. It says there in 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' life is pretty easy to remember. He lived to the ripe old age of 120, and his life is divided into three equal 40-year increments. The first part of his life is his natural training, from 1526-1486. That is the first 40 years of Moses' life, and what we are about to read here, hence the title of this message. He is about to enter section two of his life, which is his spiritual training, from 1486-1446. That is not going to take place in Egypt; that is going to take place while he is a refugee in Midian, and he is a refugee because he murdered somebody. It is during that middle section of his life that he is brought to the end of himself.

When a person comes to the end of themselves, they have blood on their hands, and they have not been doing anything for 40 years but tending sheep and working at McDonald's or whatever—I do not put people down for working at McDonald's, in fact, working at McDonald's could be exactly what you are supposed to do right now, because God needs to empty you of yourself. He needs to put you into a position where you are doing very menial labor that is beneath yourself, where you do not get any applause, you do not get any accolades. I have been in that circumstance for a lot of my life. People in that circumstance have a tendency to think, "You know what? I missed

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[2] Gleason Archer quote: Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 236-37.

God's will." But the truth of the matter is, you did not miss God's will. You are in God's will because God cannot use you until He empties you.

How do you pour water into a cup that is already full? When we are full of ourselves and full of our infatuation with our natural abilities and maybe our education. We have a tendency to think we can do the work of God through our own power. What do I need God for? I have been to the latest conference. I do not need God. God says, "Really? We have to take that attitude and we need to change it." There is no better way to do it than to put you in some kind of position where you are just tending sheep for 40 years.

That is what God is doing with Moses in that spiritual training part of it. Even Jesus Himself, when you study Luke 2-3, went through something like this. Luke talks about what Jesus was like at age 12, when He went into the temple and confounded the religious leaders with His wisdom. Then all of a sudden, Luke skips age 12 to age 30 when He started His ministry. I am like, "Wait a minute. I want to know what happened between the ages of 12 to age 30."

It is not that Jesus had a sin nature that had to be reined in, but He did have to go through a maturing process, not as God, but the God-Man. Jesus did not launch out at age 12; there was a time in his life called the "silent years." Every time I read Luke 3, I hate it because I want to know what happened during the "silent years." Luke does not tell us, but we are dealing with God incarnate. He did not just launch out into ministry; He had this time of isolation, this time of preparation, this time of learning that the God-Man (not God) had to undergo. Hebrews talks about it as well, and it is the plan and pattern of God.

Once Moses is emptied of Moses, then finally, at age 80, God shows up through the burning bush and reveals Himself to Moses and says, "Okay, let us get going in ministry. You are ready now." Moses' pride is so emptied at that point he says, "Who am I to do these things?" This is the guy at age 40 that was murdering somebody. You get to age 80 and he is a different guy—he has been humbled. God says, "Let us get moving."

Moses, from a human standpoint, has his most productive years from age 80 to age 120. I run into a lot of Christians that reach a certain age and they say, "I am retiring," and I say, "No, you are re-firing. You are just getting moving. Look at Moses—age 80 to 120. Get busy."

In the first third of his life he thought he was a somebody with all that Egyptian training and education. In the second third of his life he learned he was a nobody. In the final third of his life he learned what God could do with a nobody that once thought he was a somebody. Teach your youth, your children, and your grandchildren this, because they do not understand it. I did not understand it. We do not understand how God works. We look at things through human instrumentation, the human way of doing things; but God has a totally different schedule in our lives.

If you find yourself in that desert experience, getting your BD degree (backside of the desert degree)—that is what Moses needed, a BD degree—backside of the desert degree—do not despair. Do not think that God has abandoned you. Do not think that you have somehow missed the will of God. It is just a necessary time of preparation.

Exodus 2:11 says,

> *"Now it came about in those days when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren"—*

The word "brethren" there is used in the same way that you find in Romans 9:3. Sometimes in the Bible, the word "brother" is used in the Matthew 12:46-50 sense. Jesus says, "Who is My mother? Who are my brothers? Are not they that do the will of My Father?" In the body of Christ sense, we are fellow joint heirs, brothers and sisters, in this new man in the Church Age called the Body of Christ. Sometimes the word "brothers" is used that way, but typically it is not used that way. Here it is speaking of fellow Jews, fellow ethnicity, fellow nationality. You can jot down Romans 9:3, because you will see the word "brethren" used just like that.

> *"Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 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"* (Exodus 2:11-12).

The depth of the grace of God. How deep does the grace of God go? Exactly where is the basement? As Abraham was praying for mercy on Sodom and Gomorrah, he stopped at ten. God said, "I will spare the city if I find ten godly men" (Genesis 18:20-33). Could Abraham have kept going in the count? Where is the basement of this thing? Where does this stop? How big is the grace of God? Can God take someone with blood on his hands and use him the way He is going to use Moses in the Book of Exodus? The answer is, yes. In fact, God does this all the time.

Do you know that the three choicest servants of God that I know of in the whole Bible (other than Jesus, obviously, being the God-Man), all had blood on their hands, all committed murder. Number one, Moses; number two, David; number three, Saul of Tarsus. You take away Moses, you take away David, you take away Saul of Tarsus, and you do not have much of a Bible left. God used these people astronomically, even though they were guilty of one of the most heinous sins a person can commit—the sin of murder. In fact, the sixth commandment is going to say, "Thou shalt not murder" (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17). All three of them murdered somebody.

Why even bring this up? Because there are people within the sound of my voice that think you have gone too far. You know you have done this, or you have done that, therefore you are disqualified. That is not what the God of grace tells us. Just to make this very personal, there are people within the sound of my voice that have either had

an abortion or have been involved in an abortion, pressuring someone to have an abortion, paying for an abortion. Then you come to your senses and you realize what abortion does—it stops a heart from beating. You say to yourself, "How could God ever use me? I have this in my background. How could God use me, ever?" Then you mentally check out and say, "I cannot be used by God."

Wow! We need to read our Bible a little more carefully, don't we? I think there is a limit on His grace somewhere; I do not know where it is, though. I think it is so rich and so deep that it is really outside of human comprehension or understanding. The world system will write you off really fast; even Christendom will write you off really fast, but God does not because God is a God of grace, as seen with Moses.

What in the world is Moses' problem here? He senses his role as deliverer, and he is trying to fix the problem in his own strength. You see the problem? He knows he has some kind of role to play, and he does not wait on God's timing; he does not draw from God's strength. He just sees a situation, he reacts to it, and he murders someone in the process.

What is his problem? He does not have his BD degree, that is the problem. Only in the desert experience can you learn that you do not do the work of God through your own power. You have to learn the discipline of humility, waiting upon God, relying upon God. As long as you are going out there in ministry and trying to fix everything yourself, you are going to be an utter and total failure.

As a professor for a number of years in a college, there is nothing as frightening as a 19-year-old that knows Greek and Hebrew. That is scary, because they have all of this natural training, but they do not have their BD degree yet. They are scary to watch, and they are scary to listen to. You say to yourself, "Lord, it is valley time for them," just like it was valley time for the rest of us. We need this spiritual education. This flight that is about to take place to Midian is not an accident—it is the exact design of God.

> *"So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck the Egyptian and hid him in the sand."* (Exodus 2:12)

There is a guy trying to do the work of God through his own power. This fear that he will now be put into will push him out of Egypt, at the age of 40, to Midian where God will continue on with his second college degree, where he is going to learn spiritual truth. Natural training—he has got it. Natural abilities—he has got it. But the BD degree he does not have yet. God is going to work in his life.

Father, we are grateful for Your truth, grateful for Your Word, grateful for what You did in the life of Moses—how it speaks to us, and how you deal with each of us. I do pray, Lord, that if anyone is here that does not know You personally, that for them today would be the day of salvation; that they would understand Your full grace as revealed in Your Word through the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ whose final words on the cross were: "'It is finished!'" (John 19:30). That they

would place their trust in Christ and Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sins and the safekeeping of their soul. We pray many, many people today, by faith, would receive that offer that You have given to the whole human race. We will be careful to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name. God's people said, Amen.