

## “Impossible Faith”

*Exodus: The Redeemer and The Redeemed*

Exodus 2:1–10

### Exodus 2:1–10 ESV

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

Just a few notes about the text that I’d ask you to keep in your mind:

- This text *reverberates* with images from another man who was put into a תִּבְרָה. I don’t want to spoil the surprise just yet.
- Notice how all of the figures are completely anonymous. This is for two reasons: first, to build literary tension—thank God that he doesn’t write boring stories, and second, to show these women as typological heroines. They could be *anybody*, and indeed, they should be *everybody*.

## Each of us will find ourselves in a situation where God has to come through

In [Genesis 3:15](#), the protoeuangelion or “first gospel,” is the promise that a woman will bear a child who would end the curse. And God promises that this blessed child will be a son who come from the line of Issac and Jacob. The child who ends the curse will be a Hebrew boy.

So throughout Genesis, people are waiting on a son. Its part of the reason that genealogies matter so much, and it’s part of the reason that those figures in the Bible who oppose God’s plan are keen to eliminate the boys.

And in verse 2, we have a linguistic connection the refrain throughout Genesis: and the woman “concieved and bore.” This again is one more of those data markers which point to a single author for the Book of Moses.

Critically, however, this is the sixteenth and final time this phrase is used. We are to take from this that Moses is the one who will organize and establish the people of God into the nation promised to Abraham.

Our text zooms in from the prologue to a single family unit. You have a young mother here, a Levite, who has a three-month old baby boy.

Think about that. At three months old, this baby boy just learned how to smile; he’s probably cooing; he’s holding his head up; he probably smiles whenever she looks at him.

And hanging over his head is a national edict that he must be thrown in the Nile River to drown.

This text today cuts right at the heart of our age. Our is an age marked by panic. We had tremendous confidence coming out of the 20th centuries that the new millennium would usher in a new era of human flourishing. What we have learned however is that the external concern, disease, pestilence, and starvation, eliminated by very good engineering and application of science has netted a misplaced confidence in our ability to manage our circumstances.

And its because they are on the other side of our realization that we cannot manage circumstances like we thought, yet they are without the tools to cope.

The full secularizing effect of that misplaced confidence means that they also do not have the metaphysical tools to know what you and I do: the world is fundamentally stable, even when it seems to be spinning, because Ultimate Reality is a person whose disposition is care towards his creation and love towards his people.

People are fragile because they are being asked to live in a world affected by sin that feels like unordered chaos because they do not know there is a God redeeming it and reconciling it to himself.

## **Each of us are told to have faith that God will come through, even if we don't see how.**

In [Numbers 26:59](#), we learn that Moses's mother's name is Jochebed, and we also learn a few other important details. Read with me [Numbers 26:59](#)

### **Numbers 26:59 ESV**

<sup>59</sup> The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt. And she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and Miriam their sister.

So, Jochebed was not only her name, but also

- her grandfather was Jacob, the man who wrestled with God and received a blessing for it.
- Her uncle was Joseph, the youngest son of Jacob, who God had sent to prepare a place for the people.
- She herself had not traveled into Egypt but was born here.

We can imagine that deep down, maybe even as she laid baby Moses into the reed basket that she said to herself: "God brought our people here to live not die. My boy, this boy, will not die."

## **None of us have the strength to do this alone. That faith is a gift fortified through ever increasing trials.**

### **What is faith?**

Why does the author of Hebrews call this an act of faith? Because Jochebed acted as if the promises of God were true.

Part of what we get confused in the faith/works discussion is that the Bible does not describe faith as a leap into the void or the gap between what we can know and what we cannot. Not even close. The idea that faith is a leap comes from philosopher Soren Kierkegaard. But even he didn't mean it the way some of use it today!

## **How does faith grow?**

God allows our faith to grow through trials so that we can see in ever increasing amounts his trustworthiness. His first call on your life is not going to be to make a waterproof basket for your son to survive the Nile.

Instead, with ever increasingly but an always gentle cadence, He will expose your own misplaced confidence, always asking your soul: who do you say that I am? Is there only one God of your heart?

## **Jesus himself entered the most desperate of situations to redeem all desperate situations to himself.**

Moses's mother delivers him from the judgement of Pharaoh builds for him a basket, תִּבָּה (te-bah). This is the same word for the vessel of deliverance God has Noah build: a תִּבָּה (te-bah), an ark. Moses wants for us to draw parallels between this moment and Noah's action because these are the only places he uses this word in his Book. Even Jochebed's action of sealing the basket with pitch is reminiscent of [Gen 6:14](#).

A river meant for death for the nation of Israel is about to be redeemed for the life of Israel. Remember, the Nile River is a god-like force in the Egyptian mind: its annual floods made Egypt the bread basket of the ancient world. Pharaoh believed that by throwing the Hebrew boys into the Nile he would preserve a life for his nation.

But, God often inverts our expectations and shows that his ordinary pattern of blessing is through opposition, surprise, and weakness.

## **Knowing the author of life and death allows us to move from impossible faith to confident faith.**

How did the daughter of Pharaoh know the baby was a Hebrew boy? This three month old boy certainly had the covenant sign of circumcision. [Genesis 17:12](#) "He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised."

There was no mistaking what ethnicity this baby was. She knows. And she knows what her father decreed.

### **How does God redeem the situation for the mother and boy?**

- The daughter of Pharaoh sees the basket and takes it up from the the water (v. 5).
- She has pity on the child she is supposed to kill (v. 6).
- She sends Moses's sister to find a Hebrew woman to nurse the child.
- She then pays Moses's mother to raise the boy as her own.
- She adopts the boy and makes him an heir within to Pharaoh's household.

## **Discussion Questions**

- Reflecting on Jochebed's trust in God, can you recall a time when you've had to entrust a dire situation to God's hands?
- Drawing from the parallel between Moses and Jesus, how does the idea of "places of death becoming places of life" resonate with you personally?
- The sermon mentions how our modern age is marked by panic and misplaced confidence. How can understanding God's nature as a redeemer provide solace in our chaotic world?
- Pharaoh's daughter defied a decree to save a life. Can you think of moments when doing the right thing might mean going against popular or authoritative opinion?
- The sermon emphasizes God's trustworthiness being fortified through trials. Share an experience where a challenge strengthened your faith and trust in God.