

February 21

Scriptures: Read Exodus 1 & 2

Key Verse: “Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God... and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.” (Exodus 2:23b, 24)

Overview

This is an amazing story about the providence of God. There is a gap of over 400 years between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses (a descendant of Levi). During this time, the family of Jacob grew incredibly fast to become a nation that was so numerous that the Egyptians feared them. The new king was not God-fearing and he possibly was from a different dynasty, so he was unfamiliar with the goodness of Joseph in saving Egypt. Filled with anger, he gradually forced greater and greater hardships upon them until they became Egypt’s slaves. Under such ruthless oppression, history tells us that thousands of people have died. Yet, God did not want this to happen. He was faithful in keeping His promises to the Patriarchs, so the Hebrews continued to grow and multiply. Satan has always tried to kill and devour and, through Pharaoh, he tried to destroy the people of God so they would not become a great nation through whom the Messiah would come. But the will of God always prevails. When Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill the Hebrew newborn baby boys, they did not obey him for they feared God more than Pharaoh (1:17). Because they obeyed God and did His will, they were rewarded (1:21). May God help us today to follow His will rather than Satan’s, and see the end of abortions – the killing of innocent babies.

The children of Israel may have thought God had forgotten them, but “God heard their groaning”. Even before they cried out to Him, He was planning their deliverance in His perfect timing. When Moses was born, he was a beautiful child and his godly mother must have sensed that God had a great plan for his life. By faith she hid him for three months (Hebrews 11:23). By faith she made him a little ark and, trusting that God would keep him from harm, she set him afloat on the Nile river (in which he was supposed to be thrown to drown, 1:22). God can even use the ungodly to accomplish His plan. Pharaoh’s own daughter (the right person) came (at the right time) to bathe (at the right place) and, by the leading of God, found Moses amongst the reeds. It is truly amazing that at the climax of Pharaoh’s anger and desire to kill the Hebrew boys, God, in His providence, had Moses growing up in Pharaoh’s own home and being raised as a prince where he had opportunities to learn about leadership, so he could eventually lead out the children of Israel. Then, because of his education he was to write the first five books of the Bible, the Torah (Acts 7:22).

When Moses murdered the Egyptian, he wrongly took the deliverance of his people into his own hands (cf. Acts 7:25). He did this out of the spirit of nationalism, which was the wrong motivation (later on we see positive motivation in Exodus 32:32). This was not God’s way, nor was it the right time for God to deliver them. However, the Lord used this incident to send him into the wilderness to learn for 40 years in the school of God.

Moses took a Midianite wife, Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel (meaning “friend of God”), the priest of Midian (area south-east of Sinai). The Midianites were godly descendants of Abraham through his son Midian by his wife Katurah, whom he married after Sarah died (Genesis 25:2). Reuel and his family kept the faith of Abraham and worshipped the One true God (Exodus 18:12).

The Lord accomplishes His plan faithfully, for He will always do what He promises. Their time of bondage was fulfilling prophecy, but God had promised to bring them out and this was their hope. God accomplishes His plan through people, even unlikely people such as Pharaoh’s daughter. He accomplishes His plan providentially through circumstances. The baby Moses needed someone to nurse him, and the Lord brought his godly mother back to him so he would know his heritage and be taught in the ways of the Lord. God accomplishes His plan victoriously as we see in His eventual deliverance of the children of Israel.

You are very valuable in God’s eyes, and He wants to accomplish His plan through your life. Our hearts and minds should be open to His leading.

Prayer

O Lord, as Israel cried out to You for deliverance, so we cry for the deliverance of the people of our generation from all bondage. May Your plan be fulfilled.