

Exodus Chapter 2 - John Karmelich

Greetings everyone and hope all is well. I wanted to state that as I studied this chapter, I pondered why does God want us to know all these facts about Moses' life before the main event (The Exodus itself)? I figure if God's God, He could have just killed all the Egyptians and told the Israelites, here is your next leader (Moses), now start walking toward Israel! Instead we get a chapter (this one) with highlights of Moses' life prior to the "burning bush" and prior to the actual Exodus event!

I assume most of us know this story or have some familiarity with the fact Moses was a survivor of the ordeal of killing all male Jewish babies. As a baby he got rescued by the daughter of the Egyptian king and after he grew up, he turned on the Egyptians in favor of his Jewish brethren. He fled Egypt after he murdered someone there. That was around the age of 40. He spent the next 40 years living in the desert where we learn is he became a shepherd, and married a local girl and lived with her family. Moses had a son during this time. It's interesting in that it's the background of the man God used to lead around 2 million people out of Egypt. This man (Moses) also penned the first five books of the bible. We get all that God wants us to know about the first 80 years of his life in one chapter. Then we get in effect four bible books that occur in the next 40 years of his life. That puts these 80 years in perspective!

All of that leads me back to my opening thought: Why does God want us to know all this background? In effect, God gave us the bible not only to explain who Jesus is and what He did, but to answer the big "now what" question, of "I believe Jesus is God, now what?" In effect, that's why I write these lessons to deal with "now what". So why does God want us know all this background stuff on Moses before he got used by God in a mighty way? I'd argue it's to teach us about what it means to be "called" by God. One of the things most of us Christians grasp is that God had His hand on our life, way before we gave our lives to serve Him. It's that God's preparing us for what He desires we do as a witness for Him. No we don't know in advance what that is, but we can look back at our lives and realize how He guided us the whole time in preparing us for what He desire. We rarely realize that early in life. However as we look back we can usually see how God has prepared us for what He desires we do in our life as we use our lives as a witness for Him.

The point of all of this is as we study how God prepared Moses for how God wanted to use him. That's a clue how God uses each of us. Yes, God did significant miracles to get Moses to where He could use him the way He wanted to. The same can be applied to you and me. If you don't consider us to be any special miracle, remember that for every baby that's conceived, millions of sperm that don't "get there". My simple point is all of us are miracles. We must be grateful for our lives no matter the circumstances and realize we've all received miracles and God has called us out of the world to be a witness for Him.

With that said, time to talk about Moses' life prior to all the "big events" we'll read over the rest of this book! The specific details given out of the first 80 years of Moses life are designed to show us how he was chosen just as you and I were chosen. As we read these details, consider that God chose each of us long before we realized we were saved.

Chapter 2 opens with discussing the fact he was born from the tribe of Levi. His parents are mentioned by name in Chapter 6, but not here. The reason is the emphasis on being chosen, so the focus is on how God was working even though He is not mentioned by name in this chapter, other than the fact He was aware the Israelites were in bondage and to state the obvious God was doing something about it just by the way Moses lived the first 80 years in preparation for the greatest delivery from bondage in history!

After he was born, that family had to deal with the fact that the Pharaoh ordered all male Jewish babies to be drowned in the Nile River. His parents somehow knew Moses was special. His mother hid him in an ark (same word as "the ark"). She placed him in the river where the Pharaoh's daughter usually took her bath. The mother was afraid to watch and left the scene. The Pharaoh's daughter found Moses and decided to keep the baby for herself. Moses' older sister was nearby, saw this and asked the "daughter" if she could fetch a Jewish mother to nurse the baby. That's how Moses was preserved and grew up in the Pharaoh's home. Remember the Pharaoh feared the Israelites rising up to overthrow the Egyptians and yet the future leader of that group was permitted to live in his house!

The scene then switches to about 40 years later. We don't know how much Moses knew of his history, but it appears by that age he was aware of his heritage. He saw the Israelites being slaves as he noticed an Egyptian beating one of them one day. Moses got angry at the "beater". When he thought the coast was clear, he killed the Egyptian. The next day he saw two Jewish men arguing. One of those two men asked Moses, "Are you going to kill me like you killed the Egyptian?" Moses realized "the gig was up" He fled out of Egypt to the Sinai Peninsula.

The cute part of the story is his future father in law had seven daughters. They worked as shepherds. It so happened as they were trying to water their sheep, other shepherds "cut in line". Moses appeared at that point and helped the women deal with the situation. The girls went home and told their father "an Egyptian helped us today". I can just see a father of seven daughters saying, "And you didn't invite him home for dinner?" Moses ended up marrying one of those girls, and the text includes the fact he had a son with her. In effect, Moses spent the next 40 years of his life being a shepherd.

OK most of us have seen the movie Ten Commandments. We know the story! Why did God put these details in the bible for us to learn? Why have 80 years of a man's life in one chapter? I'd argue Moses wasn't saved yet in the sense that He gave his life to serve God in the next chapter at the burning bush. I'd argue God was preparing Moses for the task that He wanted Moses to do! One of the hardest things for Christians to learn is God often give us "boring jobs" preparing us for how He desires to use us as a witness for Him. Almost all of us older Christians can look back at our lives prior to being saved as we can see how God was guiding our lives all that time. What we thought was boring or unnecessary, was a big preparation mission for life. What about the Christians who die young or tragically? The point is God is working through believers for His glory although we don't always understand how or why! We are just called to use our lives for His glory. The reason for it is up to Him. God doesn't expect us to be perfect, just willing to trust Him to guide our lives and use it for His glory! That's "it" for chapter 2!

If interested, there are two other links on this chapter. They are for a more detailed lesson that I wrote about 20 years ago. Of course, you're welcome to read that if you'd like. Either way, I'm grateful that you did read this! If you're new here, realize you're always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again, John