

“Melody” // Exodus 1:1–2:10 // *Rescue:* *The Book of Exodus #1*¹

[Exodus Bumper](#)

Announcement

Amen, amen! **Before we dive into the Word together**, let me invite you to join us for our **21 Days of Prayer and Fasting that starts THIS MONDAY**. Listen: This is one of the most important things we do because it puts us in a posture to ask God what he wants to do with us this year. You realize that what God wants to do this year is much more important than what **we** want to do. So we want to hear from him, right? By the way, just so we’re clear: We don’t fast and pray during special seasons like this to put God into a better mood to hear us. Rather, times of fasting and prayer put **us** in a better posture to *hear from him*. Let me say that again: *Prayer and fasting is not about enabling God to hear from us, but about enabling us to better hear from God* so we can pray more effectively, because the prayers that start in heaven are the ones heard by heaven.

Y’all, it was amazing ... I went back and reviewed what God had put in my heart to pray last year during the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting,

¹ Sources consulted: L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2020). Tyler Staton, “[Exodus: An Introduction](#)”, June 11, 2023, Bridgetown Church; Tim Mackie, “[The Book of Exodus - Part 1](#)”, January 15, 2016, The Bible Project; Tim Mackie, “[The Book of Exodus - Part 2](#)”, January 21, 2016, The Bible Project; Tim Keller, “[Preparing for Salvation](#),” The Gospel According to Moses, sermon preached at Redeemer Presbyterian, September 8, 2002; Joby Martin, “[Exodus - Week 1: Providence](#)”, January 4, 2015, The Church of Eleven22; Christian Dawson, “[The Villain and the Deceiver](#)”, June 18, 2023, Bridgetown Church.

and it was amazing to see how God had answered each of them. I made a short video explaining it, but the production team didn’t think it was good enough to show on THE BIG SCREEN, so they went with Rich’s story instead. I’ll be putting out mine on social media this week.

So, bottom line: I want you to participate with us. And ... I know that the whole idea of prayer and fasting is hard for some of you, particularly if you’re new to all this, so we’ve tried to make this as easy as possible for you. All you need to do is use the **Summit app and find the “Daily Revival” feature**. Just go here to the front of the app and connect “Daily Revival” and we’ll take it from there. If you can buy something on Amazon, you can do this.

These **21 days will culminate in a Regional Night of Prayer** on Jan. 31 at several of our campuses. We’ll have a short prayer service, and then people are invited to stay and pray, if they want, all the way up to midnight.

Now, some of you are like, “*I’m totally confused about this fasting thing. Am I supposed to not eat for three weeks?*” Well, let’s be honest; after the holidays, that might be good for some of us, but no, that’s not what we’re asking. I’m asking you to fast from food on Mondays during lunch for these three weeks, if you’re physically able. That will be powerful for us to do together as a church. If that’s not possible for you, there’s other ways you can fast—cutting out certain things from your life during these 21 days—desserts or social media or TV or whatever. We have ideas for that and other helpful ways you can lead your family on **summitchurch.com/prayer**.

Intro

OK ... if you have a Bible, and I hope you do, open it to Exodus chapter 1. We're starting a deep-dive study of the book of Exodus that will last several weeks.

Exodus defines salvation.

Some of you know that after seminary, I lived for a few years in Indonesia and had to learn the language on location after I got there; the IMB gave me a whopping one week of language training before dropping me off in a city 100 miles away from the nearest English native-language speaker. The only three phrases I felt really confident in saying were: *"Hello, my name is J.D. Where is your bathroom? My house is on fire."* The rest I learned on location.

Well, if you've ever learned a language like that, you know it's really easy to make a lot of embarrassing mistakes, because a lot of words have nuances and usage rules that aren't really communicated by the dictionary. For example, I heard someone use the word "cium," so I wrote it down in my little notebook (I carried around this little notebook and used it to write down words I heard but didn't understand), then I looked it up later and saw it means "to sniff" or "to smell," so I wrote that down beside it in my little notebook and looked for opportunities to use it. Well, that very evening, I was with a friend who had given his daughter some perfume for her birthday, and when she walked in the room it was obvious she was wearing it, so trying to be polite and make conversation, I said, "Your daughter *cium* very good," but when I said that, I noticed his expression change ... because the word "*cium*," used like that, means "kiss." "*Sir, your daughter kisses very well.*" So then, he and I had this weird conversation trying to figure out what I was trying to say, and eventually, he figured it out and he got the biggest kick out of it. Or the time I was trying to say "sneeze," ("bersin") but instead said "bersina," which means "commit adultery." I won't even tell you the

awkward situation that mistake created, but whatever you imagine, the real story is worse.

One other word that didn't really translate well into Indonesian was "**SALVATION**," primarily because they were Muslim and didn't really have a concept of salvation. They had a word for "rescue," but it implied different things than our understanding of "salvation," so every time you used the word, you'd have to give two or three sentences of explanation with it.

The book of Exodus is the story form of what "salvation" is. Did you know, the first time the word "salvation" is used in the Bible is Exodus 15? And when Moses uses it, you're supposed to understand it based on the stories of Exodus.

The book depicts our salvation in two different ways: The first 19 or so chapters of Exodus illustrate it through the stories; the second 20 or so chapters reveal it through the instructions Moses gave about the laws and the temple.

Or to change the metaphor, Exodus establishes for us the "melody" of salvation, a melody we'll hear repeated over and over in the Bible. In a lot of contexts, copying a melody is considered bad. Some of you may remember that in 2016, Ed Sheeran was awarded a Grammy, "The Song of the Year," for his song "Thinking Out Loud," but then he got sued by the Marvin Gaye family because of how similar the song was to Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On." The lyrics were new, they said, but they contended that the melody and the chord progression were the same. (Ed Sheeran contested that in court and won, by the way, by actually bringing a guitar into court and demonstrating that a lot of music followed this same chord structure.) If you're writing original music, copying a melody is bad, but all the Bible writers follow the same melody established in Exodus, because the Bible has one author, God, and he's writing one salvation "song." He establishes the melody in Exodus, and then throughout the rest of the Old Testament, when

God would remind people of his salvation, or promise future salvation, he would point them back to the Exodus. The Exodus is the single most often referred-to event in the Bible.

So we're going to study this book. The book is built, in large part, of course, around the story of Moses, and so it shows us two things: first, what salvation is all about—the big picture of salvation; and, secondly, how God is working in your individual life. By the way, a lot of people try to understand the latter (what God is doing in their lives) without understanding the former (what he's doing, big picture, in the world), but that won't work, because it's only by understanding the bigger picture of God's will that you can understand his will for your life.

Exodus 1:1: "These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah ..." and then a bunch of other names, some of which are hard to pronounce.

Exodus opens up with a genealogy, which is not a super exciting way to open a book ... I'm finishing up writing a book manuscript right now, and none of my editors have ever said, "You should consider starting this book with a genealogy." For those of you looking for baby names, however, it's got some good ones—Asher, Judah, Simeon, and a few others like Gad and Naphtali. If you want your kid to hate you, name him Gad or Naphtali.

But here's why the book opens with a genealogy. The previous book, Genesis, starts its conclusion with genealogy, and the author is establishing this book as a sequel. This book, Exodus, is how God fulfilled his promise to the main character of Genesis, which was Abraham.

Genesis, you see, tells the story of how God made a promise to an old man named Abraham to bless him and make a great nation. He and

his wife struggled for a while; they were both old and had never been able to have kids, but God worked a miracle. Isaac, Abraham's son, also struggled with infertility, but eventually God miraculously gave him two sons, Jacob and Esau, and then Jacob had twelve sons, and each of them had a big family and soon, by the time you get to Genesis, the Abrahamic clan was quite sizable. But then, when things start looking good for Abraham's descendants, a huge famine struck the land where they lived, and they were all about to starve, but "luckily," Jacob's sons had sold one of their brothers, Joseph, into slavery, and through a crazy series of events he'd ended up as the vice president of Egypt, and from that position he was able to save the rest of his brothers and their kids from starvation. And they all moved to Egypt, where they lived for a few hundred years. So, **vs. 7:** The people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land [of Egypt] was filled with them.

But, **vs. 8** Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

For years, you see, Abraham's descendants had been protected by pharaohs who knew about Joseph's role in saving Egypt, and out of gratitude to him, they'd protected Israel. But then a pharaoh arose who *didn't* know Joseph (he hadn't paid attention in history class), **9** And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. **10** Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land."

11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses. (#GDTBATH) This was the basketball capital of the ancient world, and ancient historians have found this hashtag (#GDTBATH) written out everywhere in hieroglyphics.

12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. 13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves 14 and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field.

15 Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 16 "When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." 17 But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. 18 So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the male children live?" 19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them."

By the way, I love that: "The Hebrew women aren't like Egyptian women. They are **vigorous** and when they go into labor, they just pop 'em out like Jiffy Lube before we can even get there." When Veronica was in labor with our third child, Ryah, we almost didn't make it to the hospital. About 5:30 in the morning, she woke me up and said, "It's time to go." Based on our first two, I figured we had at least four to five hours before we were seeing a baby, so on the way to Durham Regional Hospital, I thought, *I wonder if I can talk her into stopping off at the Starbucks ... 'cause, you know, that would make my morning go a lot better ... You know, I could be a better help to HER if I'm more alert.* But then I looked over at her and thought better of suggesting that. Good thing, too, because the hospital records us entering at 5:45 and at 5:55 I was holding my third child, Ryah, in my arms. That's because my wife is vigorous. Maybe she's got some Hebrew in her somewhere. I don't know. But, either way, **vs. 20 So God dealt well**

with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. (Even in slavery, God continues to fulfill his promise to Abraham).

22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."

Since the midwives were not cooperating with his genocidal plan, he commanded every Egyptian in the land: If you see a Hebrew infant boy, you are commanded to cast them into the river. He makes all Egypt complicit in his murderous plan.

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. 2 The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child (Or, in Hebrew, a beautiful child. By the way, this is funny when you consider that Moses is the one writing this passage. Moses was like, "Hey, I was a pretty good-looking kid ... don't hate the player." When Moses' mom saw he was a strong, good-looking kid), she hid him three months. 3 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. 4 And his sister (Miriam) stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. 5 Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river ... She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. 6 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." 7 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?" 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go."

So the girl went and called the child's mother. 9 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." (How's that for irony? Moses' mom not only got her baby restored to her, she got paid to raise him.) So the woman

took the child and nursed him. 10 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."

The rest of the chapter describes how Moses grows up in two households—in a Hebrew household, nursed by his own mother, but also as the adopted child of Pharaoh's daughter, learning all the ways of Egypt, and when he comes of age he struggles with which people he really belongs to. And then he sees an Israelite being abused by an Egyptian soldier, and he kills the soldier. Well, when Pharaoh hears that, he's scandalized that Moses took the side of an Israelite over an Egyptian, and he puts a death sentence on Moses' head.

But the Israelites also don't want anything to do with Moses, so Moses is now a man without a home, and so he flees to the wilderness where he lives in isolation for the next 40 years, tending the sheep of a man named Jethro. For 40 more years, the plan of God seems to stall as the children of Israel groan under their oppression and slavery.

But the chapter ends this way: 24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25 God saw the people of Israel—and God knew. (That's a phrase you're going to see over and over in Exodus: God saw, God heard, and God knew.)

So, two questions I want to consider:

I. What do we learn about salvation?

- Let me just get right to it: It's hard to imagine a clearer illustration of our salvation than what we see presented in Exodus 1–2.

(1) Moses rescued the people from the bondage caused by their sin. The bondage of Israel in Exodus gives us a picture of what sin

does to us. Sin starts with enjoyment and pleasure, but then it turns into monotony and then outright destruction.

Monotony: In vv. 13–14 of chapter 1, the words we translate as "work," "service," and "slave" are all one Hebrew word, "**abad.**" It's a literary device designed to give these verses a monotonous tone. (Read) 13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel (abad) as (abad) 14 and made their lives bitter with (abad), in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of (abad) in the field. The word "abad" is repeated seven times in these verses. Sin almost always starts out enjoyably, but it turns into monotony, never fully delivering on what it promised.

And then it turns destructive. Pharaoh, their captor, started to literally murder them. That's what sin does. Pornography starts as a secret habit that you are ashamed of. Then, it becomes an addiction you can't control. Then, it destroys your relationship with your spouse and starts to change how you see people of the opposite sex. Jesus said it plainly: "The thief comes to kill, steal, and destroy." He doesn't lead with destruction, of course—no hunter leads with destruction. You lead with bait. Over the years I've compared Satan's use of sin to how they kill a wolf in Alaska ... You enjoy it, for a while, but your soul becomes numb to the wounds it inflicts upon you as you lacerate your soul to shreds.

Now, good news: We have a delivering God, but this story starts in slavery, showing our captivity to sin.

Now, you say, "Wait a minute, Pastor, hold up. This slavery sounds pretty unjust. You're making it sound like it was their fault." Well, in one sense, it was: The sons of Israel were in Egypt, after all, because they'd sold Joseph into slavery. That act represents how all of us end up in bondage to sin because we failed to trust and obey God.

But, I will concede that, on a human level, this slavery was unjust, and that reveals another aspect of our salvation: **(2) Moses rescued the people from Pharaoh's oppression.**

Some of you have suffered because of things done to you—horrible things. Abuse. Neglect. Your parents, a friend, a teacher, an older brother, a spouse—someone harmed you. I'm not saying it was OK what that person did to you, or that it wasn't really that bad, or that person shouldn't be held accountable. (Pharaoh, you'll see, gets punished mightily for his oppression of the Israelites.) I'm just saying there's a God ready to lead you out of this captivity of oppression. He's ready to redeem you and heal you and set you free. You can walk in freedom and newness of life and blessing, but you've got to accept God's offer to do so. You don't have to play the victim your whole life. Listen, it wasn't your fault what that person did to you, but it's your choice whether you're going to let it keep you down in the future. God has given us, Peter says, "all we need for life and godliness." All you need to walk in freedom and victory, to get rid of your shame and your oppression and your captivity, is in Jesus. Whom the Son sets free is free indeed.

So whether you are in bondage because of your own sin or because of what others have done to you, today can be your day of freedom. And that's good news, amen?

Write this down: *God delivers us not only from the bad things we have done to ourselves, but from the bad things others have done to us.*

3. Moses was a deliverer raised up from among God's people.

He wasn't Superman coming from another planet. He was an Israelite, born to an Israelite mom and dad. Just like another Messiah one day who would be born of a young Jewish girl, Mary, and our Savior would be someone of our own flesh and blood.

4. Moses was born during a season when the "king" had declared death for all infants.

When Moses was born, Pharaoh had declared that all infant boys had to be murdered. Who else does that remind you of? Of course! When Jesus was born, Herod had made a decree that all Hebrew baby boys under the age of 2 should be killed. And do you remember where Jesus' parents fled with him to escape that death sentence? Egypt.

5. Moses, the deliverer, came through water. That's literally, **2:10**, what his name means: "Saved through water." By the way, for the writer of Exodus, that's supposed to remind you of how God saved his people through the ark during Noah's flood, recorded in Genesis 6. By the way, want to know something amazing? The Hebrew word used for the little basket Moses was put in—**vs. 5**, was ARK. The author literally calls Moses' basket an ARK. This salvation-through-water theme will come up again in Exodus 14–15 when Israel is delivered from the Egyptian army through the Red Sea, and New Testament writers will say that event, being delivered through the Red Sea, prefigures the baptism-with-water that starts out our Christian life.²

6. Moses, the deliverer, was rejected by his people. We see it already in chapter 2; we'll see it even more explicitly in later chapters. And that's just like Jesus, who "came unto his own, and his own received him not."

7. Moses was more than a mere messenger; he was a mediator of the covenant.

Moses not only taught them about God's laws, but he's going to confront Pharaoh on their behalf and lead them out of bondage. Then he'll lay out the pattern for a blood sacrifice that forgives sins, and then after that, he will lay out for them the plans for a temple where they can meet with God directly. And then, after Israel sins and fails to hold up their end of the

² 1 Cor 10:1–4; 1 Peter 3:18–21

covenant, Moses intercedes on their behalf to keep God from showing judgment on them.³

Who does that remind you of? Jesus walked the same path of Moses. To give his first, biggest, and greatest sermon, he goes up “on the Mount,” just like Moses did, and gives his own take on the Law. The most repeated phrase he uses is, “You have heard it said” (referring to Moses’ law), “but I say unto you,” referring now to his law that he is giving. Moses engraved his law on two stone tablets; Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, Paul says, writes his law on our hearts. Like Moses, Jesus talked about the need for blood sacrifice to forgive sins. Unlike Moses, Jesus didn’t point us elsewhere for that; he was that in himself.⁴

Like Moses, Jesus provided a temple where we could meet with God. Unlike Moses, Jesus didn’t merely give us plans to build one, but became the Temple where we encounter God’s presence. He was the altar where we find forgiveness of sins.

Like Moses, Jesus now intercedes on our behalf at the right hand of God, but unlike Moses, he pleads his perfect obedience in our place, so God always hears him.

8. Before bringing salvation, Moses wandered in the wilderness for 40 years because he’d killed a man. This parallels the 40 years that Israel would have to wander in the wilderness before going to the Promised Land, because of their sin. More importantly, it parallels Jesus’ wandering the wilderness for 40 days before he began his ministry of deliverance. Remember, after his baptism, that’s where he went—into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan directly. But unlike Moses and Israel, Jesus did not wander in the wilderness because of his sin, but because of ours. And in that

wilderness, he was tempted by Satan directly and resisted him completely every single time.

9. Moses didn’t just save them from something, but to something. Moses didn’t just lead them out of slavery to Egypt; he led them to a Promised Land “flowing with milk and honey.” The book of Exodus is arranged in a very interesting way: The first 19 chapters are all about their deliverance, and the second 20 or so give the rules of worship. About half and half, and that’s because **God was not just saving them from something; he was saving them to something.** I know that in all the movies that depict Moses confronting Pharaoh (whether you are thinking of the Charlton Heston version or the Val Kilmer version), all Moses says is, “Let my people go,” but that is not really what he said. What he *ACTUALLY* says is, “God says, ‘Let my people go, that they might worship me.’”⁵ They’re not just being saved from something, but to something; they are going from the bondage of captivity to the joy and freedom of worship.

In the same way, Jesus said, “I came not just to give you life, but to give it more abundantly.” His objective was not just to keep you out of hell, but to put heaven into you.

Some of you have never experienced this part of the Christian life, and that’s why your Christian life lacks joy. That’s why you don’t love worship or love your time with God. If you’re gonna do this thing, you should do it all the way. Don’t just focus on what you’re saved from; dive into what you’re saved to.

Charles Spurgeon used to say, “There’s nobody more miserable than the half-committed Christian. If you’re gonna be saved, be saved all the way.”

³ L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, 78–88

⁴ In Luke 9:31, in his account of the Transfiguration

⁵ Cf. Exodus 10:2

It's the New Year—a lot of you have made a decision to come back to church. Let me tell you—church is a TERRIBLE hobby. You gotta get up on a Sunday morning and get showered and get dressed and fight your way through the parking lot, which is why some of you will do this for a couple of weeks and then say, “Meh ... I'm gonna stay at home.” Don't make the Christian life a hobby that you add in on Sundays. If you're gonna follow Jesus, go all-in. Put him at the center of your life. Learn his Word. Fellowship with him. Find joy in him.

N.T. Wright said, *“There are two liberation journeys in Exodus. The first is to get Israel out of slavery and the second is to get slavery out of Israel.”* The second is much more important than the first.

There, I gave you nine ways these two chapters set up salvation. Have I made my point?

Which leads me to the second question. Much shorter.

II. What do we learn about God's leadership in our lives?

Moses illustrates several things about how God is at work in our lives, individually. And I want to warn you, everybody wants to jump right to this part. ***“What's all this mean for my life? Make it practical, Pastor. What does all this mean for when I go to work on Monday?”*** In fact, most sermons I've ever heard on Moses focus only on this part. I looked in my library and most sermons on Moses had titles like these: “Holy Moses! God Uses Stammerers, Too.” Or, “Moses, the Original Waterbender.” Or, “Three Ways to Lead like Moses.”

But please don't do that. Because like I said at the beginning, you can't understand God's will for your life until you understand the bigger picture of what God is doing in the world. Many of us say, “I want to know God's will for my life.” But the more important question is *“How does my life fit into God's will?”* Or, the way I heard Louie

Giglio say it at Passion last week: *“It's not ‘God's will for my life,’ but ‘my life for God's will.’”* That's where you should start.

And his will? He's working salvation in you and through you. He's bringing you through an Exodus into a Promised Land of faith and obedience. Where you trust him. Where you learn to be satisfied by his presence alone. Not just taking you out of Egypt, but getting Egypt out of you; not just taking you to heaven, but putting heaven into you.

You've got to always interpret everything he's doing in your life *through that lens*. So, here's two quick lessons we learn about God's work in our lives from these opening chapters.

A. Even when it seems God is not working, he is!

This theme is so familiar to us here—so common a refrain in God's melody in our lives—that I won't spend much time on it, but in all these places in Israel's story where it seems like God is absent, he is not.

Was it just an accident that Moses' sister happened to put the basket into the Nile at the place where Pharaoh's daughter would be the one to find it? Was it? Say it: NO.

Was it an accident that this was one of the few people in Egypt willing to defy Pharaoh's command? NO. God was there, guiding the currents, protecting the baby Moses—the Nile is one of the worst places in the world for crocodiles.

Was it “pure accident” that Moses would grow up in Pharaoh's house where he'd form the relationships and gain the knowledge to save Israel one day? NO. Because he was raised in Pharaoh's house, he'd get military training where he'd learn how to organize large groups of people; because he was raised in Pharaoh's house, he'd have learned to read and write, which most Hebrews couldn't do, and so he'd be

able to systematize God's laws and write five of the most influential Bible books, Genesis through Deuteronomy.

Was that all pure accident?

Friend, in the same way, he's always been quietly at work in your life, doing the same kinds of things. In the pain, in what felt like chaos, his invisible hand has been writing a story, and it's time you woke up to that story.

What do you see in your life right now as random, or chaos, or just unfair? *I'm not saying it wasn't unfair or that God somehow delighted in your pain.* I'm just saying that even in the chaos and the pain, you have a redeeming God who is writing a story that will transform all of it, if you let him. Stop blaming God for your brokenness and come to God for healing from it—he's the only one that can heal you from it. Yes, lament what happened to you. Learn from it wherever you can; confront where you must. But don't stay wallowing in Egypt. A God stronger than Pharaoh is ready to lead you to a Promised Land of blessing. It's time to go!

Second thing...

B. God saves through weakness, not strength. Summit, this is another theme so common, another refrain so dominant in the melody God plays in our lives, that again, I'm just gonna mention it.

But in this story, God uses none of the things the world considers strong as part of his salvation plan.

- Did you notice, all the heroes in this story are women? This is not to take away from the role that godly, brave, male hero-type leaders play in God's plan. You're gonna see Moses become a man's man in the coming chapters ... but here at the beginning, it's all women. And back then, women were unquestionably considered second-class. And he uses not just women, but slave

women, and not just slave women, but midwives, which historians tell us became midwives because they couldn't have their own kids.⁶

- We even learn their names, not "Shipwreck" and "Pooey," as I joked; their names, Shiphrah and Puuah, actually mean "beautiful" and "sparkle." Two beautiful, sparkling women overlooked by everyone else, but mightily used in this story. By contrast, we're never given Pharaoh's name. He's the most powerful man in the world, but he's unnamed in God's universe, while two faithful, obedient midwives from the slave class are known and celebrated.
- And then you have Pharaoh's daughter—an Egyptian woman, a Gentile woman, part of the "bad guys" who finds Moses and saves him.

God brought salvation through poor, infertile women and a Gentile woman. Don't you see what this is teaching?

Even as we get into the life of Moses, it's not the advantages Moses had experienced that became the means of salvation. In fact, if you look real quick back at vs. 20 in chapter 1, you'll see that Moses, in writing his biography, skips over his entire experience of growing up in Pharaoh's household. He never even mentions it! Hey, listen, if I had been a poor, adopted immigrant kid who was rescued off the street by the president's daughter and grew up in the White House, and I was writing my own autobiography, I'd definitely include a few chapters about that. In fact, I'd probably put it on the cover: "LESSONS I LEARNED IN THE WHITE HOUSE."

Yet, Moses never brings it up; it's his insignificant time in the wilderness that he talks about. Because there, in the wilderness, not in Pharaoh's house, is where he learned something much more

⁶ See how in 1:21, it says that only *after* this act of faith did God give them their own families?

important than the arts of Egyptian power. That was where he learned to walk with and trust in God.

This is a melody we'll hear all throughout the Bible: God uses the weak and he saves through weaknesses. It was the melody first established in Genesis: God uses a sterile old man and woman to found a great nation. Not once, but twice. He then chooses Jacob, the weak second born, not Esau, the strong older son, to bring the blessing through. Then, of Jacob's two wives, he chose Leah, the ugly one, over Rachel, the beautiful one, and gave her the Messianic line. And now, to start off Exodus, we've got a series of midwives and Gentiles in the salvation story; Moses' advantages amount to almost nothing, but the wilderness where he met God is what is important.

Friend, don't waste your wilderness. Stop spending your mornings scrolling through social media. It's time to discover what God has for your life. Meet him every day. Reach for your Bible to see what he's doing. That's the most important thing that is going on in your life.

Here's what I want you to do: 1. Start a quiet time, a time every morning that you meet with God. 2. Join us for the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting, and get serious about hearing from God.

You in?

Bow Heads:

- You see the picture of salvation. Are you ready to receive Jesus? Raise hands. **READY**
- Are you ready to join us in the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting? Commit to doing a quiet time every day of this and joining us!