

Exodus 2

Moses is Born

- And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi.
 - It was in the law of the Israelites to marry within their tribe so that the inheritance is kept within the tribe
 - We might ask – at a time like this, would someone really want to get married and have kids? Even in tough times, life goes on
- So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months.
 - Does it mean if he wasn't beautiful, she'd kill him? Of course not. All kids are beautiful in their parents' eyes and she could not do it. Imagine how she lived for those 3 months – if he cried she would have to stuff out his voice. So she tried her best to take care of him. Probably she prayed so much in those 3 months. But after three months, she could no longer hide him.
- But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank.
 - She did everything she could to make sure he lives – an ark of bulrushes – a very thin plant, to make sure it floats safely. Asphalt and pitch to make sure that it's waterproof and no water could get in. Put him by the reeds where it's not waves and rocks so he doesn't move too much. In having faith that an Egyptian would find him and take him in.
 - Hebrews 11:23 – “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.”
 - She prayed, but she also worked
- And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.
 - Imagine his sister, who is so young, and she watches her brother to see what will happen to him. Imagine that her mom told her “God will take care of him” and the girl wants to see “how will God take care of him” – she learned faith from her mother.
- Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river.
 - Is this luck? There's no such thing. There is the will of God.
 - Is it luck that at the right time, Pharaoh's daughter came out to bathe?
 - Is it luck that out of anyone that could find him, it was Pharaoh's daughter? A regular Egyptian would not have been able to do anything!
 - Is it luck that when she opened the ark, Moses wept?
 - Is it luck that she loved him? Had compassion on him?
 - Is it luck that she would even go so far as to ask her father for permission to keep him?
 - Of course not! This is the will of God

- And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”
 - Compassion comes from God
 - How did she know he’s Hebrew? She’s smart... who else would throw their child in the river
- 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?” And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Go.” So the maiden 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.
 - Look at how God works. Imagine this mother is at home crying, in her head her son has died. She put him in the river. She tried her hardest but in the end he died. And her daughter comes in and says “come mom and nurse your son. Your son is alive.”
 - And Pharaoh says “this child will live”
 - Yesterday she was nursing her dead son and now she’s nursing her living son and she’s getting paid for it! And if she wants to nurse him well, as Pharaoh’s daughter’s son, then she also must eat well! So she came out of this situation on top.
- And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son.
 - We don’t know if Pharaoh’s daughter saw him often, or got to know him, or what. But definitely she lived a life of prayer and a spiritual life. Because after he grew and went to be Pharaoh’s daughter’s son, he loses his relationship with the Hebrews – and yet, he will know who God is. And who Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are.
- So she called his name Moses, saying, “Because I drew him out of the water.”
 - He didn’t have a name before this. He was never named because he was supposed to be killed – why name your son if he will be dead?
 - Moses means “son of water” and this is a spiritual meaning for us because this water has a secret meaning. Death to life – and for us, we see Baptism.
 - Moses’ mom spent at the most 2-3 years with him, Pharaoh’s daughter the rest of the 40 years. And yet, whose teaching stuck? The spiritual teaching of his mother, or the worldly teaching of Pharaoh’s daughter?
 - Mom represents the teaching of the Church, and her milk represents the word of God as St Paul says: “I gave you milk” (1 Cor 3:2) Pharaoh’s daughter represents the teachings of the world
 - Many Protestants today say “let’s not baptize him until he’s 12 and see what he thinks” – but we don’t think like that. For us, he takes the Blood of Christ from 40 days old and the Body as soon as he has his first teeth. He is taught to see the icons and smell the incense in the liturgy. This is the importance of a spiritual upbringing.
 - We have the hymns and liturgies and Agpeya playing on TV when he is a kid
 - We have a hymns class even from Preschool – even before they can talk, we are teaching them hymns! At home they should be hearing spiritual songs and hymns.

Moses Flees to Midian

- Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens.
 - He did not forget after all these 40 years that the Hebrews are his brothers. Even though he is born Egyptian and grew up in Pharaoh's house.
- And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.
 - Moses' story starts here with a rocky start – he has no faith here. He looked left and right and saw no one, so he killed the Egyptian. Didn't he think that God was watching him?
 - He is also depending on his own strength and his own knowledge. He sees himself as the savior of the Hebrews and he's gonna save them from the Egyptians. He has pride
 - Spiritual person never goes to violence
 - We never saw him praying
 - Needless to say, he failed **hard** in the beginning
- And when he went out the second day
 - As if to be proud of what he did, going out to see if there are any other problems to solve
- behold, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?"
 - Seems like the Hebrews' problem was not just the Egyptians, but even within themselves they had problems!
 - When the Church is persecuted, God takes care of it. But when the children of the Church are in conflict, what can be done? It's much worse.
- Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"
 - Imagine how Moses felt – people knew! When he looked left and right and saw no one... someone was there and someone saw.
 - And he realizes that he has lost everything. He lost the Pharaonic family by killing an Egyptian and lost the Hebrews who now see him as a murderer.
- So Moses feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!" When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.
 - God will change a lot in Moses, piece by piece. By the end of the story, Moses' pride will be gone, his fears will be gone, his resorting to violence will be gone, he will go to prayer for everything.
 - This gives us hope that God can change us and transform us and perfect us
 - If you have something in your life you are struggling to change or fix or transform, first know that you CAN change, and know that God is the One that can change you.
 - Failure is the beginning of success
- Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. And they came and drew water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.
 - Moses doesn't like to see people be wronged
 - He has some virtues, but he doesn't really know God yet.
- When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "How is it that you have come so soon today?"

- Seems like this was happening every day
- And they said, “An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock.” So he said to his daughters, “And where is he? Why is it that you have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.” Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses. And she bore him a son. He called his name Gershom, for he said, “I have been a stranger in a foreign land.”
 - We can consider this to be Moses’ second death
 - Moses is going into a 40 year lesson here. And the most important lesson for him to learn in the next 40 years is humility – because all of Moses’ problems stem from his pride and from his Pharaonic way of thinking. But God will not let someone prideful do His work.
 - When we have problems in our life or in service, when a service is not found to be successful, it always comes back to pride. But the Moses we know from later in Exodus, who is humble, is easy to work with.
- Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.
 - Before, they were in bondage and in bitterness – but they didn’t cry out to God. Someone might be annoyed or upset. And one day, he prays and he finds that his problem is solved. And he might ask “God did you leave me for all these years” – well... did you cry out to God? Did you ask God? “Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7)
- So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
 - Did God forget? Of course not, but in order for Moses to simplify in writing this book for the people to understand, he personifies God. “remembered” here means that God brought this issue in its time
 - What covenant?
 - Genesis 15:13-16: “Then He said to Abram: ‘Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.’”
- And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.
 - Again, this is personified language in order for us to understand.