

Text: Exod. 1:22 – 2:10

Title: “God provides deliverance through Pharaoh’s daughter”

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Introduction: Artapanus is the name of a 2nd century BC Jewish historian, whom the Ptolemaic pharaohs of that day commissioned to author a history of the Jewish people. Most of his work did not survive the fire that destroyed the famous Alexandrian library, but some of his history is recoverable in the quotations of other works.

We know that Moses must have been born around 80 years prior to the Exodus, and that 1 Kings 6 dates the Exodus to around 1445 BC. So Moses was born around 1525 BC. We learn from Artapanus that at this time of history, Egypt was divided up into sub-kingdoms ruled by different pharaohs. For this reason, Dr. David Rohl puts the timeframe of our passage into what is known as the second intermediate period of Egyptian history, between the 13th and 18th dynasties (*Exodus: Myth or History?*, 131). He has found historical evidence that suggests that pharaohs were relatively weak in this time period because of the power of the viziers, which he traces to the role Joseph (the Egyptian Ankhu) and his sons played in Egypt (133).

Artapanus names the pharaoh of this passage and his daughter. He also names a contemporary pharaoh of another region, whom Egyptologists recognize as the 29th ruler of the 13th dynasty. This pharaoh eventually unifies Lower Egypt, and how he accomplished that is explained by the Jewish historian. According to Artapanus, Moses’s Egyptian stepmother marries this very pharaoh. His name was Sobekhotep IV.

One of the artifacts from this period is the Wadi Hammamat stela, which lists Sobekhotep IV's four sons. The first listed is called Sobekhotep Mio. Dr. Rohl says of this name, "it is tantalizing to consider that this might be an actual mention of the boy Moses, here being referred to by his pet name or hypocoristicon 'Mio'" (137). Rohl points out that it is significant that this son did not succeed his father to the throne, which also fits the biblical narrative very well.

On the eastern bank of the Pelusiac Branch of the Nile, in the region of the delta area called Avaris, stood a royal palace and temple of this region's pharaoh. The area had become overrun with Semites, and for this reason this ruler was endeavoring to use his power to kill male Israeli newborns. The midwives had successfully frustrated his efforts for a time. But as a result of the new command of 1:22, many little boys lost their lives.

Dr. Rohl notes this finding from archaeological evidence at Tell ed-Daba for this time period: "Strangely, there were far more burials of infants and young children (50%) than normal (25%) for this sort of ancient civic society. Moreover, there were more females than males in the adult grave population. For every three females there were only two males. Where had the adult males gone? The Bible provides the answer" (127).

Dr. Rohl is referring to our passage, which details this answer. Although many infants died in this horrific time, one little one came floating down the river to the royal residence at just the right time for just the right reason. And although powerfully ironic, what we find in this answer too is that God provides deliverance through Pharaoh's daughter. I want us to note four things from the passage about her this morning.

I. This deliverer was the daughter of the destroyer (1:22 – 2:3).

Illustration: At our ACCC meeting last October, the Council approved a resolution against our society's "Culture of Death" [available at <https://acc4truth.org/2019/11/19/culture-of-death/>]. It concludes: "Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 78th Annual Convention, October 22-24, 2019, at Faith Chapel, Carlisle, PA, resolves to oppose the culture of death by proclaiming the Christ of whom the Apostle John says in John 1:4, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." We encourage Christians to publicly stand for the biblical position on suicide, PAD, euthanasia, and abortion, while ministering with grace to those who have been harmed by the culture of death. We also urge Christians to support political candidates and laws which oppose these forms of murder."

Application: The world's culture is filled with death. Where does the world's culture of death come from? Very simply, it comes from its ruler's domination. Heb. 2:14-15, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Jesus through death destroyed death. Bryan and Anna Henderson's hymn, "Praise the Mighty King," put this wonderful and powerfully ironic truth this way:

"To the cross our Lord was nailed
And with each blow the darkness failed.
Death has lost its sting today,
As Christ has giv'n to us the Way."
"From the darkness Satan's zeal

Has bruised with death the Savior's heel.
From a cross of crimson red
Our Savior crushed the serpent's head."

Deliverance comes through the daughter of the destroyer in our passage. And that is how our deliverance from death for us all had to come. It came through the daughter or seed of the destroyer, Satan - the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Truly, God is able to cause the wrath of His enemy to serve His own praise. The eye of faith must remember this is true, when the victories of demons seem overwhelmingly intimidating.

C. H. Mackintosh: "Faith can stand and look on at Satan putting forth the plenitude of his power. . . . It knows that God is stronger than Satan, and it can therefore quietly wait for the full manifestation of that superior strength, and, in thus waiting, find its victory and its settled peace" (2:10-11).

II. This deliverer was a humane person (2:4-6).

Illustration: Have you ever stopped to think about what the word *inhumane* means? What makes an inhumane act specifically inhumane? The Noah Webster's 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* defined the word *humane* this way: "Having the feelings and dispositions proper to man; having tenderness, compassion, and a disposition to treat others with kindness; particularly in relieving them when in distress, or in captivity, when they are helpless or defenseless; kind; benevolent."

During World War 2, Winston Churchill was honored by the University of Rochester with an honorary doctorate. In response he gave a radio address on June 16, 1941, from London to America. The day before the British troops in

North Africa had lost half of their tanks on the first day of Operation Battleaxe, in the hopes of freeing Tobruk from Rommel. The operation ultimately would be unsuccessful.

Here is part of what Churchill said in that radio address: "The destiny of mankind is not decided by material computation. When great causes are on the move in the world, stirring all men's souls, drawing them from their firesides, casting aside comfort, wealth and the pursuit of happiness in response to impulses at once awe-striking and irresistible, we learn that we are spirits, not animals, and that something is going on in space and time, and beyond space and time, which, whether we like it or not, spells duty."

Application: Like it or not, this deliverer's basic sense of humanity called her to duty. The ability to be touched by a beautiful baby, a baby's cry, a young sister concerned for the helpless child, all of these are a blessed part of what it means to be human. They are that because we are more than animals with appetites. We are God's image-bearers with affections that can hear the call to duty. Our appetites desire rest, comfort, warmth, food, drink, sexual pleasure, and entertainments. Our duty is often to set these things aside for more important things. This is especially true for the believer, whose duty it is to do good to all men, especially those who are of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).

Timothy was a believer who lived like this. Of him Paul would say, "I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own things, and not the things that are Jesus Christ's." It was part of Timothy's nature, his duty as a born again image-bearer, selflessly to care for the things that belong to Christ. It is ours too.

III. This deliverer was the employer of Moses's mother (2:7-9).

Illustration: Have you ever experienced the helpless feeling of losing a child in a crowd? That happened to us at the Texas state fair once with Brandon. There are few feelings worse than not knowing that your little one is ok.

Application: Moses's mom and dad must have felt that feeling. Heb. 11:23 tells us, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." It is interesting that this passage describes the faith of the period of hiding, but not the faith of building this little waterproof ark and sending it down the river. I believe this part of the record took more faith to execute, because now there is a complete relinquishing of control. At times, we have done all we can do. And then we must simply trust the Lord. In those times, Jesus never fails.

These verses teach us at least two important truths about this life of faith. First, faith is always hard, not easy. It is not easy to give up control to God. And second, faith always pleases God. He rewards Moses's mom with the privilege of raising her son during the most formative years of his life, and with a paycheck to do it. Hebrews 11 is clear that the faithful are sometimes called to die in faith without having received yet the promise. But the wonderful thing about eyes of faith is that they can see the promise's fulfilment, though it is not yet received. It will be worth it all when we see Christ. Trust before seeing is what faithfulness is about.

IV. This deliverer was an important influence on Moses (2:10).

Illustration: Stephen noted in Acts 7:22, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." Dr. Rohl follows the Egyptian rec-

ord of this time and concludes that Moses became a mighty Egyptian prince. Stephen emphasizes the education Moses received because of the influence of Pharaoh's daughter.

Here is what the Egyptologist says about that, "These were not nurseries as we understand them but much more like training schools for aspiring rulers. It was there that the royal children were educated in the arts of kingship and international diplomacy. Moses would have learned to read and write both the formal hieroglyphs of the monuments and the cursive script of everyday documents written on papyrus, which we today call hieratic. He may even have learned to read Akkadian – the *lingua franca* of the great region" (138-139). Rohl believes that Hammurabi's famous law code would have been one of Moses's subjects of study.

Application: I can only imagine that Moses's family would have rather had him home. Yet God had a purpose in all of this difficulty. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and His ways than our ways. We must trust Him.

Conclusion: This account of the God's deliverance of one in the midst of this massacre of cruel death points us to Christ. The tyrant of Jesus's day, Herod, also lost his temper and many little ones died (Matt. 2:16). One little Deliverer escaped Bethlehem that tragic first Christmas season.

Jesus is the Deliverer in whom was life, and the life was the light of men. As tragic as the cruel death of many little boys is, any person's death no matter how old is ultimately no less tragic if it is a death with no deliverer.

Death threatens us all; but there is a victory of deliverance over the grave in the work of Christ (1 Cor. 15:55-57, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ"). Do you know that victory over sin and the fear of sin's death? Have you been delivered? One need only go to the Deliverer to find this deliverance freely given to any who will receive it.

“A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction – the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

Preachers and Preaching