

082723 Sermon "Fear of God" Exodus 2:1-10

Now, let's draw a simple picture of the Exodus first. This book records the Israelites living in Egypt coming out of Egypt, and this book records the building of the tabernacle after receiving the law at Mount Sinai. Chapters 1 to 19 record the event of the Exodus, chapters 20 to 24 record the receiving of the law, and chapters 25 to 40 record God's instructions for the tabernacle and the building according to those instructions.

Jacob's family suffered from a famine, but God sent Joseph to Egypt in advance to become prime minister. And he allowed Jacob's family to settle in Egypt. Exodus 1 shows the life of the Israelites living in Egypt at the time. It tells us that in the process of settling in Egypt, the people of Israel became very strong because of God's blessing.

Jacob's family who went down to Egypt were only 70 people at first, but as time passed, the number of Jacob's descendants, the Israelites, increased greatly. This mightiness has become a great threat to the people of Egypt. Due to the fear that the Egyptians felt, the Israeli people were severely oppressed, and they lived a miserable life because of that.

By the way, looking at Exodus 1:12, "However, the more they were abused, the more they multiplied and spread out, and the Egyptians were grieved because of the Israelites... In this way, during the 400 years of slavery, the number of 70 people prospered to a staggering number of 600,000 men alone.

Because the number of Israelites did not decrease even after the harsh work, the king of Egypt ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill the sons when they were born and to save the daughters when they were born. However, how did the midwives behave? In 1:17, "The midwives feared God and disobeyed the command of the king of Egypt and saved the male babies."

Let's pause here. One biblical phrase that has troubled many people is to fear God. What does "fear of God or fear of the Lord" mean, and why does the Bible tell us to fear God? When the Bible refers to the "fear of God," it means having a deep respect, reverence, and awe for God's authority.

Rather than causing someone to be afraid of God, a proper “fear of God” leads one to love Him.

Usually, terrifying fear is likely the type of fear that comes to mind for many people. For example: fear of storms, viruses, terrorists, wars, fear of failure. But the Hebrew verb [yare] and the Hebrew noun [yirah] usually refer to the fear of God and are viewed as a positive quality. Reverence of God helps us to take Him and His beneficial words seriously. Proverbs 14:27 says, “The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to turn one away from the snares of death.” This fear acknowledges God’s good intentions.

There Are Bridges All the Way

A young girl, unaccustomed to traveling, was taking a train ride through the country, and it happened that in the course of the day her train was obliged to cross two branches of a river and several wide streams. The water seen in advance always awakened doubts and fears in the child. She did not understand how it could safely be crossed. As they drew near the river, however, a bridge appeared, and furnished a way over. Two or three times the experience was repeated, and finally the child leaned back with a long breath of relief and confidence.

“Somebody has put bridges for us all the way!” she said in trusting content.

That is life. We fear so many things, so many troubles look dark ahead, so many difficulties seen insurmountable as they loom before us; but as we advance we find that there is a way through them. God has built bridges for us all the way. I always think like this. Rather than being afraid of problems, difficulties, and situations, I should be afraid of losing my faith in God on the journey of my life.

Exodus 2 records God's providence in preparing Moses, the leader, for Israel who faced trials. Moses was born to his father, Amram, and his mother, Jochebed. As mentioned earlier, there was Pharaoh's policy that if a Jewish son was born, he must be killed, but Moses' parents hid him and raised him. Then, when they could no longer hide the baby, they made a box of reeds and put the baby in it and set it afloat on the banks of the Nile. In this way, they entrusted his baby to God's providential hands in a dark situation where they couldn't see the bright future.

Surprisingly, Moses was drawn out of the Nile by the pharaoh's daughter and adopted into the royal family. The name "Moses" comes from the Hebrew verb [mashah], meaning "to pull out/draw out" (of water), and the infant Moses was given this name by Pharaoh's daughter after she rescued him from the Nile. (*The name Moses is derived from Egyptian mose "is born".)

It is not introduced in detail in the Bible today, but what was the feeling of Moses' mother, Jochebed, who floated baby Moses on the Nile River? She and her husband must have prayed to God very earnestly. If I were them, I'd definitely do it.

A prayer to ask for God's good help and guidance, not the parents' will and plans for their child... How are you? Do you commit your children, your grandchildren and your family into the hands of God's providence? Are you still praying for them?

The prayers I pray for my children are not for their rise and success in this world. If they live diligently, they can eat well and live well in this world. My prayer for my children is for them to meet God personally. And they live by loving God and loving their neighbors.

There are moments when you really sigh and cry, but you have to pray. Parents, grandparents, pray for yourself tirelessly and continue to pray for your children and grandchildren as well.

Indeed, God's providence has been wonderfully fulfilled. If you put a baby in a small reed box and float it on the river, how long will the reed box last on the water? How likely was the box to sink in the water or become food for crocodiles in the Nile River? However, when baby Moses' sister followed the small reed box, it just drifted to the place where Pharaoh's daughter and her party were.

In that difficult time when he had no choice but to die, God saved and preserved Moses in a truly amazing way, and made him be nurtured in godliness. Also, Moses' mother raised Moses while receiving wages from the princess. He grew up receiving court education in Pharaoh's court. Some

may say that everything is coincidence, but I do not believe in chance or luck. I believe in God.

Dear beloved, God saved Moses from drowning in the river. Keep your children, grandchildren, and your family in your prayers. Entrust them into God's good hand. Fairfield Grace, may God's grace, peace, goodness, and mercy be with you, with your family, with your business, with your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.