

Exodus 2

At the end of the first chapter, Pharaoh had given the command for the Hebrew boys to be cast into the Nile River. In this chapter, one Hebrew woman “casts” her son into the Nile, in a basket, by which he is saved from death. The boy, of course, is the famous Moses. Moses reveals his nature of “a deliverer” on three separate occasions. At the end of the chapter, when the pressure from the pharaoh eases through his death, Israel cries to God. God hears, remembers, and knows the oppression of Israel.

TRANSLATION - 2:1-9:

1 And he went, a man from the house of Levi and he took a daughter of the house of Levi. **2** And the woman conceived and gave birth to a son and she saw him that good he [was] and she hid [him] three months. **3** And she was no longer able to hide him and took for him an ark of papyrus and covered it with bitumen and pitch and put in it the child and put [it] in the reeds on the shore of the Nile.

4 Then she stood, his sister, at a distance to know what will be done to him. **5** And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash at the Nile and her maidens were walking along the Nile and she saw the ark among the reeds and she sent her slave and she took it. **6** And she opened it and saw the child and behold, a youth crying, and she pitied him and said, “From the Hebrew children this [one is].” **7** And his sister said to the daughter of Pharaoh, “Shall I go and call for you a woman, a nurse, from the Hebrews and she will nurse for you the child?” **8** And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, “Go.” And the virgin went and called the mom of the child. **9** And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, “Take this child and nurse him and I, myself, will give your wage.” And the woman took the child and nursed him.

HEBREW WORDS:

“Levi” (ver. 1) is mentioned 61 times in the OT and “Levite” is mentioned 289 times. “To conceive” (ver. 2) is used 43 times in the OT, about half of which (22) are in Genesis. This is its only use in Exodus. Similarly, the verb “to give birth” is used 499 times, 168 in Genesis, only 8 times in Exodus: 1:16, 19; 2:2, 22; 6:20, 23, 25; 21:4. “Good” is used 530 times, notably in the description of the creation (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). The adjective is used in Exodus 2:2; 3:8; 14:12; 18:9, 17. “To hide” is used 34 times in the OT, in Exodus only at 2:2-3.

“Ark” (ver. 3) is used 28 times the OT; 26 of those times are referring to the ark of Noah in Genesis 6-9. The other two occurrences are here, at 2:3, 5. It is an Egyptian word. “Papyrus” is used only here in Exodus, out of 4 uses. It is an Egyptian word. This verb, “to cover,” is used only here in the OT. The word “bitumen” is used only three times: Gen. 11:3; 14:10; Exo. 2:3. “Pitch” is only used here (2:3) and Isaiah 34:9. “Child” is related to the verb “give birth” (only the vowels are different); it is used 89 times, 19 in Genesis, 12 in Exodus. “Reeds” is used here (2:3, 5); Deut. 1:1; Isa. 19:6; and Jonah 2:6. “Nile” is the word “river,” but specifically refers to the Nile river; it was used first at Exodus 1:22.

“To know” (ver. 4) was used at 1:8; see notes there. “To wash” (ver. 5) is used 72 times in the OT, in Exodus, 11 times. “Maidens” is used 76 times in the OT; it can mean a “young girl, newly married, or maidservant.” This is its only use in Exodus. It was used six times in Genesis 24 (24:14, 16, 28, 55, 57, 61). “Slave” is used 56 times in the OT, 9 times in Exodus. “Crying” (ver. 6) is used 114 times. This is its only use in Exodus; this is the only reference to a baby crying in the OT. “To pity” or “to have compassion” is used 41 times in the OT; this is its only use in Exodus. “Hebrews” was used at 1:15-16, 19. “Behold” (ver. 6) is used 1,061 times; it is used 42 times in Exodus, beginning in 1:9.

“Nurse” (ver. 8) is used in two forms here, one as a noun (in Hebrew it is actually a participle), the other as the verb. It is used 33 times. This is the only use of the noun (participle) in Exodus; the verb will be used again in verse 9. “Virgin” (ver. 8) is used 11 times, in Genesis 24:43 and only here in Exodus. “Wages” (ver. 9) is used 28 times; in Exodus only here and 22:14.

HEBREW GRAMMAR:

The phrase that Moses' mother saw "that good he [was]" (ver. 2) recalls the description of creation, which suggests to some that Moses is suggesting a "new creation" (of the nation of Israel) begins here.

REFERENCES AND ALLUSIONS TO GENESIS:

Levi (ver. 1) was born to Jacob and Leah in Genesis 29:34. He was involved with Simeon in the slaughter of the Shechemites for the rape of their sister, Dinah, in Genesis 34. For that, he lost the right of the firstborn. His blessing by Jacob is found in Genesis 49:5-7.

As we noted above and will again below, the word for "ark" or "basket" (2:3, 5) is the same Hebrew word for the "ark" of Noah in Genesis 6-9. Some suggest this is Moses' way of indicating the birth of the nation of Israel is a "new beginning" as the flood of Noah's day brought a new beginning.

"Hebrew" (2:7) was first used of Abraham at Genesis 14:13. It is also used in Genesis 39:14, 17; 40:15; 41:12; 43:32. The

ARCHAEOLOGY:

The papyrus was ubiquitous in the Nile region. The plant stood 10' high. Bitumen came from the southern area of the Dead Sea.

The "reeds" (ver. 5) is also a part of a phrase, the "Sea of Reeds" (13:18), otherwise known as the Red Sea. This sea is found at 10:19; 13:18; 15:4, 22; 23:31. It is found a total of 24 times. However, modern archaeologists do not know where the sea is located. Many scholars suggest a marshy area, but as we pointed out in the introduction, the sea was deep enough for Egypt's armies to drown with their chariots and horses (14:24-28).

There are a few stories in the Ancient Near East that are reminiscent of Moses' story, such as Sargon of Akkad; the story's title is *Legend of Sargon's Birth*. That is, a baby is thrown into a river, and delivered, who grows into a leader. However, there are enough and significant differences to show that the Moses story was not fictionalized nor based on such stories. Additionally, the *Legend* is dated in the eighth century BC, considerably later than Moses! On the presupposition that the dating of Moses' writing according to the Bible is correct (see the Introduction), then Moses lived considerably earlier than Sargon's work was written. Perhaps *it* was based on Moses!

COMMENTARY:

This anonymous woman (at least in this chapter) has the same fear of God, perhaps, as the midwives in the previous chapter. She acts to save her son from death. Moses' father's name was Amram, we learn from 6:20. We learn from the same text that his mother's name was Jochebed. Moses was a descendant of Levi from both sides of the family. In 7:7, we learn that Moses had an older brother, Aaron, three years older than Moses. Miriam is identified as Aaron's sister in 15:20-21; therefore she was Moses' sister present in this text (see Num. 26:59; 1 Chron. 6:3).

Jochebed saw that Moses was a healthy ("good") child, so she hid him for three months. When she could hide the baby no longer, she put him into a basket made of papyrus. As we note above under "Words," the word for "basket" or "ark" is the same word used of Noah's boat in Genesis 6-9. These two passages are the only places where the word is located in the OT. Jochebed also did for the basket what Noah did for the ark, pitching it with bitumen. Some scholars suggest that Moses is portraying his birth as a "new beginning" as the flood was during the days of Noah. Then Jochebed put the ark with the baby into the reeds of the shore of the Nile. Whether she knew it was the place where Pharaoh's daughter bathed, we do not know.

Whether Jochebed told Miriam to stand in guard of the baby in the reeds, we do not know. Yet she did. Then Pharaoh's daughter came to that point to wash and she had some

servants with her, walking along the shore of the Nile. She saw the ark and sent a slave to obtain it. When they opened the ark, they saw the baby boy and the baby was crying. The word “behold” draws the audience’s attention to the fact there was a baby inside the basket, in the reeds, in the Nile River. Remember, Moses’ original audience would have *heard* the story read. The daughter took pity on the boy and recognized, in some way, that he was among the Hebrew children (who should have been killed).

At that point, Miriam stepped forward and offered to get a nurse from among the Hebrews to nurse the baby. Observe she uses the words “for you” twice in one sentence, suggesting a servile attitude toward the pharaoh’s daughter. Also, the noun “nurse” is related to the verb “to nurse.” The daughter responds with one word: “Go.” Miriam, identified by Moses as a “virgin” indicating her youth and the fact that she was not married, went straight for Jochebed, the “mom of the child.” When Jochebed arrived, the daughter told her to take the baby boy and nurse him. Ironically, Pharaoh’s house, through his daughter, pays the Hebrew woman to nurse and raise the boy who will one day defeat the Egyptian army!

Jochebed took her son, Moses, and nursed him, probably for three years, perhaps more. Moses was under Jochebed’s tutelage long enough for him to grow up knowing he was Hebrew, not Egyptian, even if he was eventually raised in the home of Pharaoh.

APPLICATION:

Later Jewish writers - The author of 1 Chronicles (23:6, 12-13) summarizes Moses’ family.

NT writers - Stephen, again, refers to the life of Moses in his sermon in Acts 7, stating that Moses was a “handsome” or “beautiful” child (7:20; this chapter is summarized in Acts 7:20-29). The writer of Hebrews will also allude to Moses’ birth and state that Moses’ father was a part of the action (11:23; this chapter is summarized in Hebrews 11:23-27).

TRANSLATION - 2:10-14:

10 And the child grew and she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh and he was to her for a son and she called his name Moses and she said that “From the water I drew him.” **11** And it was in those days that Moses grew. And he went out to his brothers and he saw their burdens and he saw an Egyptian man hitting a Hebrew man from his brothers. **12** And looked thus and thus and saw that there was not a man and he hit the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

13 And he went out the second day and behold, two Hebrew men were struggling and he said to the perpetrator, “Why are you hitting your friend?” **14** And he said, “Who made you a man, a prince and judge over us to kill us? You, yourself, saying just as you killed the Egyptian?” And Moses feared, saying, “Surely it is known the matter!”

HEBREW WORDS:

“To grow” (ver. 10) comes from the adjective “big.” The verb is used 117 times. “Name” is used 864 times in the OT; it is used 43 times in Exodus. “Moses” is a play on the verb “to draw or take out,” used here also. Moses is found in the OT 766 times. “To draw” is only used here in Exodus; it is also used at 2 Sam. 22:17 and Psalm 18:16. “Brother” (ver. 11) is used 629 times in the OT, 17 times in Exodus. On “burden,” see at 1:11. The word will also be used at 5:4-5; 6:6-7. “To hit” can be interpreted more violently as “to beat, strike dead, destroy, injure.” The verb is used 501 times, in Exodus 26 times.

“To look” (ver. 12) actually means “to turn toward, to the side.” It is used 134 times, in Exodus at 2:12; 7:23; 10:6; 14:27; 16:10; 32:15. “Thus and thus” denotes Moses looking both directions. “To hit” here is the same verb used at verse 11, but here it obviously denotes a fatal strike. “To hide” is used 31 times; only here in Exodus. “Sand” is used 22 times, only here in Exodus. “Struggling” (ver. 13) is used 8 times in the OT, twice in Exodus: 2:13; 21:22. “Perpetrator” or the one doing the wrong is used four times in Exodus (2:13; 9:27; 23:1, 7), out

of 264 times. It means “wicked.” The verb “to hit” was used twice earlier. “Friend” is used 197 times in the OT, 20 times in Exodus.

“Prince” (ver. 14) was used earlier at 1:11. This is the only use of “judge” in Exodus, out of 204 occasions. “To kill” is used 167 times in the OT, in Exodus 11 times: 2:14-15; 4:23; 5:21; 13:15; 21:14; 22:24; 23:7; 32:12, 27. “To fear” was used earlier at 1:17, 21. “Surely” is used 17 times; only here in Exodus. “To know” is one of the key verbs in Exodus, used earlier at 1:8.

COMMENTARY:

We do not know how long Moses was in the care of his mother. Weaning could occur around the age of 3 or 4 years. Perhaps it was longer; Coffman writes that his grandfather, growing up in Virginia, USA was not weaned until he was seven years old.¹ The years Moses spent under his mother’s guidance was enough to teach him he was a Hebrew (2:11) and he served a different God than the Egyptians (3:15).

Pharaoh’s daughter named him “Moses,” an Egyptian name related to the verb “to be born,” but also a Hebrew name based on the verb “to draw out (water).” Either Moses, the writer, is connecting his name to the Hebrew verb “to draw out,” or Pharaoh’s daughter could speak Hebrew, which would not be unusual since she may have had slaves who were Hebrews. “Moses” is a name also found in many Egyptian names, such as Thuthmose, Ahmose, Ptahmose, and others.

Moses grew and matured. One day, he went out to “his brothers.” These were Hebrews which shows that Moses understood that he, himself, was a Hebrew although he was living in the Pharaoh’s palace and being educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians. He noted the burdens they were carrying but he also observed an Egyptian man “hitting” a Hebrew man, “from his brothers.” This verb “to hit” is used in verses 11, 12, and 13. The use in verse 12 clearly implies a fatal blow, but the verb does not necessarily denote such force. Moses looked “thus and thus,” the Hebrew says. We do not know if he was looking to see if other Egyptians might be watching him or if he was looking to see if other Hebrews might come to the aid of the man. Most commentators want to pronounce an ethical judgment on Moses, that he committed murder. However, the text does not comment on the ethics of his decision. He “hit” the Egyptian, clearly killing him for he then buried the man’s body in the sand. Here, he defends a Hebrew against an Egyptian.

On the next day, “behold” two Hebrew men were struggling, or wrestling. Moses spoke to the one who was in the wrong - the “perpetrator” (which suggests the evil was obviously visible) - and asked why he was “hitting his friend.” It was at that point this man replied with sarcasm. He asked who made Moses a “prince and judge” over them. Just because the man accused Moses of thinking he was a “prince and judge” does not mean Moses thought or was acting as a “prince and judge” over them, as many commentators assume. The question the Hebrew asked Moses in verse 14 is similar to what the Sodomites accused of Lot in Genesis 19:9. Then the perpetrator asked if Moses would kill them or him just as he killed the Egyptian. Moses knew then that his actions for the prior day were known and he was afraid. In this case, Moses defended a Hebrew against a fellow Hebrew.

APPLICATION:

Moses’ contemporaries - Moses grew up with all the privileges, including a fine education, in the palace of the pharaoh. His formal education would have started early and lasted twelve years. We do not know if this reflects on Moses’ temperament, but in Numbers 20:11, he strikes a rock, without God’s permission.

Later Jewish writers - Isaiah (63:11) might be alluding to Moses’ salvation in the reeds.

NT writers - Stephen states that Moses was trained in the wisdom of Egypt (Acts 7:21-22). The Hebrew writer summarizes Moses’ early life in 11:24-27.

¹ Coffman, 18.

TRANSLATION - 2:15-22:

15 And Pharaoh heard this matter and he sought to kill Moses and Moses fled from before Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian and dwelt by the well. **16** And the priest of Midian [had] seven daughters and they came and drew [water] and filled the troughs to water the sheep of their father. **17** And the shepherds came and they drove them away and Moses arose and helped [them] and watered the sheep. **18** And they came to Ruel, their father, and he said, "Why are you hurrying to come today?" **19** And they said, "A man, an Egyptian, delivered us from the hand of the shepherds and even to draw, he drew [water] for us and he watered the sheep." **20** And he said to his daughters, "And where...? Why this [one] you left the man? Call him and let him eat bread."

21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man and he gave Zipporah, his daughter to Moses. **22** And she bore a son and he called his name Gershom because he said "A stranger I was in a foreign land."

HEBREW WORDS:

"To seek" (ver. 15) is used 225 times in the OT, in Exodus at 2:15; 4:19, 24; 10:11; 33:7. "To flee" is used 63 times in the OT; in Exodus at 2:15; 14:5; 26:28; 36:33. "Priest" (ver. 16) is used 750 times in the OT, reflecting the nature of the Israelite religion. The noun referred to Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18 and Egyptian priests in Genesis 41:45, 50; 46:20; 47:22, 26. The word is used in Exodus 11 times, Leviticus 194 times, Numbers 69 times, and Deuteronomy 14 times. "To draw" (water) is used 5 times in the OT: Exo. 2:16, 19; Psa. 30:1; Prov. 20:5. "To fill" is used 252 times; in Exodus, 23 times. "Trough" was used in Genesis 30:38, 41 and here.

"Shepherd" (ver. 17), a participle in the Hebrew language, is used 167 times. It is only used in Exodus at 2:17, 19. "To drive away" was earlier used at Genesis 3:24; 4:14. It is used 45 times in the OT; in Exodus, twelve times. "To help" is often translated "to deliver, save." It is used 205 times in the OT. In Exodus, it is used here (2:7) and 14:30. "To water" was used 20 times in Genesis, especially in chapter 24. It is used 62 times in the OT, four times in Exodus: 2:16-17, 19; 32:20. "To hurry" (ver. 18) is used 81 times, in Exodus at 2:18; 10:16; 12:33; 32:8; 34:8. "To deliver" (ver. 19) means to "rescue, save." It is used 213 times, in Exodus 14 times. "To leave" (ver. 20) is used 214 times in the OT; it means to "leave, forsake, abandon." It is used in Exodus at 2:20; 9:21; 23:5. "To be content" (ver. 21) is used 18 times in the OT; only here in Exodus. It also means to be "intent, determined, resolved." "Zipporah" is only mentioned here, 4:25 and 18:2. Her name means "bird." "Gershom" (ver. 22) is found 14 times in the OT, mainly in 1 Chronicles. He is mentioned in Exodus here and 18:3. The name is a play on the word "stranger." "Stranger" is found 92 times in the OT. It was found at Genesis 15:13; 23:4. It is used in Exodus 12 times. "Foreign" is used 46 times in the OT; in Genesis only at 31:15. In Exodus, it is used only here and 18:3; 21:8.

HEBREW GRAMMAR:

"To draw, he drew [water]" (ver. 19) translates the Hebrew infinitive absolute with the perfect tense of the same verb, as a matter of emphasis.

REFERENCES AND ALLUSIONS TO GENESIS:

As Genesis 25:4 shows, the Midianite nation descended from a son of Abraham through Keturah.

ARCHAEOLOGY:

"Midian" (ver. 15) was earlier seen at Genesis 25:4; 36:35. The nation is found in Exodus at 2:15-16; 3:1; 4:19; 18:1. It is found in the OT 59 times. The location where Moses fled is unknown. It was somewhere on the Sinai peninsula. We do not know the relationship between the Ishmaelites (Gen. 37:25), the Kenites (Judg. 4:11), and the Midianites (see Judges 8:24).

“Reuel” means “friend of God” or “shepherd of God.” He was a priest in Midian; the text is not clear if he was a pagan priest or a priest of God “Most High” as was Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20, 22)

COMMENTARY:

When Pharaoh heard of Moses’ action, he made it known he would kill Moses. Then Moses fled from before Pharaoh and lived in the land of Midian, who were distant relatives of the Hebrews. He was staying by a well when he observed some daughters of a local priest coming to give water to their father’s flock of sheep. However, there were some shepherds there who made things difficult for the daughters. Moses stepped into the scene and assisted the daughters in obtaining the needed water.

The seven daughters returned home to Reuel, their father. “Reuel” is an Edomite name based on Genesis 36:4. In Exodus 3:1, it appears he was also named “Jethro.” It is possible that Moses’ father-in-law was named both; perhaps one was a name given for his position. We do not know. The girls returned home with excitement, “hurrying,” so Reuel asked why they were so excited. The daughters responded that a man, an Egyptian, had delivered them from the hateful shepherds and had helped them. In some way - language, habits, clothing - Moses appeared to them as an Egyptian. Reuel asked where the man was...? Then he asked why they did not bring him home with them! Finally, he informed them to call Moses and give him food.

Based on Reuel’s statement in Exodus 18:11, some suggest that he was not a believer in God until after the exodus. However, his statement in that verse might simply be him reiterating the power and glory of God, in whom he already believed.

Moses writes that he was “content” to dwell in the land of Midian. At some point Ruel gave one of his daughters, Zipporah, as a wife to Moses. Her firstborn son was named “Gershom,” a combination of two words: “stranger” and “put.” Moses named him that because he was a stranger in a foreign land. We do not know which land - Egypt or Midian - Moses considered “foreign.” The name is also a play on the verb “to drive away.”

APPLICATION:

Contemporaries of Moses - Moses was eighty years old when he stood before the pharaoh (7:7). He had spent 40 years in the Midian wilderness. Moses will live 120 years, total (Deut. 34:7). The word translated “helped” is used for deliverance in 14:30. Pharaoh will “drive away” Moses and Aaron in 10:11, and Jehovah will cause Pharaoh to “drive away” Moses and the Israelites from Egypt (6:1). Few men in the OT were as educated as Moses; Solomon, Nehemiah, and Daniel were also well-educated.

NT writers - Stephen will state that Moses was eighty years old when he fled Egypt (Acts 7:23, 30).

TRANSLATION - 2:23-25:

23 And it was many days and the king of Egypt died and the sons of Israel sighed from the work and they cried and their cry arose to God from the work. **24** And God heard their cry and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. **25** And God saw the sons of Israel and God knew.

HEBREW WORDS:

“To die” (ver. 23) is used 845 times in the OT; it is found 53 times in Exodus. “To sigh or groan” is used 13 times, only here in Exodus. “Work, service, or worship” is used 145 times, earlier in Exodus at 1:14. It will be used in Exodus 23 times. “Cry” (for help) is used 73 times, only here in Exodus. The noun “cry for help” is used 11 times, only here in Exodus. “Cry” or “groaning” (ver. 24) is different than words used previously; this word is used 4 times in the OT: 2:24; 6:5; Judges 2:18; Ezek. 30:24. “To remember” is used 235 times, notably in the story of Noah (Gen. 8:1; 9:15-16) and Abraham (19:29). The verb is used in Exodus at 2:24; 6:5; 13:3; 20:8, 24; 23:13; 32:13; 34:19. “Covenant” is a key word in the OT, used 287 times, related to

the word “to cut.” The word is used in Genesis 27 times, in Exodus 13 times: 2:24; 6:4-5; 19:5; 23:32; 24:7-8; 31:16; 34:10, 12, 15, 27-28. In Exodus Abraham is mentioned 9 times, Isaac 9 times, and Jacob 11 times. “Sons of Israel” is used 122 times in Exodus. In 1:1, 7 the phrase refers to the physical sons of Jacob; beginning in 1:9, it seems to always refer to the nation of Israel. Many times translations will use the word “Israelite,” but the Hebrew only uses “Israel.” The word “Israelite” (in Hebrew) is only used at Lev. 24:10-11; 2 Samuel 17:25.

REFERENCES AND ALLUSIONS TO GENESIS:

The first promise from God to Abraham is found in the famous text, Genesis 12:1-3. References to the promise of “land” (Canaan) are found at Genesis 12:7, 13:15, 17; 15:7, 16, 18; 17:8; 24:7; 26:3-4, 28:4, 13, 15; 35:12; 48:4; 50:24. The other significant references to God’s covenant with Abraham are found in Genesis 15:13-16 and most of chapter 17. The covenant with Isaac is found in 26:1-5; 23-24. The covenant with Jacob is found in 28:1-4; 35:9-12; 46:1-4.

God “remembered” Noah (Gen. 8:1). When God sees a rainbow, He will “remember” His covenant with Noah and all mankind (Gen. 9:15-16). God “remembered” Abraham and saved Lot from Sodom (Gen. 19:19). God “remembered” Rachel and allowed her to become pregnant (Gen. 30:22).

ARCHAEOLOGY:

“Gershom” (ver. 22) is a name based on the noun “stranger.” It is also related to the verb “to drive off or drive away.” The verb will be used in Exodus 6:10; 11:1; 12:39.

The Egyptian pharaoh had the practice, in the celebration of his coronation, to give amnesty to certain criminals (see Gen. 40:20-21). In this situation, perhaps the new pharaoh lightened somewhat the burden on the Israelites or they hoped he would.

COMMENTARY:

Once that particular Pharaoh died, the Israelites felt a sense of relief. It is almost as if the oppression let up just enough to allow them to cry. They did cry out and their cry rose to heaven, into the ears of God because of the hard work they were required to do. Notice the emphasis on God in these last two verses: 1) God heard their cry; 2) God remembered His covenant; 3) God saw the sons of Israel; 4) God knew; that is, He knew what was going on with His children. God is the subject of four verbs in these verses.

Then, God acted. He appeared to Moses in chapter 3, in the burning bush, in the form of the angel of the Lord. The last time God appeared from heaven and the last time God spoke from heaven, was several hundred years earlier, in Genesis 46. In that passage, God appeared to Jacob and told him to go into Egypt and he would get to see his son, Joseph, and God would bring him out of Egypt back to that promised land.

This “covenant” that God remembered is the covenant God made with Abraham as early as Genesis 12. The main components of that covenant are found in Genesis 15 & 17, but it was referred to several times throughout the book of Genesis (see “References and Allusions to Genesis” above). The main components of that covenant are:

- 1) God would be the God of Abraham’s descendants.
- 2) God would make them a great nation.
- 3) God would give them the land of Canaan for a dwelling place.
- 4) God would bless the world through Abraham’s seed.

Here at the end of chapter 2 as we move into chapter 3, God is going to begin working on fulfilling those promises.

APPLICATION:

Moses’ contemporaries - In Deuteronomy 26:7, Moses refers to this paragraph, reminding Israel that God heard their cries and groans. God’s perspective on this paragraph (2:23-25) is found in 3:7-9.

Later Jewish writers - In Isaiah 19:23-25, we see that Egypt would worship with Israel and God would consider Egypt His children and His inheritance. Just before that passage, Isaiah had also said, regarding Egypt that the Lord brought oppressors against Egypt, and then sent a Savior to save them. Egypt responds in worship (19:20-21)! Other passages that show God responds to the cries of His children are: Psalms 30:8-10; 40:1-3; 107:6, 13, 19, 28. David considered himself a foreigner in the eyes of God (1 Chron. 29:15). See also Psalm 39:13; 119:19.

Consider these passages which reflect the cries of God's children and their anticipating a response: Job; Psalm 9; 10; 22; 31; 34; 35; 44; 89; Isaiah 8; 49; 63-65; Habakkuk.

NT writers - The NT portrays Christians as "foreigners" as well: Eph. 2:12, 19; Heb. 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11-12.

One might ask, why didn't God intervene earlier on behalf of the Israelites? Prager offers three reasons and we add a fourth:²

1. God would not take away man's will to choose. This brings evil and suffering.
2. There will be justice in the next world. We must be patient and stay faithful.
3. Citing a rabbi from America, Milton Steinberg, Prager writes: "The believer has to account for the existence of one thing - unjust suffering; the atheist has to account for the existence of everything else."
4. If God intervened every time evil occurred, life would not be dependable. Laws would not be reliable. There would be no consequences for the poor, bad, or evil decisions men make.

² Prager, 30.