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[0 : 0 0] Now we saw in chapter 1 of Exodus last Lord's Day evening how that Pharaoh had arisen, that knew not Joseph, how the Israelites had multiplied and increased and then been enslaved by the Egyptians and how there then came this bloody decree to kill all the baby boys that were born to the Hebrews.

Because the midwives wouldn't carry out the instruction of Pharaoh to kill the baby boys, then Pharaoh charged all his people, verse 22 of chapter 1, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

So this is his decree. And when we come into chapter 2, we read then of a man of the house of Levi who took to wife a daughter of Levi. And we may think initially that this is him just doing it, taking a wife subsequent to the decree of Pharaoh to kill the baby boys.

But we'll see, of course, as the information unfolds, that that's not exactly the timeline here. But we do know from chapter 6, verse 20, that the man in question here, his name is Amram, and that his wife is called Yochabed.

And as we see, we have that in chapter 6, verse 20. We also read there that she is his aunt, and that may seem a bit surprising, as his father's sister. So she is an immediate daughter of Levi, a sister then of Kohath, Amram's father.

[1 : 3 1] Chapter 6, verse 18, confirms the name of Amram's father as well as Kohath. Now, these kind of marriages, of course, would later be ruled out by God and his law as being too close of kindred.

The old-fashioned word that the Confession of Faith uses is the word consanguinity, meaning like blood. The blood is too alike. It is too close. And so God would later on ban by his law these kind of close marriages.

Nowadays, we call it incestuous. But, of course, at that time, various biblical figures had close, quite close marriages, which were not in and of themselves forbidden by God.

Of course, Abraham had married his half-sister. And, of course, if you go back further, I suppose you could say Cain had married his full sister, and so on. But the law of God forbidding such close unions have not yet been given.

And as Romans, chapter 5, verse 13, tells us, for until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed where there is no law.

[2 : 3 6] And as yet, the law banning such unions had not been given. Of course, it's perfectly possible as well that in a day and time when people had large families, it's perfectly possible that, you know, Kohath, for example, could have continued to have children long after his own children were having children.

So it's entirely possible, for example, that Jochebed could even have been younger than Amram, even though she was technically his aunt. Of course, that doesn't change the closeness of the blood tie.

But it just sort of contextualizes things a wee bit for us. We also know from this chapter that although the narrative initially reads as though Moses was the firstborn of Amram and Jochebed, if the child has an elder sister, as we see in verses 4 and 7 and 8 and so on, it's probably as much as maybe 9 or 10 years old, though we're speculating.

But she'd have to be old enough to be able to be consciously sort of patrolling and standing guard by the riverbank and confident enough to go and speak to Pharaoh's daughter and so on. So she's probably not much less than 9 or 10 by that stage.

And we're to understand this to be their first child, perhaps, since the king's murderous edict. Now, we know, of course, also later on that the subsequent revealing of a brother, Aaron, and the

information chapter 7 and verse 7 that Aaron is three years older than Moses.

[4 : 07] So it would appear that Aaron, as a little boy, a three-year-old or two, three-year-old boy, was not under threat from the edict, which means that he must have been safely established as a toddler before the edict comes in instructing the killing of newborn baby boys, which means it is probably issued sometime in the year before Moses is born.

It's as close as that to the birth of Moses. So it's after Aaron, who's three years older than Moses, and before Moses. So probably, if Aaron was just a comparatively new baby, he might have been under threat from the edict, but he doesn't seem to have been.

So he must have been well-established as maybe a two-year-old or older toddler by the time Moses comes along, or the time Jochebed is expecting Moses.

He is the first child who is directly in danger from the edict, and that is probably why it's narrated in this way, which kind of suggests that he was their firstborn.

But, of course, we know from later information that he wasn't. But the first one since the murderous edict came into force. So we also know from later information, chapter 15, verse 20, that the older sister is called Miriam.

[5 : 28] So we have Miriam, we have Aaron, and now we have Moses. Now, verse 2, Now, this would be both difficult and highly dangerous as well, to keep a newborn infant both hidden and quiet.

How do you keep a newborn infant quiet? From both the Egyptians, you know, the poorer sort of the Egyptians probably lived quite close to the Hebrews. And perhaps some of the Hebrews may have lived as servants in the houses of richer Egyptians and so on.

You know, chapter 3 and verse 22, Now, if they're their neighbours, then it must imply that at least the poor or so Egyptians lived reasonably close to the Hebrews.

Maybe not cheek by jowl, but certainly close enough for somebody to hear the squalling of a newborn baby. So it's dangerous and it's difficult.

And also, although it might be a bit unpleasant to say it, human nature being such as it is, you might also have to consider the possibility that Hebrew parents who have lost their own children to the soldiers might be less than sympathetic to somebody else who is managing to keep theirs.

[7 : 06] So you have to reckon on the possibility of somebody enviously perhaps reporting them or saying, well, if I lost my son, why should they get to keep theirs? Well, we'll soon see about that.

That's human nature. People might say, oh no, they're fellow Hebrews. Let them be spared if they can. When they have lost their child, it's asking quite a bit of people.

So we have to allow for human nature as well. It is dangerous, both in respect of potentially jealous fellow Hebrews, but also in respect of the Egyptians, human nature being what it is.

So whilst this verse tells us that Moses was a child of great beauty, a goodly child, you know, not just a cute baby, but obviously having some kind of characteristic of beauty or goodness that's shining out of him, it takes the New Testament to confirm to us that hiding Moses for three months was not merely an act of parental protection, but rather an act of faith.

We look ahead to Hebrews chapter 11 verse 23. We read, 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.

[8 : 23] So by faith, his parents, because they saw he was a proper child, he was hidden three months by his parents. Now, that's not any faith in Moses part of that stage.

He's just a baby. He's just a three-month-old baby. He doesn't know anything. He's not able to, you know, fend for himself. He's not able to take any decision about this. This is the decision of his parents, which gives us also a context of a believing and no doubt praying family, of a solid foundation of prayerful parental faith.

When so many other Hebrews, remember we looked at that last week in chapter 1, so many of the Hebrews had gone away of Egyptian idolatry and just succumbed to worshipping Egyptian gods. Because the fact that they are hiding their child by faith, which Hebrews tells us, means that they had this faith in the Lord Jehovah, the God of Israel, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

That makes them not unique, but it makes them certainly at least unusual in the strength and depth of their faith. Now, you might think, come on, you're reading a bit too much into this here.

[9 : 35] Who's not going to want to protect their child if they can? Clearly, not many people were able to. But still we have here Jochebed and Amram able to protect their child, doing so in faith,

we're told by faith.

And also remember, what is the fruit of their family union? What is the foundation, the kind of basis, that subsequently produces the prophetess Miriam, the high priest Aaron, and the great prophet Moses, and humanly speaking, the instrument of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.

That is quite a highly charged, powerfully spiritual family. That doesn't come by coincidence. That comes not even by an individual with one-off gifts from the Lord.

That is also, we must take it, a family foundation of faith, and almost certainly prayer in the Lord God Jehovah, the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob.

That is the foundation that subsequently turns this little girl into a prophetess, that turns Moses into the great deliverer of Israel, turns Aaron into the high priest of Israel.

[10:51] Israel. This is a family foundation of faith. By faith, they had Moses three months. And then we read, and when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and dogged it with slime and with pitch, and put the child there in a chief.

It laid it in the flags by the river's brink. An ark of bulrushes does not to us sound either very substantial, nor particularly watertight.

But the stems of these riverside reeds, when bound together in bunches, formed the fabric of Egyptian and Ethiopian Nile ships and seagoing vessels.

Now, if we're to look ahead, we're looking, for example, in Isaiah, what we see in chapter 18, verses 1 and 2, Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go ye swift messengers to our nation, a nation scattered and peeled, and so on.

And sendeth to the sea in vessels of bulrushes. This was the material that they used to build ships, not only the Nile ships and vessels, but sea-going vessels, which if they were covered and copped in this way with slime and with pitch, we have a reference well into Greek and Roman times.

[12:20] Secular historians such as Pliny, for example, testified to how the Egyptians sailed in boats that were copped in slime on the inside and pitch on the outside.

Now, the slime, that kind of mud from the Nile, apparently, when it was baked hard by the sun, it became a sort of concrete-like finish that was so hard that it couldn't be penetrated unless it was broken by some kind of direct strike.

So that if a ship, for example, bashed into rocks or something, that might crack or break off this hard concrete-like substance. That's what went on the inside to help seal it and secure it.

And on the outside went a mineral-based pitch, a tar-like substance to sort of seal the cracks and so on. So slime within and pitch without, that's not the Bible testifying to that.

That's Pliny and other Roman times historians testifying that this is what the Egyptians did with their ships, with their bulrushes-type ships and boats.

[13:28] So what's being done here in ancient Egypt with the little ark, it's exactly how the boat builders would do it. They would seal it. They would make it waterproof in that sense.

So it's a similar finish, which would say could only be breached without a hard, direct blow that would break off this kind of covering. So this little basket, committed to, not committed to the flowing river, you know, it didn't just sort of push it into the water, push it out to see how it got flowed off down river, just laid it in the flanks, laid it in the bulrushes, at the side of the river.

So just be in the water, where the water's sort of lapping at the sides, and it would be protected because it's sealed and because it's covered and it's pitch and slam and so on, and the child would be protected.

And if it's not being put into the flowing river, but rather not exposed to, you know, the ravages of hippopotamuses or crocodiles or whatever, but laid simply at the water's edge in the bulrushes where the river would only just touch it, only just lap in it.

So it would be on the one hand about as safe as a mother could make her child, and on the other, it would also allow her, if she was challenged to say, we hear you had a baby child in the house, what's happened to it?

[14:44] She can truthfully say, well, yes, I cast him into the river in accordance with Pharaoh's commandment, because technically she had. Technically she had put him in the river, just as had been ordered.

The fact that she'd done it in a carefully constructed ark that was made waterproof inside and out and no doubt protected as much as possible, that's neither here nor there. It would allow her

truthfully to say, yes, I cast my child into the river, just as well commanded.

So that being the case, verse four raises one small question. You know, sisters do a father to see what would be done to her. Now, why does not Jochebed, his mother, himself watch over the fate of her baby son?

Well, it could be, of course, that a grown woman standing beside the riverbank, looking anxiously in one particular direction, might actually draw attention to the presence of the ark in the bull rushes, and so actually endanger the child more than her absence would, whereas obviously a little girl just not playing or staying idly, apparently at the riverbank, would attract less attention.

Or, perhaps more likely, we are seeing here, I would suggest to you, just in part, a little part, of the hidden, unwritten, but all too human cost of Israel's subsequent redemption.

[16:12] A cost for Jochebed, especially, and personally. We would, I think, be foolish to imagine this whole episode as some kind of clever, coldly calculated plan to try and take advantage of Pharaoh's daughter in this way and not recognize the agony with which either Jochebed or Amram would have painstakingly constructed this little ark, this little basket of bull rushes, weaving and binding it together, no doubt, with tears, conscious of its purpose and who was going to go in it.

Probably, they probably lived in a one-room house, the little child is probably playing quietly or sleeping peacefully in the corner whilst they're busy doing it. Knowing who is going to go into it. Knowing the life of their baby son was, humanly speaking, bound up with how good a job they make of interweaving these bull rushes and making this little basket, this little ark into which they're going to put their three-month-old child, binding it up, as it were, with tears, his life depending on the kind of job they make of it, pitching it and re-pitching it, every crack and crevice, how many layers of hardened slime would have been painstakingly smeared and dried over its inside and then what? Well, probably straw or hay or whatever on the inside and maybe a wee blanket, you know, just to make the child as comfortable as possible and then you've got that surely heart-rending moment of picking up the wee one and actually putting him into the basket maybe while he's sleeping, oblivious to it all and picking it up and handing it to the riverbank, knowing, or rather, not knowing what is going to befall, what is going to happen when you do this.

Perhaps he's oblivious to it all, perhaps he's looking anxiously or trustingly up into the eyes and then, you know, how many tears would have splashed on the lid as it's finally closed, or whether we want oblivious or not as it might be.

[18:28] You know, we can't really enter in to the pain, the agony there must have been in these parents as they put this child in.

You know, if you've ever had to, you know, to load a much-loved cat into its basket or a dog into a blanket in the back seat of the car or the boot of the car for that final trip to the vets, then, you know, you get a fraction, maybe, a glimpse, but no real comparison of the human cost of this decision. This is not a cold cat, they're, yeah, bring him in a basket, here, be safe, there, watch over, no problem. This is your own child. This is your three-month-old little baby that you have delighted in. This is a child whose life is in danger and you have to put him in and you've made this basket and you lay him in, you put the lid on and you put it away to the riverbank, but that does not come cheap.

That does not come without cost, without tears. Perhaps it is Miriam herself who takes it to the riverbank and you can just imagine Yoko Ben absolutely breaking down in her husband's arms as that little basket goes out of the house for perhaps the last time.

[19:42] We just can't enter into it. Why didn't she go herself? Well, I would suggest to you perhaps that it's not unlike the situation with Hagar in Genesis 21 where having been driven away with Ishmael, our little boy, we read in verse 14, Abraham rose up early in the morning, took bread and a bottle of water, gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder and the child and sent her away.

And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba and the water was spent in the bottle and she cast the child under one of the shrubs and she went and sat her down over against him a good way off as it were a bow shot for she said, let me not see the death of the child.

And she sat over against him and lifted up her voice and wept. Now is that not really what we're thinking about and looking about here with Jochebed? No wonder she couldn't go to the riverbank. What's going to happen to that own basket? We do not know. We don't know if a crocodile is going to come up out of the water and snap it up. We don't know if some other creature is going to trample it or whether it's going to be washed out into the current.

We don't know whether Pharaoh's daughter or anybody else is going to have compassion on it or whether the soldiers will find it and kill the child. We just don't know she cannot bear to look.

[21 : 03] I would suggest that is perhaps a more likely reason why we do not have Jochebed herself here. But verses 5 to 10 the story takes as we know a slightly happier turn.

Had Pharaoh's daughter lost a child herself perhaps? Was she especially vulnerable to this suggestion of oh look here's a little baby at the river? whom the Egyptians regarded as a god remember?

They thought of the river as a god that had suddenly provided this for. Was she known to be especially compassionate toward the Hebrews? We do not know these things but we can imagine that she was not stupid.

This child suddenly appears in a very carefully and lovingly constructed little basket. She sees it. She sends whatever means to get it. Some have suggested that she was coming down to the river to wash for a religious festival or whatever.

At any rate she must have been known to wash at a particular spot, a particular area near where the ark has been placed. And Miriam is there on hand ready to offer advice to help.

[22 : 11] this child this child has obviously, obviously been left for her to find and she became willingly complicit. Not stupid, not naive, but complicit in what she must have known was a, humanly speaking, a plan to save this child's life.

Baskets do not miraculously appear out of nowhere with babies in them at the side of the river. Little girls do not miraculously appear. Can I go and get a nurse for you? And look, here's a Hebrew nurse, just like that.

Isn't it amazing? She's not stupid. She knows what is going on here, but she enters into it. You nurse them for me, I'll give you your wages, and so on.

And she hasn't reared up but her own son. Now, in our modern democratic days, we may think that perhaps Pharaoh or the Egyptians must surely have worried about, well, we can't do this.

If we make an exception for one, will we not end up having to spare all of them and make an exception for everyone? How can we treat this one, this little Hebrew baby, any differently? But that is to miss the whole point and the brutal reality of arbitrary, absolutist, pagan monarchies.

[23 : 27] Pharaoh was, in their eyes, a god, small g. the gods and the pharaohs did as they pleased. They could easily make an exception if they wanted to.

All fathers want to indulge their daughters if they can. And Pharaoh could and did indulge his. He didn't answer to the Hebrews. They come and say, oh, it's not fair, you make an exception of this child and none of ours.

Why? I don't care, I choose to, that's my problem, not yours. If his Egyptian ministers turned around and said, you can't go raising this Hebrew child as an Egyptian prince, what is going to happen? He would say, what is up to you?

I've decided it. I am doing it. You deal with it. They serve him. He doesn't serve them. It's not like our parliamentary democracy where, you know, a prime minister answers to the cabinet and a parliament answers to the people and so on.

You have an election every so often. They're not elections. They didn't have plebiscites. They didn't have votes in democracies. Pharaoh said it and it was so. And if Pharaoh decides, my daughter's going to raise this child as a board, deal with it.

[24 : 31] If you've got a problem with it, that's your problem. If you want to be executed tonight for arguing with me, that's fine. Okay? You just didn't argue with Pharaoh. This kind of arbitrary, absolutist, pagan monarchy, this ends up being overruled and utilised in the sovereignty of God.

Because that very arbitrariness, that very absolutism ends up being used of the Lord to preserve and protect the one that he intends to be, humanly speaking, the deliverer of his will.

God superintending all things for his glory and the plans of his mercy. Now we read, verse 10, the child grew. She brought him onto Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son.

And she called his name Moses, for she said, because I drew him out of the water. The name Moses means drawn out. Now if he did have a name before, and the Jewish rabbis claimed that the name he would have been given by his parents was the name Jochim, where they were to get that from, or what scripture they're going on, clearly it's just a tradition or an invention or whatever, we don't have any authority for that at all.

We have no record of any other name given to this child. He is known, whether to Hebrews or to Egyptians alike, simply as Moses. Unlike, for example, Daniel, who we know that that's his Hebrew name, and he was given the name Belchish by the Babylonians, we know some people's names have been changed.

[26 : 05] We don't know for Moses. It's the only name we've got. And it's the name that the Egyptian princess gave to him. And he became her son.

We think, oh, that's my mouse. Isn't that good? Again, let's just go back to Kyokab for a minute. Yes, she has got him back, as from the dead.

Yes, she has been brought to Pharaoh's door and said, nurse this child. Oh, yes, your majesty, no problem. Your royal highness, I'll have to nurse the child. However long a child is weaned for in those ancient days, sometimes maybe up to as old as two years old, perhaps.

Then if it was hard to let him go at three months, how hard do you think it's going to be at two years? When you've raised him, when you've nursed him, when he's beginning to toddle, and then you take him by the hand, and you take him, this nice lady's going to look after you now.

Huge, big palace, and all these strange people about, and then you have to watch him being taken away. And then he's looking over his shoulders and saying, mommy, you're coming back, whatever. No, there's nothing with that.

[27 : 08] How many heartbreaks do you think this poor woman has to go through? The human cost of this saving of Moses is huge, and yet it is comparatively unnoted, it is unwritten, and yet I guarantee you it would have been there.

God does not lay out for us in sort of Jeremy Kyle style, sort of, all the heartbreaks and all the difficulties and all the sorrows on display, but they would have been there.

The cost to his mother, the cost to his family of seeing your own little two, three year old, whatever you would be, toggling off into the Egyptian palace at the hand of some other servant or whatever, knowing that humanly speaking you'll probably never see him again.

And if you do, he probably won't recognize you. How many times do you have to say farewell to the child the Lord has given you? A second heartbreaking farewell for Yochavid, but at least the child will live.

He will be safe, he will be protected, he will be privileged, and this is all part of the Lord's plan. In verse 11 we read, and it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown, and we know from elsewhere in scripture he was forty years old at this point, so he was fully an adult and trained up in the ways of the Egyptians.

[28 : 30] He went out unto his brethren, and he looked on their burdens, and he spied an Egyptian, smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. Some commentators say it implies that the Hebrew was killed by the Egyptian.

It doesn't explicitly say that there, but he saw him smiting an Egyptian, and he was right, he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he sprew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

Now, obviously when he does this, he is acting on the smud of the moment, he is acting on impulse, it's not recommended as something that the Lord's people should do.

He went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strolled together, and he said to him that did the wrong way, therefore smite us to thy fellow. And he said, who made thee a prince and a judge over us?

Intendest thou to kill me as thou killed the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said, surely this thing is known. Now, notice here, the fallenness of human nature, the one who is at fault, is unashamed to speak back, and to argue, not with the fact of what he's done, but with the fact of having been rebuked for it.

[29 : 39] Now, this tiny little verse, this tiny little instance illustrates the reality of human sin, which cannot bear to be on the one hand perhaps exposed, or if it is exposed to be brazen, cannot bear to be challenged or to be rebuked.

sin, no matter how serious the sin, no matter how blatant the abuse of the situation, no matter how much in the wrong, they would rather argue back than concede.

Yeah, well, yes, I probably shouldn't have hit him. I probably shouldn't have smitten my fellow Hebrews. No, who made you a prince of that judge over us? Well, you could tell me what to do. Intendest thou to kill me as thou killed the Egyptian?

No, just because you've said a word of rebuke, that's taken as being sort of a threat of my life, and such is the nature of sin. That it will demand complete and total sovereignty, complete and total right to do as it pleases, or else it is perceived as a threat against their very existence. Now, we see this, of course, nowadays. If you dare to so much as say there are boys and there are girls, and that's it. Or if you dare to say marriage is between a man and a woman, and that's it. [30 : 49] You're accused of all manner of hate speech and wanting to exclude people and wanting to be bad for people and deny them existence and so on. All manner things for simple little statements of truth.

Because sin cannot bear either the light of day of scrutiny, but nor can it especially bear the impudence of a rebuke in righteousness.

This is what we have here. Wherefore, smitest thou thy fellow? Simple question. Who may be a prince and a judge over us? In turn, is that a king of the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said, surely this thing is normal.

Now, these verses 11 to 14 indicate to us, that neither were the Israelites yet ready to go unto Egypt, nor was Moses yet ready to be their deliverer or leader.

It may be that he had some idea that he ought to be a leader for them, that he ought to deliver them from their bondage, but at present, he obviously thought he could do it by human means. You know, if he was killing that Egyptian, then he was doing it in his own strength, in his own wrath.

[32 : 02] James tells us, chapter 1, verse 20, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. It was by the staff and not by the sword, by the meekness of Moses and not by his own human wrath that the Lord was to accomplish the great work of deliverance.

You know, we think in terms of poor Peter in the garden, he draws his sword to defend Jesus. And Jesus said, now put up your sword again. If I wanted to, I could call 12 legions of angels to deliver me.

It's not by the sword that the Lord is going to work his deliverance. Not in the days of Christ, not in the days of Moses. It's not by killing your enemies by your own hand, but rather by putting your trust in the Lord.

If there's anybody to be killed, the Lord will do it. If the Lord intends you to use your sword, he'll give you explicit instructions as he did to Joshua and Israelites when they came into the land of Canaan. But the wrath of man worked not the righteousness of God. Verse 13 makes clear, now, wherefore, smite his star of thy fellow.

[33 : 08] And also, you know, who made you a prince of a judge over us? It makes clear that despite 40 years of Egyptian upbringing and privilege, Moses is known and recognized to be a Hebrew.

Hebrew. That's a significant thing. They don't say to what they think is a prince of Egypt, you know, who made you a prince or a judge over us? If he was a straight, pure, blood Egyptian, you'd say, who do you think?

I'm an Egyptian prince or taskmaster. You can surely, well, get carried off to the cells or executed by tonight or whatever. Don't talk back to me. I'm the master of the race. You're the slave.

But because he was known to be a Hebrew, rather than regard him as an ally in the eyes of his fellow Hebrews, this elicits contempt rather than gratitude.

Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? He is recognized not to be a proper prince of Egypt. He is recognized to be a fellow Hebrew.

[34 : 10] Intendest thou to kill me as thou killest the Egyptian? Not your fellow Egyptian the other day, but the Egyptian. In other words, you're not an Egyptian. I know you're not an Egyptian.

You're a Hebrew just like us. Who do you think you are? This elicits, as we say, not gratitude but rather contempt. And this, of course, is exactly what Jesus faced himself when he comes back to his own town in Nazareth and when he preaches to them and expands the scriptures.

We read in Mark chapter 6, verse 3, after he said, this man this wisdom, these things, you know, what is this which is given to him that even such mighty works are rod by him? When he's teaching this to them, they go, is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph, or Judah and Simon, are not his sisters here with us?

And they were offended at him. They didn't say, oh, isn't it great? One of us has got this kind of power. Isn't it great if the Lord's going to do a word? He's going to do it with one of our fellow Nazarenes.

Really put Nazareth on the back. Go for it, Jesus. We are really on your side. No, they're offended at him. Who do you think you are? You're just like us. We know who you are.

[35 : 24] We know who your dad was. We know who your mummies, your brothers and sisters are here. Who do you think you are? But Jesus said to them, a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country and among his own kin and in his own house.

Who may they a prince and a judge over us? And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. You might think, well, how could Jesus, he could not do any mighty work.

How could he be constrained from doing a mighty work if he wanted to? Because of their lack of faith. And there is not yet faith in the Hebrews.

Not yet faith in the living God to deliver them. Not yet faith in their chosen instrument of Moses as the man whom the Lord is going to choose. There is not faith in the God of their fathers.

There is not faith in stop. Jochebed and Amram are exceptional. They may not be unique, but they are exceptional in that they have faith in the living God.

[36 : 26] Sufficient to put themselves through this kind of repeated depth of heartbreak which they must have had to go through in order to secure the life and the future of their youngest son.

So this quality of faith is a rarity. And the Hebrews are not yet ready to be delivered. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses.

But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian. Now almost certainly when Pharaoh says he's got to slay Moses, this is politics, it's not vengeance.

Pharaoh, as you know, the absolutist ruler, is not going to be concerned about the death of one of his minor taskmasters. He's a minion. He's not worried. What he's worried about is the fact that a Hebrew, albeit brought up as a prince of Egypt, has killed an Egyptian.

And where is this going to end if it is not stamped on? And if he does not stamp on this one with all the privileges of Egypt, who nevertheless has turned upon his fellow Egyptians, who have given him so much, if there is such base in gratitude in one who has received so much from the court of Egypt, what might be expected from the other Hebrews?

[37 : 46] He has to set an example. This is not vengeance. I think we should be clear about this. It's not vengeance. This is politics. When Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses.

Moses. Now, we might consider, you know, well, who would have given him away? If he looked this way and that, he might, you know, regarding nobody saw him do it.

So, perhaps the Hebrew who he saved out of the hand of the Egyptian, if he wasn't dead, did he tell him? Who else was there to do it? If nobody saw him do it.

And that's quite a thought. You know, okay, he could say, well, see, that's Moses who was brought with him. He killed the Egyptian, you know, that was helping me. And that would have spread all around the Hebrews. And when it reached Pharaoh, he is ready to kill Moses.

And so Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well. Now, this journey, which would have been a considerable journey because Midian, okay, we don't know the precise geographical boundaries of it, but part of it would be in probably the eastern part of the Sinai Desert.

[38 : 55] He probably would have fled over the top end of where the Gulf of Suez would end and down into the Sinai Peninsula or across the top of it into Arabia and into that area where the Kushite peoples and tribes would be dwelling, amongst which, and these would be the descendants of Ishmael, remember, the Midianites were descendants of Ishmael, amongst whom there is some remnant of the worship of the true God.

And here the Lord brings him just fleeing into the wilderness. And we don't know how he got as far as he did. Maybe he joined a caravan of traders. Maybe he was just fleeing on foot.

By whatever means, he must have somehow had water and supplies to sustain him. But he gets all the way into the land of Midian and sat down by a well, thus far delivered again.

Forty years have elapsed since he was laid in the river. And now, as a prince of Egypt, he's had the free for his life. And now, what is his situation? The Egyptians want to kill him.

The Hebrews despise him. He has nobody left in the world. He doesn't belong anywhere. And the only land he has ever known, he has had to run for his life.

[40 : 16] He probably doesn't know where he is at this stage. It's described as being the land of Midian. He almost certainly wouldn't have known what it was. He just sits down by a well. He needs

the water.

He needs the opportunity to refresh himself. He needs to survive. But he has nowhere to go and no one to turn to. It's just him and the wilderness and God.

Now, we're going to leave the narrative at this stage here. But I want you to recognize just how low the Lord brings Moses before he begins to bring him up again.

So far, if you can leave aside for a moment the apparent privilege of being raised up in the palace of Pharaoh and all the teaching and learning of the Egyptians to which he was subject and with which he was, yes, blessed and equipped and so on, all of that has gone out the window now because the Egyptians want to kill him.

Pharaoh now desires to put him to death. And the Hebrews that he came to try and help, they don't want anything to do with him. They despise him. They hold him in contempt. So he has nobody.

[41 : 23] If he were to go back to his family, whoever of them might still be alive, he'd probably put them in danger. He can't flee to his stepmother, the princess of Egypt, because she's embarrassed now by the fact he's turned against the Egyptians.

He has nowhere. And he has no one. He doesn't have a country of his own. He doesn't have a family left. He has nothing. And here he sits down by the well of water in the desert of Midian. Just him and the wilderness and God. Now I do not know what your own situation may be. I do know, however, that the Lord frequently brings people down.

Usually brings people down before he intends to exalt them. He will often reduce an individual to the situation where there is nothing and nobody left to turn to but to the living God.

When you have nobody else, when you have no other source of strength or blessing or ability or help in the world, there is still you and God who never forsakes his people.

[42 : 33] He has said, and it's there in his word in the original, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. And you think, well, that takes a bit of faith. Okay, well, what have you got to lose? If you say, well, the Lord is real and he's watching me and he cares me, then I've got the Lord.

Even if we've got nothing else in this world, I've got the Lord. And because he controls the heavens and the earth, he is more powerful than all the forces of the world, I've got hope. Now maybe he's going to help me.

Maybe he's going to be on my side. Well, he's not going to be on your side as such, but he will bring you to the place whereby you're on his. But to do that, sometimes we have to be brought low.

And sometimes we have to be broken of all privilege and ability and health and strength in this world. At this stage in his life, there is nothing but the well, the wilderness, and God from Moses.

I don't know what you have in your life, where you are, but you can be guaranteed of this. The Lord is there. And you may say, oh, well, he hasn't helped me much.

[43 : 36] He hasn't done anything for me much so far. Have you asked? Have you waited on him? Have you turned him? Or have you reckoned you could get by fine without him up to now? Maybe you thought you could.

But as one by one, all these other means of strength are taken away from you, the Lord does that so that we have nowhere else to turn but to him.

And if you say, well, I don't believe in this God, that's fine. That means there's just you in the wilderness and nothing. If that's what you choose, if that's what you desire, just an inevitable, eventual death and nothing, except it's not nothing, of course.

It's an eternity separated from the Lord, which is what we call hell. But the Lord is there. The Lord is in the wilderness. The Lord is with the outcast.

The Lord is with those who have nowhere else and nobody else to turn. And even if they had it all and have lost it all, and there is just you and the wilderness, trust me, there isn't.

[44 : 40] There is you and the wilderness and there is God. And he is there for those who have no one else. He is there for those who have abundance as well, but so often they are too blind to see it.

But when there is nobody but you and the Lord, you know where it is you must go. You know where it is you must turn. It's not rocket science.

It's not complicated. It's a bit of a no-brainer when it comes down to it. The Lord has brought you to this stage in your life. And with all the love in the world, I would suggest, perhaps he has done so for a purpose.

And the purpose and the reason that he has has yet to unfold, but only when you turn to him and throw yourself on his mercy will it begin to unfold.
Let us pray.