

MOSES

A Man of Selfless Dedication

STUDY TWO

Born after Midnight

Exodus 2:1–10

The conditions in which Moses was born were nothing less than torturous. It was into these dark times that he was born, after midnight, in the darkest hour of Hebrew history.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

IN the early 1930s, Germany was an economic wasteland. Banks had collapsed under the strain of a stock market crash. Millions lost their jobs, and many teetered on the edge of starvation. Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party leveraged the dire situation to gain power by promising jobs, prosperity, and a revitalized Germany. The Nazi political machine, however, hid a sinister side.

Once in power, Hitler instituted horrific measures of ethnic cleansing to achieve a “purified” race, including genocide of the Jews throughout Eastern Europe. By the end of World War II, an estimated six million Jews had been killed.

Thousands of years earlier, another type of Holocaust took place in ancient Egypt under a Pharaoh whose tactics resembled Hitler’s. Without warning, like the Jews during World War II, the Israelites were stripped of their rights when Gestapo-like taskmasters raided their homes and businesses. Their young men became beasts of burden; their women, defenseless chattel; their neighborhoods, impoverished ghettos.

Cruellest of all was Pharaoh’s final solution to curb Israelite overpopulation: “Throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River” (Exodus 1:22). We can only imagine the horror of such an edict.



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Exodus 2:1–10

In Israel's darkest hour, Moses was born. But in his parents' hearts, faith burned bright as they trusted God to protect their newborn son. In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll see how God overruled Pharaoh and saved young Moses—and He did so through the indomitable power of a mother's love.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Express your faith by asking the Lord in prayer to illumine the truths in His Word and guide you through the darkness of today's world.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Moses' father, Amram, and mother, Jochebed, were from the tribe of Levi (Exodus 6:20). Another key figure in Moses' birth account is his sister. She's not named here, but we know her as Miriam based on Numbers 26:59. Moses' brother wasn't mentioned either, but his name was Aaron, and he was three years old when Moses was born (Exodus 7:7).

Exodus 2:1 begins, "About this time," referring to the time of Pharaoh's cruel edict in [Exodus 1:22](#). Why is this timing significant to the account? What does it highlight about God?



Observation: Moses' Home, Protection, Childhood, and Adoption

Observation lays a solid foundation for understanding a biblical passage. As you read, notice the action words in the narrative. Observe the sequence of events, cause-and-effect, and contrasts and comparisons.¹

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Moses' Home—Exodus 2:1–2

What details do you observe about Moses' parents and his birth in *Exodus 2:1–2*?

All mothers view their newborns as beautiful, but what did Jochebed see in Moses? What did God see, according to *Acts 7:20*? How do you think she kept him hidden for three months?

Moses' Protection—Exodus 2:3–6

Jochebed could hide her precious son for only so long, so she devised a plan. What did she do in *Exodus 2:3–6*?

How ironic that the Nile became a river of life for Moses. But Jochebed had to do the unthinkable as a mother . . . give up her baby! How could she let him go? What did Jochebed's action demonstrate about her motherly love and her faith in God?

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What additional insight into Jochebed's and Amram's character does [Hebrews 11:23](#) note?

Jochebed secured the basket right where she wanted it. She knew that on certain days at a certain place, Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe. She had a plan, and she had great faith in God, because she knew God was greater than Pharaoh.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Moses' Childhood—Exodus 2:7–9

Use your imagination to step into the scene in [Exodus 2:7–9](#). What emotions do you think Miriam, the Egyptian princess, Jochebed, and even little Moses felt?

God used a brave little girl and two women inseparably linked by motherly love to subvert the power of Pharaoh and provide Moses a nurturing home. What does this scene reveal about God's heart? What does it reveal about the way He works to accomplish His will?

Moses' Adoption—Exodus 2:10

What do you observe in [Exodus 2:10](#)? What must it have been like for Jochebed to release Moses for adoption and for the princess to receive him as her own son?

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Moses may have been around three years old when he was adopted. What spiritual values and personal stability do you think Amram and Jochebed built into him during these vital, formative toddler years?

The beautiful message from this passage is that God's hand is on your life. I do not believe there is any such thing as an accidental birth.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Faithfulness of God, Response of Faith

Interpretation seeks the meaning of the passage from the author's words in its biblical and historical context. "The overall theme of Exodus is redemption—how God delivered the Israelites and makes them His special people."²

The main character of Exodus is God, and each narrative points to God's hand at work. Pharaoh may sit on a regal throne in pomp and power, but God rules from a higher throne. How do you see God's hand in the account of Moses' birth and adoption (*Exodus 2:1–10*)?

God works *most powerfully* through those who seem *most powerless*: the midwives (*1:17*), the Israelite mothers (*1:19*), Moses' mother and sister (*2:3–4, 7–9*). Even Pharaoh's daughter (*2:5–10*) was an unexpected hero who defied her own father's edict to adopt a Hebrew boy.

The right response of God's people, no matter how insignificant they may feel, is faith. What qualities of faith do you see in the characters of the passage?

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What main lesson was Moses teaching his readers about God? What is the significance of Moses' name to the main theme of Exodus?

In the believer's life there is no such thing as an ill-timed birth. You may have come into a home that was financially strapped. You may have known brokenness and hurt and insecurity since your earliest days, but you were not an accident. God can use you. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Moses' Life in Overview

“There has never been a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10). Through Moses, God freed His people from slavery. Through Moses, God gave His law and formed the Israelites into a holy nation (Exodus 19:6). Through Moses, God spoke words of hope in the wilderness.

And yet, Moses didn't grow into spiritual maturity overnight. Not until he reached *eighty years old* did he become effective for God. Pastor Chuck Swindoll traces Moses' life in forty-year periods.

He spent his first forty years in Egypt, nursed by his mother and taught by the Egyptian schools. He spent his second forty years in the desert, nursed by solitude and taught by God. He spent his final forty years with the Hebrew people in the wilderness, nursed by trials, discouragements, and tests, and taught by the Law.³

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The chart below offers a preview of Moses' life. Take a few minutes to look over the chart, noting the forty-year periods and the major themes.

Panorama of Moses' Life			
	The First Forty Years	The Second Forty Years	The Third Forty Years
Lesson	Thinking he was somebody	Learning he was nobody	Discovering what God could do with a nobody
Location	Egypt	Midian	Egypt, Wilderness
Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nursed at home• Schooled and skilled• Self-willed and impatient• Fled for his life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Father, shepherd, servant• Alone and broken• Humble and sensitive• Useful to God	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered Hebrews• The law• The tabernacle• Their wanderings
Scripture	Exodus 1:1–2:15; Acts 7:17–29	Exodus 2:16–4:28; Acts 7:29–34	Exodus 4:29– Deuteronomy 34:12; Acts 7:35–44

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What lessons stand out to you about how God works in a person's heart over the course of his or her lifetime?

Do you see phases of maturity in your own spiritual growth? How has God been working in your life?

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Dwight L. Moody said this about Moses: “He spent his first forty years thinking he was a somebody. He spent his second forty years learning he was a nobody. He spent his third forty years discovering what God can do with a nobody.”
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Faith in Dark Times

We all pass through a “midnight” season in which no light shines. Dawn seems eternally distant. Has a dark midnight overtaken you? If so, write down the circumstances that are shrouding your spirit?

If the parents of Moses could speak today, what might they say to you about courage, love, faith, hope, family, and God?

If dark times haven't come, now is the time to build faith for the future. What lessons from your study can you carry with you to draw upon when you need them?

What insight about God and His character did He reveal to you through your study?

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Moses was born into a hostile world, but he was nurtured in a secure home. Faith is formed in the earliest years of life, the precious days of infancy and childhood that pass by so fast. Make your home a haven from the world, a safe place where you and your loved ones can grow up secure in God’s faithfulness and love.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, when the night seems long and full of tears, help me to hang onto Your promise of joy that comes in the morning. I cling to Your hand as I walk through the shadows, and I keep my mind on You and not on my fears. My hope is in You and the work I know You are doing, even though I may not see it yet. In Jesus’ name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, “*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*”
2. Insight for Living, “Exodus,” [insight.org/resources/bible/the-pentateuch/exodus](https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-pentateuch/exodus).
3. Charles R. Swindoll, *Moses: A Man of Selfless Dedication* (Nashville: Word, 1999), 20.

For the 2024–2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 1975, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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Insight for Living

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