

Exodus 1-2

Pastor Jake Beattie

It is estimated that there are around 55,000 photos taken every second in the world today. That calculates to almost five billion photos taken each day. It's hard to fathom just how many photos that is. One of the reasons for this is how easy it has become to take photos, but I also think another aspect is we want to remember things that happen in our day to day life. This is one of the reasons why we take so many photographs of our children as they grow up. We know that without something to trigger our memory, we will likely forget these wonderful times in their childhood. When the Christmas season comes around each year, we have a propensity for getting caught up in the excitement of the season and forgetting the true meaning.

The opening chapters of Exodus may be a familiar story to you, but in it we read of a Pharaoh who is forgetful and a God who remembers. Exodus 1:8 tells us there arose a new king in Egypt who did not know Joseph. It does not specifically state that he did not remember Joseph, but he did not know him. Surely what Joseph did for the nation of Egypt was known not only in Egypt, but in surrounding countries, as Egypt was the only place for people to find food during the famine. While this new Pharaoh did not know Joseph, he surely must have heard the stories about him and how he preserved countless lives during the famine. This Pharaoh, however, did not seem to care about Joseph and the family he left after him. This Pharaoh decided to treat the Hebrew people with contempt and enslave them. God's chosen people were treated as slaves and would continue to be treated as such for hundreds of years to come.

Beyond being treated as slaves, we also read that this Pharaoh commanded the midwives to kill the Hebrews' newborn male babies as they were born. When that plan failed he commanded all Hebrew baby boys to be thrown into the Nile River in an attempt to keep the nation from becoming too strong and fighting against Egypt. God's people were being treated so terribly. This looks so far from what God had promised to Abraham back in Genesis 12, that in him all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

But even though Pharaoh had forgotten Joseph, God had not forgotten His people. At the end of Exodus 2 we read, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew." The end of chapter 2 reminds us that God has not forgotten about His people, but the rest of chapter 2 is proof that He had not forgotten. God was at work preserving the life of Moses. When things were not looking good for God's people, God was already at work preparing their deliverance. Sometimes the Christmas season reminds us how hard, difficult, and stressful life can be. When we feel this way it clouds our reasoning and we question if God can help us. What a wonderful reminder that when God's people needed good news, God had already been at work.

Similarly for us, no matter how we may feel during this time of the year, we need to be reminded that the God we serve is a God who makes promises. And while sometimes those promises are not fulfilled at the times we desire, we know without a doubt that God is at work to bring those promises to completion.