

Where Did I Come From?

Long Beach Alliance Church • May 9th, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife can get to them.” So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty.

~Exodus 1:19-20 (NASB)

1) Where You Came From Is Important

- A) The “mirroring” of the beginning of Exodus (Genesis 46:8 & Exodus 1:1) developed a continuity for the original reader which allowed them to understand their lives within a genuine historical perspective.
- B) Whenever the modern reader approaches a historical narrative (like Exodus), we are also able to better understand the circumstances of our modern lives in light of what God has been doing with His people historically.
- C) In other words, sometimes our circumstances and the events (both good & bad) of our lives cause us to wonder “what is God doing?” or “where is God in the midst of this or that situation?” Exodus helps to answer this question and assure us that God’s chosen people are never alone.

2) Strength In Numbers & Solidarity In Persecution

- A) The beginning of Exodus notes the unique divine blessing of descendents from the “original” family of Israel (the 70, Exodus 1:1-5) to a “teeming swarm” of Israelites (1:6-7).
- B) When a new Hyksos king (1:8) rises (see notes from 4/25/10 for a thorough explanation of both the timeline and reasoning for Hyksos rulership in Egypt) who did not know the greatness of Joseph, everything changes for Israel.
- C) The new Pharaoh uses the fear internal strife and war as a pretext (1:9-10) for persecuting the immigrant Israelites (1:11-14*). The Israelites go from favored friends of Egypt to a slave people who labor for their oppressors.

3) Civil Disobedience In The Face Of Evil Leadership

- A) Pharaoh asks two leading midwives (it was common Egyptian practice to deliver babies with 2-4 midwives present) to assist in genocide against Israelite boys (1:15-16).

- B) But these Hebrew midwives fear God more than Pharaoh, and disobey their earthly king in favor of their heavenly King (1:17). When called to task by Pharaoh (1:18), they lie to Pharaoh in order to protect the Israelite people (1:19).
- C) God blesses these women as leading women in Israel (1:20-21). God’s is in control, even when the situation gets worse and worse. Soon, open genocide against Israelites is advocated by Pharaoh (1:22) through the drowning of all Israelite boys. The situation seems increasingly hopeless...

* The references to “Pithom & Raamses” in Exodus 1:11, like its predecessor from Genesis 47:11, are anachronisms (a detail or word in a story that does not fit the time period of the story. Often anachronisms can be understood as clarifications or adjustments made to the text at a later time). These place-names were added later in history for clarity.

