

---

EXODUS 2:1 A man of the house of Levi went and took a daughter of Levi as his wife.

---

Amram and Jochebed marry, Exo 2:1. Moses is born, and is hidden by his mother three months, Exo 2:2. Is exposed in an ark of bulrushes on the river Nile, and watched by his sister, Exo 2:3, Exo 2:4. He is found by the daughter of Pharaoh, who commits him to the care of his own mother, and has him educated as her own son, Exo 2:5-9. When grown up, he is brought to Pharaoh's daughter, who receives him as her own child, and calls him Moses, Exo 2:10. Finding an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, he kills the Egyptian, and hides him in the sand, Exo 2:11, Exo 2:12. Reproves two Hebrews that were contending together, one of whom charges him with killing the Egyptian, Exo 2:13, Exo 2:14. Pharaoh, hearing of the death of the Egyptian, sought to slay Moses, who, being alarmed, escapes to the land of Midian, Exo 2:15. Meets with the seven daughters of Reuel, priest or prince of Midian, who came to water their flocks, and assists them, Exo 2:16, Exo 2:17. On their return they inform their father Reuel, who invites Moses to his house, Exo 2:18-20. Moses dwells with him, and receives Zipporah his daughter to wife, Exo 2:21. She bears him a son whom he calls Gershom, Exo 2:22. The children of Israel, grievously oppressed in Egypt, cry for deliverance, Exo 2:23. God remembers his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and hears their prayer, Exo 2:24, Exo 2:25.

#### Verse 1

There went a man - Amram, son of Kohath, son of Levi, Exo 6:16-20. A daughter of Levi, Jochebed, sister to Kohath, and consequently both the wife and aunt of her husband Amram, Exo 6:20; Num 26:59. Such marriages were at this time lawful, though they were afterwards forbidden, Lev 18:12. But it is possible that daughter of Levi means no more than a descendant of that family, and that probably Amram and Jochebed were only cousin Germans. As a new law was to be given and a new priesthood formed, God chose a religious family out of which the lawgiver and the high priest were both to spring.

---

EXODUS 2:2 The woman conceived, and bore a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months.

---

#### Verse 2

Bare a son - This certainly was not her first child, for Aaron was fourscore and three years old when Moses was but fourscore, see Exo 7:7 : and there was a sister, probably Miriam, who was older than either; see below, Exo 2:4, and see Num 26:59. Miriam and Aaron had no doubt been both born before the decree was passed for the destruction of the Hebrew male children, mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Goodly child - The text simply says *כי טוב הוא* ki tob hu, that he was good, which signifies that he was not only a perfect, well-formed child, but that he was very beautiful; hence the Septuagint translate the phrase, *ιδοντες δε αυτο αστειον*, Seeing him to be beautiful, which St. Stephen interprets, *Ην αστειος τω Θεω*, He was comely to God, or divinely beautiful. This very circumstance was wisely ordained by the kind providence of God to be one means of his preservation. Scarcely any thing interests the heart more than the sight of a lovely babe in distress. His beauty would induce even his parents to double their exertions to save him, and was probably the sole motive which led the

Egyptian princess to take such particular care of him, and to educate him as her own, which in all likelihood she would not have done had he been only an ordinary child.

---

EXODUS 2:3 When she could no longer hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him, and coated it with tar and with pitch. She put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank.

---

### Verse 3

An ark of bulrushes - תִּבְתַּת גֹּמֵא *tebath gome*, a small boat or basket made of the Egyptian reed called papyrus, so famous in all antiquity. This plant grows on the banks of the Nile, and in marshy grounds; the stalk rises to the height of six or seven cubits above the water, is triangular, and terminates in a crown of small filaments resembling hair, which the ancients used to compare to a thyrus. This reed was of the greatest use to the inhabitants of Egypt, the pith contained in the stalk serving them for food, and the woody part to build vessels with; which vessels frequently appear on engraved stones and other monuments of Egyptian antiquity. For this purpose they made it up like rushes into bundles, and by tying them together gave their vessels the necessary figure and solidity. "The vessels of bulrushes or papyrus," says Dr. Shaw, "were no other than large fabrics of the same kind with that of Moses, Exo 2:3, which from the late introduction of planks and stronger materials are now laid aside." Thus Pliny, lib. vi., cap. 16, takes notice of the naves papyraceas armamentaque Nili, "ships made of papyrus and the equipments of the Nile:" and lib. xiii., cap. 11, he observes, *Exodus ipsa quidem papyro navigia texunt*: "Of the papyrus itself they construct sailing vessels." Herodotus and Diodorus have recorded the same fact; and among the poets, Lucan, lib. iv., ver. 136: *Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro*, "The Memphian or Egyptian boat is constructed from the soaking papyrus." The epithet *bibula* is particularly remarkable, as corresponding with great exactness to the nature of the plant, and to its Hebrew name גֹּמֵא *gome*, which signifies to soak, to drink up. See Parkhurst sub voce.

She laid it in the flags - Not willing to trust it in the stream for fear of a disaster; and probably choosing the place to which the Egyptian princess was accustomed to come for the purpose specified in the note on the following verse.

---

EXODUS 2:4 His sister stood far off, to see what would be done to him.

EXODUS 2:5 Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the river. Her maidens walked along by the riverside. She saw the basket among the reeds, and sent her handmaid to get it.

---

### Verse 5

And the daughter of Pharaoh - Josephus calls her Thermuthis, and says that "the ark was borne along by the current, and that she sent one that could swim after it; that she was struck with the figure and uncommon beauty of the child; that she inquired for a nurse, but he having refused the breasts of several, and his sister proposing to bring a Hebrew nurse, his own mother was procured." But all this is in Josephus's manner, as well as the long circumstantial dream that he gives to Amram concerning the future greatness of Moses, which cannot be considered in any other light than that of a fable, and not even a cunningly devised one.

To wash herself at the river - Whether the daughter of Pharaoh went to bathe in the river through motives of pleasure, health, or religion, or whether she bathed at all, the text does not specify. It is merely stated by the sacred writer that she went down to the river to Wash; for the word herself is not in the original. Mr. Harmer, *Observat.*, vol. iii., p. 529, is of opinion that the time referred to above was that in which the Nile begins to rise; and as the dancing girls in Egypt are accustomed now to plunge themselves into the river at its rising, by which act they testify their gratitude for the inestimable blessing of its inundations, so it might have been formerly; and that Pharaoh's daughter was now coming down to the river on a similar account. I see no likelihood in all this. If she washed herself at all, it might have been a religious ablution, and yet extended no farther than to the hands and face; for the word γnr rachats, to wash, is repeatedly used in the Pentateuch to signify religious ablutions of different kinds. Jonathan in his Targum says that God had smitten all Egypt with ulcers, and that the daughter of Pharaoh came to wash in the river in order to find relief; and that as soon as she touched the ark where Moses was, her ulcers were healed. This is all fable. I believe there was no bathing in the case, but simply what the text states, washing, not of her person, but of her clothes, which was an employment that even kings' daughters did not think beneath them in those primitive times. Homer, *Odyss.* vi., represents Nausicaa, daughter of Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians, in company with her maidens, employed at the seaside in washing her own clothes and those of her five brothers! While thus employed they find Ulysses just driven ashore after having been shipwrecked, utterly helpless, naked, and destitute of every necessary of life. The whole scene is so perfectly like that before us that they appear to me to be almost parallels. I shall subjoin a few lines. The princess, having piled her clothes on a carriage drawn by several mules, and driven to the place of washing, commences her work, which the poet describes thus: - Ταί δ' απ' απηνης Είματα χερσιν έλοντο, και εσφορεον μελαν ύδωρ. Στειβον δ' εν βαθροισι θωωσ, εριδα προφερουσαι. Αυταρ επει πλυναν τε, καθηραν τε ρυπα παντα, Εξειης πετασαν παρα θιν' άλος, ήχι μαλιστα. Λαϊγγας ποτι χερσον αποπλυνεσκε θαλασσα.

*Odyssey*, lib. vi., ver. 90. "Light'ning the carriage, next they bore in hand

The garments down to the unsullied wave,  
 And thrust them heap'd into the pools; their task  
 Despatching brisk, and with an emulous haste.  
 When all were purified, and neither spot  
 Could be perceived or blemish more, they spread  
 The raiment orderly along the beach,  
 Where dashing tides had cleansed the pebbles most."  
 Cowper.

When this task was finished we find the Phaeacian princess and her ladies (Κουρη δ' εκ θαλαμοιο - αμφιπολοι αλλαι) employed in amusing themselves upon the beach, till the garments they had washed should be dry and fit to be folded up, that they might reload their carriage and return. In the text of Moses the Egyptian princess, accompanied by her maids, נערתיה naarotheyha, comes down to the river, not to bathe herself, for this is not intimated, but merely to wash, γnr lirchots; at the time in which the ark is perceived we may suppose that she and her companions had finished their task, and, like the daughter of Alcinous and her maidens, were amusing themselves walking along by the river's side, as the others did by tossing a ball, σφαιρη ται τ' αρ επαιζον, when they as suddenly and as unexpectedly discovered Moses adrift on the flood, as Nausicaa and her companions discovered Ulysses just escaped naked from shipwreck. In both the histories, that of the poet and this of the prophet, both the strangers, the shipwrecked Greek and the almost drowned Hebrew, were rescued by the princesses, nourished and preserved alive! Were it lawful to suppose that

Homer had ever seen the Hebrew story, it would be reasonable to conclude that he had made it the basis of the 6th book of the Odyssey.

---

EXODUS 2:6 She opened it, and saw the child, and behold, the baby cried. She had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

---

#### Verse 6

She had compassion on him - The sight of a beautiful babe in distress could not fail to make the impression here mentioned; see Clarke on Exo 2:2 (note). It has already been conjectured that the cruel edict of the Egyptian king did not continue long in force; see Exo 1:22. And it will not appear unreasonable to suppose that the circumstance related here might have brought about its abolition. The daughter of Pharaoh, struck with the distressed state of the Hebrew children from what she had seen in the case of Moses, would probably implore her father to abolish this sanguinary edict.

---

EXODUS 2:7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?"

---

#### Verse 7

Shall I go and call a nurse - Had not the different circumstances marked here been placed under the superintendence of an especial providence, there is no human probability that they could have had such a happy issue. The parents had done every thing to save their child that piety, affection, and prudence could dictate, and having done so, they left the event to God. By faith, says the apostle, Heb 11:23, 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. Because of the king's commandment they were obliged to make use of the most prudent caution to save the child's life; and their faith in God enabled them to risk their own safety, for they were not afraid of the king's commandment - they feared God, and they had no other fear.

---

EXODUS 2:8 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." The maiden went and called the child's mother.

EXODUS 2:9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." The woman took the child, and nursed it.

EXODUS 2:10 The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."

---

#### Verse 10

And he became her son - From this time of his being brought home by his nurse his education commenced, and he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Act 7:22, who in the knowledge of nature probably exceeded all the nations then on the face of the earth.

And she called his name - משה mosheh, because מן המים min hammaim, out of the waters משיתיהו meshithihu, have I drawn him. משה mashah signifies to draw out; and mosheh is the person drawn out; the word is used in the same sense Psa 18:16, and 2Sam 22:17. What name he had from his parents we know not; but whatever it might be it was ever after lost in the name given to him by the princess of Egypt. Abul Farajius says that Thermuthis delivered him to the wise men Janees and Jimbrees to be instructed in wisdom.

---

EXODUS 2:11 In those days, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his brothers, and looked at their burdens. He saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his brothers.

---

#### Verse 11

When Moses was grown - Being full forty years of age, as St. Stephen says, Act 7:23, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, i.e., he was excited to it by a Divine inspiration; and seeing one of them suffer wrong, by an Egyptian smiting him, probably one of the task-masters, he avenged him and smote - slew, the Egyptian, supposing that God who had given him commission, had given also his brethren to understand that they were to be delivered by his hand; see Act 7:23-25. Probably the Egyptian killed the Hebrew, and therefore on the Noahic precept Moses was justified in killing him; and he was authorized so to do by the commission which he had received from God, as all succeeding events amply prove. Previously to the mission of Moses to deliver the Israelites, Josephus says, "The Ethiopians having made an irruption into Egypt, and subdued a great part of it, a Divine oracle advised them to employ Moses the Hebrew. On this the king of Egypt made him general of the Egyptian forces; with these he attacked the Ethiopians, defeated and drove them back into their own land, and forced them to take refuge in the city of Saba, where he besieged them. Tharbis, daughter of the Ethiopian king, seeing him, fell desperately in love with him, and promised to give up the city to him on condition that he would take her to wife, to which Moses agreed, and the city was put into the hands of the Egyptians." - Jos. Ant. lib. ii., chap. 9. St. Stephen probably alluded to something of this kind when he said Moses was mighty in deeds as well as words.

---

EXODUS 2:12 He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no one, he killed the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

EXODUS 2:13 He went out the second day, and behold, two men of the Hebrews were fighting with each other. He said to him who did the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow?"

---

#### Verse 13

Two men of the Hebrews strove together - How strange that in the very place where they were suffering a heavy persecution because they were Hebrews, the very persons themselves who suffered it should be found persecuting each other! It has been often seen that in those times in which the ungodly oppressed the Church of Christ, its own members have been separated from each other by disputes concerning comparatively unessential points of doctrine and discipline, in consequence of which both they and the truth have become an easy prey to those whose desire was to waste the heritage of the Lord. The Targum of Jonathan says that the two persons who strove were Dathan and Abiram.

---

EXODUS 2:14 He said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you plan to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses was afraid, and said, "Surely this thing is known."

---

Verse 14

And Moses feared - He saw that the Israelites were not as yet prepared to leave their bondage; and that though God had called him to be their leader, yet his providence had not yet sufficiently opened the way; and had he stayed in Egypt he must have endangered his life. Prudence therefore dictated an escape for the present to the land of Midian.

---

EXODUS 2:15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and lived in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.

---

Verse 15

Pharaoh - sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh - How can this be reconciled with Heb 11:27 : By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king? Very easily. The apostle speaks not of this forsaking of Egypt, but of his and the Israelites' final departure from it, and of the bold and courageous manner in which Moses treated Pharaoh and the Egyptians, disregarding his threatenings and the multitudes of them that pursued after the people whom, in the name and strength of God, he led in the face of their enemies out of Egypt.

Dwelt in the land of Midian - A country generally supposed to have been in Arabia Petraea, on the eastern coast of the Red Sea, not far from Mount Sinai. This place is still called by the Arabs the land of Midian or the land of Jethro. Abul Farajius calls it the land of the Arabs. It is supposed that the Midianites derived their origin from Midian, the fourth son of Abraham by Keturah, thus: - Abraham, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan and Midian, Raguel, Jethro; see Gen 25:1. But Calmet contends that if Jethro had been of the family of Abraham, either by Jokshan, or Midian, Aaron and Miriam could not have reproached Moses with marrying a Cushite, Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel. He thinks therefore that the Midianites were of the progeny of Cush, the son of Ham; see Gen 10:6.

---

EXODUS 2:16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

---

Verse 16

The priest of Midian - Or prince, or both; for the original כהן cohen has both meanings. See it explained at large at Gen 15:18 (note). The transaction here very nearly resembles that mentioned Genesis 29 (note) concerning Jacob and Rachel.

---

EXODUS 2:17 The shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

---

#### Verse 17

The shepherds - drove them - The verb יגרשים yegareshum, being in the masculine gender, seems to imply that the shepherds drove away the flocks of Reuel's daughters, and not the daughters themselves. The fact seems to be, that, as the daughters of Reuel filled the troughs and brought their flocks to drink, the shepherds drove those away, and, profiting by the young women's labor, watered their own cattle. Moses resisted this insolence, and assisted them to water their flocks, in consequence of which they were enabled to return much sooner than they were wont to do, Exo 2:18.

---

EXODUS 2:18 When they came to Reuel, their father, he said, "How is it that you have returned so early today?"

---

#### Verse 18

Reuel, their father - In Num 10:29 this person is called Raguel, but the Hebrew is the same in both places. The reason of this difference is that the ע ain in רעואל is sometimes used merely as vowel, sometimes as g, ng, and gn, and this is occasioned by the difficulty of the sound, which scarcely any European organs can enunciate. As pronounced by the Arabs it strongly resembles the first effort made by the throat in gargling, or as Meninski says, Est vox vituli matrem vocantis, "It is like the sound made by a calf in seeking its dam." Raguel is the worst method of pronouncing it; Re-u-el, the first syllable strongly accented, is nearer to the true sound. A proper uniformity in pronouncing the same word wherever it may occur, either in the Old or New Testament, is greatly to be desired. The person in question appears to have several names. Here he is called Reuel; in Num 10:29, Raguel; in Exo 3:1, Jethor; in Jdg 4:11, Hobab; and in Jdg 1:16 he is called קיני Keyni, which in Exodus 4 we translate Kenite. Some suppose that Re-u-el was father to Hobab, who was also called Jethro. This is the most likely; see Clarke's note on Exo 3:1.

---

EXODUS 2:19 They said, "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and moreover he drew water for us, and watered the flock."

EXODUS 2:20 He said to his daughters, "Where is he? Why is it that you have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread."

---

#### Verse 20

That he may eat bread - That he may be entertained, and receive refreshment to proceed on his journey. Bread, among the Hebrews, was used to signify all kinds of food commonly used for the support of man's life.

---

EXODUS 2:21 Moses was content to dwell with the man. He gave Moses Zipporah, his daughter.

---

#### Verse 21

Zipporah his daughter - Abul Farajius calls her "Saphura the black, daughter of Rewel the Midianite, the son of Dedan, the son of Abraham by his wife Keturah." The Targum calls her the granddaughter of Reuel. It appears that Moses obtained Zipporah something in the same way that Jacob obtained Rachel; namely, for the performance of certain Services, probably keeping of sheep: see Exo 3:1.

---

EXODUS 2:22 She bore a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have lived as a foreigner in a foreign land."

---

#### Verse 22

Called his name Gershom - Literally, a stranger; the reason of which Moses immediately adds, for I have been an Alien in a strange land.

The Vulgate, the Septuagint, as it stands in the Complutensian Polyglot, and in several MSS., the Syriac, the Coptic, and the Arabic, add the following words to this verse: And the name of the second he called Eliezer, for the God of my father has been my help, and delivered me from the hand of Pharaoh. These words are found in Exo 18:4, but they are certainly necessary here, for it is very likely that these two sons were born within a short space of each other; for in Exo 4:20, it is said, Moses took his wife and his Sons, by which it is plain that he had both Gershom and Eliezer at that time. Houbigant introduces this addition in his Latin version, and contends that this is its most proper place. Notwithstanding the authority of the above versions, the clause is found in no copy, printed or MS., of the Hebrew text.

---

EXODUS 2:23 In the course of those many days, the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.

---

#### Verse 23

In process of time - the king of Egypt died - According to St. Stephen, (Act 7:30, compared with Exo 7:7), the death of the Egyptian king happened about forty years after the escape of Moses to Midian. The words וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם vayehi baiyamim harabbim hahem, which we translate And it came to pass in process of time, signify, And it was in many days from these that the king, etc. It has already been remarked that Archbishop Usher supposes this king to have been Ramesses Miamun, who was succeeded by his son Amenophis, who was drowned in the Red Sea when pursuing the Israelites, but Abul Farajius says it was Amunfathis, (Amenophis), he who made the cruel edict against the Hebrew children. Some suppose that Moses wrote the book of Job during the time he sojourned in Midian, and also the book of Genesis. See the preface to the book of Job, where this subject is considered.



Sighed by reason of the bondage - For the nature of their bondage, see Clarke's note on Exo 1:14.

---

EXODUS 2:24 God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

---

#### Verse 24

God remembered his covenant - God's covenant is God's engagement; he had promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give their posterity a land flowing with milk and honey, etc. They are now under the most oppressive bondage, and this was the most proper time for God to show them his mercy and power in fulfilling his promise. This is all that is meant by God's remembering his covenant, for it was now that he began to give it its effect.

---

EXODUS 2:25 God saw the children of Israel, and God was concerned about them.

---

#### Verse 25

And God had respect unto them - וידע אלהים *vaiyeda Elohim*, God knew them, i.e., he approved of them, and therefore it is said that their cry came up before God, and he heard their groaning. The word ידע *yada*, to know, in the Hebrew Bible, as well as γινωσκω *ginōskō* in the Greek Testament, is frequently used in the sense of approving; and because God knew - had respect for and approved of, them, therefore he was determined to deliver them. For אלהים *Elohim*, God, in the last clause of this verse, Houbigant reads אליהם *aleyhem*, Upon Them, which is countenanced by the Vulgate, Septuagint, Chaldee, Coptic, and Arabic, and appears to have been the original reading. The difference in the original consists in the interchange of two letters, the י *yod* and ה *he*. Our translators insert unto them, in order to make up that sense which this various reading gives without trouble.

The farther we proceed in the sacred writings, the more the history both of the grace and providence of God opens to our view. He ever cares for his creatures, and is mindful of his promise. The very means made use of to destroy his work are, in his hands, the instruments of its accomplishment. Pharaoh orders the male children of the Hebrews to be thrown into the river; Moses, who was thus exposed, is found by his own daughter, brought up as her own son, and from his Egyptian education becomes much better qualified for the great work to which God had called him; and his being obliged to leave Egypt was undoubtedly a powerful means to wean his heart from a land in which he had at his command all the advantages and luxuries of life. His sojourning also in a strange land, where he was obliged to earn his bread by a very painful employment, fitted him for the perilous journey he was obliged to take in the wilderness, and enabled him to bear the better the privations to which he was in consequence exposed.

The bondage of the Israelites was also wisely permitted, that they might with less reluctance leave a country where they had suffered the greatest oppression and indignities. Had they not suffered severely previously to their departure, there is much reason to believe that no inducements could have been sufficient to have prevailed on them to leave it. And yet their leaving it was of infinite consequence, in the order both of grace and providence, as it was indispensably necessary that they

should be a people separated from all the rest of the world, that they might see the promises of God fulfilled under their own eyes, and thus have the fullest persuasion that their law was Divine, their prophets inspired by the Most High, and that the Messiah came according to the prophecies before delivered concerning him.

From the example of Pharaoh's daughter, (see Clarke's note Exo 2:5), and the seven daughters of Jethro, (Exo 2:16), we learn that in the days of primitive simplicity, and in this respect the best days, the children, particularly the daughters of persons in the highest ranks in life, were employed in the most laborious offices. Kings' daughters performed the office of the laundress to their own families; and the daughters of princes tended and watered the flocks. We have seen similar instances in the case of Rebekah and Rachel; and we cannot be too pointed in calling the attention of modern delicate females, who are not only above serving their own parents and family, but even their own selves: the consequence of which is, they have neither vigor nor health; their growth, for want of healthy exercise, is generally cramped; their natural powers are prematurely developed, and their whole course is rather an apology for living, than a state of effective life. Many of these live not out half their days, and their offspring, when they have any, is more feeble than themselves; so that the race of man where such preposterous conduct is followed (and where is it not followed?) is in a state of gradual deterioration. Parents who wish to fulfill the intention of God and nature, will doubtless see it their duty to bring up their children on a different plan. A worse than the present can scarcely be found out.

Afflictions, under the direction of God's providence and the influence of his grace, are often the means of leading men to pray to and acknowledge God, who in the time of their prosperity hardened their necks from his fear. When the Israelites were sorely oppressed, they began to pray. If the cry of oppression had not been among them, probably the cry for mercy had not been heard. Though afflictions, considered in themselves, can neither atone for sin nor improve the moral state of the soul, yet God often uses them as means to bring sinners to himself, and to quicken those who, having already escaped the pollutions of the world, were falling again under the influence of an earthly mind. Of many millions besides David it may truly be said, Before they were afflicted they went astray.