

CHAPTER 2

This chapter begins the story of Moses, that man of renown, famed for his intimate acquaintance with Heaven and his eminent usefulness on earth, and the most remarkable type of Christ, as a prophet, saviour, lawgiver, and mediator, in all the Old Testament. The Jews have a book among them of the life of Moses, which tells a great many stories concerning him, which we have reason to think are mere fictions; what he has recorded concerning himself is what we may rely upon, for we know that his record is true; and it is what we may be satisfied with, for it is what Infinite Wisdom thought fit to preserve and transmit to us. In this chapter we have,

- I.** The perils of his birth and infancy (v. 1-4).
- II.** His preservation through those perils, and the preferment of his childhood and youth (v. 5-10).
- III.** The pious choice of his riper years, which was to own the people of God.
 - 1.** He offered them his service at present, if they would accept it (v. 11-14).
 - 2.** He retired, that he might reserve himself for further service hereafter (v. 15-22).
- IV.** The dawning of the day of Israel's deliverance (v. 23, etc.).

EXODUS 2:1-4

THE BIRTH OF MOSES

Moses was a Levite, both by father and mother. Jacob left Levi under marks of disgrace (¹⁴⁹⁵Genesis 49:5); and yet, soon after, Moses appears a descendant from him, that he might typify Christ, who came in the likeness of sinful flesh and was made a curse for us. This tribe began to be distinguished from the rest by the birth of Moses, as afterwards it became remarkable in many other instances. Observe, concerning this newborn infant,

I. How he was hidden. It seems to have been just at the time of his birth that the cruel law was made for the murder of all the male children of the Hebrews; and many, no doubt, perished by the execution of it. The parents of Moses had Miriam and Aaron, both older than he, born to them before this edict came out, and had nursed them without that peril: but those that begin the world in peace know not what troubles they may meet with before they have got through it. Probably the mother of Moses was full of anxiety in the expectation of his birth, now that this edict was in force, and was ready to say, *Blessed are the barren that never bore*, ^(L23)Luke 23:29. Better so than bring forth children to the murderer, ^(H93)Hosea 9:13. Yet this child proves the glory of his father's house. Thus that which is most our fear often proves, in the issue, most our joy. Observe the beauty of providence: just at the time when Pharaoh's cruelty rose to this height the deliverer was born, though he did not appear for many years after. Note, When men are projecting the church's ruin God is preparing for its salvation. Moses, who was afterwards to bring Israel out of this house of bondage, was himself in danger of falling a sacrifice to the fury of the oppressor, God so ordering it that, being afterwards told of this, he might be the more animated with a holy zeal for the deliverance of his brethren out of the hands of such bloody men.

1. His parents observed him to be a *goodly child*, more than ordinarily beautiful; he was *fair to God*, ^(A72)Acts 7:20. They fancied he had a lustre in his countenance that was something more than human, and was a specimen of the shining of his face afterwards, ^(E29)Exodus 34:29. Note, God sometimes gives early earnest of his gifts, and manifests himself betimes in those for whom and by whom he designs to do great things. Thus he put an early strength into Samson (Judge 13:24, 25), an early forwardness into Samuel (^(S18)1 Samuel 2:18), wrought an early deliverance for David (^(S37)1 Samuel 17:37), and began betimes with Timothy, ^(S15)1 Timothy 3:15.

2. Therefore they were the more solicitous for his preservation, because they looked upon this as an indication of some kind purpose of God concerning him, and a happy omen of something great. Note, A lively active faith can take encouragement from the least intimation of the divine favour; a merciful hint of Providence will encourage those whose spirits make diligent search, *Three months* they hid him in some private apartment of their own house, though probably with the hazard of their own lives, had he been discovered. Herein Moses was a type of Christ,

who, in his infancy, was forced to abscond, and in Egypt too (^{<4023>}Matthew 2:13), and was wonderfully preserved, when many innocents were butchered. It is said (^{<38123>}Hebrews 11:23) that the parents of Moses *hid him by faith*; some think they had a special revelation to them that the deliverer should spring from their loins; however they had the general promise of Israel's preservation, which they acted faith upon, and in that faith hid their child, not being afraid of the penalty annexed to the king's commandment. Note, Faith in God's promise is so far from superseding that it rather excites and quickens to the use of lawful means for the obtaining of mercy. Duty is ours, events are God's. Again, Faith in God will set us above the ensnaring fear of man.

II. How he was exposed. At three months' end, probably when the searchers came about to look for concealed children, so that they could not hide him any longer (their faith perhaps beginning now to fail), they put him in an ark of bulrushes by the *river's brink* (v. 3), and set his little sister at some distance to watch what would become of him, and into whose hands he would fall, v. 4. God put it into their hearts to do this, to bring about his own purposes, that Moses might by this means be brought into the hands of Pharaoh's daughter, and that by his deliverance from this imminent danger a specimen might be given of the deliverance of God's church, which now lay thus exposed. Note,

1. God takes special care of the outcasts of Israel (^{<4570>}Psalm 147:2); they are *his* outcasts, ^{<2904>}Isaiah 16:4. Moses seemed quite abandoned by his friends; his own mother durst not own him: but now the Lord took him up and protected him, ^{<4370>}Psalm 27:10.

2. In times of extreme difficulty it is good to venture upon the providence of God. Thus to have exposed their child while they might have preserved it, would have been to tempt Providence; but, when they could not, it was to trust to Providence. "Nothing venture, nothing win." *If I perish, I perish.*

^{<0115>}EXODUS 2:5-10

THE DELIVERANCE OF MOSES

Here is,

I. Moses saved from perishing. Come see the place where that great man lay when he was a little child; he lay in a bulrush-basket by the river's side. Had he been left to lie there, he must have perished in a little time with hunger, if he had not been sooner washed into the river or devoured by a crocodile. Had he fallen into any other hands than those he did fall into, either they would not, or durst not, have done otherwise than have thrown him straightway into the river; but Providence brings no less a person thither than Pharaoh's daughter, just at that juncture, guides her to the place where this poor forlorn infant lay, and inclines her heart to pity it, which she dares do when none else durst. Never did poor child cry so seasonably, so happily, as this did: *The babe wept*, which moved the compassion of the princess, as no doubt his beauty did, v. 5, 6. Note,

1. Those are hard-hearted indeed that have not a tender compassion for helpless infancy. How pathetically does God represent his compassion for the Israelites in general considered in this pitiable state! ^{<336>}Ezekiel 16:5, 6.

2. It is very commendable in persons of quality to take cognizance of the distresses of the meanest, and to be helpful and charitable to them.

3. God's care of us in our infancy ought to be often made mention of by us to his praise. Though we were not thus exposed (that we were not was God's mercy) yet many were the perils we were surrounded with in our infancy, out of which the Lord delivered us, ^{<329>}Psalms 22:9, 10.

4. God often raises up friends for his people even among their enemies. Pharaoh cruelly seeks Israel's destruction, but his own daughter charitably compassionates a Hebrew child, and not only so, but, beyond her intention, preserves Israel's deliverer. *O Lord, how wonderful are thy counsels!*

II. Moses well provided with a good nurse, no worse than his own dear mother, v. 7-9. Pharaoh's daughter thinks it convenient that he should have a Hebrew nurse (pity that so fair a child should be suckled by a sable Moor), and the sister of Moses, with art and good management, introduces the mother into the place of a nurse, to the great advantage of the child; for mothers are the best nurses, and those who receive the blessings of the breasts with those of the womb are not just if they give them not to those for whose sake they received them: it was also an unspeakable satisfaction to the mother, who received her son as life from the dead, and now could enjoy him without fear. The transport of her joy, upon this happy turn, we

may suppose sufficient to betray her to be the true mother (had there been any suspicion of it) to a less discerning eye than that of Solomon, ^{<41R2>}1 Kings 3:27.

III. Moses preferred to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter (v. 10), his parents herein perhaps not only yielding to necessity, having nursed him *for her*, but too much pleased with the honour thereby done to their son; for the smiles of the world are stronger temptations than its frowns, and more difficult to resist. The tradition of the Jews is that Pharaoh's daughter had no child of her own, and that she was the only child of her father, so that when he was adopted for her son he stood fair for the crown: however it is certain he stood fair for the best preferments of the court in due time, and in the mean time had the advantage of the best education and improvements of the court, with the help of which, having a great genius, he became master of all the lawful learning of the Egyptians, ^{<41R2>}Acts 7:22.
Note,

1. Providence pleases itself sometimes in raising the poor out of the dust, to set them among princes, ^{<41R1>}Psalms 113:7, 8. Many who, by their birth, seem marked for obscurity and poverty, by surprising events of Providence are brought to sit at the upper end of the world, to make men know that *the heavens do rule*.

2. Those whom God designs for great services he find out ways to qualify and prepare beforehand. Moses, by having his education in a court, is the fitter to be a prince and *king in Jeshurun*; by having his education in a learned court (for such the Egyptian then was) is the fitter to be an historian; and by having his education in the court of Egypt is the fitter to be employed, in the name of God, as an ambassador to that court.

IV. Moses named. The Jews tell us that his father, at his circumcision, called him *Joachim*, but Pharaoh's daughter called him *Moses*, *Drawn out of the water*, so it signifies in the Egyptian language. The calling of the Jewish lawgiver by an Egyptian name is a happy omen to the Gentile world, and gives hopes of that day when it shall be said, *Blessed be Egypt my people*, ^{<24R5>}Isaiah 19:25. And his tuition at court was an earnest of the performance of that promise, ^{<24R3>}Isaiah 49:23, *Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers*.

EXODUS 2:11-15

MOSES SLAYS AN EGYPTIAN

Moses had now passed the first forty years of his life in the court of Pharaoh, preparing himself for business; and now it was time for him to enter upon action, and,

I. He boldly owns and espouses the cause of God's people: *When Moses was grown he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens, v. 11.* The best exposition of these words we have from an inspired pen, ^{<8124>}Hebrews 11:24-26, where we are told that by this he expressed,

1. His holy contempt of the honours and pleasures of the Egyptian court; he *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, for he went out.* The temptation was indeed very strong. He had a fair opportunity (as we say) to make his fortune, and to have been serviceable to Israel too, with his interest at court. He was obliged, in gratitude as well as interest, to Pharaoh's daughter, and yet he obtained a glorious victory by faith over his temptation. He reckoned it much more his honour and advantage to be a son of Abraham than to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

2. His tender concern for his poor brethren in bondage, with whom (though he might easily have avoided it) he *chose to suffer affliction*; he looked on their burdens as one that not only pitied them, but was resolved to venture with them, and, if occasion were, to venture for them.

II. He gives a specimen of the great things he was afterwards to do for God and his Israel in two little instances, related particularly by Stephen (^{<4023>}Acts 7:23, etc.) with design to show how their fathers had *always resisted the Holy Ghost* (v. 51), even in Moses himself, when he first appeared as their deliverer, wilfully shutting their eyes against this day-break of their enlargement. He found himself, no doubt, under a divine direction and impulse in what he did, and that he was in an extraordinary manner called of God to do it. Now observe,

1. Moses was afterwards to be employed in plaguing the Egyptians for the wrongs they had done to God's Israel; and, as a specimen of that, he killed the Egyptian who smote the Hebrew (v. 11, 12); probably it was one of the Egyptian taskmasters, whom he found abusing his Hebrew slave, a

relation (as some think) of Moses, a man of the same tribe. It was by special warrant from Heaven (which makes not a precedent in ordinary cases) that Moses slew the Egyptian, and rescued his oppressed brother. The Jew's tradition is that he did not slay him with any weapon, but, as Peter slew Ananias and Sapphira, with the word of his mouth. His *hiding him in the sand* signified that hereafter Pharaoh and all his Egyptians should, under the control of the rod of Moses, be buried in the sand of the Red Sea. His taking care to execute this justice privately, when no man saw, was a piece of needful prudence and caution, it being but an assay; and perhaps his faith was as yet weak, and what he did was with some hesitation. Those who come to be of great faith, yet began with a little, and at first spoke tremblingly.

2. Moses was afterwards to be employed in governing Israel, and as a specimen of this, we have him here trying to end a controversy between two Hebrews, in which he is forced (as he did afterwards for forty years) to suffer their manners. Observe here,

(1.) The unhappy quarrel which Moses observed between two Hebrews, v. 13. It does not appear what was the occasion; but, whatever it was, it was certainly very unseasonable for Hebrews to strive with one another when they were all oppressed and ruled with rigour by the Egyptians. Had they not beating enough from the Egyptians, but they must beat one another? Note,

[1.] Even sufferings in common do not always unite God's professing people to one another, so much as one might reasonably expect.

[2.] When God raises up instruments of salvation for the church they will find enough to do, not only with oppressing Egyptians, to restrain them, but with quarrelsome Israelites, to reconcile them.

(2.) The way he took of dealing with them; he marked him that caused the division, that did the wrong, and mildly reasoned with him: *Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?* The injurious Egyptian was killed, the injurious Hebrew was only reprimanded; for what the former did was from a rooted malice, what the latter did we may suppose was only upon a sudden provocation. The wise God makes, and, according to his example, all wise governors make, a difference between one offender and another, according to the several qualities of the same offence. Moses endeavoured to make them friends, a good office; thus we find Christ often reproving his

disciples' strifes (⁴⁰⁹⁶Luke 9:46, etc.; 22:24, etc.), for he was a prophet like unto Moses, a healing prophet, a peacemaker, who visited his brethren with a design to slay all enmities. The reproof Moses gave on this occasion may still be of use, *Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?* Note, Smiting our fellows is bad in any, especially in Hebrews, smiting with tongue or hand, either in a way of persecution or in a way of strife and contention. Consider the person thou smitest; it is thy fellow, thy fellow-creature, thy fellow-christian, it is thy fellow-servant, thy fellow-sufferer. Consider the cause, *Wherefore smitest?* Perhaps it is for no cause at all, or no just cause, or none worth speaking of.

(3.) The ill success of his attempt (v. 14): *He said, Who made thee a prince?* He that did the wrong thus quarrelled with Moses; the injured party, it should seem, was inclinable enough to peace, but the wrong-doer was thus touchy. Note, It is a sign of guilt to be impatient of reproof; and it is often easier to persuade the injured to bear the trouble of taking wrong than the injurious to bear the conviction of having *done wrong*. ⁴⁰⁹⁷1 Corinthians 6:7, 8. It was a very wise and mild reproof which Moses gave to this quarrelsome Hebrew, but he could not bear it, he kicked against the pricks (⁴⁰⁹⁸Acts 9:5), and crossed questions with his reprover.

[1.] He challenges his authority: *Who made thee a prince?* A man needs no great authority for the giving of a friendly reproof, it is an act of kindness; yet this man needs will interpret it an act of dominion, and represents his reprover as imperious and assuming. Thus when people dislike good discourse, or a seasonable admonition, they will call it *preaching*, as if a man could not speak a word for God and against sin but he took too much upon him. Yet Moses was indeed a prince and a judge, and knew it, and thought the Hebrews would have understood it, and struck in with him; but they stood in their own light, and *thrust him away*, ⁴⁰⁹⁹Acts 7:25, 27.

[2.] He upbraids him with what he had done in killing the Egyptian: *Intendest thou to kill me?* See what base constructions malice puts upon the best words and actions. Moses, for reproving him is immediately charged with a design to kill him. An attempt upon his sin was interpreted an attempt upon his life; and his having killed the Egyptian was thought sufficient to justify the suspicion; as if Moses made no difference between an Egyptian and a Hebrew. If Moses, to right an injured Hebrew, had put his life in his hand, and slain an Egyptian, he ought therefore to have submitted to him, not only as a friend to the Hebrews, but as a friend that

had more than ordinary power and zeal. But he throws that in his teeth as a crime which was bravely done, and was intended as a specimen of the promised deliverance; if the Hebrews had taken the hint, and come in to Moses as their head and captain, it is probable that they would have been delivered now; but, despising their deliverer, their deliverance was justly deferred, and their bondage prolonged forty years, as afterwards their despising Canaan kept them out of it forty years more. *I would, and you would not.* Note, Men know not what they do, nor what enemies they are to their own interest, when they resist and despise faithful reproofs and reprovers. When the Hebrews strove with Moses, God sent him away into Midian, and they never heard of him for forty years; thus the things that belonged to their peace were hidden from their eyes, because they knew not the day of their visitation. As to Moses, we may look on it as a great damp and discouragement to him. He was now *choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God*, and embracing *the reproach of Christ*; and now, at his first setting out, to meet with this affliction and reproach from them was a very sore trial of his resolution. He might have said, "If this be the spirit of the Hebrews, I will go to court again, and be the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Note, *First*, We must take heed of being prejudiced against the ways and people of God by the follies and peevishness of some particular persons that profess religion. *Secondly*, It is no new thing for the church's best friends to meet with a great deal of opposition and discouragement in their healing, saving attempts, even from their own mother's children; Christ himself was set at nought by the builders, and is still rejected by those he would save.

(4.) The flight of Moses to Midian, in consequence. The affront given him thus far proved a kindness to him; it gave him to understand that his killing the Egyptian was discovered, and so he had time to make his escape, otherwise the wrath of Pharaoh might have surprised him and taken him off. Note, God can overrule even the strife of tongues, so as, one way or other, to bring good to his people out of it. Information was brought to Pharaoh (and it is well if it was not brought by the Hebrew himself whom Moses reproved) of his killing the Egyptian; warrants are presently out for the apprehending of Moses, which obliged him to shift for his own safety, by flying into the land of Midian, v. 15.

[1.] Moses did this out of a prudent care of his own life. If this be his forsaking of Egypt which the apostle refers to as done by faith (³¹²⁷ Hebrews 11:27), it teaches us that when we are at any time in trouble

and danger for doing our duty the grace of faith will be of good use to us in taking proper methods for our own preservation. Yet there it is said, *He feared not the wrath of the king*; here it is said he *feared*, v. 14. He did not fear with a fear of diffidence and amazement, which weakens and has torment, but with a fear of diligence, which quickened him to take that way which Providence opened to him for his own preservation.

[2.] God ordered it for wise and holy ends. Things were not yet ripe for Israel's deliverance: the measure of Egypt's iniquity was not yet full; the Hebrews were not sufficiently humbled, nor were they yet increased to such a multitude as God designed; Moses is to be further fitted for the service, and therefore is directed to withdraw for the present, till the time to favour Israel, even the set time, should come. God guided Moses to Midian because the Midianites were of the seed of Abraham, and retained the worship of the true God among them, so that he might have not only a safe but a comfortable settlement among them. And through this country he was afterwards to lead Israel, with which (that he might do it the better) he now had opportunity of making himself acquainted. Hither he came, and sat down by a well, tired and thoughtful, at a loss, and waiting to see which way Providence would direct him. It was a great change with him, since he was but the other day at ease in Pharaoh's court: thus God tried his faith, and it was found to praise and honour.

EXODUS 2:16-22

THE MARRIAGE OF MOSES

Moses here gains a settlement in Midian, just as his father Jacob had gained one in Syria, ^{<0126>}Genesis 29:2, etc. And both these instances should encourage us to trust Providence, and to follow it. Events that seem inconsiderable, and purely accidental, afterwards appear to have been designed by the wisdom of God for very good purposes, and of great consequence to his people. A casual transient occurrence has sometimes occasioned the greatest and happiest turns of a man's life. Observe,

I. Concerning the seven daughters of Reuel the priest or prince of Midian.

1. They were humble, and very industrious, according as the employment of the country was: they *drew water for their father's flock*, v. 16. If their

father was a prince, it teaches us that even those who are honourably born, and are of quality and distinction in their country, should yet apply themselves to some useful business, and what their hand finds to do do it with all their might. Idleness can be no one's honour. If their father was a priest, it teaches us that ministers' children should, in a special manner, be examples of humility and industry.

2. They were modest, and would not ask this strange Egyptian to come home with them (though handsome and a great courtier), till their father sent for him. Modesty is the ornament of woman.

II. Concerning Moses. He was taken for an Egyptian (v. 19); and strangers must be content to be the subjects of mistake; but it is observable, 1. How ready he was to help Reuel's daughters to water their flocks. Though bred in learning and at court, yet he knew how to turn his hand to such an office as this when there was occasion; nor had he learned of the Egyptians to despise shepherds. Note, Those that have had a liberal education yet should not be strangers to servile work, because they know not what necessity Providence may put them in of working for themselves, or what opportunity Providence may give them of being serviceable to others. These young women, it seems, met with some opposition in their employment, more than they and their servants could conquer; the shepherds of some neighbouring prince, as some think, or some idle fellows that called themselves shepherds, *drove away their flocks*; but Moses, though melancholy and in distress, *stood up and helped them*, not only to get clear of the shepherds, but, when that was done, to water the flocks. This he did, not only in complaisance to the daughters of Reuel (though that also did very well become him), but because, wherever he was, as occasion offered itself,

(1.) He loved to be doing justice, and appearing in the defence of such as he saw injured, which every man ought to do as far as it is in the power of his hand to do it.

(2.) He loved to be doing good. Wherever the Providence of God casts us we should desire and endeavour to be useful; and, when we cannot do the good we would, we must be ready to do the good we can. And he that is faithful in a little shall be entrusted with more.

2. How well he was paid for his serviceableness. When the young women acquainted their father with the kindnesses they had received from this

stranger, he sent to invite him to his house, and made much of him, v. 20. Thus God will recompense the kindnesses which are at any time shown to his children; they shall in no wise lose their reward. Moses soon recommended himself to the esteem and good affection of this prince of Midian, who took him into his house, and, in process of time, married one of his daughters to him (v. 21), by whom he had a son, whom he called *Gershom, a stranger there* (v. 22), that if ever God should give him a home of his own he might keep in remembrance the land in which he had been a stranger. Now this settlement of Moses in Midian was designed by Providence,

- (1.) To shelter him for the present. God will find hiding-places for his people in the day of their distress; nay, he will himself be to them a little sanctuary, and will secure them, either under heaven or in heaven. But,
- (2.) It was also designed to prepare him for the great services he was further designed for. His manner of life in Midian, where he kept the flock of his father-in-law (having none of his own to keep), would be of use to him,

[1.] To inure him to hardship and poverty, that he might learn how to want as well as how to abound. Those whom God intends to exalt he first humbles.

[2.] To inure him to contemplation and devotion. Egypt accomplished him as a scholar, a gentleman, a statesman, a soldier, all which accomplishments would be afterwards of use to him; but yet he lacked one thing, in which the court of Egypt could not befriend him. He that was to do all by divine revelation must know, by a long experience, what it was to live a life of communion with God; and in this he would be greatly furthered by the solitude and retirement of a shepherd's life in Midian. By the former he was prepared to rule in Jeshurun, but by the latter he was prepared to converse with God in Mount Horeb, near which mount he had spent much of his time. Those that know what it is to be alone with God in holy exercises are acquainted with better delights than ever Moses tasted in the court of Pharaoh.

EXODUS 2:23-25

CRY OF THE OPPRESSED ISRAELITES

Here is,

1. The continuance of the Israelites' bondage in Egypt, v. 23. Probably the murdering of their infants did not continue; this part of their affliction attended only the period immediately connected with the birth of Moses, and served to signalize it. The Egyptians now were content with their increase, finding that Egypt was enriched by their labour; so that they might have them for slaves, they cared not how many they were. On this therefore they were intent, to keep them all at work, and make the best hand they could of their labour. When one Pharaoh died, another rose up in his place that was governed by the same maxims, and was as cruel to Israel as his predecessors. If there was sometimes a little relaxation, yet it presently revived again with as much rigour as ever; and probably, as the more Israel were oppressed the more they multiplied, so the more they multiplied the more they were oppressed. Note, Sometimes God suffers the rod of the wicked to lie very long and very heavily on the lot of the righteous. If Moses, in Midian, at any time began to think how much better his condition might have been had he staid among the courtiers, he must of himself think this also, how much worse it would have been if he had had his lot with brethren: it was a great degradation to him to be keeping sheep in Midian, but better so than making brick in Egypt. The consideration of our brethren's afflictions would help to reconcile us to our own.

2. The preface to their deliverance at last.

(1.) *They cried*, v. 23. Now, at last, they began to think of God under their troubles, and to return to him from the idols they had served, ³⁵⁰⁸Ezekiel 20:8. Hitherto they had fretted at the instruments of their trouble, but God was not in all their thoughts. Thus *hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he binds them*, ³⁸⁶³Job 36:13. But before God unbound them he put it into their hearts to cry unto him, as it is explained, ⁰⁴¹⁶Numbers 20:16. Note, It is a good sign that God is coming towards us with deliverance when he inclines and enables us to cry to him for it.

(2.) *God heard*, v. 24, 25. The name of God is here emphatically prefixed to four different expressions of a kind intention towards them.

[1.] *God heard their groaning*; that is, he made it to appear that he took notice of their complaints. The groans of the oppressed cry aloud in the ears of the righteous God, to whom vengeance belongs, especially the groans of God's spiritual Israel; he knows the burdens they groan under and the blessings they groan after, and that the blessed Spirit, by these groanings, makes intercession in them.

[2.] *God remembered his covenant*, which he seemed to have forgotten, but of which he is ever mindful. This God had an eye to, and not to any merit of theirs, in what he did for them. See ~~
~~Leviticus 26:42.

(3.) *God looked upon the children of Israel*. Moses looked upon them and pitied them (v. 11); but now God looked upon them and helped them.

(4.) *God had a respect unto them*, a favourable respect to them as his own. The frequent repetition of the name of God here intimates that now we are to expect something great, *Opus Deo dignum* — *A work worthy of God*. His eyes, which run to and fro through the earth, are now fixed upon Israel, to show himself strong, to show himself a God in their behalf.