

LESSON 21 - God Preserved Israel Enslaved in Egypt; the Providence of God in the Life of Moses

Now we come to one of the most remarkable periods in Israel's history where we will witness Israel's escape from Egyptian slavery, their miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, the establishment of a covenant with God on Mt. Sinai, and their journey to the edge of the Promised Land. All these ingredients come together to create a drama that is more powerful than the Nile River, more majestic than any Pharaoh, and more amazing than buying a ticket to the hottest concert or movie that's out there right now!

We live in a society that rewards strength and denigrates or ridicules the weaknesses of men without giving any thought to the power and purpose of God. But the Bible gives us a true picture of God and of men—men who are weak in themselves, but who, by faith, can be mightily used by our gracious, almighty, sovereign Creator, God.

Many people in our culture have a vague knowledge of the story of Moses; they have heard bits and pieces but have never had any concept of the sovereign God who is really the main character in this wonderful true story.

Moses was very human, and God has graciously presented to us in His Word many examples of the human frailty of His chosen leader of Israel. Yet through this frail vessel, our almighty, gracious God worked deliverance for Israel. Ultimately, God provided salvation for all mankind through Israel's promised Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

In today's lesson, we will see that God is sovereign and loving as he preserved Israel during their slavery and raised up Moses to deliver them.

REVIEW questions from Lesson 20 on Joseph and his brothers.

1. How did Joseph's older brothers react to their father's love for Joseph? **They were jealous, and they hated Joseph.**
2. What did Joseph dream? **Read Genesis 37:7-9.**
3. What did these dreams mean? **They meant that Joseph would be given a position of authority over all his family.**
4. Who knew Joseph's future and showed it to him through his dreams? **God did.**
5. How much of our future does God know? **God knows it all.**
6. What did Joseph's brothers do to him? **First they threw him down into an old well where he might have died. Then they sold Joseph to become a slave in Egypt.**
7. What happened to Joseph in Egypt? **The wife of Joseph's owner tried to seduce him and get him into bed with her. When her actions were rebuffed by Joseph, she lied about him, and he was put into prison.**
8. Who took care of Joseph in prison? **God did.**
9. Why did God take care of Joseph?
 - a. **Because, although Joseph was a sinner, he trusted in God and His mercy.**
 - b. **Because Joseph believed God's promises regarding the Deliverer.**
 - c. **Because God had a wonderful plan for Joseph's life.**
10. Who gave Joseph the understanding of Pharaoh's dreams? **God did.**
11. What did Pharaoh's dreams mean? **God was making known to the king that there would be seven years of very good harvest which would be followed by seven years of drought.**

12. Is God able to do whatever He wants to do even in places where the people do not know and worship Him? **Yes, God is able to do whatever He wants to do, for He is almighty.**
13. How did God fulfill the dreams which He had given to Joseph when he was a youth? **The Lord gave Joseph wisdom to interpret the king's dreams so that Joseph would be given the position next to the king.**
14. Why did Jacob take all of his family down to live in Egypt?
- a. **Because his son Joseph was down in Egypt.**
 - b. **Because there was plenty of food in Egypt.**
 - c. **Because the king invited Jacob to live in Egypt.**
 - d. **Because God had planned for this to happen.**
15. What were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's descendants called? **The children of Israel, Israelites, or Israel.**
16. What motivated Joseph to act as he did? **His faith in God.**

When the curtain closes on the book of Genesis, the Israelites are prospering in Egypt though the esteemed position of Joseph who is Abraham's great grandchild and Jacob's favored son. When the curtain opens on the Book of Exodus, time has passed and the tables have turned dramatically. The descendants of Jacob's 12 sons, who now make up the twelve tribes of Israel, find themselves languishing in slavery. Making matters worse, a population explosion among the Israelites concerns the Egyptian king or Pharaoh, who orders that all the Israelite newborn males be killed.

Let's pick up the story by reading what Hebrews says about the man called Moses.

Hebrews 11:23-26 (ESV)

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

A. Introduction

This study begins in the second book of the Bible—Exodus. -Exodus means "going out."

This book records how God took His people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.

As we study this amazing story, let's keep in mind these things:

- First, remember that the Bible is a true history.
- The events of Genesis and Exodus are mentioned many times throughout the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments.
- Many of the minute details of Genesis and Exodus have been confirmed by archeological discoveries.
- Second, keep your eyes on what God is doing. You will learn a great deal about God from this book. Just as our actions reveal our character, so God's actions reveal His character.
- Third, remember that God is the same today as He was at the time this story took place.
- He never changes.
- God is still holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, faithful, and sovereign.

Genesis 50:26 (ESV)

²⁶ So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis 12:3 (ESV)

³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 28:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

B. Israel increased in number and in riches.

Joseph and all his generation died in Egypt.

Joseph, his brothers, and their families continued to live in Egypt after their father’s death even though the drought had ended.

They did not return to the land which God had promised to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Bible says that Joseph and all that generation died in Egypt.

About 350 years passed between the time that Israel came down to live in Egypt and the time that their story picks up again here in the book of Exodus.

Israel had been living in Egypt all that time.
POINT TO EGYPT ON CHRONOLOGICAL MAP 1.

READ Exodus 1:6-7 (ESV)

⁶ Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.

⁷ But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

The children of Israel prospered in Egypt. Their numbers increased rapidly. They also became very rich. They had many cows, goats, and sheep. There was plenty of grass for their animals. The pharaoh was very good to them. But things were soon to change.

C. The new pharaoh’s evil plans

Theme: Satan fights against God and His will. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He hates man.

READ Exodus 1:8-11 (ESV)

⁸ Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

⁹ And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us.

¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.”

¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses.

Who do you think was guiding Pharaoh in his evil plan? Satan was; Satan hates God and man.

Why would Satan want to destroy the nation of Israel? Satan knew that God had promised to send the Deliverer who would destroy Satan and deliver man from his power.

He also knew that God had promised that this Savior would be born through the nation of Israel. Satan knew that the Deliverer would be a descendant of Abraham.

Satan wanted to destroy the nation of Israel because they were the people God had chosen to fulfill His plan in the world. Satan didn't want anyone to be delivered from his power and from the righteous punishment of God.

Exodus 1:12-16 (ESV)

¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel.

¹³ So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves

¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

¹⁵ Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah,

¹⁶ "When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live."

The story of Moses' birth takes place amid tragedy. A king arose in Egypt, a pharaoh, who was threatened by the Hebrew people. Even after the Hebrews were forced into hard labor, Pharaoh was still troubled. We do not know why. Perhaps it was sheer numbers. Perhaps it was the Hebrews' faith in God. Perhaps it was their tenacity of spirit. Perhaps it was their obvious and unwavering confidence in a Lord of history!

Pharaoh may have been an emotionally insecure man. The storyteller wants us to understand that the number of Hebrews was sufficient to threaten those in power.

The result: Pharaoh issued a terrible decree. He ordered that all male infants born of the Hebrew women were to be thrown into the Nile River and drowned. His executive order was given to the Hebrew midwives. The midwives, however, refused.

Exodus 1:17-22 (ESV)

¹⁷ But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live.

¹⁸ So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the male children live?"

¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them."

²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong.

²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."

The midwives, however, refused. They simply could not or would not comply with such a command. So Pharaoh called them before him in the palace. "Why have you done this," he cried, "and allowed the boys to live?" (1:18).

The midwives used clever tactics in their response. They replied, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them” (1:19).

In effect, these midwives LIED to Pharaoh. They created a story to provide cover for what they were doing which was, allowing the Hebrew baby boys to live. How can God condone a lie? Well, there are lies and there are righteous lies. Here is a situation where the lie arises out of doing a righteous act—preserving the life of the innocent Hebrew babies. This is very similar to the lies that Germans and Austrian believers who were hiding Jews in their homes to protect them from being slaughtered by Hitler in the concentration camps. When the SS would knock on the door of the homes of these believers who were part of the resistance movement against Hitler and the Nazis, they would lie and say that they did not have any Jews living in their household.

We also have the example of Rahab, the prostitute, who along with her entire family was saved by God because she hid two Hebrew spies which had been sent by Joshua. When she was asked about this by the King of Jericho’s men, she lied to them and told them that the spies had taken off, when the spies were hidden right there in her house. She actually lied twice-- Yet she is praised for her faith in the Bible-- in the book of Hebrews and in the book of James.

And getting back to our story of the Hebrew midwives lying to Pharaoh, we are told, “So God dealt well with the midwives” (Exodus 1:20). God looked favorably upon these family servants. The message is clear. Sometimes it is important for the people of God to be shrewd. The Hebrew lied to Pharaoh because they feared God more than man and God blessed them with families.

This frustrated Pharaoh and led him to employ a more direct strategy for the elimination of Hebrew boys. “Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: ‘Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live’ ” (Ex. 1:22).

As you can see, everything was going wrong for Israel. They had come to Egypt filled with confidence and assurance of God’s promises, but soon found themselves in harsh slavery and under the ruthless oversight of their Egyptian taskmasters. Even worse than that, a Pharaoh who was unfamiliar with Joseph had mustered his entire nation against them. The Nile was about to become the graveyard of Israel’s future. Just pause and consider what Israel’s mindset must have been at this moment. The children of promise were now slaves to a foreign king. They must have been asking questions like, “Where are you, God?” and “Why is this happening to us?”

If there had been a twenty-four-hour news network like FOX News in the days before Moses’ birth, the headlines that would have been flashing across the screen might have been something like this: “Hebrews Continue in Slavery; No End in Sight,” “Hebrew Sons to Be Tossed in the Nile,” and “God’s Promises: Fact or Fiction?” In other words, things were very bleak for the Hebrews and they knew it. But even at this bleak moment, the hand of God’s providence was at work planting the seeds of a plan that would eventually blossom into the redemption of his people and the fulfillment of his promises to them.

D. Moses’ birth: 3 Women & a Baby

Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

POINT TO THE NAME “MOSES” ON THE CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

READ Exodus 2:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman.

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

³ When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank.

⁴ And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him.

The parents of this child trusted in God to take care of their baby son.

E. The Providence of God: The Invisible Hand of God

Theme: God is faithful; He never changes.

Exodus 2:4-10 (ESV)

⁴ And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him.

⁵ Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it.

⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?"

⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother.

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

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

Just consider the chain of extraordinary providence of God that preserved Moses' life:

- His mother hid him for three months.
- When she could no longer hide him she put him in a basket among the reeds of the Nile on the exact day and time, and at the exact location, that Pharaoh's daughter was coming to bathe.
- Moses' sister just happened to be watching all of this and just happened to think of a great plan to suggest a Hebrew mother to nurse the child.
- On top of all this, Pharaoh's daughter, in direct rebellion to her father's decree, felt pity on Moses and adopted him into the most powerful house in Egypt. Moses was supposed to be dead, but instead he grew up in the house of the leader whom, through God's power, he would one day bring to ruin.

F. Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's Daughter.

- God used Moses' courageous sister and even Pharaoh's daughter to protect Moses!
- Then God returned Moses to his own mother to nurse him until he was old enough to be sent back to Pharaoh's daughter.
- God planned to use Moses to deliver the Israelites from slavery.
- God knew that Moses would be safer in Pharaoh's house than anywhere else.

- He also knew that Moses would learn many things there that would be important for him to know for his future work as the leader of his people.

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

God is greater than Satan; God is greater than everyone and everything.

- No one and nothing can stop Him from doing whatever He plans.

Acts 7:22 (ESV)

²² And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

- He continues to carry out His plans even in adverse situations and works through these situations to bring about good for those who trust Him.
- God has all wisdom. We can trust Him. He cared for His people Israel, even while they were in bondage; and He also cares for you.
- Each of us needs to understand God's Word so we will know what God has done to deliver us all from the power of Satan and to bring us back to God.

G. Moses runs for his life

Exodus 2:11-15 (ESV)

¹¹ One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people.

¹² He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

¹³ When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?"

¹⁴ He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known."

¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well.

The Israelites were held captive by the evil pharaoh. They couldn't escape.

- Moses tried to help them, but he failed.
- No human being could release his people from the wicked ruler of Egypt.
- Only God could help them.

Moses fled Egypt and ended up in the land of Midian.

Travel time from Egypt to Midian will take **268 hours and 45.06 minutes** if the vehicle kept an average speed of sixty kilometers per hour.

Travel time by walk may take around **1343.8 hours** if you continuously walk at the speed of 6KM.

Because the public roads were watched, Moses took flight thru the deserts, where his enemies could not suspect he would travel; and though he was destitute of food, he went on, and when he came to the city of Midian, which lay by the Red Sea, he sat at a certain well and rested.

We pick up on the story of Moses and how God called him to deliver Israel, in our next lesson

Lesson 22: God Calls Moses Out to Deliver His People

QUESTIONS for REVIEW:

1. Why did the Pharaoh of Egypt make the Israelites slaves? **Because they had become more in number than the Egyptians, the king was afraid that the Israelites might join with the Egyptians' enemies to fight against them and take control of Egypt.**
2. Who was guiding the king in his wicked plans? **Satan**
3. Why would Satan wish to destroy the Israelites? **Satan knew that God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that one of their descendants would be the Deliverer.**
4. How did Pharaoh try to destroy the Israelites and keep them from increasing in numbers? **He ordered the midwives to kill all the baby boys that were born.**
5. Did the Hebrew midwives obey his command? **No**
6. Why did the Hebrew midwives not obey Pharaoh's command? **Because they feared God more than Pharaoh. They knew that it was an evil command that should not be obeyed.**
7. Did the Hebrew midwives lie to Pharaoh? **Yes**
8. What was God's response to what the Hebrew midwives had done? **The Bible says God dealt well with the midwives and gave them families.**
9. What is the term that describes God's oversight and protection working behind the scenes to accomplish his will? **The Providence of God**
10. Give examples of the Providence of God here in this lesson, concerning the baby Moses?
11. Why did the Lord allow Pharaoh's daughter to adopt Moses? **To protect Moses from the evil dictate of the Pharaoh and to be a witness to the Egyptians of the sovereign hand of God which could reach down and insert himself into Pharaoh's household.**
12. Can Satan, any spirit, a human being, or anything hinder God from doing what He plans? **No**

