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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Greater Refuge Memorial Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

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**“COMING OUT”**

**Exodus 1:1-22**

The book of Exodus is the 2nd book of Moses. Exodus means "the road out". Exodus is a Greek word. "Ek" means out. "Hodos" means road. Exodus is the continuation of Genesis in that we see within it the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham to make of him a great nation (Genesis 12:2), the nation of Israel. Exodus tells us of the years of bondage in Egypt of the Israelites. (From the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses is approximately 270 years). It speaks of their deliverance through the 10 plagues, and also of the beginning of the history of the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land. The number 10 we will see often. The number 10 indicates world government. The number 40 is symbolic of testing time. These are just 2 of the numbers that we will deal with. Symbolism is very prominent in this book, such as the crossing of the Red Sea symbolizing water baptism. More than any other book of the Bible, other than Revelation, we will see symbols in nearly every sentence. Abraham was told of God of the 400 years of bondage in Egypt that these covenant people would spend. This book brings in the ceremonial and the moral law. We will see in this book God dealing with the false gods of Egypt through the ten plagues. We, also see, the desire of God to be with His people in the fire by night and the smoke by day which accompanies them. We will see in this, that God will see us through the troubles of this world, if we look to Him.

***Exodus 1:1 "Now these [are] the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob."***

One man's (Jacob, also called Israel) family came into Egypt and grew into the nation of Israel. Joseph and his family were already in Egypt, and his father and eleven brothers and their families fled the famine and came to Egypt where there was food. Because they were of Joseph's family, Pharaoh treated them royally. Joseph had led Egypt into a food storage program which not only saved Egypt, but saved his family, as well. The Pharaoh had welcomed Joseph's family and gave them land to dwell on. The wealth that Joseph had brought to Egypt was soon forgotten; and when the Pharaoh died, the new Pharaoh became afraid of the Israelites and made slaves of them in Goshen to keep them from overthrowing the Egyptian government. The beginning of this book of Exodus lists the families of Jacob (the patriarch) at the time of their entrance into Egypt. Each son and his family will be mentioned separately.

***Exodus 1:2 "Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,"***

***Exodus 1:3 "Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,"***

***Exodus 1:4 "Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher."***

Reuben is mentioned first because he was the oldest son. Reuben displeased his father greatly when he practiced incest with his father's concubine, Bilhah. This is a terrible sin, and Reuben was disinherited for this sin. (Genesis 35:22) Simeon and Levi, as you recall, were not much better. We recall the cruelty of these, and the embarrassment they caused their father. We see in these sons of Jacob, really, a group of men with many faults. They really were not very likely material for the spiritual leadership that God had called them to. We see here, already, the symbol of God choosing people of low estate to do mighty jobs for Him. God will take this lowly lot (except for Joseph and perhaps Benjamin) and cause them to be the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. We see in this that God takes worldly people and changes them into the leaders of His church. We see throughout the Bible, and particularly in Exodus, the number twelve being a representative number of the whole. In this list, the names of the wives' children first. Joseph's name is excluded because he was already in Egypt. You remember from Genesis that his brothers had sold him as a slave. The servant girls' children were listed last. In fact, Leah's children were even named before Rachel's child, because Leah was Jacob's first wife.

***Exodus 1:5 "And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt [already]."***

This is speaking of the families of Jacob and his sons and their families in Egypt. We remember from the lessons in Genesis that Joseph realized that his being sold into Egypt was part of God's plan for the provision of the covenant people. They must be preserved at all costs. Joseph (a type of Christ) forgave his brethren and provided for their needs. Joseph had left specific instructions not to leave his bones in Egypt, but to carry them to the Promised Land to be permanently buried. He believed God would keep His promise and deliver His people.

***Exodus 1:6 "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation."***

***Exodus 1:7 "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them."***

They were to be 430 years in Egypt, and all the 12 brothers had died and now a new generation was carrying on in the place of their fathers. God's blessings were not just material in nature. Children are blessings from God. Especially, Hebrews, believe that many children mean that God has blessed you abundantly. They believed it was a curse not to have children. By the time of the exodus, the people of Israel consisted of “six hundred thousand able-bodied men besides their families” (12:37). They were no threat to the Egyptians when there were just 70 people, but now that they were near 3 million, it is a totally different story. God was fulfilling his kingdom promise to Abraham to give him numerous descendants (Genesis 13:16). The people of Israel were becoming the nation God had promised.

***Exodus 1:8 "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph."***

As we said, as long as Joseph was alive, the Pharaoh remembered what he (Joseph) had done for Egypt. With the new leader, there was no memory of this. He had not known Joseph, and he had not lived during the famine; and he felt no obligation to this mass of foreigners living in his land.

***Exodus 1:9 "And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel [are] more and mightier than we:"***

***Exodus 1:10 "Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and [so] get them up out of the land."***

After Joseph and all of his brothers died, a new king ascended to the throne in Egypt. This pharaoh did not know about Joseph and had no appreciation for his achievements on behalf of Egypt. Here we see fear gripping this new ruler. These Israelites were growing in such numbers that he actually feared that they would overthrow the Egyptian government. He believed that they might even join in with Egypt's enemies and turn against Egypt; after all, they were foreigners. He wanted to be sure this will not happen.

***Exodus 1:11 "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses."***

Pharaoh decided to exploit the Israelites for their economic potential. He assigned taskmasters over them and oppressed them with forced labor. This meant that they were forced to labor for the government by cruel overseers. These treasure cities were encampments of war materials handy to be used to squelch any and all attacks that came against Egypt. Importantly, years before this, God had told Abraham that one day his offspring would be enslaved by another nation for four hundred years (Genesis 15:13-14). It had finally come to pass: the people of Israel were now slaves. But God had also promised that he would judge the nation that mistreated them, and that Abraham’s descendants would plunder their oppressors. How that would happen would soon unfold. The word "Pithom" means abode of the sun. Some believe that the miracles of Moses took place in this same Raamses. This forced labor, as we said, was to keep them worn out so they could not fight against Egypt. This ruler in Egypt was also using this free labor to build mighty monuments.

***Exodus 1:12 "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel."***

***Exodus 1:13 "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:"***

This word "grieved" here actually means they greatly feared the Israelites. It is very strange how many times God will send many children to those who are oppressed. It is as if it is to compensate for the lack in their lives. Poor families, even today, have more children that the wealthy. Here we see the anger of the Egyptians toward Joseph's family shows up in the degree of hardship they bring to them.

***Exodus 1:14 "And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, [was] with rigour."***

We see work beyond the normal. Perhaps instead of working 8 hours a day, the work was probably extended from sunup to sundown, and in Egypt it is very hot. Perhaps they were also required to carry heavy bricks all day in this heat. We do know from history that a great wall was begun that was to protect them from their enemies, but the wall was never completed. This wall is not mentioned in the Bible, so this is just supposition. All we are absolutely sure of, is that the work was cruel because of its degree of hardness. In spite of Pharaoh’s ill-treatment, their numbers only continued to rise. This tells us that in the midst of their suffering, God was blessing them. Yet the Egyptians came to dread them, and Pharaoh treated them ruthlessly.

***Exodus 1:15 "And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one [was] Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:"***

***Exodus 1:16 "And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see [them] upon the stools; if it [be] a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it [be] a daughter, then she shall live."***

***Exodus 1:17 "But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive."***

Pharaoh decided to use an even more wicked method of population control. He told the Hebrew midwives to kill any son that the Hebrew women delivered. But the midwives refused to obey the king of Egypt. Why? They feared God. Though Pharaoh had the power to execute them, these defenseless women knew God held ultimate power, and they acted on that knowledge. These midwives were like doctors of today. They assisted in the birth of a child. This is an old profession, and many women prefer them over a conventional doctor even today. Their function is to save lives, but here we see the king ordering them to destroy all the boy babies. Whether these midwives were Egyptian or Hebrew is unimportant. "Shiphrah" seems to be a Hebrew name, and it means elegant or beautiful. "Puah" means one who cries out. The stool mentioned here is a special chair built for the purpose of child birth. We know the midwife would be the first to see the child and would have the opportunity to kill the baby. Here the king gave them a mandate. Disobeying the king could cause them to lose their heads. If these were Hebrew midwives, it is totally opposed to their respect for life. As we have said before, children were believed to be blessings from God and should not be destroyed. In verse 17, we see a strong statement indicating that these midwives feared God. This almost certainly makes them Hebrew because Egyptians knew little about the real God. We see numerous Scriptures throughout the Bible telling us to obey those in government, but we see a higher law than the government. We must not break God's law to obey government. We are subject to the law of the land and should be good citizens, but if in so doing we break God's law, we must first obey God.

***Exodus 1:18 "And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?"***

***Exodus 1:19 "And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women [are] not as the Egyptian women; for they [are] lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them."***

When the king demanded an explanation for their disobedience to his command, the midwives lied, saying that they routinely arrived at the births too late. The anger of the king had been kindled toward these midwives. Here we see midwives facing their death because they will not kill these boy babies. This is the very thing martyrs are made of. They were unwilling to go against what they believe, even if they know they would be killed for their stand they have taken. They not only were brave but were smart as well. This was probably the only excuse that Pharaoh would believe.

***Exodus 1:20 "Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty."***

***Exodus 1:21 "And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses."***

They decided to lie to this wicked king—who didn’t deserve the truth in order to prevent the murder of innocent children made in God’s image. For their actions, God was good to the midwives and gave them families. And the Israelites multiplied even more. The principle here is that when God’s people are faced with only two sinful options (in this case, lying and murder), we are to choose that which brings God the greater glory. It appears from this Scriptures above, that God probably softened the heart of the Pharaoh and caused him not to punish the midwives. God controls all people, not just the ones who have decided to follow Him. We see that Pharaoh's plan backfired on him and that multiplying of the people went on without Pharaoh's blessing. Whether this means physical houses or whether this means God blessed them with a family, we really do not know; but whatever it was, it is a blessing abundantly from God. God overlooked them lying to the Pharaoh's because they took no thought for themselves in sparing these babies' lives.

***Exodus 1:22 "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."***

Being foiled in his second attempt to control the Israelites’ numbers was the last straw for Pharaoh. He commanded all his people to throw every son born to the Hebrews into the Nile. This was like human sacrifice. The Nile River was worshipped by the Egyptians. These Egyptian people would see the day when they would regret the murdering of these babies, for the tenth plague would kill their firstborn. With this decree, the stage was set for the rise of Moses. God had blessed his people, which led to a problem, which led to more blessing, which led to worse problems, which led to preparation for God’s ultimate deliverance. This is a reminder that many times God will allow blessings in our lives that will actually lead to some suffering, which will in turn lead to even greater blessings for his kingdom purposes. We, however, must patiently wait for him to work things out. These Hebrews were called to become a nation in Egypt (a type of the world). We believers are first called while we are in the world. Just as Egypt was not the home of these Hebrews, this world is not our home. We are in this world, but we are not of this world. These Hebrews were longing to go to the Promised Land; we believers in Christ are longing for the day when we can go home, too. It seems in great adversity these Hebrews grew the most. This is true of the church, as well. When we see great prosperity, we drift away from God; but in adversity, our cry for help is to our God who cares for us. These Hebrews had to wait until God's timing was right to remove them. We Christians, even now, are crying out, "Come quickly Lord Jesus". The church now, in my opinion, is going through a period of lukewarmness. Our home, if we are Christians, is in heaven. Somehow, we must get our eyes off the earthly and onto the heavenly.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who was the penman for Exodus?
2. What does Exodus mean?
3. Approximately how many years are between Joseph's death and Moses' birth?

4. What does 10 indicate?

5. What does 40 symbolize?

6. How many of Jacob's family went into Egypt?

7. Approximately how many will come out with Moses?

8. How many sons did Jacob have?

9. Who was Moses, the deliverer, a shadow of?

10. Who is the Lamb?
11. Who had God told of the 400 year bondage of the Israelites?
12. What 2 types of law were introduced in Exodus?
13. Why was Reuben mentioned first in the list of sons?
14. Why was Joseph omitted from this list of sons?
15. Name the 12 sons of Jacob.
16. In what sin was Reuben involved?
17. Twelve is what type of number?
18. How many souls came from the loins of Jacob in verse 5?

19. What does the word "taskmaster" indicate?
20. "Pithom" means what?

21. In verse 12, the more they afflicted them, the more they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

22. What does "grieved" actually mean?

23. What word describes the severity of their service?

24. What is a midwife?

25. What does the name "Shiphrah" mean?

26. What does "Puah" mean?

27. Instead of the Hebrews decreasing, what happened?

28. What was throwing these babies into the Nile River like?

29. Sin is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

30. The terrible troubles we face here are for what purpose?

31. What position in our lives is where God demands to be?

32. In what area did these Hebrews live?

33. What do you see is the basic message in this lesson?