

Lesson 1 – Exodus 1-2:10

Text: Exodus 1-2:10

Main Characters: God, Pharaoh, Jochebed (Moses' mother), Moses

Key Passages:

- Exodus 1:7 – Israel grew at an extremely fast rate in Egypt, perhaps miraculously fast.
- Exodus 2:10 – The Hebrew child, named Moses, became a son to Pharaoh's daughter.

Main Storyline:

Exodus 1 begins the fulfillment of one of God's promises to Abraham. In Genesis 15, Abraham had been promised that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for 400 years. After this time, God promised that He would judge the nation, and Abraham's descendants would be brought out with great wealth.

The Israelites (children of Israel/Jacob) who went to Egypt began to be called "Hebrews", which means strangers or sojourners. This is especially appropriate because, as God had promised, the Israelites would eventually return to their land, Canaan. The Egyptians viewed them as strangers also and did not want to intermingle with them or associate with them very much (remember Genesis 43).

At some point, a Pharaoh came to power that did not know Joseph or hold any regard for the Hebrew people. Also, the Hebrews began to multiply at an incredible rate, perhaps much faster than a normal group of people would multiply. As a result, the new Pharaoh became worried that Israel was becoming too powerful, and would ally with an enemy in the event of a war.

Pharaoh, believing he was making a wise decision, enslaved Israel under taskmasters, who afflicted them with forced labor. However, the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians also began to force the Israelites to serve "with rigor," which means that they began to be cruel and "ferocious" (the Hebrew word) toward them. He then commanded the Hebrew midwives that if a Hebrew boy was born, he should be killed. However, due to their fear of God, they did not obey Pharaoh's evil command. In fact, it seems that the people multiplied even more in spite of the law. As a result, Pharaoh commanded all of the people to drown the Hebrew boys in the river.

One day, a man (Amram) and woman (Jochebed) from the house of Levi had a son. They hid their son for three months, knowing that they were supposed to kill him by order of Pharaoh. When they could not hide him anymore, Jochebed took her son and put him in a little basket in the river, while her daughter watched to see what would happen. Around that time, Pharaoh's daughter came to the river to bathe. When she saw the baby in the river, and heard him cry, she had compassion on him, even knowing that he was a Hebrew baby. The baby's sister asked Pharaoh's daughter if she should find a Hebrew woman to nurse him, and she agreed. His sister called for Jochebed to come and nurse the child, and Pharaoh's daughter gave her a wage to do so. So the baby became a son to Pharaoh's daughter, and she named him Moses, which means "drawn out (of the water)."

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) When man thinks he is being wise by plotting against God, God makes him look foolish. Not only will the plot fail, but it will have an opposite effect than what was intended (Job 5:12-13).
- 2.) God blesses those who obey Him even in the face of human opposition (Acts 5:29).
- 3.) God continues to keep His promises, even in the face of extremely difficult situations.