

Lesson 18

Slavery of the Israelites – Moses is born

Exodus 1:1-14
Exodus 2:23-24
Exodus 2:1-10



Teacher, please remember that the commentary below is intended to help you in your study, not to be read to your students. Make your own list of applications, using the help from the commentary, but don't necessarily try to cover everything! Think of the students in your class, then be prayerfully selective.

Contents:

1. Preparation
2. Memory verses
3. Theme
4. Lesson introduction
5. Verse by verse commentary (suggested location of activities included)
6. Suggested prayer to close
7. Attention grabbers
8. Activities
9. Bible Text (in full, without commentary)

1. Preparation

- 1) Choose memory verse
- 2) Select attention grabber to start off lesson / break the ice - optional, recommended for younger classes. (see point 7)
- 3) Suggested activities- optional, recommended for younger children (see point 8)

2. Memory verse

Matthew 11:28

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

3. Theme

God hears the prayers of His children.

4. Lesson introduction

In all of our lessons, we have seen the love of God for each one of us and for everyone. We have seen how God is sovereign and has a master plan for everything. We have seen types in the Old Testament that represent Christ in the New Testament, and we have seen how God uses every circumstance in our lives for His good purposes.

Today, we begin Exodus. We will learn that, over many years, the children of Israel have multiplied greatly in Egypt. However, their circumstances change, and God’s people will cry out for deliverance. We can be confident that God hears the prayers of His children. He will answer their prayers in His perfect time.

It has been said that, up until the coming of Jesus Christ, there was none greater than Moses. He is one of the few people in the Bible whose life is followed from his birth until his death. God called Moses to be a prophet, advocate, intercessor, and leader. Most of God's early dealings with Israel involved Moses. Today, we will also talk about the birth and first years to Moses.

5. Verse by Verse Commentary

Exodus 1:1-7

In the first seven verses, we see the nation of Israel was growing and multiplying. Leah's six sons are mentioned in the order of their birth, then Rachel (Jacob's second wife). Joseph's son Benjamin is mentioned, but not Joseph, because Joseph was already in Egypt. Dan and Naphtali were the sons of Rachel's maidservant Bilhah. Gad and Asher were the sons of Leah's maidservant Zilpah. The number of men who entered Egypt was between 70 and 75 (see Genesis 46:27; Deuteronomy 10:22; Acts 7:14).

It is amazing to think that the entire nation of Israel at this time was only around 75 men. At the time when the Exodus begins there are now about 600,000 men. When you add women and children there were about 2,000,000 people. The population grew to this amount in approximately 400 years. No wonder it says, "the land was filled with them."

God is so good. His promise to Abraham so many generations ago is now coming to pass. Do you remember? God made a promise to Abraham that He would be a great nation and that they would be the same in number as the sand of the sea. Abraham did not see it physically fulfilled in his lifetime, but God kept His promise many years later. God always keeps His promises. He will do what He says in just the right time.

So as God promised, the Israelites were becoming as numerous as the sands of the sea. God was not done fulfilling His promise. He had promised that His people would live in the land that He promised to give them. God would fulfill that promise, also, and teach His children to trust in Him in the process. As we follow the journey of the children of Israel, we will learn exciting things about our own walk with God. God hears the prayers of His children.

Suggested Activity: Heavy laden

Exodus 1:8-14

The new king of Egypt, "did not know about Joseph" or "had no appreciation for Joseph's achievements." He became concerned that there were too many Israelites in the land. He feared, in event of war, such a great number of people could easily revolt and help their enemies to defeat Egypt.

Pharaoh decided to deal with the Israelites shrewdly. The words, "deals shrewdly" implies implementing a policy that would control their fast-growing population as well as use their labor potential to its fullest. The Pharaoh set taskmasters over them and forced them into labor to build the royal store cities of Pitham and Rameses.

But, as the Lord so often does, he frustrated the plans of man. The more the Egyptians oppressed the children of Israel, the more they grew in number and strength. God is awesome! He uses hard times in

our lives to strengthen us. His purposes will always be accomplished. God can turn what is meant for evil against us to work for our good.

Consider the great persecution of the early church. Christians were persecuted (or treated badly and sometimes even killed) for their faith. As a result, the persecution drove the Christians all over the country and the world. When they scattered all over, they spread the Gospel all over the world. Satan's plan backfired on him! We can truly say, "And we know that all things work together for the good to them that love God and are called according to His purposes" Romans 8:28.

Exodus 2:23-24

The Egyptians responded to the continued growth of the children of Israel by dealing even more harshly with them. They made them work harder as slaves and made their lives very bitter.

The Pharaoh died; however, the new Pharaoh continued the oppression of the Hebrews. The people cried out to God for deliverance, and God heard their cries and remembered the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God remembered His people. In His timing, He moved to deliver them. God remembers us. In Psalms 50:15 God assures, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." God does not always work in the time frame we desire Him to, but His timing is always the best. He sees our needs and hears our cries. God hears the prayers of His children.

Why would God allow His people to suffer affliction? Perhaps one reason could be that it made them desire a land of their own; we know that God promised His people a land of their own--the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Affliction also has a way of causing one (or a people) to draw near to God and depend on Him. Perhaps the people had not been calling upon the Lord before this trial. Now, in bondage to the Egyptians, they would look to God daily to sustain them and pray for His promise to deliver them.

Why does God allow us to suffer affliction? We can be confident He is working for good in our lives also. During our hard times, an attitude of self-sufficiency gives way to an attitude of dependency on God. Through those times, we walk closely to Him and our faith can grow tremendously as a result. Through those times, we learn empathy for others who go through difficult times, and we become more Christ-like in character as a result of the "fiery" trials.

Suggested activity: God's ears

Exodus 2:1-2

In Exodus 6:20, we are given more details concerning the parents of Moses. "And Amram took him Jochebed, his father's sister, in marriage; and she bore him Aaron and Moses; and the years of the life of Amram were a hundred and thirty and seven years." Note that Moses was from the tribe of Levite both by father and mother.

In verse two, we see that his mother hid him for three months because he was a beautiful child. We are told in Hebrews 11:23 that it was faith that caused her to hide Moses: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child, and they were not afraid of the King's commandment."

Faith and fear are mutually exclusive. Their faith was evident in that they did not fear man (the Pharaoh), but rather, determined to obey God.

The Bible speaks very clearly that we need to respect and obey all those who are placed in authority over us. We need to respect our president, our governors, our congressmen, our police, and anyone else that God has called to a place of leadership in our communities. However, the Bible allows this exception: when we are asked to do something that is in direct violation to God's Word or His command, we are to obey God, rather than man. God had sent Moses to deliver His people. Moses' parents obviously did the right thing in hiding him.

Exodus 2:3-4

After three months, she realized that she could hide him no longer. So she then made an ark of bulrushes, put the baby in it, and laid the ark in the reeds by the river's bank. Again, we see Amram and Jochebed's faith in placing Moses in the very spot where the babies were drowned. They trusted God to take care of and protect their precious baby. What seemed by sight to be a step that would yield a dim future for Moses, was actually a step into God's plan of protection, training, and preparation for the deliverer of His people. God has a good plan for our lives!

The "sister" of Moses mentioned in verse 4 was most likely Miriam who we will see mentioned later in the story of Moses and the children of Israel.

How we need to trust in God's plan for our lives even when our circumstances look bleak. Proverbs 3:5 states, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct your paths." We can be confident God has a good plan for our lives. God has a good plan for our lives!

Exodus 2:5-9

Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river to bathe. It was no coincidence that she went down to that very spot, at that very time, to see a basket. We know it was God who put it into the heart of this Egyptian princess to go to the river at that time and place, and it was the Lord who moved her heart with compassion for the crying child.

It was the Lord who caused the princess to yield to the suggestion of Moses' sister, making the princess willing for the child's own mother to care for him. Pharaoh's daughter thought it convenient that Moses should have a Hebrew nurse. What a blessing for Jochebed and for her son! Who better could nurse and care for the child than his own mother?

Now, she could care for and enjoy her son freely, without fear. How wonderful to trust the Lord with everything and to know that He sees each of our situations and uses them for our good. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). God has a good plan for our lives!

Suggested activity: All's Well That Ends Well

Exodus 2:10

When the child had been weaned, the mother, who had been his nurse, brought him back to the Pharaoh's daughter, who then adopted him as her own son, and called him Moses, for she said "Because I drew him out of the water." As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses received a thorough Egyptian training, and was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as Stephen states in Acts 7:22.

Pharaoh had wanted to eliminate the Israelites; and yet, God compels him to give bread, lodging, and education to the man God had chosen to accomplish the very thing that Pharaoh was trying to prevent. Pharaoh's wisdom was turned to foolishness, and Satan's devices were defeated. The ways of the Lord are amazing! God has a good plan for our lives!

As we look at these ten verses, we can truly see that God had His fingerprints all over the lives of Moses and his parents, and most assuredly, He has His fingerprints all over our lives.

As we study the entire history of Israel, it is amazing how God has directed, blessed, loved, and taken care of His people. From Abraham to Isaac, to Jacob, to Joseph, and now Moses, God's hand is upon His people. God's hand is upon all those who call upon Him. God has a good plan for our lives!

Have you called upon the name of the Lord? You can have a relationship with Him today and see what He will do in your life.

Teachers: Use this as an opportunity to share the Gospel with your students.

Suggested activity: The Ark in the Bulrushes

6. Prayer

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's faithfulness to hear His children. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

7. Attention Grabbers

What you will need:

- 1) You will need: apples, knife, a chalk or dry erase board to draw on.
- 2) As many small prizes (stickers, pencils, erasers, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

Carrying out the attention grabber:

1) Fruitful Multiplication

Cut an apple across the middle to show the children in the two slices how many seeds are inside (there are usually 5 seeds in each apple).

On a chalk or dry erase board, draw an apple tree. Talk to the children about how the fruit multiplies while drawing. Ask, "if only one apple grew on this tree, and the seeds from only that apple grew into trees, how many trees would there be?"

Draw five more apple trees under the first tree, spaced wide apart. Then continue asking, "Now, if only one apple grew on each of these trees, and the seeds from those apples grew into trees, how many trees would there be?"

Point out that so many trees and apples were produced just from one apple from one tree. In today's lesson, we will see that the Lord greatly multiplied the people of Israel while they were in Egypt. Go ahead and cut slices of the remaining apples for a snack. God hears the prayers of His children.

2) You're Hot ! You're Cold !

Hide a few small prizes somewhere in your classroom. Pick a volunteer to try to find the prizes by following your hints of "you're getting colder; you're getting warmer." When the student finds the prizes, have him pass it out to the class.

Explain that today you will be learning about a family that drew near to the Lord and trusted in Him. God has a good plan for our lives!

8. Activities:

What you will need:

- 1) You will need: Plastic grocery bags, canned goods or something heavy (according to age), two cardboard boxes (Option: decorate them like cars).
- 2) You will need: The "God's Ear" template, scissors, pencil, and markers or crayons.
- 3) One deck of playing cards.
- 4) As many "ark" patterns (that you draw before class and copy onto card stock) as the number of children in your class, and scissors, glue, cotton balls and crayons.

How to carry out the activities:

- 1) Heavy Laden

Let's do a grocery store relay! Divide your class into two teams. Give each team two heavy grocery bags (just heavy enough for them to carry).

The first person must carry the groceries to the "car" (cardboard box made to resemble a car).

The second person gets them out of the car and carries them into the "house" (back across the starting line), then repeats.

Explain that things had changed for the children of Israel since Joseph's time. They were made slaves and had to do heavy labor every day of their lives; they were beaten and treated badly.

2) God's Ears

You will need as many "God's Ear" templates as the number of children in your class. Have the children draw a large picture of an ear and color. Next have the children poke a hole in the ear where the sound will travel in. At the bottom of the page are lines that can be used for prayer requests.

Explain to the children that "God's Ear" is always open to our prayers. Have them write a prayer request to poke through the hole. God hears the prayers of His children.

3) All's Well That Ends Well

Have your class sit in a circle and pass out a playing card to each student. Have them look at their card and remember the suit and value. Then have them pass the cards around according to your instruction.

Tell your class to pass the cards three times to the right, then one time to the left; then four times to the right; then five times to the left; then seven times to the right; then three times to the left; then one time to the right; then seven times to the left; then one time to the right.

Each child should have the card he started with. Explain that as they passed their cards around they really had no idea where it would end up or whether they would get it back, just like Moses' mother. She sent her baby son in a basket on the Nile never knowing whether she would see him again, but God is so good that not only did she see him again, she got to take care of her own baby until he was weaned. God has a good plan for our lives!

4) The Ark in the Bulrushes

Draw a simple template of a baby basket. Make as many white cardstock copies of the "ark" pattern as the number of children in your class. Have your students color their sheets and draw a baby in the ark. Cut out their arks and babies. Around the babies have the children glue cotton balls so it looks like the baby is lying in something soft. Glue the ark onto a sheet of white construction paper. Have the children decorate a river scene around the ark.

9. Bible text (NIV):

Exodus 1:1-14

The Israelites Oppressed

1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his family: 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; 3 Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; 4 Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. 5 The descendants of Jacob numbered seventy[a] in all; Joseph was already in Egypt. 6 Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, 7 but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them. 8 Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. 9 "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. 10 Come, we must deal shrewdly with

them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.”

11 So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites 13 and worked them ruthlessly. 14 They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

Exodus 2:23-24

23 During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. 24 God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.

Exodus 2:1-10

The Birth of Moses

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, 2 and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. 3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket[a] for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. 4 His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

5 Then Pharaoh’s daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. 6 She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. “This is one of the Hebrew babies,” she said.

7 Then his sister asked Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?”

8 “Yes, go,” she answered. So the girl went and got the baby’s mother. 9 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.” So the woman took the baby and nursed him. 10 When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses,[b] saying, “I drew him out of the water.”

Template – God’s Ear

Prayer Request:

Prayer Request:

Prayer Request:

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