

Moses and the Exodus

The Bible Course, Unit 4

The Book of Exodus Begins . . .

- Exodus begins by listing Joseph's descendants and those of his brothers, who came to Egypt to live with him. Together they were the sons of Israel.
- Pharaoh Ramses II (1290–1224 BC) came to power and “knew nothing of Joseph” (Exodus 1:8).
- Ramses II felt threatened by the many Israelites, so he enslaved them.

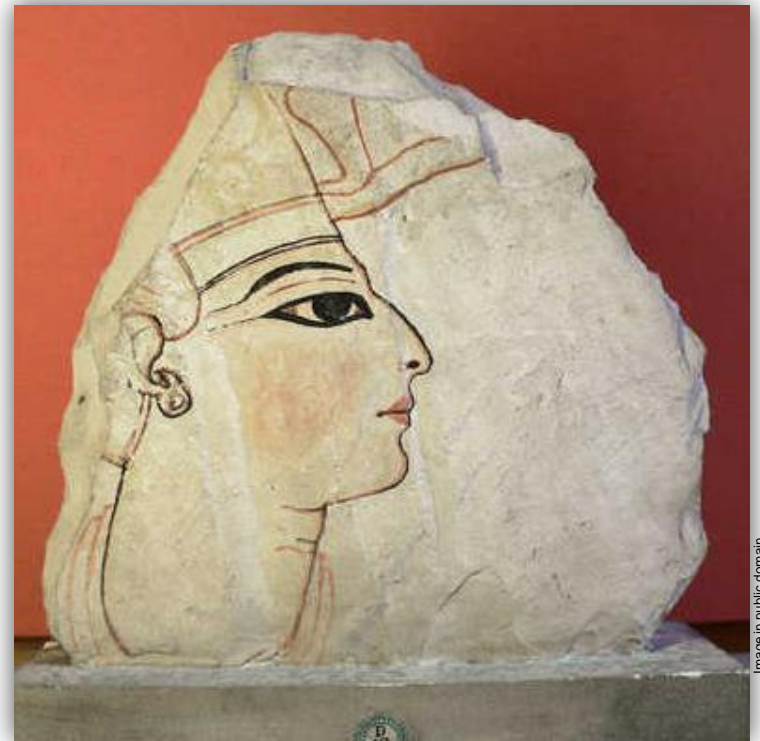


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Miriam

- Miriam the prophetess was the sister of Moses and Aaron.
- She saved Moses from Pharaoh's plan to kill all Israelite boys at birth by floating Moses on the Nile in a basket, where Pharaoh's daughter found him.
- Miriam also provided her mother the opportunity to remain in Moses' life by suggesting her to Pharaoh's daughter as a nurse for the infant Moses.



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Moses' Early Years

- Moses was brought up as Egyptian royalty, but his contact with his family gave him exposure to and sympathy for the Israelites.
- After Moses reaches adulthood, he sees an Egyptian striking an Israelite slave. In defense of the slave, Moses kills the Egyptian and hides the body in the sand.
- When it becomes known what Moses has done, he fears for his life and flees to the land of Midian.
- In Midian he encounters the daughters of Reuel, a priest of Midian. Moses stays with Reuel and marries his daughter Zipporah.



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God Calls Moses

- Years later God reveals himself to Moses and calls him to a key role in the salvation of God's People.
- Moses experiences a theophany through a burning bush.
- God identifies himself as "I am who am" and calls Moses to be his voice of truth and arm of justice.



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Moses Returns to Egypt

- Upon returning to Egypt, Moses said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Let my people go . . .” (Exodus 5:1).
- Pharaoh refused to release the Israelites, so God unleashed ten plagues on Pharaoh and Egypt.

The Ten Plagues

- First Plague: Water turned into Blood
- Second Plague: Frogs
- Third Plague: Gnats
- Fourth Plague: Flies
- Fifth Plague: Pestilence
- Sixth Plague: Boils
- Seventh Plague: Hail
- Eighth Plague: Locusts
- Ninth Plague: Darkness



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The Tenth Plague and Passover

- Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn
- God spared the Israelites from this plague by passing over the houses marked with the blood of the sacrificial lamb. This event is known as the Passover.



What did the event of the Passover show the Israelites about God?

Freedom from Egypt

- After the tenth plague, Pharaoh lets the Israelites go.
- Pharaoh soon changes his mind and the Egyptian armies pursue the Israelites. On the shores of the Red Sea, God defeats the Egyptians.



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The Sinai Covenant

- Mount Sinai is the sacred ground where God forms a Covenant with his Chosen People.
- Contained within this Covenant are the laws and obligations known as the Ten Commandments.
- Within the framework of the Sinai Covenant, God declares himself to be their God, a God of fidelity, love, and justice.

The Ten Commandments

- I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.
- You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not kill.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
- You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

(CCC, pp. 496–497)