

## Exodus 1

Well this evening we begin a new journey in our study through the Bible and of course we'll be looking at the book of Exodus.

I think it's important as we begin tonight that we kind of get a little bit of the background of what has taken place in the history of the people of Israel to this point.

It's been a while since we were in the book of Genesis but some of the last things that happened were connected to a man whose name was Joseph...His father's name was Jacob who is also known as Israel and he had 12 sons in total which we know became the 12 tribes of Israel.

Joseph was a favored son and his father actually gave him a coat of many colors...It was clear his father had chosen him above the others.

In the course of time Joseph had two dreams...And in both of the dreams that he had he was in an elevated position with his brothers and even his parents honoring him. Of course the brothers weren't to happy about this and they really saw Joseph as a prideful, self-absorbed brother.

Joseph one point allowed to stay home while the others were out taking care of the livestock and eventually there came a day that Joseph was sent to check on his brothers that he might report back to his father Jacob, and while he was on the way the brothers saw him and decided to turn against him. At first they wanted to kill him but he ended up being sold into slavery.

After this he ended up as a slave in the home of a man named Potipher and while he served his master he came into an elevated

position in the home...so much so that his master didn't even really check on Joseph for how honorable that he was.

As Joseph was elevated in the home the wife of Potiphar began to try and seduce him to sleep with her and Joseph we know ran away...When Joseph ran away the wife of Potiphar then lied about Joseph saying he was trying to take advantage of her which ended with Joseph being in prison.

You can imagine how difficult this must have been for Joseph knowing he had done nothing wrong...Again though in the course of time Joseph was elevated in the prison and there were two men that had dreams, one of which was the chief cupbearer to the Pharaoh and the other which was the chief baker.

As these men told their dreams to Joseph he interpreted them and shortly after that they came to pass with one of the two being restored and the other finding his death, but Joseph was forgotten.

Then the Pharaoh had a dream and no one could interpret it and one of the two that Joseph had interpreted the dream for remembered him and mentioned it to the Pharaoh.

Joseph was brought before him and the dreams of the Pharaoh were interpreted and they were prophetic dreams of what was going to come in the land...There were going to be 7 great years and then 7 horrible years of famine and Joseph exhorted the king to prepare now that they might have enough for the future.

The Pharaoh then put Joseph in charge of gathering and storing the crops that would be needed for the future and in the course of time the family of Joseph ended up in the land with him...Joseph took care

of his family and eventually revealed to them that he was still alive as they thought he was dead and gone.

As the book of Genesis ended the father of the family (Israel) had died and the brothers were all afraid that Joseph would take his revenge on them now that his father was dead...Joseph in response said this in Genesis 50:20 which says **But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.**

Joseph was a hero for not only his own family but also for the people of Egypt. His family was well taken care of, they were honored, they were given a place to live and take care of their livestock.

It is with this background that we arrive in our study of the book of Exodus.

Now I know this is a little bit of a lengthy background but before we start here I just want to give you a little bit of information about the book of Exodus.

The book of Exodus was authored by Moses and we know that because on a few occasions in the book of Exodus we can see Moses is specifically stated to have written things down...One such example of this is found over in Exodus 24:4.

In addition to this in the Gospels in Luke 20:37 Jesus Himself said this <sup>37</sup> **But even Moses showed in the *burning bush passage* that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’** I think that if Jesus attributed these things to Moses that we can conclude that indeed it is so.

The book of Exodus is a very old book of the Bible as it was written some 3,400 years ago...There are some that might say it's so old that it's not necessary...Many churches in fact no longer teach the Old Testament nor place much emphasis on it.

I believe the Old Testament is extremely important for you and I as believers in Jesus Christ. Over in the book of Romans 15:4 we have the following which says this **4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.** Similarly over in the book of 1 Corinthians 10:11 we have this right after it speaks of things that took place in the Old Testament...It says **11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.**

So you and I who live in the days that we currently encounter can learn and grow as we study the Old Testament...The scriptures should give us hope and patience as we seek to honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the book of Exodus is important for a few reasons...and to speak to that I'm going to give you a brief breakdown of this book into three parts.

The first section is Exodus chapters 1-18 and it chronicles the great deliverance of God's people Israel from the Egyptians...There are many promises God had made to His people prior to this and we'll see that God continued to keep them just as He does to this day.

The second portion is chapters 19-34 and really this section establishes the Law of God and what it is that God requires of man that he might have a relationship with God. In these chapters we see

the 10 commandments given as Moses is up on the mountain with God.

And then finally chapters 35-40 are going to detail the tabernacle of God in detail, which will lead us to the book of Leviticus which really lays out the worship of God and how it should be conducted.

So really as we study this we should be learning about God's desire to have a relationship with the people of Israel and God's desire to use them as a light to the world as they were the chosen people of God.

This first section of the book of Exodus which we will begin this evening, lets us know that Israel who was favored and blessed while initially in the land of Egypt now faces hard times as they were enslaved and oppressed...In this time we can see that there was a need for deliverance and of course God Almighty is going to be their deliverer and He will use a man by the name of Moses who we will be introduced to next week.

Ok with that in place let's go ahead here and take a look at verses 1-6 which say the following **Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob: <sup>2</sup> Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; <sup>3</sup> Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; <sup>4</sup> Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. <sup>5</sup> All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt already). <sup>6</sup> And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation.**

I'm not sure if you have ever noticed this or not as you have gone through the Old Testament of the Bible, but it is filled with names and

genealogies and families that reach all the way back to Adam and Eve. The reason for this is really two-fold.

First it established the people of Israel and their family lineage which was important to them as they were a patriarchal society...This was a society that was filled with oral tradition and they would speak of their fathers often and they placed a great emphasis on where they came from and what God had done on their behalf.

The second reason is prophetic for this is the family that is tied to the coming Messiah who is Jesus...All the way back in the garden of Eden God had said of Eve that her seed would crush the head of the serpent...and so there is always this undercurrent in the Bible that God was going to work to restore man's relationship with Himself...That relationship was severed when humanity chose to sin and would not be restored until Jesus came and paid the price of our sins.

We don't have time this evening, but if you do some research you will see that the coming Messiah is prophesied of many times as coming from the family of Israel specifically the tribe of Judah thus the genealogies of Israel point us all to the coming Messiah who is Jesus.

So here we have 12 sons listed in total that came down to Egypt and like I said we have that given to us in the book of Genesis and we learn here there were 70 persons that came down and that Joseph was already in Egypt.

We then learn that all of these brothers had died at this point and so the idea is there is a new generation of the people of Israel that are in the land of Egypt.

I would mention here before we move on that I am amazed that the work of God continues in the hearts of men even today. Throughout history there are many that God has used and all of them have physically died...As those individuals God has used have died the Lord has graciously allowed others to be raised up to step in and lead and minister to God's people.

Look with me at verse 7 which says this <sup>7</sup> **But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.** So you can imagine that the people of Israel had moved to Egypt as just 70 people and we are told here that they multiplied and became exceedingly mighty.

We are told the land was actually filled with them, so God had blessed them as a people.

I want to point out to you that God had already promised them that this would take place...God always keeps His Word and His promises throughout scripture. All the way back in the early chapters of Genesis in chapter 15:4-6 God said this to Abraham which says <sup>4</sup> **And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."** <sup>5</sup> **Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them."** And He said to him, **"So shall your descendants be."**

<sup>6</sup> **And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

God also made a similar promise in Genesis 22:17 which says **<sup>17</sup> blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.**

It's amazing really to read through the Word of God and to just make note of the promises God made and then watch as they are fulfilled. God always keeps His Word, we can see He has done so in the past and we know that He will do so in the future.

Look with me at verse 8 which says this **<sup>8</sup> Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.** As time went on and Joseph and all his brothers had died and the family had grown greatly there came a new king over Egypt...I want to point something out to you from Acts 7:17-19 which says the following and this is Stephen who was eventually stoned for his faith as he testified of Jesus to those listening and he said this **<sup>17</sup> “But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt <sup>18</sup> till another king arose who did not know Joseph. <sup>19</sup> This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live.**

What I want to point out to you is in verse 18 of this passage from Acts when it says TILL ANOTHER KING AROSE...in the Greek there are two definitions for the word other or another...The first means another of the same kind...and the second means another of a different kind.

The word used by Stephen is the word another which means a different kind...And I point that out because it indicates to us there is a

new ruler in Egypt from a different family...as such they didn't value what the previous government did.

It would be like when there is a change in the presidency from one party to the other...One party has its values and when another comes in the way to lead a nation is quite different.

And so we have a new king on the scene in Egypt and this one didn't pay much attention to Joseph and he probably either didn't know the history of the people of Israel in the land or he just didn't care about it.

How many of you have heard something similar to the following..."It's so easy from one generation to the next to lose the values that a society was built on" I think that's true in our own nation...It has been said that the United States is always just one generation away from becoming something it was never intended to be and we as a society must work very hard to preserve the freedoms that we enjoy so much.

It's the same way for us as believers in Christ...we must work hard to teach our children the ways of Jesus, we must look to build them up in their faith and we must work hard to teach them the Word of God on a regular basis...Unfortunately our society is degrading rapidly as we get further from the truths of the Bible...we need revival for sure, we need mercy from God to bring us back to truth.

Look with me at verses 9-10 which say <sup>9</sup>**And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; <sup>10</sup> come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land."** So the new king is in the land and of course you are going to want to have a

thorough understanding of your kingdom and who is living in it and the structure of it...and so the king starts asking questions and taking an account of everything and he realizes that there is this huge group of people that live in the land.

He knows that they are descendants of a man named Israel but from what I can gather he didn't care to really learn that much about how the Israelites had been a huge blessing in the past to the people of Egypt...Instead he saw them as a threat as he even says they are mightier than we.

His concern here is that they could very easily turn on them if an enemy was to enter the land...they might join forces with that invading army and then eventually leave...and so his response to this rather than strengthening the ties with the Israelites is to come against them and deal shrewdly or harshly with them.

Now I have to point out to you again that what takes place here as this is unfolding with Israel being treated poorly was also prophesied by God back in Genesis...God spoke saying they would be both blessed while in the land, and also that they would face great difficulty.

Listen to what we learn over in Genesis 15:13-14 which says this

**<sup>13</sup>Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. <sup>14</sup>And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.**

And then listen to what Genesis 46:3-4 says when it says **<sup>3</sup>So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt,**

**for I will make of you a great nation there. <sup>4</sup> I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up *again*; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.**”

So far at this point while they were in Egypt the Israelites had been blessed and multiplied and now we see that difficulty will come and of course this is all God’s plan as He is going to bring them out of Egypt as a mighty nation indeed.

As we move forward here in our study I want you to know that the Egyptians came against the Israelites in two ways. First they afflicted them and second they attempted to curb the expanding population of the people.

Look with me at verses 11-14 which say this **<sup>11</sup>Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. <sup>12</sup> But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. <sup>13</sup> So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. <sup>14</sup> And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.**

Essentially the Egyptians placed the Israelites into hard manual labor...Initially they were taking care of their herds and flocks back at the end of Genesis but now they are being oppressed.

The Israelites were tasked with building store cities for the Egyptians and they worked in making mortar, bricks and all kinds of service in the fields...Notice it says twice they were made to serve with rigor

which means severity or cruelty. So this was not an easy life for the people of Israel.

I want to point out one other thing to you in verse 12 as it says that the more they afflicted them the more they grew...I have to point out that often times when adversity takes place that growth takes place and I especially want to apply that to the Christian life.

It has been said that when persecution takes place that the church is refined and strengthened...and I believe that out of adversity greatness is cultivated.

It's so true that when hard things happen in life that you tend to grow closer with those you are spending time with...When it comes to Christianity especially persecution and difficulty really bring those who truly believe together.

It is when persecution of the church takes place that there is a separation of the chaff and the wheat...Those that don't truly believe tend to shy away from standing for Christ, while those that take up their cross daily draw near and stand strong.

Notably in the scriptures we see this take place in Acts 4:23-31 as the apostles went before the authorities and they were told not to speak the name of Jesus any longer...and when they left the disciples came together asking of God that He would give them boldness to share the truth. We then see the Holy Spirit is poured out on them.

The same thing took place in Acts 8:1-8 and this was right after Stephen had been martyred as he was stoned to death and then we are told that the church scattered and ran from Jerusalem and you

would think they would hide in fear but instead they took the gospel with them speaking it as they went.

This reminds me of what the Word says over in Romans 8:35-39 which says <sup>35</sup> **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?** <sup>36</sup> **As it is written:**

**“For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”**

**<sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

It's a hard thing when persecution of the church or any people group takes place and certainly the Israelites have had far more persecution as a nation than any other.

Throughout the Bible and history there has been hatred for the Jewish people and that's what we see here as they were afflicted and picked on and even required to kill any sons that were born to them which we will see here in a few minutes.

We might wonder why the Jewish people face so much difficulty...the simple reason is because Satan knows that they as a people group are God's chosen people...Satan knows God has a special place in His heart for them...and Satan knows there are many promises that God has made to the people of Israel and if Satan can stop those promises

or annul those promises then the Word of God isn't true and everything in it is invalid.

Try as Satan might you and I know God has a plan for Israel that has been fulfilled in many ways...and God has a plan for Israel even into the future.

**Verses 15-16 say the following** <sup>15</sup>**Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah;** <sup>16</sup>**and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live."**

Now we have the control of the population brought into the picture. The king reached out to some of the midwives and we have two of them named here being Shiphrah and Puah and the command was that when the Hebrew women were on the birthstools they were to kill the male children and let the daughters live.

It's interesting that these two women are named...and the king of Egypt isn't named. These women are going to do the right thing in this situation and we will see that they are honored for it.

I have to take a minute and just mention that the killing of children is just plain evil...There aren't really words to say how wrong it is to take an innocent life. Today, in our own society millions of babies have been murdered in the womb...Satan has the same hatred for humanity today that he had for the Jewish people in the narrative before us.

**Just as a side note to make mention when we talk about this** is that really the murdering of the innocent is directly against one of God's

original commands to Adam and Eve found in Genesis. God said they were to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth...It's so sad that when God says something that Satan immediately looks to destroy and come against it.

Can you imagine being one of these women and you get the command from the king that you are to murder babies? I'm sure these women were afraid for the king could take their lives if they weren't obedient to what he said.

Look with me at verses 17-21 which say this <sup>17</sup> **But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.** <sup>18</sup> **So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?"**

Notice what it says about the midwives...it says they feared God. For these women they knew it was wrong through and through to do what was required and their obligation was to honor God over honoring men.

This does bring us to an interesting discussion that takes place in Christian circles on a regular basis and that is how are we to respond to our government as we go through life. Over in the book of Romans 13:1 we are told the following **Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.**

1 Peter 2:13-14 says <sup>13</sup> **Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as**

supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good.

The Bible does teach that you and I as believers should be in obedience to our government even when we may not like it...But I do have to say that there is a limit to how far a government can go and you and I as believers in the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ have a higher authority that we must submit to.

**When a government asks us to directly violate what the Word of God stands for** we are to civilly disobey and I say the word civilly because I don't think it's our calling to go out and fight the government, I don't see any Biblical examples of Paul starting a riot or protesting the government on the street...Instead Paul just stuck to his calling...to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world around him...Even Jesus did not fight against the government when He was on earth.

So we as believers must stand for the truth when the world violates what the Word says just as these women did...There are other Biblical examples of this taking place and for homework you might go and take a look at Daniel and how he was required to only pray to the king...and when this was placed on him he instead went to his home and prayed as he always had.

We might think of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who were required to bow to an image...and they said to the king they wouldn't do such a thing and if they ended up dying over it that was fine with them.

And then we have a new testament example of this found in the apostles in Acts 5:27-29 as they were before the religious rulers and it says the following <sup>27</sup> **And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!”**

<sup>29</sup> **But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.**

Yes we should obey the authorities for God has allowed them to be...but more importantly we have a greater authority that we must be obedient to being God’s Word. Currently we as a nation have incredible freedom to worship Jesus...One day the authorities may say we can’t meet to which we must say that the Word commands us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together...One day the authorities may work to require that certain children not be allowed to have life to which we are to disobey...We should understand that persecution will come to those that want to be Godly in life...We should expect opposition to some degree and we should embrace that opposition by running to the Lord Jesus and each other to find strength.

So the Pharaoh brings these women in before him and he asks them what the deal is and the women we are told feared God and then look how they respond in verses 19-21 which say <sup>19</sup> **And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.”**

**20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21 And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them.**

Now there is some debate here about the response of the midwives...Some say that perhaps they are lying and to that I would say that two wrongs never make a right...telling a lie shouldn't be the response that we have when someone asks us a tough question.

The second thought is that this is indeed true and perhaps God just protected the Hebrew women by allowing them to give birth so fast that they couldn't even be present.

In any case we can see here that God blessed the midwives and allowed them to have households...there is blessing I believe for doing the right thing...the world may not like us, they may confront us but God has a way of watching out for those that do the right thing in life.

We can also see here that the people of Israel are continuing to multiply and grow mightily...So the king's plans aren't really working out are they? He is trying to make life hard for the Jewish people, he is trying to stop the growth of their population and the harder he seems to try the worse things become.

It's always a hard thing in life if someone finds themselves going against the plans of God Almighty...you won't ever win but instead you'll find yourself frustrated and struggling.

Finally look at verse 22 which says **22 So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."** Instead of using the midwives now the Pharaoh commands that the boys that are born are

to be thrown into the river...and that really sets us up for next week as there was one woman who refused to allow her little child to be drowned in the waters but instead provided a little boat to protect the child.

That's where we will stop this evening, lots of little lessons for us along the way and you know if the Lord is speaking to you about anything in life at all I just want you to know that really that's why we are here is to minister to you and allow the Holy Spirit to do a work in your heart and mind...If you need prayer please let us know. If you need to accept Jesus in your heart as your Lord and Savior please let us know as we would love to pray with you.

Let me pray for us and we'll conclude with some worship.

## **Exodus 1 “After The Death Of Joseph”**

### **Introduction**

Genesis 50:20

Luke 20:37

Romans 15:4

1 Corinthians 10:11

### **Verse 7**

Genesis 15:4-6

Genesis 22:17

### **Verse 8**

Acts 7:17-19

### **Verses 9-10**

Genesis 15:13-14

Genesis 46:3-4

### **Verses 11-14**

Romans 8:35-39

### **Verses 17-21**

Romans 13:1

1 Peter 2:13-14

Acts 5:27-29