

**Purpose**

- Discover the background of the book of Exodus.
- To learn about Moses

**Background Information**

## EXODUS

The book of Exodus was written by Moses. He wrote this to record the events of Israel's deliverance from Egypt and development as a nation. Exodus was written in the desert during Israel's wanderings. It took place in Egypt. God's people, once highly favored in the land, are now slaves. God is about to set them free. Key people are Moses, Miriam, Pharaoh, Pharaoh's daughter, Jethro, Aaron, Joshua, and Bezalel. Exodus is noted for containing more miracles than any other Old Testament book. It is also known for containing the Ten Commandments.

## MOSES

The story of Moses begins four hundred years after Joseph moved his family to Egypt. Joseph's family, descendants of Abraham, had grown and multiplied to about two million strong. The Pharaoh (unnamed) feared the power they could have so he made them slaves. Again in fear, the Pharaoh ordered that all male babies be thrown into the Nile River. One Hebrew mother hid her son for three months but no longer could hide him so she made a basket of reeds, waterproofed it and placed it in the Nile River. She instructed her daughter Miriam to watch over the basket. She placed the basket close to the Pharaoh's daughter's bathing area. Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby and basket and sent a slave girl to retrieve it. When she opened the basket and the child cried she felt sorry for him and asked a girl nearby (Miriam) to find someone to care for the child. Miriam ran home and brought back her own mother to nurse the young boy. The Pharaoh's daughter named the baby Moses which means "to draw out." Moses lived to be the human hero of the Hebrew people and Exodus. His life is divided into three parts, each part lasts about forty years.

Moses lived the first forty years of his life thinking that he was someone very important. After all He grew up on Pharaoh's house and was trained at Nile State University. He was on his way to the top! However he never forgot his roots and in time he came to believe that he was to be the deliverer of his people. He started his new career by killing

an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. His treasonous sympathies were exposed, and he ran for his life to Midian.

Moses spent the second forty years of his life realizing he was a nobody. He ran from Egypt into the Sinai desert and married Zipporah and joined into her family of shepherds. He worked for his father-in-law (Jethro) herding sheep. One day while kicking along in the wilderness Moses saw a bush on fire. As he approached, God spoke to Moses from within the bush and commissioned him to do exactly what Moses feared most-go back to Egypt. What excuses would you have used? Moses came up with a bunch, but God still insisted. After God turned a staff into a snake and back again; gave Moses leoparsy and then healed it; and turned water to blood Moses agreed to do as God asked even though he had a speech impediment and feared he could not speak for God. God sent Aaron, Moses' brother, to greet him and work together. Moses took his wife and family and returned to Egypt.

In the last forty years of his life Moses learned that God could make somebody out of a nobody. Moses didn't do anything spiritually significant until he was 80 years old. That might give a few of us some hope. But the road for God's people would not be easy.

Moses and Aaron stood before the Pharaoh of Egypt and demanded the release of the people of Israel. Naturally the Pharaoh refused, so God sent plagues on Egypt – ten of them.

1. The Nile River was turned to blood.
2. Frogs covered the land.
3. Gnats flew in like dust.
4. Biting flies inflicted discomfort on the people.
5. Domestic animals died.
6. People broke out in painful boils
7. Hail and lightning destroyed crops.
8. Locusts ate whatever vegetation was left.
9. Darkness covered Egypt for three days.
10. The firstborn child in every Egyptian household died.

With each plague Pharaoh promised Israel's release. When the plague was listed, however, Pharaoh chanted his mind. (Exodus 7-11).

The Israelites were protected from the last plague because they killed a lamb and spread the lamb's blood on the doorframes of their houses. God promised that when the last plague came, he would "pass over" every house with blood on the door. The Jewish celebration of Passover is a reminder of God's great deliverance of his people. (Exodus 12).

The pharaoh finally agreed to let the Israelites go. So about two million people left! They headed toward the Sinai wilderness but soon came to the Red Sea. To make matters worse, Pharaoh's army was pursuing them from behind. In a powerful miracle, God parted the water of the Red Sea and the people of Israel crossed on dry ground. The Egyptian army pursued them only to be drowned by the returning water (Gen. 13:17-14). The people were so thankful to God that worshipped Him and believed that He had sent Moses and Aaron to deliver them.

Israel's escape from Egypt and their deliverance at the Red Sea became the defining event of the Old Testament. Centuries later, if a biblical writer wanted to appeal to irrefutable evidence of God's power and faithfulness to his people, the writer would point to the miracle of the Red Sea.

### **Procedure**

- Check out 7-1. Follow Moses' path. Lesson 7, Page 1
- Do 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, and 7-5 for fun.