

# **Exodus**

## **March 4, 2007**

### **Chapter 1**

#### **I. Introduction**

History of the Book's name:

Original Hebrew: "And these are the names" or simply "Names" (i.e. *Shemoth*)

Septuagint Greek: *Ek Hodos* (rode out of, or the way out)

Vulgate Latin: *Liber Esodus*

As we study through this book, it is important for each of us to consider to what we are in bondage. For some, it might be less extensive than others, but if we say that we have totally broken the bondage of this world, we lie to ourselves and to those around us. Where can we go with God if we leave this bondage behind dwelling totally in His power and His will? If you feel that you have no bondage in your life, please ready the following verses from Philippians 1:6, 2:3, 2:14, 4:6.

Exodus probably occurs during the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty (16 century BC) of Egypt. Several dynasties preceded this one where Semites were prevalent according to their names as Pharaohs or officials to Pharaoh. These Semites are referred to as the Hykos.

#### **II. How Big is Your God?**

#### **III. Connection with the Past**

**Ex 1:1-10**

**1:1** 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 in all; Joseph was already in Egypt.

**6** Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, **7** but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them.

**8** Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. **9** "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much 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."

## NIV

Verse 1: The title is the first words of the book. Notice that it starts with “And.”

Verse 5: See Genesis 46 for more information on those who left Egypt.

Verse 6: The Israelites had been in Egypt a long time:

**Ex 12:40-41**

**40 Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years. 41 At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all the LORD's divisions left Egypt. NIV**

Verse 7: What circumstances allowed the Israelites to grow so numerous?

Verse 10: The delta area of Goshen would have been an area particularly susceptible to attacks from warring tribes. Therefore, the Egyptian had some reason to be concerned with the huge number of Israelites in the land.

Verse 10: “Leave the country” or literally “go up to the land” might be a translation of an idiom meaning more like “take possession of the land. See:

**Hos 1:11**

**1 The people of Judah and the people of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head; and they shall *take possession of the land*, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.**

**NRSV**

## IV. The Final Solution: First Plan

**Ex 1:11-14**

**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 hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly. NIV**

Verses 12-14: Notice how the Israelites were treated:

- Oppressed
- Worked them ruthlessly
- Made their lives bitter
- Hard labor
- All kinds of work
- Use them ruthlessly

The probable intent is to have some, perhaps many, of the Israelites die under the workload.

Question: Why would God allow this to happen to the Israelite?

## V. The Final Solution: Second Plan

Ex 1:15-21

**15** The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah,  
**16** "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." **17** The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. **18** Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?"

**19** The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive."

**20** So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. **21** And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.  
NIV

Verse 15: Many find concern that only two midwives are named. They might have been supervisors or representatives of a larger number.

Verse 16: Typically, "Hebrew" is not a term that Israelites used as a personal term anywhere in the Pentateuch. It is apparently reference to a larger group and sometimes seems rather demeaning.

As such, the "Hebrew midwives" might be midwives of Egyptian descent who minister to Hebrew women. The names of the midwives are Egyptian names.

Verse 17: What does it mean to fear God? Basically, it means that they understood right and wrong, and that they wanted to please God by doing what is right, fearing Him if they did wrong. They probably did not have a lot of understanding of the Jewish past, but enough to do what is right.

Verse 19: While still a lie, Hebrew women might well have taken a greater role in the delivery of their children as a result of their culture, requiring less help from midwives. If so, this would make the rather odd explanation sound somewhat truthful to Pharaoh.

Verse 19: In addition to lying, the midwives also disobey civil authority. How can we reconcile what they did as being correct?

Verse 20: While lying is wrong, the midwives' hearts were right, and God rewards them.

Verse 21: "Them" in the above verse might refer to Israel rather than the midwives, but only the Darby translation translates it this way.

## **VI. The Final Solution: Third Plan**

**Ex 1:22**

**22 Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."**

**NIV**

Plans one and two have failed, but Pharaoh continues to come up with another plan. The exact time frame for these events is not identified. It might have covered decades.

In the next chapter, we see a specific case of how this plans fails. Given the large number of Israelites at the time of the Exodus, about 80 years later, any other plans appear to have failed miserably as well.

## **VII. Why does God Allow Bad Things to Happen to Good People?**

### **VIII. Next Week**

We will cover Chapter 2. Please read it in advance.

### **Extra Credit:**

-How is Moses' immediate mother named as revealed in the Bible? Genealogical information is inadequate to answer this question.

-In the 430 years in Egypt, were the Israelites true to the LORD? If not, how were they untrue?