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Discover Your Bible Series

Revised
Edition

Discover
EXODUS
SPECIAL DELIVERY

STUDY GUIDE



Part One of a Two-Part Study

STUDY GUIDE

Discover
EXODUS
SPECIAL DELIVERY




**FAITH
ALIVE.**
Christian Resources

Grand Rapids, Michigan

*“Go. I am sending you to Pharaoh
to bring my people the Israelites
out of Egypt.”*

Exodus 3:10

We thank Carol Veldman Rudie for writing the original lesson material (1997) on which this revised study of Exodus is based. This revised edition incorporates updates and suggestions by readers and small group leaders.

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How to Study

The questions in this study booklet will help you discover for yourself what the Bible says. This is inductive Bible study—in which you will discover the message for yourself.

Questions are the key to inductive Bible study. Through questions you search for the writers' thoughts and ideas. The questions in this booklet are designed to help you in your quest for answers. You can and should ask your own questions too. The Bible comes alive with meaning for many people as they discover the exciting truths it contains. Our hope and prayer is that this booklet will help the Bible come alive for you.

The questions in this study are designed to be used with the New International Version of the Bible, but other translations can also be used.

Step 1. Read each Bible passage several times. Allow the ideas to sink in. Think about their meaning. Ask questions about the passage.

Step 2. Answer the questions, drawing your answers from the passage. Remember that the purpose of the study is to discover what the Bible says. Write your answers in your own words. If you use Bible study aids such as commentaries or Bible handbooks, do so only after completing your own personal study.

Step 3. Apply the Bible's message to your own life. Ask,

- What is this passage saying to me?
- How does it challenge me? Comfort me? Encourage me?
- Is there a promise I should claim? A warning I should heed?
- For what can I give thanks?

If you sense God speaking to you in some way, respond to God in a personal prayer.

Step 4. Share your thoughts with someone else if possible. This will be easiest if you are part of a Bible study group that meets regularly to share discoveries and discuss questions.

If you would like to learn of a study group in your area or would like information on training to start a small group Bible study,

- call toll-free 1-888-644-0814, e-mail smallgroups@crcna.org, or visit www.smallgroupministries.org
- call toll-free 1-800-333-8300 or visit www.FaithAliveResources.org (to order materials)

Introduction

The Exodus narrative is a continuation of the story begun in Genesis. Genesis tells about the origins of the universe and human history—and particularly about God’s work to make a new nation through which he will bless all peoples (Gen. 12:1-3). Exodus continues that story by showing how God proceeds to work out his plan, over many long years, to make that nation into his chosen people, from whom the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, would come (see Matt. 1).

Part One of this study focuses on the first fifteen chapters of Exodus, which make up one of the most memorable stories in the Bible. These chapters reveal the character of God and many of his attributes. They celebrate God as the deliverer of his people. The remaining chapters of Exodus (featured in Part Two of this study) then describe how God makes his people into a nation unlike any other—not for the purpose of being different, but ultimately to show God’s love to the world.

Taken as a whole, the narrative of Exodus mirrors the redemptive plan of God for his children, even today. It gives us a fascinating glimpse of God’s purpose throughout history—to provide a divine mediator, Jesus Christ, who frees people from slavery to sin and leads them into full life with God forever (John 8:34-36; 10:10).

Egypt and Sinai in Moses' Day



Glossary of Terms

- Abraham**—father of the Israelite nation, called by God to leave his homeland and begin a family of people who would be faithful to the Lord and live in the land of Canaan. Abraham is renowned for his faith in God’s promises (Gen. 12:1-7; 15:6, 13-16; Heb. 11:8-16). He is also called “the father of all who believe” in Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:11).
- angel of the Lord**—a special agent from God who represents, brings a message from, and is sometimes identified with God.
- Canaanites**—the inhabitants of Canaan (see map), the land the Lord promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.
- circumcision**—removal of the male foreskin. God commanded Abraham and his descendants to do this as a sign that they belonged to God and as a symbol of the cutting away of sin from their lives (Gen. 17). In the New Testament circumcision is replaced with baptism in Christ. True circumcision is of the heart, not the flesh (Jer. 4:4; Col. 2:9-12).
- consecrate**—to set apart for holy purposes; to dedicate to God.
- covenant**—a mutually binding agreement between two parties; usually both parties agree to accept certain responsibilities.
- exodus**—exit, departure, literally “the road out” (from Greek, *ex + hodos*).
- fear of God**—To fear God means to respect and honor God with awe and humble devotion (see Ex. 1:17; 14:31).
- Goshen**—the land given to Jacob and his descendants (Israel) when they came to live in Egypt (see map; Gen. 47:1-12; Ex. 8:22; 9:26).
- Hebrew**—a general term for the descendants of Abraham, a descendant of Eber. The *NIV Study Bible* states that *Eber* “is the origin of the Hebrew word for ‘Hebrew’” (see Gen. 10:21, 25; 11:10-12:9) and that Egyptian and Canaanite correspondence from around 1375 B.C. (about 75 years after the exodus) refer to an ominous fear of people called “Habiru” (or “Apiru”), a word probably referring to the Hebrews.
- hyssop**—a bush with small, closely packed branches useful for sweeping or brushing (see Ex. 12:22).
- Isaac**—Abraham and Sarah’s son, who inherited all the promises God made with Abraham.
- Israel**—another name for Jacob (Ex. 1:1). Later the name is more commonly used to refer to the nation of Israel that descended from Jacob’s twelve sons.

Jacob—Isaac’s son whom God renamed Israel (Gen. 32:28). The descendants of Jacob’s twelve sons became the twelve tribes of the people of Israel.

Joseph—one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Sold into Egyptian slavery by his brothers, Joseph became an interpreter of dreams, helped Pharaoh, and became second in command of Egypt. During a severe famine he saved his entire family by moving them to Egypt, where there was food (Gen. 37-50). Joseph asked that, when he died, his bones be taken back to Canaan when the Israelites returned there (Gen. 50:25; Ex. 13:19).

Midian—desert region east of Egypt and south of Canaan, inhabited by nomadic shepherds (see map). The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1-4), whom he married after Sarah died (Gen. 23).

Moses—the man chosen by God to lead his people out of Egypt and as they lived in the wilderness before entering the promised land of Canaan. Moses received from God and taught Israel the laws that would govern them as God’s chosen people.

Pharaoh—the title used by kings of Egypt. The Egyptians believed their kings were sons of their gods.

plunder—to take the goods of, usually by force (as in war).

redeem—to buy back; to deliver or set free through a ransom payment or other provision. The firstborn sons of the Israelites were redeemed from the plague of death in Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:1-13, 21-23; 13:12-16). The Passover pointed to redemption from spiritual death, paid by the blood of Jesus Christ through his death on the cross for all who believe in him as Savior, the one who delivers us from our slavery to sin (John 8:34-36).

spelt—a grain similar to wheat (Ex. 9:32).

vigil (keep vigil)—to keep watch or guard (see Ex. 12:42).

Lesson 1

Exodus 1

Israel in Egypt

Introductory Notes

As the book of Exodus opens, we find the people of Israel in Egypt. They have lived there already for many years—long enough for their population to multiply and become noticeable to the Egyptians. The story of how they came to Egypt is presented in the preceding book of Genesis (see Gen. 37-50).

In Exodus we find the continuing story of how God made a new nation, descended from Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 12-25), and blessed them in order to bless all the other nations on earth (Gen. 12:2-3). Much later in the story we learn how God accomplished that through Jesus Christ, who became a descendant of Abraham and was also the Son of God (Matt. 1; Luke 1:26-38). He came to deliver us all from slavery to sin (John 8:34-36) and to give us new life with God forever (John 5:24; 10:10).

As you study the book of Exodus, you'll discover many parallels to God's saving work through Jesus. God's plan to deliver his people Israel mirrors his much greater plan to save us all. In this first chapter of Exodus, for example, look for clues about God's care for Israel even as they encounter very hard times.

1. *Exodus 1:1-5*

As the book begins, what do we learn about the descendants of Israel?

2. *Exodus 1:6-10*

a. What happened to the people while they lived in Egypt?

b. What did the new king fear? Why?

3. *Exodus 1:11-14*

a. What did the Egyptians do as a result of their new king's assessment?

b. What were the effects on the Israelites?

4. *Exodus 1:15-16*

What did the king try next? Why would he do this?

5. *Exodus 1:17-19*

a. How did the midwives respond to the king's order? Why?

b. What did they say when the king questioned them? What do you think of their answer?

6. *Exodus 1:20-21*

How did God respond to the midwives' actions and honor their obedience?

7. *Exodus 1:22*

How did Pharaoh retaliate?

Questions for Reflection

Which powers are in opposition in Exodus 1? Do you see evidence of those powers at work in our world today? Explain.

In this chapter what do we learn about the power of God working behind the scenes? What examples can you give of God's work behind the scenes in your life? How can you share those examples with other people in your life?

Discover Your Bible Series

Bible Studies for Small Groups

The narrative of Exodus shows how God works to deliver his people—through amazing miracles and a reluctant leader—to show Egypt and all nations that the God of Israel is the one Lord over heaven and earth. The images are rich and revealing: grinding slavery, a stubborn king, ten powerful plagues, the first Passover, the crossing of the Red Sea. All these and more point to the powerful presence of the Lord, who is faithful and fulfills his promises. In this story we see how God proceeds to work out his plan to deliver people of all nations from their slavery in sin to enjoy new life, through Jesus Christ, his one and only Son.

Discover Exodus: Special Delivery is the first part of a two-part study of the book of Exodus. Part One features 12 lessons covering Exodus 1-15, and Part Two, titled *Discover Exodus: Life Lessons*, features 12 lessons covering Exodus 16-40. This material is intended for small group Bible study, but it can also be used profitably for personal study. Guides for leaders and students are available.

The approach to Bible study in this series emphasizes discovery (the reader discovers what the Bible has to say by asking questions and seeking answers from the passage studied). This is an effective and enjoyable way to study God's Word.

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