

Israel's Suffering

Exodus 1

REFLECTION

Have you ever encountered a difficult situation personally or professionally that was out of your control? How did you handle the situation? Did you involve God? Explain or write your answers.

Read Exodus 1:1-7.

HISTORY

Many times when we encounter names in the Bible, we spend a lot of time stumbling through the pronunciations while trying to read them quickly to move on. When reading the Bible, I encourage you to focus on names you recognize and use your Bible to find information about that person. I would rather you know the history behind the person's name than pronouncing it correctly. The information we will uncover in Exodus chapter 1 is important.

At the end of Genesis, we read that Jacob and his family moved to the land of Goshen, a region in Egypt, thanks to his son Joseph and the current Pharaoh. Exodus 1 tells us that 70 people moved with Jacob to live in the land of Goshen. Remember Jacob's name also means Israel and his 12 sons, including Joseph, represent the 12 tribes of Israel (Ge. 32:28).

In Genesis 50, we find out Joseph has died. Exodus begins by informing us that Joseph's brothers have also died along with everyone who lived during the time of Genesis.

Even though Joseph's family was dying off, the Israelites were still multiplying. Remember this phrase as we study the Book of Exodus: *fruitful and multiplied*. Not only were the Israelites growing, but they were also strengthening within the region of Goshen. Remember during this time, Israel was not its own country. All throughout Exodus, God has a plan to move His people to the land He promised to Abraham just like He moved Jacob's family from Canaan to Goshen. For people, such a task would be impossible, but with God, all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

Read Exodus 1:8-14

QUESTIONS

- Who was the new sheriff in town?
- What was different about this Pharaoh?
- What was the problem and how did he want to fix it?
- Before today, did you know slavery existed in Bible times?
- The more the Israelites suffered under the hand of the Egyptians, the more they _____ and _____.
- How did the Egyptians feel about the Israelites?
- What type of work were the Israelites forced to complete?
- Why would God allow this to happen to His children?

Read Exodus 1:15-18.

QUESTIONS

- What did the king of Egypt, or Pharaoh, command the Hebrew midwives to do?
- Why would the Pharaoh seek to have the baby boys killed as opposed to girls?
- What does it mean to “fear” God? Read Psalm 111:10.
- How would you feel standing in front of Pharaoh knowing you disobeyed his command?

- Predict what will happen to the midwives.

Read Exodus 1:19-22.

QUESTIONS

- What was the excuse the Hebrew midwives formulated as to why they could not kill the male children?
- Name all the people who received a blessing from God because of the decision made by the Hebrew midwives.
- How do you think Pharaoh feels in this moment?
- What did he command the midwives to do with the boys and girls who would be born?
- Predict what you think will happen in Chapter 2.

CHALLENGE

The Hebrew midwives made a bold commitment to follow God knowing they could have been killed by the Pharaoh. No matter the cost, they chose to place God's commands first in their lives. They knew God is a God of love and not one who would condone the killing of His children. Because of their faith in Him, God provided the midwives with households of their own. So, not only did the children of Israel grow and multiply but so did the families of these women. Every day we are surrounded by blessings from God. List ways in which He has blessed you and make a decision starting today to follow Christ no matter the cost.

RESOURCES

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