

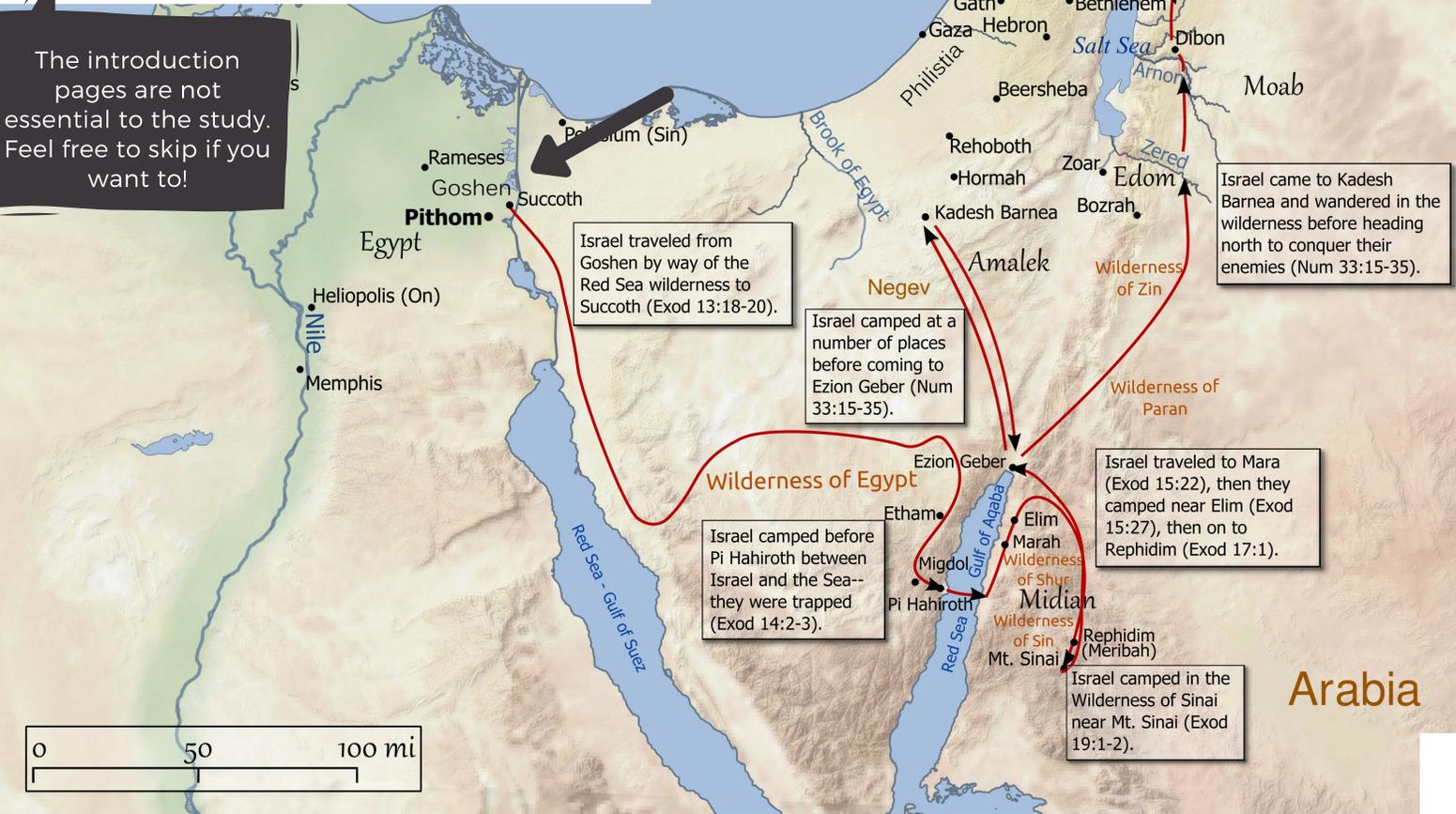


HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH

EXODUS

THE ORIGINAL STORY OF SALVATION

The introduction pages are not essential to the study. Feel free to skip if you want to!



Egypt

Even though we tend to think of Exodus as primarily the story of deliverance from Egypt, less than half of the book takes place there. It's important to understand that Initially the Israelites were respected in the land of Egypt before being forced into slavery. This map shows the path of God's people in this book.

According to biblical and extra-biblical history the Hebrews worked in the the storage cities Pithom and Rameses, and lived in Goshen.

As stated in Exodus, when the Israelites were slaves that mainly made bricks. There is a lot of speculation to what the bricks the were used for. Some Scholars think the bricks were used to build the city of Akhenaten. This is the city in the picture below. It has a fascinating story, but ultimately it didn't last very long because it was abandoned soon after it was built. Left alone the bricks easily succumbed to the elements over time leaving only the foundation.

God's People in Egypt

A lot of people know the story of God's people being rescued from Egypt but how did they end up there in the first place?

The story of Joseph we see that Jacob and his family are welcomed in to the land because Jacob was greatly respected. For the next 430 years the Israelites prospered in the land.

They grew to such a number that one pharaoh decided that the people should be enslaved to Egypt.



Artist rendering



What is left today

Dating Exodus

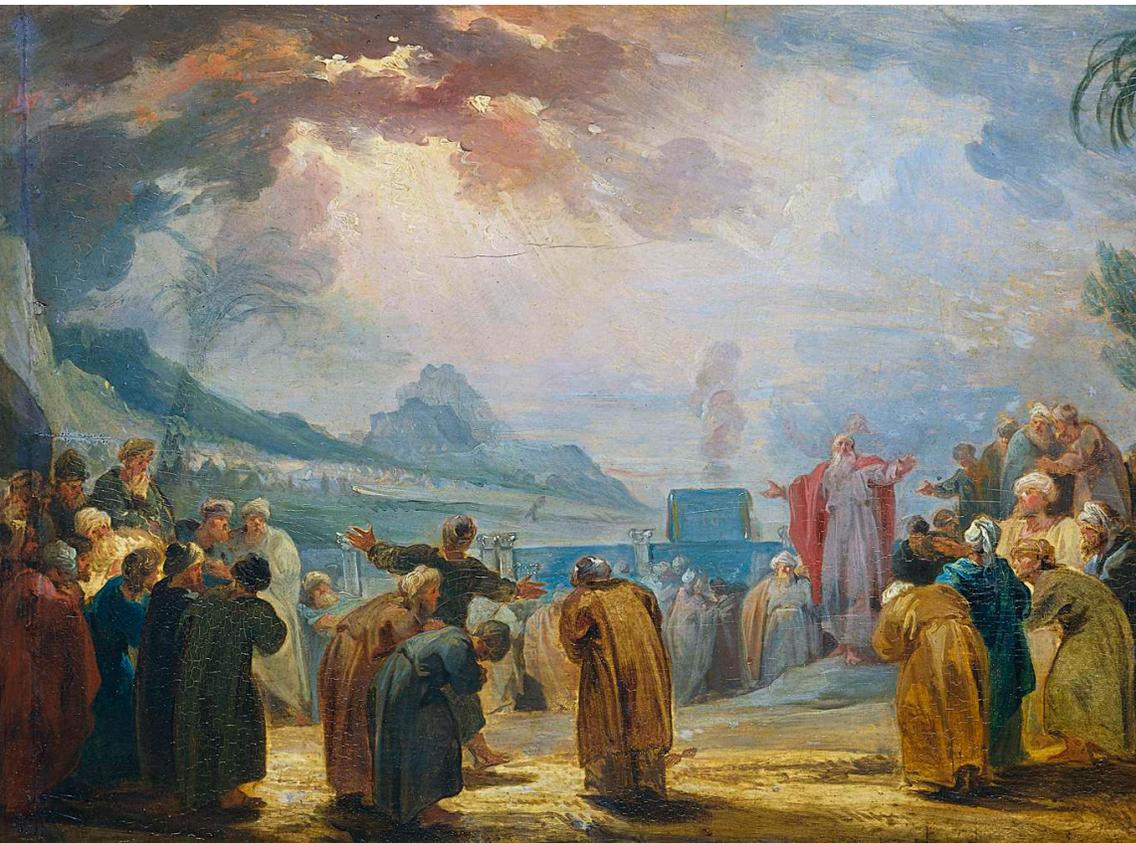
The exact date of the lifetime of Moses is unknown. If we were given the name of the Pharaoh in the story we would have some insight, but unfortunately do not. We can, however; take some educated guesses at to the date of Exodus. In light of that we can look at two biblical texts: 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26. While the Judges passage seems difficult to place in its own time it compliments the Kings passage to give us a date around 1447 BCE for when the exodus out of Egypt took place. These dates are debated outside and within the Christian Community.

Authorship

Christian and Jewish Tradition holds the Torah was written by Moses. The Torah includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Numbers. Biblical support for this after the life of Moses can be found in Ex 17:14; 34:27; Num 33:2; Duet 31:22; 32 where God commands Moses to write specific things down. This is however is not considered complete evidence and strictly speaking the Torah is anonymous. This is because full authorship is never attributed to Moses inside the Torah.

Even though we cannot be sure with the Bible alone that Moses wrote the entire Torah, we can be sure he was at intricately tied to its documentation. Jesus and the early church almost unanimously tie the Torah to Moses. See Matt:19:7; 22:24; Mark 7:10; 12:26; John 1:17; 5:46; 7:23.

If we do choose to believe that Moses is indeed the author we must concede that others helped him write at least parts of the Torah to add things in such as the death of Moses and events after him in Duet 34.



Exodus in context

When reading any book of the Bible it's important to realize you have 3 basic contexts to read the book with. 1- Context within the Isolated book. 2- Context within the Bible as a whole. 3- Context reading as a Christian.

We will get to 1 and 3, but it's important to remind yourself that Exodus of it's context within the Bible. Exodus is a narrative that is a continuation of Genesis. Therefore we should know where Genesis left off when we start this book. (Check out the Story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50)

Major Themes to watch out for

Salvation

This Book is evidence for the salvific nature of God. There is a reason that the story of Moses is so popular among Jews in the time of Jesus. It proves that God has a plan of salvation for his people. There are many connections to the story of Jesus and the story of Moses. These are intentional and be on the lookout for them.

Humanity's Trust Issues

Exodus highlights that God's people have a tendency to choose themselves over God. Exodus shows us that humanity chooses themselves because they will always struggle to trust God.



God's Forgiveness

Humanity continues to mess up and God continues to forgive. This cycle is something that presents itself throughout the entire Bible is really highlighted here.

God is Intimate

God yearns for a close and personal relationship with us. This has been seen since the creation in Adam and is no different here. God walks alongside Moses and even chooses to reside with his people.

God calls the Ordinary

God uses all kinds of people to do his work. God doesn't call perfect people, but he uses faithful people for his perfect purpose. Pay special attention to characters that are *not* Moses.

Study Section 1

1. Israel in Egypt- Plan of salvation
 - a. Exodus 1:1-1:10
2. A Man Named Moses
 - a. Exodus 1:8-4:31
3. A God's Patience- The Plagues of Egypt
 - a. Exodus 5:1-13:16

Study Section 2

1. Israel in the Wilderness
 - a. Exodus 13:17-18:27
2. Israel at Sinai
 - a. Exodus 19:1-24:18
3. The Next Leader
 - a. Exodus 25:1-40:38

Questions?

Extra Information

This Bible Study was designed to give you a light, but comprehensive look into the story of Exodus. For some of you this will include more information than you will find interesting and for others it won't have enough. Feel free to gloss over the extra information or do some of your own research. I like the background stuff so I like to include it!

Will This Study Help me?

If you're looking for a great study of Exodus that will change how you view the Bible... this one might be it!... Or it might not be. Any study can help your faith walk if you put time and effort into it. I am praying it will benefit you!

I've got questions Chris...

Fell free to reach out to me about the study or bring up your questions in the group. Questions are good! They mean you're closer to understanding.

I don't think I agree with you on _____

Great! There are a bunch of people that are a lot smarter than me that debate over points that are made in this study. Having different views on scripture will always happen in Christian community and that's good! the Important part is that listen to others and challenge ourselves to think differently.





Israel in Egypt- Plan of Salvation

OPEN UP

When we think about the story of salvation we typically only think about the life of Jesus. That's for good reason! The salvation story of Jesus is the defining moment that changes the life of a Christian. While it is arguably the most transformative portion of the Bible, the life of Jesus is just one part of the story of salvation. Actually the Bible is full of stories of how God continues to save his people time after time. Sometimes the Israelites learn from these and sometimes they do not, but the important part is the consistency of God to be the savior of his people.

LET'S TALK

Can you think of a story in the Bible where God saves his people that is not Jesus or Exodus?

God saves his people A LOT. Why is this an important theme in the Bible? What purpose does it have in the Bible?

God can save his people, but he doesn't work according our time or our demands. Why is this important to remember?

LET'S READ

Exodus 1:1-1:22



REVIEW

Does anything stick out to you that maybe you didn't think would be there? *(It's okay to say no)*

Joseph is an important part of the backstory to Exodus. Why is that? *(If you need a refresher on Joseph feel free to talk about him)*

Egypt is in the Bible a fair amount, but we commonly think of them as the "bad guys". What does the back story tell us about Egypt initially?

We're going to change the way we think about the Israelites in the next section. Why is important to "rethink" how we read scripture from time to time?

RETHINK EXODUS 11-1:22

In the time of Joseph the Israelites come to Egypt as **refugees**. They are refugees because they entered a foreign land in need of food, water, and safety. Because God blessed Joseph the Egyptians welcomed them in. For many years the Israelites were respected and welcomed into this foreign land. Eventually one king (Pharaoh) rises to power and he doesn't like them. Pharaoh wants them gone. He didn't know the history of the Israelites, but more so he is tired of these refugees using up all of his resources and taking up space in his land. The Egyptians have the power so they do as they see fit.



REFUGEES OR PEOPLE IN POWER

How does the salvation of the weak and vulnerable relate to the story of salvation through Jesus?

How does seeing the Israelites as refugees influence your view when reading this story?

Does knowing that Egypt accepted them at first change your opinion of ancient Egypt?

Refugees often require nations to give up space and resources. As people who live in a country that is desirable to refugees we often relate more to the Egyptians here than we do to the Israelites. How can we be more welcoming to those needing our help?

How can we address this locally?



THIS WEEK

Talk about how we can more accepting of others that need our help.

Make a commitment to each other to go out of your way for someone who can use help.

How can Hope Community Church be better at welcoming in people who need a place to be accepted?

LET'S PRAY

Take prayer requests and address the challenges you set up for yourself this week.





A Man Named Moses- God Chooses Us

OPEN UP

God doesn't need us for his plan. Or maybe a better way of putting it is that God doesn't need us to work with Him in order to fulfill his promises. He CHOOSES to work with us and involve us because he values relationship. Moses is an incredible character because he highlights how even the best of us are unreliable and fickle. We get scared and overwhelmed when we don't need to be. In spite of all of this God continues to use us and we get to be a part of his amazing story.

LET'S TALK

Have you thought any more about last week's study on salvation? *(review it together is necessary)*

This week we're reading about Moses. Moses is one of the most prolific characters of the Bible. Why do you think this is? What makes Moses special?

Moses tends to have a lot of excuses as to why he doesn't want to do what God calls him to. How does this message continue to relate to us today?



LET'S READ

Exodus 2:1-4:31

REVIEW

Did you learn anything new or did anything stick out to you about Moses or his journey? ? (It's okay to say no)

Moses gets most of the credit for the Exodus story, but what other humans did God use in the text that you read?

It's clear that God is working through Moses, but the author wants the reader to understand that Moses still questions God often. Why is this?

There are some strange parts of this story... (Ex 4:24-26).
There is still much debate on exactly what this means, but most scholars think it has something to do with Moses raising his son in Midianite customs and not Israelite customs.

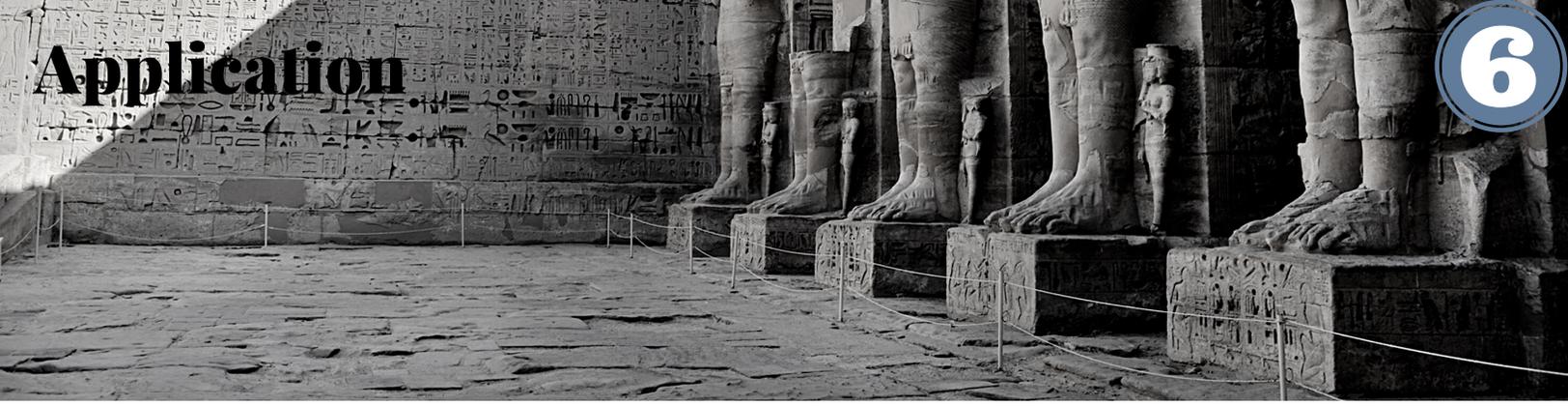
Either way- we are always going to encounter things in the Bible that don't translate well.

What can we do about that?

RETHINK EXODUS 2:1-4:31

Moses has an amazing story of God using him for the salvation of his people. One thing that seems to be consistent with Moses is his tendency to avoid responsibility and not trust God. In this way Moses was working with God, but missing the mark in other ways. Moses would be one of the first characters in the Bible that would show some characteristics of the ultimate savior that would later come. Let's make some connections to Moses and Jesus.

Application



JESUS

Jesus had to flee with his family to Egypt to escape king Herod who was killing off infants.

Jesus was is a king born in extremely poor and dangerous circumstances

Jesus was born from a lineage of Hebrew Levites.

Jesus continually followed God's will even when it meant his death.

Jesus would give up his life to free the world from slavery to Sin.

MOSES

How does Moses start his life? Similarities Differences?

How does Moses encounter poverty and royalty in a similar way?

What was Moses' lineage?

How does Moses follow God's will?

How would God use Moses?

THIS WEEK

Talk about how we can realize our "Moses- like" tendency to avoid responsibility and be more "Jesus-like" in accepting responsibility.

Make a commitment this week when you're faced with a decision to "take the easy way out" to be more like Jesus and accept responsibility.

How can Hope Community Church be better at accepting responsibility and making excuses from God's direction?

LET'S PRAY

Take prayer requests and address the challenges you set up for yourself this week.





God's Patience- The Plagues of Egypt

OPEN UP

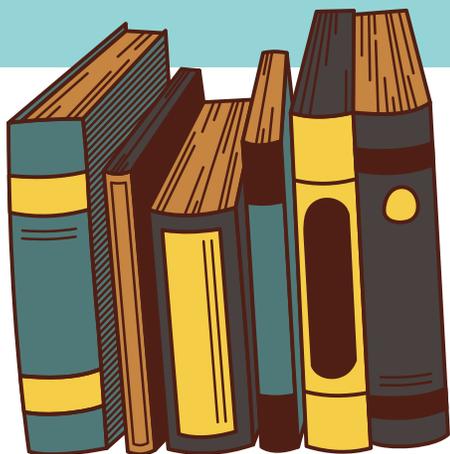
One of the pitfalls we tend to fall into when addressing the Bible is thinking about the God of the Old testament as a ruthless and heartless God. The text we're going to read today shows us that God is not only patient with his own people when we follow other "god's", but he's also patient with people that oppose him. The plagues of Egypt can definitely come across as harsh, but remember that each plague is a chance for the pharaoh to yield to God. This line of thinking actually makes God a very patient God. At the same time God is continuing to be incredibly patient with Moses and Aaron and his own people that don't always trust him. Sound familiar?

LET'S TALK

Have you thought any more about last week's study on Moses? (*review it together is necessary*)

This week we're reading about God's patience with his wavering people and the deliverance of the Israelites. What are the advantages of having a patient God?

Why do we often feel like God is not patient with us?



LET'S READ

Exodus 5:1-7:25

REVIEW

What motivation do you think is pushing Pharaoh forward to keep defying the God of Israel ?

What is Aaron's role in the exodus story?

The Israelites were upset at Moses and Aaron because they ended up with more work after they met with Pharaoh (*no straw provided*). The Israelites seemed to have lost all hope and faith in God. Why do you think this is?

There is often the debate of God hardening Pharaoh's heart and the question "why would God do that"?

What is important to see here is that in the **first 5 plagues** the Bible says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart or that it "grew hard" with no mention of God. **The second 5 plagues** it says that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. God gives Pharaoh many chances before he uses Pharaoh's disobedience for his good purposes. **Why are these details important to keep in mind?**

RETHINK EXODUS 5:1-13:16

It can be easy to miss what God is doing in all of this. The plagues for instance are not random, but very intentional. They do more than demonstrate God's patience. Every one of the plagues is actually directed toward at least one Egyptian God each and by sending the plagues God is demonstrating his unmatched power over other gods. The final plague with the deaths of the firstborn sons is a demonstration of God's power over Pharaoh who did the same thing to the Israelites. Knowing that God likes to move in complex ways behind the scenes it's easy to say that we should be continually looking for God's hand in our own lives.



GOD'S PLAGUES

1. Nile to blood
2. Frogs
3. Gnats
4. Flies
5. Death of livestock
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death of Firstborn

EGYPTIAN GODS

1. **Hapi** and **Isis**- The god and goddess of the Nile
2. **Heqet**- Goddess of birth with frog head
3. **Set**- god of the desert storms
4. **Re**- the sun god; **Uatchit**- represented by the fly
5. **Hathor**- goddess with a cow head; **Apis**- the bull god, symbol of fertility
6. **Sekhmet**- goddess with power over disease. and **Sunu**- the pestilence god; Isis- healing goddess
7. **Nut**- the sky goddess; **Osiris**- god of the crops and fertility; **Set**- god of the desert storms
8. **Nut**- the sky goddess; **Osiris**- god of the crops and fertility
9. **Re**- the sun god; **Horus**- a sun god; **Hathor**- a sky goddess
10. **Pharaoh**- considered a god; **Pharaoh's son** also considered a god; **Min**- god of reproduction; **Isis**- goddess who protected children;

THIS WEEK

We don't serve "god's" in the same way the Egyptian's did, but we do worship many of those same things. (ex: food, health, fertility, wealth, success etc.) God has shown power over all of these things. How can we spend less time on worshipping these god's this week and more time worshipping our God?

Make a commitment this week when you're faced with a choice to worship one of these things to give your worship to God instead. What are practical steps you can take?

How can Hope Community Church be better at not worshipping these other gods?

LET'S PRAY

Take prayer requests and address the challenges you set up for yourself this week.