



The word Exodus means "the departure, or going out, of a large group of people." It is related to our word *Exit*. In the book of Exodus, we will see God's provision for Abraham's descendants. When God hears the cries of His people who are in slavery, He answers them in a mighty way. We will look closely at who listens to God and becomes a part of His story.

## Day #1: Enslaved

Do you remember the promises that God made to Abraham? How many can you list? (Genesis 12:1-4; 13:14-17) One of the promises was that Abraham would have as many offspring as there were pieces of dust on the earth or stars in the sky. By the time Moses was born, this promise was well on its way to being fulfilled. In fact, Abraham's descendants, called Israelites or Jews, are still being born today!

We see at the end of the book of Genesis that the Israelites had moved to Egypt.

✚ *Now the Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there and were fruitful and increased greatly in number.* - Genesis 47:27 (NIV)

Exodus 1:7 tells us, that there were so many Israelites in Egypt that "the land was filled with them." The king of Egypt, called Pharaoh, became worried about the Israelites. Because there were so many of them, Pharaoh was afraid they would one day turn against the Egyptians. So Pharaoh ordered that they become slaves and put Egyptian slave masters over them. The Israelites were treated terribly. They were forced to work in the fields and to make bricks for Pharaoh's buildings. The Egyptians were cruel and showed them no pity (Exodus 1:14).

Pharaoh did not know how powerful God was. He did not know of God's promises to His people and that no one can thwart God's plan. Pharaoh's slavery plan did not work. God blessed His people in spite of Pharaoh's attempt to harm them.

*But the more the slave drivers beat them down, the more the Israelites increased their numbers and spread out. So the Egyptians became afraid of them.* - Exodus 1:12

Pharaoh would come up with another plan.

✚ Go outside on a cloudless night. Look up to the sky and look at the stars. Remember that God - who knows each star by name - keeps His promises, and that no man can thwart God's plan.

## Day #2: The Midwives

God clearly puts people in authority over us. Children have parents and teachers over them. Adults have police officers and political leaders over them. It is important to respect and obey those in authority over us whenever that does not contradict God's laws. Most of us are blessed to live under good leadership that will never ask us to do anything bad. But today we will read about two women who had to make a choice: follow their earthly leadership or obey God. It is always right to obey God!

Since Pharaoh's plan to enslave the Israelites could not contain them, Pharaoh came up with an even crueler plan. It was an unthinkable horrible command. Pharaoh gave specific orders to the Israelite midwives. These women, named Shiphrah and Puah, were like nurses that helped the Israelite babies to be born. Pharaoh demanded that the women kill all the Israelite baby boys that were born. Pharaoh thought that by killing the baby boys, he could reduce the strength and number of the Israelites.

But killing babies is WRONG! God knits babies together (Psalm 139:13) and He knows them before they are even born (Jeremiah 1:5). God detests hands that shed innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16-17)! There is no one more helpless than a newborn baby is! The midwives knew Pharaoh's command was wrong.

✚ *The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live.* - Exodus 1:17 (NIV)

These women risked great punishment from Pharaoh by disobeying his command. In anger, Pharaoh asked them why they let the babies live. They told Pharaoh that the babies were born before they could get to them. God was very pleased that the midwives listened to Him instead of Pharaoh. God blessed them, fulfilling His promise to Abram, "I will bless those who bless you." (Genesis 12:3)

*So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.* - Exodus 1:20-21 (NIV)

Even this wicked plan did not work against God's people. The Israelites increased in number even more. Pharaoh would come up with yet another plan.

✚ Thank God for those who are in authority over you. Pray for them by name. Ask God to bless them and give them wisdom to lead you in a Godly way.

## Day #3: Moses' Family

We have seen that Pharaoh's first two attempts to weaken the Israelites did not work. Pharaoh came up with another horrible scheme.

*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."* - Exodus 1:22 (NIV)

The Nile is a great river that runs through Egypt. There was an

### Day #3 continued:

Israelite (also known as Hebrew) couple named Amram and Jochebed who had a baby boy (Exodus 6:20). They did NOT follow Pharaoh's evil order. Instead, they hid him for three months. But it is not easy to hide a baby. They had to do something drastic - their baby's life was at stake.



*But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. - Exodus 2:3 (NIV)*

The baby had an older sister named Miriam. Miriam went to watch from a distance to see what would happen to her precious brother. Try to imagine how the baby's parents and sister felt as the baby drifted away from them, down the huge river, out of their loving reach.

*Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile River to take a bath. Her attendants were walking along the bank of the river. She saw the basket in the tall grass. So she sent her female slave to get it. When she opened it, she saw the baby. He was crying. She felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said. - Exodus 2:5-6*

There were no baby bottles back then. Babies had to drink their mother's milk. Bravely, Miriam stepped forward and spoke to Pharaoh's daughter.

*Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"*

*"Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water." - Exodus 2:7-10 (NIV)*

What a blessing! Not only was the baby's life spared, but also his mother got to take care of him while he was young - and get paid for it!



Ask God to give you wisdom to hear His commands and strength to obey them so that you may live in His blessings (Deuteronomy 11:27).

## Day #4: Fear God, Not Man

Pharaoh came up with three very wicked plans. Why did he do these evil things? Read Pharaoh's explanation:



*"Come. We must deal with (the Israelites) carefully. If we don't, they will increase their numbers even more. Then if war breaks out, they'll join our enemies. They'll fight against us and leave the country." - Exodus 1:10*

FEAR. Pharaoh was afraid of the Israelites. He was afraid they would grow too powerful. He was afraid they might join Egypt's enemies in war against them, and Egypt would lose what they had. He did not care about God's commands. And what were the results of Pharaoh's plans? They did not work. His plans failed. The Israelites kept increasing in numbers. Also, Pharaoh must have looked quite foolish when he ordered all the baby boys to be thrown into the water, only to have his daughter rescue one of those babies. She named him Moses which means "drawn" because he was drawn out of the water. So "Drawn-from-the-Water" was running around the palace, the adopted grandson of Pharaoh! And most serious of all,

### Day #4 continued:

one day Pharaoh would have to face all mighty God and explain his actions against God's people (Romans 14:10-11, Proverbs 12:2). Remember God's promise to Abraham: "I will curse those who curse you."

Now consider the midwives and Moses' family. They did not follow Pharaoh's wicked orders. Exodus 1:17 tells us the midwives feared God. That means they had an awesome respect for Him. And look at what the Bible tells us about Moses' parents:

*Moses' parents had faith. So they hid him for three months after he was born. They saw he was a special child. They were not afraid of the king's command. - Hebrews 11:23*

These people highly valued what God values. They were not afraid to go against the ungodly orders of a man - even the powerful king! They had a proper respect for God, knowing it is better to go against man than to go against the living God. And God poured blessings over them for their obedience to Him.

Pharaoh did **not** listen to God because **he feared men, not God**. Just the opposite, the midwives and Moses' family **did** listen to God because **they feared God, not men**.



We have all feared people at times. We might be afraid they will be mean to us, or talk badly about us. Discuss a time when you feared someone. Remember there is no one that God cannot handle. Shift your focus to the power and perfection of God. It is always right to obey Him!

## Day #5: Obedience

The next time you are in a really high place, such as the top of a mountain or looking out the window of a skyscraper, notice how far you can see. The higher you are, the farther you can see. The people on the ground can only see what is right around them, but when you are high above them, you have a much different perspective. This is similar to the way God can see far more than we can. We can only see what is immediately around us. God can see forever into our past and forever into our future (Revelation 1:8). And He knows what is happening around the whole world at the same time.



*For He looks to the ends of the earth and observes everything under the heavens. - Job 28:24 (NASB)*

We will learn in the weeks to come, that Moses is the person God used to lead the Israelites out of slavery, and lead them to the promised land. God had an amazing plan and Moses was going to be right in the middle of it. Moses' parents, sister, and the midwives did not know this plan in advance. These people simply obeyed God on that day at that hour. They did not know they would be part of a plan that would be talked about for centuries.

*But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. - Psalm 33:11 (NIV)*

Because Moses' family listened to God, they became part of God's promise to Abraham. Remember that God promised to bless Abraham's descendants and give them land of their own. And through Abraham's people, God would bless the whole earth - with the birth of the Savior.



Is there a time when you chose to obey God and later you saw how it fit into God's bigger picture? We might not always see the big picture right away. But, it is always right to listen to God! We might see one day that we were a part of something huge!