

# Exodus 3-5

Bible Study

## Review

### Chapter 1

The Egyptians initiate a policy towards the Israelites of hard labor to suppress their multiplication and to prevent them from joining their enemies (Hyksos) to fight against them

The policy of hard labor did not stop the multiplication of the Israelites...so a new king [Thutmose I] then decreed all male Hebrew babies to be killed [Ex. 1: 15-16]

### Chapter 2

Moses born and saved by the daughter of Pharaoh [Hatshepsut]...raised at the court of Pharaoh for 40 years

Moses flees to Midian for killing an Egyptian

After spending 40 years in Midian the king of Egypt [Thutmose III] dies...the capital offense charge being dropped, Moses returns to Egypt

Ch. 2: 24 So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

v. 25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.



Midian

[Midianites]  
 (Aid to Bible Understanding)  
 "The extent of their landholdings is uncertain and must have varied in the course of their history"

Horeb ?  
 Ch.3:1

Moses called by God to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt at Horeb...and would lead them back there to receive the commandments

<sup>1</sup>Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to **Horeb**, the mountain of God.

<sup>2</sup>And the **Angel of the Lord** appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush *was* not consumed.

**“Angel of the Lord”** —(Heb.) *Malak*= messenger

(Context tells us whether divine or human messenger)

- v. 4 “God called to him”
- v. 5 “Holy ground”
- v.6 “I am the God of your father...”

This is a divine messenger –God, the One who became Jesus Christ

<sup>3</sup>Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.”

<sup>4</sup>So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, **God called** to him from the midst of the bush and said, “**Moses, Moses!**” And he said, “Here I am.”

v. 4 “**God called**” — “God [Elohim] called”  
(Companion) ‘only here in Exodus ‘

v. 4 (last part) “**Moses, Moses**” —double name to draw attention  
“Here I am” —like Jacob [Gen. 46:2]—an attitude to do what God wants

<sup>5</sup>Then **He** said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand *is* **holy ground.**”

v. 5 “**He**” [God= Elohim]  
(Companion) “occurs four times in Exodus 3—v.5, 6, 12, 14”

v. 5 (last part) “**holy ground**” —has God’s active presence

<sup>6</sup>Moreover **He** said, “*I am* the **God** of your father—the **God** of Abraham, the **God** of Isaac, and the **God** of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon **God**.

(NSB) “In announcing these names, the Lord was assuring Moses that His covenant with the fathers of Israel was still in effect”

v. 6 “**God**” = Elohim, the creator

(Companion) “Note the five-fold repetition. Christ founds the doctrine of the resurrection on this verse. [Mat. 22: 31-32]”

### **Matthew 22:31-32**

<sup>31</sup>But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,

<sup>32</sup>*‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?*<sup>ε</sup> God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

<sup>7</sup>And **the Lord said**: “I have surely **seen** the oppression of **My people** who *are* in Egypt, and have **heard** their cry because of their taskmasters, for I **know** their sorrows.

“**the Lord said**” = Jehovah said  
(Companion Bible)

“**My people**”

(Expositors) “Israel was no longer a family; she was now a people and a nation. But they were so internally linked to Yahweh that he called them *ammi*, my people”

“seen” ... “heard” ... “know” —because of His concern, he planned to rescue them

<sup>8</sup>So I have **come down** to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

<sup>9</sup>Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

v. 8 “**come down**” —God does this when he acts or intervenes



<sup>10</sup>Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

<sup>11</sup>But Moses said to God, “Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

v. 11 Egypt is a world power and the children of Israel are in a very oppressive situation--Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh...?

<sup>12</sup>So He said, “**I will certainly be with you.** And this *shall be a sign* to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

v. 12 Moses would come back to Horeb/Sinai—as a sign that God is with him

<sup>13</sup>Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What *is* His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

(Word) “What Moses asks then, has to do with whether God can accomplish what he is promising”

God’s answer to Moses in the following verse [v.14] is extremely important and among the most important scriptures of the Bible





<sup>14</sup>And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

“I AM WHO I AM”= (Heb. ‘ehyeh ‘asher ‘ehyeh)— “I be who I be” denoting past, present and future

- God has always existed and will always exist

(Word) “the One Who Always Is.” Not conceptual being, being in the abstract, but active being, is the intent of this reply”

(Word) “God has answered Moses’ protest of his own inadequacy with the assertion ‘I AM with you’

### **John 8:58**

<sup>58</sup>Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

Christ’s response to the Pharisees was that he was the “I AM” of the Old Testament times

<sup>15</sup>Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The **Lord** God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.’

### “Lord ”

This is a new name revealed to Moses— ‘Yahweh’—the name implies eternal, self-inherent existence

- Yahweh—translated “**Eternal**” in many versions of the Old Testament

(BKC) “It usually speaks of His **relationship** to His people”

(Expositors) “This was no new God to Israel; for it was the same God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who was sending Moses.

His ‘**name**’ was his person, his authority, his power and his reputation”

“forever”

(Companion) “He changes not [Mal. 3:6]. He is therefore Israel’s God today, as then”

<sup>16</sup>Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ‘The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, “**I have surely visited you** and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt;

<sup>17</sup>and I have said **I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites** and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.””

**Genesis 50:24**

And **Joseph** said to his brethren, “I am dying; but **God will surely visit you**, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

Joseph prophesied of this deliverance by God... that is announced by Moses

<sup>18</sup>Then they will heed your voice; and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the **king of Egypt**; and you shall say to him, ‘The Lord God of the Hebrews has met with us; and now, please, let us go **three days’ journey** into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.’

“**King of Egypt**”= Amenhotep II

“**three days journey**”

(JFB)

“God was pleased to put it on that ground at first, in order that by the king’s refusal of so small and so reasonable a request, the unyielding , tyrannical character of the Egyptian monarch might be the more strikingly displayed”

<sup>19</sup>But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand.

<sup>20</sup>So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go.

<sup>21</sup>And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed.

<sup>22</sup>But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put *them* on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians.”

## Exodus 4

<sup>1</sup>Then Moses answered and said, “But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, ‘The Lord has not appeared to you.’”

“they will not believe me”

(BKC) ‘Fear that the Israelites might not believe God had appeared to him is reasonable because God had apparently not appeared to the Israelites for 430 years, the length of the sojourn in Egypt’

God has Moses to perform **three miracles** (signs) that would a great witness to the Egyptians... and to the Israelites who at this time were being influenced by Egyptian religion



v. 2-5  
The first sign

<sup>2</sup>So the Lord said to him, “What *is* that in your hand?” He said, “A rod.”

<sup>3</sup>And He said, “Cast it on the ground.” So he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it.

Snakes were a symbol of power in Egypt and one of their gods

- God was showing that he would overcome the powers of Egypt

<sup>4</sup>Then the Lord said to Moses, “Reach out your hand and take *it* by the tail” (and he reached out his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand),

<sup>5</sup>“that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”

v. 5

(Expositors) “God’s prophets were accredited by ‘signs and wonders’ [Deut. 13:1-3] with the sole purpose of validating the messenger and the message—that both were truly from God”

v. 6-7  
The second sign

<sup>6</sup>Furthermore the Lord said to him, “Now put your hand in your bosom.” And he put his hand in his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous, like snow.

<sup>7</sup>And He said, “Put your hand in your bosom again.” So he put his hand in his bosom again, and drew it out of his bosom, and behold, it was restored like his *other* flesh.

(BKC) “This disease, though perhaps not the same as what is today called leprosy, was prevalent in Egypt and was considered incurable”

“restored like his other flesh”

(Expositors) “was to warn Pharaoh that this God who had sent Moses had the power to inflict or to save what he would with just a word or a gesture from his ambassador”



v. 8-9  
3<sup>rd</sup> sign

<sup>8</sup>“Then it will be, if they do not believe you, nor heed the message of the first sign, that they may believe the message of the latter sign.

<sup>9</sup>And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from <sup>f</sup>the river and pour *it* on the dry *land*. The water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry *land*.”

(BKC) “The Egyptians regarded the Nile River as the source of life and productivity. So Moses’ showing the people that he had power over the Nile would prove that God had given Moses ability to overcome the Egyptians”

<sup>10</sup>Then Moses said to the Lord, “O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I *am* slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

<sup>11</sup>So the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the Lord?

<sup>12</sup>Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.”

<sup>13</sup>But he said, “O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever *else* You may send.”

<sup>14</sup>So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said: “Is not **Aaron** the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

Aaron to speak on behalf of Moses

<sup>15</sup>Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.

<sup>16</sup>So he shall be your **spokesman to the people**. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.

<sup>17</sup>And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs.”

v. 16 “spokesman to the people”—Israel had to be taught because they had lost so much during the long period between Joseph and Moses

<sup>18</sup>So Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said to him, “Please let me go and return to my brethren who *are* in Egypt, and see whether they are still alive.” And Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.”

<sup>19</sup>Now the Lord said to Moses in Midian, “Go, return to Egypt; for all the men who sought your life are dead.”

<sup>20</sup>Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

<sup>21</sup>And the Lord said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But **I will harden his heart**, so that he will not let the people go.

**“I will harden his heart”** [Pharaohs’]—used for the first time

➤ A Hebrew idiom with verbs—used as permitting a thing to be done

<sup>22</sup>Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Israel *is* My son, My firstborn.

v. 22 Israel a type of the first fruits— “My son, My firstborn”

(Expositors) “The announcement that Israel was God’s ‘son’, yes even his ‘firstborn’ may have stunned Pharaoh; for he was accustomed to regarding himself alone as ‘the son of the gods’

<sup>23</sup>So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.”

v. 23 “let my son go that he may serve me”...  
Israel called to worship him—(develop a relationship with God)

The emphasis in verses 22-23 is on sons....  
And Israel as God’s son (relationship)—leads to the next section of scripture

<sup>24</sup>And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

<sup>25</sup>Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast *it* at <sup>£</sup>Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you *are* a husband of blood to me!"

<sup>26</sup>So He let him go. Then she said, "*You are* a husband of blood!"—because of the circumcision

Circumcision was the sign of the covenant people—Moses being the national leader had violated **God's instructions** —making it a capital offense

**Genesis 17:13-14**

<sup>13</sup>He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

<sup>14</sup>And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

"you are a husband of blood"

Moses was responsible for circumcising his son , who apparently delegated the job to his wife, Zipporah who objected to doing it. When she did it reluctantly she called Moses a 'husband of blood'

(NSB) "Many of Israel's neighboring peoples practiced circumcision, but none except Israel circumcised infants"

<sup>27</sup>And the Lord said to **Aaron**, “**Go into the wilderness** to meet Moses.” So he went and met him on the mountain of God, and kissed him.

(Companion) “Aaron apparently brought up in Pharaoh’s house”

**1 Samuel 2:27-28**

<sup>27</sup>Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house?’

<sup>28</sup>Did I not choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire?

(Expositors) “Aaron, now eighty-three years of age, was to meet Moses midway enroute to Egypt at ‘the mountain of God’

<sup>28</sup>So Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which He had commanded him.

<sup>29</sup>Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.

Even in slavery the children of Israel were governed by their own rulers—representatives of the people

<sup>30</sup>And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people.

To authenticate his authority “he did the signs in the sight of the people”—the miracles/signs v. 8-9

<sup>31</sup>So the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped.

“the people believed”  
(Expositors) “The pressure of physical hardship had made this people more receptive than would be their custom in later years”



Exodus 5

First encounter with Pharaoh

1<sup>st</sup> time this title used in scripture

<sup>1</sup>Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, “Thus says **the Lord God of Israel**: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”

(JFB) “As representatives of the Hebrews, they were entitled to ask an audience of the king, and their thorough Egyptian training taught them how and when to seek it”

Pharaoh was considered a ‘god’ by his own people

<sup>2</sup>And Pharaoh said, “**Who is the Lord**, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.”

Who is the Lord?

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“The Egyptians knew well and even venerated a number of Semitic deities. Baal, for instance, was highly revered.

But his statement more likely means a refusal to acknowledge Yahweh as one worthy of his attention”

<sup>3</sup>So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days’ journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.”

<sup>4</sup>Then the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get *back* to your labor.”

<sup>5</sup>And Pharaoh said, “Look, the people of the land *are* many now, and you make them rest from their labor!”

(Expositors) “There were already too many people, and should he give them rest from their labors to further increase their numbers?”

<sup>6</sup>So the **same day** Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying,

<sup>7</sup>“You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves.

(BKC) “Immediately he set about to make the burden of the Israelites more oppressive.

Straw was mixed with clay and sand not so much as a binding agent but to cause the clay to be more durative”

<sup>8</sup>And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it. For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, ‘Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.’

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“Time off from work for worship was not unheard of in Egypt....

➤ Pharaoh does not want to give the Hebrews time off for any reason”

<sup>9</sup>Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it, and let them not regard false words.”

<sup>10</sup>And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, “Thus says Pharaoh: ‘I will not give you straw.

<sup>11</sup>Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.’”

The Egyptians had been supplying them with straw and it is now cut off

<sup>12</sup>So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw.

<sup>13</sup>And the taskmasters forced *them* to hurry, saying, “Fulfill your work, *your* daily quota, as when there was straw.”

<sup>14</sup>Also the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten *and* were asked, “Why have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before?”

The Israelite foremen were beaten for not reaching the daily quota of bricks

<sup>15</sup>Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, “Why are you dealing thus with your servants?”

The foremen of the Israelites request an audience with Pharaoh and affirm their loyalty [‘your servants’]

<sup>16</sup>There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us, ‘Make brick!’ And indeed your servants *are* beaten, but the fault *is* in your *own* people.”

v. 16 “the fault is in your own people”—the foremen blame the Egyptians for not delivering straw

<sup>17</sup>But he said, “You *are* idle! Idle! Therefore you say, ‘Let us go *and* sacrifice to the Lord.’

<sup>18</sup>Therefore go now *and* work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks.”

<sup>19</sup>And the officers of the children of Israel saw *that they were* in trouble after it was said, “You shall not reduce *any* bricks from your daily quota.”

<sup>20</sup>Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them.

<sup>21</sup>And they said to them, “Let the Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

v. 21 “to put a sword in their hand to kill us”

(New Bible Commentary)

“To the Hebrew foremen it appeared as if Moses and Aaron had provided Pharaoh with an ideal opportunity to extend his campaign of genocide against the Israelites”

Moses in frustration questions God for the people’s plight



<sup>22</sup>So Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why *is* it You have sent me?”

v. 22 “Why have you brought trouble on this people?”

(Companion) “We, like Moses, are full of similar questions, to our sin and sorrow”

<sup>23</sup>For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all.”

v. 23 “done this evil” [OKJ] ‘evil entreated’—Heb. Idiom

(Expositors) “Moses **did not charge God directly** with authorizing this evil, for the idiom only means that God allowed and permitted such trouble as Pharaoh had thus spawned”



## Lessons

We must be patient as trials come our way...

- God intervenes in His time as He did for Israel in Egypt

God prepared Moses after 80 years of training in Egypt and Midian to approach Pharaoh and witness by miracles... that God was in command

- Training by God can last a lifetime

Things seemed to be getting worse for the Israelites and became a test for Moses...

- Enduring to the end is trusting in God even when times seem more difficult