

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EXODUS 1-3

My youngest grandson, Miles, enjoys playing **Jailhouse**. He'll run through the living room when suddenly I'll grab him, put him in a gentle hug, *and lock him up in my imaginary jailhouse*. After a few seconds I'll pretend to fall asleep, and loosen my grip. That's when he makes his break, and I try to catch him again.

Well, once a grandpa was playing "jailhouse" with his four year old grandson. But the boy wasn't in the mood. When grandpa grabbed him and "locked him up," the boy shouted the verse he'd heard that morning in Sunday School, Exodus 5:1, "Let my people go."

That's the theme of Exodus. Moses challenges the Pharaoh, the mightiest man over the mightiest nation on Earth, that God says, "Let my people go." Exodus is the story of how God frees His enslaved people, Israel.

When we read the creation account in Genesis 1 we come away impressed with God's unlimited scope and unbridled power. Yet God's most spectacular accomplishments are not His *creative works*, but His *redemptive works*. It takes no love to create... yet it takes intense love to redeem or retrieve... especially, when who you're *retrieving* has *rebelled* against you.

Only a few chapters in your Bible are devoted to *creation*, but the whole book is about *redemption*. The Bible tells us how God repossesses humanity from the guilt and slavery of sin... The word "**Exodus**" is from two Greek words "**Ek**" which means "**out of**," and "**Hodos**" or "**the road, the way**." Exodus is the way out. Its the road out of both Egyptian and spiritual bondage.

Thus, if you feel trapped... if you're looking for a way out of the sin that's ensnared you... take heart! Exodus is the book for you! In the weeks ahead we'll learn how God can bring us out of bondage into a life of victory.

And Exodus opens as Genesis closes, Jacob and his family join Joseph in Egypt. Originally seventy people settled in Goshen, a fertile region in northwest Egypt. There Israel's family planned to wait out the famine, but for the next 400 years they never return to Canaan.

Verse 1, "Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher." Eleven sons and their families. "All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for

Joseph (the twelfth son) was in Egypt already). And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation. But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.”

At the time of the Exodus, in Numbers 1, a Hebrew census was taken, and Moses counted over 600,000 men, 20 years of age and older. Add to that women and children, and it pushed the Hebrew population upwards of 2 million. Egypt at the time was a land of just 7 million people total. That means nearly a third of the country’s total population was of Hebrew descent.

And this frightened the Egyptians. Hebrew women were *fertile Myrtles*. If this Hebrew baby boom wasn’t stopped, the local Egyptians would be outnumbered.

Verse 8, “Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.” This was actually more than a new king, but a new dynasty. Joseph came to power under the *Hyksos, or the shepherd kings* - foreigners from Canaan who’d taken over Egypt.

But when the native Egyptians recaptured the throne, the new government shifted policy. Joseph’s family no longer enjoyed a favored-nation status.

“And (the Pharaoh) said to his people, “Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land.” They feared a Hebrew uprising. “Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens.” They were forced into slavery and a life of forced labor. “And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew.” And you’ll find this is always the case when God’s people are oppressed and persecuted... *they multiply!*

In Acts when the Church is under attack it grows. *Persecuting God’s people is like pouring gas on a fire, it causes the flame to burn brighter.* Under persecution believers *intensify their commitment, streamline their service, bulk up their faith.* In times of ease *faith can get flabby.* But when afflicted, *faithful believers become clean, lean, and serene, a real witnessing machine!*

Verse 12, “And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage - in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.” The Jewish historian, Josephus, says the Hebrews built walls, and canals throughout Egypt - even some of the famous pyramids. *Yet all the hardship and rigor didn’t stop their growth.*

So the Pharaoh came up with another plan, verse 15, “Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, “When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.”

The “*birthstool*” was a childbirth innovation created in Egypt. Women gave birth *standing up* rather than *lying down*. They would squat over two stones or bricks, and pushed down on the stones. Their pushing and gravity helped the baby slide down the birth canal. A midwife would catch the child before he or she hit the ground.

So to stop the population explosion, Pharaoh first applies *external hardship*, but when that fails he employs *internal sabotage*. He tries to recruit the midwives to do his dirty work... This is Satan’s strategy today. He *intimidates from without* and *infiltrates from within*. And he often uses spiritual midwives, or false teachers, to corrupt the faith of newborn believers. This is why we need pastors committed to God’s Word.

Verse 17, “But the midwives feared God...” I’m sure they feared Pharaoh, but *they feared God more*. And that’s what it boils down to... *who do we fear most?*

These midwives “did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.” *Here’s appropriate civil disobedience*. When the laws of the land violate God’s Law, we need the courage of Shiphrah and Puah, “to obey God rather than men.”

“So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?” I’m sure they were quaking in their boots. “And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.” *Hebrew gals don’t play*. They were healthy and multiplying like rabbits. Like FedEx Overnight they make fast deliveries.

“Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them.” These two *midwives* became *housewives*. Because the ladies took care of God’s children, God blesses them with children of their own.

And in a spiritual sense this is what I’ve experienced. A pastor is a sort of *spiritual midwife*. My job is to assist God’s children, newborns in Christ. A pastor finds himself caring for the households of the church, yet in return God has blessed my family in amazing ways!

Verse 22, "So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive." This Pharaoh doesn't give up easily. He orders a genocide of all the Hebrew males born in the land of Egypt.

Josephus said Pharaoh's actions were prompted by a prophecy. One of his wise men predicted a Hebrew child would be born soon to deliver God's people. Pharaoh is trying to eliminate this promised deliverer.

Chapter 2, "And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi. So the woman conceived and bore a son." Later, we learn their names *Amram* and *Jochebed* - and their baby boy was *Moses*.

"And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months." Josephus says that while growing up in the court of Pharaoh, Moses was so handsome people would go out of their way to walk by the nursery just to admire his good looks... *My parents said they had the same problem... with my brother!*

Hebrews 11:23 tells us, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command." I never knew what an act of faith hiding a baby for three months would be, until I had one. *This took incredible faith!*

What if baby Moses wakes up hungry in the night, and lets everyone know? What if he gets colicky? Or burps too loud? What if dad sticks him with a safety pin? Or dad gets stuck with a safety pin, and screams?

What happens later at the Red Sea is no more a miracle than hiding a baby for three months. Josephus tells us Amram had a dream. God told him of his child's destiny. Thus we read, "By faith Moses... was hidden."

Verse 3, "But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister (Miriam) stood afar off, to know what would be done to him."

She didn't just send him down river. She laid him in the reeds to be found by the princess. Psalm 78:12 says God did marvelous things in "the field of Zoan."

Zoan and Tanis were royal cities, in the Nile delta, in the land of Goshen, where the Hebrews lived. For some reason this was the only stretch of the Nile free of crocodiles. It was probably near Zoan that Jochebed safely laid her baby in the bulrushes. Truly, this gal had faith. She put her baby boy in a wicker basket, coated it in waterproof tar, *and trusted in God's providence.*

“Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it.” Pharaoh’s daughter at the time may’ve been a girl named *Hatshepsut*. She was part of Egypt’s 18th dynasty, the daughter of Thutmose I - a very politically powerful princess. She had a daughter, but no son. And as a result she may’ve viewed Moses as her own heir and the future pharaoh.

The Jewish Talmud tells an interesting story about the baby Moses... One day, while playing on Pharaoh’s lap, the child grabbed the king’s crown, tossed it to the floor, and stomped on the royal crown. Pharaoh’s counselors took this seriously. They saw *the baby’s antics as prophetic*. To them it was an act of treason, and from then on viewed Moses with suspicion.

The Pharaoh though laughed the incident off as child’s play. He insisted if the baby had the choice of a hot coal or a piece of gold he would be too naïve to know which one was best... So when Moses was put to the test, the baby grabbed the hot coal and stuck it in his mouth. The coal burned the child’s tongue and caused a speech impediment. Later, this could be why Moses points to his poor speaking ability as an excuse for why he can’t speak on God’s behalf in Egypt.

But we’re getting ahead of ourselves... *Back to the river*. Verse 6, “And when she had opened (the ark or basket), she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept.” A Jewish fable says that at this very moment an angel pinched Moses to make him cry. It conjured up sympathy toward the baby in the heart of the daughter.

So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.”

Here’s another act of God’s providence. The royal princess appoints Moses’ own natural mother to nurse the child. In ancient times kids were nursed, and breast fed for three to four years. This gave Jochebed plenty of time to train her son in the truth of the one, true God.

Often parents complain that CC Christian School only goes through 5th grade; then they have to send their kids to public school. Jochebed only taught Moses for four years; yet she was able to instill in his heart a godly identity and a longing that later caused him to seek God. My point is **a good foundation can take a child a long way**. Jochebed parented by faith, not fear.

Verse 10, "And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." In Hebrew "*mo-sheh*" means "to draw out..." In Acts 7:21-22, Stephen fills in a gap in Moses' early history, "Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds." As the queen's son Moses was educated in Egypt's finest academies.

What an irony! God shows a sense of humor here. Moses was the baby Pharaoh wanted to kill; instead he ends up bankrolling his room, board, and education.

One other note, Stephen says, "Moses was... mighty in words and deeds." Moses was educated in Egyptian culture. He was schooled in science, engineering, literature, astronomy, geometry, law, and philosophy.

And one of his *mighty deeds* was mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus. A 30 year-old Moses led the Egyptian army in a victory over the Ethiopians. Film maker, Cecile B. DeMille, in *The Ten Commandments* turns this reference into a scene in his movie. DeMille's storyline weaves together the Bible and Josephus.

Also notice, Stephen said Moses was "*mighty in words*" which undermines his later excuse that he was "*slow in speech*." Perhaps his reluctance to go to Pharaoh was more about his *willingness* than *ability*.

Apparently forty years elapses between verses 10 and 11. In Acts 7 Stephen tells us, "Now when (Moses) was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel." Evidently, Moses knew his racial identity, and it produced a personal crisis.

As prince in the royal court, Moses knew he was in line to succeed the Pharaoh and rule over Egypt. But Moses wasn't Egyptian. Egypt was not his home. God put a stirring - a restlessness - in his heart. Moses became disenchanted with Egyptian frills and thrills. *He longed for something deeper*, He wanted to know the true God and discover the Creator's purpose for him...

Hebrews 11:24 sums up Moses' spiritual awakening, "By faith Moses... refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin (all Egypt failed to satisfy Moses), esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

Verse 11 records the incident that changed Moses' life, "Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens." He wanted an up-close view at the plight of his people. And "He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren." It was a microcosm of the cruelty and injustice the nation was suffering.

"He looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand." This was not an act of obedience to God, he takes matters into his own hands, and breaks the law. If he'd been taking a stand for God Moses would've looked upward, instead he looks "*this way and that way*" to see if He's been spotted. *He does what might ultimately be God's will, but He does it in His own way.* He kills another man and hides his corpse in the sand.

Verse 13, "And when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?" Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" This shocked Moses. His head had been on a swivel. He didn't think anyone saw him.

"So Moses feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!" And boy, was he right. The news got all the way to Pharaoh. "When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh..." Rather than risk arrest, Moses becomes a fugitive. He flees Egypt and escapes into the desert.

"And (he) dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well." Moses is disillusioned. All he wanted to do was help his people. He could've used his clout to alleviate their suffering... *but one of his own ratted him out.* In an attempt to help, Moses lost everything.

Acts 7:25 tells us of Moses' disappointment, "For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand." Moses had gained a sense of destiny, but that sense wasn't shared by the folks he tried to help.

Moses trusted in his earthly position and physical aptitude. Now he's stripped of all he'd formerly relied on. *And in God's economy this is a good thing...* God works through *our faith*, not *our flesh*. He uses *His strength*, not *our influence*, so all the glory goes to Him.

Moses has a lot to learn... He's spent forty years in *the schools of Egypt*. Now God enrolls him for the next forty in *the school of brokenness*. Genesis 46:34 told us Egyptians despised shepherds. They looked down on them - *well, now God makes Moses a shepherd.*

To be a powerful tool in God's hand, he has to be broken of his self-reliance. Pride and self-sufficiency have to go. God is about to change Moses from a *man who looks this way and that way*, to a *man who looks upward* - who walks by faith in God, not by sight.

Verse 16 tells us what happens to Moses in Midian, "Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. And they came and drew water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then the shepherds came and drove them away." "Girls first" was not a Midianite motto. These men bully the sisters and cut in line..

"But Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock." Moses became their knight in shining armor! So "When they came to Reuel their father (who also went by the title, *Jethro*), he said, "How is it that you have come so soon today?" And they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock." They call Moses "an Egyptian" probably because he was still dressed like one, or maybe because he sported an Egyptian haircut, or it could be *he walked like an Egyptian (song) Recall the Bangels?*

Verse 20, "So he said to his daughters, "And where is he? Why is it that you have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread." Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses." Moses is not in Midian long before he takes a wife. "And she bore him a son, and he called his name Gershom; for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land." The name "*Gershom*" means *stranger*.

One of the truths you'll discover in the OT is that Jesus is on every page. Here Jesus is depicted typologically. Recall, the first time He came to earth, He was rejected by the Jews. It's not until He comes again that Israel accepts and follows Him, *which is exactly what happens to Moses*. He's rejected at His first coming, but is received at His second coming.

And what does both Jesus and Moses do between comings? Take a Gentile bride. Today, Jesus builds His Church. We are the *Gershom* or *stranger* in this world.

Verse 23, "Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage." God had compassion on Israel's cries. *But it wasn't just empathy that moved God to action*. What prompted Him was a covenant. God loves everyone, but not everyone has a covenant relationship with Him.

"So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." Six-hundred years earlier in Genesis 15:13 God promised

Abraham, "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them 400 years... But in the fourth generation they shall return here..." Those 400 years of affliction is now over, and God has heard the cries of His people. He has recalled the covenant, and is preparing a deliverer.

"And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them." Again, God gave them His attention not just because of His empathy, but because of the covenant. And the covenant God acknowledges today is the one He's made through His Son Jesus. Trust Jesus if you want to have a relationship with God.

Chapter 3, "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." Horeb is the mountain range. Sinai is the peak... The traditional Mount Sinai is a site called "Jabal-Musa" or "the mountain of Moses." It sits in the south-central portion of the Sinai Peninsula.

But perhaps a more fitting site is in northwestern Saudi Arabia called "Jabal Maqla" or "burnt mountain." It's peak is literally scorched as was Sinai. Galatians 4:25 speaks of "Mount Sinai in Arabia." The Sinai and Jabal Musa was in Egypt, not Arabia. Midian is Arabia.

It's an interesting study, but it's not **where**, but **Who** Moses meets on this mountain that makes it so vital.

Verse 2, "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. Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." It's not everyday you see a bush on fire, yet not consumed. *Moses wanted a closer look...*

"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." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." Realize, when God tells Moses he's on "*holy ground*," He's not saying something miraculous happened under Moses' feet. The dirt on the mountain didn't turn to heaven dust. What makes a person, place, or object "*holy*" has nothing to do with the object.

"*Holy*" means "*to set apart or dedicate*," - the ground was holy because God was there. This building is holy, not because we built it with gold or mixed baptismal water with the sheetrock mud, but because we've set aside this room to meet with God...

And you are holy, not because you're morally flawless, or more spiritual than others, but because you are dedicated to God.

And in verse 6 the voice coming from the bush identifies Himself, **"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."** Remember, **"the Angel of the LORD appeared to him..."** Here the Angel identifies as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the Bible **"angel"** means **"messenger."** Often in the OT the Angel of the LORD is actually Jesus making a pre-incarnate appearance. I believe that's what's happening here. It's Jesus that speaks to Moses from the burning bush...

And this is so fitting when you realize the typology...

Fire in the Bible is symbolic of God's judgment.

The word **"bush"** in Hebrew means **"thorny bush."** It represents man's sin and the curse that comes as a result, *thorns and thistles interrupted his existence*.

Thus, **a bush that burns, but doesn't burn up** represents *God's grace*. Sin is judged, *or burned*, but the sinner, *that is, the bush*, is not consumed. *And Jesus is our burning bush*. In Christ our sin is judged or burned up, but the sinner is saved or not consumed.

Verse 7, **"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. 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. 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. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."**

Moses' responds in verse 11... "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?"

Oh, forty years earlier Moses was brimming with confidence. He thought he was ready to deliver the Hebrews all by himself. But not any more. AW. Pink writes, **"Moses at eighty was not as eager as he was at forty. Solitude had sobered him. Keeping sheep had tamed him. He saw difficulties in himself, in the people, in his task. He had already tried once and failed..."**

While in Egypt Moses thought he was God's gift to the Hebrews, but forty years later the wilderness had humbled him. DL Moody summarized his life, **"Moses spent his first**

forty years in Pharaoh's court thinking he was a **somebody**. He spent his second forty years in the desert learning he was a **nobody**. And he spent his last forty years showing what God can do with a **somebody who discovers he is a nobody.**"

Guys, God always uses *what's broken - and little - and humbled*. Moses was now all the above. In Egypt he was *full of himself*. Now in Midian he comes to the *end of himself*. On the mountain he meets God, and leaves filled with His glory. And you can't be *full of God* if you're *full of yourself*. Moses learned the three *Rs* in Egypt - *reading, writing, and arithmetic*. But in the desert he learned the *R* that matters most... *reliance*.

Here Moses is feeling pretty inadequate in light of his commission. God is asking him to walk into the court of the Pharaoh and demand the release of Egypt's slave labor. That's like me walking into a palace in Beijing, and demanding freedom for all China's dissidents.

Moses says, verse 11, "**Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?**" *Lord, I'm the wrong man for this job!*

But in verse 12 God answers Moses, "**I will certainly be with you.**" The promise of God's presence should've been enough to absolve all Moses' doubts and fears.

But God continues, "**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.**" 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?" 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.'" Here God reveals to Moses and us, His majestic, eternal name, "**I AM.**" "*I am*" is the present tense of the verb "*to be.*" It speaks of God's autonomy. God needs nada. He depends on no one. He answers to no one. God is sufficient all by Himself.

So why does He use Moses? Same reason he uses us, not because He needs us, but because we need Him. He uses us to teach us about Him and ourselves.

In verse 11, Moses had asked God, "**Who am I?**" But now God replies, "***It doesn't matter who you am, what matters is I AM.***" In the desert Moses discovered he's the "***I Ain't,***" now he's going to learn God is the "***I AM.***"

And God will be with Him. Moses needs to forget about *who he is or who he ain't*, and focus on *God*. ***We lose our inadequacies in God's sufficiency.*** Moses was great not because he was *self-made* but *God-made*.

And remember, it took God forty years to make a Moses. When an artist paints a masterpiece he can't be rushed. It took Michelangelo four years to paint the Sistine Chapel. And when God makes a man, He takes His time. If you want to be great for God have patience.

A friend and donor of Hiram College once asked the chancellor if there was anyway he could speed up his son's education. You know, put the boy on a fast track.

The chancellor replied, "It all depends on what you want to make of your son. When God makes an oak it requires one-hundred years. When He produces a squash it takes only two months." You can be a squash right now. An oak takes time. Don't resent how long God keeps you in the oven, he's cooking up character.

Verse 15, "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.' In the OT when you see "LORD" in all caps that's the translators way of indicating the Hebrew word, *Yahweh* or *Jehovah*. It's from the verb "to be," and harkens back to the name, "I AM WHO I AM."

In Egypt Moses is to "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; 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." '

"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.' "But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand." God knows the heart of the Pharaoh. He was so hard hearted it will take more than one miracle to loosen his grip on the Hebrews. *It might even take ten!*

Verse 20, "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. 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. 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." God won't just defeat Egypt, He'll strip the Egyptians of the wealth made by its Hebrew slaves. After

400 years of free labor, *as the children of Israel leave Egypt God will set up a one-time pay day!*

Even after 400 years of bondage - after His people had forgotten Him - after Moses had given up - God never forgot His people or gave up on them. He was still their Deliverer... *And He is still your Deliverer too!*