

*Kari Minter*

WEEK ONE PREVIEW

# BEYOND EGYPT

*Learning to Walk in the Freedom of the Exodus*



## ABOUT THE STUDY

*Beyond Egypt: Learning to Walk in the Freedom of the Exodus* is an inductive 7-week Bible study on the book of Exodus where author Kari Minter guides you through an in-depth look at the character of God, the story in Exodus, and how to practically use biblical knowledge to walk in freedom with God on a daily basis.

*Beyond Egypt* will guide you into understanding the relevance between the Old and New Testaments. You will discover the narrative of Exodus is not just a historical story of the people of Israel but ultimately points to Christ and the gospel message. *Beyond Egypt* will exemplify the rich theology of Exodus while teaching you how to let theology impact your daily moments. Upon completion of this study, you will be in awe of how God rescues us in Christ and calls us to live beyond our slavery to sin and into our freedom in Christ.

*Beyond Egypt: Learning to Walk in the Freedom of the Exodus*

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*To my husband, Brent,*

who believes in me more than I believe in myself. Thank you for making the space for me to write this study, speaking truth over me when it all gets to be too much, and loving theology as much as I do.

*And to Avery,  
Elliana, and Justus,*

you are my world, my biggest cheerleaders, and my most compelling reason to keep writing. I pray you can see what chasing your dreams while chasing Jesus involves. Love you always!

BEYOND EGYPT

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# *Introduction*



## *Introduction*

My faith story is probably similar to yours. I experienced a season where my love for God poured from every ounce of my being. I woke up thinking about God and desired to obey all he asked of me. Joy abounded when I was able to study his Word with other believers. Small group Bible studies and seeing my Christian friends were the highlights of my week.

Then, life shifted a bit.

Somewhere in the season of having three babies in three years, buying our first house, deciding to quit my job and stay home with the kids, and figuring out how to be a pastor's wife, my exuberant joy at spending time in God's Word was replaced with the daily cares, exhaustions, and stresses of life.

I lost the expectation that God would be intricately involved in my days. I never lost my love for God, but my awareness of his presence in my daily life slipped away.

I still loved and intellectually respected God, but letting him lead me through the chaos I found myself in? I had no idea how to do that, nor the energy to figure it out.

Because here's the thing:



I knew the gospel story: Jesus's birth, perfect life, death, resurrection, and ascension. I knew Christ willingly suffered and died on the cross to take my sins upon himself. I knew putting my faith and trust in him was the only way to have eternal life and a relationship with God. But I didn't know how that impacted my here and now. Understanding how the gospel interacts with daily life was beyond my grasp. Thankfully, it wasn't beyond God's.

If you're living in this in-between state where you know and love God, but letting him engage with your daily life seems unattainable, then you're in the right place. God's Word states, "You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures" (Psalm 16:11). One of the goals of this study is to help you understand how this verse can be a reality in your life.

John 10:1–5, 14–18 depicts what life with God should look like. It states:

"Truly I tell you, anyone who doesn't enter the sheep pen by the gate but climbs in some other way is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought all his own outside, he goes ahead of them. The sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will never follow a stranger; instead they will run away from him, because they don't know the voice of strangers. . . .

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down

my life for the sheep. But I have other sheep that are not from this sheep pen; I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

This passage demonstrates the beauty of the gospel that can be missed as we walk through our daily life. Let me explain:

John 10:2 states, “The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.” This gate was set by God the Father, whose plan since the beginning of time was for Jesus to give us salvation. The gatekeeper (God) opens the gate for him (Jesus). The sheep (God’s children) then hear Jesus’s voice and he calls them by name. Jesus leads them out and goes ahead of them; the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Do you see the active voice of this passage? Jesus doesn’t just save us, he actively participates in every step of our life. Not only does he participate, this passage ensures us he never leaves us (vv. 12–13), he knows us (vv. 14–15), and he lays down his life for us (vv. 15–18).

At this point, you may be nodding along saying you intellectually agree with this statement, but do you practically believe it and emotionally experience it? This disconnect between our mind and our heart can be a stumbling block, but it doesn’t have to be.

## *The Story of God*

Do you remember the picture books you read as a kid or are reading to your own kids? Imagine those books for a second. I bet when you bring them to mind, you don't see the words on the pages but the images. For example, if I say the words *Goodnight Moon*, what comes to mind? The green and orange book cover? The old lady sitting in the corner or the child in the bed with the bright moon out the window?

Let's try the same exercise with a Bible story. What if I say "Noah's Ark"? What do you immediately picture? I'm guessing a huge ark and all sorts of zoo animals walking in twos up a plank and into the ark.

God's Word is unique in this way. Often God's plan and character is revealed through stories, especially throughout books of the Old Testament. These stories evoke visual images that make it easier to grasp the story of God.

Exodus is one of those "picture books." It paints the same picture of truth that we see in the gospel message of John 10. Exodus gives visual imagery for our minds and imaginations to hold on to as we seek to understand how to live with and for God and how to hear his voice and follow him as John 10 tells us we should. As we jump into Exodus, let the visual imagery lead you down the path to discovering God, the depth of his gospel, and his moment-by-moment care for your soul.

## *Background*

But first things first. Let's make sure we understand the layout of the Bible.

The Bible is one big story; theologians call it the story of redemptive history. This simply means God's plan for the redemption of mankind begins in Genesis and is slowly revealed throughout history. The Bible records this revelation.

We start in Genesis with creation because mankind needs to know that God alone created the universe. Genesis also reveals humanity's sin and inability to stay holy on their own. In addition, this first book of the Bible shows that God never leaves mankind to their own devices to figure out life. Instead, God comes down and initiates a relationship with humanity. We see this in Genesis 3 when God comes to Adam and Eve in the garden after they have chosen not to trust God and choose sin instead. We see this again with the tower of Babel in Genesis 11. The people choose to build their own kingdom instead of following God, yet God comes down and reestablishes his plan for them. In fact, this idea of God "coming down" and initiating a relationship with mankind is one of the major themes of the Bible. This theme is explained in Genesis 17 when God calls Abram (later called Abraham) into a covenant relationship with him. The story of Exodus hinges on this theme of God "coming down" and the promise God established in Genesis 17.

"I am God Almighty. **Live in my presence** and be blameless. I will set up my covenant between me and you, and I will **multiply you**

greatly.” Then Abram fell facedown and God spoke with him: “As for me, here is my covenant with you: You **will become the father of many nations**. Your name will no longer be Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I will make you the father of many nations. I **will make you extremely fruitful** and will make nations and kings come from you. I will confirm my covenant that is between me and you and your future offspring throughout their generations. It is a permanent covenant to be your God and the God of your offspring after you. And to you and your future offspring I **will give the land where you are residing—all the land of Canaan—as a permanent possession**, and I will be their God.”

*GENESIS 17:1–8*

The covenant God establishes with Abraham allows him to live in the presence of God. God promises to make him fruitful, create a nation from his offspring, and give his descendents a promised land. This covenant between Abraham and God becomes the theme that flows through the entire story of the Bible. The people of God hold on to this promise throughout the book of Genesis. It becomes the reason they cry out to God for help in the book of Exodus, the motivation behind learning how to walk with God through the books of Deuteronomy and Numbers, the grounds for the Israelites conquering the land in Joshua, the justification for being held accountable for their choices in Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the motive for continued hope in the book of Habakkuk. Throughout the Old Testament, the people of God hold on to this promise that God gives Abraham in Genesis.

However, even with this deep belief in the promise of God, it remains difficult for the people of God to follow and obey him. Following the story and history of Israel, the Old Testament gives us the picture of this struggle and of our need for God to “come down,” rescue us, redeem us, and teach us to walk with him.

As we journey through the book of Exodus, notice these two themes of mankind’s inability to follow God on their own and God’s kindness to continually “come down” and provide a path.

## *Layout of the Study*

This 7-week study is designed to bridge the gap between an intellectual study of the Bible and a devotional study. Intellectual studies focus on increasing your biblical knowledge, while devotional studies focus on engaging your emotions with Scripture and increasing how you apply it in your life. The following seven weeks will help you combine the two and engage both your emotions and your mind.

The first four days of each week begin with a section titled “Approaching the Presence of God.” We always want to start our time in the Word by humbling ourselves before the God of the universe. While this study is primarily about the book of Exodus, we will also take time to look at God’s character as it is revealed elsewhere in Scripture. Every day, you will be given a psalm that recaps part of the story of the Exodus. Your goal as you read is to look for God’s revealed character through his Word. Understanding and recognizing God’s character always leads to a deeper worship of God.

You will then move on to a section titled “Engaging the Story of God.” This section focuses on the story of God as seen in the book of Exodus. You will read sections of Exodus, notice connections between it and the rest of Scripture, answer questions, and end with personal application.

Day 5 of each week will have a slightly different layout than the first four days. On that day, you will complete a section titled “Living Out Our Freedom in God.” In this section, you will take everything you have learned about God throughout the week and practice living those truths in your daily life. On day 5, there will be three optional activities listed. You will choose one activity and make a plan to practice it during your day. The goal for day 5 will be to continue to bridge that gap between what we know about God and what we experience in our daily lives.

## *Beginning Exodus*

As we jump into the book of Exodus, my prayer is for us to get a picture of the story of God impressed into our holy imagination. The dirty diapers, messy houses, crazy schedules, difficult work environments, and the general chaos of life will hopefully no longer appear to separate us from the story of God. Rather, we will find ourselves in the middle of it.

God is waiting to reveal himself to you through his Word. As we begin this journey, let's remove any preconceived notions we have about Exodus or the Old Testament and ask God to engage our imaginations and minds to enable us to know him more and follow him closer.



WEEK  
ONE



The Journey

*Exodus 1:1 - 2:10*

## WEEK ONE

# The Journey

*Exodus 1:1 - 2:10*

So the Egyptians assigned taskmasters over the Israelites to oppress them with forced labor. . . . But the more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. They worked the Israelites ruthlessly and made their lives bitter with difficult labor in brick and mortar and in all kinds of fieldwork. They ruthlessly imposed all this work on them.

*EXODUS 1:11-14*

The beginning of Exodus finds the Israelites stuck in slavery: slavery that is ruthless, bitter, oppressive, and overwhelming. God had led them into this land of Egypt, multiplied them, and blessed them mightily. Eventually that blessing was used against them, and they were trapped in the arms of slavery.

This slow fall into slavery often occurs in our own lives. God blesses us with financial security, but then we get stingy or stop tithing out of fear of not having enough, slowly falling into financial slavery. God blesses us with children, but now all of our time, talents, and energy go into protecting and providing for them while forgetting to

trust God with their lives, slowly falling into the slavery of idolizing our kids. Or what about when God allows us to be removed from a distinguished position in life and we find ourselves simply surviving in a behind-the-scenes role? Discontentment and depression overwhelm us, which makes us realize we have slowly fallen into the slavery of needing influence or position in life.

Though we do not experience the physical slavery the Israelites experienced, our mental, emotional, and spiritual slavery also keeps us from God and traps us in our life's circumstances. Being enslaved to the things of this world is often unexpected and unintentional, occurring slowly over time. Rarely do we wake up and consciously make the decision to be enslaved to the things of this world!

In Christ, we find freedom from our slavery. Galatians 5:1 states, "For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand firm, then, and don't submit again to a yoke of slavery." Christ sets us free from slavery to sin. This week, as you study the background of how the Israelites ended up in slavery in Egypt, ask God to reveal to you if you are enslaved to any behaviors, possessions, or people. Let him reveal where he has blessed you and where you have turned the blessing into an idol that keeps you from God. Then ask him to help you to live and walk in the freedom he has given you through Christ.

## *Prayer for the Week*

*Lord, reveal to me where I'm slowly drifting into slavery instead of living in complete dependence on you. Amen.*

DAY ONE

# *Be Fruitful and Multiply*

## *Approaching the Presence of God*

The first four days of every week will begin with time for you to read a psalm. As you read the psalm, underline the characteristics of God seen in the verses. Our focus for this section will be to get to know God better. Often, when we read narratives like the book of Exodus, we put our own emotions into the story. But, as we study the character of God as his Word reveals, we are able to correctly interpret and see God through the story. Simply taking time to humble our hearts before the Lord and state the truths we learn about his character will radically change our perspective as we continue in our study of the book of Exodus. Today, we will do this section together so you can get the hang of it.

**Begin today's study by slowly reading Psalm 105:1–6.**

Give thanks to the LORD, **call on his name**;

**proclaim his deeds** among the peoples.

Sing to him, sing praise to him;

tell about all his **wondrous works**!

Boast in his **holy name**;

let the hearts of those **who seek the LORD** rejoice.  
Seek the LORD and **his strength**;  
seek his face always.  
Remember the **wondrous works** he has done,  
his **wonders**, and the **judgments** he has pronounced,  
you offspring of Abraham his servant,  
Jacob's descendants—**his chosen ones**.

From now on, you will be adding the characteristics you notice about God in the Psalms to the *Character of God* chart at the back of the book. By the time you end the study, you should have a significant list of all you've learned about God in these seven weeks! I've noted the first few characteristics about God in these verses for you.

Take time to pray and praise God for who he is. If you feel nervous to pray, just tell God your thoughts. As you do, engage the imagination God gave you and picture yourself walking into the throneroom of God. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need." Use what you learn from today's psalm to guide your prayer.

Here is an example to help you get started:

*God, thank you for the assurance that when I call on you, you hear me. As I look for you, you will be found. You don't hide from me. You alone are holy, and you alone do wondrous works. God, give me your strength today to see your work through your Word and in my daily life.*

## *Engaging the Story of God*

### *TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 1*

Exodus begins where the story of Genesis ends with the Israelites settled in Egypt. It then jumps forward almost three hundred years. Remember, the Bible is one big story, and today we will discover how the stories in the Bible connect. Seeing connections will help us better understand God and the depth of the oppression the Israelites were experiencing. These connections will also help us appreciate the theme of redemption we see throughout all of Scripture. God focuses on the physical and mental slavery in the first fourteen chapters of Exodus. The last twenty-six chapters focus on how to walk in the freedom God has given his children. In light of that, let's jump into Exodus 1 and discover what it teaches us about God, his ways, and ourselves.

**Read Exodus 1. How many times are the words *multiplied, fruitful, increased, and numerous* repeated?**

Repeated words create emphasis, indicating importance. To understand how these repeated words are important, we need to look at other places in Scripture and discover how Scripture connects.

Look at the following chart. In the first column, you'll notice a passage in Genesis you need to read. This passage states a promise of God. The middle column tells you who is speaking in the passage. You will fill in the final column and list what God commands or promises in each verse. I've done the first two for you.

<i>Old Testament Promises</i>		
<i>VERSE</i>	<i>WHO IS SPEAKING</i>	<i>WHAT IS COMMANDED OR PROMISED</i>
<i>Gen. 1:28</i>	God speaks to Adam and Eve.	<i>Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it.</i>
<i>Gen. 9:1, 11</i>	God speaks to Noah after the Flood.	<i>God tells Noah to be fruitful and multiply and establishes a covenant with him.</i>
<i>Gen. 22:17-18</i>	God speaks to Abraham.	
<i>Gen. 26:24</i>	God speaks to Isaac (Abraham's son).	
<i>Gen. 35:10-12</i>	God speaks to Jacob (Isaac's son).	



What connection do you notice between Exodus 1 and the story of God shown in our Genesis passages?

What phrase is continually repeated in these passages?

How does this phrase connect the story of God in Exodus to the commands and promises of God in Genesis?

Through the use of the words “fruitful” and “multiply,” this first chapter in Exodus reminds readers of God’s promise to Abraham to make his descendants “as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore” (Genesis 22:17). Since the beginning of creation, God’s plan was that his people would be fruitful. In Exodus 1, we are reminded God’s promises are always fulfilled.

Now that we clearly see this connection between Genesis and Exodus, let's look at how the promise of God to make his people fruitful returns through the rest of Scripture. Read Matthew 28:19–20 below, often called the Great Commission.

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.”

**How does “making disciples” relate to the call from God in Genesis to be fruitful and to multiply?**

Now read John 15:1–2 below:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that does not produce fruit he removes, and he prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit.”

**How do you see the plan that God proclaimed at creation carried into the mission of the New Testament?**

Read Exodus 1:1–8 again. Throughout the book, when we read “Israel,” we are reading about the people of God being redeemed from slavery. But in Exodus 1:1, the “sons of Israel” refers to a specific family in the story of God.

**Reread Genesis 35:10–12. Whose name does God change to Israel?**

We will study the sons of Israel in more depth tomorrow, but for now, know Israel’s (Jacob’s) sons eventually become the twelve tribes of Israel—the Israelites. Throughout the Old Testament, these tribes are important players in the story of God. The Bible really is one big story!

Whew! That’s a lot of biblical knowledge for one day. Remember the psalm you read at the beginning of today’s lesson? As we study the work of God and see his plan unfold throughout the Scriptures, we are continuously reminded that his ways truly are mysterious and wonderful!

**Take some time to think through all you’ve learned about God today, including your list of character traits from Psalm 105:1–6, the promises of God in Genesis, and the connections between Genesis and Exodus.**

## *Daily Reflection*

<i>What is one concept that stands out most in your mind? Why?</i>	<i>What do you need to believe or do today to apply this truth to your life?</i>

DAY TWO

# Getting to Egypt

## *Approaching the Presence of God*

Remember, the first four days of each week will begin with a time for you to read a psalmist's perspective on the story in Exodus. As you read, underline the characteristics of God you notice and focus on getting to know God better. Refer back to Week 1, Day 1 to remind yourself of the importance of this.

**Read Psalm 105:7–11 and underline anything you learn about God's character.**

He is the LORD our God;  
his judgments govern the whole earth.  
He remembers his covenant forever,  
the promise he ordained  
for a thousand generations—  
the covenant he made with Abraham,  
swore to Isaac,  
and confirmed to Jacob as a decree  
and to Israel as a permanent covenant:  
“I will give the land of Canaan to you  
as your inherited portion.”

**What do you learn about God through these verses? Add your observations to the chart in the back of the book.**

The Lord remembers his covenant forever, and we will see how his faithfulness continues throughout the book of Exodus. When the Israelites complain against God, God keeps his promise. When they live in fear and are overwhelmed by their circumstances, God keeps his promise. Even when they curse God and refuse to believe he can save them, God keeps his promise. The story of God reminds us our behavior does not determine if God keeps his promises; he keeps his promises because he is God and that is what he does.

*Use all you have learned about God through this psalm to stir your heart to prayer. Ask God to open your eyes to what he wants you to learn today through his Word.*

## *Engaging in the Story of God*

*TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 1:1-8*

Yesterday we began exploring the connections throughout the Bible. We focused on God's promise to make his people "fruitful" and to "multiply." We then filled in a chart that led us through the book of Genesis and God's promise to his people. Today, we will continue to explore this connection and see the hand of God at work through the story of Exodus.

**To refresh our memory, how are the sons of Israel in Exodus 1:1 different from how we will read "Israel" through the rest of the book?**



Read Genesis 35:22–26 below and underline the names of the “sons of Israel.”

Jacob had twelve sons:

**Leah’s sons** were Reuben (Jacob’s firstborn),  
Simeon, Levi, Judah,  
Issachar, and Zebulun.

**Rachel’s sons** were  
Joseph and Benjamin.

The **sons of Rachel’s slave Bilhah**  
were Dan and Naphtali.

The **sons of Leah’s slave Zilpah**  
were Gad and Asher.

These are the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

These twelve brothers are the sons of Israel (or Jacob’s sons) and are the basis for the twelve tribes of Israel, who become the Israelites. Everything in Scripture connects, and everything is intentional. Don’t you love how God works?

Notice they all have the same father: Jacob. Six of the brothers have Leah as their mother, two of them have Rachel as their mother, and the other four were born from household slaves whom Leah and Rachel had given to Jacob.

A blended family full of drama.

The biggest drama of the family is the jealousy and hatred ten of the brothers have toward Joseph. Those born of Rachel are Jacob's favorites, which means the other brothers despise them. Eventually, the brothers sell Joseph to slave owners, and Joseph ends up in Egypt. God uses this horrible event to carry out his plan.

**Read Genesis 41:14–41 in your Bible.**

**How does Joseph gain influence in Egypt?**

**What role does Joseph now have in Egypt?**

**Now read Genesis 41:56–42:3. According to these verses, why do Joseph's brothers come to Egypt?**

The whole story involves more drama than a reality TV show. Look through the following verses and identify what happens in each verse.

<i>The Story of Joseph</i>	
VERSE	WHAT HAPPENS?
<i>Gen.</i> 42:5-7	
<i>Gen.</i> 42:18-20	
<i>Gen.</i> 42:21-25	
<i>Gen.</i> 43:11-14	
<i>Gen.</i> 45:1-3	
<i>Gen.</i> 45:4-10	

So. Much. Drama!

Even with all this drama, the end result is beautifully designed by God. God made a covenant with Abraham and then continued this covenant through Isaac (Abraham's son) and Jacob (Isaac's son). God has now brought Abraham's descendants into the land of Egypt. Here he will begin to make his people fruitful and use them to impact the nations.

As we continue through our study, we need to periodically stop and remember all God has done up to this point in the story. Let's do that now by reading Scripture.

**Read Acts 7:1–15 in your Bible and underline what God did to bring the Israelites together in Egypt. What stands out to you as you read these verses? Why?**

Take some time to think through all you've learned about God today, including your list of character traits from Psalm 105:7–11, the circumstances orchestrated by God to bring his people into Egypt, and the list of miracles you've read up to this point in the story.

<i>Daily Reflection</i>	
<i>What is one concept that stands out most in your mind? Why?</i>	<i>What do you need to believe or do today to apply this truth to your life?</i>

DAY THREE

# *God Provides What He Requires*

## *Approaching the Presence of God*

Read Psalm 105:17–22 and underline anything you learn about God’s character.

He had sent a man ahead of them—  
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.  
They hurt his feet with shackles;  
his neck was put in an iron collar.  
Until the time his prediction came true,  
the word of the LORD tested him.  
The king sent for him and released him;  
the ruler of peoples set him free.  
He made him master of his household,  
ruler over all his possessions—  
binding his officials at will  
and instructing his elders.

**What do you learn about God through these verses? Add your observations to the chart in the back of the book.**

God's sovereignty is on display in these verses! God sends Joseph to Egypt to prepare the way for his people to survive a future famine. God also brings Joseph into a position of power at the correct time so God's plan for his people could take place! And guess what? The same God who was sovereign then is still sovereign over your life today. Over what situation in your life do you need to believe God is sovereign? Confess the disbelief in God's sovereignty and ask God to help you believe the truth today.

*Use all you have learned about God through this psalm to stir your heart to prayer. Ask God to open your eyes to what he wants you to learn today through his Word.*

## *Engaging the Story of God*

TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 1:8–22

According to Exodus 1:8, what do you learn about the new king in Egypt? Why is this important information?

How are the Israelites treated under this new king?

Pharaoh tries two different plans to eliminate the growth of the Israelites. List these two plans below.

1.

2.

On the surface, both plans seem like they would work. However, neither plan stops God from multiplying his people (vv. 12, 20).



Proverbs 16:9 says, “A person’s heart plans his way, but the LORD determines his steps.”

**What truth do we learn from this verse to explain why Pharaoh’s plan did not work?**

**What does this teach you about the character of God?**

Upon first reading it, Exodus 1:16–20 can be confusing. Often, when we have a hard time understanding something in Scripture, we need to read passages in other places in Scripture to help us interpret it. Let’s do that with these verses in Exodus to see why God might be pleased with the midwives.

Acts 5:29 states, “Peter and the apostles replied, ‘We must obey God rather than people.’” What biblical principle is taught in this verse?

How does this principle help explain why God is pleased with the midwives in Exodus 1:16–20?

Remember the chart from Day 1? Since the beginning of creation, God has asked his people to be fruitful, multiply, and share his name with the world. We saw this with Adam, Eve, and Noah. From the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we see this command begin to take the form of a promise.

Anything God asks of us, he provides for us. God never demands what he doesn't provide. All he needs from us is a willingness to let him work through us. God still provides what he promised by allowing the Israelites to multiply in Egypt, even while they were under ruthless oppression (Exodus 1:12).

Take some time to think through all you've learned about God today, including your list of character traits from Psalm 105:17–22 and your understanding of the circumstances the Israelites are facing in Egypt.

<i>Daily Reflection</i>	
<i>What is one concept that stands out most in your mind? Why?</i>	<i>What do you need to believe or do today to apply this truth to your life?</i>

DAY FOUR

# *The Birth of the Rescuer*

## *Approaching the Presence of God*

Read Psalm 105:23–26 and underline anything you learn about God’s character.

Then Israel went to Egypt;  
Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham.  
The LORD made his people very fruitful;  
he made them more numerous than their foes,  
whose hearts he turned to hate his people  
and to deal deceptively with his servants.  
He sent Moses his servant,  
and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

**What do you learn about God through these verses? Add your observations to the chart in the back of the book.**

We miss so much of God’s works when we only see things from one perspective! What Exodus implies, the psalmist says flat out. God makes the people fruitful; he also makes others hate them. In our

humanity, we long to be liked. We want others to appreciate us and desire our presence. But as we keep reading Exodus, we will see God often uses the hatred of those who do not know or follow him. Even the opposition we face in life is under the authority of God!

*Use all you have learned about God through this psalm to stir your heart to prayer. Ask God to open your eyes to what he wants you to learn today through his Word.*

## *Engaging the Story of God*

*TODAY'S READING: EXODUS 2:1-10*

In Exodus 1, we saw a glimpse of the harsh treatment the Israelites received at the hands of the Egyptians. This glimpse helped us better understand their need to be rescued. In Exodus 2, we are introduced to the person God will use to rescue and redeem his people.

**Read Exodus 2:1. Based on what we learned in Exodus 1 about the sons of Israel, why does the author mention the man is from the family of Levi and married to a Levite woman?**

**How does this fact connect this story to the larger story of the Bible?**

The New Testament often refers to the Old Testament to help explain God's works. When we read these recaps in the New Testament, we gain new information or little details that were handed down through the Israelites' oral history but weren't recorded in the original story. These can be helpful to our overall understanding of the Old Testament. Today's passage is one of those instances where it is helpful to read a recap of the passage in the New Testament.

Now that you've read Exodus 2:1–10, read Acts 7:17–22 below. Underline any additional details you learn about Moses's life.

“As the time was approaching to fulfill the promise that God had made to Abraham, the people flourished and multiplied in Egypt until a different king who did not know Joseph ruled over Egypt. He dealt deceitfully with our race and oppressed our ancestors by making them abandon their infants outside so that they wouldn't survive. At this time Moses was born, and he was beautiful in God's sight. He was cared for in his father's home for three months. When he was put outside, Pharaoh's daughter adopted and raised him as her own son. So Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his speech and actions.”

At the darkest moment of the Hebrew people's lives—when they are oppressed, their children's lives are threatened, and life seems hopeless—God is working to save them. The people could not feel God working, yet Scripture clearly shows us what is occurring behind the scenes. God's plan calls for a baby to be born in secret and raised in the house of Pharaoh.

**Looking again at our passages in Exodus 2:1–10 and Acts 7:17–22, how do you see the hand of God working out the details of the story?**

Peter Enns, in his book *Exodus: The NIV Application Commentary*, comments, “Ironically, this child, once doomed to death by Pharaoh’s decree, will become the very instrument of Pharaoh’s destruction and the means through which all Israel escapes not only Pharaoh’s decree, but Egypt itself.”

God is at work in every single detail of the birth of the savior for the enslaved Hebrew people. Can you see the hand of God weaved through this whole story? Just imagine the birth of Moses. I’ve given birth to three children, and not a single one of them was peaceful or quiet. Yet Moses’s birth went undetected by the authorities.

More than that, have you ever been around a newborn? They aren’t necessarily quiet all the time; they cry when they are hungry, tired, gassy, or need a diaper change. But God works to keep Moses hidden until he is three months old and physically stronger.

Finally, how many of you would love to have someone pay you to nurse your own child? Pharaoh’s daughter thinks she is in control of this whole situation, but we can see the bigger picture. God is at work orchestrating details in order to save his children.

Salvation always belongs to the Lord—even though we often think we control all the details!

Read Matthew 2:13-14 below.

After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search



for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt.

**What similarities do you see between the birth of Christ and the birth of Moses?**

As you read Exodus, keep noting the similarities to Jesus, the gospel, and the salvation the Lord offers to all who believe. We will focus on some of these similarities in later weeks.

**Take some time to think through all you’ve learned about God today, including your list of character traits from Psalm 105:23–26 and what you’ve seen God do up to this point in the story.**

<i>Daily Reflection</i>	
<i>What is one concept that stands out most in your mind? Why?</i>	<i>What do you need to believe or do today to apply this truth to your life?</i>

## DAY FIVE

# *Living Out Our Freedom in God*

Whew! You've learned a lot about the story of God this week! We have traced the Israelites' lineage through Genesis, seen the promises of God being carried out even under oppression, and watched blessing and provision turn into oppression and slavery. Who knew the beginning of Exodus was so rich?

One temptation with studying the Bible can be to stop once we begin to gather intellectual information. But God wants to interact with your whole life, not just your mind.

Day 5 each week will be set aside for you to practice and experience God in your daily moments. Today, pick one of the activities listed below to engage in throughout your day. Look for God as you take all you have learned about him through his Word and let him transform you in your daily moments. These are all activities you can take with you into your time with the Lord once this study is complete. Today's activities will focus on slowing down and learning to listen to God's voice through his Word.

How do we listen for God? John 10:4 states, "The sheep follow him because they know his voice." This sounds like a simple statement, but learning to hear God's voice through his Word takes practice.

Throughout our study this week, the people of God had to know God's voice in order to know how to follow him. But what seems so simple when we read it in Scripture can be very difficult to live out. All the activities today are designed to help you practice listening to God so you can “know his voice” and follow him.

## *Using Your Imagination*

This week we read Psalm 105 and viewed God's faithfulness from Genesis to Exodus through the eyes of the psalmist. Today, slow down and reread this psalm, asking God to open your eyes to a deeper knowledge of him.

- **Read** Psalm 105:1–26.
- **Imagine** the scene as you read it slowly (engage all five senses). It might be helpful to make a list of the things you notice as you employ your senses and imagination while you read.
- **Observe** the facts listed (who, when, where, and what).
- **Interpret** the facts and ask why and how these happened.
- **Decide** what this psalm teaches you about God and about mankind.
- **Apply** all this knowledge to your life. Ask yourself: *How does this change my outlook on my day today?* What will you do to help remember what you learned?

## *Releasing the Cares of the World*

This week we noticed the slow fall into slavery that happened to the Israelites. What began as a rescue mission to escape a famine resulted in a life of slavery. Slavery can often happen to us in the same way, but our slavery tends to be to sin patterns or idols in our life. Today take a few minutes and ask God where you have allowed a blessing from him to enslave you or become an idol in your life.

- **Find** a quiet place and quiet your heart before the Lord.
- **Recognize** something that is bothering you, causing anxiety, or on your mind multiple times throughout the day. If you struggle to identify anything like that, ask God to bring awareness to any anxiety inducers in your life. List anything that comes to mind.
- **Give** it to God: Place your palms down and state (either aloud or in your thoughts), “I realize \_\_\_\_\_ is consuming me. I give \_\_\_\_\_ to you Lord.”
- **Receive** from God: Turn your palms upward and tell God you are ready to receive from him what he desires for you.
- **Repeat** as many times as needed throughout your day.

## *Recognizing Motives*

As we read about the jealousy of Joseph’s brothers, the fear of Jacob, the hostility of Pharaoh, and the desperation of the Hebrew people,

we can see a reflection of sin in our own lives. Today take a deeper look at your heart and things you justify because of the circumstances surrounding you.

- **Step 1:** Ask God to bring to mind a habitual sin in your life. Be patient. List anything that comes to mind in your journal. If there is one that seems to stand out more than others, focus on that today.
- **Step 2:** Identify why you choose this sin. For example, do you always gossip because deep down you are feeling insecure? Gossip may be a visible sin, but the real issue you need to talk to God about is your insecurity.
- **Step 3:** Confess your motive to God. Remember 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
- **Step 4:** Do a quick Google search or look through the concordance in your Bible to find Scripture to combat the lie you believe led you to sin.
- **Step 5:** Write down this verse and keep it visible! Use the weekend to memorize and meditate on this verse.

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