

DELIVERANCE

THE EXODUS
& JESUS

By Kay Daigle

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APPRECIATION

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BIBLE TRANSLATIONS QUOTED

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

What to Know About This Study Guide	7
Introduction	11
Week One— Yahweh Provides for His Servants	13
Week Two—Yahweh Prepares His Servants	17
Week Three—The Promise-keeping and Loving God	21
Week Four—The Sovereign God of Wonders	25
Week Five—The Passover & the Cross	29
Week Six—The Red Sea & the Wilderness	35
Week Seven— The Covenants	39
Appendix	45

INTRODUCTION

Most of us have at least some familiarity with the story of the Exodus. It's the saga marking God's deliverance of the Israelite people—the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob —from slavery in Egypt.

The exodus is the most significant historical event for the Jewish people even today as they celebrate it yearly on Passover. And the Bible is full of references to it in both testaments, with the New Testament often explaining later events in light of it.

We Christians, who believe that God uses both the Old Testament and New Testament to tell his great story, may find ourselves amazed at the parallels between the events of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Jesus' deliverance of the church from the power of sin. As we go through the exodus story in this study, we'll look at many of those similarities.

All the way through the Old Testament, our loving God provided signposts that pointed to Jesus. In doing so, he used the prophets and the amazing story of Moses and Israel's deliverance from slavery. Moses' record of events from Exodus through Deuteronomy gave glimpses into our later rescue through the ultimate deliverer, Jesus.

I've always been awestruck when reading about the great wonders that God used to deliver his people from slavery under Moses, and I'm humbled and thankful that Jesus chose to come to earth as a man and die to deliver you and me.

“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:13-14, ESV).

Kay Daigle

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WEEK ONE—YAHWEH PROVIDES FOR HIS SERVANTS

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

But the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.

Exodus 1:17

BACKGROUND

You are likely familiar with the biblical story of Joseph, the son of Jacob who was the son of Isaac who was the son of Abraham. His life is highlighted in Genesis 37-50, a long story with details that we don't need to study in order to follow the story of Exodus. It records the history of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Israelites. (They were Israelites as descendants of Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel).

It is important to understand for our story, however, to know that Joseph's ten older brothers were deeply jealous of his status as his father Jacob's favorite, so when circumstances provided an easy way to get rid of him, they sold Joseph to a caravan headed to Egypt.

Years later, Joseph's brothers travelled to Egypt because it alone had supplies of abundant food in the midst of a great famine—all because God had forewarned Pharaoh in a dream that famine was coming. As the one who had interpreted this dream and advised Pharaoh how to prepare for it, Joseph became second in command of all of Egypt, answering only to Pharaoh himself. Although the sons of Jacob didn't recognize their younger brother when they encountered him, he knew them and put them through several tests to determine whether their hearts had changed from hatred and self-centeredness to concern for others.

After they passed the tests, Joseph announced himself to his brothers and reconciled with them. Then Joseph sent them home to bring their father Jacob and the rest of the family to Egypt where he could provide for their needs during the famine.

Genesis ends with the death of Joseph, setting the stage for the book of Exodus. The word exodus refers to a mass departure of people—in this case a great exodus of the descendants of Jacob from Egypt.

Many years earlier, God had told Abraham that his offspring would become slaves in a strange land for 400 years and would then return to the land that God had promised Abraham (Genesis 15:13-14).

Moses' story is the saga of that deliverance from slavery. The time had come to bring God's people home to the land of promise.

This study has three parts per week in which you will 1) read and answer questions from Exodus (usually Parts One and Two), and 2) read and answer questions on scriptures in the New Testament where we find parallels to Jesus (usually Part 3).

PART ONE STUDY

Read Exodus 1:1-2:10 in light of these questions, writing down your thoughts:

- What happened to Abraham's descendants in Egypt—the good and the bad?
 - What was Pharaoh's reason for the instructions he gave the midwives? (Obviously two midwives weren't enough for the population of the Hebrews at this time. It is likely they were the head midwives.) Describe the courage of the midwives. Why were these ordinary women so brave?
 - What was the second plan that Pharaoh implemented after his initial plan failed? How do you see his instructions lead to Moses' rescue? What emotions would you have had if it was your child under the threat of death?
 - What do you learn about what it means to fear God from the actions of the midwives and Moses' mother? What is God saying to you about fearing God?
- ★ What other story have you read or heard (perhaps a Bible story) about a courageous believer who refused to obey her/his king or governmental leaders because to obey would involve doing something that God would not approve? Such stories don't always have happy endings like this one did. What was the outcome for the hero of the story you're thinking of?

PART TWO STUDY

Journal your insights into Exodus 2:11-15 as you consider these questions:

- Why did Moses leave Egypt?
 - Read Hebrews 11:24-25 and add any additional insights into Moses' faith and actions that you find. What is God saying to you through his example?
 - Read Acts 7:17-29, a section of the last words of Stephen, an early martyr for Christ. What do his words add to our understanding of what was going on in Moses' mind when he acted to protect a fellow Israelite?
- ★ Although it appears that Moses' actions that took him out of Egypt weren't in sync with God's plans, the rest of the story suggests that even so God was in the midst of what he did in order to force Moses out of Egypt. Have you ever done anything that was unwise as you look back on it, and yet God was in it for his purposes? Write down the story.

Read Exodus 2:16-22, and write your thoughts on these questions:

- Summarize in your own words what happened when Moses fled to Midian.
- Has there been a time in your life when you can look back and see that God was moving you into a new phase in your life? What happened? What part did faith play in your actions?

PART THREE STUDY

Now we'll look at parallels between Moses and Jesus showing how God protected his servants who were to deliver his people.

Read Matthew 2:13-18, which begins after the wise men had visited Jesus and had been warned in a dream from God to use another route home instead of returning through Jerusalem where King Herod was (Matt. 2:1-12).

Journal your thoughts as you read these questions:

- What was closely alike in the way both Moses' and Jesus' lives were threatened when they were babies?
- How do you see God at work in similar ways through the midwives, the wise men and Joseph to protect these baby boys?
- Write down anything else that you notice here as to how God connects their stories so readers will notice it. (And it's okay if you don't see anything else!)
- What does all of this tell you about God?
- Considering what you've read and written down, what hope do these stories give you today?



How have you seen God move behind the scenes in your own life, perhaps in ways that were unexpected?

Moses and Jesus and other biblical giants fit this description in the NET Bible note:

. . . The Bible has several stories about miraculous or special births and deliverances of those destined to lead Israel. Their impact is essentially to authenticate the individual's ministry. If the person's beginning was providentially provided and protected by the Lord, then the mission must be of divine origin too. . . .¹

May we bow in awe of the God of all power who invites people—from midwives and magi to you and me—to participate in his work on earth.

¹ NET Bible, Note 1 on Exodus 2:1.