

Come Follow Me March 21-27

Exodus 1-6

“I Have Remembered My Covenant”

Begin your study with a prayer, and ask for help to find messages in [Exodus 1-6](#) that are relevant to your life and to your service in God’s kingdom.

Record Your Impressions

The invitation to live in Egypt literally saved Jacob’s family. But after hundreds of years, their descendants were enslaved and terrorized by a new pharaoh “who knew not Joseph” ([Exodus 1:8](#)). It would have been natural for the Israelites to wonder why God allowed this to happen to them, His covenant people. Did He remember the covenant He had made with them? Were they still His people? Could He see how much they were suffering? There may be times when you’ve felt like asking similar questions. You might wonder, Does God know what I’m going through? Can He hear my pleas for help? The story in Exodus of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt answers such questions clearly: God does not forget His people. He remembers His covenants with us and will fulfill them in His own time and way (see [Doctrine and Covenants 88:68](#)). “I will redeem you with a stretched out arm,” He declares. “I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under [your] burdens” ([Exodus 6:6-7](#)).

For an overview of the book of Exodus, see “[Exodus, book of](#)” in the Bible Dictionary.

(9-1) Introduction

The Lord’s concern for His chosen people can be seen in the call of Moses. So great was Moses that forever after the Lord and His people have used him as a standard, or

model, of a prophet. Even Jesus Christ was called a prophet like unto Moses (see [Acts 3:22; 7:37; Deuteronomy 18:15, 18–19; 1 Nephi 22:20–21; 3 Nephi 20:23–24](#)). Indeed, Moses was a similitude or living symbol of Jesus Christ (see [Moses 1:6](#)).

Moses was a man who, like us, possessed both weaknesses and strengths. The key to Moses' character is his meekness, the capacity to be molded by the Lord and His Spirit. "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" ([Numbers 12:3](#)).

In this chapter you will learn of Moses' foreordination, his youthful preparation, the patient tempering of his character in the desert, his call from God, and his assumption of prophetic leadership. Perhaps it will encourage you to analyze your life so that, like Moses, you can identify your weaknesses, purge yourself of them, and take up the assignment the Lord has for you in this life. Like Nephi, you may be led to say "let us be strong like unto Moses" ([1 Nephi 4:2](#)). Elder Mark E. Petersen testified:

"The true Moses was one of the mightiest men of God in all time. ...

"He walked and talked with God, received of divine glory while yet in mortality, was called a son of God, and was in the similitude of the Only Begotten.

"He saw the mysteries of the heavens and much of creation, and received laws from God beyond any other ancient man of whom we have record." (Moses, p. 49.)

CHAPTER 1

The children of Israel multiply—They are placed in bondage by the Egyptians—Pharaoh seeks to destroy the sons born to Hebrew women.

1 Now these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob.

2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,

3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,

4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.

6 And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

7 ¶ And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

(9-2) Exodus 1:7. "The Children of Israel Were Fruitful, and Increased Abundantly"

"The fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham required that Israel should become numerous. To accomplish this, the little family, numbering only 70 persons ([Genesis 46:26–27](#)), needed sufficient time and a peaceful place in which to grow. Egypt was that place. ...

“... Palestine was a battleground for warring nations that moved back and forth in their conquests between the Nile and the Euphrates. Israel would have found no peace there. They required stable conditions for their eventual growth and development. ...

“Their bondage certainly was not all on the negative side. It too served a good purpose. The cruelty of the taskmasters, the hatred that existed between the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and the length of their trying servitude fused Jacob’s children into a united people. ...

“The hatred they felt toward the Egyptians prevented intermarriage between the Hebrews and their neighbors. To reap the benefits of the Abrahamic promises, Israel had to remain a pure race, and the Lord used this means to achieve it. ...

“Yes, Egypt had her role in the Lord’s mighty drama, and she played it well.

“At the end of 430 years, the Lord now decreed that the time had arrived for Israel to occupy her own land and there become that ‘peculiar people’ who would await the coming of their Messiah.” (Petersen, Moses, pp. 27–30.)

8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

(9-3) Exodus 1:8. A Pharaoh Who Knew Not Joseph

Many scholars speculate that Joseph came to power in Egypt while the nation was under the domination of the Hyksos people. The ancient historian Manetho called the Hyksos the shepherd-kings and told how their conquest and dominion were bitterly hated by the Egyptians. The Hyksos were Semitic peoples from the lands north and east of Egypt. Since Jacob and his family were also Semitic, it is easy to understand how Joseph would be viewed with favor by the Hyksos and also how, when the Hyksos were finally overthrown and driven out of Egypt, the Israelites would suddenly fall from favor with the native Egyptians.

Many people have wondered how Joseph could be vice-regent for so many years without having his name in any of the records or monuments of Egypt. If the theory of Hyksos domination is correct, then Joseph’s name would have been purged from records and monuments along with those of the other Hyksos rulers. Nevertheless, one scholar claimed that he found the Egyptian name *Yufni*, which would be the equivalent in Egyptian of the Hebrew *Yosef* (see Donovan Courville, “My Search for Joseph,” *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 1977, pp. 5–8). While the evidence is not conclusive, at least it can be said that there may be extra-biblical evidence of Joseph’s existence.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

10 Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land.

11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

15 ¶ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

17 But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

(9-4) Exodus 1:15–22

The oppressive measures of the pharaoh were not able to thwart the purposes of God in creating a great nation. Through the courageous faith of the midwives and their refusal to carry out the pharaoh's orders to execute the male children, Israel continued to prosper. The life of Moses, who was a similitude of the Savior (see Moses 1:6), was threatened by the ruler of the land, just as the life of Christ was threatened by Herod, who decreed the death of the children of Bethlehem.

Both the ancient Jewish historian Josephus and Jonathan ben Uzziel, another ancient Jewish writer, recorded that the pharaoh had a dream wherein he was shown that a man soon to be born would deliver Israel from bondage, and this dream motivated the

royal decree to drown the male children (see Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, bk. 2, chap. 9, par. 2; Clarke, Bible Commentary, 1:294).

CHAPTER 2

Moses is born to Levite parents, is raised by Pharaoh's daughter, slays an Egyptian in defense of an Israelite, flees to Midian, and marries Zipporah—Israel in bondage cries to the Lord.

1 And there went a man of the house of ^aLevi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.

2 And the woman conceived, and bare a ^ason: and when she saw him that he *was a goodly child*, she hid him ^bthree months.

(9-5) Exodus 2:1–2. What Is the Genealogy of Moses?

Moses was a descendant of Levi through both his father, Amram (see [Exodus 6:16–20](#)), and his mother, Jochebed (see [Exodus 2:1; 6:20](#)).

3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* ^ain the flags by the river's brink.

4 And his ^asister stood afar off, ^bto wit what would be done to him.

5 ¶ And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

6 And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, *This is one* of the Hebrews' children.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her ^ason. And she called his name ^bMoses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

(9-6) Exodus 2:1–10

Both the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (see [Genesis 50](#)) and the Book of Mormon (see [2 Nephi 3](#)) show that as early as the time of Joseph, son of Jacob, the future mission of the deliverer had been prophesied. So detailed had been the prophecy by Joseph that

even the name of Moses was known, as well as incidents of his ministry (see [Reading 8-27](#) for the Joseph Smith Translation additions to [Genesis 50](#)).

(9-7) [Exodus 2:10](#). What Training Did Moses Receive as a Youth in Egypt?

In the New Testament Stephen made a lengthy speech about the dealings of the Lord with the house of Israel. Concerning Moses' youth, Stephen related, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" ([Acts 7:22](#)).

Josephus said that Moses was a very handsome and educated prince and a mighty warrior in the cause of the Egyptians (see *Antiquities*, bk. 2, chap. 9, par. 7; chap. 10, pars. 1–2).

As a prince, Moses may have had access to the royal libraries of the Egyptians as well as the scriptural record of the Israelites as taught by his mother. Quite possibly he read the prophecies of Joseph and was led by the Spirit to understand his divine appointment to deliver his brethren the Israelites. Stephen's address implied that Moses understood his responsibility: "And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. ... For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not." ([Acts 7:23, 25](#).)

Paul, in Hebrews, added further to the concept, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; ... esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt" ([Hebrews 11:24, 26](#)). Moses' mother, Jochebed, likely taught him the principles and righteous traditions of the Hebrews as she nursed and cared for him (see [Exodus 2:7–9](#)).

11 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

(9-8) [Exodus 2:11–15](#). Why Did Moses Slay an Egyptian?

“‘Smote’ and ‘slew’ in King James English are both translated from Hebrew *nakhah*, meaning ‘to beat down’; it is the word used in describing the action taken by soldiers in combat against each other. It would be correct to say that Moses *slew* a man who was *slaying* another, or took a life in saving a life. His looking ‘this way and that’ before doing so, simply indicates that he was aware that the Egyptians would not condone his defense of a slave.” (Rasmussen, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1:74.)

“However, the historian Eusebius says that the slaying was the result of a court intrigue in which certain men plotted to assassinate Moses. In the encounter it is said that Moses successfully ward off the attacker and killed him. (Eusebius IX:27.)

“In the Midrash Rabbah, the traditional Jewish commentary on the Old Testament, it is asserted that Moses, with his bare fists, killed an Egyptian taskmaster who was in the act of seducing a Hebrew woman. This is confirmed in the Koran.

“Certainly there must have been good reason for Moses’ act, and most assuredly the Lord would not have called a murderer to the high office of prophet and liberator for his people Israel.” (Petersen, Moses, p. 42.)

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to day?

(9-9) Exodus 2:18. Who Was Reuel?

The more common name for Reuel is Jethro (see Exodus 3:1; Numbers 10:29). Jethro was a descendant of Midian, who was a son of Abraham and Keturah (see Genesis 25:1–6). Through this line Moses received the priesthood (see D&C 84:6–13).

19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? why *is it that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

22 And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

23 ¶ And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt “died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they “cried, and their “cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

(9-10) Exodus 2:23

Acts 7:30 indicates that the “process of time” described here was another forty years.

24 And God “heard their groaning, and God remembered his “covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, “and God had respect unto *them*.

Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

Exodus 1–2

Jesus Christ is my Deliverer.

One of the central themes in the book of Exodus is that God has power to free His people from oppression. The enslavement of the Israelites as described in Exodus 1 could be seen as a symbol of the captivity we all face because of sin and death (see 2 Nephi 2:26–27; 9:10; Alma 36:28). And Moses, the Israelites’ deliverer, can be seen as a type, or representation, of Jesus Christ (see Deuteronomy 18:18–19; 1 Nephi 22:20–21).

Read Exodus 1–2 with these comparisons in mind. You might notice, for example, that both Moses and Jesus were preserved from death as small children (see Exodus 1:22–2:10; Matthew 2:13–16) and that both spent time in the wilderness before beginning their ministry (see Exodus 2:15–22; Matthew 4:1–2). What other insights do you learn from Exodus about spiritual captivity? about the Savior’s deliverance?

See also D. Todd Christofferson, “Redemption,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 109–12.



Moses in the Bulrushes, © Providence Collection/licensed from goodsalt.com

CHAPTER 3

The Lord appears to Moses at the burning bush—Moses is called to deliver Israel from bondage—The Lord identifies Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and as the Great I AM—He promises to smite Egypt and bring His people out with great wealth.

1 Now Moses kept the flock of ^aJethro his father in law, the ^bpriest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the ^cmountain of God, *even* to ^dHoreb.

(9-11) Exodus 3:1

Horeb is the same as Mount Sinai, where Moses received the law from the Lord. Elijah also later sought refuge at Horeb (see [1 Kings 19:8](#)).

2 And the ^aangel [^bpresence] of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of ^cfire out of the midst of a ^dbush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God ^acalled unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy ^ashoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* ^bholy ground.

6 Moreover he said, ^aI *am* the ^bGod of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was ^aafraid to ^dlook upon God.

7 ¶ And the LORD said, I have surely seen the ^aaffliction of my people which *are* in ^bEgypt, and have heard their ^ccry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8 And I am come ^adown to ^bdeliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land ^cflowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the ^aCanaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 Now therefore, behold, the ^acry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will ^asend thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest ^bbring forth my people the ^cchildren of Israel ^aout of Egypt.

(9-12) Exodus 3:1–10

“A manifestation was given to Moses by a messenger of light, causing a bush to appear to burn; it was really not afire and was *not* consumed. The word ‘angel’ could better have been rendered ‘messenger’ which is the basic meaning of the Hebrew word *malakh*. A flame in a bush, a mighty wind, a small voice, a great thundering, or

other phenomena may herald a message from God, as a *malakh* of God. After Moses' attention was drawn to the bush, the voice of the Lord Himself spoke to Moses; Moses responded in awe and reverence." (Rasmussen, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1:74.)

The Joseph Smith Translation of Exodus 3:2 reads, "And again the *presence* of the Lord appeared unto him" (emphasis added).

11 ¶ And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt:

17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

18 And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

(9-13) Exodus 3:11–18. What Is the Significance of the Title I Am?

When the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush He used the name *I AM* to identify Himself as the God of Israel, the same God who had appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Although this is the first time this name appears in the Bible, it is obvious that if the name had not been known to the Israelites, its value for identifying the Lord would have been useless. Correct identification was crucial to Moses in authenticating his call to the Israelites. This name does not appear frequently in the Bible; however, Jesus (the Jehovah of the Old Testament) used it on other occasions to

identify Himself to Abraham (see [Abraham 1:16](#)), to the Jews (see [John 8:58](#)), and to modern Israel (see [D&C 29:1](#)).

Etymologically, the title *I AM* is directly related to the most frequently used name of deity in the Old Testament—*YHWH*. How often the name *YHWH* appears in the Bible may not always be evident in the King James Version, since the translators substituted the title LORD or GOD almost every place it appeared in the Hebrew. This practice shows deference to the reverential feelings of the Jews who never pronounced the name, substituting instead their word for *Lord*—*Adonai*. (Read [Genesis 18:1–3](#) where this distinction between Lord and LORD makes a significant difference in the interpretation. Also see [Reading A-2](#) for a full discussion of this subject.)

I AM is the first person singular form of the verb *to be*. Therefore, *YHWH* (which can also be the third person singular) would mean “HE IS” or “HE EXISTS.” The first or third person of the same verb was used by the Lord in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, depending upon whether He wanted to emphasize His own or our own perspective.

19 ¶ And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

21 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

22 But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

CHAPTER 4

The Lord gives signs to Moses—Aaron is chosen as a spokesman—Israel is the Lord’s firstborn and must be released to serve Him—Moses’ son is circumcised—Moses and Aaron lead Israel in worship.

1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

2 And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

5 That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

6 ¶ And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow.

7 And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh.

8 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*.

10 ¶ And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of *him whom* thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not* Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

17 And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

(9-14) Exodus 4:10–17. Why Was Moses So Reluctant to Be God's Spokesman?

There is some evidence that Moses may have had a mild speech impediment (see Reading 9-22), although some scholars think Moses may only have been suggesting that his facility in both the Hebrew and Egyptian languages was poor after having lived forty years with the Midianites. Whatever the outward cause, the Lord answered Moses with reasoning so simple and yet so profound that it was difficult to refute. Moses' feelings of inadequacy were so strong, however, that he still insisted he needed help. The Lord became angry at this continued lack of confidence and gave Aaron to Moses as a spokesman. Anyone with normal feelings of his own unworthiness can sympathize with Moses, but all must learn to trust in the power of the Lord. Moroni taught that the Lord specifically gives individuals weaknesses so that they will be humble. But if they have enough faith in God, His grace is sufficient to "make weak things become strong"

for them ([Ether 12:27](#)). Enoch had a similar response to his own feelings of inadequacy, and yet great things eventually came out of that weakness when he turned to God (see [Moses 6:31–32, 47; 7:13](#)).

18 ¶ And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

(9-15) [Exodus 4:18](#)

The great vision Moses received, as recorded in [Moses 1](#), took place after Moses' original call on Mount Horeb and before his arrival in Egypt. [Moses 1:17](#) refers to the burning bush experience in retrospect. [Moses 1:24–25](#) speaks of the delivery of Israel from bondage as a future event.

19 And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

20 And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

(9-16) [Exodus 4:19–21](#). Did the Lord Raise Up the Pharaoh and Did He Harden the Pharaoh's Heart?

The Joseph Smith Translation of [Exodus 4:21](#) says, "I will prosper thee; but Pharaoh will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go." This truth must be remembered in all subsequent references to the pharaoh's heart being hardened.

22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, *even* my firstborn:

23 And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn.

24 ¶ And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

26 So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

27 ¶ And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.

28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

(9-17) Exodus 4:18–28. Why Was the Lord Angry with Moses As He Traveled to Egypt?

The King James Version lacks detail in this account. The Joseph Smith Translation indicates that the Lord was angry with Moses for failing to circumcise his son. It appears that Zipporah had not wanted to circumcise Gershom but relented when the Lord expressed His anger to Moses.

“And it came to pass, that the Lord appeared unto him as he was in the way, by the inn. The Lord was angry with Moses, and his hand was about to fall upon him, to kill him; for he had not circumcised his son.

“Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and circumcised her son, and cast the stone at his feet, and said, Surely thou art a bloody husband unto me.

“And the Lord spared Moses and let him go, because Zipporah, his wife, circumcised the child. And she said, Thou art a bloody husband. And Moses was ashamed, and hid his face from the Lord, and said, I have sinned before the Lord.

“And the Lord said unto Aaron, go into the wilderness to meet Moses, and he went and met him, in the mount of God; in the mount where God appeared unto him; and Aaron kissed him.” (JST, Exodus 4:24–27.)

29 ¶ And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:

30 And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

31 And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

(9-18) Exodus 4:29–31

What can be said of the people who had to be converted by signs (see Matthew 12:38–39; D&C 63:7–12)? Although their initial reaction when they saw the signs was very positive, at the first indication of challenge and adversity their commitment began to waver (see Exodus 5:20–23).

Exodus 3–4

God gives power to those He calls to do His work.

Today we know Moses as a great prophet and leader. But Moses did not see himself that way when the Lord first called him. “Who am I,” Moses wondered, “that I should go unto Pharaoh?” ([Exodus 3:11](#)). The Lord, however, knew who Moses really was—and who he could become. As you read [Exodus 3–4](#), note how the Lord assured Moses and responded to his concerns. What do you find in these chapters that might inspire you when you feel inadequate? How does the Lord bless His servants with increased power to do His will? (see [Moses 1:1–10, 24–39; 6:31–39, 47](#)). When have you seen God do His work through you or others? For more about the life and ministry of Moses, see “Moses” in the [Bible Dictionary](#) or [Guide to the Scriptures](#).

CHAPTER 5

Moses and Aaron ask Pharaoh to free Israel—Pharaoh responds, Who is the Lord?—He places greater burdens upon the children of Israel.

1 And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

2 And Pharaoh said, Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now *are* many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.

6 And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying,

7 Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves.

8 And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.

9 Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.

10 ¶ And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

11 Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished.

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

13 And the taskmasters hasted *them*, saying, Fulfil your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw.

14 And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to day, as heretofore?

15 ¶ Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants?

16 There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants *are* beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people.

17 But he said, Ye *are* idle, *ye are* idle: therefore ye say, Let us go *and* do sacrifice to the LORD.

18 Go therefore now, *and* work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

19 And the officers of the children of Israel did see *that* they *were* in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task.

20 ¶ And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh:

21 And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

22 And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou *so* evil entreated this people? *why is it that* thou hast sent me?

23 For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

(9-19) Exodus 5:1–23; 6:1

God gave the pharaoh a chance to let Israel go, of his own free will, to worship God. Through his refusal the pharaoh could blame no one but himself for the consequences.

CHAPTER 6

The Lord identifies Himself as Jehovah — The genealogies of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi are listed.

1 Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I *am* the LORD:

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

(9-21) Exodus 6:3. Was Jehovah's Name Known before Moses?

The King James Version of Exodus 6:3 suggests that the name *Jehovah* was unknown to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This suggestion, however, obviously cannot be the case (see Genesis 4:26 in which the name LORD [Jehovah] first appears). Also, the Lord (Jehovah) appeared several times to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others. Obviously there is something wrong with the King James translation of Exodus 6:3. The problem can be resolved if one knows that the verse can be read as a question in the Hebrew, as well as the English, merely by raising the inflection of the voice toward the end of the sentence. (When one translates a text, not spoken aloud, he may not catch the inflection and may therefore miss the original intention of the writer.) The Prophet Joseph Smith rendered this passage as follows: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob. I am the Lord God Almighty; the Lord JEHOVAH. And was not my name known unto them?" (JS, Exodus 6:3.) The answer is yes!

Exodus 6:3

Who is Jehovah?

Jehovah is one of the names of Jesus Christ and refers to the premortal Savior. The Joseph Smith Translation clarifies that the prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew the Lord by this name (see Exodus 6:3, footnote c). Usually, when the phrase "the Lord" appears in the Old Testament, it refers to Jehovah. In Exodus 3:13-15, the title "I AM" is also a reference to Jehovah (see also Doctrine and Covenants 38:1; 39:1).

4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I *am* the LORD.

(9-20) Exodus 6:1-8

The eternal gospel covenant that the Lord God established with Adam and all the patriarchs, including Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was, at the time of Moses, established with the whole house of Israel.

9 ¶ And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

11 Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

12 And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips?

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

14 ¶ These *be* the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: these *be* the families of Reuben.

15 And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these *are* the families of Simeon.

16 ¶ And these *are* the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi *were* an hundred thirty and seven years.

17 The sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families.

18 And the sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: and the years of the life of Kohath *were* an hundred thirty and three years.

19 And the sons of Merari; Mahali and Mushi: these *are* the families of Levi according to their generations.

20 And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram *were* an hundred and thirty and seven years.

21 ¶ And the sons of Izhar; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri.

22 And the sons of Uzziel; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri.

23 And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

24 And the sons of Korah; Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these *are* the families of the Korhites.

25 And Eleazar Aaron's son took him *one* of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas: these *are* the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their families.

26 These *are* that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies.

27 These *are* they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these *are* that Moses and Aaron.

28 ¶ And it came to pass on the day *when* the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,

29 That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, *I am* the LORD: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee.

30 And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

(9-22) Exodus 6:12, 30

The King James Version states that Moses had “uncircumcised lips” ([Exodus 6:30](#)). The Joseph Smith Translation clarifies this statement by saying that Moses had “stammering lips” and was “slow of speech” ([JST, Exodus 6:29](#)). [Exodus 4:10](#) in the New English Bible reports that Moses was “slow and hesitant in speech.” This characteristic may explain Moses’ original hesitation to be God’s spokesman (see [Exodus 4:10](#); see also Reading 9-14).

Exodus 5–6

The Lord’s purposes will be fulfilled in His own time.

Although Moses courageously went before Pharaoh, just as God had commanded, and told him to release the Israelites, Pharaoh refused. In fact, he made the Israelites’ lives harder. Moses and the Israelites may have wondered why things weren’t working out even when Moses was doing what God asked him to do (see [Exodus 5:22–23](#)).

Have you ever felt you were doing God’s will but didn’t see the success you expected?

Review [Exodus 6:1–8](#), looking for what the Lord said to help Moses persevere. How has the Lord helped you persist in doing His will?

Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Home Evening

Exodus 1–2.

Several women played critical roles in God’s plan to raise up a deliverer for the Israelites. As a family, you could read about the midwives Shiphrah and Puah ([Exodus 1:15–20](#)); Moses’s mother, Jochebed, and his sister, Miriam ([Exodus 2:2–9](#); [Numbers 26:59](#)); Pharaoh’s daughter ([Exodus 2:5–6, 10](#)); and Moses’s wife Zipporah ([Exodus 2:16–21](#)). How did these women further God’s plan? How do their experiences remind us of Jesus Christ’s mission? You could also gather pictures of female relatives and ancestors and share stories about them. How have we been blessed by righteous women? President Russell M. Nelson’s message “[A Plea to My Sisters](#)” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 95–98) could add to your discussion.

Exodus 3:1–6.

When Moses approached the burning bush, the Lord told him to remove his shoes as a sign of reverence. How can we show reverence for sacred places? For

example, what can we do to make our home a sacred place where the Lord's Spirit can dwell? How can we show more reverence in other sacred places?

Exodus 4:1–9.

The Lord gave Moses power to perform three miracles as signs to show the children of Israel that He had sent Moses. What do these signs teach us about Jesus Christ?

Exodus 5:2.

What might it mean for us to “know” the Lord? How do we come to know Him? (for example, see [Alma 22:15–18](#)). How does our relationship with Him affect our desire to obey Him? (see also [John 17:3](#); [Mosiah 5:13](#)).

For more ideas for teaching children, see [this week's outline](#) in *Come, Follow Me—For Primary*.

Suggested song: “[Reverence Is Love](#),” *Children's Songbook*, 31.



Moses Found in the Bulrushes by Pharaoh's Daughter, by George Soper