

EXODUS

THE ROADMAP OUT OF EGYPT

How do you all feel about road trips? Big, long journeys with a fun destination in mind?

I know most of you aren't driving yet, so hopefully one day you can relate to this. Or honestly, I hope you're better than me—I am really, really, really bad at directions. So I use Google Maps basically to go EVERYWHERE, especially on long drives. The problem is, Google Maps has a voice that is always talking to me, which can get pretty annoying when I'm trying to have a conversation, listen to music or a podcast, or just enjoy the ride. So what do I do? I turn off the voice. I want to enjoy the ride as much as possible. I don't want some robotic voice constantly talking to me throughout the journey.

But when I do that, my brain switches into autopilot, and I end up missing SO MANY turns.

I miss a turn. I add time to the drive. I make everyone in the car upset. But here's the amazing thing: when I make a wrong turn, Google Maps reroutes me and sets a new course.

I've fallen off course, but the destination hasn't changed.

In the book of Exodus, we're going on a much longer road trip than any of us have ever been on, and the amazing thing is that when we get off course, God already knows the way forward. As we begin, we're going to meet the Israelites (the people of Israel). The most important thing to know about them is that they are God's people. Exodus is the second book of the Bible, so it continues the story from Genesis. We were introduced to Jacob in Genesis, and now his family has grown into an entire nation, now called the Israelites. But they're no longer living in safety—they're slaves in Egypt, suffering under a powerful king. Sometimes we end up in difficult places because of our own choices, and other times, like Israel, we face hardship even when we haven't done anything wrong. Either way, God is never caught off guard. Israel couldn't see what was coming or understand what God was doing, but God already had a plan to rescue them. They may have been off course, but God hadn't lost sight of where He was taking them.

As we begin our series, *Leaving Egypt Behind*, Exodus 1 will help us understand how Israel got where they were, what faithfulness looked like while they were there, and how God was working even when He seemed silent. It will also help us examine the places in our own lives where we may have taken a wrong turn, made an unwise choice, or slowly drifted from where God wanted us to be.

Most importantly, we will see that no matter where we find ourselves, we must never take our eyes off God or His promises. Israel's circumstances changed dramatically, but God's covenant did not. The same is true for us. We will make wrong turns, our surroundings may change, our plans may fail, and life may take us somewhere we never expected, but God remains faithful to His people and always keeps His promises.

Israel couldn't see what was coming. They couldn't understand what God was doing. But God already knew where He was taking them.

They may have been off course, but **God hadn't lost sight of the destination.** The same is true for us.

ICEBREAKER

If you could see 10 years into the future, what's the first thing you'd look for? What would you hope to see?

DAILY DEVOTIONS

READ IT

Read Exodus 1.

EXPLORE IT

1. According to Exodus 1:1–7, how many members of Jacob's family went to Egypt, and what happened to the Israelites over time?
2. What concern did the new Pharaoh express about the Israelites in Exodus 1:8–10?
3. What methods did the Egyptians use to oppress the Israelites in Exodus 1:11–14? How did the midwives respond?

DAY 1 — TODAY'S THEME: WAITING

Read Exodus 1:1–7.

Waiting for something can feel old-school. In our society, waiting is often seen as weak or unnecessary. Amazon gets our orders to us almost immediately. DoorDash brings food to our door. We have news in a flash, social media updates, texts, calls, and livestreams. Believe it or not, there was a time when this stuff didn't happen, just ask your leaders. We've built a world where we rarely have to wait.

But here's the truth: **God desires our patience.** And more often than we want, we are called to wait.¹

Throughout Scripture, we see that waiting is not wasted time. Sometimes, God is doing some of His greatest work while we wait. And when we finally see what He was doing, we realize—it was worth the wait.

As we look at this first chapter, we will read of the events that set the scene for the remainder of the book, particularly of God's marvelous redemption within the first fourteen chapters. Here we see the people of Israel enslaved and slaughtered under the cruel hand of Pharaoh, yet in the midst of such affliction, we are told again and again and again that God continued to make His people fruitful and strong....While none of this is explicitly restated here, Moses clearly expects his readers to be familiar with Genesis before entering into the story of the Exodus. Within Moses' own day, this was likely because many of the Israelites needed to be refamiliarized with their family history. After all, spending four hundred years in a foreign country is not traditionally the greatest way to form a strong national identity. For us, we can take these words as a reminder that no one's life is lived in a vacuum. While we may not know the names of our great, great, great grandparents, we would not be here without all thirty-two of them. Of course, many today tend to believe in absolute personal autonomy to such a degree that they believe themselves to be untethered from the events of the past and not responsible for the events to come. Yet the reality is that, like the Israelites in Egypt, our lives have been shaped by those who have gone before us as well. But we will return to that thought a little later.²

4. **What's something you've had to wait a really long time for? How did you feel while you were waiting?**

5. **If the Israelites had forgotten what God had done in Genesis, how would this have affected their view of God as they lived in Egypt?**

6. **Moses wrote Exodus and started the book this way to help the Israelites to know and remember their story. Who has helped you learn about Jesus and what it means to follow Him?**

7. **How does knowing that your life is part of God's bigger story change the way you think about what you're going through right now?**

¹ Ethan's note

² Cole Newton, "Afflicted & Fruitful | Exodus 1," B. C. Newton, January 3, 2022, <https://bcnewton.co/2022/01/03/afflicted-fruitful-exodus-1/>.

DAY 2 — TODAY'S THEME: WHAT NOW?

Read Exodus 1:1-6.

Have you ever walked through a cemetery? Yeah, I know, it's bleak. And I definitely don't go on strolls through cemeteries for fun. No, I'm not that strange. But maybe you've had to walk through one before, like at a funeral. You walk past all these tombstones, and you see how many people have come and gone. For a second, you might wonder, Who were these people? What were their lives like? But you only think about it for a second, and then the feeling passes, and you're back to thinking about your own life.

Here in Exodus, we get the death of Joseph, and it's a great reminder that we're jumping into a story that is much larger than we realize. This is part of a much bigger story, from Adam all the way to Jesus. But as we start this chapter, we see that Exodus is also a direct continuation of the story of Genesis.³

And Joseph died: Joseph was the remarkable great-grandson of Abraham who saved Egypt — and the world — from terrible famine because he listened to God's voice speaking through Pharaoh's dream. Because of his wisdom and administration, he was lifted to high and honored office in Egypt. Yet eventually, Joseph died and the status his family enjoyed died with him.⁴

8. **Who or what do you sometimes look to for security or to make you feel safe? Think about people, leaders, friends, family, money, celebrities, or even your church.**

9. **Joseph was powerful and respected, but eventually he died. What does that teach us about putting our trust in people instead of God?**

10. **Joseph made a difference in the lives of people who came after him. Who is someone younger than you that you could encourage, help, or point toward Jesus this week?**

³ Ethan's Note

⁴ David Guzik, "Exodus 1 – Israel Multiplies in Egypt," *Enduring Word*, accessed July 27, 2026, <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/exodus-1/>.

DAY 3 — TODAY'S THEME: 1 v ALL

Read Exodus 1:8–14.

Recently, my family went on vacation, and we ended up playing the boardgame Catan together. Before we even started, my brother looked at everyone and said, “We’re going to gang up on Lauren. We don’t want her to win. She’s too good, and we have to fight against her together.”

This felt a little aggressive, but I soon learned that my sister-in-law (Lauren) is really good at the game. When you play a strategy game with someone who knows what they’re doing, you start to realize that every move is calculated. You’re not always sure what they’re planning, what they’re building toward, or what their next move will be.

So our strategy was simple: all hands on deck. We were going to stop Lauren. Long story short, Lauren still won. Even after we joined forces against her, she managed to beat all of us. Lauren wasn’t doing anything wrong. She was just really good at the game. Her success made everyone else feel like they needed to do something about it.

That’s essentially what happens in Exodus 1. God had promised Jacob that his family would grow into a great nation. In Exodus 1:7, we see that promise coming true. The Israelites had multiplied and grown so much that they filled the land of Egypt.⁵

Ironically, however, this divine blessing that Israel was experiencing evoked a crisis. These verses introduce a complication into the unfolding plot: Israel’s phenomenal population explosion was seen as a threat to national security by the new pharaoh. Israel’s alarming population growth served only to stir up paranoid fears. Whether Pharaoh was suggesting that they were simply expanding too rapidly, or were already threatening to outnumber the indigenous population, the net effect was the same: sooner or later the Israelites would be beyond Egyptian control.⁶

11. Why do you think Pharaoh felt threatened by the Israelites? What was he afraid might happen?

12. Have you ever felt jealous or threatened by someone else’s success? What did that reveal about your heart ?

13. When someone else is succeeding, how can we choose to trust God instead of comparing, competing, or trying to control the situation?

⁵ Ethan’s Note

⁶ Paul R. Williamson, *Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 2 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2025).

DAY 4 — TODAY'S THEME: OUT OF CONTROL

Read Exodus 1:15–22.

Let me paint a picture and give you a little insight into what's going on in your youth leader's head. Every Wednesday night of small group, your leaders have a certain job to do. There's a plan, there's a flow, and their job is to help keep you all on track. Now, I know it's our first night together, so maybe things will be different this year, but things can usually go one of two ways: either you have a really good night, or things can completely spiral out of control. And if we're being honest, it's usually a little closer to the second one.

Well, that's basically what Pharaoh is seeing in Egypt. He looks around and sees a problem developing: there are way too many Israelites. The Israelites are multiplying so quickly that what started as a concern has turned into near panic. Pharaoh is afraid that they could eventually become a threat to the Egyptians themselves.

So Pharaoh decides something needs to change. He wants to stop the Israelites from continuing to grow, and his solution is horrifying. He calls on the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, and gives them an unthinkable command: when the Hebrew women give birth, if the baby is a boy, they are to kill him.

Pharaoh is essentially asking the midwives to solve his national crisis by murdering innocent children (wow, the Bible is intense). But there's one problem Pharaoh didn't account for: the midwives feared God more than they feared Pharaoh.

So they refused to obey his command. They chose to honor God rather than follow the orders of the most powerful man in Egypt. And when Pharaoh realizes what they've done, he summons them and demands an explanation.

Verse 22 is the chilling moment when an entire society is called to participate in evil rather than resist it. Whenever a culture normalizes the destruction of innocent life for the advancement of its own interests, it is walking the same path Pharaoh chose.

14. How would you use the example of the Hebrew midwives to encourage a Christian who is being pressured to compromise at work, school, or within their family?

15. What are some warning signs that fear, jealousy, or the desire for control is beginning to shape our treatment of other people?

16. Following the example of the Hebrew midwives, where is God calling you to courageously refuse to participate in evil while intentionally protecting or advocating for someone who is vulnerable?