



The Passover Experience

Rabbi Eckstein's Biblical Teachings on the Jewish Roots of Christianity



God Sends a Deliverer

Lesson One

Something to Think About

It might be easy to sit back and criticize Moses for his "lack of faith" and reluctance to obey God. Yet, consider your own situation today. In what areas is God calling you to obey Him? How would you describe your willingness—or reluctance—to obey Him right now? In what ways can you have confidence that God will enable you to obey Him?

The good news for Moses, and for ourselves, is that our ability to carry out a God-given assignment does not depend upon ourselves, but wholly on the One who is all-powerful, all-loving, and all-knowing. Keep your eyes focused on God and His resources, not your own.

Extra Credit

Read Psalm 73. Reflect on how Asaph's experience parallels that of the Israelites in Egypt. How does his situation help him to focus on God? How did the Israelites' situation help them to understand their need for God? The sense of helplessness that comes from suffering can often be a first step toward freedom. The truth for the Israelites, for Asaph, and for us is that we can never find spiritual freedom only from ourselves. We, like Israel and Asaph, need to look to and focus on God.

Lesson Objectives

Through these lessons, students of the Bible will understand the underlying principles of the Jewish celebration of Passover which are:

- That God hears the cries of His people;
- That God is present in human life; and
- That God intervenes in history to deliver man from affliction and to redeem him from oppression.

Key Bible Verse

"The LORD said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey. . .'" (Exodus 3:7–8)

Scripture to Read: Exodus 3:1—4:31

Before You Begin

The story of the Exodus has its roots in Genesis. Four hundred years earlier, Jacob and his sons had settled in the land of Goshen because of the famine in Canaan. There they prospered, thanks in large part to Joseph (Genesis 46:28–47:27). Eventually, Joseph died, as did the Pharaoh whom he served. That is when life began to change for the Israelites.

We pick up the story in Exodus 1. The population of the Israelites had grown to such proportions that they posed a perceived threat to the new Pharaoh (Exodus 1:9–10). To deal with this growing problem, Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites and forced them to build his great cities. When that proved ineffective, Pharaoh took more drastic measures, ordering the Hebrew midwives to kill all the male babies at birth.

When the midwives refused to obey the Pharaoh, he issued another edict to his people: throw all the Hebrew male babies into the Nile River. Yet, God overturned the Egyptian's final scheme in a most unusual way, through the birth and divine deliverance of a particular Hebrew boy, Moses (Exodus 2:1–10). The story of Moses is a familiar one. The Pharaoh's own daughter discovered Moses floating in a basket in the Nile River and, having compassion on the baby, adopted him as her own. Moses grew up with all the privileges of an Egyptian prince, yet apparently never forgot his Hebrew roots.

When he was 40, Moses killed an Egyptian for his brutal treatment of a Hebrew slave. When Moses discovered that there were witnesses to his crime, he fled the country to Midian. Our study picks up when Moses is a shepherd, tending his flocks.

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God Sends a Deliverer—Continued

Lesson One

The Call of Moses

1. Where was Moses and what was he doing when the angel of the Lord appeared to him? (3:1–2)
2. Who called Moses from the burning bush and how did He identify Himself? (3:4–6)
3. Why did God say He was appearing to Moses in this way? (3:7) What reassurances does this offer in your own situation right now? What does this tell you about God's character?
4. What did God tell Moses He had come to do for His people? (3:8) Through whom was God going to bring His people out of Egypt? (3:10)
5. In verses 3:11—4:16, Moses raises several objections to God's command to him. Complete the chart below, identifying Moses' objections and God's responses to him.

Scripture	Moses' Objection	God's Response
3:11–12	_____	_____
3:13–15	_____	_____
4:1–9	_____	_____
4:10–12	_____	_____

6. After all that, Moses still pleaded with God to send someone else. How did God respond? (4:14–17) What does this reveal about Moses? What does this reveal about God?
7. In 3:16–22, God gives Moses His plan for delivering His children. What response did the following groups have to Moses' message?
 - The Israelites (v. 18)
 - The King of Egypt (vv. 19–20)
 - The Egyptians (vv. 21–22)
8. How does knowing their responses beforehand help Moses? How does it hinder him?
9. When Moses and Aaron meet with the leaders of Israel, what is their response? (vv. 29–31) What is your response to knowing that God cares deeply about you?
10. What truths do you learn about God from this study? What encourages you for today? For the week ahead?



This bush at Mt. Sinai is said to be similar to the burning bush from which God spoke to Moses. It is believed that this type of bush lives for hundreds of years.

The Jewish people have often used the burning bush as a symbol of their peoplehood. This symbol often appears on the walls of synagogues or in other prominent places, not only in Israel, but also in Jewish communities around the world. Fire also most likely symbolizes the presence of God dwelling among His people. For further references, read Genesis 15:17, Exodus 19:18 and 40:38.

In Exodus 3, God identifies Himself as "I AM WHO I AM." This is the unspoken name of God, YHWH, for the Jewish people. The God who appeared to Moses is the same God we come before today and bring our needs and inadequacies to, and who intervenes in our own situations. Read Hebrews 13:8 for another affirmation of this truth.



Mt. Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt.

Sources

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