

CONCERNING THE WAY

July 1, 2008



LESSON 22: EXODUS: THE CALL OF MOSES

Introduction

This lesson will cover Exodus chapter 1 through 5, which basically is about God's preparation and call of Moses to be the deliverer of Israel. The story of the Exodus, like many of the Genesis stories, is a very familiar story to most of us. But like all of our lessons, I will try to point out things you may not have learned, point out ties to the New Testament, how parts of these stories relate to us today, and how the Bible all fits together so beautifully.

Moses is one of the most well-known figures in history, especially if you are Jewish! Join us in this new study and I pray that it will increase your knowledge and build your faith.

- *Dusty Rhodes*

Exodus continues the history written in Genesis. Israel has been in Egypt over 200 years. The children of Israel are multiplying, and God is about ready to fulfill the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will now take them into the land that He had delineated in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Biblical scholars don't all agree on where the story of Moses fits in Egyptian history. However, no one knows for sure yet. As more evidence is uncovered by archeologists and more research is done, perhaps someday we'll know for sure. The following is one theory that is very compelling and seems to fit very well.

I'm sure you've heard the word dynasty. When we talk about a certain dynasty in Egypt, we're talking about a line of kings coming from the same family. The 16th and 17th dynasties were not Egyptian, they were the Hyksos, who were Semites (Egyptians were Hamites) The Hyksos conquered Egypt and ruled during these dynasties. They welcomed semites into the land, even gave them land. Joseph came into the land during the Hyksos rule, which is why the Pharaoh was favorable to him, put him in power, and welcomed Jacob's family to live in Egypt.

Over time the Hyksos became weaker and weaker and were overtaken by the Egyptians, led by Ahmose, who established the 18th dynasty. Keep in mind that a common name in the 18th dynasty was Mose - pronounced Mo - sheh in Egyptian. Mose was the root of many names, and the name of a God would often be added to it, as you can see in the list of Pharaohs below. Let's look at the line of kings during the 18th dynasty and see if there are any familiar parallels to the Biblical story of Moses and the Exodus.

THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY OF EGYPT (Dates are B.C.)

1. **Ahmose** - 1570 - 1546 - led revolt and expelled Hyksos from Egypt, led campaigns into Canaan (where Hyksos capital was) and destroyed the Hyksos completely, they disappear from history
2. **Amenhotep I** - 1546 – 1526 – son of Ahmose – also made raids into Canaan – died childless, leaving no seed
3. **Thutmose I** - 1526 – 1512 - son-in-law of Ahmose – married twice, produced a daughter by 1st marriage and son by 2nd marriage, daughter was Hutshepsut
4. **Thutmose II** (son of Thutmose I) - 1512 - 1504
5. **Thutmose III** – 1504 – 1447 - son of Thutmose II, was very young when father died, kingdom was basically controlled by his aunt Hutshepsut in the early years of his reign, until 1483 – he hated Hutshepsut. When she died in 1483 Thutmose did everything he could to erase her memory – statues of her were smashed, inscriptions of her were wiped out, tried to kill anyone connected with her, he also raided into Canaan and conquered the kingdoms of Canaan, placing them thoroughly under his rule.

6. **Amenhotep II** – 1447 – 1425 – son of Thutmose III, also raided Canaan
7. **Thutmose IV** – 1425 – 1417 – son of Amenhotep II, but not 1st born son. Said he had a dream where a god appeared to him and promised if he would clear the sand from around the Sphinx (which was covering the Sphinx at that time) he would become Pharaoh. So he did so. He invented this story to legitimize his right to rule, since he was not the 1st born son
8. **Amenhotep III** – 1417 – 1379 – son of Thutmose IV – was a weak king, and Egypt began to lose control of Canaan
9. **Amenhotep IV** (Akhnaton) – son of Amenhotep III, tried to change Egypt's religion to monotheism, worshipping only the Sun god. This caused a civil war in Egypt, and Egypt lost control of Canaan completely

How does this correlate with the Bible?

Exodus 1:8 *Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt.*

1. **Ahmosé** - How could a man come to power that didn't know Joseph? After all, he was the 2nd most powerful man in Egypt for many years. It seems that even after several hundred years he would still be known. The reason is the change in dynasty from the Hyksos to the 18th dynasty under Ahmosé.

This dynasty was Egyptian and they hated Semites with a passion. The Israelites flourished in Goshen under the rule of the Hyksos dynasty. Ahmosé, the first king of the 18th dynasty, enslaved the Israelites, because he didn't know Joseph, and hated Semites.

2. **Amenhotep I** - is mentioned in Exodus 1:15 – the Pharaoh of the genocide, he tries to have all male children killed because he fears their numbers.

3. **Thutmose I** - daughter Hutshepsut, was the Pharaoh's daughter mentioned in Exodus 2:5, she is the one who adopted Moses, in about 1525. Moses is not a Jewish name, but an Egyptian name. See the similarity? It was a typical name in this dynasty. Moses originally probably had a longer name, it began with the name of an Egyptian deity, and he probably dropped it after he left Egypt

4. **Thutmose II** – Moses raised by Hutshepsut under his reign in the royal court – Acts 7:20-22

5. **Thutmose III** – the Pharaoh of the oppression – he couldn't touch Moses while Hupshepsut was alive. But when she died, he had no protection, and as Thutmose III went about cleansing Egypt of her memory, he looked for a way to get rid of Moses. This is the only explanation for Exodus 2:15 – where Moses kills an Egyptian and has to flee for his life. If he was of the royal court, he would have been able to kill anyone he wanted to without consequences. But now, it was a good excuse for Thutmose III to execute him. So Moses fled to Midian, where he stayed for the remainder of Thutmose III's reign. Notice that Thutmose III reigned 40 years after the death of Hutshepsut, and Moses stayed in Midian for how long? 40 years. After the death of Thutmose III, he is free to return

6. **Amenhotep II** - the Pharaoh of the Exodus, the one that experiences the plagues, and the death of his 1st born son

7. **Thutmose IV** - remember, was not the 1st born son, because his brother was killed in the 10th plague. Israel is wandering in the wilderness during his reign

8. **Amenhotep III** – Egypt loses control of Canaan under his reign, which is one reason why Joshua and the Israelites are able to conquer and control Canaan.

9. **Amenhotep IV** – civil war during his reign, not able to control Canaan, and this is the period of the Judges in Israel

For another fascinating theory on where the Moses story fits in Egyptian history, go to the web site <http://www.answersingenesis.org/tj/v15/i1/moses.asp>. The important thing to remember, as we have learned in earlier studies, is we let the Bible interpret history. We do not let known history (which is subject to revisionism) interpret the Bible.

Why did Israel have to go to Egypt and stay for 400 years?

1. Genesis 15:12-16 – to allow the sin of the Canaanites (Amorites) to reach a level set by God before He judged them
2. Genesis 38 – the chosen sons begin to intermarry with Canaanites, and gravitate toward paganism. So, they need to separate from the pagan Canaanites and go to a place where they would be unique, segregated, and be preserved as a separate nation

Theology of the Exodus - What we learn about God in this book

- The God Who is there - Ex. 3:14
- The God Who controls history - Ex. 4:21
- The God Who is Holy - Ex. 3:5
- The God Who remembers - Ex. 2:24, 3:6,16
- The God Who works in salvation - Ex. 3:7-9 - sometimes physical, sometimes spiritual
- The God Who speaks - Ex. 3:4-22 - we have the words of God in the scriptures
- The God Who will act in judgment - Ex. 3:20, 4:22 - but He is longsuffering and just
- The God Whose anger may be averted - Ex. 32:9-14
- The God Who transcends - Ex. 33:20 - No one is able to see God in His full glory
- The God Who lives among His people - Ex. 29:45 - the reason why the Tabernacle is built, today He lives in our hearts through the Holy Spirit
- The God of Law - Ex. 20-23 - not for obtaining salvation, but for our benefit, and because of our love for Him

Importance

- Historically - how Israel became a nation, and how the Mosaic Law was given
- Religion - origin of many Jewish practices, such as Passover, and dietary laws
- Dispensationally - transition from the age of Promise to the Age of Law
- Typically - many types of Christ in Exodus - Passover, and the tabernacle
- Spiritually - many spiritual lessons for people today 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Exodus 1:1 *These are the names of the sons of Israel who entered Egypt -- each man with his household entered with Jacob:*

Of course the sons are all mentioned here. But drop down to verse 7:

Exodus 1:7-9 *The Israelites, however, were fruitful, increased greatly, multiplied, and became extremely strong, so that the land was filled with them. (8) Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. (9) He said to his people, "Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are!"*

The word multiplied in the Hebrew almost speaks of swarming. So this wasn't just a casual increase. They had a real population explosion. Their prosperity was by divine blessing and in compliance with the will of God.

Stephen says in Acts 7:18 that "another king arose" the Greek word here means another of a different kind" The new king is not Hyksos, but Egyptian.

Back then, things were not any more stable than they are now. An empire could rise, and a line of kings could come on the scene, but it wouldn't be very long before someone that was stronger would

come in and they would over-rule the Pharaohs and set up a new line of kings. History indicates the line of Pharaohs who had been on the throne from the time of Joseph, were friendly with the Israelites. But now along comes a new king who didn't know Joseph, and had nothing to do with any agreement the Israelites might have had with previous Pharaohs.

How would we feel as Americans, if we looked up one day and we were out-numbered by another nation, right here in our own country. We might get a little defensive, also. So you can see how the Pharaohs and Egyptians might have felt.

Exodus 1:10 *Come, let's deal wisely with them. Otherwise they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country."*

How many people do you suppose that Pharaoh and his cabinet were looking at? Well, you can forget the few thousand that were in the movie - The Ten Commandants. It's millions, and if you doubt me on that, let's look at Numbers Chapter 22. Here in Numbers they have ended their 40 years of wandering, and Moses is leading them around to the Southeast of Canaan, through the land which was called Moab. And as they come across the land of Moab, their king gets just as worried as the Pharaohs did. I just want you to see where we get this figure of 3-7 million Israelites that will leave Egypt on the night of that Passover.

Numbers 22:3-5 *And the Moabites were greatly afraid of the people, because they were so numerous. The Moabites were sick with fear because of the Israelites. (4) So the Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "Now this mass of people will lick up everything around us, as the bull devours the grass of the field. Now Balak son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at this time. (5) And he sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor at Pethor, which is by the Euphrates River in the land of Amaw, to summon him, saying, "Look, a nation has come out of Egypt. They cover the face of the earth, and they are settling next to me.*

Of course, that's a play on words, but, in later verses when the King of Moab took Balaam up into a high mountain, and told him to look, he said, "you can't see the end of them." They went beyond the horizon, even from a high place. Now that's not a few thousand. That is millions. So when the children of Israel start their exodus from Egypt, I want you to picture something like the entire Dallas-Ft. Worth metro area moving out all at once. Now, let's turn to Numbers 26:

Numbers 26:2 *"Take a census of the whole community of Israelites, from twenty years old and upward, by their clans, everyone who can serve in the army of Israel."*

Numbers 26:51 *These were those numbered of the Israelites, 601,730.*

When you have a little time, sit down and do some calculation. Using your own logic, see what you come up with. As you see from verse 2, the 601,730 in verse 51, were not all the children of Israel, but only that select few that were able to go to war in Israel. Normally, an Israel soldier was between the ages of 20-30 years old. How many other family members would be involved for one soldier, unmarried, between 20-30 years old? So, in order to get 601,730 young men of military capabilities, you would have to have a minimum of 3,000,000 people total when you are taking into account parents, grandparents, sisters, and other brothers not qualified for military service. And remember, there was also a mixed multitude that came out with them. Consequently, always figure between 3-7 million came out of Egypt. So now let's turn back to Exodus. In order to slow down this

population explosion among the Israelites, we read:

Exodus 1:11-14 *So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor. As a result they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. (12) But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread. As a result the Egyptians loathed the Israelites, (13) and they made the Israelites serve rigorously. (14) They made their lives bitter by hard service with mortar and bricks and by all kinds of service in the fields. Every kind of service the Israelites were required to give was rigorous. (15) The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, (16) "When you assist the Hebrew women in childbirth, observe at the delivery: If it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she may live." (17) But the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.*

Now, if the baby was a boy, they were supposed to kill him. Remember back there in Genesis 3:15, God said it in plain English to old Satan, that the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent which was Satan. So what is Satan going to do throughout the human race? He's going to do all he can to keep this Seed of the woman from ever coming to fruition. That's why Israel has suffered so many times throughout her history, almost a complete demolition of her people. It's genocide. You see, Satan was attempting to totally remove that group of people through whom the Savior, or the Messiah, must come. And so, even here, before Israel even gets into the land of promise, and gets started on all these promises associated with that Abrahamic Covenant, Satan is going to try to stop it in its tracks. His first ploy is to kill all the boy babies as they are born.

Let's go back to Hebrews 11, because unless we comprehend what God's Word says about the activities of these people, it probably just goes in one ear and out the other. But there's more to it than that. It's not just a story. This is a Biblical truth. It all helps build to the plan of salvation as we now know it today.

Hebrews 11:22,23 *By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, mentioned the exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions about his burial. (23) By faith, when Moses was born, his parents hid him for three months, because they saw the child was beautiful and they were not afraid of the king's edict.*

"By faith... (That's why Joseph said when you leave this place, take my bones with you. We always have to come back and define faith. You know, I get disturbed when I read or hear people say, "I'm of the Methodist faith, or Catholic faith, or this faith or that." That isn't faith. Faith means taking God at His Word. Romans 10:17 says, "*Consequently faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the preached word of Christ.*"

Moses' parents weren't looking through physical eyes, but through spiritual eyes. And they knew that what God had promised and what God had said, He would fulfill. And through those eyes of faith, they saw in this little infant, the working of God. And so they took their chances, and never forget - **nothing happens by accident.** This is all sovereignly unfolding as God has commanded it. Now, back in Exodus, when the authorities find out that the midwives are not killing all the boy babies as they are supposed to, they say:

Exodus 1:18-22 *Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this and let the boys live?" (19) The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women -- for the Hebrew women are vigorous; they give birth before the midwife gets to them!" (20) So God treated the midwives well, and the people multiplied and became very strong. (21) And because the midwives feared God, he made households for them. (22) Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "All sons that are born you must throw into the river, but all daughters you*

may let live."

But, God is watching over His people, Israel. No one is going to destroy the nation of Israel because they are God's Covenant people. God is now ready to step into the picture to deliver His Covenant People. But it's going to take a deliverer. In Chapter 2 we have the birth of the deliverer:

Exodus 2:1-5 *A man from the household of Levi married a woman who was a descendant of Levi. (2) The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a healthy child, she hid him for three months. (3) But when she was no longer able to hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him and sealed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and set it among the reeds along the edge of the Nile. (4) His sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would happen to him. (5) Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself by the Nile, while her attendants were walking alongside the river, and she saw the basket among the reeds. She sent one of her attendants, took it,*

This kind of calls to mind Noah's ark, doesn't it? Well, this was just simply a little basket. Remember back in Genesis 6 when the ark was made? Remember what the Hebrew word for pitch was? Atonement. So, here again we have that same picture, that this little basket she built for Moses is a place of safety, but more than that, God is in all of this. So she seals it with pitch. Note carefully everything here is pointing to the work of the Cross. **Everything in the Old Testament is looking forward to the time when Christ would become the Savior of mankind, when He would bring in the true atonement.**

You should know by now in our studies that it was not just an accident that Pharaoh's daughter came along at this time. Here again is the work of a Sovereign God, using even a pagan young woman to carry out His work. She comes along the river, and just at the moment she spies the ark, what happened? The baby cries. And no doubt it was a cry that just tugged at her heart, like it does to so many of us when we hear a baby cry.

Exodus 2:6,7 *...opened it, and saw the child -- a boy, crying! -- and she felt compassion for him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." (7) Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get a nursing woman for you from the Hebrews, so that she may nurse the child for you?"*

She wasn't fooled, she knew who it was. And then came Miriam. Did Pharaoh's daughter know who she was referring to? In other words, "Can I take it back to its mother?" And Pharaoh's daughter has no problem with it. She doesn't say, "Well, daddy says all the Hebrew boys must be put to death." She said you go ahead and take him back and nurse him for me.

Exodus 2:8-10 *Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes, do so." So the young girl went and got the child's mother. (9) Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. (10) When the child grew older she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "Because I drew him from the water."*

To prove my point, let's go back to Hebrews again. We'll be using this great faith chapter of Hebrew 11 quite a bit in the next few lessons.

Hebrews 11:24-25 *By faith, when he grew up, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's*

daughter, (25) choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to enjoy sin's fleeting pleasure.

Then look at Acts 7. Remember everything must be substantiated from Scripture. Well, how old was he? We don't know that till we come to Acts 7. This is Stephen, reviewing the Old Testament.

Acts 7:21-23 *and when he had been abandoned, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. (22) So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds. (23) But when he was about forty years old, it entered his mind to visit his fellow countrymen the Israelites.*

When Moses received his education in Egypt he received it from the idolaters; pagan priests. And he was saturated with it. That's why I wanted us to come to Acts 7, because Hebrews said that when he grew up, it was faith that prompted him to chose the Hebrews rather than the Egyptians.

He had been saturated for thirty-five years with Egyptian teachings and away from his family. So how did he know that he would choose to be with the people of God? Well, the verse said by faith. But faith must come from the word, by hearing. Where did he get it? Those first five years! Remember mothers did not wean their children from the breast until they were five or six years old. Psychiatrists now tell us that what a child learns the first 5-6 years are going to be the biggest influence for the rest of his life.

So Moses, while he was nursed by his mother those first five years, not only gained physical substance, but faith. His parents were people of faith, and they had revealed to Moses that someday the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would take them out of Egypt, and put them in the land of Canaan again. So Moses has that locked in by the time he is five, and he never forgot.

So parents should never give up, because if we've trained our children in the Word, even if they stray from it during those youthful years, God may bring them back. I think this happens a lot. Normally, when these kids reach maturity, they suddenly realize mom and dad weren't so dumb after all. And they'll come back to it. Always keep the line of communication open. So, Moses now had great power and influence.

Exodus 2:11-12 *In those days, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and observed their hard labor, and he saw an Egyptian man attacking a Hebrew man, one of his own people. (12) He looked this way and that and saw that no one was there, and then he attacked the Egyptian and concealed the body in the sand.*

Evidently Moses wasn't a puny little guy. He may have struck the Egyptian so hard that he killed him. Then when he realized what he had done, he buried him in the sand.

Exodus 2:13-14 *When he went out the next day, there were two Hebrew men fighting. So he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you attacking your fellow Hebrew?" (14) The man replied, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you planning to kill me like you killed that Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, thinking, "Surely what I did has become known."*

Right there should ring a bell. Where do you get that very same statement? In the New Testament, when Jesus had presented himself as Israel's King, what did Israel say the morning of his trial? "Who made you to rule over us?" And when the Roman authorities asked Israel, "Is He your King?" What was

their answer? They said they had no king but Caesar. So all of this is laying the ground work. They reject Moses and they have nothing to do with him. Let's look at what Stephen said in Acts:

Acts 7:24-25 *When he saw one of them being hurt unfairly, Moses came to his defense and avenged the person who was mistreated by striking down the Egyptian. (25) He thought his own people would understand that God was delivering them through him, but they did not understand.*

When Moses, in his place of power and prestige (and no doubt, wealth), approached these Jews out there in the sand, what did Moses really think that they would do? He thought they would recognize him as the one that could get them out of their slavery. And he was ready to do so. Now, of course, Moses was a little ahead of God's time-table, but he thought that surely he could deliver his people out of Egypt. And that's exactly what Stephen is saying here. He thought, (Moses did) that these Jews that he had approached would have understood that he was to be their deliverer. But they didn't understand.

Acts 7:26-29 *The next day Moses saw two men fighting, and tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you hurting one another?' (27) But the man who was unfairly hurting his neighbor pushed Moses aside, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us? (28) You don't want to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?' (29) When the man said this, Moses fled and became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.*

Moses left the country. Are you using your mind and thinking ahead? When is all this repeated? Isn't that exactly what happened to Jesus? He came unto His own and presented Himself as their King. He proved His credentials with all of His miracles.

Now, as time went by, Jesus presented Himself and they rejected Him. They said they would not have this man to rule over them. What did they do? They killed him. And what did God do, according to **Psalm 110:1** *Here is the LORD's proclamation to my lord: "Sit down at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool!"*

He left the world; He left the country, so to speak. And He is now like an exiled King in glory. When you're in exile, what do you wait for? **The day that you can go back.** That's the way I want you to picture Christ. He came to His people the first time and they rejected Him. And He went back to glory as an exile. But when He left, what in so many words did He say? "I'm coming back." And that's what He will one day do. But now let's turn back to the book of Zechariah and see what will happen the second time. We've looked at this passage before.

Zechariah 12:10 *"I will pour out on the kingship of David and the population of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication so that they will look to me, the one they have pierced. They will lament for him as one laments for an only son, and there will be a bitter cry for him like the bitter cry for a firstborn.*

As we read this verse, keep reminding yourself of how they treated Joseph the second time, and how they treated Moses the second time. And now here's Christ, and it's saying that they will recognize Him as the one they crucified. Now, let's quickly look at Chapter 13, verse 6. And this is all about His second coming, when He returns to the nation of Israel in power and glory.

Zechariah 13:6 *Then someone will ask him, 'What are these wounds on your chest?' and he will*

answer, 'Some that I received in the house of my friends.'

Now, do you see how all this ties together? Joseph appeared the first time and they didn't know who he was. Moses goes out the first time and they didn't know who he was. And Jesus comes the first time and the Scripture makes it so plain, that they did not know Who He was.

Exodus 2:15-19 *When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well. (16) Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. (17) Then the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock. (18) When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "Why have you come back so soon today?" (19) So they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and what is more, he even drew the water for us and watered the flock."*

You see there again, he wasn't a puny individual. He wasn't afraid of anybody. And so, even those rough old eastern shepherds, as they tried to usurp the well, Moses chased them away. And he did it single-handedly.

Notice in verse 19, he is called an Egyptian. From all outward appearances, from his language, from everything, what was Moses? He was Egyptian. He had been raised in Pharaoh's palace for 35 years. But inside, what is he? He's a Hebrew - an Israelite.

Exodus 2:21-23 *Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses. (22) Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land." (23) Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God.*

Here again, is the perfect picture all through the Old Testament. It happened to Joseph and it's happened to Moses. We've also had other instances, where these men of God, driven away from their original setting, will marry what kind of a girl? A Gentile! Remember when we talked about the Bride of Christ, and while He's in exile, what kind of a Bride is He calling out? A Gentile Bride. The Church is predominately Gentile. And so you have this picture all the way up through the Old Testament - even here with Moses. He was a Jew - an Israelite - but he marries a Gentile.

When it says, 'in the course of those many days,' do you know how long it's speaking of? 40 years! Again, you go back to Acts Chapter 7 and there we see that Moses' life was broken down into three 40 year segments. Not counting the five years in his mother's house. But the first 40 years is in Pharaoh's palace, as the son of pharaoh's daughter. The second 40 years he is on the back side of the desert, herding sheep. And then the third 40 years, he comes back and delivers the children of Israel. So now let's look at verse 23:

Acts 7:30 *"After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush.*

That's the beginning of his third 40 years when he will go back and lead Israel out into the wilderness.

Exodus 2:24,25 *God heard their groaning, God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with*

Isaac, and with Jacob, (25) God saw the Israelites, and God understood....

There's the Abrahamic Covenant again. God now realizes that it's time for Him to move, according to His own prophetic utterances, back there to Abraham. He remembered the Covenant that He made with Abraham. He repeated it to Isaac. He repeated it to Jacob and that Covenant carries all the way through. God is now going to start making things happen. Let's go on to Chapter 3:

Exodus 3:1 *Now Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb.*

In plain English, what is Moses' title? He's a shepherd. And what did Egyptians think of shepherds? Genesis 46:34 says they were disgusting to the Egyptians. So this is where Moses ends up. A shepherd! With those smelly old sheep, after having been 40 years in the pomp and circumstance and the wealth and luxury of Egypt. And Moses has his flock way out in the wilderness part of the desert - miles from any civilized town. And he comes to Horeb, which is Mount Sinai.

Now I don't know how many of you realize the geography of the Sinai Peninsula. The Sinai is the most rugged, most wilderness country that you've ever heard of. How the children of Israel even got through it is a miracle. It was not a very nice place to spend 40 years. And poor old Moses is going to have 80 of them out there. By now, he's had 40 years back there tending sheep.

Exodus 3:2-5 *The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from within a bush. He looked -- and the bush was ablaze with fire, but it was not being consumed! (3) So Moses thought, "I will turn aside to see this amazing sight. Why does the bush not burn up?" (4) When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him from within the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am." (5) God said, "Do not approach any closer! Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."*

There are bushes in the Sinai desert, and because of the heat and dryness in the desert, they do catch fire and burn up. So burning bushes in this area are not all that unusual. Bushes that talk and do not burn up, however, you don't normally see!

Whenever God calls a man by his name twice, as in verse 4, it's for the purpose of calling him for a specific task or commission. This happened with Abraham in Genesis 22:1, Jacob 46:2, 1 Samuel 3:10, Paul in Acts 9:4

Here's another reference to the angel of the Lord, and it says He appeared to Moses. The other verses make it clear that this is God appearing, so we must assume again that it is the pre-incarnate Christ, the 2nd person of the Trinity making an appearance. We'll see later on that Mount Sinai, the "Mountain of God" remains holy for a long time after this. And it wasn't a disembodied spooky voice, like you see in the movies.

Exodus 3:6 *He added, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.*

Why does God repeat this over and over again? So that it soaks in! All of these Covenant promises were repeated to those three patriarchs, and we cannot forget that. And again, this was not just a voice speaking. Moses saw God. But who did He see? Who steps out of the Trinity and reveals

Himself to mankind, time after time? God the Son.

Exodus 3:7-8 *The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. (8) I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a land that is both good and spacious, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the region of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.*

Remember what He said back in Genesis 15? Israel would have to stay in bondage until the Canaanites' iniquity was full. In other words, the Canaanites had gone so deep into sin and wickedness, that God was perfectly fair in telling Joshua when he brought the Children of Israel into the Promised Land, that they were to kill them all. So this is one reason that God let his own people go into Egypt and suffer, so that the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, could prove the worthiness of the judgment that was going to come upon them.

Exodus 3:10-11 *So now go, and I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." (11) Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, or that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

Moses makes a series of five objections in this chapter, which I find amazing. It's amazing that this man has the nerve to question God, and it's amazing that God didn't fry him on the spot!

He says, "God, I can't go to Pharaoh, I'm just a shepherd." And then later on in the conversation with God, Moses says, "I can't speak, I can't do this." So why does he make such an argument? Stop and think - for 40 years where has he been - sheep herding, with nothing but sheep to talk to. He doesn't have any public connections. He is just an old country boy now, who is going to feel completely out of place in Pharaoh's Palace:

Exodus 3:12 *He replied, "Surely I will be with you, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: When you bring the people out of Egypt, you and they will serve God on this mountain."*

And that's exactly where they went when they left Egypt. It was there that Moses received the Ten Commandments, and there, he received the instructions for building the Tabernacle. It was there, the Priesthood was established. And it was there that Israel was to move straight north to the land of milk and honey. Now, remember, Moses spent 40 years steeped in Egyptian idolatry. And every idol and god in Egypt's culture had a name. Regardless whether it be, sun, moon, star, frog, animal, or whatever - it had a name. Moses hasn't forgotten that, and with that in mind, look at his next question.

Exodus 3:13-14 *Moses said to God, "If I go to the Israelites and tell them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' -- what should I say to them?" (14) God said to Moses, "I AM that I AM." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

Now, isn't that typical? The children of Israel are in Egypt, they too are surrounded by all the Egyptian gods; here comes this man Moses from the far side of the desert; and he speaks of a God, and what's the first thing they will ask? What's his name. So Moses anticipates.

As we look back to Genesis Chapter 1, "*In the beginning God,*" and so it is all through Chapter 1. Everything has been accomplished, the creation was completed, man was on the scene and in the garden. Then in Chapter 2, verse 4 we have a change to **LORD** God. Is that a misprint? Of course not. All through the first chapter we are dealing with God the Creator, but as soon as we get into Chapter 2, man is on the scene, and man is going to need a communicator. Someone in the God-Head must be able to communicate with Adam.

John 1:1 says "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" That "Word" is capitalized, so it's a name of Deity; a name of God. Now, what do we do with words? We communicate. So now we have, "In the beginning was the Word - the Communicator. God the Communicator. So the Communicator must come on the scene in order to do just that with Adam. Who is He? - Jesus in the New Testament, and God the Son in the Old Testament. He's Jehovah. He is LORD. So what you really have here in Chapter 2:4 is Jehovah God. The term Jehovah comes out of a couple of Hebrew root words - Jahweh-Havah. Jahweh, meaning I AM, and Havah, meaning to become more and more and more revealed. So you take Jahweh-Havah the I AM, Who is to become more and more revealed, and you contract them and come up with the name Jehovah.

Who is Jehovah? Jehovah is the I AM, but the I AM Who would become more and more revealed. As you come up through human history as far as the Bible is concerned, isn't that exactly what has happened? All the way through the Old Testament, God the Son is more and more revealed. And finally, He comes in the form of flesh, a further revelation. And then He goes the way of the Cross, and ascends back into heaven; but He's coming again, and we see that all revealed in the last Book of your Bible. And what do we call it? The Book of Revelation. And this is exactly what the Bible has been doing; it has been a continuing revelation of God the Son. The Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Let me show you more clearly in a passage of Scripture, just exactly what is entailed in all of this. Turn to John's Gospel, John 8:48 so that we can get the setting: this is during Christ's earthly ministry, and He is being confronted by the religious leaders of the Jews. They were constantly accusing Him of being an imposter. They wouldn't give Him credit for Who He was. In this passage they are claiming that He has a demon.

John 8:48-51 *The Judeans replied, "Aren't we correct in saying that you are a Samaritan and are possessed by a demon?" (49) Jesus answered, "I am not possessed by a demon, but I honor my Father -- and yet you dishonor me. (50) I am not trying to get praise for myself. There is one who demands it, and he also judges. (51) I tell you the solemn truth, if anyone obeys my teaching, he will never see death."*

What did those Jews know concerning life and death? It was the territory of God! So to them Jesus is on pretty thin ice, because look at how they responded:

John 8:52-54 *Then the Judeans responded, "Now we know you're possessed by a demon! Both Abraham and the prophets died, and yet you say, 'If anyone obeys my teaching, he will never experience death.' (53) You aren't greater than our father Abraham who died, are you? And the prophets died too! Who do you claim to be?" (54) Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory is worthless. The one who glorifies me is my Father, about whom you people say, 'He is our God.'*

They thought they knew the God of Abraham, and they thought they knew Jehovah.

John 8:55-57 *Yet you do not know him, but I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I obey his teaching. (56) Your father Abraham was overjoyed to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." (57) Then the Judeans replied, "You are not yet fifty years old! Have you seen Abraham?"*

That's pretty strong isn't it? How could He call them liars? Because they claimed to know God and didn't. And they said Jesus didn't know Him, but He did. So He said, "If I agreed with you, that I don't really know God, then I'd be as big a liar as you are"

John 8:58 *Jesus said to them, "I tell you the solemn truth, before Abraham came into existence, I am!"*

What's He claiming? He's the I AM of the burning bush. He's the I AM of pre-eternity. He's the I AM of all Scripture. It's interesting to note throughout the Book of John there are seven distinct I AM's, that fit so perfectly with the seven distinct Jehovah's, or I AM's in the Old Testament. What are some of them? I AM the Bread of Life. I AM the Way and the Truth. I AM the Resurrection. I AM the Good Shepherd. There are seven in all. He never backed away from being the I AM. But what I want you to see is, how the Jews responded when He claimed to be the I AM.

John 8:59 *Then they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out from the temple area.*

They were going to kill Him for being such a blasphemer; for claiming to be the I AM of the Old Testament. Now back to Exodus again. Moses now has it clearly put, that the I AM, God the Son, Jehovah, is the one Who is doing all this preparation work.

Exodus 3:15 *God also said to Moses, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'The LORD -- the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob -- has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is my memorial from generation to generation.'*

They were to bring all the heads of the people together, so that Moses could announce to them, that the time of their deliverance is at hand.

Exodus 3:19-22 *But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even under force. (20) So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you. (20) So I will extend my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will do among them, and after that he will release you. (21) "I will grant this people favor with the Egyptians, so that when you depart you will not leave empty-handed. (22) Every woman will ask her neighbor and the one who happens to be staying in her house for items of silver and gold and for clothing. You will put these articles on your sons and daughters -- thus you will plunder Egypt!"*

Some translations may say "borrow" in verse 22, but the correct translation is "ask". God told the women, and all of Israel to ask the Egyptians if they had something to give them, to send them on their way. And we know from the account, that by the time Egypt had gone through the plagues, they were in shambles; economically, physically, and in every other way. The Egyptians literally unloaded all their wealth on the Israelites. " Just get out of here, and don't come back."

However, God had something else on His mind. It wasn't just to make the Israelites rich, as they left Egypt. When they get down to Sinai, He is going to give them instructions to build the Tabernacle, and that Tabernacle is just literally filled with silver and gold and precious stones, fine linen - all the wealth of Egypt. It was in God's Sovereign plan. They asked and the Egyptians gave it to them

gladly.

Exodus 4:1-4 *Moses answered again, "And if they do not believe me or pay attention to me, but say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you?'" (2) The LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." (3) The LORD said, "Throw it to the ground." So he threw it to the ground, and it became a snake, and Moses ran from it. (4) But the LORD said to Moses, "Put out your hand and grab it by the tail" -- so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand*

Isn't this just like us? How many times have you and I known God probably wants us to do something for Him. And what do we say? "**But God**"... Moses says, "I've been gone 40 years on the far side of the desert; they won't believe when I tell them." And he remembered that they didn't believe him even when he lived in Egypt.

Middle Eastern serpents can be deadly poisonous. So he runs from it. By the way, the place you grab a live snake is not the tail, but right behind the head, where the fangs can't touch you! God tells Moses to do a dangerous thing - catch it by the tail.

I want to point out here the beginning of what Paul claims in 1Corinthians 1:22. This could avert so much confusion, and doubt that is in people's minds these days. Now, remember this is Paul writing to a Gentile Church, to you and I:

1 Corinthians 1:22 *For Jews demand miraculous signs...*

Just think about that for a moment, beginning with Moses, and then later on to convince Pharaoh that Moses was the representative of the God of Israel. What did he use as proof? Signs and miracles! Think of it - all through Israel's history, as much Bible as you can possibly remember, didn't it happen over and over? The supernatural! The miraculous! For instance, the night the shepherds were on the hills of Judea, and that great angelic host appeared, singing the choruses of heaven, concerning the birth of the Christ. Did that drive those shepherds insane? No, they weren't that shook up over that. They were almost used to those sort of things. That was part of Israel's history.

In the Book of Acts, Peter is locked up in prison, and who comes and escorts him out? An Angel! I am sure, if an Angel would suddenly go into the city jail in Kansas City, there would be a lot of people fainting dead away, wouldn't they? We are not programmed for that kind of thing, but Israel was used to it. It happened all through their history.

Exodus 4:5-9 *"that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." (6) The LORD also said to him, "Put your hand into your robe." So he put his hand into his robe, and when he brought it out -- there was his hand, leprous like snow! (7) He said, "Put your hand back into your robe." So he put his hand back into his robe, and when he brought it out from his robe -- there it was, restored like the rest of his skin! (8) "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the former sign, then they may believe the latter sign. (9) And if they do not believe even these two signs or listen to you, then take some water from the Nile and pour it out on the dry ground. The water you take out of the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."*

These were signs given to Moses, to prove to Israel that he was God's man...

Exodus 4:10-12 *Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I am not an eloquent man, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant, for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." (11) The LORD said to him, "Who gave a mouth to man, or who makes a person mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? (12) So now go, and I will be with your mouth and will teach you what you must say."*

I think it's interesting to notice, that God has already used the signs to convince Moses that he was going to be led of God. Now, let's go to the New Testament and study some of the references that have a direct connection with this. I would like to look at the fact that the Jews, beginning right here with Moses, and all the way up through their history, had to have signs in order to be convinced of what God was saying and what He was doing.

First, let's go to 1 Corinthians and see why God had to put Moses on the far side of the desert for 40 years in order to prepare him to be an instrument that God could use. Here in Chapter 1, Paul is laying out the wisdom that can come only from God, and not from men:

1 Corinthians 1:26,27 *Think about the circumstances of your call, brothers and sisters. Not many were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were born to a privileged position. (27) But God chose what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and God chose what the world thinks weak to shame the strong.*

Let's put that right back in perspective with Moses. Isn't that exactly what God did with him? When he was mighty, when he had power, when he had clout, God couldn't use him. He went out there in the energy of the flesh and thought he could deliver the Children of Israel. So God, by a Sovereign act, gets Moses where He can prepare him to be the kind of man He can use. He makes him a shepherd for 40 years - out where he has no contact with the public.

So Moses is now, in his own eyes, NOTHING! But in God's eyes he's EVERYTHING! That's the requirement for service, even today. That's what Paul referred to here in Corinthians. If you want to be a Sunday School teacher, or a missionary, or anything in God's service, the first place we have to come to is an understanding that in ourselves, we are nothing! We all must come to the place that Moses did. Even Paul was brought to such a place. Educated as he was at the feet of Gamaliel, Paul had to understand that, when it came to be a servant of God's Grace, especially to the Gentiles, he **had to begin as a nobody!** Paul tells us that all the way through his writings. Look at Chapter 2 of 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 2:1-4 *When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with superior eloquence or wisdom as I proclaimed the testimony of God. (2) For I decided to be concerned about nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (3) And I was with you in weakness and in fear and with much trembling. (4) My conversation and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power,*

A lot of times we look at Paul with all of his journeys, and preaching, and think the man had a lot of guts, but he didn't. He shook in his boots, as he would enter some of these strange places, just as you and I would. And a lot of people think it takes enticing words, but it doesn't. You don't have to have degrees behind your name in order to be something for God. I'm thankful for that, for I wouldn't be teaching today if that was a requirement.

Now let's turn to Matthew Chapter 11. Most of us who know anything about our Bible at all, realize that when Jesus began His earthly ministry, He began with miracles. For three years He performed miracle after miracle. Why?

Matthew 11:2-5 *Now when John heard in prison about the deeds Christ had done, he sent his disciples to ask a question: (3) "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" (4) Jesus answered them, "Go tell John what you hear and see: (5) The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news proclaimed to them.*

Why did Jesus perform all of those miracles to the nation of Israel? To prove Who He was! **The miracles validated Him as the Messiah.** Remember that the Jew required a sign. It was just their very nature.

Another place we can look at is Acts 10. This is where Cornelius sends for Peter. In verse 14, Peter had the vision with the sheet. In that sheet were unclean animals according to the Jewish diet and the Jewish Law. So Peter wasn't about to eat, but God told him to go ahead and eat them. Remember, this is ten years after Pentecost and Peter is still sticking to the Law. He's not about to eat pork. And if you think I'm making too much of that, look at the following account .

In Acts Chapter 10, we have the account of Cornelius in Caesarea, being prompted by God to send for Peter, who is down on the coast in the city of Joppa. And Peter, by the urging of the Holy Spirit, finally goes to the house of Cornelius. But remember, Peter was still a good Law-keeping Jew, and had a problem going into a Gentile home. So, he took several of his Jewish believers with him. This is about ten years after Pentecost, and the Crucifixion. Look at what Peter says when he gets to the house of Cornelius:

Acts 10:28 *He said to them, "You know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile, yet God has shown me that I should call no person defiled or ritually unclean.*

He was never convinced before this. Peter began preaching to the house of Cornelius and now let's go the end of his message:

Acts 10:44-46 *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the message. (45) The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were greatly astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, (46) for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.*

Keep in mind, all of these are Gentiles, with the exception of a few Jews that came with Peter, from Joppa, and I imagine they came for moral support. These were not the unbelieving Jews that Jesus had to put up with. These were Jews who, along with Peter, had recognized Who Jesus was. Ten years after Pentecost and they were astonished. Why were they astonished? It had never happened before. Gentiles had never come into a knowledge of salvation. They may have had religion, as like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. He was religious, he had been to Jerusalem, had worshiped, but on his way back to Ethiopia, what did Philip do? He leads him to salvation.

How did these Jews know the Holy Spirit came upon them? They started speaking in other languages! What did that do to those Jews? It proved that God was doing something that they didn't think was possible. And that was to save a Gentile. **Here again the sign was used to convince**

these Jews.

I Corinthians 1:18 *For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

So much of what we hear today is leaving out the Cross. And we can't do that. No one can be saved by simply believing in Jesus. It has to be the work of the Cross. And Paul states that here. The world may think the preaching of the Cross is foolishness, but to us that are saved, it is the power of God. And that power can never be released from God until we **BELIEVE THE GOSPEL. That Christ died, was buried and rose again.**

Sometimes we use cliché's too much. You have all heard the expression (I've used it and imagine you have used it) "Well, I've accepted the Lord Jesus as my personal Savior." Now, there is nothing wrong with that, but what is it? It's a coined phrase. It's not in the Bible! You show me one verse where it says that if you will take Jesus as your Lord and personal Savior, that you will be saved. It doesn't say that.

Now, if you take the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, based on the fact that He, the very Son of God, became flesh, went to the Cross, shed His blood, was buried, and rose from the dead, and you put that whole truth into your cliché, then I have no problem with that. But how many people can do that? Another one we like to use is, "Well if you just believe in Jesus." Which Jesus are you believing in? Are you believing in the Jesus of the three years that He ministered to Israel, or are you putting your faith in that Jesus that went to the Cross, and rose from the dead?

Do you see what I'm saying? How many times have you heard the expression "Well if you'll just take Jesus into your heart," and again, there is nothing basically wrong with that, if the person who is taking Him into his heart, understands that the only reason you can have Christ in your heart, is because He died on that Cross. This is what worries me, that people are being led into a false security by simply taking a shortcut, or clichés without knowing the full truth of the matter. **So we are saved by the power of God, from the preaching of the Cross.**

I Corinthians 1:19-21 *For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will thwart the cleverness of the intelligent." (20) Where is the wise man? Where is the expert in the Mosaic law? Where is the debater of this age? Has God not made the wisdom of the world foolish? (21) For since in the wisdom of God the world by its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe by the foolishness of preaching.*

Isn't that so true. The Jewish scholars studied the Torah, and still do. But they don't know God. Recently, I read an article by one of the Chief Rabbis in Jerusalem. In so many words he said, "Concerning the coming of the Messiah: the Messiah that Israel is looking for, will be a man. All of Israel is aware of this fact and that His coming is imminent. He will come in with political clout; He will have military power behind him, and he is going to be able to set Israel up, destroy her enemies, and then from that power base, bring peace to the whole world."

Which man are they looking for? The Anti-christ! That rabbi gave a perfect description of him. The rabbi wasn't thinking in terms of the Anti-christ; he was thinking of Israel's Messiah. That's the wisdom of this world. But Paul wants us to have the wisdom of God, and how do we get it? By the

foolishness of preaching, to save them that BELIEVE! Remember, Faith plus Nothing. Here is the verse I was heading for; it just took a long time to get to it:

I Corinthians 1:22 *For Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks ask for wisdom,*

We'll see that as soon as Moses approaches the children of Israel, he does all these signs that God tells him to do. And then in the next verse, it says that they believed. Why, because they saw the signs, and that's the way it's been all through Israel's history. And if nothing else is remembered from this lesson, **the reason Jesus spent three years performing signs and miracles up and down the land of Israel, was to prove to these Jews who He really was.**

Exodus 4:13-17 *But Moses said, "O my Lord, please send anyone else whom you wish to send!" (14) Then the LORD became angry with Moses, and he said, "What about your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak very well. Moreover, he is coming to meet you, and when he sees you he will be glad in his heart. (15) "So you are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And as for me, I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you both what you must do. (16) He will speak for you to the people, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were his God. (17) You will also take in your hand this staff, with which you will do the signs."*

This is what brought the two brothers together. Aaron now becomes the spokesman, but Moses is the one through whom God does the speaking.

Exodus 4:18-20 *So Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, "Let me go, so that I may return to my relatives in Egypt and see if they are still alive." Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace." (19) The LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, because all the men who were seeking your life are dead." (20) Then Moses took his wife and sons and put them on a donkey and headed back to the land of Egypt, and Moses took the staff of God in his hand.*

Moses takes his family and heads to Egypt. In the meantime, back in Goshen, God also speaks to Aaron:

Exodus 4:24-26 *Now on the way, at a place where they stopped for the night, the LORD met Moses and sought to kill him. (25) But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off the foreskin of her son and touched it to Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me." (26) So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said, "A bridegroom of blood," referring to the circumcision.)*

This is certainly a strange incident here. Apparently Moses didn't circumcise his 2nd son. This angers God and He strikes Moses with a fatal disease. Because of Zipporah's reaction, it seems that Zipporah was unhappy that Moses circumcised his first son, and probably kept him from circumcising their 2nd. Remember that Zipporah was not Jewish, and the covenant of circumcision may have seemed strange and abhorrent to her. Zipporah, angrily it seems, calls Moses a "bloody bridegroom", and we don't see her mentioned again until chapter 18. Moses sent her away with her sons, and then was brought back later by her father Jethro in Chapter 18.

What this says to me is that anyone who is in a position of leadership in a church or Christian organization had better get his own house in order before taking authority over others. It would have been an insult to God for Moses to show up in Egypt to lead all the Israelites out when his own son was not even circumcised.

Exodus 4:27-31 *The LORD said to Aaron, "Go to the wilderness to meet Moses. So he went and met him at the mountain of God and greeted him with a kiss. (28) Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him and all the signs that he had commanded him. (29) Then Moses and Aaron went and brought together all the Israelite elders. (30) Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people, (31) and the people believed. When they heard that the LORD had attended to the Israelites and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed down close to the ground.*

You see, they believed because of the signs that Moses performed.

Exodus 5:1,2 *Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Release my people so that they may hold a pilgrim feast to me in the desert.' " (2) But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey him by releasing Israel? I do not know the LORD, and I will not release Israel!"*

Whenever the Old Testament uses the term The Lord, it is actually the translation for "Jehovah", or "Yahweh" in Hebrew. So Pharaoh was saying who is this "Jehovah"? Everything in Egypt was a god: a frog, the moon, sun, every animal you could think of, and each of them had a name. So when Moses and Aaron came and said the God of Israel, Jehovah, is going to lead the children out, Pharaoh's natural response was, "Who is this Jehovah? He doesn't mean anything to me.

He's going to learn who Jehovah is, but it's going to take a while. What would Pharaoh lose if he let the Israelites go? He would lose the backbone of his economy; they were his workers. They were the ones that were getting all the daily work done. The Egyptians had become the upper-class elite. They did nothing but make sure those Jews got the work done.

You could compare this to America, especially the South, before the Civil War. Why were our plantation owners so uptight about losing slavery? That was the backbone of their economy. How would the American farmer do today if the government would say, "We are going to take all of your farm equipment away from you. You can't use tractors or combines anymore." What would they do? They'd go crazy. Because after all, how could they get their crops in the ground, and get them out, if they didn't have their machinery? This is what was confronting Egypt: take the Jews away and they've got nothing. And so Pharaoh says, "I will not let them go!" They were faced with something they couldn't cope with.

Exodus 5:3 *And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us go a three-day journey into the desert so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, so that he does not strike us with plague or the sword."*

Why the three days? Well, three is a significant number in Scripture. We have the Triune God; that's where everything begins - The Trinity. So everything in creation rests upon trinities of sorts. The creation itself rests upon a basic Trinity of time, space, and matter. Take any one of those three away and you don't have a universe. Water is another example. What is it? It's a liquid, a solid, a gas. And so it is in all of creation, you have so many things that come in threes.

What do you suppose God has on His mind when He tells Moses and Aaron that He wants Israel to go three days journey into the wilderness? There is only one thing that can separate a person from slavery, and, remember, this whole Book of Exodus is a picture of redemption. First, Israel

redeemed out of Egypt, but it's the perfect picture of you and I being redeemed out of the shackles of sin, and brought to a life of freedom. Now, the three days are indicative of the resurrection. Let's go to Matthew Chapter 12:

Matthew 12:38-40 *Then some of the experts in the law along with some Pharisees answered him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." (39) But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. (40) For just as Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights."*

Way back in Exodus, God is already giving us a picture of the basic premise. And that there is no setting us free from of sin, anymore than there was any reason of expecting Israel to be set free from Egypt, unless they could have three days separating them from their place of captivity. And it's the same way in our salvation. If we try to ignore the basic premise of the Gospel again, and that is that Christ died, was in the grave three days and three nights, and rose from the dead, then we have no Gospel. But when we put our faith in that Gospel, those three days and nights in the tomb separates us from that old life of sin and bondage. And this is what we want to keep so clear in our thinking, that Israel had to be separated from Egypt, but it took the three days journey to do it, as it took the three days and nights in the tomb to separate us.

Exodus 5:4,5 *The king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you cause the people to refrain from their work? Return to your labor!" (5) Pharaoh was thinking, "The people of the land are now many, and you are giving them rest from their labor."*

What Pharaoh is going to make sure of, as much as he can, is that he does not lose these captives. It is the same when we come into the spiritual realm. Who, also, is going to do everything he can to keep from losing his captives? Satan! Keep that uppermost in your mind: Satan will do anything to keep from losing one of his captives.

Every person born in the human race is dead spiritually. And as we move on up through those little innocent years, Satan begins to wrap his web. Then by the time we reach the age of accountability, eight, nine, ten, or whatever you want to call it, he has us completely wrapped in his web, as a spider does to the fly. There was no way that fly can ever get out of that web, but by an outside power.

It is precisely the same way in the spiritual realm. The lost person, even though he doesn't realize it, is totally bound up in Satan's web. And nobody can cut that web but the power of God Himself, and this is what we have to see. Now, let's look at what Paul says to the Gentiles at Corinth:

II Corinthians 5:14,15 *For the love of Christ controls us, since we have concluded this, that Christ died for all; therefore all have died. (15) And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised.*

What do you see in that last statement? That's the Gospel by which we are saved! See how Paul always brings that out. Now, he may not say the whole thing, but he'll either say that you have to BELIEVE in the One Who rose from the dead, which indicates His death, or He may speak of His burial and His resurrection. Whichever way, He's always showing us the complete picture of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection as our Gospel:

II Corinthians 5:16 *So then from now on we acknowledge no one from an outward human point of view. Even though we have known Christ from such a human point of view, now we do not know him in that way any longer.*

Now as near as we can tell, Paul and Christ were about the same age. So when Jesus began His earthly ministry at the age of thirty, Saul was also about the same age. Paul was a young up-and-comer Jew in Judaism, and so they may have never crossed paths, yet Saul knew who Jesus was. He knew all about Jesus, but of course he didn't know Him.

What he's saying is an important message for us today. What is it? Many churches preach Jesus in his earthly ministry, and that's all well and good, as far as it goes. But, there is no salvation in simply understanding His earthly ministry. We have to go to where? The Cross. We have to go to the resurrection, otherwise, as Paul said here, we know Him for nothing. And we must go beyond that. Now as we know Him as the Christ after the resurrection. Now verse 17:

II Corinthians 5:17-18 *So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away -- look, what is new has come! (18) And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation.*

What has happened? We've had that web cut off. We have been set free! And we are no longer under the shackles of Satan. We are now as Israel, who was brought out of Egypt, and set apart for God. However, we will see in the coming chapters in Exodus, when things got a little rough, where did the children of Israel want to go? To the old life in Egypt. And isn't that the problem with so many believers? Oh, as soon as things get a little tough, then the tempter comes and says, "See, you were probably better off back where you were before." But don't you believe him. That's the working of Satan, always appealing to the flesh. But, old things are passed away.

What is reconciliation? Remember that Exodus is a Book of Redemption. It's a picture of being bought back. And reconciliation is next of kin to redemption. When two people are estranged, and they get their act together, and can come back together, what do we call it? Reconciliation. It's the same thing, practically, as being redeemed, and brought back with a price.

What does this mean, "ministry of reconciliation"? It means that God expects everyone of us, when He gives opportunity, to be ready to tell another person that is trapped in Satan's web, "Listen, God has done everything that needed to be done to set you free; to reconcile you to Himself." That is the ministry of reconciliation. This is what our responsibility is as the church, to preach about this reconciliation.

II Corinthians 5:19,20 *In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation. (20) Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His plea through us. We plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!"*

An ambassador is a representative of a government not in his own homeland, but in a foreign land. That should make you realize that we're strangers here now that we belong to Christ. This world is not our home.

II Corinthians 5:21 *God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we*

would become the righteousness of God.

As soon as we become a child of God, by faith in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, we become citizens of Heaven! Paul teaches that the believer already (even though we are left on the earth) has citizenship in heaven. This got the early believers in trouble with the Roman Government, when they would give their allegiance to nobody but their God. Their Roman citizenship was now secondary. We must remember, we are left here as ambassadors of heaven, where our home really is, where our citizenship is and we are to represent that citizenship as we walk on this earth.

Now look at I Corinthians Chapter 6. This also relates to bringing Israel out of Egypt. As soon as God brings the children of Israel out of Egypt, they are to be a separated people, as we will see later. The instructions were clear-cut: they were to have nothing to do with the people around them. They were to be a separated, holy, nation of people. Again, the lesson fits right in with you and I today. Unfortunately, what has happened to Christianity, is that it has reached the place where it is no different. Most people can't tell a Christian from a non-Christian by looking at his behavior and lifestyle. But that is not what God intended. We are to be different, but not an oddball. Just because we are Christians, we don't have to be odd-balls and walk with a long face. If anyone has a reason to be joyful, it's a Christian in this perplexing world.

OK, so Moses and Aaron have confronted Pharaoh; have made their demands that Israel is to leave Egypt, for at least the three day journey into the wilderness for their sacrifice to the Lord their God. Remember, Pharaoh, rebelled at such a thought. After that, he made it more difficult for the children of Israel.

Exodus 5:7 *"You must no longer give straw to the people for making bricks as before. Let them go and collect straw for themselves.*

Have you heard the term "higher criticism"? Higher criticism was that group of theologians of the late 1800's who began to scoff at certain parts of Scripture, that they thought were unbelievable. And this is one of them. They didn't believe you could use straw to make bricks. Who had ever heard of such a thing! Well, in the 1920s, archaeologists found the ancients did make brick with straw. It was part of the binding. The Word of God is so very, very true! So they had to go out and get the straw themselves, rather than having someone bring it to them, and yet maintain their quota of production.

Exodus 5:8-11 *But you must require of them the same quota of bricks that they were making before. Do not reduce it, for they are slackers. That is why they are crying, 'Let us go sacrifice to our God.' (9) Make the work harder for the men so they will keep at it and pay no attention to lying words!" (10) So the slave masters of the people and their foremen went to the Israelites and said, "Thus says Pharaoh: 'I am not giving you straw. (11) You go get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, because there will be no reduction at all in your workload.' "*

So things keep getting worse, and finally, the children of Israel are beginning to wonder if Moses and Pharaoh know what it's all about. They went to Pharaoh to complain, and of course he told them to get back to work. On their way out from Pharaoh they run into Moses and Aaron, and said:

Exodus 5:21-23 *(21) "May the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the opinion of Pharaoh and his servants, so that you have given them an excuse to kill us!" (22)*

Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "Lord, why have you caused trouble for this people? Why did you ever send me? (23) From the time I went to speak to Pharaoh in your name, he has caused trouble for this people, and you have certainly not rescued them!"

That is a common reaction from the human viewpoint. God has said He would deliver them, He would take them out. Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh, who in turn lays more burdens on the children of Israel, and makes life even more miserable. Now, they are beginning to wonder, is God really going to do what He said He would do?