

'He supposed that his brothers would understand...' (c. 1486)

Exodus 2:11–20

Moses Murders an Egyptian

11 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.

13 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?"

14a The man replied, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you planning to kill me like you killed that Egyptian?" [cf. [Acts 7:22–28](#); [Heb 11:24–26](#)]

Moses Flees to Midian

14b Then Moses was afraid, thinking, "Surely what I did has become known." [cf. [Acts 7:29](#)]

15 When Pharaoh heard about this event, he sought to kill Moses.

So Moses fled from Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he settled by a certain well.

16 Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and began to draw water and fill the troughs in order to water their father's flock.

17 When some shepherds came and drove them away, Moses came up and defended them and then watered their flock.

18 So when they came home to their father Reuel, he asked, "Why have you come home so early today?"

19 They said, "An Egyptian man rescued us from the shepherds, and he actually drew water for us and watered the flock!"

20 He said to his daughters, "So where is he? Why in the world did you leave the man? Call him, so that he may eat a meal with us."

A God Who Sees, Hears and Remembers (c. 1486 – 1447 BC)

Exodus 2:21–25

Moses' Family

21 Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage.

22 When she bore a son, Moses named him Gershom, for he said, "I have become a resident foreigner in a foreign land."

The Death of Thutmose III (c. 1450 BC)

23 During that long period of time the king of Egypt died, and the Israelites groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out, and their desperate cry because of their slave labor went up to God.

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

25 God saw the Israelites, and God understood....

Encounter at Mount Sinai (1447 BC)

Exodus 3:1–4:17

The Burning Bush

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.

2 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."

6 He added, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." [[Matt 22:31–33](#)] Then Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

7 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.

9 And now indeed the cry of the Israelites has come to me, and I have also seen how severely the Egyptians oppress them.

10 So now go, and I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." [cf. [Acts 7:30–35](#)]

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?”

11 Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, or that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

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.”

“Who should I say sent me?”

13 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.’”

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.’”

16 “Go and bring together the elders of Israel and tell them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, appeared to me—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—saying, “I have attended carefully to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt,

17 and I have promised that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.’”

18 “The elders will listen to you, and then you and the elders of Israel must go to the king of Egypt and tell him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, let us go three days’ journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’

19 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.

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!”

“But they will not believe me”

4:1 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—

5 “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.”

“But I am not eloquent”

10 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.”

“Please send someone else!”

13 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.”

The Journey Back to Egypt (late 1447 BC)

Exodus 4:18–31

Moses Says Goodbye to Jethro

18 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.”

Yahweh’s Final Instructions (Moses delayed his departure?)

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.

21 The LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the wonders I have put under your control. But I will harden his heart and he will not let the people go.

22 You must say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, ‘Israel is my son, my firstborn,

23 and I said to you, ‘Let my son go that he may serve me,’ but since you have refused – to let him go, I will surely kill your son, your firstborn!’”

Zipporah Circumcises Her Son (Moses refused or was unable to do it himself?)

24 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.)

Aaron Meets Moses at Mount Sinai

27 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.

The Israelites Believe Moses and Aaron

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.

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Chronological Notes

1) The Pharaoh Who Sought to Kill Moses.¹

- A) Thutmose III was a minor when he came to power in 1504, and thus was younger than Moses. If, indeed, Moses had been reared as the foster son of Hatshepsut, there is every likelihood that he posed a real threat to the younger Thutmose, since Hatshepsut had no natural sons. That is, Moses may have been a candidate for pharaoh, with only his Semitic origins standing in the way. In any case, there appears to have been genuine animosity between Moses and the pharaoh. This is evident in the fact that Moses, having slain an Egyptian, was forced to flee Egypt for his life. That the pharaoh himself took note of what would otherwise have been a relatively minor issue suggests that this particular pharaoh had more than casual interest in ridding himself of Moses. Moses’s self-imposed exile took place in 1486, when he was forty years old (Acts 7:23). Thutmose III had been in power for eighteen years, and the aged Hatshepsut, who died three years later, was likely no longer able to interdict the will of her son-in-law/nephew.
- B) For forty long years Moses remained a fugitive from Egypt, having found a home among the Midianites of the Sinai and Arabia. One of the reasons for such a long exile was the fact that the pharaoh from whom Moses fled continued to live and reign—it was only after his death that Moses felt free to return to Egypt (Exod 2:23; 4:19). Thutmose III died in 1450 and

¹ Sourced from Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75–78.

was succeeded by his son Amenhotep II (1450–1425).

- (1) It is important to note that the biblical narrative requires a rule of almost forty years for the pharaoh who sought Moses's life, since the king who died at the end of Moses's sojourn in Midian was clearly the same one who had threatened him nearly forty years earlier. Of all the rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty, only Thutmose III reigned long enough to qualify.