

# The Slavery of The Israelites

Exodus 1:1-14; 2:23, 24

## **MEMORY VERSE**

MATTHEW 11:28

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

You will need: apples, knife, a chalk or dry erase board to draw on.

You will need: Plastic grocery bags, canned goods or something heavy (according to age), two cardboard boxes (Option: decorate like cars).

You will need: The “God’s Ear” template, scissors, pencil and markers or crayons.

## **ATTENTION GRABBER!**

### **Fruitful Multiplication**

Cut an apple across the middle to show the children in the two slices how many seeds are inside (there are usually 5 seeds in each apple).

On a chalk or dry erase board draw an apple tree. Talk to the children about how the fruit multiplies while drawing. Explain that if only one apple grew on this tree, and the seeds from only that apple grew into trees, how many trees would there be?

Draw five more apple trees under the first tree, spaced wide apart. Then continue explaining, “Now, if only one apple grew on each of these trees, and the seeds from those apples grew into trees, how many trees would there be?”

Next explain how that so many trees and apples were produced just from one apple from one tree. We will learn in our lesson

today how that the Lord greatly multiplied the people of Israel while they were in Egypt. Go ahead and cut slices of the remaining apples for a snack. **God hears the prayers of His children.**

## LESSON TIME!

In all of our lessons, we have seen the love of God for each one of us and for everyone. We have seen how God is sovereign and has a master plan for everything. We have seen types in the Old Testament that represent Christ in the New Testament and we have seen how God uses every circumstance in our lives to make us more like Jesus.

Today we begin Exodus and we will learn that God's people have multiplied. There are many Israelites now. But God's people are being mistreated very badly so they cry out to God. We will learn that **God hears the prayers of His children.** He does listen to His children and He listens to your prayers and my prayers. He is always with us and will never leave us nor forsake us, and He will answer us in His perfect time.

### EXODUS 1:1-7

Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob;

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah;

Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin;

Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt already).

And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation.

But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.

We have in the first seven verses, the nation of Israel growing and multiplying. It starts with the naming of Jacob's sons, starting with Leah's six sons in the order of their birth. Then Rachel's (Jacob's second wife) son Benjamin is mentioned, but not Joseph, because Joseph was already in Egypt. Dan and Naphtali were the sons of Rachel's maidservant Bilhah. Gad and Asher were the sons of Leah's maidservant Zilpah. The number of men who entered Egypt was between 70 and 75 (see Genesis 46:27; Deuteronomy 10:22; Acts 7:14)

It is amazing to think that the entire nation of Israel at this time was only around 75 people. At the time when the Exodus begins there are now about 600,000 men. When you add women and children there were about 2,000,000 people. They grew to this amount in approximately 400 years. No wonder it says, "the land was filled with them."

God is so good. His promise to Abraham so many generations ago is now coming to pass. God always keeps His promises and will do what He says He will do at just the right time. Sometimes we have a hard time trusting God though. When we don't see things happening at the time when we thought they were going to happen then we might think that somehow God has forgotten. He has never forgotten to fulfill any of His promises.

Sometimes we might think that God is too busy to do what He promised to do, or maybe He enjoys helping everyone else and wouldn't want to fulfill any promises in my life. These are all things we may have thought of. If you remember God made a

promise to Abraham that He would be a great nation and that they would be the same in number as the sand of the sea. Abraham didn't see it physically fulfilled in his lifetime, but God kept His promise many years later. The Israelites were becoming as numerous as the sands of the sea. God wasn't done yet, because He had also promised that His people would live in a land that He promised to give them. He was going to perform that promise and teach His children to trust in Him in the process. As we follow the journey of the children of Israel, we will learn exciting things about our own walk with God. **God hears the prayers of His children.**

## Heavy Laden

Let's do a grocery store relay! Divide your class into two teams. Give each team two heavy grocery bags (just heavy enough for them to carry).

The first person must carry the groceries to the "car" (cardboard box made to resemble a car).

Then the second person gets them out of the car and carries them into the "house" (back across the starting line), then repeat.

Explain that a lot of things had changed for the children of Israel since Joseph's time. They were made slaves and now had to do heavy labor every day of their lives. They also were beaten and treated badly.

## EXODUS 1:8-14

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we;

"come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land."

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

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel.

So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor.

And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage--in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor.

Now the new king of Egypt, "did not know about Joseph" or "had no appreciation for Joseph's achievements." So the new king of Egypt became concerned that there were too many Israelites now. Out of fear he began to think that if there was ever a war they might gang up on him and join the other side and help to defeat Egypt.

So Pharaoh decides to deal with the Israelites shrewdly. The words, "deals shrewdly" implies a policy that would try to get them to stop growing so fast in their population as well as use their labor potential to its fullest. So they set taskmasters over them and forced them into labor to build the royal store cities of Pitham and Rameses.

But, as the Lord so often does, he frustrates the plans of man. The more the Egyptians oppressed the people the more they grew in number and strength. Isn't God awesome! How He uses hard times in our lives to strengthen us and then He still accomplishes His plans no matter what. We can also see how that the Lord makes Satan's plan to backfire and then to work for His good.

For example, it is interesting to see in the early church that Christians were persecuted (or treated badly and sometimes even killed) for their faith. So instead of the Christians staying in one town, the persecution drove them all over the country and the world. When they scattered all over, they spread the gospel all over the world. Satan's plan backfired on him! We can truly say, "And we know that all things work together for the good to them that love God and are called according to His purposes" Romans 8:28.

We see in our lesson that God helped His people; the Egyptians responded by being even more mean to God's people. They made them work harder as slaves and made their lives very bitter. When this happens, we will see, it causes the children of Israel to cry out to God and **God hears the prayers of His children.**

#### EXODUS 2:23-24

Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.

So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

Here we see that the Pharaoh of Egypt dies. He is then followed by another just like himself. So the oppression did not stop just because the first Pharaoh died, but continued on through to the

next generation. The people cried out to God for deliverance and it says that God heard their cries and remembered the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God remembers His people and His faithfulness to them. It was now the right time to begin the children of Israel's deliverance. God loves His people and will always help them in their time of need. When we have needs we can always cry out to God. He may not always answer us exactly like we think he should or would, but we can rest assured that He always hears and knows what we are going through.

Sometimes when we cry out to God it may seem like He takes a while to answer, but He has reasons for that as well. In our story we read that the children of Israel grew in strength and multiplied the more they were afflicted (Exodus 1:12). Why would God let this happen to His people? For one thing, it made them desire a land of their own and thus through that desire God would begin to fulfill the prophecy of generations ago that said that God would give His people the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey.

It also made them stronger and more dependant on God. We don't know for sure, but perhaps they weren't calling on God before all this began to happen. But now they learned that they had to become completely dependant on God to meet their needs daily and to eventually deliver them.

Also, God knew that there would be enemies in the Promised Land to conquer, and they had to be strong to wage war. But most of all, it drove them to God. It made them trust Him and to desire what He had for them.

The same is true in our lives; those hard times make us turn to Jesus and trust Him, because He is the only one who can help us through. When bad things happen in our lives it doesn't mean that

God isn't still in control. He is very much in control of the situation, but He also wants us to be drawn closer to Him.

Something else to learn from this lesson is that we should trust God just as much when times are good. We need to run to Him in the good times and in the bad times. Regardless of when they cried out to God, He certainly heard them; and God hears our prayers as well, every single one of them. He is never too busy, and He is always with us no matter what. Let us yield ourselves unto the mighty hand of God and the plan He has for our lives, that He might work through us the great things He has planned for our lives! **God hears the prayers of His children.**

## God's Ears

You will need as many "God's Ear" templates as the number of children in your class. Have the children draw a large picture of an ear and color. Next have the children poke a hole in the ear where the sound will travel in. At the bottom of the page are lines that can be used for prayer requests.

Explain to the children that "God's Ear" is always open to our prayers. Have them write a prayer request to poke through the hole. **God hears the prayers of His children.**

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's faithfulness to hear His children. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

Template – God’s Ear

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Prayer Request:

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Prayer Request:

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Prayer Request:

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Prayer Request:

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