

# EXODUS 1–6

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## **Introduction to Exodus**

There are five books that make up the books of Moses, also known as the Torah or Pentateuch. The second of those five books is Exodus, following the book of Genesis. In Hebrew, the title of this second book is the equivalent of “And these are the names of,” which is taken from the beginning of the first verse. Take note of the first word in that title: “and.” This is an indication that Exodus picks up where Genesis ends. Exodus is the Greek name of the book and means “departure” or “exit.” This book tells us of the departure, or exodus, of the Hebrews out of Egypt. Scholars mostly agree that Moses was the writer of the book. Chapters 2 and 3 of Exodus recount Moses’s birth, how Moses became a prophet, and how he delivered the people of Israel out of Egyptian bondage.

The first half of the book of Exodus (chapters 1–18) is primarily historical, while the second half deals with laws and covenants. The first verses of chapter 1 take us back about 430 years to when Jacob and the children of Israel traveled to Egypt. At another point in Genesis, God commanded Abraham and his family to leave Abraham’s homeland for Egypt. God then promised Abraham that he and his seed would become a great nation (Genesis 12:3). Genesis showed us the beginning of the fulfillment of this promise as it followed Abraham and his next three generations (Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph) to that goal.

## ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 1:1–6**

At the beginning of the book of Exodus, we read that Jacob took himself, his family, his servants, and his livestock to Egypt with the Pharaoh’s approval. In addition to needing to escape a famine, Jacob

wanted to see Joseph, his son and governor over all of Egypt, before Jacob died. Verses 4–6 list the sons of Jacob, minus Joseph since he was, of course, already in Egypt. The offspring of these twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel. The text states that seventy people made the trip, though scholars generally believe that there were many more, including spouses, children, other relatives, and servants. Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, until the end of his life. Joseph served a total of eighty years as governor of Egypt before he died. Many of Joseph’s descendants had passed on by the time the book of Exodus was written.

In verse 1, notice the use of the phrase “children of Israel.” As mentioned in Genesis 32:28, God appeared to Jacob and declared to him, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel” (see also Genesis 35:10).

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 1:7–10**

Verse 7 tells us that the children of Israel multiplied while in Egypt, stating it five times, in one way or another. This is an example of repetitive phrasing, which is a writing style common in Old Testament times. We see it a lot in the book of Isaiah. While repetition has multiple purposes in scripture, here it is used to emphasize that the Lord was fulfilling His promise to His people.

In verse 8, a new king that did not know of Joseph came into power. Some scholars believe that the new king didn’t know Joseph because he was part of a different dynasty than Joseph had served under. These scholars use the reasoning that the previous king was of a Semitic clan, as was Joseph (which explains why Joseph was easily appointed governor of Egypt). Scholars believe that when the new king took over the Egyptian throne, he possibly suppressed Hebrew history in Egypt or even ordered all records destroyed from the previous dynasty. Therefore, no records of Joseph are to be found in Egyptian records.

Since the population of Israel grew rapidly after Joseph’s death, the new king may have tried to slow that growth down. He probably feared that if a future war broke out in Egypt, the Hebrews would eventually join with Egypt’s enemies.

We will see as we read on that the Hebrews were oppressed and put in bondage by the Egyptians.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 1:11–14**

Egyptian taskmasters imposed a harsh workload on the Hebrews. And the more the Hebrews were oppressed, the more they multiplied. That worried the Egyptians so much that they placed the Hebrews in bondage, ordering them to labor in the fields and to build the cities of Pithom and Raamses for Pharaoh. These were “treasure cities,” where Pharaoh stored grain and other things of value. These cities were located in Goshen, a fertile part of Egypt where the Hebrews were believed to have settled. The city of Raamses is commonly recognized as the location where the later Exodus out of Egypt began. Pithom is thought to be the first stopping place as the Exodus progressed.

#### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 1:15–19**

As was noted previously, the children of Israel multiplied very quickly, and Pharaoh wanted to slow that down. He spoke to many Hebrew midwives, two of them being Shiphrah and Puah. He ordered them to kill all the newborn Hebrew sons but to spare all the daughters, which would weaken the people of Israel for at least a generation. However, the midwives wanted to obey God more than Pharaoh, so they decided to save the male children. When asked by Pharaoh why they did not obey him, their ostensible reason was that Hebrew women were healthier than Egyptian women and always seemed to deliver their children before a midwife could attend to them. In other words, the Hebrew midwives could not perform Pharaoh’s request if they were not present at the child’s delivery.

#### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 1:20–22**

Because of the Hebrew midwives’ good deed in saving the sons of Israel at birth, the numbers of the Hebrew people only increased. These midwives feared and obeyed God and as such were blessed with their own household, perhaps giving birth to their own children. Pharaoh realized he could not rely on the Hebrews to kill their own children, so, as verse 22 tells us, he asked that his own people, the Egyptians, do it.

We will see in the next chapter that a special child named Moses was born, a child that would become the liberator of the children of Israel. Some scholars believe that through divination, Pharaoh learned of the impending birth of that child and therefore wanted him killed. However, since some Israelite prophets

(for instance, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph) lived and taught in Egypt, it is possible that this pharaoh was aware of their prophetic teachings (see Genesis 15:13–16; 46:3–4).

### **Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 2:1–4**

Moses's parents, Amram and Jochebed, were Levites. Amram was a grandson of Levi, a son of Jacob (see Exodus 1:2). Moses was a “goodly” child, meaning that he was handsome and beautiful. Knowing of the pharaoh's edict that all male Israelite children be killed, Jochebed decided to hide Moses. He was hidden for three months before she decided to place him in a basket made of bulrushes (reeds). The basket was smeared with tar to make it watertight. She then placed the basket among the reeds at the river's edge. While all this took place, Moses's older sister, Miriam, watched from a distance to see what happened to the basket.

### **Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 2:5–10**

Pharaoh's daughter discovered the basket floating among the reeds at the river's edge. And, of course, she found a baby in the basket and immediately recognized it as a Hebrew child. Miriam came out of her hiding place to speak with Pharaoh's daughter and offered to locate a wet nurse for the child. The princess, who was greatly concerned for the baby, unknowingly accepted Miriam's choice of Jochebed as the nurse. Jochebed was paid wages to nurse and care for the baby. He was eventually returned to Pharaoh's daughter, who raised him as her own son. Because he had been “drawn out of the water” when she discovered him, she called his name Moses.<sup>1</sup> Scholars believe that although Pharaoh's daughter raised Moses, Jochebed may have continued to be his nursemaid for about three to seven years. Therefore, Moses had the opportunity to learn both Hebrew and Egyptian teachings and ways of life.

### **Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

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<sup>1</sup> Scholars vary on their explanation of the etymology of Moses's name (the King James Version of the Bible uses the Greek rendering). Remember that Pharaoh's daughter was Egyptian, so she may or may not have known Hebrew. Before she took over the role of raising the child, it seems that the child must have had a name already given to him by his own parents. Some scholars will even go as far as to say that Moses's natural mother, who was Hebrew, may have suggested the already given Hebrew name to the princess, who accepted it, since the name inferred drawing a child out of water.

## **Exodus 2:11–15**

As Moses's narrative moves forward forty years (see Acts 7:23), we see Moses identify himself as a Hebrew despite the fact that he was mostly raised in a privileged manner among the Egyptians. The text says that one day he saw an Egyptian striking one of his "brothers." Moses then looked around and saw that no one else was going to the slave's aid, so he "slew" the Egyptian. The next day, two other Hebrews asked Moses why he would "smite" the Egyptian. Notice the ambiguity between whether he slew (killed) or smote (hit) the Egyptian. It so happens that the words usually translated as "to slay" and "to smite" both derive from the same root word. Regardless of whether Moses slew or just smote the Egyptian, we know that he took it upon himself to deliver the slave from harm. This theme of deliverance is often seen in Moses's narrative as a type of Christ, who is our Deliverer.

Moses's response to the two perplexed Hebrews was, "Surely this thing is known" (Exodus 2:14). Stephen, in Acts 7:25, said that Moses "supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not."

Pharaoh became aware of Moses's actions and ordered him to be killed. Moses escaped Pharaoh's anger and fled from Egypt to the land of Midian (believed by scholars to be in the Arabian Peninsula across from the Sinai Peninsula). At some point along the way, he rested beside a well.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 2:16–22**

While sitting by the well, Moses encountered the seven daughters of the priest of Midian (here called Reuel, but later called Jethro), who had come to draw water for their father's flock. Some shepherders came and chased the women away. Moses intervened and drew water for the women's flocks. Noticing how quickly the women returned home, Reuel asked what happened. Since Moses was probably still in his Egyptian clothing, the women responded that "an Egyptian" helped them. Reuel invited Moses to live with him and his household. Moses eventually married one of Reuel's daughters, Zipporah, and she bore him a son, Gershom, which means "stranger." Moses apparently felt alienated in Midian, as he could call neither Egypt nor Canaan his home.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 2:23–25**

After Moses spent some time in Midian (Acts 7:30 says forty years), the pharaoh died, which means the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt for an additional forty years. God heard the supplication of the people of Israel while they were in captivity and bondage. God also remembered the covenant that he had made with Abraham. After the Hebrews' many years in slavery, it was time for God to fulfil His promise of redeeming His people, for He had "respect" for them. The word translated as "respect" here means that God heard the Hebrews' prayers, He acknowledged their suffering, He recognized their turning toward Him, and He was going to help them overcome their ordeal.

In Exodus thus far, we have seen God's hand in saving Moses, the future liberator of His people, from Pharaoh's decree of death to all male Hebrew children. We have seen God save him again as he fled to Midian and was married. Along the way, we have also seen Moses as the rescuer, or deliverer, saving his fellow people from harm. These things in the narrative show Moses as a type of the Savior and Deliverer. We will see more of this foreshadowing as we continue our reading of the book of Exodus.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 3:1**

In Exodus 2:18, we read that Moses's father-in-law, the priest of Midian, was called Reuel. Here in 3:1, however, we see his name as Jethro. Dual names appear quite often in Old Testament writings. (Note that Jacob also had another name: Israel.) There are different scholarly opinions to explain the two names used here for Moses's father-in-law. In this case, some scholars attribute the dual names to scribal error. Others say that perhaps Reuel was indeed his real name, but Jethro was his priestly name.

Moses, now eighty years old, was Jethro's keeper of the flock. We read that Moses led the flock to the "mountain of God," Horeb, typically called Mt. Sinai. (The location of the original mountain is not known.) The mountain will indeed earn the designation "the mountain of God" as we read about the event about to unfold and about other forthcoming events when Moses was on the mountain.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 3:2–6**

On the mountain, God appeared to Moses in the form of a burning bush. Moses noted that the bush did not burn in the fire. God called to Moses from the bush as he approached and requested that Moses remove his shoes because he was standing on holy ground. God identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God who made covenants with Moses’s ancestors. Moses was afraid to look at God.

Verse 2, where “the angel of the Lord” appeared to Moses, needs explanation. The Old Testament frequently references an “angel” speaking when it seems that God Himself is actually speaking (see Genesis 12:11–12). When Abraham was preparing to sacrifice his son on an altar, “the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven. . . . For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” In Genesis 12:15–16, we read, “And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time. And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord.” And, of course, Exodus 3:4 makes it clear that it is God Himself speaking from the bush. The reference to God appearing in a flame of fire is a sign of His presence; we will see this symbol throughout the book of Exodus.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 3:7–9**

From the burning bush, God declared to Moses that He had seen, heard, and known of the bondage and suffering that the children of Israel had gone through in Egypt for many years. God had come down to the mountain to deliver His people from that bondage. We will see Moses assisting in that deliverance as we move forward through the book of Exodus. Verse 8 references the promised land that is part of the Abrahamic covenant and mentions some of the inhabitants of Canaan in Moses’s time.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 3:10–14**

Moses was called to speak with Pharaoh and to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses humbly wondered out loud, “Who am I” to perform such a task? God assured Moses that He would support him in the task and give him the confidence he needed. Moses then asked God His name so that Moses could tell the people in Egypt. God responded with the enigmatic phrase, “I AM THAT I AM.” Here God identifies Himself as Jehovah (or Yahweh in Hebrew). In Hebrew, the tetragrammaton (the four-letter word, without vowels) referencing “I

AM” in verse 14 is transliterated as YHWH. YHWH not only represents forms of the Hebrew verb *hayah* (to be) but is also related to the name YaHWeH. It is the name that the children of Israel would come to recognize as the name of God. Christians typically use the associated name Jehovah and consider Him to be Jesus Christ.

Jehovah later appeared to Moses again “upon this mountain [Mt. Sinai]” after Moses helped deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. Then, a token, or sign, was shown to Moses that would prove that God’s hand was involved in this deliverance.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 3:15–18**

Rather than using the name Yahweh, those who translated Exodus from Greek rendered God’s name as “the Lord God,” which is the common translation found in the Bible. Moses was instructed by God to tell the children of Israel that “the Lord God of your fathers” was the name to be remembered from generation to generation. Moses was also instructed to tell the people that the Lord God had appeared and sent him to them. God had seen their suffering while in slavery and would deliver them out of slavery and lead them out of Egypt into the promised land.

Moses and “the elders of Israel” were then instructed by God to go to Pharaoh with a similar message, though in a less direct way. Moses was to ask for Pharaoh’s permission to allow him and the children of Israel to go into the desert to worship God for just three days. It seemed that the king would surely agree to that request.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 3:19–22**

The Lord knew from the beginning that Pharaoh would not let Moses and the Hebrews go into the desert unless He demonstrated a “mighty hand” to help Moses persuade him. By using “signs and wonders,” God would show the people that He was the true and living God.

Once Moses and the people were allowed to leave, they would not go empty-handed. The Lord told Moses that every woman was to “borrow” wealth and clothes from her neighbor and others. Here, the word “borrow” means “to ask,” meaning that they should ask the Egyptians for help. The Egyptians in the end

provided the Hebrews with the wealth and clothing that they would need on their journey. Through other people, God did indeed provide for His people while they journeyed out of Egypt.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:1–5**

Moses was concerned that the people of Israel would still not believe that God appeared to him, so God showed Moses some signs that would convince the people of Israel, and later the Pharaoh, that Moses spoke on God's behalf: God turned Moses's staff into a serpent, then turned it back into a staff. In Egypt, the serpent represented protection and healing. The pharaohs' crown had a cobra as part of the decoration, which represented Wadjet, an Egyptian goddess who represented the power of the king. By demonstrating His ability to change the staff into a serpent, God indicated that He was the source of Moses's power and greater than the Egyptian gods.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:6–9**

In case the people did not believe the first sign and Moses's message, God demonstrated another sign: He made Moses's hand leprous, then returned it to its normal state. As with the sign of the serpent, we see symbolism here again of God's ability to heal. If the people still did not believe Moses, he was instructed to place some river water on dry land and turn that water into blood. This appears to be a sign of God's judgment upon people who would not follow His prophet.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:10–13**

Moses was concerned that he was not eloquent enough to face Pharaoh, but God assured him that just as He had revealed with the previous signs, He had the power to assist Moses with his speech. However, Moses was so worried about his speech problem that he begged God to send him another person that could also help.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:14–17**

God was frustrated with Moses’s lack of faith, but He nevertheless decided to send Aaron, Moses’s brother and a Levite, to be a spokesperson and mediator between Moses and the people. Moses, of course, would still be the person who led Israel out of Egypt and would speak on behalf of God.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:18–20**

Moses accepted his calling as deliverer of Israel and subsequently received permission from Jethro, his father-in-law, to return to Egypt. God also gave His blessing for Moses to do so. God assured Moses that it was now safe to return. Therefore, Moses and his family made the trip back to Egypt. He carried the “rod of God,” his staff, with him.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 4:21–23**

Before Moses left Midian, God instructed him that when he returned to Egypt to speak with Pharaoh and to visit his fellow Hebrews, Moses should show Pharaoh all the signs and wonders that he had already observed. These signs and wonders were meant to convince Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to leave Egypt. However, as part of God’s plan, Pharaoh’s heart would be hardened to a point that Pharaoh would not let them leave.

God remembered His covenant promises (see Exodus 2:24), and He remembered His covenant people: “Israel is my son, even my firstborn” (4:22). His “son” represents all the people of Israel. Moses would ask the Pharaoh to let God’s people go. If Pharaoh would not, then Pharaoh’s own firstborn, and all of Egypt’s firstborn sons, would be killed.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 4:24–26**

Just as the Lord remembered His covenant with Abraham’s descendants, He expected Moses and the rest of the Hebrews to remember their parts of the covenant as well. As part of the covenant promise, their sons had to be circumcised “as a token of the covenant betwixt [God] and [Abraham]” (Genesis 17:11). Regarding Moses’s son, failure to circumcise him could have led to Moses’s punishment—and even death. Moses’s life was preserved, however, by the actions of his wife, Zipporah.

### **Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 4:27–31**

God arranged for Moses to meet Aaron, his brother, in the desert on Mt. Sinai. Aaron was called to be Moses’s spokesperson when he was to speak with the people of Israel and later with Pharaoh and his court. Moses told Aaron all the things that God had instructed him to do. In verses 29–30, we see Aaron speaking with the elders and other people about God’s message to Moses, including the Hebrews’ many years of suffering in Egypt and the fact that God had visited them there. The people believed Aaron and Moses. To show their gratitude to God for keeping His covenant with them, for protecting and providing for them, the people all bowed their heads in worship. The people of Israel, presumably, become converted by witnessing “signs and wonders.”

### **Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 5:1–5**

After the people of Israel were convinced of Moses’s authority, Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh with God’s commandment to “let my people go.” Moses and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh with a statement of God’s authority: “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel.” This form of asserting authority was often used in the ancient Near East. (Note in Exodus 5:10 that Pharaoh affirmed his personal authority by stating, “Thus saith Pharaoh.”) Pharaoh defiantly responded, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey . . . to let Israel go?” He admitted that he did not know the Lord. We will see later that the Lord assured Egypt that “[they] shall *know* that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them” (7:5).

Moses and Aaron continued to seek permission to allow the Hebrews to leave so that they could feast and worship “the Lord [their] God.” The Hebrews wished to obey their God, and if they did not go on that journey (or were not allowed to go), then God would send down pestilence or worse upon Egypt. Pharaoh did not

believe them and stood by his decision to not let the Hebrews go, demanding that the many Hebrews in Egypt get back to work. The work was a heavy burden on the Hebrews, and that burden was about to become even heavier. Heavy burdens, however, can become a blessing, as we will see in later verses.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 5:6–9**

The Hebrews in Egypt had been tasked with making brick. Brickmaking in ancient Egypt was common. For example, there is a well-known painting from the ruins of Thebes that depicts brickmaking. Brickmaking was a way for the Hebrews to labor for Pharaoh, like serfs who had to pay taxes to the landowner. Because Pharaoh thought the Hebrews didn't have enough work since they wanted to go off to feast and rest, he and his officers gave them more work. Straw was needed in the process of brickmaking, but Pharaoh now refused to give the straw to the Hebrews; the Hebrews had to gather it themselves. On top of that, the "tale of the bricks"—that is, their quota or tax obligation—was not to be reduced. The Hebrews had to work harder to maintain the obligation placed on them. Rather than allow the Hebrews to "sacrifice to their God," Pharaoh forced the people to sacrifice to him by way of a heavy tax obligation.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 5:10–14**

The taskmasters, or overseers, over the Hebrews, beat the Israelite officers (who were the brickmaking foremen), forcing them and those working under them to work harder, not only in gathering their own straw but also in making the bricks. Rather than straw, many of the workers resorted to gathering stubble from straw cuttings. Their brick quotas remained the same as when straw was handed out.

***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 5:15–19**

The Israelite foremen, seeing that they were in trouble ("were in evil case"), went to Pharaoh and demanded to know why he was being so harsh on his servants, even to the point of having them beaten for

not keeping up with their original brickmaking quotas despite the fact that Pharaoh's leaders were at fault by not providing the straw.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 5:20–23**

The Israelite foremen met with Moses and Aaron on their return from speaking with Pharaoh. They accused Moses and Aaron of making them look bad in front of Pharaoh, to the point of potentially getting themselves killed. Moses, in turn, went to God with their concerns. He also wanted to know why the Lord allowed him and the people to cause so much evil. (The Hebrew word rendered here as “evil” also has the meaning of “trouble.”) Moses surely knew that he was to help deliver God's people out of Egypt, but he did not expect it to be such a burden or that it would take so long: “Neither has thou [Lord] delivered thy people at all.” This was a good lesson in obedience and patience for Moses and his people. Things do not always go the way we expect, though God does keep His covenants and promises.

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

**Exodus 6:1–5**

God reassured Moses that He was in control and would keep His covenant with Israel to deliver them out of Pharaoh's grasp and out of Egypt. God promised “a strong hand” to convince Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go, and with a “strong hand” Pharaoh would end up running the Hebrews out of Egypt.

Notice the numerous usages of “I” in these passages, which denote that God is speaking: “I am the Lord,” “I will do to Pharaoh,” “I appeared unto Abraham,” “I have also established my covenant,” “I have also heard the groaning . . . of Israel,” and “I have remembered my covenant.” Also notice the reference to the name Jehovah, (or Yahweh), which may have been unfamiliar or forgotten by the Hebrews in Egypt (see the commentary for Exodus 3:10–18).

**Source**

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 6:6–8**

Through Moses, the Lord continued to reassure the children of Israel that He was in control of bringing His people out of Egyptian bondage and of guiding them to the land that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would redeem (in Hebrew, “deliver”) His people, rendering great judgments against Egypt. Through all that, the people of Israel would certainly come to know their God.

#### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 6:9–13**

Because of their continued bondage, the Hebrews appeared to not trust in Moses and his message that God would rescue them from bondage and torment. The Lord requested that Moses and Aaron return once again to Pharaoh and ask that His people be allowed to go. Moses was frustrated with that request since he had already attempted to speak to his people and to Pharaoh, and neither the people nor Pharaoh responded the way Moses expected. In addition to feeling slow of speech, Moses felt he was unworthy to fulfill his assignment from the Lord.

#### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

### **Exodus 6:14–19**

The biblical text breaks the narrative to list a genealogy leading up to Moses and Aaron’s generation to show that it is *this* very Moses and *this* very Aaron that had been given the task of delivering Israel. The narrator listed only four generations from the time of Jacob (Israel), starting with Jacob’s first three sons: Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. In Genesis 15:13–16, the Lord promised Abram that deliverance of his people would come in the fourth generation: “And he [the Lord] said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generations they shall come hither again.”

#### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 6:20–25**

Levi's son Kohath had a son named Amran. He was the father of Moses and Aaron. The narrator goes on to list Aaron's sons, who would go on to become leaders of the Levitical Priesthood in Israel.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 6:26–27**

The genealogy points us to Moses and Aaron, who were called by God to deliver Israel out of Egypt. The Hebrews would be led out of Egypt according to their “armies” (Hebrew *tsava'*, “company” or “host”). Note that in later biblical passages, God is sometimes referred to as “Yahweh tseva'oth” or “the Lord of hosts.” For example, Psalms 24:10 reads, “Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.” This name points to God's organizing the children of Israel into “armies” according to each tribe.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

## **Exodus 6:28–30**

These verses mirror Moses's earlier doubts and reluctance to be God's spokesperson.

### ***Source***

Book of Exodus Minute by W. Breitenstein

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