

# Unit Three: In Egypt

ISRAEL IN EGYPT AND HER DELIVERANCE  
(Exodus 1 – 13)

# Historical Background

- Ahmose I (~1584-1560 BC)
    - first ruler of the strong 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, drove out the Hyksos in the 16<sup>th</sup> century BC
- The **First order** for **Hebrew midwives** to kill Hebrew male babies at birth (Exodus 1.16) came from him or Amenhotep I (~1560-1539 BC)



Moses born ~1526 BC

Thutmose I (~1539-1514 BC): Beginning of empire status for Egypt



# Historical Background

→ **Second order** by Thutmose III (~1504\*-1450 BC) for **all Egyptians** to kill Hebrew male babies by casting into the Nile (Exodus 1.22)  
→ Jews desire to leave (would have been hard to leave if things were going well)



# Relevant Egyptian history

- Thutmose III (~1482\*\_-1450 BC) Greatest Egyptian ruler
  - expansion of empire almost to Euphrates
  - Moses flees to Midian (~1480 BC)
- Amenhotep II (~1450 – 1424 BC): Great military leader
  - The Exodus (~1446 BC)

# Preparation of Moses to Deliver Israel (Exodus 2-4)

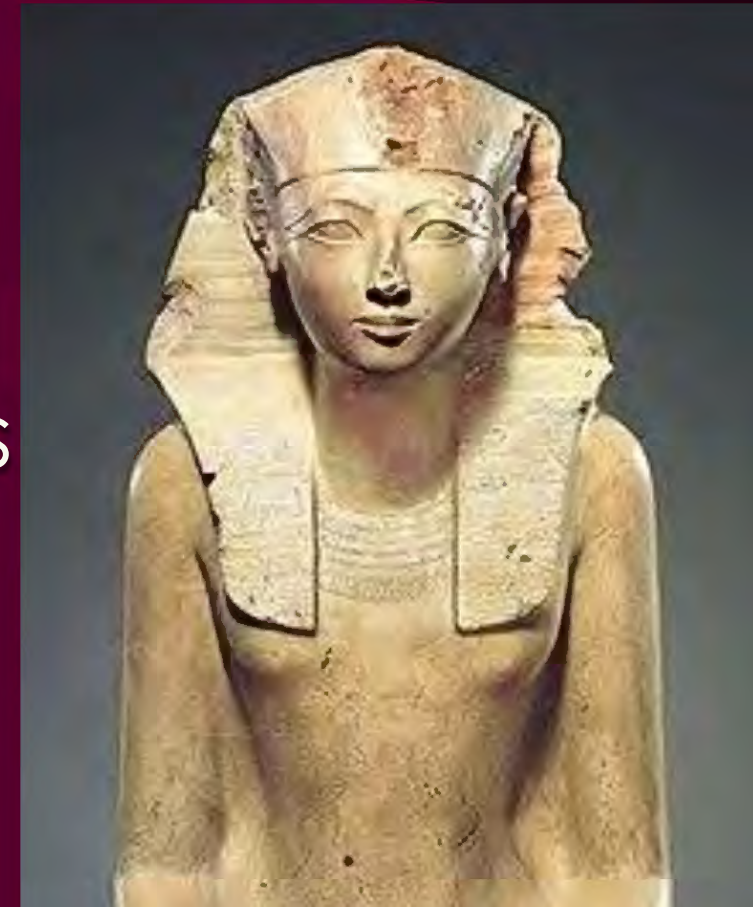
## Birth and youth (2)

- Tribe of Levi (both Amram, his father, and Jochebed, his mother)
- Aaron (~ 3 years) and Miriam (~ 7 years) older
- Name (Moses): in Hebrew, 'drawn out'; in Egyptian, 'son' (cp. Thutmose = 'son of Thoth')
- Hidden among bulrushes → daughter of pharaoh takes him into the household of Pharaoh

# EXCURSUS ON HATSHEPSUT

## THE DAUGHTER OF PHARAOH

- The only living child of Thutmose I, son of Amenhotep I, with his chief wife, Ahmose (∴ the daughter of Ahmose I and the sister of Amenhotep I [→ “aunt” of Thutmose I])
  - No direct evidence of Hatshepsut as the biblical daughter of Pharaoh
  - However, her significance in history supports it



# HATSHEPSUT

- She could not accede to the throne
- Married a son of Thutmose I by a lesser wife (her half-brother, Thutmose II, who ruled ~1514 – 1504 BC)
- The weakness of Thutmose II allowed Hatshepsut to rule, and she extended her claim over Lower and Upper Egypt
- The royal couple had only one daughter (Nefrure) and no son; Nefrure perhaps married to a son of Thutmose II by a lesser wife
- A successor, assuming the name Thutmose III, was crowned king at age 10



# HATSHEPSUT

- Intellectually endowed
  - in her household, Moses had the finest education

“Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds” (Acts 7.22)



# Preparation of Moses

Moses makes a **courageous choice** (2.11-25)

- Age 40: “By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin” (Heb 11.24-25)
- **Unfortunate decision:** killing an abusive slave-master

The Pharaoh who “heard of it” (Ex 2.15) would have been Thutmose III; that he ruled from Thebes to the south would have allowed for the escape of Moses



# Preparation of Moses

## Flight to Midian

- Jethro (3.1; “excellence”)
  - Reuel 2.18; “friend of God”)
  - Priest of Midian
  - Moses delivered his daughters from other shepherds
    - given Zipporah as wife
    - lived with Jethro for 40 years



# Call of Moses to Deliver Israel

Call and responses (3.1 – 4.13)

- Moses did not decide to return to Egypt b/c death of Thutmose III
- He was called by God at the burning bush (3.1-10)

Moses

- “Who am I”? (3.11-12)
- “Who sent me”? (3.13-22)

Yahweh: I AM WHO I AM!

- Preview of what will happen in the exodus is given to Moses

# Call of Moses to Deliver Israel

- Moses continues to argue with Yahweh
  - They won't believe me (4.1-9)
  - I am not eloquent (4.10-12)
  - Send someone else (4.13)

# Moses Returns to Deliver Israel

- Seeks and gets Jethro's permission to return to Egypt with his family
- Covenantal context of the trip back
- The LORD sends Aaron to the wilderness to meet Moses (4.27-31)

# Confrontation with Pharaoh (5.1 – 7.19)

## Moses' Demand and Pharaoh's Response

- Let my people go: Moses bargains for 3 days in the wilderness
- Not deceitful; Moses was testing Pharaoh to observe his reaction to the religious request

# Moses' Demand and Pharaoh's Response

- Pharaoh Amenhotep II (~1450-1424 BC), a strong military leader: “No!”
- Calls Israel lazy: now they must find their own straw and make the same quota of bricks



# Confrontation with Pharaoh

## Repeated Demand and Rejection (7.1-19)

- Step One: Pharaoh demanded a miracle as proof from Moses and Aaron
  - the staff → serpent
  - the miracle duplicated by the magicians



# EXCURSUS ON EGYPTIAN MAGICIANS

- Magic and religion were closely related in Egypt (and throughout the ANE)
- Two Egyptian patron deities of magic: Isis; Thoth (Thutmose = son of Thoth)
- Magic was employed in all kinds of mystery to obtain answers and the ends desired
- Magicians attained great skill in their art

# Demand and Rejection

- After Step One
  - Pharaoh's heart was hardened (v. 13)
- How might we understand God having hardened Pharaoh's heart?
  - Pharaoh had already refused
  - God revealed things about himself to his people and to the Egyptians (multiplied his signs and his wonders)
  - Moses established as a leader

# God's Response in Power (7.20 – 12.36)

Step Two (God declared the miracles)

The Ten Plagues (7.20 – 10.29)

- |                                    |                         |             |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Water to blood                  | } Mimicked by magicians | 6. Boils    |
| 2. Frogs                           |                         | 7. Hail     |
| 3. Gnats                           |                         | 8. Locusts  |
| 4. Insects (flies?)                |                         | 9. Darkness |
| 5. Disease on livestock (anthrax?) |                         | 10. Death   |

# God's Response

## Purposes of the plagues

- to punish Egypt for enslaving Israel
- to facilitate Israel's deliverance from Egypt
- to show that Israel belonged to Yahweh
- to demonstrate Yahweh's supremacy over the gods (and magicians) of Egypt
- to show other nations the power of Yahweh (Joshua 2.9-11; 1 Sam 4.8; 6.6)
- to demonstrate the sovereignty of God in all earthly affairs (9.13-16)

# God's Response

## Egyptian magicians

- Only able to mimic the first two plagues
  - trickery?
  - demonic power?
- Inadequacy
- Named in 2 Tim 3.8: Jannes, Jambres

# God's Response

Supernatural character demonstrated by

1. **Intensification**: natural events, but unique in severity and timing
2. **Prediction**: time set for coming and removal (insects, livestock disease, hail)
3. **Discrimination**: no insects, livestock disease, hail or utter darkness in Goshen
4. **Progression**: increase in severity
5. **Uniqueness**: tenth event obviously a divine intervention, predicted and selective

# The duplicity of Pharaoh

- As the story unfolds, Pharaoh seems to gradually become more inclined to Moses' request, agreeing (to a limited degree) multiple times, beginning with the 2<sup>nd</sup> plague, to let the people go
- He reneged each time once the plague was removed (until the 10<sup>th</sup> plague)

# Duration of the period of plagues

- The 1<sup>st</sup> plague would have been more remarkable during the flooding season on the Nile, i.e., in September/October
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> plague (frogs) followed seven days after the first (7.25), and the muddy conditions following the flooding period of the Nile fits this (October)



# Duration of the period of plagues

- The 7<sup>th</sup> plague (hail) destroyed mature barley and flax crops (~ early February)
- Locusts (8<sup>th</sup> plague) would have destroyed wheat, which matured later than barley/flax and so would not have been destroyed by the hail in ~ early February (February/March)
- Passover was the 14<sup>th</sup> Nisan (March/April)
- September/October to March/April: ≈ 6 months

# God's Final Response

**Tenth Plague:** *The Judgment* – Deaths of All

Firstborn (11.1 – 12.36)

- The warning (11.1-10): a final plague
- Plunder of Egypt (12.35-36)
- Death of the firstborn

# Tenth Plague

- Redemption: *Passover* (12.1-28)
  - picture of substitutionary atonement
- This month *becomes* the first month of the calendar (12.2-13)
  - 14<sup>th</sup> day
    - take the lamb on the 10<sup>th</sup> day
    - kept for 4 days (to assure purity?)

# Passover



- Kill the lamb at twilight
- Take hyssop and sprinkle blood on the doorposts & lintel
- Roast the lamb; eat all of it
- Unleavened bread and bitter herbs

- The release (12.29-36)



- Death of firstborn by the death angel (12.29)
- Egypt now urged Israelites to leave