

Exodus



Suggested responses to questions about Exodus 2:1-25

Note: Be sure to respond to all the questions yourself before reading the suggested responses in order to make the most of this study.

1. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes that Moses was hidden “by faith” for three months because his parents saw that he was a beautiful child. Hebrews 11:23 describes Moses’ parents as “not afraid of the king’s edict.”
2. Moses is rescued from water in a vessel covered with pitch, and in Genesis 6:14, Noah is instructed by God to build an ark and cover it with pitch. Noah and his family are rescued from the flood in this vessel, and the story of Noah is about God’s “re-creation” of the world, which Genesis 6:11 describes as being “corrupt in God’s sight.” The story of the baby Moses being rescued from waters in this way anticipates his role as the one who will lead the Israelites to safety through the waters of the Red Sea.
3. Exodus 2:4 records that Moses’ sister “stood at a distance, to know what would be done to him,” indicating that although Moses’ mother placed him in the basket in the river, she wasn’t completely abandoning him. It’s fair to assume that Moses’ family knew Pharaoh’s daughter frequently came to that area of the river to bathe and were expecting her to find the baby. In Exodus 2:7-8, Moses’ sister offers to call a nurse for the baby, then brings Moses’ own mother to care for him.
4. The name Moses turns out to be a Hebrew pun, sounding like *mosheh*, which means ‘to draw out.’ Biblical names frequently disclose important information about a person’s inmost reality. In Exodus 2:5, Moses is “drawn out” of the Nile River by Pharaoh’s daughter, who adopts him as her own son. In Exodus 2:15, after Moses has killed an Egyptian, he’s drawn out of Egypt itself and flees to the land of Midian.
5. In Exodus 2:11, Moses’ concern for the Hebrew being beaten by an Egyptian indicates that he may have begun to identify with his own Hebrew roots. In Exodus 2:12, Moses kills the Egyptian and hides the man’s body in the sand.
6. In Exodus 2:13-14, Moses attempts to reconcile two Hebrews who are fighting. In Exodus 2:14, one of the Hebrews asks Moses: “Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” The Hebrews react to Moses’ intervention in their lives with suspicion and hostility, because they know that he’s been living as an Egyptian prince for the past 40 years. In Acts 7:25, St. Stephen (the first Christian martyr) says that Moses “supposed that his brethren understood that God was giving them deliverance by his hand, but they did not understand.”

Exodus Lesson 2 Suggested Responses

7. Exodus 2:15 records that when Pharaoh heard of Moses' action, "he sought to kill Moses." By intervening in the affairs of the Hebrews, Moses stood to lose everything—his freedom, wealth, citizenship, and status as a member of the royal household. When Pharaoh seeks to have him killed, Moses flees from Egypt into the land of Midian.
8. In the Bible, wells frequently are associated with marriage betrothals. More often than not, when a man meets a woman at a well, a wedding isn't far off. Both Isaac (*Gen 24:1-51*) and Jacob (*Gen 29:1-20*) find their brides-to-be at wells. In Exodus 2:15b-17, Moses meets the daughters of Reuel at a well, foreshadowing that one of them will become his wife. In Exodus 2:20, Reuel insists that his daughters invite Moses to dine with the family, indicating the importance of showing hospitality toward strangers. Leviticus 19:34 teaches: "The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself." In Matthew 25:35, Jesus explains that when the Son of man comes in glory, one of the things by which people will be judged is how they've welcomed strangers. Hebrews 13:2 urges Christians: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."
9. Based on Moses' appearance, the daughters of Reuel describe Moses as an Egyptian. Reuel (also called Jethro later in the book of Exodus) is a priest of Midian. Genesis 25:1-6 explains that the Midianites are a tribe of people descended from Keturah, Abraham's wife after Sarah's death. The Midianites worship the God of Abraham, as do the Israelites, but the Midianites also have intermarried with the Canaanites, and the Canaanites worship false gods. Both the Israelites and the Midianites are descendants of Abraham—the Israelites through Abraham's marriage to Sarah and the Midianites through his marriage to Keturah.
10. Genesis 15:18 records: "On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canannites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites." Genesis 26:2-5 tells how God renews the covenant with Isaac: "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfil the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves: because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." In Genesis 28:13-15, God appears to Jacob in a dream and says: "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your descendants; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you." In Genesis 32:28, after Jacob has wrestled all night with a mysterious stranger, the man tells him: "Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

Responses to the Questions for Reflection will vary.