

"Waiting for an Unknown Future"

What is going on?

Exodus 1:8 NLT

Eventually, a new king came to power in Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph or what he had done.

Exodus 1:11-14 NLT

So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves. They appointed brutal slave drivers over them, hoping to wear them down with crushing labor. They forced them to build the cities of Pithom and Rameses as supply centers for the king. But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the Israelites multiplied and spread, and the more alarmed the Egyptians became. So the Egyptians worked the people of Israel without mercy. They made their lives bitter, forcing them to mix mortar and make bricks and do all the work in the fields. They were ruthless in all their demands.

Exodus 1:22 NLT

Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River. But you may let the girls live."

Psalms 22:1-2 NIV

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?

My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.

How can I handle this?

What can God do?

God sees those who **hurt**.

Exodus 2:23-25 NLT

Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God.

God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.

Psalm 56:8 NLT

You keep track of all my sorrows.

You have collected all my tears in your bottle.

You have recorded each one in your book.

God blesses those who **trust**.

God delivers those who **wait**.

Genesis 15:13-14 NLT

Then the LORD said to Abram, “You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will **come away** with great wealth.

Isaiah 40:31 KJV

But they that **wait** upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY

Share one piece of good news you experienced or heard about this week.

Faced with a difficult season of waiting, we start asking some significant questions: *What's going on? How can I handle this? What can God do?*

Are there other areas of your life, aside from the pandemic, that have you waiting for God to do something?

Have someone read Genesis 50:22-26 and Exodus 1:1-11.

Have someone read Exodus 1:15, 16, and 22. Pharaoh didn't stop with brutal slave labor. What was his next move to oppress God's people?

Have someone read Genesis 46:1-4. What did God promise Jacob as he was leaving the Promised Land? Often when God makes a promise, He does not specify *when* He will fulfill that promise. Sometimes God's people find themselves waiting. Why doesn't God answer all our prayers and fulfill every promise immediately? We might not have faced slavery or genocide, but haven't each of us had periods of waiting, praying, crying out to God, and then more waiting . . . when it seemed like God was silent?

There are two ways to handle our challenges: either *with* God or *without* Him. God sees our hurt.

Have someone read Exodus 2:23-25. God blesses those who trust.

Over the years the Israelites made a lot of bad choices. However, what is one thing they did right in their situation that we can do also?

God isn't looking for fancy words or complicated prayers. He looks for simple faith and simple trust.

God delivers those who wait.

Have someone read Genesis 15:13-14 and Isaiah 40:31.

God had promised to deliver His people and was about to send them someone who would lead them to freedom. Most Israelites were unaware at the time of what God was putting in motion: of Moses' birth and survival during the genocide, of his being raised by Pharaoh's daughter, of God preparing him to lead the Israelites. All they saw was their daily pain and suffering as they waited. Discuss how you can relate to waiting and not knowing what all God is doing behind the scenes. Do you believe your future with God will be even better than your past? Why or why not?

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