“Where Was God During Israel’s 911?”

*Exodus 1*

Opening Question(s) – choose (a) or (b)

1. How many times have you moved in your lifetime? In the biggest move you made, who moved with you? Whom did you leave behind? What was best or hardest about the move?
2. What is the best or worst boss you’ve had? What made him/her the best or worst to work for? What lasting impact, if any, did they have in your life?

Discussion Questions

1. **Read Exodus 1.** How does the beginning of this story (vv.1-7) connect to end of the previous story in Genesis (5022-26)?
2. Was the “exceedingly numerous” increase of the Israelites a blessing (v.7) or a curse (v.9)? What caused the new king of Egypt to look at the Israelites so differently than his predecessor(s)?
3. How have perspectives on the church changed in Canada since the last generation? Why?
4. What did the new king decide to do first about the Israelite problem (vv.10-11)? How successful was he with this approach and why (v.12-14)?
5. What was Pharaoh’s plan B? Plan C? How successful were these approaches and why?
6. Have you ever been in a job or situation where you were suddenly seen as a problem? How did you feel? What did you say or do?
7. Some people question where God was during 911. Where was God during Israel’s 911 type crisis in Egypt?

When and where have you seen God appear (or seem absent) during a crisis?

1. What do you think about the midwives and their civil disobedience (v.17, 19)? Is what they do and say commendable, questionable, confusing?
2. Have you ever had to face a crisis of conscience at work? How did you handle it?
3. What general lessons or personal insights have you gleaned from this story?

**Exodus 1** – NIV

**1**These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his family: **2**Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; **3**Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; **4**Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. **5**The descendants of Jacob numbered seventy[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-1538a)] in all; Joseph was already in Egypt.

**6**Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, **7**but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them.

**8**Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. **9**“Look,” he said to his people, “the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. **10**Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.”

**11**So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. **12**But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites **13**and worked them ruthlessly. **14**They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

**15**The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, **16**“When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.” **17**The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. **18**Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?”

**19**The midwives answered Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.”

**20**So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. **21**And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

**22**Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: “Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.”

**خروج 1**

**بندگی اسرائیل**

1چنین است نام پسران اسرائیل که هر یک با اهل خانۀ خویش همراه یعقوب به مصر رفتند: 2رِئوبین، شمعون، لاوی و یهودا؛ 3یِساکار، زِبولون و بِنیامین؛ 4دان و نَفتالی، جاد و اَشیر. 5شمار نسل یعقوب بر روی هم هفتاد تن بود؛ و یوسف از پیش در مصر به سر می‌برد.

6باری، یوسف و جملۀ برادرانش و همۀ آنان که از نسل او بودند مردند، 7اما بنی‌اسرائیل بارور و کثیر گشته، به شماره بسیار زیاد شدند، چندان که آن سرزمین از آنان پر شد.

8آنگاه پادشاهی تازه در مصر به پا خاست که یوسف را نمی‌شناخت. 9او به قوم خود گفت: «به خود آیید که بنی‌اسرائیل از ما فزونتر و نیرومندتر گشته‌اند. 10باید به زیرکی با آنان رفتار کنیم، وگرنه از این نیز فزونتر خواهند شد و اگر جنگی درگیرد، به دشمنانمان خواهند پیوست و با ما خواهند جنگید، و از سرزمین ما خواهند گریخت.» 11پس مصریان سرکارگرانی بی‌رحم بر بنی‌اسرائیل گماشتند تا بر آنان با کارِ اجباری ستم کنند. بنی‌اسرائیل شهرهای فیتوم و رَمِسیس را برای فرعون ساختند تا انبار آذوقۀ آنها گردد. 12ولی هر چه بیشتر بر بنی‌اسرائیل ستم می‌کردند، بیشتر افزوده و منتشر می‌گشتند؛ پس مصریان از بنی‌اسرائیل بیمناک شدند 13و بی‌رحمانه آنان را به بیگاری واداشتند. 14آنها با تحمیل کارهای طاقت‌فرسا چون خشت زدن و ملاط ساختن و هر نوع کار دیگر در مزارع، زندگی را به کام بنی‌اسرائیل تلخ می‌کردند. ایشان در هر کارِ اجباری که بر دوش بنی‌اسرائیل می‌نهادند با ایشان بی‌رحمانه رفتار می‌کردند.

15و اما پادشاه مصر، شِفْرَه و فوعَه را که قابله‌هایی عبرانی بودند، امر کرده، 16گفت: «چون فرزندانِ زنانِ عبرانی را به دنیا می‌آورید و آنها را معاینه می‌کنید، اگر نوزاد پسر بود او را بکشید، ولی اگر دختر بود زنده بگذارید.» 17اما قابله‌ها از خدا ترسیدند و آنچه پادشاه مصر بدیشان گفته بود نکردند بلکه پسران را زنده گذاشتند. 18پس پادشاه مصر احضارشان کرد و پرسید: «چرا چنین کردید؟ چرا پسران را زنده گذاشتید؟» 19قابله‌ها پاسخ دادند: «زنان عبرانی همچون زنان مصری نیستند. آنها پُر زورند و پیش از رسیدن قابله می‌زایند.» 20پس خدا به قابله‌ها احسان کرد؛ و بر شمار قوم افزوده شده، بس نیرومند گشتند. 21و چون قابله‌ها از خدا ترسیدند، خدا نیز آنان را صاحب خانواده ساخت. 22آنگاه فرعون به تمام افراد خویش فرمان داده، گفت: «هر پسری را که به دنیا آید، به رود نیل افکنید؛ ولی دختران را زنده بگذارید.»