

## WELCOME THE STRANGER

### "A TALE OF TWO KINGS"

#### EXODUS 1:1-22

### This Week's Core Competency

**Compassion** – I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need. Psalm 82:3-4

*3 Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless;  
maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.*

*4 Rescue the weak and needy;  
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.*

The world is facing a refugee crisis. World Relief is an organization committed to addressing that crisis by equipping churches in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States to "welcome the stranger." Over the last 35 years World Relief has resettled more than 250,000 refugees in the United States (see [worldrelief.org](http://worldrelief.org)).

Two terms are particularly important to this discussion: "Refugees" and "Internally Displaced Persons." World Relief explains the difference in their answer to the question, "What is the definition of a refugee?" Under both international and U.S. law refugees are individuals who have fled their country of origin because of a credible fear of persecution on account of their race, religion, political opinion, national origin, or social group. "Internally Displaced Persons," on the other hand, are people who flee their homes but stay within the boundaries of their

***The foreigner residing among you  
must be treated as your native-born.  
Love them as yourself, for you were  
foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD  
your God.***

– Leviticus 19:34

country. Neither term includes those who flee a situation of poverty, a natural disaster, or even violence, unless the violence is specifically motivated by race, religion, political opinion, or one of the other grounds in the legal definition (see [refugeecrisis.worldrelief.org/s/Syrian-Crisis-FAQ.pdf](http://refugeecrisis.worldrelief.org/s/Syrian-Crisis-FAQ.pdf)).

On the magnitude of the problem, World Vision, another Christian organization standing with today's Syrian refugees tells us:

*Syria's conflict has devastated the nation. More than 240,000 people have been killed, including 12,000 children. One million more are wounded or permanently disabled. An upsurge in fighting has complicated aid efforts and driven some families deeper into despair.*

*Refugees are fleeing to neighboring countries, and increasingly to Europe. The resulting chaos in Hungary and the heart-wrenching photos of refugees from the coast of Turkey have caught the attention of the world in recent weeks.*

*Here's some background information on the humanitarian needs in the fourth year of war in Syria.*

*More than half of the country's population of 22 million has been forced to leave their homes. Many of them have moved multiple times since the conflict began in March 2011.*

*At least 7.6 million people are internally displaced (IDPs) within Syria, and more than 4 million have fled as refugees to neighboring countries.*

*An estimated 4.8 million people are in areas of Syria that are difficult to access because of the conflict. It's hard for aid groups to reach them.*

*About half of those displaced are children.*

*Increasing numbers of refugees are attempting to*

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reach Europe. Of the nearly 478,000 people who have arrived in Europe by sea in 2015, 54 percent of them come from Syria, the UN Refugee Agency says (see [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org)).

The crisis amounts to an opportunity for Christians, in the United States as well as Europe, to show compassion by "welcoming the stranger." Welcoming refugees is a tangible way to love our neighbors (Lk 10:27) and to practice the Golden Rule (Lk 6:31).

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### Exodus 1:1-22

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 in all; Joseph was already in Egypt.

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

8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. 9 "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much 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 hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, 16 "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and observe them on the delivery stool, if it 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 boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle "seventy" in v. 1.
- \* Underline "fruitful," "multiplied," "numerous," "filled," and "increased" in vv. 1-22.
- \* Double underline "oppress/ed," "forced labor," ruthlessly," "bitter," and "hard labor" in vv. 1-22.
- \* Box the major characters in vv. 8-22: "the Israelites," "the king," "the Egyptians," "the Hebrew midwives," and "God."
- \* Bracket "who did not know about Joseph" in v. 8.
- \* Put a check mark over the temporal connecting words "now," "then," and "when" in vv. 1-22.
- \* Number each "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 1-22.
- \* Put parentheses around "so" and "so that" indicating *result* in vv. 1-22.

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## day 2

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Compare the number of Israelites in Egypt when the book of Exodus opens with the number of Jacob's sons who went with him to Egypt (Ge 46:27; cf. Ex 1:5). What do you infer about the relationship of Exodus to Genesis based on your observation?
2. How do we know from verses 8 and 9 that the Israelites must have lived in Egypt quite a while before the Egyptians enslaved them?
3. Put what the Egyptians were worried about in your own words.
4. Describe the three failed policies that various kings of Egypt pursued to reduce the risk posed by the Israelites. (See vv. 11, 16, and 22.)
5. What one word would you use to describe what life was like in Egypt for the Israelites?
6. Ironically the Israelites are being *blessed* and *oppressed* at the same time. How so?
7. God is mentioned only three times in Exodus 1:1-22, all in connection to him blessing the midwives because they feared him. God appears to be *rather uninvolved* in the lives of his people in this passage. So how do we know that God is *very involved* in their lives during this trying time?
8. Put what "to fear God" means in your own words.
9. **Discussion:** After studying this passage, talk about your answer to the second *living* question, "How does God want to change you?"

# day 3

## EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

God told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a country not their own and would be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years before he would bring them back to their land (Ge 15:13). Two centuries later his grandson, Jacob, and Jacob's entire family, seventy people in all, moved to Egypt. A family went down into Egypt, but a people destined to become a nation would come up out of Egypt 430 years later. Before Jacob moved, God told him, "'Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again'" (46:3, 4). Seventeen years later when Jacob was about to die he assured his son Joseph that God would be with him and bring him back to the land of his fathers (47:22). And so it's not surprising that Jacob instructed his sons to bury him with his fathers in the land of Canaan (49:29-32), something Joseph did with all the pomp and ceremony befitting royalty (50:7-14). Fifty-four years later, before Joseph died, he echoed the hope of his father, telling his brothers that God would come to their aid and take them up out of Egypt to the land he had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (50:24). So sure was he of their return that he made the sons of Israel swear to carry his bones back to the land with them (v. 25).

Like every story, the story in Exodus 1:1-22 has a *setting*, *characters*, and a *plot*. The setting is generally "Egypt" (vv. 1, 5, 8, 15, 17, 18) or "the land" (v. 7), more specifically "Pithom" and "Rameses" (v. 12), the two store cities built by the Israelites. The characters include the Israelites and the Egyptians, the king of Egypt and God. Like the plot of every *good* story, the plot of this story entails conflict. The conflict between the Israelites and the Egyptians is obvious. The conflict between the king of Egypt and God is less so but becomes more so as the story develops. In the end it's Yahweh against Pharaoh, the true God of the Israelites against the false gods of the Egyptians. The opening chapter sets the stage for Yahweh's rescue of his people following his contest with Pharaoh.

As the story opens, the Israelites are still in Egypt. Joseph's generation has passed away, and the number of Israelites has increased greatly. Matter of fact the land is "swarming" with them (cf. Ge 1:28; 9:1). God

has blessed them there, but as time passes, things change. Rulers appear on the scene who feel threatened by the growing number of Israelites. So one king then another takes measures to deter their rebellion, curtail the further growth of their population, and provide forced labor for his building projects. God's blessing turns out to be a curse in a way, in that the more the people multiply the more they are oppressed. The Egyptians dread them more and more, so they work them more and more ruthlessly and make their lives bitter with hard labor. When that doesn't have the desired result, one king directs the Hebrew midwives to kill at birth the boys of Israelite women, and when they defy him another orders that the boys born to Israelite women be thrown into the Nile. On the disobedience of the midwives, one commentator writes: "We are not told whether the midwives were lying, or whether the quick delivery of 'Hebrew' babies was a biological fact . . . Even if they lied, it is not for their deceit that they are commended, but for their refusal to take infant lives, God's gift. Their reverence for life sprang from reverence for God, the life-giver (Ex. 20:12, 13), and for this they were rewarded with families" (R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, TOTC, 55).

God's people must have wondered, "How could God allow this terrible turn of events to take place? Why has the God of our father, the God who promised to be with our ancestors and us, allowed this evil to come upon us? Where is he? Doesn't he care?" The *lower* story is about the Israelites response to suffering while they wait on God to fulfill his promise to their fathers. The *upper* story is about God's protection of his people and his provision of a deliverer to save them.

Israel's sojourn in Egypt left a lasting impression on them. And their harsh treatment at the hands of their oppressors became the basis of the LORD's future appeal to them to treat foreigners in Israel differently from the way they were treated by the Egyptians. In Leviticus 19:33-34 the LORD commands them: "'When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'"

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## *The Message of the Passage*

*Instead of letting the suffering and trials you face get the best of you,  
put your hope in God who knows what you're going through  
and always keeps his promises.*

### day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the first two "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

### **“A Tale of Two Kings”**

(Use the space below for Sunday's message notes)

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## notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 1 **These** The first verse of the book of Exodus begins with the Hebrew conjunction "and," which is omitted from the NIV. This small grammatical detail indicates that the second book in the Old Testament continues the story begun in the first book. Genesis 46 reports that Jacob took his sons and their families with him to Egypt where he later died. Exodus 1 reports that after Joseph, his brothers and all that generation died, the number of Israelites in Egypt increased greatly just like God had said (cf. Ge 46:3).

v. 8 **did not know** While the identity of "the new king who did not know about Joseph" is unclear, he definitely was not the next one to rule after Joseph died (ca. 1805 B.C.). Some argue that he was a foreign ruler, one of the early Hyksos who subjugated Egypt and displaced the native rulers from 1730-1580; others argue that he was one of the early Egyptian rulers of the 18th dynasty—either Ahmose I (1584-1560) or Amenhotep I (1560-1539) (see John J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt*, 45-51). "Enslavement is one of three solutions by which Pharaoh attempts to keep the Israelites' numbers to a manageable mass: enough for forced labor, but not enough to encourage rebellion" (Peter Enns, *The NIV Application Commentary: Exodus*, 43).

**Note:** While the identity of the kings of Egypt alluded to in Ex 1:1-22 must not have been important to the telling of the story, commentators can't help but speculate as to who they were. Assuming an early date for the exodus, i.e., 1446, one commentator writes: "The new king (v. 8) may have been Ahmose (Greek Amosis) who founded the eighteenth dynasty and the New Kingdom and ruled from 1570 to 1546 B.C. However, he was probably one of Ahmose's immediate successors, Amenhotep I or, most likely, Thutmose I. (This was not the famous King Tut, or Tutenkhamen, who ruled Egypt from 1360 to 1351 B.C., during the Judges Period of Israel's history.) The Egyptian capital at this time was Zoan (Gr. Tanis). Ahmose was the first native Egyptian Pharaoh for many years. Preceding him was a series of Hyksos rulers. The name Hyksos probably means 'rulers of foreign lands,' though the ancient Egyptian historian Manetho wrote that it meant 'shepherd kings.' They were a Semitic people from the northern part of the Fertile Crescent, from the area around Paddan-aram, where Laban, Leah and Rachel's brother, lived had invaded Egypt about 1670 B.C. and ruled until Ahmose expelled them. The New Kingdom (ca. 1570-1085 B.C.) that Ahmose inaugurated was the period of greatest imperial might in Egypt's long history. To summarize, Jacob moved from Canaan to Egypt about 1876 B.C. The Hyksos invaded Egypt about 1670, approximately 200 years after Jacob relocated there. Ahmose expelled the Hyksos about 1570, ending their 100-year domination of Egypt. Moses was born about 1525, or about 50 years after Ahmose had restored Egyptian sovereignty" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Exodus," 2015 ed., 9-10, [www.soniclight.com](http://www.soniclight.com)).

v. 11 **Pithom, Rameses** "It probably took years to build the cities of Pithom and Raamses (Ramses, Rameses), which the Egyptians used to store goods (cf. 1 Kings 9:19; 2 Chron. 8:6; 17:12). Pithom may be Tell er-Retabeh or Heliopolis, not Tanis; and Raamses may have been Qantir, rather than Tell el-Maskhuta, the popular critical identifications" (12). "The name 'Rameses' for one of the store cities seems to point unquestionably to Rameses II [ca. 1300-1234 B.C.]. But it is probable that this city, which already existed under the Hyksos (the foreigners who ruled Egypt several centuries before the nineteenth dynasty), was rebuilt by Rameses II and that 1:11 refers to the city by its later name" (William H. Gispen, *Exodus*, 22, cited by Constable, 12; see also "Introduction: Exodus," in *The NIV Study Bible*, 84).

v. 15 **the king** Either Ahmose I (1584-1560) or Amenhotep I (1560-1539). "The second solution is to command the midwives to kill all Israelite male children at birth (since only males poses any military threat)" (44). When enslaving them didn't work, this king ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all the boys born to Israelite women. It was a vicious order that would have been effective had it been obeyed, but two midwives let the boys live.

v. 15 **Hebrew** "Hebrew" had a wider meaning than "Israelite slave." "The word probably has a connotation something like modern 'gipsy,' in a derogatory sense, combining the ideas of wandering and animal-trading" (Cole, 55).

v. 15 **midwives** Either there were only two, which is unlikely, or Shiphrah and Puah had other midwives under them, or they were the only two who disobeyed because they feared God.

v. 22 **Pharaoh** Moses was born ca. 1526 B.C. during the reign of Thutmose I (1539-1514) who gave the order to his people, "Every boy that is born (to the Hebrews) you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live." "The final solution is the murder of all male infants (v. 22) by throwing them into the Nile. Thus, what for the Egyptians is a life-giving force is intended as an instrument of death for the Israelites. The significance of this act, both for Egypt's future destruction and Israel's deliverance, cannot be overstated. Water will play a central role in bringing this struggle to a close" (Enns, 44).

## Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Several years ago, I was frequently a substitute teacher at my kid's elementary school. One of the "benefits" of substitute teaching is that you almost always get voted the one in the grade level to monitor the playground during recess. One day, while I was hanging out around the monkey bars, I noticed a group of kids picking on a classmate. It obviously wasn't the first time it had happened. One group of three girls approached another girl and began taunting her. It only lasted a couple of minutes. I started making my way over to the crying girl but before I could get there another girl came up to her, put her arm around her and began talking. These girls were not necessarily friends. The comforter was simply moved by compassion to reach out to another person in need. I began wondering why some kids are prone to be compassionate while others are not. When I told the teachers what had happened, they weren't surprised. The girl's family ran the Sunshine Team. They reached out to families in need in the school. Compassion is better caught than taught. When we model compassion to others, our kids get to see how it's done. And when the opportunity to show compassion comes, they are more likely to respond in kindness. Learn the memory verse together as a family this week and practice it often!

### What Does The Bible Say

**Weekly Verse:** Read Exodus 1:1-22

1. Read Genesis 47:5. How did the first king treat Joseph's family?
2. In Exodus 1, how did the new king treat Joseph's descendants?
3. What did God tell the midwives to do?

### What Do You Think

1. Why do you think the new king didn't like the Israelites?
2. How do you think the Israelites felt after being treated well by the Egyptians at first and then being treated badly?

### What R U Going To Do

Pray the Lord would give you an opportunity to show compassion to someone this week. When he does, write it down so you can share it with your small group next Sunday.

### Core Comp

Compassion: I believe God wants me to help others in need.

### Memory Verse

Mt 7:12 - *So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

## KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed Scrolls \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.  
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

**Trinity** 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Salvation By Grace** Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

**Authority of the Bible** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

**Personal God** Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

**Identity in Christ** John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

**Church** Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

**Humanity** John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

**Compassion** Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

**Eternity** John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

**Stewardship** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

**Worship** Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

**Prayer** Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

**Bible Study** Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

**Single-mindedness** Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

**Spiritual Gifts** Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

**Biblical Community** Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

**Giving Away My Time** Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Money**

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Faith** Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Life** Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

**Joy** John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

**Peace** Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

**Faithfulness** Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

**Self-Control** Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

**Humility** Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

**Love** 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

**Patience** Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

**Kindness/Goodness** 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

**Gentleness** Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

**Hope** Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).