

JANUARY 16, 2020

*Parashat Shemot*

**Exodus 1:1–6:1**

Taught By:

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### SUMMARY

A new Pharaoh, who did not know *Yosef*, takes power in Egypt. He is afraid of the growing Israelite community, so he enslaves them. The heroic civil disobedience of midwives *Shifra* and *Pu'ah* help prevent the destruction of the Israelite nation.

*Yocheved*, the mother of *Moshe*, places her baby in a floating basket in the river in hopes of saving him. Pharaoh's daughter discovers the basket, adopts the baby, and names him *Moshe*. With the help of *Moshe's* sister, she hires *Moshe's* mother as a nurse. *Moshe* grows up. When he sees an Egyptian slave driver hit an Israelite, *Moshe* hits him, kills him, and runs away to *Midyan*. There *Moshe* meets the daughters of *Yitro* and marries one, named *Tsippora*. They start a family, and *Moshe* works as a shepherd.

God speaks to *Moshe* from a burning bush, telling him to return to Egypt and demand that Pharaoh let the Israelites go to worship God in the wilderness. *Moshe* tries to persuade God several times not to choose him, but God insists on *Moshe's* leadership and promises that *Aharon*, *Moshe's* older brother, will speak for him. *Moshe's* first meeting with Pharaoh does not help and Pharaoh makes things worse for the Israelites.



**Exodus 2:11**

While he was watching their forced labour, he also saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his kinsmen.



**Exodus 2:12**

He looked this way and that, and saw that no one else was in sight.

**1) This week we read about Moshe growing up and leaving Pharaoh's palace. He goes out and sees an Egyptian hitting an Israelite slave. Moshe looks around, sees there is no one, then hits the Egyptian and kills him.**

**Why do you think Moshe looked around before hitting the Egyptian?**

**EVA:** I think he knew that he wanted to hit the Egyptian and that this could get him in trouble, so he looked around to make sure that nobody would see him hit the Egyptian because he didn't want to get into trouble.

**MAX:** I think he looked around because he was hoping someone would see that he was about to stand up for justice.

**DAVID:** Then, when he didn't see anyone, he stood up to the Egyptian anyway--maybe because he felt that the Israelite could be killed if someone didn't stand up for him.

**2) After he killed the Egyptian, Moshe buried the Egyptian in the sand. Why would he bury him?**

**DAVID:** Maybe he didn't mean to kill the Egyptian and then, when he doesn't want to get into trouble, so he hides the body.

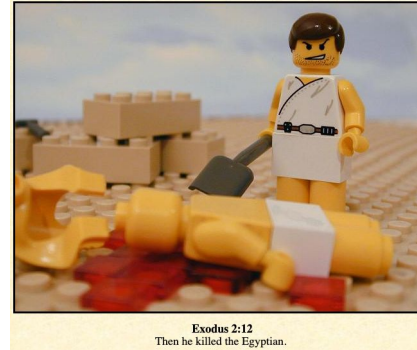
**MAX:** I think that burying the body is another way that Moshe shows he cares about the Israelite who was being hit. Moshe probably doesn't think that he will get into trouble, because he is close with Pharaoh. If the dead Egyptian is found, he probably thinks that people will assume that the Israelite he was hitting is the one who killed him. He probably wants to keep the Israelite out of further trouble.

**3) Why do you think G'd appeared to Moshe as a firey bush that didn't burn up?**

**DAVID:** One of the first things the G'd says to Moshe is that Moshe should take off his shoes because he is standing on holy ground. If the ground is holy, maybe G'd appears to Moshe as a bush because it is holy since it grows from the ground.

**MAX:** The bush was on fire, but not destroyed, so maybe this is G'd's way of telling Moshe that G'd has power and is indestructible.

**EVA:** Maybe this is meant to teach us that G'd is powerful like fire. Fire can be used to cook or as a tool to make things, but it can also be very destructive. Maybe G'd is trying to show Moshe and us that G'd can make things and can destroy. By not destroying the bush, maybe G'd is trying to show that the creative, helpful part of G'd is talking to Moshe, not the destructive part of G'd.



Exodus 2:12  
Then he killed the Egyptian.



Exodus 2:12  
And hid him in the sand.