

Exodus 1-6 — “The Burning Bush”

Come, Follow Me 2026 — March 21-27

Parallel Accounts: Acts 7:20–36; Hebrews 11:23–29; 1 Nephi 17:23–31; D&C 8:3; Moses 1

Overview

Genesis ends with a near-happily-ever-after — the family of Jacob reunited in Egypt, Joseph vindicated, the covenant alive. Then you turn the page and everything has changed. Generations have passed. The children of Israel are slaves. Joseph is forgotten. The miracle-child has become a threat.

Exodus begins in darkness: a new Pharaoh who “knew not Joseph” (Ex. 1:8), a policy of genocide against Hebrew boys, and an entire people groaning under bondage. Yet within that darkness, God is already at work — quietly, through women, through an ark of bulrushes, through a burning bush no one else bothered to stop and look at.

These six chapters introduce the second great movement of scripture. If Genesis is the story of the covenant being *made* with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Exodus is the story of God *fulfilling* that covenant on a massive scale. The Exodus itself — bondage, deliverance, wilderness, covenant at Sinai, entry to the promised land — mirrors the temple endowment narrative so closely that Jared Halverson suggests God could have used it as the template instead of the creation and fall account. Down into Egypt parallels the fall; the wilderness journey parallels mortal struggle; Sinai parallels making covenants; the promised land parallels returning to God’s presence.¹

Of all the lessons and stories in scripture, few have had more influence on Western civilization than those in Exodus. Mark Holt (Gospel Talktrine) frames it bluntly: the twin pillars of liberty and morality — which underpin common law, the American founding, and modern ethics — originate here. It was Exodus that first declared, categorically, that God wants his people to be *free*, and that he wants them to be accountable to an *objective standard of right and wrong*. These ideas were radical. They boggled ancient minds, caused people to hate the Jews, and shaped everything that followed.²

Moses stands at the center of this story, but he doesn’t arrive at the burning bush as a confident leader. He arrives as a fugitive shepherd — a man who has failed in Egypt, is now nobody in Midian, and will spend an entire chapter arguing with God about why God should pick someone else. The burning bush is not a reward for spiritual achievement; it’s an invitation extended to a man hiding in the wilderness. That is the pattern of God’s calls.

The Come Follow Me manual frames Exodus 1–6 around the question: **What do I learn about God from the way He delivered Israel?** The answer Exodus gives is surprising — He delivers through women, through

arks, through burning bushes, and through a man who cannot speak well. He delivers *in any wise* (Ex. 6:6 — the Hebrew *pada* means to ransom by any means necessary).³

Key Concepts

1. *Tebah* (תִּבְיָה) — The Ark of Moses

The Hebrew word for the basket in which Moses floats down the Nile is *tebah* — the same word used for Noah's ark. It appears only twice in all of Hebrew scripture: Genesis 6–9 and Exodus 2. Both times it is a vessel that saves life in a world of water, daubed with pitch to keep water out.

David Butler notes the parallel deliberately: Noah's *tebah* saves all humanity; Moses's *tebah* saves the one who will save Israel.⁴ The connection is not coincidental. Jochebed's act — preparing an ark, sending it out on the waters, trusting God with what cannot be controlled — mirrors the faith of Noah. Both arks are built with what is available, sealed against the flood, and commended to God's hands.

Holt observes that the ark is a “boat without sail or rudder” — it simply floats, and the symbolism is that God is guiding it.² Jochebed had a plan. She didn't blindly drop a basket in the river; she placed it where Pharaoh's daughter bathed, sent Miriam to watch, and trusted God to steer what she could no longer control.

This is the typology of the Atonement. Christ is also “drawn out” — from the tomb, from death — to deliver a people. The word *tebah* is the shell of God's deliverance theology in miniature before the Red Sea makes it grand.

2. *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה) — I Am That I Am

The divine name revealed at the burning bush is among the most studied phrases in all of scripture. Moses asks “What is thy name?” and God answers: *Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh* — “I Am That I Am” (Ex. 3:14). The name Jehovah (*YHWH* — the tetragrammaton, or “four-letter word”) derives from this same root: the Hebrew verb *hayah*, to be or to exist.

Because Hebrew has no pure present tense — only “perfect” (completed action) and “imperfect” (ongoing/future action) — the name resists simple translation. Several legitimate readings:

- “**I am who I will always be**” — emphasizing continuity; the God of Abraham is the same God of Moses, of Joseph Smith, of you.⁵
- “**I will be what tomorrow demands**” — emphasizing divine sufficiency; whatever the situation requires, God already is.⁵
- “**He causes to be**” — Holt's analysis of *YHWH* as the causative (Hiphil) stem of the verb *to be*: God doesn't merely exist, he *causes existence*. He is not created by nature; he created nature. He causes armies of angels

to be (hence “Lord of Hosts” = *YHWH Sabaoth*, “He causes armies to exist”). He speaks order out of chaos, light out of darkness, a nation out of slaves.²

Holt points out that Yahweh is a grammatical form that doesn’t appear anywhere else in Hebrew — which is itself a kind of miracle. Nobody else uses the verb this way. It seems coined specifically for God, a word unique to him in all language.²

Emily Freeman frames it as a fill-in-the-blank name: “I am ____.” Whatever you need. An open ocean? I am what opens oceans. Hunger? I am bread. Serpents? I am the healer. The name is a promise that cannot be exhausted, made to a man afraid of every specific failure he can imagine.⁵

Jesus invokes this same name when he says “Before Abraham was, *I am*” (John 8:58) — not “I was.” He is deliberately claiming the title of Exodus 3:14, connecting himself as the *Ehyeh* who appeared to Moses.

3. *Pada* (פָּדָה) — Redeemed by Any Means

Exodus 6:6 contains the first appearance of the word *pada* in the context of God’s covenant with Israel: “I will redeem you with a stretched out arm.” This particular Hebrew word for redeem — *pada* — means “to ransom; to deliver in any wise; to secure by payment of whatever price is necessary.”

This word will become a cornerstone of covenant theology. Unlike *ga’al* (redeemer as kinsman), *pada* focuses on the *method*: by any means necessary. God is not constrained to predictable means. He will open seas. He will rain bread. He will use a basket and a princess to save the very deliverer.⁶

What the handcart saints needed was a ravine — prepared eons before Martin picked up the first handcart. Who could have predicted that? *Pada*. That is the theology behind it.

4. Exodus as the Book of Remembering

Holt’s most structurally important contribution is this: Exodus is a book about memory. It begins with a *forgetting* — “there arose a new king who knew not Joseph” (Ex. 1:8) — and proceeds through a series of divine rememberings.²

- Ex. 2:24: “God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob”
- Ex. 3:15: “This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations”
- Ex. 20:8: “Remember the Sabbath day”
- Ex. 13:3: “Remember this day”

The entire Passover feast — instituted *on the night of* the first Passover — is a structure for collective memory. God commands it immediately, before they even leave Egypt. Why? Because gratitude requires memory. Wisdom requires memory. Faith requires memory. You cannot trust a God you don’t remember.²

President Eyring’s talk “O Remember, Remember” (Oct. 2007) captures the same principle: when we write down how we’ve seen God’s hand, something shifts. We don’t just remember the past — we recognize the present. And recognizing the present invites more.²

5. The Women of Exodus 1-2: Deliverers of the Deliverer

Before Moses appears by name, six women deliver him. David Butler (Don’t Miss This) identifies four key principles from the women of Exodus 1–2:⁴

Woman	Action	Principle
Shiphrah & Puah	Defied Pharaoh, saved infant boys	<i>Revered God</i>
Jochebed (Moses’s mother)	Built the ark, released her son	<i>Sacrifice</i>
Miriam (Moses’s sister)	Watched from a distance, intervened	<i>Watched over</i>
Pharaoh’s daughter	Drew him out, named him Moses	<i>Drew out / Delivered</i>

Holt adds that the Torah’s willingness to feature women so prominently — and to preserve their names when the most powerful man on earth goes unnamed — is itself evidence of the Bible’s divine origin. No other ancient literature of the period does this. The midwives Shiphrah and Puah are named; Pharaoh is not. God’s ledger is inverted from the world’s.²

#dssg
#woman

Pharaoh’s great miscalculation was underestimating the daughters. By targeting the sons, he left the women free — and the women delivered the deliverer at every step.¹

Every principle they embodied (reverence, sacrifice, watching over, drawing out) Moses will repeat on the scale of a nation.

6. Moshe (מֹשֶׁה) — He Who Draws Out

Pharaoh’s daughter names the rescued infant *Moses* (Hebrew: *Moshe*). In Hebrew, the root is *mashah* — “to draw out.” She draws him out of the water. In Egyptian, the cognate *mose* means “son of” (as in Thutmose, Ramesses — the name is common; the Hebrew meaning is what matters).

The name is prophetic in both directions: he was drawn out (passive), and he will draw out (active) — all of Israel, out of Egypt, through the sea. Every time his name was spoken, Moses carried a description of his divine calling.¹

7. Moses’s Weakness as Divine Design

Holt observes that the Book of Numbers calls Moses “the meekest of men in all the world” — and his slow speech, which he offered as an excuse, was likely genuine. Moses was not a skilled orator. He knew it. God knew it. And yet God still chose him.²

Ether 12:27 is the theological key: “I give unto men weakness that they may be humble.” Moses’s halted speech kept him perpetually dependent on God. A confident orator might have trusted his own persuasive ability; Moses had to trust the Lord to be with his mouth. Holt reframes the “excuse” entirely: the weakness was not an obstacle to Moses’s calling — it was a prerequisite for it.²

Section-by-Section Commentary

Exodus 1 — A New King Who Knew Not Joseph

Historical context: Between the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus, centuries pass. Holt surveys the theory that Joseph’s rise coincided with the Hyksos (a Semitic ruling group) controlling Egypt during the second intermediate period — making it natural for a Semitic administrator to rise to power under them. When native Egyptian rulers reclaimed Egypt in the New Kingdom, this “new Pharaoh who knew not Joseph” wasn’t merely forgetful; he was of a different cultural lineage entirely, with no reason to honor what a foreign dynasty had elevated.^{1 2}

The Israelites multiplied using the very language of Genesis 1 (*paru vayirbu*, “be fruitful and multiply”) — signaling to the reader that Israel’s growth in Egypt is covenantal, not merely demographic. They are fulfilling the Abrahamic promise in the land of their captivity.²

The new Pharaoh’s logic is self-defeating: the Israelites are becoming too numerous, so he afflicts them to keep them down — but “the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew” (Ex. 1:12). Every attempt at suppression backfires. Adversity strengthens Israel rather than breaking them.

The midwives: Shiphrah and Puah are told to kill male Hebrew infants at birth. They refuse — not through formal protest, but through quiet civil disobedience. When questioned, they tell Pharaoh the Hebrew women deliver before midwives arrive. Whether literally true or diplomatically creative, they *feared God more than they feared Pharaoh* (Ex. 1:17) — and God “dealt well with the midwives” and gave them “houses” (families/households) of their own (Ex. 1:20–21).⁴

Exodus 2 — The Ark of Moses

Jochebed hides her son three months. Josephus records a tradition that Amram had received a dream promising this child would be the deliverer of Israel — meaning Jochebed’s release of the basket was not blind trust but faith-filled obedience to a revealed promise.¹ Like Abraham with Isaac, they trusted that God would keep his word even if it required returning a child from death.

Holt captures the terror of those three months: this is not sentimental motherhood. Under Pharaoh's decree, hiding the child meant the entire family could be executed if discovered. Every cry risked death. Every visitor was a threat. Three months of that sustained, sleepless, adrenaline-laced faith — and then, when she could no longer maintain it, Jochebed placed her son in the river she had been most afraid of.²

When the basket is found by Pharaoh's daughter, Moses is already circumcised. She knows immediately this is a Hebrew child. Her decision to adopt him defies her own father's edict. Miriam's intervention then closes the loop: she offers a Hebrew wet nurse — her own mother — so Jochebed nurses her son openly, protected by royal decree, and even gets paid for it. "Cast your bread upon the waters and it will return unto you after many days" (Eccl. 11:1) — in this case, it returned in hours.¹

Moses in Midian: Moses grows up in Pharaoh's house but never forgets who he is. When he witnesses an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, he acts. When he witnesses two Hebrews fighting, he intervenes again — only to be told, "who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" The very people he risked his life to defend betray him. Exposed, Moses flees. In Midian he finds Jethro's family at a well — a narrative echo of Jacob finding Rachel and Abraham's servant finding Rebekah. He marries Zipporah (*bird*). He names his son Gershom (*stranger in a strange land*) — a daily reminder that the displaced deserve care.¹

At the close of chapter 2, the narrative pivot arrives in four verbs: God *heard*, God *remembered*, God *saw*, God *knew* (*yada* — intimately, experientially). The covenant inventory is complete. He hasn't forgotten. He hasn't turned away. He is about to act.

Exodus 3 — The Burning Bush

Moses leads Jethro's flock to the "backside of the desert" — the far side, the remote edge — and arrives at the mountain of God. Halverson observes that Moses's whole ministry is captured in that one verse: he leads the flock to the mountain of God. That is precisely what he will do with Israel.¹

The burning and not consumed: At Sinai, bushes are rare. A bush burning without burning down is doubly unusual. The true miracle is less the fire than the *absence of ash* — this fire gives without consuming. It is a foreshadowing of the Atonement: the One who bore all our suffering without being destroyed by it.

Holt adds: why a bush? A rabbinic midrash answers that God came in a bush precisely because a bush is so common and unremarkable — to say that there is *no place devoid of God's presence*. He doesn't require a cathedral. He doesn't need the redwood or the mountain peak. He can show up in a thorn bush in the desert. "No place is devoid of His presence."²

Turning aside: "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt" (Ex. 3:3). And then: "When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush" (Ex. 3:4). The turning aside precedes the calling. Halverson notes: the burning bush is God "clearing the divine throat" — an attention-getter. It requires three calls for the Nephites at Bountiful

to fully hear (3 Ne. 11). Moses’s stopping to see is itself a spiritual act. The bush speaks only after Moses stops.¹

Holy ground: “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Ex. 3:5). In the desert, removing shoes is dangerous — scorpions, heat, sharp rock. It is vulnerability. It is the dust-to-dust reminder: *Adam*, taken from the *adamah* (ground), now presses bare foot to bare earth. Halverson connects it to being “grounded” — fully present, ready to receive what God is about to say.¹

“I Am That I Am”: See Key Concepts §2 above. The divine name given here will govern all of Moses’s subsequent ministry. Every time he invokes Jehovah, he is invoking the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — the same God who made the same covenant and is now fulfilling it. Pharaoh will ask “Who is the Lord?” (Ex. 5:2). The rest of Exodus is the answer, plague by plague, sea by sea.

The commission: God commissions Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt (Ex. 3:10). Moses responds with five rounds of objection — each followed by a divine reassurance.

Moses’s Concern	God’s Reassurance
”Who am I?” (3:11)	“I will be with thee” (3:12)
“What is your name?” (3:13)	“I Am That I Am” (3:14)
“They won’t believe me” (4:1)	The signs — rod/serpent, leprous hand (4:2–9)
“I’m not eloquent” (4:10)	“Who made man’s mouth?” Aaron will help (4:11–16)
“Send someone else” (4:13)	God’s righteous indignation; Aaron is already coming (4:14)

The pattern is pastoral: God does not rebuke Moses’s doubts in the first four rounds. He meets each concern with specific, concrete reassurance. Only at the fifth — “send someone else” — does God express indignation. Even then, he doesn’t withdraw the call. He adds Aaron.¹

Halverson reads the signs not just as credentials for the Israelites but as specific reassurances for Moses: *You think Pharaoh is a serpent who will bite you. Take him by the tail. Trust me. He becomes a stick.* The sign is a private sermon before it becomes a public wonder.¹

Holt draws out the contrast at the heart of Moses’s calling: when Moses stood against the Egyptian to defend the Hebrew, he acted with force. When he stood between the two Hebrews, he had to act with words — and failed. He really was slow of speech in the moments it mattered most. And yet: Numbers 12:3 says “Moses was the meekest of men in all the world.” His perceived weakness — his dependence, his inability to talk his way through things — was the very trait that made him irreplaceable.²

Exodus 5-6 — Pharaoh Refuses; God Renews the Covenant

Moses follows through. He confronts Pharaoh. Pharaoh responds: “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?” (Ex. 5:2). Holt notes that this is actually a reasonable question. Pharaoh worshipped an ennead — a pantheon of nine Egyptian gods. Moses appears with the name of a deity Pharaoh has never heard of. Why would anyone obey a god they don’t know? That’s the question Exodus is designed to answer: plague by plague, sign by sign, sea by sea.²

Pharaoh’s initial response is to increase Israel’s labor — requiring bricks without providing straw. The people suffer *more* immediately after Moses’s intervention than before. Moses returns to God in anguish: “Why hast thou so evil entreated this people?” (Ex. 5:22). Sound familiar? It echoes Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail: “O God, where art thou?” (D&C 121:1). The baby is already in the basket — the deliverance has already begun — but those inside Egypt can’t see it yet.

God’s answer in Exodus 6 is the covenant inventory in seven “I will” statements:

“I will bring you out... I will rid you of their bondage... I will redeem you... I will take you to me for a people... I will be to you a God... I will bring you in unto the land... I am the Lord.” (Ex. 6:6–8, condensed)

This is not God explaining his plan. This is God binding himself with covenant language. The word *pada* (redeem) appears here for the first time in this context — *by any means necessary*. Whatever tomorrow demands, I am sufficient.³

Then the heartbreaking verse 9: “Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.” The people are too crushed to hear hope. This is the hardest part of leadership — speaking covenant words to people who cannot yet receive them. Moses does it anyway.

Literary and Structural Analysis

Exodus as Fractal

Exodus 1–2 functions as a “fractal” of the entire book — Butler calls it a small example of the larger Exodus story.⁴ The four women mirror four principles that unfold across all of Moses’s subsequent ministry:

- Revere God → Moses on holy ground, removing shoes
- Sacrifice → Moses sent away from family, later raising the staff
- Watch over → Moses watching over Israel in the wilderness
- Draw out → Moses drawing out Israel through the sea

The Ark Typology

Three arks in scripture carry covenant significance:

1. **Noah's ark** (*tebah*) — saves humanity from flood
2. **Moses's basket** (*tebah*) — saves Israel's deliverer from the river
3. **The Ark of the Covenant** (*aron*) — different word, but carries God's presence through the wilderness

Each is a vessel of divine protection in a world of threatening waters.

The “In Process of Time” Motif

“It came to pass in process of time” (Ex. 2:23) threads through Exodus. Deliverance is not immediate. Holt frames it: the people have been in bondage for hundreds of years. By the time Moses appears, things immediately get *worse*. Yet the baby is already in the basket. The basket has already been found. The mother is already nursing her son back.² God has already begun what we cannot yet see — “in process of time.”

Exodus as Book of Remembering

The entire structural arc of Exodus 1–6 moves from *forgetting* (Ex. 1:8) to *remembering* (Ex. 2:24; 6:5). A Pharaoh who forgot Joseph enslaved Israel. A God who remembered his covenant came down to deliver them. The Passover feast — instituted on the very night it occurred — is the mechanism God created to ensure Israel never forgot again.²

Connections to Restoration Scripture

Moses 1 (Pearl of Great Price): The Exodus 3 encounter is preceded by Moses's vision of the earth and its inhabitants. Satan appears immediately after and tempts Moses. Moses's experience gives him the context to rebuke Satan: “I can judge between thee and God” (Moses 1:15). This is the fuller version of Moses's spiritual formation before the burning bush.

1 Nephi 17:23–31: Nephi uses the Exodus as his primary evidence that God can command impossible things. The Exodus is Nephi's apologetic: “He brought them out of Egypt... by the power of his word he did cause the Red Sea to divide.”

Mosiah 12–13: Abinadi quotes Exodus at length in his trial before Noah. The law of Moses preserved in Exodus points to Christ as its fulfillment.

D&C 8:3: “This is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the very same spirit... of Moses into the waters of the Red Sea.” The gift given to Moses at the burning bush is the same spirit available to all who inquire in faith.

D&C 84:23–24: “Moses sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; but they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence.” Sinai is Moses's failed attempt to bring all Israel to what he experienced alone at the burning bush.

Ether 12:27: The theological key to Moses's weakness — and to ours. "I give unto men weakness that they may be humble." Moses's slowness of speech was not an obstacle to his mission; it was a feature of it.

Doctrinal Connections

Condescension of God: "I am come down to deliver them" (Ex. 3:8). Halverson calls this "condescension" — God coming down — paired with "con-ascension": he comes down in order to lift us up. This is the Atonement in miniature. The Book of Mormon uses *condescension* explicitly (1 Ne. 11:16–17, 26) to describe God's willingness to enter the human experience.¹

Covenant Renewal: Exodus 6 renews the Abrahamic covenant formally. God reminds Moses that his covenant was with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — now he intends to fulfill it. Covenant memory is the ground of covenant action.

Weakness as Gift: God's response to Moses's "I am not eloquent" — "Who hath made man's mouth?" — reframes weakness as divine design. Moses's slow speech kept him dependent on God in exactly the way a deliverer needed to be.^{1 2}

Type and Shadow of Christ: Joseph was a type of Christ in Genesis. Moses is a type in Exodus. Both were nearly killed at birth. Both were preserved through water. Both went into exile and returned as deliverers. Both performed wonders. Moses's serpent on the staff (Num. 21; John 3:14) and the Passover lamb (Ex. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7) make the Christological typology explicit in later chapters.

Sources and Insights

Don't Miss This — David Butler & Emily Freeman

The key insight from Butler and Freeman is the *women as deliverers* framework. Exodus 1–2 isn't prologue to Moses's story — it *is* the story, just on a smaller scale. The four women establish the four principles (revere, sacrifice, watch over, draw out) that play out in every subsequent deliverance in the book.

Freeman's treatment of "I will be what tomorrow demands" is particularly memorable: the divine name is not a theological label but a covenant promise about God's total sufficiency for every unknown future need. Fear lives in the future; God lives there too — and he's already enough.⁵

Unshaken — Jared Halverson

Halverson's contribution is the structural and typological frame: Exodus as the temple endowment template. The journey from Egypt to Canaan parallels the journey from premortality through mortality to

exaltation. This framework makes the entire book feel less like ancient history and more like a map of your own life.

His treatment of Moses's five objections at the burning bush is pastoral and careful: he doesn't minimize Moses's doubts, he shows how God meets each one specifically. The serpent sign is for Moses as much as for Israel. Taking the snake by the tail is taking Pharaoh by the tail — God saying: he's just a stick. Trust me.¹

His insight about the forgotten names — Shiphrah and Puah named; Pharaoh unnamed — is among the most striking details in these chapters. God's record-keeping is inverted from the world's.

Follow Him Podcast — Anthony Rivera (Week 13)

Rivera covers the historical background of Egypt's second intermediate period and the likely Hyksos context for Joseph's rise — which explains why a later "pure Egyptian" Pharaoh would be hostile to the Semitic population he found so large in his territory. This historical grounding prevents the story from feeling like legend and grounds it in real ancient geopolitics.³

Rivera also emphasizes God's patience through Moses's repeated objections — pointing out that God never withdraws the call, never shames Moses for doubting, and ultimately provides everything Moses says he lacks: presence, name, signs, Aaron's eloquence, and his own unending I Am.

Gospel Talktrine — Mark Holt (S01E13A-B)

Holt brings the most culturally and intellectually wide-ranging perspective of any source here. His central contribution is the *civilizational significance* of Exodus: the twin pillars of liberty and morality that underpin Western law, philosophy, and governance originate in these chapters. The founding documents of the United States were written by men who were "neck deep in Judeo-Christian philosophy" — and the concept that slaves deserve to be free, and that everyone is subject to an objective moral standard, comes directly from Exodus.²

His Hebrew analysis of *YHWH* as the causative stem of "to be" — meaning "He causes to exist" — adds a layer no other source covers: God is not merely self-existent, he is the *cause of all existence*. Every "Lord of Hosts" moment is God causing heavenly armies to exist. Every "let there be light" is God causing light to exist. The name is a declaration of creative omnipotence built into four letters.²

His framing of Exodus as the "book of remembering" — structured around a forgetting (Ex. 1:8) and moving through a series of divine rememberings — gives the entire narrative an emotional architecture: this is a love story about a God who never forgot his people, even when they forgot him.

Finally, his treatment of the 40 years in the wilderness (covered in later chapters) as the time required not to find the promised land, but to get Egypt *out of Israel* — "they spent three days leaving Egypt and forty years getting Egypt out of them" — is one of the

most memorable insights in the entire Old Testament study series.²

#world

Personal Application

1. **“The baby is already in the basket.”** When you don’t see God working, the deliverance may have already begun — through people you haven’t noticed yet, through a door quietly unlocking somewhere you haven’t checked.
 2. **Turn aside to see.** How many burning bushes have you walked past because you were focused on getting the sheep to the next hill? The turning is the invitation. God speaks *after* Moses turns, not before.
 3. **Holy ground is wherever God is.** Your living room can be holy. A car ride can be holy. The ground becomes holy because of who is there, not because of the architecture.
 4. **“I will be what tomorrow demands.”** The thing you’re most afraid of is already inside God’s sufficiency. He doesn’t need to know your specific future fear — he already *is* the answer to it.
 5. **Write down how you’ve seen God’s hand.** Gratitude requires memory. Faith requires memory. Wisdom requires memory. If you want to trust God more tomorrow, write down what he did today. (Pres. Eyring, “O Remember, Remember,” Oct. 2007.)
#journal
#journaling
#remember
 6. **Weakness as calling.** Moses’s slow speech kept him dependent on God. What weakness in you might be serving the same purpose — keeping you from trusting yourself more than God?
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Discussion Questions

- Which of the four women in Exodus 1–2 do you relate to most — the midwives, Jochebed, Miriam, or Pharaoh’s daughter? Why?
 - Moses offered five objections to God’s call. Which one do you identify with most?
 - “I will be what tomorrow demands.” What does that mean for the specific thing you’re facing right now?
 - Pharaoh’s question: “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?” How would you answer that question using only what you’ve personally experienced?
 - What would you write down today as evidence that God was active in your life? (Try it.)
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Footnotes

Further Reading

- Come Follow Me Old Testament Exodus 1-6 Mar. 21-27 Dont Miss This - Dont Miss This
- Come Follow Me - Exodus 1-6 The Burning Bush - Unshaken
- Bondage, Passover, and Exodus, Part 1 - S01E13A
- Bondage, Passover, and Exodus, Part 2 - S01E13B
- Sources/PDFs/followhim_old_testament/13-OT-Anthony-Rivera-Exodus-1-6-followHIM-Podcast-ENGLISH.pdf
- Moses 1; Abraham 3 — This Is My Work and My Glory (for Moses’s pre-Exodus spiritual formation)
- Atonement (for connections to *pada* and condescension)
- Sources/PDFs/BYU OT Field Guide.pdf

Previous Chapter

← Genesis 42–50 — God Meant It Unto Good

Next Chapter

→ Exodus 7–13 — Let My People Go

Footnotes

1. Halverson, Jared. “Come Follow Me — Exodus 1–6: The Burning Bush.” *Unshaken* podcast, 2026. Come Follow Me - Exodus 1-6 The Burning Bush - Unshaken ↩ ↩2 ↩3 ↩4 ↩5 ↩6 ↩7 ↩8 ↩9 ↩10 ↩11 ↩12 ↩13 ↩14 ↩15
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