

12.02 Moses Flees (Exodus 2:11–25; Acts 7:21–29; Hebrews 11:24–27)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- “Life of Moses” Series 1 Flash-a-Cards from A Beka Book and/or pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) A wallpaper trough used to soak pre-pasted wallpaper (see photo)
- (optional) *Herein Is Love Commentary Series; Exodus, A Commentary for Children*, by Nancy Ganz, Shepherd Press, 2002.



Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Israelites*: the descendants of Jacob, whom God named *Israel*; sometimes called *the children* or *sons of Israel*
- *to flee*: to run away from someone or something
- *flock*: a group of sheep or goats
- *trough*: (pronounced “trahf”); a long, narrow open container for animals to eat or drink out of [show a wallpaper tray]
- *sojourner*: a person who lives in a country not his own

Scripture (NASB)

Exodus 2:11 Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12 So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one *around*, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13 He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, “Why are you striking your companion?” 14 But he said, “Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and said, “Surely the matter has become known.”

15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock. 17 Then the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock. 18 When they came to Reuel their father, he said, “Why have you come *back* so soon today?” 19 So they said, “An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and what is more, he even drew the water for us and watered the flock.” 20 He said to his daughters, “Where is he then? Why is it that you have left the man behind? Invite him to have something to eat.” 21 Moses was willing to dwell with the man, and he gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses. 22 Then she gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom, for he said, “I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.”

23 Now it came about in *the course of* those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of *their* bondage rose up to God. 24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 25 God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice *of them*.

Acts 7:22 Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and

deeds. 23 But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. 24 And when he saw one *of them* being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. 25 And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand. 26 On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, ‘Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?’ 27 But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 You do not mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?’ 29 At this remark, Moses fled and became an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

Introduction/Review:

A baby in a basket!? This was not an abandoned child but rather a baby strategically placed by his mother so that he might be saved from certain death. Who would be better to save that child than the daughter of the pharaoh who had made a decree to destroy the baby? Yes, the princess saved Moses and saw to it that he received the best education available in Egypt (and perhaps in all the world). Yet, ✓Moses’ best education had been as a small child at the knees of his godly mother, Jochebed.

Story:

Prince Moses

Moses grew up. Being almost forty years old, he was known in Egypt as the adopted son of the princess and as “a man of power in words and deeds” (Acts 7:22). Having such an exalted position, ✓Moses might have supposed he could use his political rank to deliver his brothers from their hard labor. To the contrary, however, the New Testament informs us that Moses, rather than exalting himself, rejected the prestige of being called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, “choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward” (Hebrews 11:24–26).

Helpful Moses

It was time for Moses to identify himself with his birth people, the Israelites—to “visit” them.

The word *visit* might be just that—conversing with people in order to determine their situation and to learn how he could help. He saw that the Israelites were being subjected to hard labor—carrying heavy loads and doing demanding physical work.

In fact, he actually observed an Egyptian unjustly *beating* an Israelite. This was wrong! Looking one way and then another [Teacher, do so] and seeing no one around, Moses defended the innocent Israelite and took vengeance, killing the Egyptian. Then he quickly hid the Egyptian’s dead body in the sand.

Rejected Moses

Even though his intention was to aid his people, the Israelites did not want his help. Moses learned this hard lesson the day after he slew the Egyptian. He went out and saw two Israelites physically fighting one another. Moses tried to rectify the situation peacefully by urging, “Men, you are brothers; why are you injuring one another?”

Pushing Moses away, the Israelite who was doing the most harm accused Moses, saying, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?”

Oh, oh! These men had learned about Moses’ murder the previous day. If they knew, who else knew? Moses

was afraid* and for good reason, for Pharaoh himself learned of this matter and attempted to kill Moses. Moses had no choice but to flee the country.

Moses in Midian

Moses ran away to a land called Midian,** south of Edom. [Locate on map below.] One day he sat down by a well where flocks drank. The priest of that area had seven daughters who cared for their father's flock. These women came daily to draw water from this well and to fill troughs with water for the flock. However, big, bad shepherds also came daily and chased these women away so that they could not water the flock in a timely manner.

The day Moses was at the well, however, he stood up for the ladies and helped them get water for their flock. This kindness made it possible for them to get their job done earlier than usual.

When they returned home early, Reuel (also named Jethro), their father, asked, "Why have you come back so soon today?"

They answered, "An Egyptian stood up for us against the shepherds. What is more, he even drew the water for us and watered the flock."

Reuel said to his daughters, "Where is he then? Why is it that you have left the man behind? Invite him to eat with us."

The girls went back and got Moses. He ended up living with and working for Reuel.

Eventually, Reuel gave his daughter, Zipporah, to become Moses' wife. She bore a son whom Moses named Gershom, which means sojourner. Moses said, "I name my son Sojourner because I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."

Meanwhile, back in Egypt, Pharaoh died after several years had gone by. Things were not going any better for the Israelites. They were still slaves. They sighed [Teacher, do so] because of the bondage, and they cried out to God for help.

God heard their groaning and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

What was that covenant? [Show the chart below. Briefly review #1–5 about blessing.] God had said He would bless Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel, and He would make them a blessing. Notice #6–10 on this chart. God had said He would give Israel the land of Canaan and increase their number. Well, the number of Israelites had increased all right—✓to about 2.5 million! Look at #8: "Your descendants shall serve and be afflicted in a strange land 400 years." That period of time had elapsed. God had said (in #9 and 10), "I will judge that nation," and "Afterward your descendants shall come out with great substance."

Was God about to do what He had promised hundreds of years before? Was this part of the covenant—the 400 years in Egypt—about to be completed? Yes!

*Exodus tells us Moses was afraid, but Hebrews states he did not fear the wrath of the king when he forsook Egypt. Commentator John Gill reconciles these contradictory statements by citing two separate events: Moses was afraid when he left Egypt at age forty, but he was not afraid at the time of the exodus from Egypt when he was eighty years old (<https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=gill&b=58&c=11>).

**Midian, the founder of this land, was a son of Abraham by Keturah (Genesis 25:2).

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

As Moses was misunderstood and rejected by his people, so Jesus was rejected when He came to deliver His people, born-again Jews and Gentiles, from their sins.

The name of Moses' firstborn son was Gershom, which means "sojourner." Jesus left heaven's glories to sojourn among mankind about thirty years.

- May we, like Moses, "endure ill-treatment with the people of God [rather] than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt . . . looking to the reward" (Hebrews 11:25, 26).
- True believers in Jesus are sojourners on this earth; their home is in heaven.

[The following "Lessons" are from James Montgomery Boice's sermon, "Doing the Wrong Thing in the Wrong Way," from Session Four of a series entitled "The Battle of Egypt: The Life of Moses."]

- We can do something utterly right one moment and something utterly wrong the next.
- One failure does not necessarily disqualify us from future service.
- God is able to work in us despite our failures. Sometimes the process takes a long time.
- God remembers our faith, not our failures. Moses is praised for three things in Hebrews 11; most of the other people in this chapter are mentioned for only one thing.

Activities:

- Play dough: bricks; well; sheep
- Snack: Troughs—Fill the "troughs" of celery sticks with peanut butter or cream cheese.
- Add a statement and picture about Moses to the bulletin board, "Well, Lots of Things Happened at Wells." For printables and a photo of the finished bulletin board, go to the Extras page at teachingthebibletokids.org.
- Sing stanzas 1 and 2 of "Moses Gets out of Egypt," found in Lesson 12.01b or on the Songs page at teachingthebibletokids.org, where an audio and visuals are available.
- Play a "fleeing" game: Read the following statements. If a statement tells *why* Moses fled, students will run to different parts of the room. If a statement does *not* tell why Moses fled, students return to their seats.
 1. He looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. [Flee.]
 2. Moses stood up and helped Reuel's daughters and watered their flock. [Return.]
 3. Reuel said, "Invite the man to eat with us." [Return.]
 4. One who was injuring his neighbor pushed Moses away, saying, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" [Flee.]
 5. Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known." [Flee.]
 6. The king of Egypt died. [Return.]
- Review questions: (Game: With Legos® or other play bricks, for each correct answer add a brick to a wall or tower.)
 1. Describe Moses' reputation and education in Egypt. [Educated in all the learning of the Egyptians; a man of power in words and deeds.]
 2. How old was Moses when he started to think about helping his people? [About forty years old.]
 3. What did Moses do when he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew? [He struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.]
 4. What happened when Moses tried to stop a fight between two Israelites? [One said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"]
 5. What did Pharaoh think of Moses' actions? [He wanted to kill him.]
 6. To what land did Moses flee? [Midian.]

7. What did Moses do at the well in Midian? [Stood up for and helped Reuel's daughters water their flock.]
8. Where did Moses live in Midian? [With Reuel.]
9. Who became Moses' wife? [Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel.]
10. Why did Moses name his firstborn son Gershom, which means "sojourner"? [He said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land."]

Memory Verse[s]: (NASB)

- Hebrews 11:24–27—By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.
- Or Hebrews 11:25—[Moses chose] to endure ill-treatment with the people of God [rather] than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.
- Or Hebrews 11:26—[Moses considered] the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

Handwork:

- Color the line drawing found below. Glue sand or sandpaper on the sandy part of the picture.

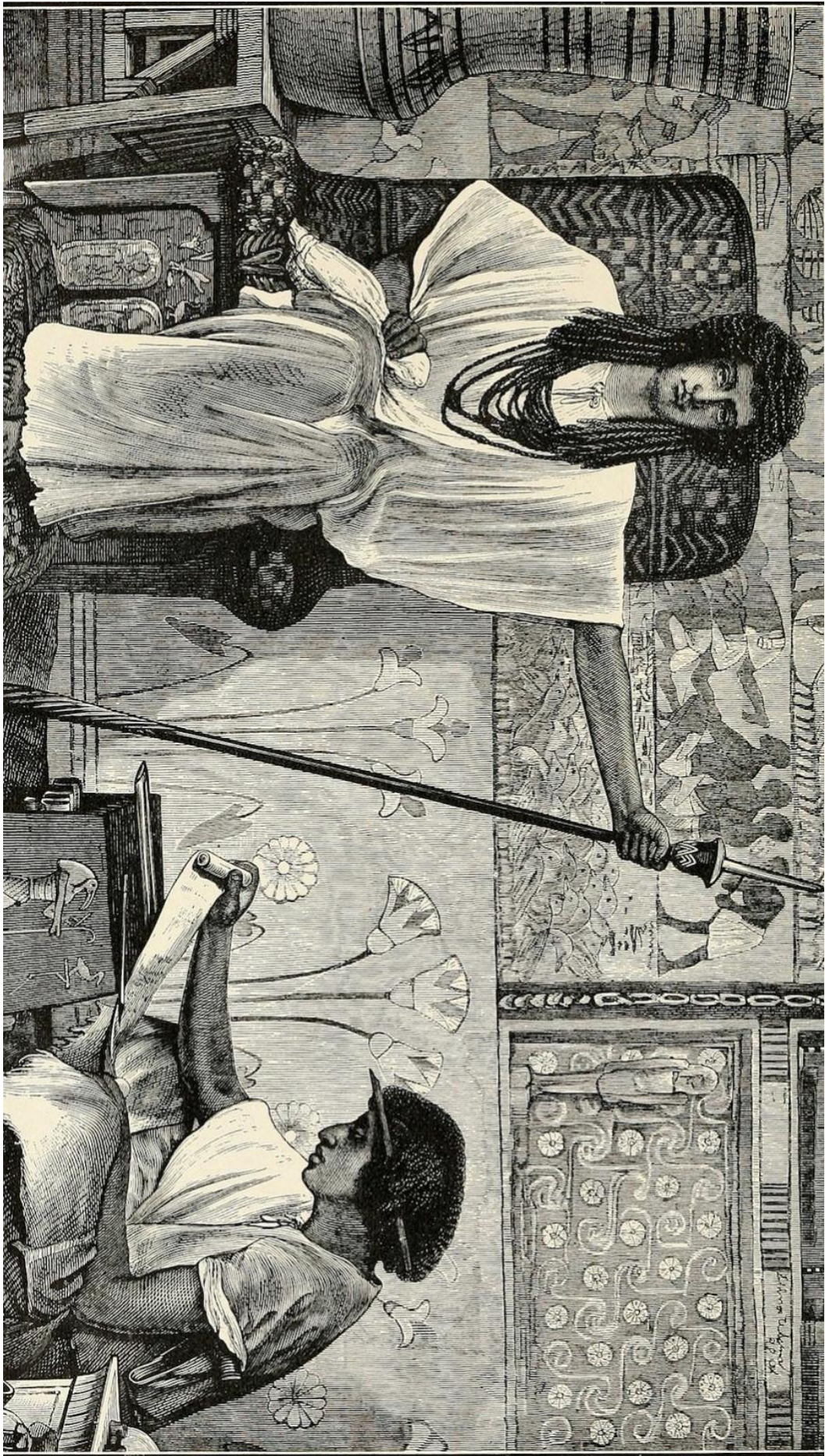
Israelites

to flee

flock

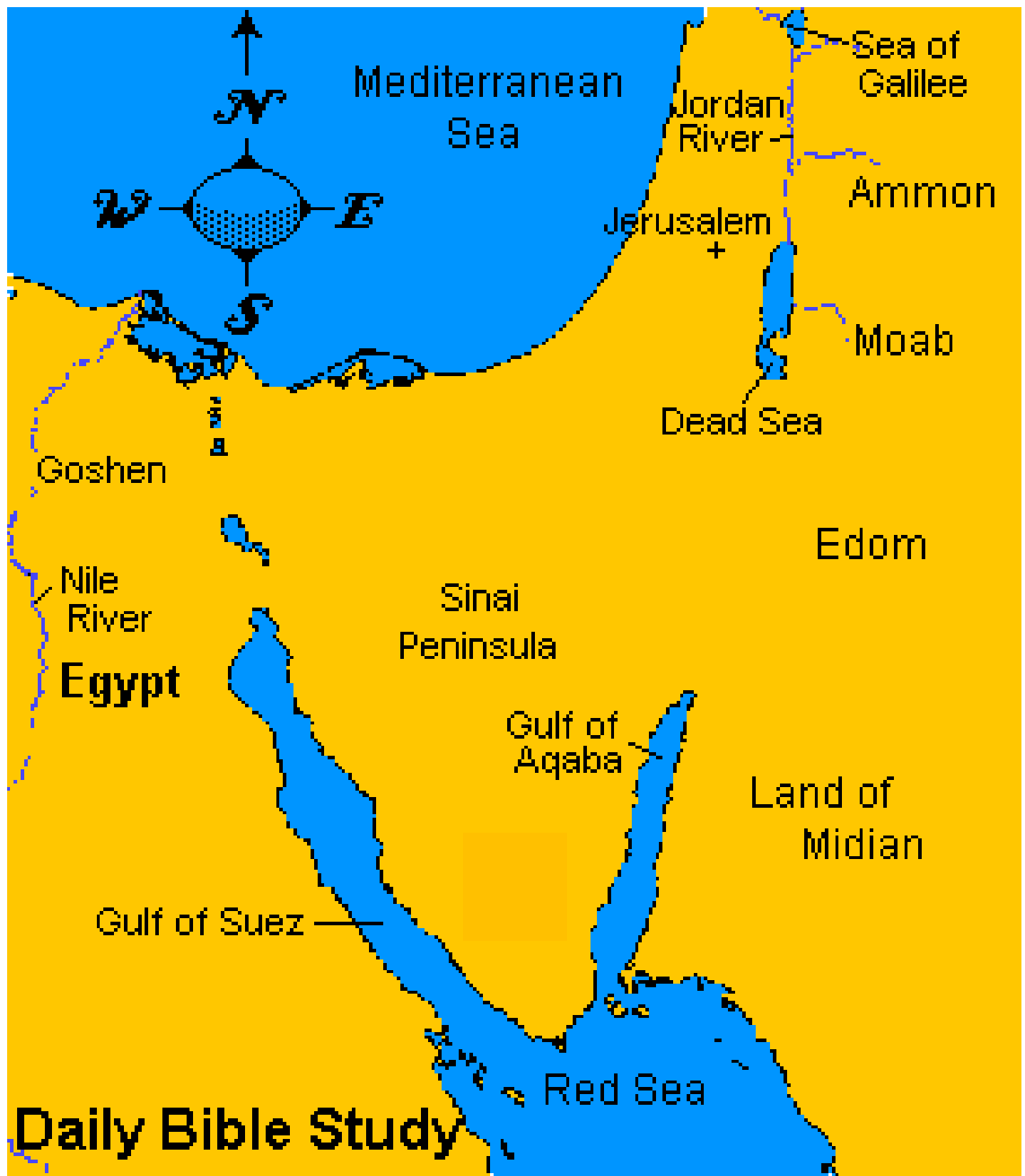
trough

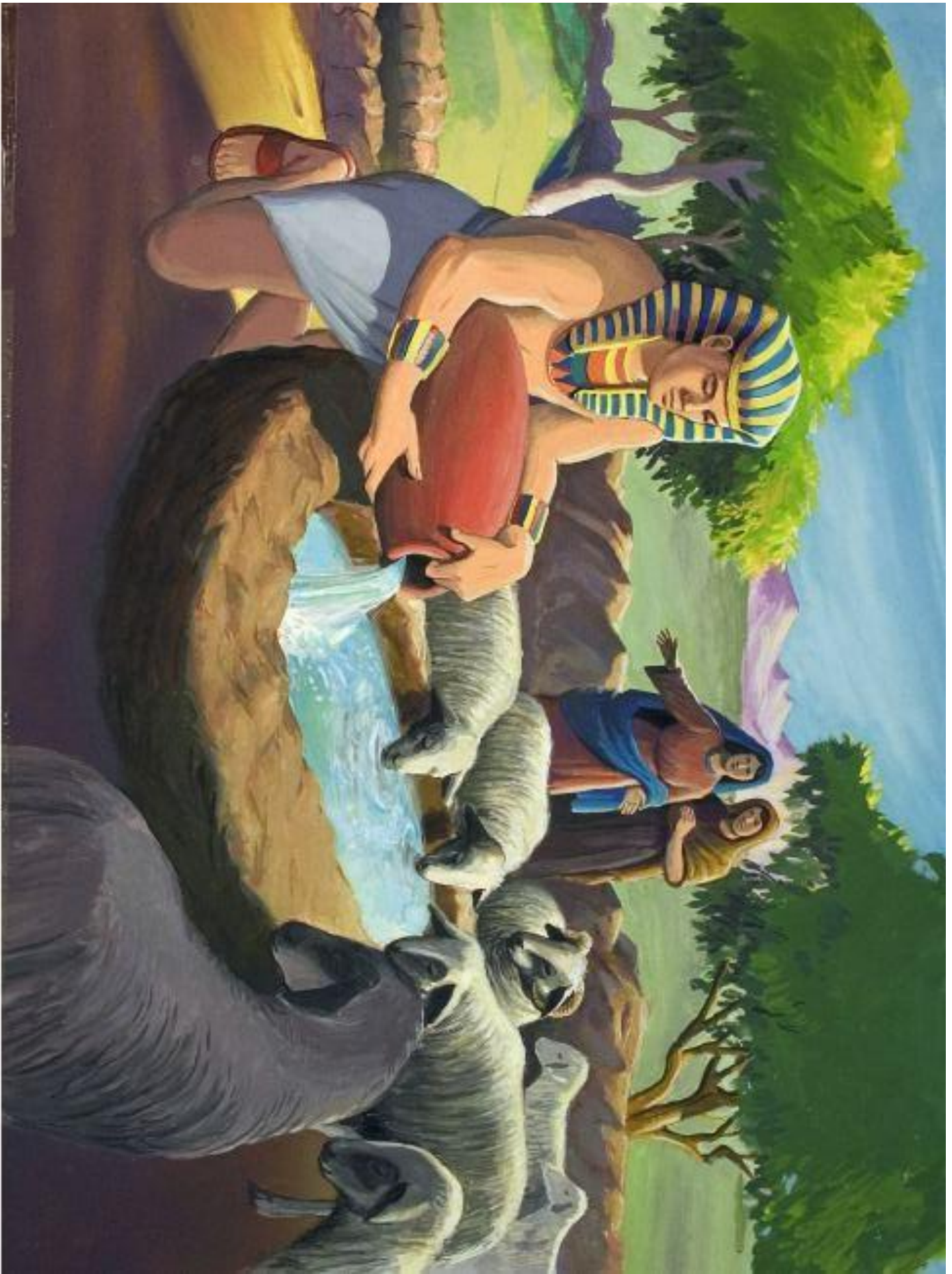
sojourner













The Abrahamic Covenant

1. I will bless you.
2. I will make your name great
3. You shall be a blessing.
4. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.
5. In you shall all families of the earth be blessed.
6. Unto your descendants I will give this land.
7. I will make your descendants as numberless as the dust and as the stars.
8. Your descendants shall serve and be afflicted in a strange land 400 years.
9. I will judge that nation.
10. Afterward your descendants shall come out with great substance.

