

Children of Israel in Egypt

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I gave a presentation titled "Children of Israel in Egypt." I want to share some of my comments in this article.

Who was Israel?

Genesis 32:28—"And He said, 'Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.' "

How did Israel end up in Egypt?

When Stephen (in the book of Acts) was accused of speaking blasphemy against the holy place and the law (Acts 6:13-14), he defended himself by reciting some highlights of the Old Testament history—from Abraham to Solomon (Acts 7:1-50).

Stephen first mentioned Jacob (Israel) in verse 8, first mentioned Joseph in verse 9 and first mentioned Moses in verse 20.

- Joseph was sold into Egypt (verse 9).
- Jacob (Israel) and his relatives (75 of them) went to Egypt (verse 14).
- When Jacob (Israel) died, he was buried back in Shechem (verses 15-16).

Israelites multiplied in Egypt

- The children of Israel multiplied in Egypt (verse 17).
- A new Pharaoh dealt treacherously with the children of Israel (verses 18-19).

Moses was born

In the course of time, Stephen got to the history of Moses (verses 20-44). I found it interesting that Stephen's account (although much shorter than the Exodus account) followed the chronological path—with a notable exception.

To me, Acts 7:25 seemed out of place. However, that verse opens the door to a great discussion.

Moses didn't readily accept

Acts 7:25—"For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand."

It is true that the children of Israel did not always accept that God would deliver them by the hand of Moses. But did you notice that Moses did not always accept that God was going to deliver them by the hand of Moses?

(I am not criticizing Moses about his moments of doubt. In fact, I find it helpful to realize that children of God have moments of uncertainty—and God still loves us.)

- Exodus 3:7-10—God told Moses that He was going to deliver the people by sending Moses to Pharaoh.
- Exodus 3:11—Initially, Moses expressed some reservations.
- Exodus 3:12-15—God reassured him.
- Exodus 4:1—Moses again expressed reservations.
- Exodus 4:10—Moses again expressed reservations.
- Exodus 4:11-12—God again reassured him.
- Exodus 4:13—Moses asked for someone else to be sent.
- Exodus 4:14-16—Although God was irritated (the Bible says His "anger" was "kindled"), He agreed to send Aaron to help Moses.

God foretold their deliverance

- Exodus 3:19-20—God foretold Pharaoh's reaction and God performing miracles.
- Exodus 4:21-23—God foretold Pharaoh's reaction and God giving the 10th plague.

The children of Israel would know that He was their God (Exodus 6:7).

The Egyptians would know that God was the Lord (Exodus 7:5, Exodus 14:4 and Exodus 14:18).