

**Sermon Discussion Guide 6.25.23**  
**Pastor Carmen Schrock-Hurst**  
**Exodus 1:1-22; 3:8-9**

**Ephesians 3:9a** *“And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me...”*

**Opening questions:** Invite class members to reflect on times in their lives when they cried out to God. What was it that drove them to cry out so sincerely? What happened as a result?

**Discuss:** Carmen said that in order to truly enter into the Exodus story one should begin by reading Genesis 37-50, the story of Joseph. Take time as a class to reconstruct as much of the Joseph story as you can remember from memory. What were the key points (people) of the story?

**Discuss:** In this series we are beginning a walk through the Exodus stories and looking for ways that the Exodus stories inform our own journey of faith. We begin our journey through Exodus by focusing on the cry of the oppressed people. How does this parallel any parts of your own story?

**Read Exodus 1: 15-21 and discuss:** In an attempt to control the numbers of Israelites Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill the baby boys. They refused. Pay attention to how the midwives responded to Pharaoh. What stories can you think of from down through history that are examples of how other faithful people responded to unjust leaders? How does Jesus call us to respond when we are given orders that go against our conscience?

**Reflect:** Carmen suggests that some of us may try to numb our pain through things like sports, shopping, food or media consumption rather than to actually feel the pain and cry out to God. How does this ring true in your life? What value do you find in bringing your pain to God?

**Tough Question:** When an oppressed people group, like the children of Israel in Egypt, suffers for generation after generation how do you explain God’s seeming lack of response to their crying out for mercy? What takes God so long?

**Looking ahead:** What other questions does this chapter of Exodus raise? How will the groundwork of this first chapter shape our study of the rest of the book?

**Prayer:** O God who hears the cry of the suffering and the oppressed, hear now our prayer for those people who are voiceless. As we cry out on their behalf, may we also learn to be honest with you about our own cries for help and mercy. AMEN