

Recap of last week's study:

Hagar's Exile and Wilderness Encounter With God

Genesis 16:1-13, 21:14-21

Study considerations:

- Last week's study reinforced our study theme which is **the wilderness**.
- It's not only a place of danger, testing, and scarcity, but also a place where God provides, protects, and transforms those who have been pushed to the brink.

Moses' Exile and Encounter With God in the Wilderness

- Exodus 2:11-25, 3:1-6

Moses flees for his life into Midian's wilderness, which becomes the setting for his transformative encounter with God and his calling into a mission of liberation.

Exodus 2:11-25 NASB

¹¹ Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his fellow Hebrews and looked at their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his fellow Hebrews. ¹² So he looked this way and that, and when he saw that there was no one around, he struck and killed the Egyptian, and hid his body in the sand. ¹³ Now 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 ruler and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and said, “Surely the matter has become known!”

¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard about 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.

Consider

Centuries after Abraham, his descendants are enslaved in Egypt, and the Egyptian Pharaoh orders the death of every Hebrew baby boy (Exod. 1:22).

- Moses is born during that time, but he is rescued from death and raised in Egypt's royal court (Exod. 2:1-10).
- As an adult, Moses defends an enslaved Israelite by murdering an Egyptian slave master.
- But when his actions are exposed, Moses flees for his life into the wilderness of Midian.

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 their father Reuel, he said, "Why have you come back so soon today?" ¹⁹ They said, "An Egyptian saved us from the shepherds, and what is more, he even drew water for us and watered the flock." ²⁰ So 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 And Moses was willing to live 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 stranger 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 groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage ascended to God. ²⁴ So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵ And God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.

Consider

Unlike Hagar, who is exiled because of others' wrongdoing (Gen. 21:9-14), Moses ends up in the wilderness because of his own violent actions.

- But the wilderness becomes a place of refuge for him as he finds shelter with a Midianite priest, marries his daughter Zipporah, and tends to the family's livestock.

Exodus 3:1-6 NASB

¹ Now Moses was pasturing the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² Then the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not being consumed. ³ So Moses said, "I must turn aside and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burning up!" ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

⁵ Then He said, “Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ And He said, “I am the God of your father— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Consider

Years later, while shepherding flocks on a wilderness mountain, Moses sees a burning bush that somehow stays intact—it's not being burned up.

- From its fire, God speaks to Moses, telling him that he has seen Israel's suffering in Egypt and instructing him to return to Egypt and lead Israel out of slavery and into freedom.

Consider

For Moses, the wilderness becomes a place of God's calling and promise.

- And God also declares that Moses will bring the Israelites back to that same mountain (Mount Horeb, later called Mount Sinai), so that they too can worship God in the wilderness (Exod. 3:12).

Reflect

- How does Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush compare with Hagar's experience in the wilderness?
- What might these stories reveal about the wilderness as a place where God meets with people, cares for them, and calls them into a new future?

Next week:

Wilderness Testing to Strengthen Trust

Exodus 16:1-20

Study considerations:

- In a barren wilderness where food and water are almost impossible to find, Israel faces the threats of starvation and dehydration.
- God uses these challenges to test them, inviting them to trust him more than ever before.

Source FOR 3/26/2026:

[The Wilderness in the Bible | Moses' Exile and Encounter With God in the Wilderness](#)