

"Let My People Go": God's Move to Liberate a People  
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*Dr. James Cone stated, "There is no knowledge of Yahweh except through God's political activity on behalf of the weak and helpless of the land." (God of the Oppressed, p. 59).*

**Introduction:** In light of the stream of racially motivated gun violence, Christ's body must know their response is in the spotlight. With the world watching, they will want to know: How will they respond to this endemic cruelty displayed over and over again upon Black people? Will they be strategically silent? Or will they exercise the authority to bind and loose a movement that liberates God's people?

The book of Exodus, taken from a literal point of view, is an epic narrative of oppression, deliverance, and freedom that rivals none. Exodus is an example of "how" God moves for his people; and how God moves through his people.

### **Preparation**

Read the following text to prepare for the discussion: Exodus 1, 2:23-25; Psalm 105:23-28; Genesis 15:13-16; Romans 9:17

While reading, consider the cause of "the people's bondage" and the ways it parallels the toxic relationship America has with people of color today. More critically, consider how God views these events. Consider God's liberation strategy and what God wants to achieve through these events.

### **Discussing the Text:**

Exodus 1:1-7: The Israelites are fulfilling God's mandate to expand humanity throughout the earth (Gen 1:28). There are a new Pharaoh and a new "administration" change that threatens the strength of the Israelites and threatens their growth.

1. Even though God is not directly mentioned, how is God's power already on display in the first verse of Exodus?
2. For those new to scripture, you may want to read Genesis 1:28 and then read Exodus 1:7. This demonstrates a helpful link between the beginnings of the two books.

### **Exodus 1:8-22**

1. What "might" the author of Exodus be communicating by naming the midwives, yet we do not know the name of Pharaoh?
2. What might this say about who or what God values?
3. How does God respond to Pharaoh's genocidal threat to kill all the Israelite boys?

4. Who has the strength or ability to control life in this portion of the text?
5. Can you highlight other text in scripture where you see God use human agency to advance His cause?

Exodus 1:8, "A new king (Pharaoh) arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph." This makes it clear that people can no longer rely on their political or social connections to influential people. They no longer can rely on their past political position for stability and prosperity. What remains constant is their relationship with and their relationship to God.

1. How have you seen God sustain your life or another person's life in ways that contradict traditional wisdom?
2. What is the difference between relying on God's sustaining power and trusting in your ability to connect to the right people?
3. When relying on God and going against the political system, how did those women contribute to the history of Israel?
4. How do we know when someone is "disobeying" an authority figure or disobeying the law to obey God?
5. Could we ever imagine God calling us to "disobey" in some way the order to serve and obey God?
6. During this current climate, when our black men and women, when our youth's lives are in danger, how do we evaluate our obedience to God or the church's status quo?