

WOVEN & KNOWN

MOSES SERIES

Deep Study Guide

Part Four of Thirty



THE KILLING OF THE EGYPTIAN

Identity Crisis, Premature Justice, Rejection, Exile, and the First Failure of Moses



Primary texts for this guide

Exodus 2:11-25 · Acts 7:17-36 · Hebrews 11:24-27 · Numbers 35:9-34 · Leviticus 25:25-55 · Genesis 4:8-16 · Matthew 2:13-15

A deeper companion guide to the Woven & Known Moses Series article.
Designed for personal study, small groups, journalling, and teaching preparation.

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How to Use This Guide

Suggested rhythm

1. Read the biblical text aloud before opening the commentary.
2. Work through one module at a time rather than rushing.
3. Write before you read the suggested reflections.
4. Return to the article only after you have wrestled with the Scripture and questions.
5. Use the self-quiz at the end to test retention and clarify what needs more study.

This companion guide is intentionally deeper than the public article. It is built like a mini-seminar: observation, historical context, Hebrew word study, theological synthesis, critical thinking, devotional application, and assessment. The goal is not to make the text more complicated; it is to slow down enough to notice what is actually there.

Big thesis

Moses' killing of the Egyptian is not a simple hero moment and not merely a moral failure. It is a theologically dense moment where identity, justice, kinship obligation, premature calling, rejected deliverance, and future redemption collide. Moses acts like a go'el before he has been sent as one. God does not discard him; He sends him to Midian for formation.

Learning Objectives

- Trace the narrative movement from palace identity to Hebrew solidarity to exile.
- Explain the Hebrew significance of el-echav, sivotam, nakah, sar, shofet, and the four divine verbs in Exodus 2:23-25.
- Evaluate Moses' act through the lenses of justice, kinship obligation, and premature calling.
- Understand go'el/redemption language and why it matters for Christology.
- Compare Exodus 2 with Acts 7 and Hebrews 11, noting how the New Testament interprets Moses' identity and rejection.
- Use Midian as a theological category for hidden formation after public failure.
- Connect Exodus 2 to the larger Passover-Pentecost redemptive arc without flattening historical differences.



Module One: First Reading - What Does the Text Actually Say?

Before interpretation, practice observation. Read Exodus 2:11-25 three times. On the first reading, note actions. On the second, note emotions. On the third, note repeated words or theological signals.

Observation: List the major verbs in Exodus 2:11-15. What does Moses do? What does Pharaoh do? What do the Hebrews do?

Emotional map: Where do you see compassion, anger, fear, rejection, exhaustion, or hope in the passage?

Theological signal: What do verses 23-25 reveal about God before God speaks to Moses at the burning bush?

Close-reading principle

A biblical narrative often tells you how to interpret itself through repeated verbs, unusual phrasing, delayed information, and narrated silence. Exodus 2 does this with kinship language (“his brothers”), seeing language (“he looked”), fear language, and the fourfold divine response: God heard, remembered, saw, and knew.



Module Two: Identity - Moses Between Two Worlds

Exodus 2:11 says Moses “went out to his brothers.” That one phrase collapses the entire identity tension of the first forty years. To Egypt, Moses appears Egyptian. To the Midianite women, he will still look Egyptian. But when he chooses where to go and whom to see, the text calls the Hebrews his brothers.

Key Hebrew Observations

vayigdal Moshe - “Moses had grown up.” More than age; it marks full stature and social arrival.

el-echav - “to his brothers.” Kinship language, not detached ethnic description.

vayar b’sivlotam - “he looked on their burdens.” The verb suggests attending to suffering, not casual noticing.

ish mitzri / ish ivri - “Egyptian man” / “Hebrew man.” The narrative keeps ethnic and relational identity in view.

Identity reflection: Where does Moses’ Hebrew identity appear to be internal before it becomes public?

Critical thinking: Is Moses “choosing” a new identity here, or finally acting on an identity he already had? Defend your answer from the text.

What many readers miss

Moses does not begin his deliverer identity at the burning bush. He begins to act from it here. The problem is not that he cares too early; the problem is that compassion has not yet been joined to divine commission, wisdom, or timing.



Module Three: Justice, Violence, and the Go'el Problem

This is the difficult centre of Part Four. Was Moses wrong? Was he acting as a kinsman-redeemer? Was he avenging unjust violence? Was the killing murder, rescue, premature judgment, or all of these tangled together? A serious study must resist shallow answers.

Go'el in brief

The go'el was the near kin responsible to restore what a vulnerable family member could not restore alone. In biblical law, go'el language touches land redemption, slave redemption, family restoration, and blood-avenging. This does not make every act of vengeance righteous; later Torah carefully regulates blood vengeance through cities of refuge and legal distinctions between murder and manslaughter.

Use these texts as lenses:

- Leviticus 25:25-55 - redemption of land and enslaved kin.
- Numbers 35:9-34 - cities of refuge and the blood-avenger.
- Deuteronomy 19:1-13 - guarding justice from both murder and revenge abuse.
- Ruth 4 - redemption as restoration of family future.
- Job 19:25 - "I know that my Redeemer lives," redemption language as hope.

Legal-theological analysis: How does later go'el law help explain Moses' impulse without automatically justifying his method?

Moral reasoning: What is the difference between righteous anger, vigilante action, and divinely commissioned deliverance?

Group discussion: If the Hebrew overseer was being beaten severely, what options did Moses have? Which options does the text show? Which does it leave unspoken?

Critical caution

Do not flatten Exodus 2 into “Moses was right” or “Moses was wrong.” The text itself is more sophisticated. Moses sees true injustice, acts from true kinship, uses lethal force, hides the body, fears exposure, is rejected by his brothers, and is later affirmed by the New Testament as someone who chose solidarity with God’s people. These details must be held together.



Module Four: “Who Made You?” - Rejection Before Commission

The question in Exodus 2:14 is devastating: “Who made you a prince and a judge over us?” It is the first spoken rejection of Moses by the people he is trying to identify with. In Acts 7, Stephen makes this the interpretive key to Moses’ life and to Israel’s rejection of Jesus.

Acts 7 lens

Stephen says the same Moses whom they rejected was the one God sent as ruler and redeemer. The rejection was real, but it did not cancel the calling. It became part of the pattern by which God would later identify His chosen deliverer.

Text comparison: Read Exodus 2:14 and Acts 7:25-35. What changes when Stephen retells the story?

Authority question: What is the difference between assumed authority and authority given by God? How does Moses experience both?

Christological shadow: How does Moses' rejection by his own people prepare the reader to understand John 1:11 and the rejection of Jesus?

The pattern

Rejected by his own → sent away into exile → formed in hiddenness → called by God → returned as deliverer. This pattern appears in Moses and reaches its deepest fulfilment in Christ, who is rejected, descends into death, rises, and is vindicated as Lord and Saviour.



Module Five: Midian - The Geography of Formation

Midian is not just where Moses hides. It is where the palace man is remade. The desert does not erase his calling; it purifies his understanding of it. The well scene also places Moses in a long biblical pattern of covenant meetings at wells.

- Genesis 24 - Rebekah is encountered at a well.
- Genesis 29 - Jacob meets Rachel at a well.
- Exodus 2 - Moses meets Zipporah's family through a well conflict.
- John 4 - Jesus meets the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.

Historical window: Midian

Midian is usually associated with northwest Arabia and adjacent desert zones. Archaeology connects the broader region with Qurayyah Painted Ware, often formerly called "Midianite pottery," showing a wider cultural and trade network rather than an isolated primitive people. This matters because Moses enters a

real social world, not empty wilderness.

Formation question: What does Moses learn in Midian that he could not learn in Pharaoh's palace?

Well motif: What do biblical well scenes tend to signal? How does this shape how you read Moses sitting down by the well?

Personal reflection: What has your "Midian" season stripped away, and what has it quietly given you?

Pastoral insight

Midian is not wasted time. Midian is the place where public failure becomes hidden formation. The fact that Moses spends forty years there should warn us against measuring divine preparation by speed.



Module Six: The Four Verbs That Change History

Exodus 2:23-25 ends Part Four not with Moses in focus, but with God. The narrative camera lifts from Midian and Egypt to the covenant God who hears, remembers, sees, and knows.

God heard: The cry of the oppressed enters the divine courtroom. It is not lost in the air.

God remembered: Biblical remembering is covenant activation, not recovery from forgetfulness.

God saw: God does not merely audit suffering; He beholds His people with covenant concern.

God knew: The deepest verb. Relational, intimate, and active. When God knows, intervention is near.

Which of the four verbs do you most need to believe right now - heard, remembered, saw, or knew? Why?

Compare Exodus 2:23-25 with Exodus 3:7-10. How does God's private response become public commission?

Theology of delay: The people cry, but Moses is still in Midian. What does this teach about God's timing and human perception?

The hidden hinge

The burning bush is the visible start of Moses' commission, but Exodus 2:23-25 is the hidden hinge that makes it inevitable. God's response begins before Moses hears his name from the bush.



Module Seven: Moses, Jesus, and the Redeemer Pattern

Typology does not mean treating Moses as a secret code for Jesus in every detail. It means recognizing divinely patterned correspondences in salvation history. Moses is not Christ. But Moses' life creates categories that Christ fills perfectly.

Pattern	Moses	Christ
Threatened deliverer	Pharaoh's regime threatens Hebrew sons.	Herod threatens the children around Bethlehem.
Identity with the oppressed	Moses chooses his Hebrew brothers over palace privilege.	The Son takes flesh and identifies with humanity.
Rejected by his own	"Who made you prince and judge?"	"He came to his own, and his own did not receive him."
Exile and return	Moses flees to Midian and later returns.	Jesus enters death and returns in resurrection vindication.
Redeemer role	Moses acts prematurely and imperfectly.	Christ redeems perfectly, willingly, and finally.

Typology practice: Which connections above are directly grounded in the New Testament, and which are theological synthesis? Why does that distinction matter?

Christological reflection: How does the imperfect redeemer make you appreciate the perfect Redeemer more deeply?



Module Eight: Passover, Pentecost, and the Fifty-Day Arc

Part Four ends with groaning. That groaning begins the movement toward Passover. From Passover the story moves toward Sinai. In later Jewish tradition, Shavuot becomes associated with the giving of Torah; in the New Testament, Pentecost becomes the giving of the Spirit. The pattern is not accidental in Christian theological reading: redemption leads to covenant formation.

The redemptive chain

Groaning in Egypt → Moses called → Plagues → Passover blood → Exodus → Sea crossing → Wilderness → Sinai/Shavuot → Torah written on stone → Christ our Passover → Resurrection → Pentecost → Spirit writing God's law on hearts.

Structural analysis: Why does redemption come before law in Exodus? What happens to Christian discipleship if we reverse that order?

Compare Sinai and Acts 2: What similarities and differences do you notice: fire, speech, covenant, people formed, divine presence?

Critical thinking: How can we honour Jewish readings of Shavuot while also reading Pentecost christologically as Christians?

Guardrail

Do not treat the Old Testament as merely a set of Christian symbols. The events have their own historical and covenantal integrity. Christian typology is richest when it first honours the original context and then traces how the New Testament develops the pattern.



Academic Deep-Dive Labs

These exercises are designed to move from devotional reading into disciplined theological study. Use them for group discussion, teaching preparation, or personal research.

Lab 1 - Narrative Ethics

Write a 500-word argument answering: Was Moses' killing of the Egyptian morally justified, morally wrong, or morally mixed? You must use Exodus 2, Acts 7, Hebrews 11, and at least one text from the go'el/cities-of-refuge tradition.

Lab 2 - Identity and Embodiment

Trace the phrase "his brothers" through Exodus 2 and Hebrews 11. How is identity shown through action, cost, and association?

Lab 3 - Authority and Calling

Compare Moses in Exodus 2 with Moses in Exodus 3-4. What has changed? What has not changed?

Lab 4 - Typology Without Overreach

Create a two-column list: what the New Testament explicitly says about Moses and Christ, and what later theological reflection reasonably infers. Explain your criteria.

Lab 5 - Redemptive Timeline

Draw a timeline from Exodus 2:23 to Acts 2. Mark groaning, Passover, Sinai, Calvary, Resurrection, and Pentecost. Under each, write one sentence explaining the theological movement.

Journalling Pages: Your Midian Season

Where have you acted from a genuine desire to help but later realized your timing or method was immature?

Who or what asked you, “Who made you?” How did that question affect your sense of calling?

What part of your old “palace identity” is God stripping away in this season?

What might God be forming in you that could only be formed away from public visibility?

What would it look like to wait without giving up on the promise?

Self-Quiz: Part Four

Use this to check comprehension after completing the study. Try it without looking back first, then use the answer key to review.

1. What phrase in Exodus 2:11 shows Moses' internal identification with the Hebrews?

2. What does go'el mean in broad biblical usage?

3. What question does the Hebrew man ask Moses in Exodus 2:14?

4. How does Stephen reinterpret Moses' rejection in Acts 7?

5. What are the four divine verbs in Exodus 2:23-25?

6. What does biblical "remembering" mean when God remembers His covenant?

7. Why is Midian important theologically?

8. What is the Passover-Pentecost structural arc?

9. Why should typology honour the original context first?

10. What is the main thesis of Part Four?

Answer Key

- 1. What phrase in Exodus 2:11 shows Moses' internal identification with the Hebrews?** el-echav - "to his brothers."
- 2. What does go'el mean in broad biblical usage?** A near kinsman/redeemer responsible to restore or vindicate family rights or losses.
- 3. What question does the Hebrew man ask Moses in Exodus 2:14?** "Who made you a prince and a judge over us?"
- 4. How does Stephen reinterpret Moses' rejection in Acts 7?** As a pattern: the rejected Moses is the one God sent as ruler and redeemer.
- 5. What are the four divine verbs in Exodus 2:23-25?** God heard, remembered, saw, and knew.
- 6. What does biblical "remembering" mean when God remembers His covenant?** Not recovering forgotten information, but acting on covenant commitment.
- 7. Why is Midian important theologically?** It is the place of hidden formation after public failure and before divine commission.
- 8. What is the Passover-Pentecost structural arc?** Redemption at Passover leads to covenant formation at Sinai/Shavuot, and Christ's Passover leads to Spirit-giving at Pentecost.
- 9. Why should typology honour the original context first?** Because the Old Testament event has its own historical/covenantal integrity before later fulfilment is traced.
- 10. What is the main thesis of Part Four?** Moses acts from true identity and concern but prematurely and imperfectly; God forms him in Midian rather than discarding him.

Facilitator Notes

Leading this session well

This topic includes violence, identity conflict, and failure. Keep the discussion anchored in the text. Avoid turning Moses into either a flawless hero or a condemned criminal. The aim is mature theological discernment: compassion without presumption, zeal with submission, and calling formed by God's timing.

Suggested 90-minute group plan

- 10 min - Opening prayer and read Exodus 2:11-25 aloud.
- 15 min - Observation: what does the text actually say?
- 20 min - Discuss Moses' act: justice, violence, go'el, timing.
- 15 min - Acts 7 and the rejection pattern.
- 15 min - Midian as formation, not waste.
- 10 min - Journalling: "Where am I in Midian?"
- 5 min - Closing prayer using the four divine verbs.

Selected Bibliography and Research Notes

This guide was built from the Woven & Known Part Four article supplied by the author, with additional biblical-theological synthesis and historical background. Scripture references should be read in full in your preferred translation.

- Primary text: Exodus 2:11-25; Acts 7:17-36; Hebrews 11:24-27; Numbers 35; Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 19; Ruth 4; John 1; Acts 2; 2 Corinthians 3.
- Woven & Known, Moses Series Part Four: “The Killing of the Egyptian” (author-supplied article/study draft).
- Jewish Encyclopedia, “Go’el” and “Avenger of Blood,” for definitions and rabbinic/legal categories around kinship redemption and blood-avenging.
- Bible Odyssey, “Redeemer,” for concise academic definition of the redeemer role in Hebrew Bible usage.
- Ancient Arabia / M. Luciani, “Qurayyah,” for the identification of Qurayyah and Qurayyah Painted Ware, formerly called Midianite Pottery.
- Harvard White-Levy Program, “Unearthing Qurayyah I,” for archaeological project context at Qurayyah in northwest Arabia.
- Jewish Encyclopedia, “Pentecost,” and standard Jewish festival resources for the historical association of Shavuot/Pentecost with the giving of Torah in later Jewish tradition.
- Recommended books for further study: Nahum Sarna, Exodus; Brevard Childs, The Book of Exodus; Terence Fretheim, Exodus; John Goldingay, Old Testament Theology; N. T. Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God; Richard Hays, Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels.



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