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**Israel's Oppression**

**Evil Plans, Courageous Resistance**

***Exodus 1***

**Purpose:** To discover the depths of Israel's oppression and what is required of believers in those circumstances.

Oppression is a nasty word, but it grabs the headlines because it's the reason for much conflict today. Scenes out of this chapter fit totalitarian societies. Only the methods of oppression change. God's people were not spared in 1700 b.c., and they are not always spared now. But in this study you will find a bright spot of courageous resistance.

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**1.**  To you, what is the most obvious example of oppression in the world today, and why?

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**2.**  Read Exodus 1. How did “the sons of Israel” (Jacob's descendants) fare in Egypt (vv. 1–7)?

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**3.** What was their situation under a king who had forgotten Joseph's role (Gen 41) in saving the country (vv. 8–14)?

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**4.** How do oppressors today usually justify their actions?

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**5.** Why did Pharaoh's strategy backfire (v. 12)?

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**6.** The old privileged status of the Hebrews had faded into abject slavery. How would you have felt as a Hebrew youth doing backbreaking labor under a burning sun?

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**7.** What new population control plans did Pharaoh devise (vv. 15–22)?

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**8.** How were his plans thwarted?

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**9.** Imagine the emotions of the king and the midwives when he summoned them (v. 18). What was the secret of the women's self-control and wisdom (vv. 17, 21)?

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**10.** How does your fear of God motivate right moral conduct and give you the courage to withstand the temptation to do evil?

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**11.** The tougher Pharaoh's pressure, the greater Israel's increase (vv. 20–21). How do you account for this?

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**12.** In what circumstances have you felt oppressed by unreasonable demands?

How did you find God's help?