

The Message of the Old Testament

A Book-by-Book Study

EXODUS

Background

1. EXODUS means _____, departure, or emigration.
2. The writer of Exodus is _____.
3. The time of writing was the same as _____, most likely while the Israelites were waiting to enter the promised land. (1500 - 1400 B.C.)

Historical Flow

Exodus 1-4: Moses' Birth and Calling

- Pharaoh takes advantage of a ready labor force
- Pharaoh orders the death of Hebrew sons
- Moses was born
- Moses was raised by Pharaoh's daughter
- Moses identified with his people
- Moses committed murder
- Moses fled to Midian and married
- Moses was called at age 80

Exodus 5-15: Moses' Confrontation with Pharaoh

- Moses returned to Egypt
- Moses was assisted by Aaron
- Moses performed signs
- Pharaoh refused to free the people
- God sent plagues
- Pharaoh sent the people out
- Pharaoh pursued the Hebrews but was defeated

Exodus 16-18: Journey to Sinai

- Bread from heaven
- Water from the rock
- Israel prevailed over the Amalekites
- Jethro advised Moses

Exodus 19-23: Covenant Making at Sinai

- Israel camped before the mountain
- Moses met with God
- God spoke the Ten Commandments
- God spoke other laws

Exodus 24-31: Forty Days on Sinai

- Moses went up into the glory to receive stone tablets
- God commanded concerning contributions, ark of the covenant, table for bread, golden lamp stand, tabernacle, bronze altar, court, lamp oil, priests' garments, priests' consecration, altar of incense, census tax, bronze basin, anointing oil and incense, priestly garments, and the Sabbath
- God gave Moses two tablets of stone

Exodus 32: Scandal at Sinai

The people told Aaron to make them gods
 Aaron took their gold and fashioned a calf; they brought offerings
 God was ready to obliterate them
 Moses interceded
 God relented from obliteration but He sent a plague

Exodus 33-34: Covenant Renewal

God told Moses to depart from Sinai without Him
 Moses again interceded
 God again relented
 Moses pleaded, "Show me your glory."
 Back on the Mountain
 The Lord passed by
 Covenant was renewed
 Moses' face shone

Exodus 35-40: Construction

Tabernacle
 Ark
 Table
 Lampstand
 Altar of incense
 Altar of Burnt Offering
 Basin, Court, Materials, Priestly Garments
 Tabernacle Erected
 Glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle

Lessons to be Learned

Three Points:

God works sovereignly . . .
 To save a special people . . .
 For his own glory.

1. God Works Sovereignly

The common notion among human beings is that God is _____. In other words, He will only intervene if _____ let him. When it comes to salvation, the picture often portrayed by evangelists and preachers is of one who is wringing his hands just hoping people will make the right choice. God is presented as a resource or power for improving your life, should _____ decide to use him. This is NOT the biblical portrait! Neither is it the portrait of the book of Exodus.

Two main human characters in the book of Exodus are opponents--Moses and Pharaoh. God's sovereign working is seen clearly in them both.

God's sovereignty in MOSES –

God raises up Moses:

The Israelites are in Egypt by God's _____
 Oppression arises
 Moses is protected by none other than the daughter of _____

God calls Moses:

God comes to Moses in the land of Midian

Moses is not looking for God

God reveals to him His name

God gives him _____

4:21 – “See that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles I have put in your power.”

God even makes the case that he will be with him

God uses Moses to lead His people:

Moses returns to Egypt

Moses performs signs as appointed by God (4:21)

God brings plagues through Moses

God parts the sea and then brings it back through Moses' hand

God provides manna, water, and meat miraculously

God's sovereignty in PHARAOH --

God places Pharaoh in his _____

1:8 “There arose a new king over Egypt who did not know Joseph”

9:16 “I have raised you up”

God _____ Pharaoh

4:21 “But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.”

God as the one who hardens . . . 7:3-5; 9:12; 10:20; 27; 11:10

His heart was hard . . . 7:13-14, 22; 8:19; 9:7

Pharaoh hardens his heart . . . 8:15, 32

But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35 So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the Lord had spoken through Moses. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine among them, (9:34-10:1)

God _____ Pharaoh

14:4 “I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them”

14:8 “And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.”

What God said would happen is precisely what does happen, and He defeated Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

14:23-30 The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And in the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, 25 clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians.”

26 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.” 27 So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the Lord ythrew³ the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. 28 The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. 29 But the people of Israel walked on dry

ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. 30 Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

2. God Works Sovereignly **to Save a Special People**

The common notion among human beings is that God treats all people in the _____ way. But the narrative of Exodus says otherwise. Dever writes, “God is certainly fair; he is the standard of justice. But God does mysteriously and graciously choose to extend mercy to _____. And no one can require mercy from him. It is his mercy. From a foundation of utter fairness, God chooses to extend mercy.” (Dever, 93).

He distinguishes His Special People from the Egyptians

8:23 – “I will put a division between my people and your people.”

9:4, 6 -- “But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.” . . . 6 “And the next day the Lord did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died.”

Again the distinction is explicit with the plague of hail.

11:7 – “But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the Lord makes a _____ between Egypt and Israel.”

12:26-27 – “And when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ 27 you shall say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.’”

He distinguishes His Special People from All the Peoples of the Earth (19-40)

God grants them his _____ and a covenant.

19:4-6 – “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

God demands of them holy obedience.

Notice what happens as Israel “commits adultery on the honeymoon.”

32:3-10 – “So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. And they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!” 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord.” 6 And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

7 And the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. 8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” 9 And the Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, hit is a stiff-necked people. 10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”

Moses interceded and God _____.

Moses went down to the people and became hot with anger. Three thousand were executed and even more put to death by a plague. The covenant was renewed and the people did the work the Lord commanded Moses.

The immediate failure on the part of the Israelites is indicative of the inability of any sinner to keep the law of God. God's requirement is _____. Our inability is our curse. But by His mercy alone are we justified through _____.

Romans 3:20 -- For by works of the law ___ human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes _____ of _____.

Romans 3:28 -- For we hold that one is justified by _____ apart from works of the law.

God grants them His special _____.

33:1-6 -- The Lord said to Moses, "Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your offspring I will give it.' 2 I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 3 Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."

4 When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. 5 For the Lord had said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you.'" 6 Therefore the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward.

33:12-17 -- Moses said to the Lord, "See, you say to me, 'Bring up this people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' 13 Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." 14 And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"

17 And the Lord said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name."

"Do you see that Moses has gotten to the very heart of what it means for the people to be holy and special? It is not certain circumstances or events, or even their obedience. At the heart, their holiness is a reflection of God's special presence with them. This is what it means to be God's people." (Dever, 98)

The tabernacle is emblematic of this very thing: God _____ in their midst.

3. God Works Sovereignly to Save a Special People **For HIS Own Glory**

People commonly read Exodus as a story of human _____. And while human oppression is at the middle of the events, "this story is not primarily about human liberty."

In fact, Exodus directly challenges the idea that God does everything for _____ sake. Humans are not the ultimate purpose of creation. God's own glory is! The whole book, you could say, is about God establishing His own _____!

i. Why does God call Moses?

6:7 – "I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

God's purpose is for the Israelites to recognize _____ as their _____.

ii. Why does God harden Pharaoh's heart?

7:3-5 – “But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, 4 Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. 5 The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.”

God's purpose for the Egyptians is to recognize that _____ is _____.

iii. Why does God allow Pharaoh to set the time for when God should remove the frogs from Egypt?

7:3-5 – “But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, 4 Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. 5 The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.”

God's purpose for the Egyptians is to recognize that Yahweh is God.

iv. Why does God amid the plague of hail tell Pharaoh he is pressing against him so hard?

9:14 – “For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth.”

v. Further emphasis on God's sovereign purposes . . .

9:15-16 – “For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. 16 But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in _____.”

9:29 – “Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the Lord. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord's.”

vi. Climactic emphasis on God's glory . . .

14:4 – “And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord.”

14:17-18 – “And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. 18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

15:11 – “Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?”

“The Lord sovereignly placed his people in Egypt. Why? Because Egypt was a great power. Because Egypt provided the perfect _____ on which God could display his _____. If God wants to make His might known and his renown great, what good would it do to triumph over a tribe of nomads or some lesser nation? God led Joseph down into Egypt and placed Israel’s children there, because he was preparing Egypt to be the special stage on which he would display his glory for all the _____ to witness.” (Dever, 102)

The Message of Exodus

The Lord—Yahweh—is greater than all other gods. God worked sovereignly to save a special group of people so that we would behold his greatness. He is not just another projection of human hopes or philosophical ideas. God acted in time and space, so we could see his power and worship his majesty.

God works sovereignly to save a people for his own glory. He did then, and he still does today. That is what he is doing in the church. (Dever, 103)

The ultimate end of all God does is his own glory. “He intends for his creation to see him for who he is, that all may acknowledge him, fear him, obey him, praise him, and love him.” (Dever, 104)

1 Peter 2:9 – “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”