



Exodus

Freed to Worship

Exodus 1:1-22

January 20, 2016

Message #2 of 50 – W177



Wednesday Evening Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Exodus: Freed to Worship

Exodus 1:1-22

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Exodus 1**
- We are continuing our study: **Freed to Worship**
- The book of Exodus is not just another book of the Bible
- Many people view the Old Testament as though it is interesting but not really relevant
- All Scripture is important, and as we will see as we go through this study is relevant in the lives of every believer today
- It is the gospel message in the Old Testament **Philip Ryken**
A complete understanding of the gospel requires a knowledge of the exodus.
- He implies that you can't truly understand the gospel apart from the exodus **Maxie Dunnam**

Speaking in objective terms, it (Exodus) records Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan, the Promised Land of God; but it is also the picture of our own spiritual journey out of the world of bondage to sin into the freedom of forgiveness and the full inheritance we have in Jesus Christ.

- Our key verse for this study through Exodus will be **Exodus 20:2**
I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- That is found in the first commandment
- The Lord is our God – He brought us out of the world by the sacrifice of His Son – He took us out of the house of bondage by Christ's blood shed to cleanse us of all our sins
- As I said last time, the book can be divided into 3 parts
- Part one – chapters 1 to 18 – **Redemption**
- Describes God's work to buy His people out of slavery
- Part two – chapters 19 to 24 – **Covenant**
- God establishes a covenant with the newly redeemed nation of Israel and gives them the Law
- Part three – chapters 25 to 40 – **Worship**
- God declares to His people how He wants to be worshipped
- Each of these three parts speaks directly to our own Christian faith
- It is my prayer that through this study, you will experience a greater freedom in our relationship with God

- We were freed from the world and our bondage to sin
- Not just we could be free, but so that we could worship God with more of ourselves
- And when we are better able to worship God, He is glorified and others are blessed

Teaching

- **Exodus: Freed to Worship**

- Let's get into the text for tonight

- **Exodus 1:1-5**

- The exodus is the defining moment of the people of Israel as God's people – delivered to worship them
- 70 persons, not counting Joseph and his family are the nucleus of this nation that God promised to create

- **Exodus 1:6-7**

- God had promised to do this in a message to Jacob **Genesis 46:3**
So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. ⁴I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up *again*; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.

- God had even told Abraham how long they would be in Egypt

Genesis 15:13

Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years."

- God made promises to the people of Israel and God is faithful to keep

His promises **Hebrews 10:23**

Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

- God has also made promises to us as New Testament believers **2**

Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

- It is up to us to study the Scriptures and discover what those promises are
- And they can be found all through the Bible **Psalm 103:11-12**

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

- When we receive Christ as our Savior, God casts our sins away from us – which ones? All of them; past, present, and future **Philippians 1:6**

...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ...

- God isn't done with you yet, and He is not going to stop working in you and on you until you are perfect like His Son, Jesus
- Then two similar promises **Hebrews 13:5**

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

- And **Matthew 28:20**

I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

- No matter how far you might think you are from God, He is always right there with you, because He made a promise
- It would violate God's very nature to break His promise
- God had promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation
- Here is verse 7 we say that promised being fulfilled
- And since it was fulfilled, it has persisted
- The people of Israel have never stopped being a large people group
- Even though, throughout history people have tried to annihilate them, they have persisted, and even flourished numerically, financially, and even politically
- This reveals another reality about our faith
- When the people of God flourish, the enemies of God seek to oppress them
- **Exodus 1:8**
- Wherever God's people are flourishing, Satan is in the background scheming to hinder them
- 'a new king over Egypt' = pharaoh
- Interesting that he isn't named here – in fact there up to four pharaohs referred to in the Torah and none of them are named
- This is a problem for those who are trying to line these events up with history and archeology

- What we need to see is that the name of these pharaoh's is historically interesting, but theologically unimportant
 - Lots of people are named in the Bible
 - If God had thought it was important for us to know the name of this pharaoh, He would have named him
 - In fact, I see an important truth in this
 - The players in God's drama are not nearly as important as the God who is directing the drama
 - Who is this king – who cares – he is little more than an extra that God uses to tell His redemption story to the world
 - So, This new king comes onto the scene
 - And that means things are going to change
 - One thing never changes in this life, things are always changing in this life
 - It has been hundreds of years since Joseph was Pharaoh's right hand man – this new king doesn't look at the Hebrews as a people that were used to save his nation from famine
 - He sees them as a threat
 - **Exodus 1:9-10**
 - Frankly, this king is using words of insecurity and paranoia
 - Not only is change inevitable, but so is conflict
 - In the series on James I taught that trials come to us for three basic reasons
 - The same thing is true for conflict
 - First type = **Cause and Effect**
 - Conflict happens because we did something to cause it **Galatians 6:7-8**
- Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.**
- It is the consequence of our own sins
 - Though it could also be the consequence of someone's sin around you
 - Second type = **Spiritual Conflict**
 - Other conflicts arise out of the fact that we are children of God, which makes us the enemy of God's enemy Satan

- Part of the consequence of the fall is conflict with the forces of Satan

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

- This applies literally to Christ, but extends to all who are called by His name
 - Third type = **Spiritually Mysterious**
 - These are conflicts that we can't really explain, to us they are mysterious
 - It is not mysterious to God, and fits into one of the first two types of conflicts
 - That is the case here – the Hebrews may not have known why the new king was so hostile toward them
 - But in reality, this was a spiritual conflict
 - And God was the author of it
 - That doesn't mean He caused the king to be a jerk, he just made sure that the jerk showed up when he was needed by God
 - You see, God was doing something that required the new king to be hostile
 - He was getting the people of Israel ready to leave Egypt
 - They had settled and they were flourishing
 - And if God hadn't allowed this new king to be hostile toward them they would never have left Egypt
 - And that was a problem because Egypt was not the Promised Land, Canaan was
 - There is a spiritual truth in that for all of us
 - As long as we are happy and comfortable in our Egypt, we will not long for the life God promised us
 - So the new king thinks he is wise enough to deal with these pesky Hebrews
 - His wisdom is going to backfire on him **1 Corinthians 1:19**
- For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."**
- This new king is scheming and planning
 - He is a picture for us of man in rebellion against God
 - You cannot resist God and hope to prosper in any way

- He is sovereign and will frustrate the plans of those who rebel against Him
- We should note, that just because our plans do not prosper, doesn't necessarily mean we are in rebellion against God, though it doesn't hurt to humble ourselves before God and ask Him to examine our hearts
- So Pharaoh comes up with a plan
- **Exodus 1:11**
- He makes them slaves and has them treated very harshly by the taskmasters
- A taskmaster is a commander of forced labor forces
- In ancient drawings they are always shown with clubs and/or whips
- It was meant to beat them down, to crush their spirit, to weaken them physically, and ultimately to reduce their numbers
- But it didn't work the way they planned
- **Exodus 1:12-14**
- The harder they made life for the Hebrews the more they seemed to multiply
- It is one of the historical truths about God's people
- Persecution sparks growth of the church
- We first see this in the book of Acts
- Persecution from the Jews came and Christians fled to other parts of the world and churches started springing up everywhere
- So much so that when Paul and His friends were in Thessalonica they tried to arrest them
- Said this about them and the Christian faith **Acts 17:6**
These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.
- Pharaoh thinks he can persecute the Hebrews into submission
- As we will see clearly later, by doing what he did, Pharaoh actually caused the Hebrews to do what he was afraid they might do
- One of the things he was afraid of, was that they were going to leave Egypt
- By making life so harsh, they will start looking for a way out
- This also works into God's plan

- Because the Hebrews are so comfortable in Egypt, He knows He has to make it uncomfortable so that they will leave
- There is evidence of that truth in the return from exile to Babylon
- About 1,000 years after this exodus, the people of Judah are in exile in Babylon
- God works in the life of the Persian king Cyrus to release them from their captivity
- Not all of them leave – some of them stayed because they liked their life in Babylon
- After all, Judah had been destroyed by the Babylonians so they would have to start over
- Better to stay in the place of captivity, then have to start over in the place of God's promises
- And that is a problem in the lives of some Christians
- Christ has set them free from the bondage of sin, but they stay in the place of sin, because it is comfortable and easier than leaving
- The only way to be truly free is to separate yourself from the place of bondage and move into the life that Jesus promised
- Pharaoh tries a new tactic
- **Exodus 1:15-16**
- One of the signs of the end times and of fallen mankind is the disregard of the value of human life
- I mean, really? Just how desperate must he be to start killing newborn baby boys?
- And think about this for a minute, for this plan of his to work, they would have to keep doing it until every Hebrew male was dead
- They would have to keep killing newborn baby boys for 40+ years
- That is seriously messed up
- It is interesting to note that the two midwives are named, but the Pharaoh is not – just thought that is interesting
- God's people are important to Him, His enemies are not
- To not say someone's name is a sign of disrespect or loathing
- But this new plan is not going to work either
- **Exodus 1:17**
- This is the first recorded act of civil disobedience in the Bible

- The Pharaoh was the law of the land
- And yet they chose to obey God, reverencing Him as the highest law
- Romans 13 commands us as believers to obey the laws of the land
- That means we pay our taxes, we obey the traffic laws
- And the only time we are exempted from that is when the laws of the land go against the laws of God **Acts 5:28-29**

Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

- The religious Jews wanted them to stop telling people about Jesus
- Well, that created a conflict between the laws of man and the clear commands of Jesus **Mark 16:15**

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

- You can't preach the gospel without mentioning Jesus' name
- Without His name it is not the gospel
- I love the fact that God uses two Hebrew women to foil Satan's plan to destroy the people of God

• So these Hebrew women refuse to yield to Pharaoh's

• **Exodus 1:18-19**

• This is one of those odd Scriptures that gives some people trouble

• Because as far as I can tell here, they just lied to the Pharaoh

• In Exodus 20 God is going to say that lying is a sin

• No judgment of right or wrong is given in our text, and so we are left wondering about it

• **Exodus 1:20-21**

• Lying aside, God blesses them for their fear of Him

• And He blesses them by giving them children

• It makes you wonder though, did they have boys or girls?

• First Pharaoh tried to recruit the Hebrew midwives to help him with his evil plan

• Then he turns to his people the Egyptians

• **Exodus 1:22**

• If they were to find out that a male child was born to the Hebrews they were to cast him alive into the Nile River

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- This should remind us of another king who did something similarly wicked
- Upon hearing that the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem, Herod had all the boys two years old and under killed
- God saved Jesus out of that situation by sending his family down to Egypt
- Satan's plan to stop the Messiah were doomed at every step
- And even this plan of Pharaoh's is going to take an interesting twist in the next chapter, but that is for next time
- **Amen?!**

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