



# Exodus

## Freed to Worship

**Introduction to Exodus**

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**Wednesday Evening Service**

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# Exodus: Freed to Worship

## *Introduction to Exodus*

### Opening Comments

- Tonight we begin a new study of the book of Exodus
- The title that I have chosen for this study is **Freed to Worship**
- The book begins with the Israelites in bondage or slavery in Egypt
- God raises up a man, Moses, to be the tool to save His people
- In chapter 5 we have the now famous, ‘Let My people go’
- Pharaoh refuses and God brings a series of plagues upon Egypt that concludes with the death of the firstborn
- God leads the people out into the wilderness, where He gives them the Law at Mount Sinai
- And then the book of Exodus ends with God describing to the people how He wants to be worshipped
- Turn to **Exodus 6**
- There are three basic divisions of the book of Exodus
- And we see them three verses in chapter six
- In chapter five, Moses had gone to Pharaoh and given him God’s message
- Instead of letting the Israelites go, Pharaoh made life harder for them, which made the people angry with Moses
- Moses is, not surprisingly, confused – why didn’t that work?
- The Lord responds to Moses with a word for the people of Israel
- **Exodus 6:6**
- First division – **Redemption** – Chapters 1 to 18
- God had a plan for the people of Israel
- And that plan was directly connected to the land of Canaan, the Land of Promise
- For four hundred years they have been in Egypt and for some portion of that time, they have been slaves
- God determined that it was time to set them free
- In this section God will reveal Himself as powerful, the God who is able
- Three things the Lord tells them

- I will bring you out – I will rescue you – I will redeem you
- That is not all God says He will do
- **Exodus 6:7**
- The second division – **Covenant** – Chapters 19 to 24
- God is going to enter into a covenant relationship with the nation of Israel
- This is an expansion of the covenant that God made with Abraham
- Two more ‘I will’ statements – I will take you as My people – I will be your God
- In this section God will reveal and declare His holiness and call His people to be holy
- He ends this declaration with two more ‘I will’ statements that demand a response by the people
- **Exodus 6:8**
- The promise is that God is going to take them out of Egypt and give them the land that He had promised to give to Abraham and his descendants
- The third division – **Worship** – chapters 25 to 40
- God expects His people to worship Him
- But godly worship is not natural to humans, and so He gives them a system that teaches them about how and why God should be worshipped
- If God’s people worship God according to His desires, He is glorified
- The whole universe exists to glorify God
- God’s glory is seen most clearly when God’s people are worshipping Him
- To be able to worship God, God’s people need to be free from the bondage of this world and the sin it promotes
- But that freedom needs to be combined with obedience to God
- Only then can true worship exist, and only then is God glorified
- Before we begin, we should have a little background details
- Exodus is a part of a section of the Bible called the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Bible – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

- These books go by other names – The Law – The books of the Law – and, the Books of Moses
- Moses is acknowledged by most as the human author of the first five books of the Bible
- Within the book of Exodus are several indications that Moses was called by God to write these things down **Exodus 17:4**

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.”

- Lord says to Moses ‘write it in the book’ **Exodus 24:4, 7**

And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD... Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people.

- And then near the end of Moses’ life **Deuteronomy 31:24**

So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished...

- The book was then set next to the Ark of the Covenant
- Many of the Old Testament prophets refer to Moses as the author
- And the one that should settle all questions on the subject **John 5:46-47**

For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. <sup>47</sup> But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?

- There is debate as to the dating of the book of Exodus, including the date that the Exodus took place
- It is not in the scope of this study to evaluate all the history and archeology, but the best date for the Exodus is around 1446BC and the writing of Exodus was shortly thereafter while they were at Mount Sinai
- We will look at some of the reasons for those dates as we get into the study in future weeks
- To truly understand the book of Exodus we need to have a least some understanding of the book of Genesis

## Teaching

- **Exodus: Freed to Worship**
- Turn to **Genesis 1**
- To that end I am going to give you a quick overview of the book of Genesis
- Genesis is the book of beginnings

- In chapters 1 and 2 God creates the universe and everything in it, including Adam and Eve
- God put them into the Garden of Eden and told them they could enjoy the fruit of every tree except one – the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
- Warned them and told them that if they did eat of it, that they would surely die
- In chapter three, Satan in the form of a serpent slithers in and tempts the woman to eat, which she does and she convinces her husband to eat
- The seed of sin is planted into both of them, and they immediately realize that something has changed – they are naked and ashamed
- At which point God curses the serpent, the woman, and the man and they are kicked out of the Garden, out of paradise
- In the curse of the serpent, God declares that He has a plan to redeem His people **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 is pointing to and predicting the work of a Savior, the Messiah, the Christ – to Jesus of Nazareth
- Before they are kicked out of the Garden, God deals with their shame
- An innocent animal is killed, and God clothes them with its skin
- This is a picture of the sacrifice that will be required for sin
- An innocent must die to redeem the sinner back to God
- This is why the sinner cannot satisfy God with their own death, they are not innocent, therefore their sacrifice is unworthy
- This will be an important point once we get to the later chapters of Exodus
- God was going to redeem His people, but there was a cost
- In chapter 4 Adam and Eve have a couple of boys and we see the seed of sin has been passed down to them – Cain kills his brother Abel
- And with that a pattern begins to unfold of sin corrupting the human race
- Then in chapter six as humans have expanded greatly
- God is not happy with what He sees **Genesis 6:5**

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

- And so God determined to hit the reset button
- He commissions Noah to build a great boat to save himself, his family, and two of every animal on the earth
- For over one hundred years Noah testified to the coming wrath of God over sin
- And yet only eight souls were saved from the flood – Noah and his family
- This is a testimony of God’s ability to save His people out of the wrath to come

• In chapter 9 God told Noah and His sons **Genesis 9:1**

**So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.”**

- They do and before long the world is swarming with humans again
- In chapter 11 they gather together to build a tower to heaven in a place called Babel, which would later be known as Babylon
- God confuses their language and scatters them to the ends of the earth
- And this is where one of the main characters of Genesis comes into the picture – in Genesis 12

• **Genesis 12:1-3**

- God chose Abram out of all the multitudes of humans to make special promises to Him
- And to use him to fulfill His greater promise of a redeemer for humankind
- God promises to take this man and make him great
- To make Him a great nation
- At that point, Abram wasn’t much of a nation
- His wife Sarai was barren, incapable of having children
- And the closest thing he had to a son was his nephew Lot
- And oh by the way, he was about 75 years old
- After they get into Canaan, God makes another promise to him

• **Genesis 12:7a**

- After a while Abram and Lot become so wealthy that they need to separate
- After they do, God talks to Abram again

- **Genesis 13:14-17**
- God promised the land to the descendants of Abram forever
- One of the things that the Exodus proves is that God always keeps His promises, no matter how unlikely it might seem
- Chapter 15 is one of the key chapters of Genesis
- In it God promises an heir to Abram from his own body, even though his wife is barren
- **Genesis 15:5-6**
- God confirms that promise by making it a covenant – this is the Abrahamic Covenant
- There is also an interesting thing in this verse that relates to the Exodus – look at verses 12 to 14
- **Genesis 15:12-14**
- Even before one of Abram’s descendants is born God tells him that they will go to Egypt for 400 years and that God will judge Egypt for the way they treat them
- Chapter 16 describes Abram and Sarai taking matters into their own hands producing Ishmael through Hagar
- In chapter 17 God changes Abram’s name to Abraham and confirms the covenant he made with him
- Abraham is given the rite of circumcision
- And then God changes Sarai’s name to Sarah and then says that she is going to have a son
- Which is a little hard for her to believe – she is ninety and has been barren her whole life
- Chapters 18 and 19, God deals with wicked Sodom and Gomorrah – which is a picture of the judgment the whole world will face without a Savior – why it needs a Savior
- In chapter 21 God keeps his word to Abraham and Sarah conceives and bears him a son – Isaac
- And then in chapter 22 God asks Abraham to do the unthinkable – to sacrifice the son of promise – to sacrifice Isaac
- And Abraham did what God asked him to do – just as Abraham was about to kill Isaac an angel stopped him
- **Genesis 22:15-19**

- This is a picture what God the Father would do – send His own Son to be the sacrifice
- John the Baptist **John 1:29**  
The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
- In chapter 25 Isaac’s wife bears twin sons – Esau and Jacob
- Jacob was a schemer and eventually schemed himself to a place where he had to run for his life from his brother
- In chapter 29 Jacob ends up in the area where Abram originally came from and God providentially brings him to the love of his life – Rachel, the daughter of his uncle Laban
- Jacob gets tricked into marrying Rachel’s older sister Leah after working for Laban for 7 years
- He agrees to work another 7 for Rachael
- Leah starts having babies, and after 20 years ends up with 4 wives and eleven sons and decides it is time to go home
- In chapter 32 Jacob has a radical encounter with God and wrestles with Him
- God changes Jacob’s name to Israel
- On the way back to Canaan Rachel dies giving birth to his 12<sup>th</sup> son
- And then in chapter 37 things start getting dramatic
- Joseph is seventeen years old and is Jacob’s favorite son, and it seems at least 10 of his brothers resent him for it
- They end up selling Joseph into slavery and he ends up in Egypt
- This seems odd – why would God send Joseph to Egypt
- God is omniscient – He knows everything
- He sees all of history in a single moment of time
- He knows that something is coming to Canaan that would threaten His plan to bring a Savior into the world through the descendants of Abraham
- A famine is coming to the land, and it is going to last for seven years
- And so God providentially arranges to protect them by selling Jacob’s favorite son into slavery
- Joseph is first a slave in Potiphar’s house, where he is falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife and ends up in prison
- Pharaoh’s baker and cupbearer end up in the same prison



- God gives both of them dreams which they tell to Joseph and God gives Joseph the interpretation of those dreams
- The cupbearer is released, and after two years is reminded of Joseph when God gives Pharaoh a dream that he doesn't understand
- Joseph interprets the dream – seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine – he then tells Pharaoh what he should do about it
- Pharaoh says, you're a smart guy, you handle it for me
- Joseph does and after the seven years of plenty and a couple of famine, Joseph's brother end up standing in front of him to buy grain
- He eventually reveals his identity to them, and sends them back to get their father and bring the whole family to Egypt to wait out the famine

### **Genesis 50:19-21**

Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. <sup>21</sup> Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

- For reasons the Bible doesn't share with us, they stay there after the famine is over
  - There is a 400 year gap between Genesis and Exodus
  - In that time, the 75 people that went to Egypt flourish in the rich Nile Delta soil and grow to be a population that some say was between 2 and 3 million
  - Next time we will begin in Exodus
  - Exodus is rich with the language of the gospels
  - One of my objectives will be to show you how this book applies to a believer in 2016
  - Jesus set us free, not just so that we could be free **John 8:36**
- If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**
- And the greatest expression of that freedom is in obedient worship of the God who loves us and His Son who saved us
  - **Amen?!**