

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Today we start the book of Exodus.

The word Exodus in the Hebrew means “departure” or “the going out” or “exit”

In the Gospel of Luke – you don’t have to turn there – but you might write down the verse (Luke 9:31) – because when Luke writes the account of the transfiguration – as Peter, James and John see Jesus’ appearance change and all of a sudden, he is speaking to two individuals, Elijah and Moses.

Jesus spoke to Elijah and Moses about His decease that was about to take place in Jerusalem. The word that is used for deceased is the Greek word Exodus.

In fact, if you have a NLT, it says that the spoke about His exodus from this world.

- The book of Exodus gives witness to God’s faithfulness to fulfill the prophecy given to Abram regarding the 400 years in Egypt.

In other words – God keeps His promises.

[Gen 15:13-14 NKJV] 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. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

- The book of Exodus is a story of redemption, by God's blood and by His power. Not only is God going to deliver them from the bondage of slavery at the hands of the Egyptians, He is also going to institute the Passover – pointing to our Savior Jesus Christ who redeems us from the bondage of sin.

[Jhn 1:29 NKJV] 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!

- The book of Exodus is a witness to God's total control and power over all situations and circumstances.
- The book of Exodus attests to man's inability to do anything for God, **out of God's timing.**
- The book of Exodus is also a record of murmuring and complaining against God in times of difficulty and the unknown.

Let's pray...

It has been rightfully said that the book of Exodus is the sequel to the book of Genesis.

The story continues on.

You might remember that the book of Genesis ended with the events surrounding Joseph.

Joseph was the son of Jacob that was despised by his brothers –

They hated him so much that they sold him into slavery.

He spends 13 years in Egypt - as a servant and as a prisoner for a crime that he did not commit. Never do we read about Joseph complaining – all he did was trust in the promises that God had given him.

When it was God's perfect time, we see His providence as Joseph becomes the second in command to Pharaoh.

And he then delivers his family out of the famine in the land – moving them to Goshen where they would prosper and be isolated from Egypt.

[Exo 1:1-22 NKJV] 1 Now these [are] the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob: 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; 3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; 4 Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 5 All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt [already]). 6 And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation. 7 But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.

Seventy people came down from Canaan – and in 400 years they multiplied to about 2-3 million people.

The scriptures tell us that 600,000 men left Egypt (not including women and children).

We can assume that most of them had a wife and 3-4 children (2-3 million)

The language that is used in verse 7 – is very similar to the language that is used in Genesis 1:28 when God created male and female in His own image – He said “Be fruitful and multiply”

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel [are] more and mightier than we; 10 "come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and [so] go up out of the land."

When Joseph was second in command over Egypt – God gave him wisdom on how to deal with the famine – he followed the plan and it saved Egypt as well.

However, over time – those that were in charge in Egypt, they didn't feel that they had to honor the things that Joseph did- so they had a new perspective toward the Hebrews – they began to feel threatened by them.

He was afraid that they were going to become traitors.

He was afraid that they were simply going to leave Egypt – messing up their economy.

The Hebrews were a great source of labor in Egypt.

He was afraid of their numbers – so he is going to put measure to try to stunt their growth.

11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. 13 So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. 14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage--in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve [was] with rigor.

If we bring affliction to them by forcing them work harder – they were going to treat them harshly - they are going to be so tired and beaten, that they are not going to multiply.

That was the plan.

But verse 12 tells us that the opposite happened.

The more the Hebrews were afflicted, the more they grew.

Church, affliction can bring growth.

In the early church, when persecution came upon the church – the church did not disappear. It grew.

Historically it is through times of affliction – not prosperity – that the church grows.

Today, we see it in countries like China and Iran – two places where it is not very safe to be a Christian, and yet, the church has not disappeared, the church has grown.

Affliction builds strength.

This is how weight training works – we work to “afflict” our muscles through exercise, and they eventually heal and grow back stronger.

The same thing is applied to our spiritual walk.

Turn with me to 1 Peter -

[1Pe 1:6-7 NKJV] 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, [being] much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Affliction and the difficulties (the refining process – the testing of fire) in our lives reveal to us the areas where we need to let God work in our lives.

15 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one [was] Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah;

It became obvious that the opposition from the Egyptians wasn't stunting the population of the Hebrews.

So the king of Egypt decides to attack them from within.

These two midwives were not the only midwives among the Hebrews – they were most likely the supervisors of other midwives.

16 and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see [them] on the birthstools, if it [is] a son, then you shall kill him; but if it [is] a daughter, then she shall live."

So the midwives were ordered to kill every male Hebrew baby as they were being delivered.

Why didn't they kill the women? Because they needed the workforce – the Egyptians could have them breed with slaves from other nations.

17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. 18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" 19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women [are] not like the Egyptian women; for they [are] lively and give birth before the midwives come to them."

There are those who make the argument that these two midwives lied to the king of Egypt.

The scriptures do not tell us that they lied – it could be that the Hebrew women, because of the affliction that resulted from the hard labor – they were in better physical condition to be able to give birth to their children without the need of a midwife or it could be that the midwives just walked a little slower as they went to deliver the Hebrew babies.

Perhaps God intervened by giving the Hebrew women a quick labor so the midwives could get there on time.

The main thing to get out of these verses is that the midwives feared God more than they feared the King of Egypt.

[Pro 29:25 NKJV] 25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

This is the same thing that we see the John and Peter do in the book of Acts –

They were commanded to stop preaching Christ by the Jewish council and the High Priest. And their response was “We ought to obey God rather than men”

Church, whenever we are faced with a decision of whether or not to do something

God’s way or the world’s way? We need to make sure that we choose God’s way.

20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. 21 And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. 22 So Pharaoh commanded all his people,

saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

The chapter ends with many Hebrew baby boys sinking to the bottom of the Nile.

It doesn't seem like a win for Israel.

But the account is not without its spiritual victories.

For one, God worked through the most unlikely people.

Who would have thought that two women - midwives - could withstand the command of the mightiest man on earth?

God uses the weak, the small, the poor, the disadvantaged, in order to show Himself to the world.

We are among those – the foolish things that confound the wise.

For another thing, God shows us we do not need anything other than Him in our battles.

These midwives were not provided weapons; they weren't given the ability to perform miracles.

They remained ordinary, but did something extraordinary thanks to their faith in God.

[Exo 2:1-25 NKJV] 1 And a man of the house of Levi went and took [as wife] a daughter of Levi. 2 So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he [was] a beautiful [child], she hid him three months.

Chapter two begins with the introduction of Amram and Jochebed – these are the parents of Moses.

They have already been blessed with two other: Aaron and Miriam.

This is their third child and it is a boy – and according to the decree of the Pharaoh, he must be thrown into the river.

And just like the midwives, Amram and Jochebed feared God more than Pharaoh.

[Heb 11:23 NKJV] 23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw [he was] a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

The author of the book of Hebrews tells us that the reason that they hid the baby was that he was beautiful.

All babies are “beautiful” - even the ones that aren't. So what does it mean, that Jochebed's son was “beautiful?”

Don't know, except she must have realized that there was something special about him.

Now, of course, every mom thought their little baby boy was special; but in her case, he was.

3 But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid [it] in the reeds by the river's bank.

The Hebrew word that is used here for ark is used only one other time in the scriptures and it refers to the ark that delivered Noah and his family.

The ark here delivers Moses from the decree of Pharaoh.

Think about how hard it would be for a mother to lay her 3 month old child in a basket and place it in a river where crocodiles were most likely present.

I don't think it's a stretch to say that Jochebed was led by God in this endeavor.

It doesn't seem as though other moms were launching their babies downstream.

4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

Miriam is estimated to be in her early teens -

5 Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. 6 And when she opened [it], she saw the child, and

behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

The bible never gives us the name of this daughter of Pharaoh.

However, the Jewish historian Josephus writes that she was an only daughter and gives us her name – Thermutus.

Now, I want you to think about this - the entire fate of God's eternal plan to redeem and restore creation, including the human race, was going to depend on Pharaoh's daughter discovering and defending a cast-off baby boy.

She could have heard the baby's cries and upon realizing that he was a Hebrew ordered her servants to drown him just like her father commanded.

But instead – she had compassion on him.

One could only wonder if an angel was dispatched to pinch Moses at precisely the right time that the daughter of Pharaoh is presented the basket.

Think of all the other possibilities that could have occurred with the basket/ark.

It could have sunk

A crocodile could have got to it

It could have been found by another Egyptian who would have been obedient to Pharaoh's decree.

7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. 9 Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and **I will give [you] your wages.**" So the woman took the child and nursed him. 10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he **became her son.** So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

God arranged for a way for Moses' own mother to nurse him and raise him until the age of about 3-5 years old – plus she got paid to raise her child.

It was at this point that the young boy went back to Pharaoh's daughter and lived with her – and many have suggested that Moses was the next in line to become Pharaoh.

Turn with me to Acts 7,

[Act 7:21-22 NKJV] 21 "But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. 22 "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

11 Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a

Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12 So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

Moses is now 40 years old – he has had all this training at the hands of the Egyptians.

He knows that he is a Hebrew. He knows that his people are being oppressed. He knows that one day God will raise someone to deliver them – so he decides to take it upon himself.

In verse 12, it says that he looked this way and that way – before he strikes and kills the Egyptian.

But notice that he never looked up...

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?" 14 Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" So Moses feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!"

Apparently as Moses was looking this way and that way – he didn't do a very good job about it because there were people who saw what he did.

Moses thought he was ready to deliver his people. "By his hand" is the key phrase.

Moses' had powerful hands. Politically, socially, materially, his hands got things done.

It seems he killed the Egyptian taskmaster with his bare hands.

Powerful.

Nevertheless, it would be by God's hand, not Moses' hands, that the Hebrews would be delivered.

15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.

Because it was a capital offense for an Egyptian to kill another Egyptian, Pharaoh knew his empire would expect him to deal decisively with Moses' offense.

Knowing this as well, Moses fled.

God was going to use Moses to deliver the people out of Egypt.

The problem was that Moses was not ready yet.

God needed to get Moses out of Egypt in order to get Egypt out of him.

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. And they came and drew water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock. 17 Then the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

Moses in is Midian now –

And apparently chivalry was also dead in Midian as these shepherds, instead of allowing the women draw water first, they drive the women away and Moses comes to their rescue.

18 When they came to Reuel their father, he said, "How [is it that] you have come so soon today?" 19 And they said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock." 20 So he said to his daughters, "And where [is] he? Why [is] it [that] you have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread."

When Reuel hears of what Moses has done for his daughters –

- He was first embarrassed at his daughter's lack of hospitality. They were nomads – visitors were rare. They should have invited Moses to meet their father.
- He also had seven daughters that he had to find husbands for – so he was also desperate to look for a suitable suitor for his daughters – Moses seemed like a better suitor than the shepherds that were constantly driving his daughters away.

21 Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses. 22 And she bore [him] a son. He called his name Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land."

In Egypt, he was second in command.

But here in Midian, he is a lowly shepherd – he doesn't even have his own sheep, they are all his father in laws – shepherds were looked down upon by the Egyptians.

In the eyes of the Egyptians, shepherds were an abomination.

By taking a wife and having a son, Moses seems to give up on Egypt and his hope of being a deliverer for Israel. Moses was content with where God put him, even though Midian was very different from Egypt.

23 Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. 24 So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. 25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged [them].

Back in Egypt, the death of Pharaoh set things in motion.

The Israelites had been crying-out all along, but now was the time that their groaning was going to be alleviated.

The mention of "His covenant" is significant to our discussion because it reminds us that God has made promises and He will keep them.

God told Abraham He was going to make of him a great nation that would possess a great land. The promises were unconditional - meaning God would keep them no matter what.

These closing verses are the set-up for what's coming next.

God heard their cries and the time had come for Him to act.

There may be some of us here that are hurting in some areas of our life.

It's not wrong to hope that today is the day that it is time for God to act, and to alleviate our suffering.

It's great to see help on the horizon.

But if it isn't His timing, let's embrace the fact that His grace is sufficient. If need be, let's look past this life to His eternal promises.

He'll make all things beautiful... In His time.

Amen.

Let's pray...



CALVARY
Santa Cruz