

## EXODUS: THE STORY CONTINUES

Exodus 1:1-7

### I. Intro

- A. Welcome everyone! Welcome the new visitors. Introduce myself. Answer prompt question
- B. Excited because today is the Sunday that we are starting our new sermon series through the book of Exodus!
  - 1. For those who may have been with us since the pastoral transition, you have only been around for two mini-series, but normally we work through books of the Bible, verse by verse, word by word.
    - a) *"I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word" - 2 Timothy 4:1*
    - b) The Apostle Paul, at the end of his life and ministry, at the end of this last letter, charges the church to preach God's Word. There is no other book by which the church can appeal to, know God by, or get encouragement from other than the Holy Scriptures! This is why we preach through books of the Bible.
      - (1) *"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." - Hebrews 4:12-13*
    - c) It is less "we read the Bible" and more "the Bible reads us". God's Spirit uses the Scriptures to rebuke, exhort, encourage, teach, and train His people for good works, and steadfastness. When we read and study the Bible, we are exposing ourselves to the comforting and gracious ministrations of God's Spirit.
  - 2. So how do we, as The Resolved Church, interpret the Scriptures?
    - a) There are a lot of wrong ways to interpret the Scriptures. We must be careful in how we interpret the Bible lest we fall into error.
      - (1) *"For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." - 2 Timothy 4:3-4*
    - b) We start with the basics of who wrote it, the context in which they were writing, the audience they were writing to, and the purpose for writing. Authorial intent.
    - c) Then we move on to understanding how the verses, people, and places fit within the larger structure of the Bible.
    - d) Then we move on to how any passage points us back to Jesus.
      - (1) *"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" - Luke 24:27*
      - (2) *"These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" - Luke 24:44-45*
    - e) **Exegetical, Redemptive-Historical**
- C. Enough of the nuts and bolts of Biblical interpretation, let's move on to the book at hand presently. Exodus.
  - 1. Moses is the author of the book.
    - a) Though modern liberal skeptics doubt his authorship, it is well documented in both OT and NT that he is in fact the author of this book, and the first 5 books of the OT.
      - (1) *"being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you...this Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth..." - Joshua 1:7,8*
      - (2) *"And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? - Mark 12:26*
      - (3) We already saw the NT passage where Jesus begins with Moses, which means He began at the beginning, Genesis, and worked His way through all the OT scriptures.
      - (4) 25 references in over 18 books attesting to Mosaic authorship. Plus the events and people that are in this book could only come from one who had personally seen and experienced the events at hand.
    - b) History also attests to Mosaic authorship, from both Jews and Christians alike. It is an undisputed fact that he is the author. This is important because it grounds us in the reality of history, but also means that the various threads of redemption can only make sense if Moses was really the author. The thread of redemptive history necessitates that Moses is the author of this book!
  - 2. Written to a people on the move, the Israelite nation. They are preparing to enter the land God promised them, but before they do God commands Moses to write everything down in this Book of Law as a memorial
    - a) *"Then the LORD said to Moses 'Write this as a memorial in the book'" - Exodus 17:14*

- b) *"These are the stages of the people of Israel, when they went out of the land of Egypt by their companies under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Moses wrote down their starting places, stage by stage, by command of the LORD, and these are their stages according to their starting places."* - Number 33:2
- c) Written both as a memorial as well as a Law by which they were to live when they entered the land. Their style of writing is both historical narrative, as well as law text. The law text must be seen in light of the story it is set in. The history is both selective, and factual (though not always chronological), and theological. Selective in that it keeps the lens narrowly focused on this people group, factual in that all the people and events actually happened (we can go find these places on a map), and theological in that God is always the center and reason for the writing.
- 3. The implications for us today as we read Exodus:
  - a) We can place ourselves in their shoes as we move through the text. The story is about them, but it is also about us as the truly Redeemed people of God.
  - b) We can be encouraged that God works in real life in real life ways. He is intimately concerned with the details and epics of my life. He uses all of this for His glory
  - c) God is to be the center of my life, just as He is the center of the story and in His people
- D. Enough of the background stuff, let's get into the text!
  - 1. Read, declare, thank, pray

## II. Where We've Been [vs. 1-5]

- A. The book of Exodus picks up in such a way that it assumes you already know the previous story, which is why we've title the sermon "The Story Continues...". But just in case you missed it, Moses gives you a "Previously on Genesis.."
  - 1. Starts at the family in Egypt, but what happened before that?
    - a) Jacob is the grandson of a man named Abraham, and this is important because the book of Genesis dealt primarily with a family, and now it is turning it's attention to the nation born from this family.
    - b) Abraham was the man God chose to give His special promises to. Abraham is possibly one of the most important men in the Scriptures besides Jesus. From Abraham and his relationship with God, we have the blueprint for what salvation by faith is, what the promise of heaven is, how the covenants work, and the lineage of the Christ.
    - c) Here is how the first martyr of the Christian church, Stephen, sums up the book of Genesis up to this point. It's kind of his Cliffs Notes version of Genesis:
      - (1) *"Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.' Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living. Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child. God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years. 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship Me in this place.' And He gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. 'And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit. And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all. And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers, and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem. 'But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph.'" - Acts 7:2-17*
      - (2) Themes from this excerpt of Stephen's sermon:
        - (a) God is the God of glory
        - (b) God gives the promise of land and how long Abraham's family would live in Egypt
        - (c) God gives the sign of the covenant people: circumcision
        - (d) God grants Joseph great power and influence in Egypt
        - (e) God saves Abraham's family through Joseph. God saves the nations through Joseph

- (3) These themes continue in our story in Exodus and get fleshed out in greater detail. We will see how Exodus is, in some ways, a variation on a theme by Genesis (no, not the band). However, there are some crucial differences and some epic exaggerations on these themes that are started in Genesis.
- d) One of the very last verses in the book of Genesis hint about how things will go for Israel:
  - (1) *"And Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.'" - Genesis 50:24*
  - (2) Thus, we see that Joseph remembered the promise that God had made to Abraham that He would wait 400 years before delivering His people, and wanted his family to remember too. Joseph seemed to understand that tough times were ahead for the Israelites and wanted to make sure that they knew there was a purpose for God's timing, and the promise that He would in fact visit them again. There are lots of reasons for why He did that, which we will explore at length as time goes on, but suffice it to say, we should not be surprised by what looks like God's delay.

### III. Where We Are [vs. 6-7]

- A. So where are we now? Verse [6] sums it up great: "Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them."
  - 1. Joseph died. This is important because previously Joseph was in rank and power second only to Pharaoh king of Egypt. By this time of Egypt's history the Pharaoh's were considered god by the Egyptians, meaning Joseph was like a demi-god. However, this demi-god, so to speak, was only allowed to have this rank because of the pleasure of the current Pharaoh, Sesostri II. Hyskos comes to power in 1690BC and things begin to take a turn for the worst for the Israelites. As we will see next week, oppression starts right away. God's family in Egypt were protected by one man, Joseph, and when he died, that protection was lost.
  - 2. But look at what Moses writes about the people at the time: they were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.
    - a) Even though things are going to go very poor for God's people for a time, yet they retain the blessing of God to multiply at an astonishing rate.
    - b) Notice also the similar language to Genesis 1:28. The Israelites are being enabled to live out the creation command of God despite their circumstances.
      - (1) We will see that the congregation of God's people will number in the 2 million by the time they leave Egypt, so to have 70 people in Egypt to 2 million in the span of 400 years is just about the most amazing feat of reproduction I have heard of! What does this tell us? God is with them! He is watching over them! He is giving them strength and progeny, which are blessings of God. We must never lose sight of the fact that even when God seems absent, He never is, He might just be working more in the background instead of the foreground for a time!
    - c) Whenever circumstances seem to be contrary to the promises of God, the issue is not God's promises, but in our ability to plumb the depths of God's mind.
      - (1) *"For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?" - Romans 11:34*
      - (2) We must pause and remember God's promises are sure. They never fail. Trust His timing and His working.

### IV. Where We Are Going [vs.7]

- A. [vs. 7] is the set up for the whole rest of the book of Exodus. If God did not give the Israelites such a blessing in multiplying, then none of what would follow would have happened.
  - 1. The largess of the Israelite community inspired jealousy and fear in the Egyptians. This prompted them to oppress them so that they would not get any funny ideas into their heads about rising up and taking over Egypt.
    - a) *"Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land" - Exodus 1:9-10*
    - b) This would ultimately lead the people to cry out to the LORD, presumably for the first time since Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, or Joseph....This would in turn lead God to the epic confrontations, redemption, miracles, and fulfillment of promises that we encounter in the rest of the book.
  - 2. The promises of God are still in effect:
    - a) **Seed:** physically fulfilled in Isaac, later to be truly spiritually fulfilled in Jesus Christ
    - b) **Nation:** being physically fulfilled at this juncture in Israelite history.
    - c) **Land:** yet to be fulfilled. Egypt was not their true home, nor was it the land God promised them.
- B. This blessing was because of one man: Abraham
  - 1. *"God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" - Exodus 2:24*

2. *"And the LORD said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. 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.' But Moses implored the LORD His God and said, 'O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'"* And the LORD relented from the disaster that He had spoken of bringing on His people." - Exodus 32:9-14
3. God, over and over again, deals with His people on the basis of a covenant made with one person: Abraham. This is the foreshadowing of the kind of relationship that God would have with His church; He deals with us, not on the basis of anything good we have done, or bad, but on the basis of Jesus Christ's obedience and substitutionary death.
4. The same themes we see in both Genesis and Exodus are foreshadows of what is to come in the true fulfillment of all the promises of God in Jesus Christ.

#### V. Conclusion

- A. The story continues. God's story in us is not done being written. We don't always know what God is doing in the background of our lives, but we can rest assured that He is working all things so that His people will come to faith in Him, will learn to live in humble and happy dependence on Him, and will see God's victory over our enemies and our sin. And ultimately we will see the how great and glorious God is over all things, and come to worship and love Him with all of our hearts, minds, soul, and strength. Let us pray.

#### VI. Response

- A. Confession: Lord, we confess that we are not always aware of Your holy presence with us, and doubt Your faithfulness to us.
  - B. Assurance: Lord, thank You that because of the faithfulness of Your Son Jesus, You will never leave us or forsake us. Help us to grow in trust and love for Him.
  - C. Giving
  - D. Prayer
  - E. Communion
- 1.