



ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Bible Study

## AUG 2013

### THE BOOK OF EXODUS (PART 2)

The English title “Exodus” comes from the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) which means “way out”. It captures the main theme of this Book; in the words of a commentator (Fretheim) – “The community of faith stands in need of both deliverance and forgiveness. Exodus issues relate to law and obedience, to divine presence and absence, and appropriate worship places and practices would also have been important for Israel in an exilic setting.”

Written sometime in the second millennium B.C. the primary authorship of this Book has been attributed to Moses since the time of Joshua (Joshua 8:31-35; cf. Exodus 20:25) and affirmed also by Jesus Christ (cf. Mark 12:26).

The Book of Exodus is more than a historical narrative concerning Israel; it is a theological narrative concerning God’s work in and through God’s people in fulfilment of the promise of Genesis 15:13-14 and the birth of the nation Israel. Therefore, a proper reading of this Book must rightfully direct readers to the unchanging character and covenant of God. It should inspire our trust and obedience to him who is trustworthy, good, merciful and gracious.

SERMON DATE **4 AUG 2013**  
MOSES ACCEPTS HIS CALL  
EXODUS 4:18-31

SERMON DATE **11 AUG 2013**  
MOSES VERSUS PHARAOH  
- ROUND ONE  
EXODUS 5:1-21

SERMON DATE **25 AUG 2013**  
GOD REASSURES MOSES  
EXODUS 5:22 - 6:16; 7:1-7

## MOSES ACCEPTS HIS CALL

EXODUS 4:18-31

### GENERAL SURVEY

Topic:

Key Verse:

Main Person/s:

Key Ideas and Questions:

### INTRODUCTION

In Exodus 2:12, Moses tried in his own strength and in his own time to save the Israelites. He was young and eager then. Years later in Exodus 4:23, it is now God's way and God's timing, and from the outset Moses is even told of the final outcome. Yet, in Exodus 4:10, a different Moses emerges, one who is reluctant and full of excuses, he knows he cannot do anything on his own, and seems to have been "forced" into service for God. When God calls, what does he expect? In view of this how should his servants and his people respond?

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Moses was humbled and ready to accept God's Commission.

1. Moses did not mention to Jethro his real reason for going back to Egypt (v18).
  - a. What reason did he give to Jethro? Was it true, false, or incomplete?
  - b. Does his reason show a lack of confidence (in self or in what God says) or humility? Discuss Moses' attitude.
  - c. In seeking Jethro's consent to go, Moses seems to be doing the right thing as he was in Jethro's service. He had spent 40 years in the wilderness and was 80 years old (Ex 7:6). Was it necessary for a presumably 'wise' old man to seek permission?
2. God is directing every step that Moses and his family take. Moses takes with him the staff of God (vv19-20).
  - a. Does he really need the staff to perform miracles?
  - b. What is the significance of God's staff?

3. God has given his divine judgement against Pharaoh - "I will harden his heart". Despite repeated miracles, Pharaoh's heart and mind will not bend to the things of God (vv21-23).
  - a. But who hardens Pharaoh's heart? Is it God (4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17) or Pharaoh himself (7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34, 35; 13:15)?
  
  - b. 9:34 seem to suggest that Pharaoh, in the state of sin, remained defiant; the hardening of his heart seems to be an outcome of sin. God's solemn and sovereign judgement on Pharaoh seems to be simply leaving him to his own devices, to the sinfulness and rebellion of his own heart. What personal lessons can we learn here?
  
4. Moses was suddenly confronted by God at the lodging place (v24). God threatens to kill Moses because he did not circumcise one of his sons (vv24-26).
  - a. Sizing up the situation so quickly, and fearing for her husband, what did Zipporah do?
  
  - b. The meaning of Zipporah's announcement 'bridegroom of blood' is unclear (v25). But it is clear that her action provided the occasion for God to withdraw his threat. In the example, what type of obedience was God asking for from Moses as the human-mediator and deliverer of his people?
  
5. Based on God's timing, Aaron, whom Moses hasn't seen for forty years and the people of Israel are now ready for God's act of deliverance (vv27-31).
  - a. Why were the Israelites willing to believe Moses? (v30)
  
  - b. Why did they worship God after hearing Moses? (v31)

## DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

In his own time and ways, God prepared his servant Moses and his people Israel for his act of deliverance.

- God loves his people like his first-born son.
- God expects obedience from his servant.
- A trusting people and an obedient servant are God's desires in bringing forth his salvation.
- It is important to put all our plans to God in prayer; to ask the question – Is it our timing or God's timing? Is it by our own strength or God's?
- The 'staff of God' points all glory back to him. In all our achievements, what is our 'staff of God'?

## FAMILY/GROUP MOMENTS

- Complete obedience is impossible when there are known sins in our life that we hide from God. Like the issue of circumcision, is our heart completely 'circumcised' and belong to him?
- It is not just an individual that needs to obey God, we need to be obedient as a family of God. Think of how the family/group could further obey God in our daily living.

## MOSES VERSUS PHARAOH - ROUND ONE

EXODUS 5:1-21

### GENERAL SURVEY

Topic:

Key Verse:

Main Person/s:

Key Ideas and Questions:

### INTRODUCTION

Moses and Aaron's first encounter with Pharaoh turned out to be a total disaster. They achieved nothing that looked like God's promised deliverance. Instead, they had made their situation worse than before. They were like amateurs boxers punching away with the professionals in the ring. What should the Israelites make of this terrible crisis? Why should they continue to trust Moses? It was a total disaster that gave Pharaoh the pre-text to step up their oppression. Round one went to Pharaoh!

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

In this passage, Pharaoh made the 'lazy' Israelites labour and maintain the brick quota.

1. God's requirements (5:1-5)
  - a. What was Moses and Aaron's request to Pharaoh? (v1)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. How did Pharaoh react to them and their request? (vv4-5)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What was the primary reason for his reaction? (v2) Whose battle was it really between Pharaoh and Moses?

Ponder:

How do you respond to situations where unbelievers are dealt unjustly and onerously? Meditate on Psalm 25:8-15 and 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.

2. Pharaoh's rejection (5:6-14)
  - a. How did Pharaoh criticise the Israelites because of Moses' request? (vv8, 9, 17)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Who else were affected by Pharaoh's instruction? How did they suffer? (v14)

Contemplate:

How may you remain courageous in the face of resistance or challenges to your belief? Consider Matthew 11:29-30 and Psalm 81:6, and share how these provide perspective to your situation.

3. The foremen's reaction (5:15-21)
  - a. To whom did the foremen appeal, and who were they loyal to? (v15)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What was Pharaoh's instruction to them? (v18)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. How did they respond to Moses and Aaron? (v21) If you were Moses or Aaron, how would you feel? What would your reaction be?

Reflect:

People tend to blame one another when they cannot shoulder negative consequences of situations that threaten their well-being. What are some common inter-personal reactions? What ungodly behaviour should we put off and what godly behaviour should we put on?

## **DISCIPLESHIP POINTER**

Obedience to God is costly to a believer and may be to others around him as well.

1. To Moses, God revealed who he was, beginning with the burning bush episode (Ex 3:12-15, 4:30-31). Without such a revelation, it is impossible to know God - as Pharaoh found out - it was as much as the inclination of his heart to defy God and not merely an ignorance of God's identity. Share with your group members how you will thank God for having revealed the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation?
2. Pharaoh responded by making the already difficult life impossible for the Israelites. In our lives, counting the price to follow Jesus should not be from the perspective of the world. Rather, believers should remain focused on the prize of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. Share with your group what it means to you that you would rather lose all things so you may gain Christ (Phil 3:8)? See also Rom 8:18
3. The life of a righteous disciple is by definition lonely. Not only that but also relatively few will follow the Lord (Mt 7:14). Believers need to accept that the often lonely (parts of the) journey may only be known and vindicated by God. In view of point 2 above and 1 Peter 2:23, how may you remain faithful?

## **FAMILY/GROUP MOMENTS**

Will you let your family members suffer adverse consequences or pay the cost for your faith conviction? Why or why not? To what extent will you do this?

Let us consider how we may raise the younger generation of Christians as belonging to the Lord, so that they may love him more than anyone/anything else. Share how you may apply Luke 14:26 in this effort.

## GOD REASSURES MOSES

EXODUS 5:22 - 6:16; 7:1-7

### GENERAL SURVEY

Topic:

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Main Person/s:

Key Ideas and Questions:

### INTRODUCTION

Having lost their first round of appeal to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron seemed to have lost all confidence in God and credibility with the Israelites. They were in a desperate damage control mode where they confronted God for his failure to keep his promises. And God's response was to send them to Pharaoh for round two. Would they go? On what basis would their confidence rest?

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. God reassures Moses that He will deliver Israel from Egypt (5:22-6:12)
  - a. What was on Moses' heart when he questioned God in the way he did (vv22-23)? Was it right for him to do that? What would you have done? Discuss.
    - (i) Count the number of first-person references (e.g. 'I')
    - (ii) Consider the phrase 'I will' (NIV) used numerous times by God. What is the significance?
    - (iii) What are some attributes of God shown in this passage?
    - (iv) What are the promises of God in these verses?
  - b. Consider God's reply to Moses in 6:1-8.
    - (i) Count the number of first-person references (e.g. 'I')
    - (ii) Consider the phrase 'I will' (NIV) used numerous times by God. What is the significance?
    - (iii) What are some attributes of God shown in this passage?
    - (iv) What are the promises of God in these verses?
  - c. After God replied, Moses spoke to the Israelites. Compare the Israelites' attitude and reaction in 6:9 with their earlier response to Moses and Aaron in 4:31. What caused the difference? Was it reasonable and acceptable?
  - d. Does Moses' response in verse 12 show that he understood God's promises? Why?

2. God encourages and further reassures Moses (7:1-7)
  - a. What is the meaning of 'See, I will make you like God to Pharaoh' (v1)? How is that supposed to encourage Moses (and also Aaron)? Recall that Moses was once an Egyptian 'prince' (2:10), but by now, he is an old man (7:7). Essentially, it was two aged men against the mighty Egyptian Pharaoh, or was it?
  - b. Consider God's instructions to Moses in 7:2-5.
    - (i) Count the number of first-person references (e.g. 'I')
    - (ii) Consider the phrase 'I will' (NIV) used numerous times by God. What is the significance?
    - (iii) What would God do? What effect would God's action have on the Egyptians?

## DISCIPLESHIP POINTERS

God is the covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. We need only to trust him and live.

- We should let our convictions and decision-making be shaped by God's word rather than by circumstances, what others say or think, etc.;
- We may have no or limited resources, but to do God's work and will, we can trust him to provide adequately and abundantly;
- We must not forget God's promises and provisions; otherwise we tend to rely on our own feeble abilities to accomplish God's mission.

## FAMILY/GROUP MOMENTS

- Take time to talk about what it means to trust in God to see us through trials and temptations on a daily basis. By our words and actions, parents can demonstrate this in practical terms.
- What practical steps may we take to instil in our children a love for God and his word? The more we know God through his word and obey him, the better prepared we will be for the difficulties of life.