

Message #1

Various Texts

What a wonderful ending to a horrific story that came out of Cleveland, Ohio, recently. Three girls who had been captive for ten years were liberated and set free. One man heard the voice of a girl asking for help and he helped her get out. Then all three girls were set free. It is a great story that has captivated the nation and is a true story of deliverance.

There is a story in the Bible that is even better than this story. It is a story of a nation that was held captive for 400 plus years. No one was getting out and no one was getting away. One man heard the voice of God and was told to go get that nation and take her out of her captivity and take her to freedom. It is one of the greatest stories of deliverance in all of history. It is the story of Moses, the story of Israel and the story of the book of Exodus.

We begin tonight a new exposition of one of the most significant books in all the Bible—the book of Exodus. This book contains one of the most important historical and theological events in all of Scripture.

Hollywood movies have been made about some of the events in this book, but that is not why this book was ever written. This book is written to reveal sober truths to God's people and it is designed to produce solid results in God's people, and in the next weeks we are going to travel through it.

As is our habit, we begin by asking and answering key introductory questions:

QUESTION #1 – Why study the book of Exodus?

Let me list four simple reasons to study this book of Exodus:

Reason #1 - Because Exodus is one of only 66 books that are truly inspired by God.

Just think about this fact for a moment. Almighty God has inspired only 66 books and one of them is Exodus.

When it comes to Exodus, no one questions that it is an inspired book of God. Both Jews and Gentiles acknowledge that reality.

In the Old Testament, there are 39 books that the Jews determined were inspired by God. All of the compilers of manuscripts, both Hebrew and Greek, included Exodus as part of the first five inspired books of God called the Torah.

In fact, “the law of Moses” included Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, and those books were always deemed inspired by God from the time God moved Moses to write them.

Joshua said that Moses was responsible for the Law of God (Josh. 1:7). David challenged Solomon to keep the things found “written in the Law of Moses” (I Kings 2:3). Jesus specifically spoke of things written about Him in the Law of Moses (Luke 24:44).

In the famous Dead Sea Scroll discovery in Qumran cave #2 back in 1952, there were two manuscripts of Exodus. In cave #4 there was found another copy of Exodus. This clearly teaches that the book of Exodus was considered to be a very sacred and inspired book of God that was carefully printed and carefully protected.

Reason #2 - Because Exodus is an inspired book important to Israel .

Exodus is a very critical book to Israel. It is a book that shows that God has a national redemptive plan for this nation. It is a book that shows that God loves and cares for Israel. When they were being mistreated, He was there watching and finally He intervened. This book of Exodus guarantees Israel that God will one day lead her into her Promised Land, which extends from the Nile to the Euphrates, and all of her enemies will be routed out from her land (Ex. 23:20, 23, 31). God not only redeems Israel, He enters into a covenant with Israel.

When we read the Psalms it is quite clear that this book of Exodus clearly establishes God’s sovereignty in the election of Israel (Psalm 135:4, 8, 9). It is also clear that the book of Exodus proves God’s sovereign mercy to Israel (Psalm 136:10-16). Exodus is clearly a book very important to the calling, existence, protection and future plan of God pertaining to Israel.

Reason #3 - Because Exodus is an inspired book important to the Church .

We have specific N.T. Grace Age passages that clearly teach that this very book is important to those of us who live in the Grace Age.

One passage is I Corinthians 10:1-11 . The things recorded in the book of Exodus are to be analyzed and understood by us because there are typological examples in Exodus for each and every one of us. Another passage is Hebrews 11:24-29 . The book of Exodus is obviously applicable to our development of faith. This book of Exodus will certainly challenge us to believe God and take God at His Word and move forward.

One of the lessons we will certainly learn from this book is that if we, as God’s people, cross certain lines, we can anger God to the point that He will punish us. God never portrays Himself as a God of total toleration while His people live their lives in rebellion. This is certainly one lesson we will learn from this great book.

We who live in this Grace Age are free. We have great freedom and great liberty, but this book of Exodus warns us do not get sloppy in our use of our liberty. Exodus teaches us that our freedom is not a license to pursue sin. All of us should desire deliverance from an Egyptian-type of worldliness. God’s people can pay a high price for sin if they are not careful.

Our freedom must always be used in the context of the will and Word of God and this book of Exodus certainly does teach us this point.

Reason #4 - Because Exodus is an inspired book important to our theology.

Our theology would be greatly lacking if we did not have this book of Exodus. There are six key points of theology that are derived from and clearly developed in this book.

(Theological Point #1) - In this book of Exodus, we come face to face with the doctrine of God's sovereignty. (Exodus 7-13)

God is the supreme sovereign ruler over every thing and every one, including all laws of physics. With the exception of the book of Revelation, there is no book in the Bible that demonstrates the miraculous sovereign power of God like Exodus. This book of Exodus is designed to display the sovereignty of God. In fact, when the spies for Joshua went to Rahab's house, it was her realization of God's sovereignty from this very book of Exodus that caused her to fear God and want to be right with God (Josh. 2:9-13).

God is a sovereign God. He is so sovereign that He can turn a stick into a serpent and water into blood. He can command frogs to do what He wants them to do; He can direct locusts to go to specific spots and do specific damage. He can cause severe pestilences to kill horses, donkeys, camels, cattle and sheep. He can direct physical problems like boils to hit anyone He wants. He can send destructive hail to specific areas and He can cause things to become so dark that people cannot see what they are doing or where they are going. God is so sovereign that He actually determines who dies, when they die and how they die. He is so sovereign that He can literally part a sea so His people may walk through it. That is amazing sovereignty and this book of Exodus causes us all to stand in awe of it.

(Theological Point #2) - In this book of Exodus, we come face to face with God's doctrine of unconditional election. (Exodus 3:10)

There really cannot be any debate about this fact. God is a God of election. God chose Israel when she was in the most miserable condition that a nation could be in, and then He chose His man, Moses, to go and get that nation and take the entire nation out from her miserable existence. In some respects, Israel was fighting God every step of the way, but He did it anyway. This book of Exodus certainly does establish the great doctrine of election.

This is the book that talks about God hardening a person's heart (Exodus 4:21; 7:3). I know that some want to say well Pharaoh hardened his own heart first, but that is not true. Exodus 4:21 and 7:3 comes many verses before Exodus 8:32.

God chooses the nation He wants to choose and God chooses the individual He wants to choose. He chooses the nation He wants to use and the individuals He wants to use.

(Theological Point #3) - In this book of Exodus, we come to terms with the O.T. Law, which is our schoolmaster designed to bring us to Christ. Exodus 20-23

In the book of Exodus, we come face to face with the first written record of the Law of God. In Exodus 20, we our first glimpse of the famous Ten Commandments and those commandments are designed, in part, to show that we are all guilty and sinful before God (Rom. 3:19-20).

The Apostle Paul would say in Galatians that one Grace Age purpose of that O.T. Law was to show that our only hope for being justified by God is by believing on Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:24). This book of Exodus will bring us face to face with the theological truth that none of us have measured up to the O.T. Law.

If you are honest with what you see in this book of Exodus, you will have to admit you need to cast your total and complete faith upon Jesus Christ because we have all missed the mark of the righteousness of God.

(Theological Point #4) - In this book of Exodus, we come to terms with the fact that God's plan for His people is to bring them out of bondage and into freedom.

Exodus is a book that communicates the point that God's desire for His people is that they be led out of any bondage and into wonderful freedom. Dr. Warren Wiersbe called his commentary on Exodus, "*Be Delivered.*" F.B. Meyer said there are very few of us who have not been into Egypt to taste of what is there and very few who have not been tempted to sell their birthright for some selfish, swinish pleasure (*Exodus*, p. 12).

God's goal is to get people out of bondage to any thing and set them free. The way He does that is to give people His Word so they may follow it and worship Him. God calls Israel out of Egypt, gives them His Word and establishes His worship. **The obvious formula that is seen in this book is obey God's Word and worship in God's way and you will be led to experience great freedom.**

(Theological Point #5) - In this book of Exodus, we learn that worship is to be God's way, not our way. Exodus 25-29

When we go through this book of Exodus, it is very clear that God is very precise in the way He wants people worshipping Him. Worship is to be a sacred experience. It is quite clear that Israel didn't just throw up any type of tent to worship God. God was precise in the construction of His tabernacle, the furniture that went in the tabernacle and the priests who ministered in it.

When Paul writes his letters to the churches, it is obvious that worship is to be done in a reverent, decent and orderly way (I Cor. 14:40). Furthermore, the church is the Church of the Living God, and it is to be the pillar and support of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). What is being called "worship" in many places today is not acceptable worship to God. Exodus is a book that makes that point very clear.

(Theological Point #6) - In this book of Exodus, we learn that in order to be right with God, there must be a blood sacrifice . Exodus 12:13

We know from many N.T. passages that the O.T. sacrifices point to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and we also know that the “Lamb” sacrifice has a specific connection to Jesus Christ. In fact, when John saw Jesus, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). It is more than just interesting that when Jesus was a baby He went down into Egypt. He would be the only One who would come out of there not tarnished by sin. He would come out the perfect Lamb without any blemish.

One of the great glimpses of salvation comes from this book of Exodus. It is a statement that concerns the Passover Lamb and it says: “when I see the blood I will pass over you.” This is more than just an escape from the death angel for Israel. This is illustrative of the entire redemptive plan of God. Unless God sees the blood of the Lamb applied to an individual, that individual will suffer eternal death, eternal condemnation and eternal hell. But when one believes on Jesus Christ, that blood of the Lamb is calculated by God to wash away the sins of the sinner.

These are major theological reasons we are going to go through the book of Exodus.

QUESTION #2 – What is the title of the book?

The Hebrew title of the book of Exodus comes from the opening first two words of the book which are “welleh shimoth,” which means, as seen in **verse 1**–“these are the names of.” The conjunction “now” that begins **verse 1** connects us to the book of Genesis. So you cannot make sense of the book of Exodus unless you connect it to what happened in the book of Genesis.

The English title “Exodus” comes from the Greek Septuagint word “Exodos” (ἐξοδος), which means going out, a way out or a departure or exit. The translators of the Greek Septuagint gave the book this title because of the major event that is recorded in the book—namely Israel departs and exits Egypt.

The actual Greek word Exodus is comprised of two words: The preposition “ex” (ἐξ), which means out. The noun “odos” (οδος), which means a way. **So we see the simple meaning in that Exodos (ἐξοδος) means a way out .**

The writer of Hebrews used this title when he said “Joseph...made mention of the **exodus** of the sons of Israel” (Hebrews 11:22). S. Lewis Johnson made a great observation when he observed that the last verse of Genesis ends with a coffin in Egypt, but the last verse in Exodus ends with the presence of the Living God leading Israel. So Exodus, metaphorically speaking, takes Israel out of a coffin bondage in Egypt to a liberated freedom to worship her God.

QUESTION #3 – Who wrote the book?

Even though in the last 100 years some liberals have attacked this fact, **there really is no doubt about this point; Exodus was written by Moses**. Jewish people have always taught this point.

We may easily prove Moses wrote Exodus by offering four simple proofs:

Proof #1 - Moses is specifically commanded by God, in Exodus, to write. Ex. 17:14; 34:27-28

Proof #2 - Moses specifically wrote down all the words of the LORD. Ex. 24:4

Proof #3 - Other books in the O.T. say Moses wrote the Law. I Kings 2:3; Neh. 8:1; Neh. 13:1

Proof #4 - Jesus said Moses wrote Exodus. **Mark 7:10/Ex. 20:12; 21:17; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37/Ex. 3:6**

QUESTION #4 – When was the book of Exodus written?

There have been two views concerning this issue.

View #1 - The Late date view. (We reject) – 19th Dynasty of Egypt

Some believe that the events of Exodus occurred about 1295-1290 B.C. because of the mention of Raamses in Ex. 1:11, and because of archeological evidence which they claim seems to suggest this later date. Those who take this position say Raamses was a great builder who lived in the 19th dynasty of Egypt, which dates it at this time.

View #2 - The Early date view. (We accept) – 18th Dynasty of Egypt.

This is the view that is biblically provable by one simple verse of Scripture— I Kings 6:1, which says “Solomon began to build the temple 480 years after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt.” It has been well historically documented that Solomon began building the Temple in 966 B.C. **If we add 480 to 966 the date is 1446 B.C.**

Moses died when he was 120 years old (Deuteronomy 34:7). Most believe that Moses was born some where around 1525 B.C., which means he would have lived from 1525 B.C. to 1405 B.C. So he wrote Exodus somewhere within this time frame.

We know from **Exodus 7:7** that Moses was 80 years old when he went in to speak with Pharoah, so we may assume that he was not writing prior to this. So this takes us to about the year 1446-1445 B.C. So anytime after this date would be a real possibility. **We would suggest that Moses wrote all of his works in a 39 year time frame between 1444 B.C. and 1405 B.C.**

QUESTION #5 – What is the background of the book of Exodus?

Israel had been in captivity to the Egyptians since the arrival of Jacob and his family in about 1876 B.C. In fact, the book of Exodus opens with a reminder that the sons of Israel were in Egypt and Joseph had died.

So if we date the arrival of Israel into Egypt as 1876 B.C. until the time Moses is 80 years old, which is 1446-1445 B.C., we may conclude that Israel has been in captivity to the Egyptians for 430 years. This number is specifically stated in the book of Exodus, in Exodus 12:40 and it also is specifically stated by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:17.

QUESTION #6 – What is the theme of the book?

The theme of the book is God redeems His people and wants to deliver His elect people out of bondage and He provides a way out for them, and if they will follow His Word and worship Him, He will set them free.