**Exodus II Let My People Go**

Last week:

We saw Exodus is an important part of the biblical story of God saving his people and undoing what happened in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 12-23 God chooses a man of faith through whom to save his people.

Abraham

Genesis 24-50 God creates a people through whom to save his people.

Abraham → Isaac → Jacob/Israel→ 12 sons

Jacob and 12 sons go down to Egypt A family went into Egypt. A nation of God came out of Egypt. Formed into a nation through suffering.

Exodus 1 God creates a people—Israel. But they are in captivity in Egypt.

Exodus 2-17 God sends Moses to set his people free from captivity.

Exodus 18-40 & Leviticus: God gives them a covenant at Mt. Sinai.

Numbers/Deuteronomy: We mess up and God protects us in the wilderness.

Joshua: God takes them into the Promised Land.

In a sense, this is the story of the entire Bible!

We looked at Hosea 11:1 “Out of Egypt I called my Son.

Fulfilled in Joseph, in Moses, in Israel, in Jesus and in us.

God saw his people in slavery. He had compassion on them. So, he providentially provided a Savior Moses.

A king—Pharoah—tried to kill the helpless Jewish boys, but God providentially intervened, first through the midwives’ faith, and then through Pharaoh’s daughter (and Jochabad’s sister, not Miriam)

Several times, God used powerless people, and very difficult situations, so that Israel could understand that it is God’s providence, not their awesomeness that saved them. We saw “A wonderfully unexpected rescue from a humanly impossible situation.”

Then we saw Moses inadvisedly intervening to save Israel from their persecutor. Moses willingly left the lap of luxury, walked out of the palace to join himself with the slaves. Because you have to become like a slave to save the slaves.

But, Moses fled into the desert/Midian for 40 years of preparation. (as Jesus went into the wilderness 40 days to prepare for his ministry to save Israel)

Exodus 2:16-25 God’s providence one more time! Moses “left Egypt” for Midian. (on the Arabian peninsula)

This “priest of Midian” (v. 16), who is Reuel (v. 20) is also the Jethro (Exodus 3:1) in Numbers.

He is a priest of the one true God. He is a monotheistic God-worshipper.

There were others. Not just Abraham. Job, for example.

Moses acts to rescue (2:19) Jethro’s daughters. Moses is concerned with justice. Moses is always defending the weak and the defenseless from the oppressor. This is what Jesus does.

v. 19 Irony: The daughters see him as an Egyptian. An Egyptian rescued the weak from the strong!

Jesus saves the weak from the world which oppresses them.

Not surprisingly, in another foreshadow, Moses draws water from the well, and Moses gives them water. (As does Jesus who gives us (and the Samaritan woman) the water that springs up to eternal life John 4:14)

And John 7:38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.

v. 19 They recognize him as an Egyptian. Moses will become a Jew while in Midian—at Mt. Horeb.

v. 21 Moses marries Zipporah—a Gentile—which leads a (40 years) later problem. (Exodus 4:24-26) His son Gershom is, technically, not a Jew, as Jewish descent is decided through the mother, not the father.

God is about to take the life of Moses because he unfaithfully took a non-Jew for a wife and neglected to circumcise him. But… God intervenes providentially again.

Zipporah circumcises Moses’ son, saving him (Moses) from death!

(Don’t even ask me what “bridegroom of blood” means.)

Possibly Ziporrah does the circumcision because Moses is so ill and about to die that he is unable to do so.

Exodus 2:24 A key verse. God hears our groaning. God remembers his covenant with Abraham to bless his descendants and to bless the entire world through him. God’s promises never fail!!! God comes to save!!!

v. 25 God is concerned about his people. (also in Exodus 3:7-8 …so I have come down to rescue them. So, what does God do? God sends Moses. For us: God sends Jesus. God is concerned about your being oppressed by Satan/the world. He wants to set you free.

Exodus 3:1-15 Moses meets God. The calling and commissioning of Moses.

Moses given authority from God to go and save his people.

v. 1 Mt. Horeb Mt. Horeb is Mt. Sinai

There is significant debate about where Mt. Sinai is. Is it in the Sinai Peninsula (where the mountain known as Sinai is) or is it in NW Arabia? We will not settle this debate today.

v. 4 Moses! Moses! A theophany. A God-visitation.

Reminds me of Acts 9:4 Jesus says to Paul, “Saul, Saul.”

Jesus may be choosing you and saying to you, “Ryan, Ryan” or “Stephanie, Stephanie.” I want you to go and save my people.

v. 4 Moses: Here I am

God: v. 6 Hi! I AM God

Moses: I am in deep trouble! Hides his face.

Exodus 3:7 God (as in Exodus 2:24-25): I have seen the misery of my people, enslaved to sin. Suffering at the hands of their overseer Pharaoh/Satan. I want to set them free.

God sees our misery and slavery under sin and will do almost anything to set us free.

Moses: Great idea!

God: (v. 10) Yeah, but I am choosing you and sending you!

Moses: Uhhh…. Me? v. 11 who am I?

v. 12 God: I will give you a sign. Some time way in the future, you will bring my people back to this mountain and worship me here.

v. 13 Moses: That does not help me!!! I need a sign right now! Who should I say sent me.

Moses is being quite unfaithful. It is interesting to note that this key moment in the entire Bible story—when God identifies himself to his people—is the result of a man being unfaithful!

Meaning? God is very patient with our doubts!

Moses (in his doubt) asks Who should I say sent me?

He is asking what God’s intentions are.

v. 14 God (to Moses) I am who (that) I am God does not answer Moses’ question. I will do what I will do. You need to just trust me.

Then, in compassion, he answers Moses’ question:

I AM I am the self-existent one. I am the reason of the universe.

YHWH. This is God’s proper name.

His name is not God. That is what he is. His name is not Lord. That is what he is. His name is not El or Elohim or Adonai. His name is “I AM.”

But then he gives himself another name which is “The Lord, the God of your fathers.” YHWH the Elohim of your fathers. I am the author of the story you are such a big part of!

Exodus 3:16-23 I have been watching over you (as in Hosea 11:1-4), and I will send you to a land flowing with milk and honey.

v. 18 God promises the elders will listen. So tell Pharaoh that his slaves want to take a 3 day spiritual retreat out in the desert. Moses thinks: That’s a big ask!

v. 19-20 Pharaoh, of course, will say no, but I will use that to demonstrate my glory and to redeem my people! I will show my providence to all the world.

I will work great wonders and strike the Egyptian people so that they will happily let you go and even pay you to do so!

Exodus 4:1-9 Moses is still struggling with unbelief. Fine, but why me?

Why should I be the one to start a new Bible talk on campus in my dorm?

Two more objections:

1. v. 1-9 They will not believe me.

God gives the signs of the rod/snake and the leprous hand.

God is very indulgent of Moses doubt here.

2. Exodus 4:10-17 Pardon your servant… It is worth remembering he is talking to the God of the universe here!

 I am not powerful enough of speech.

God gives Moses the words to speak, and Aaron as Moses’ spokesperson. Aaron will be Moses “prophet.”

Ex 4:18-23 God to Moses, now go! Moses finally decides to go.

He asks Jethro permission, as it involves Zipporah.

And here is the plan:
v. 21 You will do miracles before Moses.

Nevertheless, I will harden Pharaoh’s heart.

Why? So that you can be freed from slavery by my mighty hand—so that there can be no doubt who did this!!!

Romans 9:16-18 This is God’s predestination—only for salvation and never for damnation.

God wants us to know who is working!

v. 23 Why does Israel need to go out into the desert? Because, as long as they are still in Egypt, they cannot worship God. We must be saved by God first, then we can worship Him.

This is a very important foreshadow/metaphor. Your sin has separated you from your God so that he will not hear (Is 59:1-2)

Exodus 4:23 Israel is my firstborn son. She is my favored one. If you refuse, you will lose your firstborn son. Wow!

Exodus 4:27-31

v. 29, 30 As God had assured Moses, the people did believe, in part, because of the miracles that Aaron worked.

We need to stop there…

Summary:

God desperately wants to set us free from bondage to sin.

So he sent a savior—Moses, in this case, to set his people free.

It will not be easy. In fact, it will require many miracles to set us free.

But God, in his providence, and in weakness uses his strong arm to save us from slavery so that we can worship him in the wilderness.