



Exodus

Freed to Worship

Exodus 1:9-2:25

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Message #2 of 50



Wednesday Evening Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Exodus: Freed to Worship

Introduction to Exodus

Opening Comments

- Tonight, we continue a study of the book of **Exodus: Freed to Worship**
- Let's open with a word of prayer.
- Turn to **Exodus 1**.
- We spent a lot of time last week on the introduction.
- Before we jump into the text I would like to give you an outline for our study of Exodus.
- We will be breaking Exodus into three parts.
- **Exodus: Freed to Worship**
- Chapter 1 to 18 – Freed from Bondage
- Chapters 19 to 24 – Freed to Obedience
- Chapters 25 to 40 – Freed to Worship
- Exodus opens by telling us that Jacob and his family were only seventy people when they came to Egypt.
- That changed dramatically in the 400 years between Genesis and Exodus.
- **Exodus 1:7**
- At the end of Genesis, Jacob's son Joseph was the second most powerful man in Egypt.
- Through God's providence and miraculous power Joseph went from slave to prisoner to the savior of Egypt.
- Over the centuries, people forgot what Joseph had done for Egypt with God's power.
- **Exodus 1:8**
- People are like that.
- Our own history in this country is being forgotten or rewritten.
- Those men who were the heroes of the past are now being vilified.
- The new pharaoh who does not know what Joseph has done for his people.
- **Exodus 1:9-10**
- Frankly, this king is using words of insecurity and paranoia.

- Conflict is inevitable in life.
- In the series on James, I taught that trials come to us for three basic reasons.
- The same thing is true for conflict.
- First type = **Cause and Effect**
- Conflict happens because we did something to cause it **Galatians 6:7-8**

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

- It is the consequence of our own sins.
- Though it could also be the consequence of someone's sin around you – someone else caused the conflict.
- Second type = **Spiritual Conflict**
- Other conflicts arise out of the fact that we are children of God, which makes us the enemy of God's enemy Satan.
- Part of the consequence of the fall is conflict with the forces of Satan **Genesis 3:15**

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

- This applies literally to Christ but extends to all who are called by His name.
- The devil hates all humanity because we are made in God's image.
- He especially hates Christians because we shine the light of Jesus Christ into the darkness he loves.
- Third type = **Spiritually Mysterious**
- These are conflicts that we can't really explain, to us they are mysterious.
- It is not mysterious to God and fits into one of the first two types of conflicts.
- That is the case here – the Hebrews may not have known why the new king was so hostile toward them.
- But this was a spiritual conflict. - And God was the author of it.
- That doesn't mean He caused the king to be a jerk, he just made sure that the jerk showed up when he was needed by God.

- God used his natural jerk-ness to accomplish His will – to set His people free and to display His glory and power to the world.
- You see, God was doing something that required the new king to be hostile.
- He was getting the people of Israel ready to leave Egypt.
- They had settled and they were flourishing.
- And if God hadn't allowed this new king to be hostile toward them, they would never have left Egypt.
- And that was a problem because Egypt was not the Promised Land, Canaan was.
- There is a spiritual truth in that for all of us.
- If we are happy and comfortable in our Egypt, we will not long for the life God promised us.
- God might bring something uncomfortable into your life to drive you to the life He desires for you.
- That doesn't mean everyone uncomfortable thing that comes into your life is God trying to move you.
- Seek the Lord and he will tell you what to do.
- So the new king thinks he is wise enough to deal with these pesky Hebrews.
- His wisdom is going to backfire on him **1 Corinthians 1:19**
For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."
- This new king is scheming and planning.
- He is a picture for us of man in rebellion against God.
- You cannot resist God and hope to prosper in any way.
- He is sovereign and will frustrate the plans of those who rebel against Him.
- We should note, that just because our plans do not prosper, doesn't necessarily mean we are in rebellion against God, though it doesn't hurt to humble ourselves before God and ask Him to examine our hearts.
- So, Pharaoh comes up with a plan.
- **Exodus 1:11**
- He makes them slaves and has them treated very harshly by the taskmasters.

- A taskmaster is a commander of forced labor forces.
 - In ancient drawings they are always shown with clubs and/or whips
 - It was meant to beat them down, to crush their spirit, to weaken them physically, and ultimately to reduce their numbers.
 - But it didn't work the way they planned.
 - **Exodus 1:12-14**
 - The harder they made life for the Hebrews the more they seemed to multiply.
 - It is one of the historical truths about God's people.
 - Persecution sparks the growth of the church.
 - We first see this in the book of Acts.
 - Persecution from the Jews came, and Christians fled to other parts of the world and churches started springing up everywhere.
 - So much so that when Paul and His friends were in Thessalonica, they tried to arrest them.
 - Said this about them and the Christian faith **Acts 17:6.**
- These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.**
- Pharaoh thinks he can persecute the Hebrews into submission.
 - As we will see clearly later, by doing what he did, Pharaoh caused the Hebrews to do what he was afraid they might do.
 - One of the things he was afraid of, was that they were going to leave Egypt.
 - By making life so harsh, they will start looking for a way out.
 - This also works into God's plan.
 - Because the Hebrews are so comfortable in Egypt, He knows He has to make it uncomfortable so that they will leave.
 - There is evidence of that truth in the return from exile to Babylon.
 - About 1,000 years after this exodus, the people of Judah were in exile in Babylon.
 - God works in the life of the Persian king Cyrus to release them from their captivity.
 - Not all of them left – some of them stayed because they liked their life in Babylon.
 - After all, Judah had been destroyed by the Babylonians so they would have to start over.

- Better to stay in the place of captivity, then to start over in the place of God's promises.
- And that is a problem in the lives of some Christians.
- Christ has set them free from the bondage of sin, but they stay in the place of sin, because it is comfortable and easier than leaving.
- Believers who are addicted to alcohol, drugs, or sex are choosing to stay in the place of bondage.
- Believers who continue in sexual immorality after being saved are making a choice to stay in spiritual bondage. **John 8:34-36**

Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

- Someone who chooses a lifestyle of sin is choosing to live in the bondage that Jesus died to set them free of.
- The only way to be truly free is to separate yourself from the place of bondage and move into the life that Jesus promised.
- Pharaoh tries a new tactic.
- **Exodus 1:15-16**
- One of the signs of the end times and of fallen mankind is the disregard of the value of human life.
- I mean, really? Just how desperate must he be to start killing newborn baby boys?
- How depraved must they be to think it is okay to kill babies because they might be inconvenient or a threat in the future.
- And think about this for a minute, for this plan of his to work, they would have to keep doing it until every Hebrew male was dead.
- They would have to keep killing newborn baby boys for 40+ years.
- That might be hundreds of thousands of babies every year.
- That is seriously messed up.
- It is interesting to note that the two midwives are named, but the Pharaoh is not – just thought that was interesting.
- God's people are important to Him, His enemies are not.
- To not say someone's name is a sign of disrespect or loathing.
- But this new plan is not going to work either.
- **Exodus 1:17**
- This is the first recorded act of civil disobedience in the Bible.

- The Pharaoh was the law of the land.
- And yet they chose to obey God, reverencing Him as the highest law.
- Romans 13 commands us as believers to obey the laws of the land.
- That means we pay our taxes; we obey the traffic laws.
- And the only time we are exempted from that is when the laws of the land go against the laws of God **Acts 5:28-29**

Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"

²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

- The religious Jews wanted them to stop telling people about Jesus.
- Well, that created a conflict between the laws of man and the clear commands of Jesus **Mark 16:15**.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

- You can't preach the gospel without mentioning Jesus' name.
- Without His name it is not the gospel.
- I love the fact that God uses two Hebrew women to foil Satan's plan to destroy the people of God.
- So, these Hebrew women refuse to yield to Pharaoh's wicked plan.
- **Exodus 1:18-19**
- This is one of those odd Scriptures that gives some people trouble.
- Because as far as I can tell here, they just lied to the Pharaoh.
- In Exodus 20 God is going to say that lying is a sin.
- No judgment of right or wrong is given in our text, and so we are left wondering about it.
- **Exodus 1:20-21**
- Lying aside, God blesses them for their fear of Him.
- And He blesses them by giving them children.
- It makes you wonder though; did they have boys or girls?
- First Pharaoh tried to recruit the Hebrew midwives to help him with his evil plan.
- Then he turns to his people the Egyptians with a new plan.
- **Exodus 1:22**
- If they were to find out that a male child was born to the Hebrews, they were to cast him alive into the Nile River

- This should remind us of another king who did something similarly wicked.
- Upon hearing that the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem, Herod had all the boys two years old and under killed.
- God saved Jesus out of that situation by sending his family down to Egypt.
- Satan's plans to stop the Messiah were doomed at every step.
- And even this plan of Pharaoh's is going to take an interesting twist in the next chapter.
- The background so far in the book of Exodus
- The people of Israel are in Egypt.
- God has blessed them, and they have grown into a large population
- So large, in fact, that the king of Egypt, the Pharaoh is threatened by them.
- He is afraid they might join an enemy if Egypt is attacked, or they will decide to leave.
- His answer to these fears is to enslave the Hebrews and make them start building great cities in Egypt.
- But the harder Pharaoh oppresses the Hebrews the more they multiply.
- His next strategy was to recruit the Hebrews midwives to kill any baby boys that the Hebrews had.
- They feared God more than Pharaoh and defied his orders.
- That brings us to Pharaoh's third strategy to deal with the Hebrews.
- He tells all the Egyptian people to kill any baby boys that are born to the Hebrews by throwing them into the River Nile
- The Hebrews are in hard bondage and Pharaoh has ordered the deaths of all Hebrew newborn boys
- **Exodus 2:1**
- The parents of Moses are named in **Exodus 6:20**
Now Amram took for himself Jochebed, his father's sister, as wife; and she bore him Aaron and Moses. And the years of the life of Amram were one hundred and thirty-seven.
- A little later Jochebed's daughter is mentioned, she is Moses' sister Miriam.
- This chapter focuses on the providence of God.

- It displays God's operation in the background of humanity moving things around to accomplish His will in the world.
- God's providential work is often invisible to the human eye.
- And even when we become aware of it, it is only in looking back over the circumstances of a situation.
- Most Christians can look back over portions of their lives and see the fingerprints of God arranging the circumstances of their life to reach an outcome they could not perceive as it was unfolding.
- This was true in the life of this and woman from the tribe of Levi.
- All they know is that life is hard; really hard – but life keeps going on.
- We might be able to relate to that.
- Either our life is really hard or someone we know is having a tough time.
- We have examined our life for obvious signs of sin and sought God in prayer.
- And yet, we still don't know why life is hard.
- It is in those times when we must trust in God's love and providential care.
- We is doing something, we just can't see it yet.
- **Exodus 2:2**
- One of things I regularly encourage you to do is to put yourself into the account you are reading or studying.
- What would it have been like?
- Try to imagine the day when Jochebed realized that she was pregnant?
- For most people the news of a baby is exciting – cause to rejoice?
- What would it have like for them?
- There was probably a fifty-fifty chance the baby was going to be a boy.
- Can you imagine carrying a child for nine months and knowing that a baby boy would be killed.
- There were no sonograms back then, they had to wait until the baby was born to find out if it was a boy or a girl.
- To find out if the child had a future or was doomed right from birth.
- The book of Hebrews tells us a little about these parents **Hebrews 11:23**

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.

- But they knew they couldn't hide the baby forever.
- **Exodus 2:3-4**
- She knew she couldn't keep him.
- She knew that keeping him would cost him his life.
- And so, she did something that most parents would struggle with.
- She put him into the river in a basket of reeds.
- In a real way, she entrusted her beautiful baby into God's care.
- This was all she could do to save her son.
- She did what she could – and she trusted God to do everything else.
- She had no way of knowing what was coming next.
- **Exodus 2:5-6**
- The Pharaoh's daughter is a princess of Egypt.
- She knew what her father had commanded regarding the Hebrew's baby boys.
- She knew that her father wanted this beautiful baby boy to die.
- She could have closed up the basket and turned her back on the crying infant, but she had compassion for him.
- This all was God's providence – this was God's plan.
- Any number of people could have discovered the child, but God arranged for the princess to come to bathe at that precise time and location.
- And then the baby's sister reacts to this in a very cunning manner.
- **Exodus 2:7-9**
- Here is a powerful lesson for parents – trust God and give your children to Him, and He will give them back to you.
- The princess hires the baby's mother to be a wet-nurse to the baby.
- **Exodus 2:10**
- Hiring a wet-nurse was not uncommon, especially for the wealthy women of the time.
- This arrangement could have lasted as long as three years.
- So, at about three, the baby goes to live with the princess.
- She names him Moses = 'drawn out.'

- We know nothing about the time that Moses was there in the palace except that he was raised as an Egyptian and educated as the son of the daughter of Pharaoh.
- There is a 37-year gap between verses 10 and 11
- **Exodus 2:11**
- It is not clear why Moses waited 37 years to notice the suffering of his fellow Hebrews.
- But eventually he did, and saw an Egyptian beating one of his people.
- Beating a slave was neither uncommon nor even illegal.
- Even killing the slave who belongs to someone else carried only financial consequences.
- Losses for labor had to be compensated to the owner.
- Moses responds very aggressively.
- **Exodus 2:12**
- Killing a slave was one thing, killing an Egyptian was totally different.
- As you read verse 12 you get the sense that Moses thought he was getting away with murder.
- He may have thought he was delivering his people by this wicked act.
- And even though he buried the evidence the crime would not stay buried.
- **Exodus 2:13-14**
- Instead of appreciating what Moses had done on their behalf, they reject him and oppose him.
- Turn to **Numbers 16**
- This is a pattern that will continue through the rest of Moses' life as he strives to fulfill his calling as the deliverer of God's people.
- God will call Moses to be a ruler and a judge over the people, but they will regularly rebel against him, challenge his leadership, and oppose his God-given authority.
- Here in Numbers 16 we see one of the more famous of these experiences.
- **Numbers 16:1-3**
- Hey Moses, who do you think you are?
- **Numbers 16:4-7**

- We'll let God decide who He has chosen.
- Tells the ringleaders and their 250 followers to bring incense burners to make an offering to the Lord.
- **Numbers 16:28-35**
- Would like to say that was the last time anyone questioned Moses' calling from God.
- Even his brother and sister had to be rebuked by God.
- Turn back to **Exodus 2**
- God's calling on our lives doesn't mean everyone around us is going to cooperate with us.
- It is not unusual for the very people God has called us to minister to are the ones who are most difficult to minister to.
- Often when a man wakes up to the calling that God has on his life to lead his marriage and family, that he finds the greatest resistance comes from his wife and children.
- Moses experiences this pushback from the people he is trying to help and suddenly finds himself between a rock and a hard place.
- We will pick it up from verse 15 next time.