

▼ I. Introduction

▼ A. Introduction

- Mom's we want to wish you a happy mother's day. We are thankful for you in the so many different ways you honor Christ as you bring a new generation into this world and as you seek raise them and help them to grow in Christ.
- Today we are kicking off a series in Exodus and within these first two chapters we are going to see one very courageous mother who is used by God to save a whole people from the clutches of tyranny and oppression.

• B. Read Exodus 1-2

• C. Pray

▼ D. Why study Exodus?

- So why study Exodus? Why are we planning to spend 15 weeks in this book. What can it teach us? Well as we begin studying this book we will find it is a gripping narrative and story. The events it describes are captivating. We are going to see the glory, holiness, majesty and power of God. We are going to learn more about our own redemption in Christ as we see God rescue the people of Israel from Egypt. We are going to learn about God's covenant and unrelenting love for his people, even despite their failures. My prayer for us is that we will be blown away by the God who rescues us to worship him and to know him.

▼ II. Connection with Genesis

▼ A. Overview of the Book

- Departure from Egypt (1:1-18:27)
- Second half - The establishment of God's covenant with Israel at Sinai (19:1-34:35)

▼ *B. Connection with Genesis (Ex 1:1-6)*

- Exodus needs to be understood in light of the entire pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Exodus is really a continuation of the plot line started in Genesis. In fact, if you try to study Exodus without first understanding Genesis, you are going to be in trouble.
- The first six verses of Exodus make the bridge between Genesis and Exodus. So what happened in the story of redemption so far? Here is a quick recap.
- God created the world perfectly and created human beings in his image to worship him. Their purpose were to grow in number and fill the earth with worshipers of God. Adam and Eve are deceived by the serpent and sin comes into the world. God's relationship with humanity is broken. There are now two sides of the cosmic war - The children of God and the children of the Serpent. As Genesis unfolds, it seems like evil and sin grow rapidly. The children of the serpent, those in opposition to God and his ways seem to be growing. Where is the one born of woman who will one day crush the head of the serpent? (Gen 3:15). The story of Genesis turns the attention to one man, Abram. Abram is chosen by God to be an instrument of blessing throughout the world. It is through the lineage of Abraham and from his seed will come the one who will one day crush the head of the serpent. Over the book of Genesis, the seed and decedents of Abraham are protected by God's sovereign directing and leading. By God's providential hand, the 12 sons of Israel find themselves in Egypt as refugees from the horrors of famine. The life of Joseph shows God's sovereign

working to preserve and protect the people. The book of Genesis ends with decedents of Abraham, the chosen people, in Egypt.

- As Exodus begins we are told that the people of Abraham grow in number. They were “fruitful and increased greatly”. The children of God are growing and becoming numerous just as God has promised Abraham. After several years the people of Israel began to fill the Egyptian Land.

▼ III. The People of God Oppressed (Genesis 1:1-22)

▼ A. *Introduction*

- We are told there was great oppression upon the people of Israel. Within this first chapter of Exodus we see that the people of Israel are under Economic Oppression, Social Oppression, and Spiritual Oppression.

▼ B. *Economic Oppression (1:8-14)*

- The Economic oppression was fierce. As a new generation comes into power, a new Pharaoh arose who did not know Joseph. As the people of Israel began to grow in numbers, Pharaoh began to get worried. They are in such large numbers that if war breaks out they may be betrayed by these foreigners living in their land. In order to keep the population under control and to break the will of the people, the Egyptians enslaved the people and forced them into harsh labor.

- Yet the slavery Pharaoh put the people under didn't prove to be effective. The people continued to grow in number and the Egyptians only grew in their dread of the people of Israel (1:12).
- There have always been those who oppress and enslave the weak. We see it even this day in the horrors of sex trafficking as young girls are imprisoned for the pleasure of wicked and detestable men. We think about the American slave trade and the horrors of shipping human beings from Africa only to be enslaved by a foreign people. You see there have always been human beings who are oppressed by powerful people. Pharaoh and the Egyptians enslaved the people to work for them, yet their fear did not go away. The people continued to grow in number, so Pharaoh decided to implement extreme and murderous social oppression.

▼ *C. Social Oppression (1:15-22)*

- Since the slavery did not prove effective at managing the population of the Hebrews, Pharaoh decided to have state sponsored infanticide. He gave instructions to the midwives that if a Hebrew baby boy was born they were to kill the baby on the spot.
- This was in a day in age where there was no ultrasound to determine the gender of the child, so the Egyptians could not kill the baby in the womb. The murder had to wait until the baby's sex was known. You can imagine the sort of anxiety of an Israelite mother giving birth that the baby would not be a boy so that the child could live. The heartache of this genocidal oppression must have been too much to bare.
- Yet, we are told that some of the Midwives, Shiprah and Puah, feared God and did not obey the commands of Pharaoh. These strong and courageous women did what they knew was right and obeyed the Lord rather than obeying Pharaoh. The king began to inquire about why these women seem to be failing in their task to

murder the hebrew baby boys and they give a truthful answer that the hebrew women are so vigorous that they give birth before they arrive. Perhaps the midwives intentionally delayed in arriving, we are not sure. But, God honored these midwives and we are told that he dealt well with them.

- Again, it shows us that even though we think we have progressed so far as a society, we have not moved beyond the horrors of Egyptians. Behind closed doors of abortion clinics babies are being murdered for a variety of reasons by their parents. Whether it is the sex selection abortions of China in which parents intentionally abort the baby if it's a girl or whether it's here in America where parents abort their child because its inconvenient or has down syndrome. Like the Egyptians, our elite and modern society has left behind a ghastly mountain of dead babies.
- How wonderful it is when people step up to oppose such vile and detestable acts like these Hebrew midwives! How we need more people who seek to oppose fight the law of the land to protect the sanctity and dignity of all human life, especially life within the womb! Those who defend the cause of the oppressed and the weak will be honored by God. As Christians, we should stand like these hebrew midwives in opposition to injustice of the poor, the weak, and the powerless. If God has given us resources and influence to protect the cause of the oppressed we should step up and do so. God honors those who seek to protect the sanctity, dignity, and worth of every human life. From the poor, to the sexually enslaved, to the unborn, or to the abused, may we defend the oppressed in the name of Jesus Christ.
- Since Pharaoh's plan of executing the babies was not working according to plan, Pharaoh commanded that every son born of the Hebrews should be cast into the Nile river. The Nile was thought of

as a god to the Egyptians. These hebrew babies were being ripped from their mother's hands to be sacrificed to a false god.

▼ *D. Spiritual Oppression*

- In addition to the economic and social oppression the people of Israel was under, we also cannot ignore the spiritual oppression. The Scriptures give no indicator that the people of Israel are receiving this oppression as any sort of punishment for their sins like the exile to Babylon would be. Yet, Israelites are sinners. They have a need for redemption and they need to have a relationship with God.
- In the Old Testament we are given hints that the people of Israel even participated in the worship of the Egyptian gods while they lived there (Ex 20:1-7). The people were oppressed in every way, politically, economically, and spiritually.
- Few of us today have ever experienced all three of these, but every one of us have experienced spiritual oppression. We have experienced the isolation and loneliness and condemnation that comes with being a sinner. Each and every human being is spiritually oppressed. Each and every one of us are sinners and willingly put ourselves under such spiritual oppression. We need to be redeemed and we need to be saved. We need to be rescued.

▼ *E. Where is the Lord?*

- As we think about the horrors of what is taking place here in Egypt, we might wonder where is God? If this is the people of God, why hasn't he done anything? Why is he silent and allowing all of this to happen to the people?
- Though it is hidden and though we do not see it in chapter one, as chapter two begins we see God begins to prepare a redeemer to

rescue the people from the hands of the Egyptians and to redeem them from their slavery and oppression.

▼ IV. A Redeemer Prepared (2:1-15)

▼ A. *The Birth of Moses (2:1-9)*

- Here we see God prepare a redeemer for the people. We are told that a baby boy is born from the house of Levi. The little baby's mother was filled with joy at the arrival of her son. As we even think about this Mother's day there is a special bond a mother has with her baby. There is a motherly and protective instinct that happens as soon as that baby is placed in the hands of the mother. Seeing her beautiful baby mother this courageous woman decided to hide the baby for as long as she could.
- There are a lot of things that may be easy to hide, but a baby isn't one of them. Over those three months imagine the fear and anxiety this mother experienced every time her baby cried. Would she be found out? Would the Egyptians come and throw him in the Nile? The panic and anxiety in her heart must have been intense. How could she ensure the survival of her son?
- When the baby became too difficult to hide, she made a basket. The instrument of the Hebrew babies destruction would be used by God for this babies deliverance and rescue. The word basket here is the same Hebrew word for ark in Genesis 6-9. Its the only other place that word is found in the Bible. The word usage creates a powerful point - God is going to protect his people from death. This little baby boy was put into a little boat. Just as God's hand protected Noah so too would this little baby be protected by the hand of God.

- As the baby goes down the Nile river God providentially allows this baby to be discovered by the daughter of Pharaoh. Seeing it is a Hebrew boy she is filled with compassion, she has pity on him. She decides to keep him for herself.
- Then Moses' sister approached Pharaoh's daughter. What courage this girl had to be a Hebrew approaching Egyptian royalty with such boldness! Yet she offers for her to find a nurse for the baby she decides to keep and Moses' Mom gets to continue to nurse her child until she has to release him back to Pharaoh's daughter once he is weened.
- Pharaoh's daughter gives this baby a unique name. We are told that she called the baby boy "Moses" because she drew him out of water. Moses' name literally means "Draw out". The irony here is thick. For God would use Moses to draw out his people from the land of Egypt. So Moses grows up in the house of Pharaoh.

▼ *B. Moses Goes to Midian (2:11-21)*

- As Moses grows up into adulthood, you can image the sort of perplexity and confusion he must have felt. Though he has been raised an Egyptian, he sees his people sweating, hurting, and being beaten under slave labor. Who should he identify with? Should he be an Egyptian where he is comfortable and has wealth, or should he leave the wealth of the Egyptians and identify himself with people who are enslaved and oppressed?
- One day as Moses is out he sees a Hebrew man being beaten by an Egyptian. Seeing that no one else is around Moses attacks the Egyptian and kills him and hid his body in the sand. Moses makes a permanent decision to align himself with the oppressed.
- We must see Moses' failures for what they are. He committed murder and he sinned. Though Moses began to identify in with his own people, he decided to take justice into his own hands. Rather

than waiting for God to bring justice in his power and in his way at his time, he takes it upon himself to execute justice.

- As we think about this younger generation and their hunger for justice we must applaud it. It is very encouraging that there are so many younger people who long for justice when it comes to world hunger, sexual trafficking, or racial tensions. As we've witnessed the sort of out cry over this past year from Ferguson to Baltimore there are a lot of young people who long for justice. Even one of my former students from my youth ministry in Charleston has moved to Baltimore and has been quite open about his rallying for the cause of social justice in the city. But what I would tell him and what I would tell anyone in this room who was fighting for social justice, we must not make the mistake of Moses as we do. Though we should long and even fight for social justice we must do it in God's way and in God's time. We must not take justice into our own hand and seek to bring about justice through sin. Isn't that what Moses did? He saw oppression and decided I'm going to take this into my own hands as he kills the Egyptian. This younger generation no matter their skin color has a passion for justice that is to be commended, but we should seek to bring about justice in a way that honors God, knowing that justice is of the Lord and even though we may never see it fully in our lifetime, we know there is a judgement day in which God will settle accounts and in which God will execute perfect justice.
- Moses eventually must flee the country for his life, having been found out what he had done. He leaves Egypt before he can be caught by Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian.
- While here we see Moses grow as a man and as a redeemer. He protects the priest of Midian's daughters from aggressive shepherds seeking them harm. He saves them and even watered their flock. Reuel is pleased with Moses and gives him his daughter Zipporah to marry.

▼ *C. God Hears (2:23-25)*

- As Moses is in Midian, eventually the current Pharaoh would die out, but the slavery of the Hebrew people only increased. They people of Israel cried out for rescue. Yet, we are told and reminded

that God hears the cries of the oppressed. He is not ignorant of their desperation. Not only that, but God remembers the promise he made to Abraham back in Genesis. That through his line all the nations would be blessed. That through Abraham's lineage would come the one to crush the head of the serpent and eliminate evil and oppression once and for all.

- As we think about how God prepared a redeemer and a savior for his people in Moses, we are also reminded of the greater Moses who was to come, the Lord Jesus Christ. Just like Moses God would send his son from the rich comforts of heaven and God would become a man in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus as a man chooses to identify with us to be a proper high priest who is sympathetic with our weakness and leads us out from the tyrannical rule of sin. God hears and sees the oppression of this world and our sin and he prepares a redeemer who will deliver us from the hand of the enemy once and for all. By the grace of God, he sends Jesus to draw us out from sin and death into his righteousness, life, love, and blessing. Within the book of Exodus we get a prototype of a greater redemption that is to come in the arrival of Jesus Christ. Jesus as the greater Moses provides an even greater Exodus, not from the land of Egypt, but from the pit of Hell itself.
- As we think about the suffering and oppression that we may experience, God does hear and he does know and in his time he will do something about it and execute his perfect justice on the earth.
- Praise be to God that he hears the cry of our hearts as we stand shackled under the enslaving weight of our own sin and that he redeems us to worship him.

▼ V. Final Thoughts

▼ A. *For the non Christian*

- For those of you who are currently still in the bondage of your sin, the redeemer stands before you and offers you freedom. You can be saved from your own sin through Jesus Christ who went to the cross and who delivers you by his death and resurrection. If you do not know Christ turn to him and put your faith in him as your savior and God. God hears you cries this morning for hope, for life, for peace, for forgiveness and he offers it to you through his son Jesus!

▼ B. *For the Christian*

- For those of us in Christ may we, like God, hear the cries of the oppressed among us. May we work to deliver the weak and oppressed from the hand of evil men and women, and as we do may we take the Gospel of Jesus with us to free them from their spiritual enslavement as well. Like God, may we be attentive to the needs of the broken and the hurting.
- Yet, above all Christian, may you rejoice this day that God has rescued you and redeemed you through Jesus Christ. May we praise him and worship him in joy because of all that he has done! God hears our cry and he provides a redeemer. Praise be to God!

• C. *Pray*