

The Exodus: An Introduction

There is great value in an in-depth study of The Exodus. In fact, it is the core of all that God is about to do for His people through the rest of history. In it we find the Ten Commandments and the Passover. Both serve as everlasting covenants that are fixed for all time. The Ten Commandments were not just moral principles or standards of behavior. They were part of the Covenant in which we promise to “*love the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength.*” It is the covenant of love. When Jesus sat with his disciples for the Last Supper it was not a fish and chips dinner. It was the Passover Meal that God ordained all members of Israel to celebrate in memorial as a testimony of what God had done and in anticipation of what He is yet to do through Jesus Christ.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are called the Pentateuch in Greek, meaning “*five scrolls.*” The Jews call it the Torah, “*the Law.*” They are really to be read as a complete story, not bits and pieces of unconnected events. Exodus begins with the Hebrew word “*Now...*” a word that indicated it was a continuation of what came before, in fact, it is a direct quote from Genesis 46:8. These books were written primarily by Moses, inspired by God on Mount Sinai and contain the detailed record of the history of mankind and the formation of the nation Israel and the journey to the Promise Land. It is the foundation for the rest of the Bible.

Although much of it is the history of God’s working in the people Israel, yet it gives us an understanding of ourselves, for we are just like Israel. In these stories we can see ourselves, our fears and lack of faith, our slavery to sin, our addiction to pleasures, our stubbornness, our temptations, our trials, our complaining, etc. There’s a little of Israel in all of us. God uses Israel as His guinea pig, or a test-sample, of mankind to help us see ourselves. God uses it to show His love, power, disciplines, laws and judgments which are the same in every age.

Understanding **THE EXODUS** story (not just the book of Exodus) will give us an essential foundation for understanding the rest of the Bible. It tells us who God is and how he relates to His people. It is the launch pad for understanding our sinful hearts and our need of a Savior.

The Apostle Paul explains it to us this way

⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, ⁶.so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:4-6)

¹ For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ² They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³ They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴ and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. ⁶ Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.” ⁸ We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did--and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. ⁹ We should not test the Lord, as some of them did--and were killed by snakes. ¹⁰ And do not grumble, as some of them did--and were killed by the destroying angel. ¹¹ These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. ¹² So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! (1 Corinthians 10:6-12)