

## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE

Reading: Exodus 1:1-14

### 3. THE BOOK OF EXODUS

In 1964 President John Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in the state of Texas. Mrs Kennedy was in the car with him when he was shot. His wounded head fell on her lap. The blood splattered all over her dress and clothes. *That night she flew home on Air Force One.* An attendant came and asked her if she would not like to change her clothes. She refused. Someone else came to her and asked if she would not like to put on something clean. They told her about the reporters who would be in Washington when she arrived. Surely she wanted to put on something more presentable for the press and for the public. She looked up angrily and replied, ***“I want them to see the blood. I want the whole world to see the blood. I want them to see what they did to my Jack.”*** My .... we should want the world to see the blood. We should want them to see the price that Christ paid when He died for our sins. For the sin of the human race demanded the precious blood of Calvary. Is this not what redemption is all about ? You see, redemption means *“ release as the result of the payment of a price.”* ( Lutroo 1 Pet 1:18 Titus 2:14 )

Just as Genesis is the book of beginnings so Exodus is the book of redemption. The title Exodus which is Greek means *“ Way out,”* or *“ Departure.”* In the book of

Hebrews we read about *“ the departing ( exodus ) of the children of Israel.”* ( Heb 11:22 Now the word *“ exodus,”* is used in two other places in the New Testament. Do you recall that on the Mount of Transfiguration there appeared with the Lord Jesus Moses and Elijah. Do you recall what they spoke of ? They *“ spake of his decease,”* ( Mk 8:31 ) that is, Christ’s redeeming work on the cross. Peter uses the same word in the opening chapter of his second epistle for he talks about *“ my decease.”* ( 2 Pet 1:15 ) He means his death. So we can see there are three exodus experiences in the Bible. Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. Christ’s deliverance of the sinner through the cross. The Christians deliverance from the bondage of this world through death.

My .... Exodus is the story of the biggest escape in history. Over two million slaves from one of the most highly fortified nations in the entire world. It is humanly impossible and extraordinary story, and it features a series of miracles including some of the best known in the whole Bible. Now all 5 books, Genesis to Deuteronomy, begin with a conjunction, which makes the Pentateuch one single book, written by one single author Moses. Moses followed God’s instructions and *“ wrote all the words of the Lord.”* ( 24:4 ) Now ( Exodus 1:1 ) begins with the word, ***“Now.”*** Do you see that ? The word connects the book of Exodus with the book of Genesis. In other words, Exodus is but a continuing story of Genesis. Dr. G. Scroggie writes,

**The connection between Genesis and Exodus is intimate. In the one the divine purpose is revealed, and**

**in the other the divine purpose is exhibited. In the one are human effort and failure and in the other are divine power and triumph. In the one is a word of promise and in the other is a work of fulfillment. In the one is a people chosen and in the other is a people called. In the one is God's electing mercy and in the other is God's electing manner.**

Dr. R. G. Lee says,

**This book commences by telling how God came down in grace to deliver an enslaved people and ends by telling how God came down in glory to dwell in the midst of a redeemed people. Isn't that beautiful?**

I mean this book opens in gloom and ends in glory. Now the whole event of the Exodus has great significance in a number of ways.

### **1. Nationally:**

As David Pawson reminds us, “ *nobody can dispute that there is a nation called Israel in the world today. So where did they come from ? How did they get started ? How did they become a nation if they were originally a bunch of slaves ?*” My .... something big is needed to explain the nation of Israel. And that something big is the exodus. For through the events of the exodus this nation was born. Now they did not have a land yet, but they were a nation with a name of their own, “ *Israel.*” I mean the exodus was so big that it's written into the Jewish calendar. So what do we find every Spring ? The Jewish people

celebrating the Passover and recalling the mighty acts of God. You see, they marked the start of their national history.

### **2. Spiritually:**

For the Israelites discovered that their God was more powerful than all the gods of Egypt put together. In Exodus we are confronted with the truth that the Creator of everything becomes the Redeemer of Israel. But there is another big significance and that is,

### **3. Biographically:**

You see, just as Joseph was raised up by God as the deliverer of his people on their Entry into Egypt, so Moses was the man raised up by God four centuries later as the deliverer of his people on their exit from Egypt. Now I want us to divide the book this .... into 3 geographical sections. Firstly, Israel in Egypt, second Israel to Sinai and lastly, Israel at Sinai.

## **(1) ISRAEL IN EGYPT: SUBJECTION ( Ch's 1 ..... 12:36 )**

Now this takes in a period from 1875 to 1445 BC. You see, Jacob and his extended family came to Egypt about 1875 BC which was 430 years before the exodus. ( 12:40 ) Now why were they there ? Well, do you recall Joseph ? Sold into slavery into Egypt and eventually through a series of God led events he rose from slavery to the position of prime minister. In that position he saved

the nation from famine. That's why Jacob's sons first arrived in Egypt because of the famine in Canaan. Egypt was the bread basket of the Middle East thanks to Joseph's wise storing of grain during the seven years of plenty. I mean Joseph saved the nation from famine and because respected by Pharaoh his whole family consisting of 70 people were brought down to Egypt. They were given a fertile piece of the Nile delta called Goshen to live on together. But why did they stay in Egypt ? *I mean they went down for 7 years and they stayed for over 400 years ? Why ?* Well there was a **Human Element** to their stay: They were comfortable. And why not. They had traded a land of famine for a land of fruitfulness. They exchanged a land of pain for a land of plenty. They had found the good life in Egypt. As Douglas White says, *"That which was designed to be temporary was beginning to be looked upon as permanent."* You see, Egypt being a land of ease and luxury would encourage spiritual and moral decay. And is this not exactly happened ?

Do you recall what Joshua told the Israelites after they had arrived in Canaan ? *"Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood ( the Euphrates ) and in Egypt and serve ye the Lord."* ( Joshua 24:15 ) The phrase *"And in Egypt,"* means that idolatry was practised by at least some of the Israelites in Egypt. ( Ezek 20:7 ) You see, Israel not only needed to be taken out of Egypt, but Egypt needed to be taken out of Israel. They had so much in their hands they didn't realise the great need of their hearts. As they explained later, they *"sat by the flesh pots and .... did eat bread to the full."*

( 16:3 ) My .... how is it that materialism seems to sap the very life blood of the church ? Materially rich but spiritually poor. Is that you ? James Merritt says, *"Never measure your success by what you own, you measure your success by what owns you."* There was also a **Divine Element** to their stay: Do you recall God's Word to Abram ? *"Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years .... But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."* ( 15: 16 ) You see, had they returned when the famine was over, they would have been only a few people, far too small a number for to accomplish what God intended. For it was God's intention to remove the people of Canaan from the land and let the Hebrew slaves in. My .... isn't God's timing always perfect ? I mean do you see them now ? Look at ( 1:7 ) They numbered about 2.5 million. So multiplication leads to murder. There was,

#### (a) ***THE PERSECUTION GOD SEE'S:***

The Lord saw their bondage: ( 1:14 ) their burdens: ( 1:11 ) and their babies: ( 1:16 ) for all the baby boys born to the Hebrew slaves had to be thrown to the crocodiles in the River Nile. What a situation this was. Life was hard. The hours were long. The workload was heavy. Children were being killed. You say, *"what's God doing ? What's going on down here ?"* I'll tell what's going on. God is stirring up the nest to get these people to desire something better than old Egypt land. God is turning up the heat of the furnace to get them miserable

down there in Egypt. I wonder are in the crucible right now ? Are you experiencing the heat of the furnace ? Do you think that your hard moments and tests escape the Lord's notice ? Well, look at ( 3:7-8 ) My ....

***Jesus knows all about your struggles  
He will guide till the day is done  
There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus  
Not not one, no not one***

So the Egyptians resorted to genocide and the baby Moses should have died this way but then we he was,

### ***(b) THE PERSON GOD SELECTS:***

He was “ *drawn out*, ” of the water to ‘*draw out*’ God’s people from the world ( Egypt ) Moses spent 40 years in the court of Pharaoh leaning to be something. Then he spent 40 years in the desert of Midian learning to be nothing. Then he spent 40 years on the road to Canaan proving God to be everything. ( Acts 7:23 ) Think of it.

#### **1. Moses was Forty Years as a Student:**

Stephen says he “ *was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds.* ” ( Acts 7:22 ) Like Joseph, Moses was brought up at court and given the best education at the Egyptian university. This made him far better educated than any of the Hebrew slaves and enable to write the first five books of the Bible. Has God endowed you with a great intellect ? Have you placed at His feet ?

#### **2. Moses was Forty Years as a Shepherd:**

You see, if you’re going to be a leader the Lord says, “ *I’ve got to teach you how to do a little job. I have got to see to see if you’ll be faithful with a few sheep. How can I trust you with my people until I know you’ll be faithful with a few sheep.* ” You see, faithfulness in little things is God’s appointed way to bigger things. ( Matt 25:23 ) Do you know what ? Very often when God is going to use somebody He will give them the experience of isolation. You see, God always uses the solitude, the isolation experience. My .... are you wondering if the Lord knows where you are ? Are you wondering what the Lord has in store for your life ? My .... just be faithful, you just trust God and learn the lessons of isolation, and in God’s time He’ll do something. 1, 2,

#### **3. Moses was Forty Years as a Servant:**

Indeed he is described as “ *Moses the servant of the Lord,* ” ( 34:5 ) My .... do you realise that you are the Lord’s servant ? You see,

### ***(c) THE PLAGUES GOD SENDS***

Come through Moses. In the book of Exodus these ten calamities are designed as “ *signs,* ” ( 4:17 10:1 ) or “ *signs and wonders.* ” ( 7:3 ) They were displays of God’s power over all creation. You see, the Lord is going to do battle with the gods of Egypt and reveal His power. Look at ( 12:12 ) It was God against the gods of Egypt. Through these plagues Israel were shown their true God and Egypt were shown their false gods. You see, these plagues are the greatest testimony in the Old Testament to

the futility of idolatry. ( Deut 4:35 ) The tenth plague was that every first born boy in every Egyptian family would die. This would also happen to the Jews unless they followed God's instructions so,

#### **(d) THE PASSOVER GOD SPECIFIES:**

Is established. Indeed from that significant day to this present day, the Jewish people remember Passover. It was a “*memorial*,” to be celebrated to keep alive in Israel the story of the Exodus. ( 12:14, 13:8-10 ) Indeed look at ( 12:25-26 ) You see this feast, commemorated the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and it tells us that “*Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.*” ( 1 Cor 5:7 ) My .... when God sees us through the blood stained cross at Calvary He sees us as white as the driven snow. Do you see the result of the Passover ? ( 12:31-32 ) Israel were now on their way. So we see now,

#### **(2) ISRAEL TO SINAI: LIBERATION ( Ch's 12:37 ..... 18:27 )**

Most scholars date the time of the Exodus as 1445 B.C. the moment when Israel came out of Egypt by the blood of the Lamb. Did you notice what it says in ( 12:40 ) Abraham had been told that his descendants would be aliens mistreated in a foreign land for 400 years, using a figure rounded to hundreds ( Gen 15:13 ) Now here is God fulfilling His promise and bringing them out. My .... Israel's exodus from Egypt wasn't the end of their experience with God it was the new beginning. “*It took one night to take Israel out of Egypt but forty years to take*

*Egypt out of Israel*,” said George Morrison. Now here we see Israel in three geographical positions. Notice as the children of Israel make their way,

#### **(a) To the Red Sea: Through the Provision of God:**

Look at ( 13:17-22 ) Now there is a bit of controversy concerning the route which the Israelites took when they left Egypt. There are three possibilities to consider a route to the north, a route to the south or one through the middle. The third possibility the southern route down to Mount Sinai is the most likely. Here is where Moses had been a shepherd for 40 years and he knew this country well. The Israelites left Goshen and came south. Think of it. Two million odd people in a waste howling wilderness with no guide book to direct them, or track to follow. Ahead is the unknown. *I mean what did Israel have going for her ?* Well, the nation had a vivid memory of what God had done in Egypt. What else had they going for them ? Well, they had a reminder of God's promises in the bones of Joseph ? What else ?

Well, “*the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way ....*,” ( 13:21 Num 9:17-18 ) From Rameses, the starting point of the exodus ( 12:37 ) they went to Succoth, about 15 to 20 miles south east, and then from Succoth to Etham and so on. ( 13:20 ) You see, the Pillar, was given primarily to guide Israel through their wilderness journey. ( 13:21 ) It meant that they were never left to their own devices. All that was required of them was a simple and candid obedience. My .... do we also not need an unerring guide ? And God has given to us

the Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures and these are to be our pillar of cloud and fire until the journey is over. Do you recall what the Lord Jesus said about the Holy Spirit ? “ *He will guide you.* ” ( Jn 16:13 ) It was while the leaders of the fellowship at Antioch were fasting that the Holy Ghost said, “ *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.* ” ( Acts 13:2 ) Sometimes the Holy Spirit **restrains** ( 16:6-7 ) other times the Holy Spirit **constrains** ( 16:10 ) My .... do we know what it is to be led by the Spirit of God ? ( Rom 8:14 ) Are we learning to listen for His voice ? ( 1 Kings 19:12 ) Are we sensitive to His promptings and leadings ?

Of course, the Spirit of God leads us by the Word of God and this is typified in the Pillar when the Psalmist says, “ *He ( God ) spake unto them in the cloudy pillar.* ” ( Ps 99:7 ) My .... the Holy Spirit will never lead you in contradiction to the Scriptures. Of the Holy Scriptures it is written, “ *Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.* ” ( Ps 119:105 ) The Scriptures show me the steps I should take. Now have you grasp this ? *Nothing forbidden in the Word of God can be the will of God. The will of God is the Word of God, and the Word of God is the will of God.* Therefore if we want to know God’s leading, the most important thing is to get to know God’s Word. Do you know why so many of us are ignorant of God’s will ? It’s because we don’t God’s Word. ( Acts 17:11 ) My .... are you sensitive to the Spirit of God ? Are you subject to the Word of God ? (a) But then the children of Israel make their way,

**(b) Through the Red Sea: Through the Power of God:**

Here is how the Psalmist celebrates what God did. “ *He rebuked the Red Sea also and it was dried up, so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. And the waters covered their enemies there was not one of them left. Then believed they his words they sang his praise.* ” ( Ps 106:9-12 ) I mean the Red Sea was divided **Miraculously:** ( 14:21 ) and **Instrumentally:** ( 14:16 ) Philip Ryken says “ *the traditional view is that on their way to the Sinai and the south, the Israelites crossed the Gulf of Suez, the north-west arm of the Red Sea.* My .... the impossible became possible and the sea was divided. No matter how one looks at it, crossing the Red Sea was a miracle. Steve Wagers says,

*To get through the Red Sea in one night the Israelites would have needed a space of at least three miles, so they could walk 5,000 abreast. If they walked double file, it would have been 800 miles long and it would have taken them 35 days and nights to get through. It took God only one night.*

Like Israel does a Red Sea of trial and trouble confront you ? What about the impossible thing that now faces you ? My .... is the God who divided the Red Sea able to deal with your problem ? Yes. Listen to the heartening Word of God, “ *there hath no temptation or trial taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* ” ( 1 Cor 10:13 ) Now can

you see Israel coming (a) going (b) and moving,

***(c) From the Red Sea: Through the Providence of God:***

Let's not forget that the desert region over which the Israelites travelled was unable to support human life. It was not the ideal place to take 2.5 million people plus animals. Can you think of,

*1. The External Problems:*

There was the Problem of Warfare: “ *Then came Amalek and fought with Israel.* ” ( 17:8 )

There was the Problem of Water and Food:

Steve Wagers says.

*Just the amount needed to keep them from starving would have added up to 1500 tons a day but to feed them the way we eat would take 4,000 tons. Just to have it hauled would take 2 freight trains, each one a mile long. At today's prices it would cost 4 million dollars a day. Then consider the amount of water required for the barest necessities of drinking and washing dishes each day. It has been calculated you would have to have 11 million gallons every single day. Think of the gigantic task of hauling water. It would have taken a freight train with tank cars 1800 miles long. Yet God supplied them one day at a time for a total of 14,600 days.*

During the Yom Kippur War of 1973 the Egyptian army

was unable to last more than three days in the desert, yet in Exodus 2.5 million people survived there for 40 years. My .... isn't that amazing ? Yet like us, they doubted that God could meet their need “ *Yea they spake against God, they said, “ Can God furnish a table in the wilderness ?”* ( Ps 78:19 ) Is that where you are asking ? Is God asking you to step out in faith and trust Him, but you don't believe He will meet your need ? 1.

*2. The Internal Problems:*

Given the enormous numbers, one of the biggest problems Moses had was judging disputes between the people. Do you recall what old Jethro said to Moses, “ this thing is too heavy for thee thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.” ( Ex 18:18 ) “ *Distribute the load, Moses.* ” One of the famous chaplains of World War One was G. A. Studdart-Kennedy, known familiarly as Woodbine Willie. When you read the story of his life you'll be surprised to find how young he was when he died, just thirty six. It was said of him, “ he was worn out but not worked out.” Sadly in God's work there are men who die young. Is it necessary ? Well, from a divine perspective no doubt the answer is yes. But what about the human perspective ? As an elder, a deacon, a believer are you adding to the burden or are you under the burden ? Brethren, can you take from me the things that you can do, and leave with me the things that I can do. Now this brings us to the last section of the book of Exodus which is,

**(3) ISRAEL AT SINAI: REVELATION  
( Ch's 19 ..... 40 )**

In the year 1445 B.C. Israel arrived at Mount Sinai. They would be there for almost a year. ( Num 10:11 ) Now three major events took place at this time. There was,

### **(a) THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LAW:**

Now when we think of the law we usually think of the ten commandments but I want you to understand that there were three basic sections of the Mosaic Law. There was,

#### 1. The Moral Code:

This section is commonly known as the ten commandments. ( 20:3-17 Deut 5:7-21 )

#### 2. The Ceremonial Code:

This section dealt with those special ordinances which foreshadowed Christ and His redemption. It included the seven Levitical feasts and the five Levitical offerings. ( Ch's 35-40 Lev 1:1 )

#### 3. The Social Code:

Now this section included rules governing Israel's diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, marriage, childbirth, and divorce. Indeed there are seventy basic regulations in the social code. Some of these go like this. " *Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.*" ( 21:24 ) " *And he that curseth his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.*" ( 21:17 ) " *He that sacrificeth unto any god save unto the Lord only, he*

*shall be utterly destroyed.*" ( 22:20 )

Harold Willmington helps us understand these sections of Moses law. He says that the Moral Code was the Revelation from Christ: ( 1 Cor 10:4 ) the Ceremonial Code was the Realization in Christ ( Matt 5:7 Rom 10:4 1 Cor 5:7 ) and the Social Code was the Regulation until Christ. ( Gal 3:24 ) So the Jewish ceremonial system presented in Exodus and Leviticus was fulfilled by Christ, but the moral content of God's law still remains and nine of the ten commandments are repeated in the New Testament epistles for the church to honour and obey. Of course the first four commandments are directed to man's relationship with God ( 20:3-11 ) and the last six to man's relationship with man. ( 20:12-16 ) Maybe you're saying, " *those commandments are archaic.*" Do you think so ?

Well listen to this one. " *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" The book of Hebrews says " *Marriage is honourable in all and the bed undefiled but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*" ( Heb 13:4 ) You say " *why are you plucking out of the air ?*" I will tell you why. Because marriages professing Christian marriages all over Ulster are falling apart. Young folk, will you listen ? Marriage is an exclusive relationship: " *keep thee only unto her.*" Marriage is an enduring relationship " *till death us do part.*" God has given us his law to guard not only the heart but the home. How quickly Israel broke it in,

### **(b) THE CORRUPTION OF THE CALF:**

*“ And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, up make us gods which so shall go before us for as for this Moses the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt we wot not what is become of him.”* ( 32:1 ) Do you see the stages of sin here ? Impatience led to idolatry and idolatry led to immorality. ( 32:25 ) You see, we begin to fall away from God when we are impatient with Him, because He is not acting ‘ *as,*’ and ‘ *when,*’ we want. The next stage is to turn to ‘ other gods,’ and finally, having left the Lord we forget His standards for our lives. I just wonder, what stage are you at ? The book concludes with,

**(c) *THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TABERNACLE:***

What an amazing thing. God wants to dwell among His people. ( 25:8 ) Now I am fully aware that the tabernacle points to Christ. Indeed Christ is the perfect tabernacle. ( Heb 9:8, 11-12 ) The tabernacle was to provide for Israel a visible centre of worship and to preview the work of the Lord Jesus. Moses describes the brazen altar, John describes the lamb of God: ( Jn 1:29 ) Moses speaks of the brazen laver, John speaks of the water of life: ( Jn 4:14 ) Moses writes of the table of showbread, John writes of the bread of life: ( Jn 6:35 ) Moses talks of the lampstand, John talks of the light of the world: ( Jn 9:5 ) Moses presents the altar of incense, John presents the great high priestly prayer of Christ, ( Jn 17:1 ) Moses witnesses of the mercy seat, John witnesses of Christ our mercy seat. ( 1 Jn 2:2 ) The tabernacle previews the work of the Lord Jesus but it also testifies to the holiness of God.

Why the root meaning of the word “ *tabernacle,*” or “ *sanctuary,*” carries with it the thought of “ *holiness,*” and describes not only the place but the purpose of the tabernacle. An interesting study is to take a concordance and follow “ *holy,*” as it relates to the tabernacle in the book of Exodus. Do you know what you will discover ? That over 30 times you’ll find the word “ *holy,*” as it relates to the tabernacle. Why the engraving on the plate of pure gold attached to the mitre and worn by Aaron the high priest sums this testimony to the holiness of God. The words were to read, “ *Holiness unto the Lord.*” ( 28:36 ) My .... the whole tabernacle was carefully guarded from anything that might defile the sanctity of God’s dwelling place. Everything about the tabernacle witnessed to the holiness of God. Do you recall what they called the first section ? “ *The holy place.*” ( 26:33 ) Do you know what they called the second section ? “ *The most holy place.*” ( 26:34 ) Everything about the tabernacle testified to the absolute holiness of God.

That’s why their approach to God had to be through sacrifice ( brazen altar ) and cleansing ( brazen laver ) My .... God is holy, therefore we need to be careful about our worship: will you mind that as you come on Lords day morning ? “ *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.*” ( Ps 89:7 ) God is holy, therefore we need to be careful about our walk: “ *so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.*” ( 1 Pet 1:15 ) Perhaps Robert Murray McCheyne’s prayer should be often on our lips, “ **Lord make me as holy as it is possible for a saved sinner to be.**”



