

Lesson from Exodus 1 10-1-00

A word about last weeks message: To really get to know the character of God and realize He is over all of life will totally change your perspective. We fear the unknown – what tragedy may be in our future. The 'what ifs' can torment us and keep us from really finding abiding peace. We all know lives that have had tragedy upon tragedy and we fear that type of thing may happen in our lives.

If you come to know the attributes of God and see them at work in your life, presently and in the past, you will come to expect them in the future. Did God work through that pain to bring you closer to Himself? Is that not more valuable than the things you suffered? Then you can trust He will do that in the future also, for He is unchanging.

The one who learns of the character of God is like one standing on a great rock of a mountain. Winds can blow, waves can beat upon it, but it is not moved. God is that great rock. But if in your mind He is shifting sand, any little wind or wave can cause you to fear. You don't yet see the reality of the declaration of Scripture. He is for you! Ro 8:31-33 "What then shall we say to all these things? If God is for us who can be against us? For He who did not spare his own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not along with Him graciously give us all things." Have you witnessed a person of God with this kind of peace? They do hurt, they experience loss in life, but through it all there is a much greater peace that some way, some how, God is in control of all and it is for the best.

I am finally starting to realize what arrogance it is to try to guess why. It is groping for an intellectual handle to help me believe God is who Scripture declares Him to be. Faith comes by the Word not by my reasoning. "Just trust Him", sounds like a cop out but it is the sanest thing to do. Faith pleases God. This Rock of who He is has never shaken or changed one little bit in all of eternity, and it never will. Stand on the Rock of who He is and have a peace that passes understanding.

We are beginning a new series, I am excited about it because I have had a desire to study and preach on this for several years. Let's read 1Cor 10:1-11 The Apostle specifically tells us that the real *Pilgrims Progress* was written long before Mr. John Bunyan ever picked up a pen. And in his introduction to that book he tells so:

Were not God's laws,
His gospel laws, in olden times held forth
By types, shadows, and metaphors? Yet loath
Will any sober man be to find fault
With them, lest he be found for to assault
The highest wisdom. No, he rather stoops,
And seeks to find out what by pins and loops,
By calves and sheep, by heifers and by rams,
By birds and herbs, and by the blood of lambs,
God speaketh to him; and happy is he
That finds the light and grace that in them be.

The Apostle said these stories of the Children of Israel are specifically for us! Look back at verse 11 again and see the reasons given to study carefully the Exodus and wanderings in the desert.

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. 1 Cor 10:11 (NIV)

What a reason to search these stories for lessons and applications. Examples and warnings! If we don't look at them we will repeat them. As much as man has progressed in knowledge of our physical world, he has the exact same weaknesses he did 3500 years ago when these events took place.

Just as we have learned about the unchanging holiness of God, we will see here the unchanging weaknesses of man. What a contrast! But we will also see there is hope because of God's love and faithfulness. We can learn from their examples and take them as warnings and by His Spirit not make the same mistakes.

First let us see where we are in Biblical history to get our bearings. Creation, Flood, Babel, Abraham – Isaac – Jacob/Israel, Joseph, 400 years, Moses.

Was there really a man named Moses? There has never been an archeological discovery that contradicted the Bible but there have been many that have confirmed it. A Greek historian from Agyrioum in Sicily, Diodorus Siculus, traveled the middle East gathering information about the histories of the various people groups. In one of his 40 volumes he records the Egyptian version of the Exodus. Moses is named as their leader. It includes a description of their God who is not many but One. The information was gathered decades before the birth of Christ. Diodorus, being Greek, had no prejudice toward confirming the account of Scripture.

Turn to Exodus – the second book of the Torah – and we will begin with the setting of the narrative. Ex 1:5-7 During the time of captivity the people had grown in number from 70 to huge number, some estimate one to two million.

Vs8-22: There is an interesting underlying battle happening. Pharaoh's fear is cited as the reason for his command to destroy the baby boys. But we know that Eph 6 says we are fighting not against man but the powers behind man. Do you recall another destruction of baby boys? When another deliverer was to be born – Christ Jesus- Herod ordered the slaughter of the baby boys born in the area where the Messiah was predicted to be born.

In Gen 15 God made a vow that the seed of Abram would bless the world. In verse 13 he told Abraham that his descendants would be in Egypt 400 years. The time had come for a deliverer to be raised up. Just as in the time of Christ, Satan works behind the scenes to try to thwart the plan of God with death and destruction. But God can never be stopped!

In Chapter 2 one of the descendants of Levi has a baby and hides him until he is too big and noisy to hide anymore. Finally they comply with the command but build a small basket like boat to protect him for a time. The scene in the recent Moses – Prince of Egypt of that little basket swirling through the crocodile filled Nile was really done well.

One of the most unpredictable natural phenomenon is water current. Only the invisible hand of God could set that basket right in front of Pharaoh's daughter. Moses big sister had run along the bank watching the basket. Read 2:5-10 In the middle of Pharaoh's butcher like act of killing baby boys, God set his deliverer right where he could learn all the wisdom of Egypt –

in Pharaoh's court! Incredible! And the name she gave him, Moses, means 'drawn out'. She meant out of the Nile, but God meant 'out of the world' to be God's instrument.

In this introduction I believe the Lord is repeating for us the message of last week, because it is so important to possessing peace that passes understanding. In the midst of all the evil of the world God is Sovereign. Nothing can stop Him, nothing will set him back. He has a plan for your deliverance from sin, from the desire of the world. In fact, just like Moses, He plans to draw you out to Himself. ¹⁷ "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor 6:17-18 (NIV) The very word 'church' means called out ones.

We are all like Moses. We have been tossed in this river of life in which evil forces planned for our demise. But God is guiding your little ark. Your sister is watching – the family in Christ. And though you are raised in the Egypt (the world) your own mother (the church of God) will nourish you. The Lord has a plan for you. Can you see his invisible hand moving you through life, keeping you, teaching you, guiding you. It's there! All those things in life you felt were chance are a part of his working in your life, just as they were in Moses life. There are no coincidences, only Godincidences.

But first you must be trained. Ex 2:11-15 Here is knowing what is right but not knowing how to let God work. When we first recognize the spiritual battle and decide to serve God we see how much we can do, and we jump right in. The results can be disastrous. Moses had to learn early on that he could deliver no one. If it is going to be successful and lasting it must be a work of God and not self. It must be his way and not my own. Are you full of good ideas? God can't use them. He has his own plan and it is not yours. It is way beyond what you could imagine. I think we have all buried our share of Egyptians. We see something that is not right and we run out and fix it. Then we see the mess we created and flee to a place of isolation.

2:22-25 Moses gives up on his way and his dreams and his hopes and learns to shepherd sheep. That is just where God wanted him. He is going to take a much larger flock through this same wilderness. Sometimes we think God has given up on us, left us to ourselves, but we are still in his hands. He is still preparing and training us in the obscure places.

In that last verse we can find great comfort. God sees your situation. It may be hard and seem unbearable but God knows. He is concerned. In fact, He is already working to rescue you from it. While we were dead in our sin God saw the suffering sin caused in our life and worked to deliver us by sending Jesus from the throne of heaven, to be a foreigner among us. And when He was prepared by God He became our Deliverer. It happened by way of the cross. It was as unpredictable, and as beyond the imagination of man, as the deliverance He worked through Moses. Don't try to guess what God has in store or how He is working. It is beyond your imagination. Just know He sees and He is concerned and He is working to deliver you and make you his instrument to guide others to deliverance.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Eph 3:20-21 (NIV)