

“Out of Egypt”
Exodus 1-17
God’s Big Picture # 8

Background to the Exodus

Ex 1:1-7 These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.

But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

Ex 1:8-11a Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens.

The King of Egypt fears the Israelites and views them as a threat to national security. Pharaoh sees Israel’s blessing as Egypt’s curse. So, he determines to “deal shrewdly” with them.

After ordering the Egyptians to throw every Israelite son into the Nile, we read about an Israelite boy who is born – born under Pharaoh’s death sentence. Ironically, the river that was meant to kill baby Moses serves to save him. His mother puts him in a basket and places him in the river. He is soon discovered by Pharaoh’s daughter and taken in to the royal family.

Ex 2:23-24 “And the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel – and God knew.”

I. Captivity

Israel’s captivity and ours

In previous messages, we’ve shared Graeme Goldsworthy’s definition of the Kingdom of God as: *“God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule and blessing.”*

What we see here is the opposite – the anti-kingdom. God’s people are in a foreign land under an alien rule. They are a nation of slaves under a cruel and murderous master.

Ex 5:1-2 “Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’ But Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.’”

All that follows in the Exodus account is an answer to Pharaoh’s mocking question “**Who is the LORD that I should obey Him?**”

The events of the Exodus are a demonstration of Yahweh’s Lordship – over Pharaoh, Egypt, the Israelites – over all creation.

Ex 16:2-3 “And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, ‘Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’”

The Israelites are out of Egypt but Egypt is not out of the Israelites. They need a deeper deliverance from a more profound captivity.

This reveals something important about the nature of slavery:

Becky Pippert – *“Whatever controls us is really our God. The one who seeks power is controlled by power, the one who seeks acceptance is controlled by the people he or she wants to please. We do not control ourselves. We are controlled by the lord of our life.”*

We were created for One Lord. True freedom is life lived in total submission and obedience to Him. Slavery is giving ourselves to any other lord.

II. Redemption

Israel’s redemption and ours

YHWH’s Lordship exercised and displayed – in fierce opposition to all that stands opposed to or in competition with His lordship and in redemptive love for all who hope in Him.

Conquest –

Substitution – Ex 12:12-13 “I will pass through the land of Egypt . . . and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”

In the Passover, the Israelites are no longer bystanders. They are now participants. The Israelites now stand under the same curse as the Egyptians – their firstborn are threatened. However, the Lord makes provision for them. He provides a means of escape from the coming judgment. The Israelites are to sacrifice an unblemished lamb and sprinkle the blood on their doorposts. In this way, the death of the lamb stands in the place of the firstborn son.

Christ and the Passover

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Luke 9:30-31 Jesus’ transfiguration: “And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.” (“departure” = “exodus”). Israel brought Egypt with them in their hearts when they entered the promised land.

III. Identity

Israel’s identity and ours

From slavery to Sonship. The Exodus is the story of Israel’s birth as a nation.

Exodus 4:22-23 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you (Pharaoh), ‘Let my son go that he may serve me.’ If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’”

Our identity and our ultimate allegiance are intricately bound together. Who we are is deeply tied to what or who we live for.

Becky Pippert - “*Jesus’ ownership of our lives is not a control (Lordship) that manipulates us or seeks to take away our dignity*” [it does not seek to subvert our identity]. Rather, “*He governs our lives by being who He is without compromise and by insisting we become all that we*” were created to be. This can only come when we see and accept Him for who He truly is. When we are not always trying to put conditions on our acceptance and submission to Him.

Timothy Keller’s – Lordship test – who/or what really rules and defines me?

“The difference between a real Christian and a generally moral or religious person is the word “if.” Persons who are generally moral or religious but ultimately still seek to retain control (Lordship) of their lives (which is really to say that they give control of their lives to some false god) . . . say something like, “I’ll submit myself to God ‘if’”

if it doesn't cost me my friends (girlfriend or boyfriend)
if it doesn't cost me my lifestyle
if it doesn't cost me my career advancement
if it doesn't cost me my reputation
if it doesn't cost me the possibility of marriage
if it doesn't cost me serious money

if, if, if . . . if it doesn't really cost me

Look on the other side of your "if" and you'll see what has taken you captive and gives you your real identity.

Jesus lost His identity in order to secure a new one for us in Him. He became our Passover lamb – the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Pippert – *“Jesus is the only One in the universe who can control us without destroying us.”*

Application

The Exodus is about Lordship and Identity. Who or what will rule us and define us?

Identify what is on the other side of your “if”.

What qualifies or compromises the Lordship of Christ in your life?

Turn from this false lord and look to the true Lord. Turn from your false identity and embrace your true identity in Christ.