

In the song of Moses (15:1-18), the nation celebrates the destruction of the Egyptian army. The past faithfulness of God is regarded as assurance of his faithfulness to future promises.

God knew they needed drinking water. He didn't provide it for them so he could see their reaction. Would they approach him in faith or would they complain to one another in disbelief?

GOING FURTHER

Trace the theme of "knowing Yahweh" throughout these chapters (4:5; 5:2; 6:6-8; 7:5; 9:29; 10:2; 11:7; 14:4; 14:30-31; 16:6; 18:11). Why is it so important that (1) the Egyptians know Yahweh?; (2) the Israelites know Yahweh? What is God's ultimate purpose(s)?

In what ways did Moses and the Israelites demonstrate faith? In what ways did they fail? How can you learn from their experiences? See also Hebrews 11:23-29.

How does an understanding of the first Passover help us to better understand Jesus as the Passover sacrifice? In the NT, see Luke 22:7-23, 1 Cor 5:7-8, 1 Peter 1:18-19.

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT STUDY

Read Exodus 19-24. Give extra attention to chapters 19 and 24. Think about the covenant ceremony, the nature of the covenant, and the purpose of the covenant.

Think about the Ten Commandments *in their context*. How does the context of a covenant ceremony with Israel affect the church's relationship to the Ten Commandments?

SOURCES CITED

T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 2002.
Bill T. Arnold and Bryan Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. 2008.

ISRAEL REDEEMED FROM EGYPT (EXODUS 1-18)

PREPARATION FOR THIS STUDY

Read Exodus 1-18. Give special attention to 6:1-8.

How does God reveal his character in these chapters?

Think about why God chooses to deliver Israel in the way that he does.

Think about the "redemption" of Israel. How does the redemption apply to the nation as a whole and to each individual? (Or does it?)

OUTLINE

- I. Israel is redeemed as God's possession by deliverance from slavery in Egypt (1:1-18:27).
 - a. Israel is oppressed by slavery and the slaughter of male babies (1:1-22).
 - b. Moses is raised up to serve as God's mediator (2:1-6:30).
 - c. Egypt is humbled by a series of plagues (7:1-10:29).
 - d. Israel is delivered by the death of the firstborn (11:1-13:16).
 - e. Israel is saved through the Red Sea (13:17-15:21).
 - f. Israel is tested on the way to Mount Sinai (15:22-18:27).
- II. Israel is confirmed as God's nation by the establishment of the covenant (19:1-24:18).
- III. Israel is validated as God's people by the indwelling of the tabernacle (25:1-40:38).

"GENESIS, PART TWO"

The book of Genesis closes with a "to be continued" notice. The readers are left hanging as to what is going to happen to God's people in a foreign land, distant from the place that God had promised to give to Abraham and his seed. God had also made some specific promises concerning Egypt that we want to see fulfilled:

Gen 15:13-14: Abraham's descendants will be slaves in another country for 400 years but they will come out with great possessions.

Gen 46:3-4: God promises Jacob that he will go to Egypt with him and surely bring him back again (cf. 48:21; 50:24).

When we open Exodus, we see that Israel has been fruitful and multiplied (Exod 1:7) in obedience to God's command (Gen 1:28) and in accordance with God's promise (Gen 12:2; 15:5).

Why does God deliverance of Israel from Egypt? "God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob" (2:24).

KEY VERSES

3:12-15; 4:22-23; 5:2; 6:6-8; 7:5; 8:10; 14:4; 14:18; 14:30-31; 15:11; 15:13

NOTES

"As the book opens, the patriarchal covenant promises are in jeopardy" (Arnold and Beyer 2008: 105).

Chapter 1 provides another example (after many in Genesis) of the truth that those who bless Israel, God will bless, and those who curse Israel will be cursed. Pharaoh mistreats Israel and is thwarted; the midwives bless Israel and are themselves blessed.

Moses' failed effort to avenge the death of a Hebrew proves that it is not Moses who will deliver Israel but God.

Israel is not just redeemed *from* something (slavery in Egypt) but *to* something (a blessed life in the Promised Land; 3:8).

When chosen by God (3:11-12), Moses asks the wrong question ("Who am I?"). The issue is not who Moses is, but who God is, as the Lord's response affirms.

In response to Moses' fear, God "simply says, 'I will be with you.' This phrase is a shorthand reminder of God's covenant promise" (Longman 2009: 103). Jesus echoes this promise when he declares to his disciples, "And surely I am with you always" (Matt 28:20).

"The English translation [LORD] fails to convey the idea that the Hebrew *Yahweh* is a personal name. Due to the veneration of the divine name *Yahweh*, it became the practice of Jews to substitute the Hebrew word '*adonay* 'Lord' for the divine name; hence the English translation. When vowels were eventually added in the medieval period to the consonantal texts of the Hebrew Bible, the vowels of '*adonay* were used in conjunction with the consonants YHWH. This in turn probably led to the name *Yahweh* being wrongly read as *Jehovah*" (Alexander 2002: 159).

"Israel is my first-born son" (4:22). Egypt mistreats God's firstborn son and so he kills their firstborn sons. Israel fails to fulfill God's purpose as God's firstborn son and so God sends the Servant Israel, God's first-born Son (Isa 49:3). Jesus is God's firstborn son who fulfills the purpose for God's firstborn son Israel.

The length of time that Israel was oppressed by the Egyptians cannot be determined, but it lasted a minimum of eighty years, to judge from the time when Moses was born until his return to Egypt (cf. 7:7). The Lord's primary concern was not the immediate release of Israel from suffering, but rather to bring his nation to himself at the time of his choosing.

Why did God send ten plagues and harden Pharaoh's heart? For his own glory. God wanted to act in such a way that his name would be proclaimed in all the earth (9:16). It worked (Josh 2:9-10; 1 Sam 4:8).

The gifts that the Egyptians bestow on the Israelites can be understood as payment for the years of slavery in which they were not compensated for their service.

The redemption of the nation is a picture of individual redemption. But they are not the same. A person can be in the nation and redeemed physically (out of Egypt) but not be redeemed spiritually, as is seen in the people's lack of faith and worship of the golden calf.