



Series: Exodus: Out of Egypt

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Text: Exodus 6:1-9

Title: Exodus Overview

Intro

Well, if you have a bible with you, get it out and make your way to the book of Exodus! It's after genesis and before everything else. Chapter 6.

There is nothing in the Bible quite like the Exodus. It is THE book the bible uses over to draw our hearts back to **God's power and God's love for his people**. And it's got some drama in it! Even if you have never opened the Bible you've heard of the events in here.

- The baby put into a basket in the river
- Burning Bush
- 10 Plagues
- Passover
- Parting of the Red Sea

- 10 Commandments

Depending on your age, you remember EVERY Easter weekend Cecil B Demille's 10 Commandments would show up on repeat. And Moses Heston would speak with that incredible voice. Kids have been in church plays forever singing "Pharaoh Pharaoh, Oh Pharaoh let my people go"

Man, this thing is PACKED with some of the most intense accounts of God's work that you will find anywhere in scripture.

And the rest of the bible is going to say...all of these accounts are in here for a purpose. **To emphatically declare the Power & Love of the one true faithful God who by his strong hand delivers his people from their bondage.**

If Genesis is the book about God, the creator, and the promiser.... Exodus is the book about God the faithful deliverer. And the rest of your life I want you to be able to REMEMBER the God who brought his people out of Egypt. And that's actually getting to the main point of my sermon today.

What I want to do today, since we are about to spend a considerable amount of time in this book, is to give you an introduction to the themes of the book of Exodus. Today and going through to mid may we will be in what I'm calling



Volume 1 of our study of Exodus. Here in Volume 1, we will follow the account of God bringing his people out of Egypt where they were enslaved by an Egyptian pharaoh.

And the main point of the sermon is simply this:

The most important thing in your life is what you think about God.

We are going to meet a guy named Moses. His biggest problem - He didn't think God was powerful enough to do what he said he was going to do. So, he hesitated, hedged, waffled, & doubted. Israel was the same way. Pharaoh finds himself in all kinds of trouble for the same doubt.

And the beautiful thing about this book is that MOSES is the author. So here is Moses looking back on his own experience and now as an old man he writes the story with a big emphasis on the POWER of GOD TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE. He's writing so that you and I will see God in a way now that took him far too long to see. Because the most important thing in our lives is what we think about God.

Your idea of God, whether you realize it or not, will set the trajectory for your friendships, for your love life, for your career, for your family, for your involvement in church, and ultimately it will determine where you spend eternity after you die. It is THE most important thing in your life.

The reason a lot of Christians don't experience God's power to change their lives is because their God is too small. I haven't seen God in a burning bush, haven't seen a river turned to blood. In fact, nothing in my life has really changed since I became a Christian. So, in abstract, sure he's big. But in my real life he must be either uninterested or unable to help me out.

True about a church too. A.W. Tozer said in his book Knowledge of the Holy that the most important thing about a church is what it thinks about God. And the reason a lot of churches don't experience power, don't see lives changed and communities reached, don't see healing & redemption is because they don't believe he can do those things. They go through the motions of religion apart from expectancy because they don't expect anything from God.

And what Exodus is here to do is RATTLE the dust off of our hearts and off of our church and enlarge our view of God. To believe in his power to deliver, to act in expectancy that the God who brought Israel out of slavery also brought Jesus out of the grave and keeps bringing his people out of slavery to sin today.

Ok I'm getting ahead of myself but ya'll I'm excited for us to go through this book. The reason I'm drawing our attention to chapter 6 is because I actually believe these opening verses illuminate all the themes we are going to see in Exodus. So,



let's go there now. As we walk through these 9 verses, I'll pause along the way to draw out a theme. In all I think I'll be showing you the **5 themes of Exodus**. And each one - is trying to enlarge what you think about God. Because that's the most important thing in your life.

But the Lord replied to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: because of a strong hand he will let them go, and because of a strong hand he will drive them from his land."

This first theme is maybe familiar but oh man how much do we need this reminder.

Themes of Exodus **God is in control**

I was trying to decide whether or not to say it that way because it's so familiar. And some of you haven't been to church in a long time, maybe ever, and you don't just want some bumper sticker platitude. And I don't want that either. BUT what if we've let a MIGHTY TRUTH become so familiar that it's lost its power?

See God says to Moses - Here is what you are about to see. The MOST POWERFUL PERSON ON EARTH - PHARAOH...THE STRONGEST PERSON ON EARTH - is about to be controlled by

someone stronger. AND this pharaoh...who nobody tells what to do...I'm going to go ahead and tell you right now WHAT I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM DO.

And here's what happens - EVERY PLAGUE happens JUST LIKE HE SAID THEY WOULD. Pharaoh's response to the plagues happens JUST LIKE HE SAID IT WOULD. The Passover happens JUST LIKE he said it would. The RED SEA parted JUST like he said it would. The red sea closed back JUST like he said it would. And the rest of the bible is going to say...The God of the exodus...HE's still in control.

- He was in control when Elijah was surrounded by 450 prophets of Baal.
- He was in control when he shrunk Gideon's army down to 300 men. Which was 300 more than they would need because the Lord was in control of the battle.
- He was in control when Jonah went into the whale & when Daniel went into the lion's den.
- The Lord was in control when he made the winds cease and the fig tree wither and the demons flee and the lame walk.
- The Lord was in control when Jesus was arrested.
- The Lord was in control when he was beaten, whipped, crucified & killed.



- And when Jesus lay dead in the grave he was STILL fully in control.
- God was in control when Jesus came back to life.
- God was in control when the Spirit rushed in at Pentecost and the Lord was in control when SAUL oversaw the Stoning of Stephen for preaching the gospel.
- The Lord was in control when Saul became Paul. When the persecutor became the persecuted...God was in control. And he was in control when John sat imprisoned on the Island of Patmos and received a vision of the end of days where we who believe the gospel gather around his throne in a worship-filled wedding feast together.

And my prayer is that the spirit of God will rattle the dust off of your heart and revive a spirit of PEACE-FILLED JOY because as you look out at your day an old truth is ROARING BACK WITH FRESH POWER - THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, & JACOB IS STILL IN CONTROL!

World Superpowers are not in control. Multi-national media corporations are not in control. Agenda driven cancel mobs are not in control. The God of Justice, the God of

righteousness, the God of Redemption, The God of Moses - That God is still in control. He knows the hairs on your head.

The most important thing in your life is what you think about God. Do you believe he is ACTIVELY in control of what's happening in your life? Oh, there is FREEDOM in releasing control to him.

2 Then God spoke to Moses, telling him, "I am the Lord. 3 I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as 'God Almighty, but I was not known to them by my name 'the Lord.' 4 I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land they lived in as aliens. 5 Furthermore, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are forcing to work as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant."

Themes of Exodus

We must relate to God on his terms, not ours

A common theme you will encounter, especially in this first section of Exodus, is God telling Moses who he is. And then telling Moses to tell Israel & Pharaoh who he is. Right here is the first time the name "YAWEH" is used in Exodus. Only other time was with Abraham & Jacob. And it is on the basis of WHO HE IS that he does what he does. And we are to find our identity in HIM. IN who HE IS.



6 “Therefore tell the Israelites: I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from the forced labor of the Egyptians and rescue you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great acts of judgment.

What they need to know is that he is the Lord. That’s the information they need. In fact, we’ll see in chapter 3 when God calls Moses to be his deliverer Moses says well...who should I say you are when they ask me?

14 God replied to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.” -- Exodus 3:14

Jen Wilkin has a wonderful observation about this interaction. It’s in her book *women of the word* where she talks about how to study the bible.

When charged by this vision of God to go to Pharaoh and demand release of the captives, Moses self-consciously replies, “*Who am I* that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt” (Ex. 3:11).

Rather than answer him, “Moses, you are my chosen servant. You are my precious creation, a gifted and wise leader,” **God**

responds by completely removing Moses from the subject of the discussion and inserting himself. He answers Moses’ self-focused question of “Who am I?” with the only answer that matters: “I am.”¹

We are like Moses. The Bible is our burning bush—a faithful declaration of the presence and holiness of God. We ask it to tell us about ourselves, and all the while it is telling us about “I AM.” We think if it would just tell us who we are and what we should do, then our insecurities, fears, and doubts would vanish. But our insecurities, fears, and doubts can never be banished by the knowledge of who we are. They can only be banished by the knowledge of “I AM.”

Does this mean that the Bible has nothing to say to us about who we are? Not at all. We just go about trying to answer that question in a backwards way. The Bible does tell us who we are and what we should do, **but it does so through the lens of who God is. (26) As Moses would learn during the Exodus, who he was bore no impact on the outcome of his situation. Who God was made all the difference.**

What you think about God is the most important thing in your life.

He is the faithful God of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob. He is I AM. The one who is always present tense. The one who cannot be

¹ Jen Wilkin, *Women of the Word* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), pp. 23–27.



fully captured in words. He is powerful. He is faithful to his promise to his people. He IS. And I can't wait for you to meet him here in the book of Exodus.

7 I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the forced labor of the Egyptians. 8 I will bring you to the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord." 9 Moses told this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their broken spirit and hard labor.

Themes of Exodus **Circumstances are not Saviors**

What we will see next week is that the land of Egypt...the land of slavery...was once the land of salvation for God's people. There was a huge drought in their homeland and by a series of circumstances the Faithful God who is in control brought them to the fertile land of Egypt where they flourished and grew in number. See their circumstance improved. But then the circumstances change. And in fact, they get really bad. And the circumstances go from bad to worse like 3 times. They are enslaved. Then...their children start getting killed. THEN the one guy who looks like he can do something about it royally screws up and has to flee to countryside.

And yet in these circumstances what we will see is God is working salvation for his people so that they can worship him.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go into Pharaoh and tell him: This is what the Lord says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me -- Exodus 8:1

And here's what happens - he brings them out of slavery! Salvation is for the purpose of worshipping him. Salvation isn't just *from* circumstance it is **FOR** worship.

Because what will happen is the wilderness that is salvation...when they take their eyes and hearts off of God...becomes a place of grumbling and frustration. See exodus flips the pop culture idea of freedom on its head. The only way we can truly be free people is to not only be liberated FROM something but liberated TO something. If we do not give ourselves TO God...we will treat our circumstances as our savior.

Blessings will become burdens. and our false gods will be revealed just like it was in the exodus. Listen church - if your God is comfort then circumstances will be your savior. And here's how you know that your God is comfort - It's when you praise God when your circumstances are good, and you blame God when your circumstances are bad. It's when you are afraid to ask God for things because you don't want to be



disappointed or angry if you don't get them. Listen circumstances are not saviors. THE purpose of the exodus was WORSHIP.

And I bring this out because our 21st century western minds are trained to believe circumstances are saviors. Jobs, relationships, even churches...if one is going bad, get out of it and go to the next thing. The next thing isn't your deliverer. If it is, comfort is your god. Not the god of the bible. I told you the most important thing in your life is what you think about God.

Does your view of God leave room for bad circumstances? Can you try to get pregnant for 5 years...finally get pregnant...lose the child in miscarriage...and STILL WORSHIP THE LORD AS FAITHFUL? I'm not saying pain isn't real. I'm asking you if God is still God IN your pain. Can your parents let you down, your spouse cheat on you, your friends abandon you, get a cancer diagnosis, lose a loved one...Can these things happen and you STILL worship the Lord as faithful? Because the Lord does not promise you comfort. He promises suffering. But just like he was WITH Israel in their slavery, he was WITH Israel in the exodus, WITH them in the wilderness, he is WITH his people now. He's not the God of comfort. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob. He's I AM. His aim is not your comfort it is your worship. Because in your worship of him you will find the true rest your soul has always longed for.

Which by the way is why weekly worship is so CRAZY important for us. If the most important thing in your life is what you think about God, then arguably the most important time in your week is the gathering of the saints for worship. Where you are reminded of who God really is. Where the voices of others SINGING reminds us He is still working. It's why we are so careful with song selection and service planning. The Goal is to lift your eyes above your circumstances to see and celebrate the one true God again. This is not a show. It's a gathering of spirit filled believers expecting to be moved by God's spirit as we offer a sacrifice of praise together. If you are watching online man glad, we can provide this for you but it is a temporary supplement not a permanent substitute for gathering with us. So, get here!

Ok one more theme. Maybe two.

Themes of Exodus **Exodus points to our need for Jesus**

This is the most important theme. What's going to become evident as we walk through Exodus is that it's a foreshadowing of the one true savior, Jesus Christ. In fact, the gospel authors go over and above to make sure we see the connection as they tell us about Jesus. They show us how Jesus is LIKE Moses in things like:



- Like Moses, His life was threatened as infant boy when the tyrant king ordered all first-born males to be killed.²
- Like Moses Jesus was sent by God from a faraway land to deliver God's people from bondage
- Moses leads the twelve tribes of Israel; Jesus leads 12 disciples.
- Moses goes up on a mountain to meet with God and takes 3 companions, Jesus does the same. Both come down the mountain with their faces shining with the glory of God³
- and both were greeted by a confused generation.⁴
- Moses & Israel are tempted 3 times while in the wilderness, so is Jesus.⁵
- Moses performs miracles before saving his people. Jesus does the same

² Pharaoh's attempt to kill Moses (Ex. 1:16) // Herod's attempt to kill Jesus (Mt. 2:16) See also (Ex. 2:15; 4:19.)

³ (Ex. 34:29; Mk. 9:3)

⁴ Ex. 32:7ff.; Mk. 9:14ff, Heb 3:7 - 4:13)

⁵ Dissatisfaction with Manna (Nu. 11:1ff.) // Attempting to turn stones into bread (Mt. 4:3; Lk. 4:3.)

- But the night before his saving work, he has a meal with God's people called the Passover. Jesus celebrated Passover with the disciples the night before his saving work.⁶
- At Passover God creates a covenant where the sons of Israel are spared death because a sacrificial lamb was offered in their place. At the last supper Jesus creates a New Covenant where Followers of Jesus are spared eternal death because of the sacrificial lamb offered in their place on the cross. The blood of Christ covers us.⁷
- God puts one man Moses up on a high place and tells him to stretch out his arms and through that action God parts the waters of the red sea and delivers his people. and then, God delivers Moses up out of the red sea. God rolls the stone away and delivers Jesus up from death.

Israelites "put God to the test at Massah demanding proof of His presence and power" (Ex. 17:1f.) // Jesus "tempted to jump from the Temple pinnacle to force God to honor His promises." (Mt. 4:5f.; Lk. 4:9ff.) Israelites forget the Lord + worship calf (Ex. 32:1ff.) // Jesus tempted to worship Satan (Mt. 4:8f.; Lk. 4:5ff.)

⁶ Lord's covenant with Moses (Exodus 24:8) // Jesus' "my blood of the covenant" (Mk. 14:24)

⁷ Passover lamb // lamb of God (John 1:29, 36.)



- Ya'll in Luke 9.31 Jesus goes up on the mountain and has a conversation with Moses & Elijah. And literally in the Greek it says they were talking about Jesus' exodus.

Those weren't exactly in chronological order, and I didn't get even half of them. But the point the New Testament makes clear is that Jesus is to be compared to Moses. Yet while Jesus and Moses are similar, Exodus will show us that Moses - the greatest hope in the entire OT for a savior - Moses fails God's people. He fails early in life & we'll see it next week. He fails again in the wilderness and is unable to enter the promised land. A better savior than Moses is needed.

Moses' liberation is great, but it is only a social and political liberation for one group of people, and it pointed to a much greater liberation that was coming in Christ. A liberation for ALL people.

See you can't serve God, you can't have freedom to worship God, you can't trust God in hard times...if you don't know Christ. It is only when you believe with your whole heart, whole mind that Jesus died for you...to give you freedom from sin and freedom to worship God...that you'll begin to believe he is for you still. And then you will notice that your reaction to hard times will change. You won't be as quick to despair,

and despair won't run as deep. Over time you will find yourself not despairing at all. Even leaning in to suffering as an opportunity to know God better.

But you must turn to Jesus for that. And when you do, you find a freedom in this life you can never have otherwise. See the last theme I want to tell you is

Themes of Exodus **You are not the savior**

See sometimes when we read OT narratives, we will put ourselves in the shoes of the main character. And that's OK to do. It's ok to learn from Moses. To emulate his faith and avoid his pitfalls. And we will draw out some of those things as we look at his life. BUT Moses is a savior. Pointing us to Jesus, the greater savior. So, our place in the story is not as Moses, but as Israel. It is there, as helpless enslaved people that need a savior that we find a true picture of ourselves.

When you understand you are not the savior, it humbles you and then frees you. Because you don't have to be Moses for anyone, and you don't have to be Jesus for anyone. Earlier I told you God is in control. Not you. You are not in control. But that's ok. Because you are not the savior. You are not morally perfect. But that's ok because you are not the savior. You are going to mess up in your grades, your job, your parenting,



your romance, and everything else you do. Great news. Such great news - You are not the savior. You don't have to be perfect! You can't be. There's some serious exhale freedom in that.

That freedom, when you really know it, will cause you to strive to honor the one who is the savior. And then rest in his grace. The most important thing in your life is what you think about God.

He is in control. We must relate to him on his terms, not ours. Circumstances are not saviors, and neither are you. And this whole thing - It's about Jesus.

Transition to communion.



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