

Sunday, November 12, 2023 pm

JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE (20)

The Exodus (1)

Israel in Egypt - Exodus 1-4

Tonight, we continue our study of the 17 time periods of Bible history. Thus far we have addressed the first 4 time periods – Before the flood, The flood and its results, the scattering of nations, and the patriarchs. We now examine the 5th time period – the Exodus. We will devote 2 lessons to this time period – Israel in Egypt and the 10 plagues.

I. The Exodus time period

- a. For about 215 years following Joseph, scripture is silent. We are reintroduced to Israel as they are put into bondage. The estimated timeframe of this period is Around 1450 BC. According to this view, the promise God made to Abraham about 400 years in Egypt (Genesis 15:13) was an approximate dated from the time of that promise until they left the land of Egypt. Exodus 12:40 will tell us the sojourn of Israel who lived in Egypt was 430 years. This number is repeated by Paul in Galatians 3:17 which he seems to tie to promise made to Abraham. If that is the case, then it was about 215 years from the time of Abraham until the patriarchs to arrive in Egypt (Jacob's family). This would leave 215 years in Egypt. A substantial period of that time would have involved them being in slavery though we do not know the exact amount of time.
- b. This period of time is recorded in Exodus 1-12
- c. The main character is Moses
 - i. Moses – “to draw out.”
 - ii. He was born in Egypt during a time of duress. Adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and raised by his mother. His father was Amram and mother was Jochebed (Exodus 2:1, 6:20).
 - iii. He had a brother – Aaron and sister – Miriam.
 - iv. Moses lived 120 years (Deuteronomy 34:7). His life can be divided into 3 segments of 40 years each – 1) Raised in Egypt as part of Pharaoh's family; 2) 40 years in the wilderness after he fled Egypt; and 3) 40 years leading the children of Israel out of Egypt and to the border of the promised land.
 - v. Moses is one of the most prominent characters in the Old Testament. Known for delivering the Israelites from Egyptian bondage and giving them the Law of YHWH, which would called by his name.
 - vi. Moses is mentioned more than 850 times in the Bible, including about 80 times in the New Testament.
 1. 38x in the gospels, 19x in Acts, & 23x in the letters (Romans-Revelation). Much of his being addressed was addressing him as the giver of the Law and why it was done away with.
 2. Acts 7:20-44 finds Stephen mentioning Moses by name 7 times as he recounts his faithful life.
 3. Hebrews 11:23-29 (2x) addresses his birth, faith leaving Egypt, instituting the Passover and leading Israel in crossing the Red Sea.

II. Israel in Egypt

- a. Exodus 1:1-7 – all 12 sons are mentioned with Joseph giving special attention. Vs. 7 notes that they were fruitful and multiplied in the land of Egypt.
- b. 1:8 –11 A new king arose in Egypt that did not know Joseph. They saw Israel's growth and viewed them as a threat. As a result, they subdued them and put them into slavery. As previously noted, we

do not know how long they were in bondage as – the name of any of the Pharaoh's associated with the patriarchs and Moses are not named. Clearly it would have been for a number of years.

- c. NOTE: Why was this oppression necessary? For God to fulfill His promise to Abraham, Israel had to return to the land. But they were comfortable in Egypt. How do you "motivate" a people to relocate? Extended and harsh slavery would contribute to that.
- d. 1:12-22 – in spite of the bondage, the Israelites continued to increase. It was to the point that Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill all the sons of the Israelites who were born. BUT "the midwives feared God" (vs. 17) and did not obey Pharaoh. God blessed them because of this (Vs. 20). Pharaoh then ordered that every son was to be cast into the river.
- e. 2:1-10 – Moses is born and hidden for 3 months. When Jochebed could no longer hide him, she took an ark and placed it in the bulrushes of the river. Moses' sister stood afar off and watched. Pharaoh's daughter went to the river to bathe and saw the ark in the reeds. Vs. 6, "She had compassion on him". Miriam went to Pharaoh's daughter and asked if she wanted to fetch a handmaiden. She got Moses' mother who will help raise him. Vs. 10, Moses becomes Pharaoh's daughter's son. She called his name Moses.
- f. Moses will remain in Pharaoh's household for 40 years – Acts 7:22-23. That text also tells us that while in the land, Moses learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds. Thus, Moses became well educated and prosperous in Pharaoh's household.
- g. 2:11-14 - Moses, at age 40 goes out to his brethren and sees their burdens. He also sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, "one of his brethren". Thinking no one was looking he killed the Egyptian and buried him. The next day, he sees 2 Hebrews fighting and tries to break them up. The one who was wrong asked Moses, "Who made you prince and judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" (2:14-15) Moses realizes what he did was known. Thus he flees to the land of Midian. Pharaoh hears about this matter and seeks to kill Moses.
- h. 2:15-22 - In Midian, Moses sits by a well. The priest of Midian had 7 daughters who drew water there. Moses helped them water their flocks. The daughters tell their father – Reuel. He calls for Moses and invites him to live with them. Moses does and is given his daughter Zipporah as wife. Zipporah gives Moses a son, Gershom (Stranger in a foreign land).
- i. 2:23-25 – Pharaoh dies in time. The children of Israel groan because of their bondage and cry out to God. Vs. 24-25 notes that God heard their groaning and remembered His covenant with Abraham.
- j. 3:1-4:17 – Moses at the burning bush. Moses is now 80 years of age (Acts 7:30 – 40 years had passed). He is tending flocks in Horeb, the mountain of God.
 - i. NOTE: **Horeb** is a place of significance that will be revisited. It will be a place where the Israelites will receive water on their way to Mt. Sinai (Exodus 17:6). It is also associated WITH Mt. Sinai itself (cf. Exodus 33:6 – as they prepare to leave the land, Also Deut. 1:6, 5:2, etc.). 1 Kings 19:8, fleeing from Jezebel after the victory of the prophets of Baal, he ends up at Horeb.
 - ii. 3:2ff – The Angel of the LORD appears to Moses in a flame at the burning bush. Moses sees the flame and notices the bush is not consumed. When investigating, the LORD calls out to him, "Moses, Moses". When He answers, Moses is told to take off his shoes because the place is holy ground. Moses complies.
 - iii. 3:6-10 - The LORD then tells Moses, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" He then tells Moses he wants him to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt.
 - iv. 3:11ff – Moses tries to get out of it (excuses)
 1. Vs. 11 – Who am I to go before Pharaoh – he knows his insignificance - Moses is humble, in contrast to what he had done 40 years earlier. God said, "I will be with you!" He gives him a sign – when you have delivered the people you will serve God on this mountain.

2. Vs. 13 – “When the people ask what the name of God is what shall I say?” God answered, “I AM WHO I AM” – a power statement of eternity! It was this declaration that cause Jews to want to stone Jesus - John 8:58-59.
3. Vs. 15-22 - God gives Moses further instructions to go to the Israelite leaders and to Pharaoh. He even notes that Pharaoh would not listen but God would show His great wonders to Pharaoh who would then let the people go with favors. There is some prophecy in what is declared here.
4. 4:1-10 – Moses balks – but what if they don’t believe me? God gives him 2 signs – his staff (What is that in your hand) – which becomes a serpent, AND putting his hand in the bosom of his coat it became leprous. He also declares that He would turn the rivers of Egypt to blOod.
5. 4:11-12 - Moses declares, “I am not an eloquent man.” The Lord declares, “Who has made man’s mouth?” He promised, “I will be with you...”
6. 4:13- - Finally, Moses says, “O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send.” The LORD is angry with Moses. He says that Aaron was coming to meet him and would be his mouthpiece. He also again says that He would be with him and teach him what to do.
- v. 4:18-23 – Moses returns to Jethro, his father-in-law, and tells him he is going to Egypt. Moses takes his wife and sons and goes to Egypt.
- vi. 4:24-26 - There is an incident where on the way, the LORD meets him and “sought to kill him”. Zipporah takes a sharp knife and circumcises her son. Casts the foreskin at the feet Moses.
- vii. 4:27-31 - THEN Moses meets Aaron in the wilderness, and they embrace. Moses tells Aaron all that has happened. Together they gathered the elders and tell them what was about to happen, showed them the signs. “So the people believed”. Knowing deliverance was coming they bowed their heads and worshipped.

III. Lessons to consider

- a. **The faith of Moses** – Hebrews 11:24-26 – Whom will you choose to follow? Moses was willing to walk away from his life of comfort because he always knew who the people of God were. We know that we are called to be willing to walk away from anything in this life that stands in our way of serving God. Matthew 6:33 – seek first His kingdom. Luke 18:29, *Then Peter said, “See, we have left all and followed You.” So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”*
- b. **Never forget your place with God** – at 40 years of age, Moses still was loyal to his own people as the people of God. Perhaps he thought of himself as their eventual deliverer at that time. We have emphasized how we are foreigners on this earth – let us never forget who our REAL spiritual King is!
- c. **Will you stand up for your brethren?** Just as Moses seeing his brethren abused stood up for them, will we? Again, scripture is clear that we need to always be there for one another. Galatians 6:2 calls for us to bear one another’s burdens.
- d. **Respect the timing of God** – God was working on His timeframe. Recall it had been 400 years since the promise made to Abraham. Now it is time. And understand God did NOT forget them even for a moment. The description reminds us that God will act when He is ready. When we make requests of God, we ought to be patient and trusting of Him – Luke 18:7-8
- e. **Holy ground** – Moses was told to take of his sandals because he was standing on holy ground. What made that ground holy? It was not the dirt. It was God’s presence! We must realize that when we are in God’s presence, we need to act like that. While it might apply at other times, it especially applies when we assemble to worship Him. He is in our midst! He deserves our reverence – Hebrews 12:28.

- f. ***Excuses do not work with God.*** They never have and they never will! Moses made at least 5 attempts to get out of the task the LORD asked of Him. God answered every objection and in the end, Moses submitted to His will. We have addressed excuses before. Understand, excuses will not be accepted when we stand before God in judgment. Revelation 20:12 tells us books were opened and men were judged by what was written in the books. When you stand before God, will you make excuses?

And thus we are introduced to Moses. In our next lesson we will address his encounters with Pharaoh leading to the exodus of Israel. Until then, let us consider the message we have studied and seek to be the servant God desires us to be. Think about it!