

JTB IV. FROM EGYPT TO SINAI (EXODUS 1-18)

The Hebrews in Egypt (Exodus 1)

The story picks up with Israel now in Egypt for some time, enjoying God's blessing although in slavery (vv. 5-7). However, major political changes had occurred and the new Egyptian dynasty neither remembered the good done by Joseph nor had positive feelings about Semitic people within their land. Thus, the Egyptians began to employ oppressive slavery on the Jews to control their numbers (vv. 8-14). However, again we are shown that God can bless and strengthen His people even under adversity (v. 12). When hard work failed to reduce the Hebrews' numbers, the Egyptians subjected the Jewish people to the first of several "slaughter of the innocents" (vv. 15-22). Both this event and the later event in the time of Herod (Matthew 2:16) were probably instigated by the ultimate adversary in the background (Genesis 3:14,15) in hopes of destroying the Messiah to arise from Israel before He could deliver the fatal blow!



Moses, the Deliverer (Exodus 2:1 - 4:17)

Like the Messiah he foreshadowed, Moses' was divinely preserved in infancy from the destroyer (Exodus 2:1-10; cf. Matthew 2:13-21). Similarly, when he tried to rescue His Jewish countrymen, he was rejected by them (Exodus 2:11-15; cf. Acts 7:23-29,35,39; John 1:10). Moses chose God's path (Exodus 2:11ff; Acts 7:23,25; Hebrews 11:24-6). Although he did not realize it at the time, Moses was being prepared for later service by his 40 years of experience in Pharaoh's house (Acts 7:21-23) and then 40 years as a Sinai shepherd (Acts 7:29,30).

Having tried to rescue his people and been rejected, Moses, when called, was hesitant and tried to excuse himself (Exodus 3:2 - 4:17). His excuses for not serving are similar to our own:

(1) "Who am I?" (I'm nobody special – although he was well prepared). In response, God promises to be with Him (3:10-12)

(2) "What if they ask your name?" (Tell them "I AM" sent you and take the Elders of Israel with you - they will believe you, 3:13-22)

(3) "What if they won't believe me?" (God provides miraculous credentials, 4:1-9)

(4) "I have never been a good speaker" (Actually, this is not true – Acts 7:22). However, God promises to provide Moses with what he should say (4:10-12)

(5) "Why don't you send someone else" (Expressing his true unwillingness, God becomes angry and chooses to send Aaron also, 4:13-17)

Moses Returns to Egypt (Exodus 4:18 – 13:16)

God then removed the obstacles standing in the way. Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, gave Moses permission to go back to Egypt with his family (4:18) and the Pharaoh who sought Moses' life died (4:19). Moses' staff became "the staff of God" (4:20). Moses had failed to circumcise his sons, so there was a showdown over that because Moses could not lead Israel towards the Promised Land without obeying the covenant himself (4:24-26; cf. Genesis 17:14). The same attitude toward circumcision existed in those who perished in the wilderness, thus their children would have to be circumcised before they could inherit the Promised Land (Joshua 5:1-6). However, those who once rejected Moses earlier now did accept him as deliverer (4:29-31).

Exodus 5-11/ The plagues were intended to force Pharaoh to release Israel and demonstrate God's power in comparison to the false gods Egypt worshipped. Pharaoh's heart was "hardened" under the 10 plagues, because he was arrogant (ch. 5) and "hardened his own heart" (8:15,32; 9:34). Pharaoh was warned by his magicians to surrender (8:18,19) and did soften his position (8:25-28) somewhat. God hardened the heart of a man self-committed to arrogance (9:12). Miracles, usually, are to confirm God's messengers and their messages (Exodus 4:1-9) and to point men to YHWH as the true God (Exodus 9:14-16; 14:17). Pharaoh admitted his sin and asked for prayer (9:27; 10:16,17). In spite of all of the warnings, Pharaoh was viewed as a "living god" and did not bow to the true God.

Exodus 12/ The Ordinance of the Passover became a central element in Israel's annual worship and a great deal of prophetic typology is included in its divine origin. Israel's "time" began with Passover (v. 2; cf. John 3:3-7). The Passover Lamb was perfect (v. 5; John 18:38; 2Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15) and the whole nation killed the Lamb (v. 6; cf. Luke 17:25). The Lamb's blood covering their house was the only difference between the Israelites and Egyptians (vv. 7,13; cf. Acts 20:28; 1Corinthians 5:7; Ephesians 1:7). The Lamb was to be eaten totally and become "part" of each Israelite (vv. 8-10; cf. John 6:51-58). The Passover meal was to be eaten in readiness to leave (v. 11; cf. 1Corinthians 11:26). Israel had to stay "under the blood" (22; cf. Hebrews 10:23-31), for Judgment falls on those not "under the blood" (vv. 29,30). A "mixed multitude" (v. 38) was delivered, as a type of salvation for people from all nations (Genesis 12:3; Psalm 22:26-31; Isaiah 2:2,3; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 5:8,9). A provision is made for anyone who wished to become a part of Israel, because faith, seeking God, & accepting/obeying covenant terms is more important than "Jewish birth or blood/lineage" for personal salvation (12:42-49; cf. Joshua 2; 9; Ruth; Matthew 1:5; 3:7-9; 8:10-12; 12:46-50; Acts 10:34,35; Romans 2:25-29; 9:1-8,23,24; Galatians 3:9,28,29; Colossians 3:11).

Exodus 13:1-16/ The "First-Born" Redemption was an added remembrance to the message of Passover, commemorating the deliverance of Israel's "first-born" while Egypt was mourning the loss of theirs. Israel was "marked" on the hand & forehead (see: Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Revelation 7:3).

Traveling from Egypt to Mt. Sinai (Exodus 13 - 18)

Exodus 13 - 16/ God visibly led Israel out of Egypt (13:17-22). Israel was "delivered" from Egyptian bondage through the Red Sea (ch. 14), which Paul cited as a type of the New Covenant Israel's transition from bondage to salvation in Christ through the water of baptism (1Corinthians 10:2). God has often used water to distinguish the believers/unbelievers (Joshua 3:1-4:18; 2Kings 5:1-14; Acts 2:38; 1Peter 3:20-21). As they traveled in the wilderness of Sinai, God provided "bread from heaven" (*manna*, lit. "what is it?") to nourish & sustain His people (16:1-5; see: John 6:48-51)

Exodus 17/ An Amalekite attack provided the opportunity for another Messianic "type" - although God's people must "fight the good fight" in the valley of this world, the real course of the war was determined by God's man, with arms outstretched on a piece of wood, between two other men on a hill (vv. 8-13; compare with Matthew 27:38).

Exodus 18/ Moses reported back to his father-in-law, Jethro, who praised God for what had occurred (vv. 1-12) and then advised Moses to share the duties of leadership with others (vv. 13-27).

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