

DESERT LESSONS

BACKGROUND

Exodus 1 – 2

Pastor Daniel Hahn

March 14 – 15, 2020

1. What's the book of Exodus about?

Exodus is an epic tale of fire, sand, wind, and water. The adventure takes place under the hot desert sun, just beyond the shadow of the Great Pyramids. Once heard, the story is never forgotten. For Jews it is the story that defines their very existence, the rescue that made them God's people. For Christians it is the gospel of the Old Testament, God's first great act of redemption. — Ken Hughes, Preaching The Word

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. — Romans 15:4

From his incredible birth and boyhood in Egypt to his unique death and burial on Mount Nebo, Moses stands alone — lofty and yet quite human. Although God used him as His supreme voice of hope and as the first recipient of written Scripture, Moses was nevertheless a mere man. Identifying with him in his struggles and trials is not difficult. The flaws that veined the pure marble of his character help us view him as one like ourselves. ... Born into a world of slavery, murder, bondage, and torturous working conditions, Moses arrived at the darkest day in Hebrew history — into a scene he was destined to alter. — Chuck Swindol, Moses

2. How'd the Hebrews end up as slaves down in Egypt?

As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. Then the Lord said to him, "Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. — Genesis 15:12 – 14

"I am God, the God of your father," He said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. ... — Genesis 46:3 – 4

Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them. Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. — Exodus 1:6 – 8

3. What do we learn from history about all this?

In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the temple of the Lord. — 1 Kings 6:1

"Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. — Exodus 1:9 – 11

They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly. — Exodus 1:14

Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. — Acts 7:22

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?" The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known." When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, ... — Exodus 2:11 – 15

There are some lessons:

- that you can't learn in a palace.
- that success will never teach you.
- that could only be learned on the sharp anvil of painful failure.

Solitude is a place where we see ourselves and our God in new ways. We get still and identify the clutter of our lives. Struggles occur and inner battles are fought as God opens our eyes to what's important. And if it takes being on the backside of the desert for the rest of my life, it's worth it. — Henri Nowen

As our adventure with Moses begins:

Never ignore the details of the Biblical record — they're full of truth and encouragement.

Never underestimate what tale God may be weaving — it's a saga of His grace and purposes through your life.

Never assume that where you're at now is the end of the story — even what may feel hopeless might very well be the entry point of a whole new and unexpected work in your life.

Never refuse to move forward in your spiritual journey — God has so much more to show you in the sojourn that lies ahead.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What stuck with you from the message this past weekend?
- How would you describe Moses, based on what you know of him?
- What is one story from his amazing life you recall?
- How did the Hebrews end up as slaves in Egypt?
- How did God spare Moses as a baby?
- How did God use His training in Pharaoh's household to prepare him for leadership?
- What did Moses do that caused him to flee for his life from Egypt?
- Daniel shared four practical applications. Of these four, is there one that particularly resonates with something God is teaching you these days?
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 2. Never underestimate what tale God may be weaving — it's a saga of his grace and purposes through your life.
 3. Never assume that where you're at now is the end of the story — even what may feel hopeless might very well be the entry point of a whole new and unexpected work in your life.
 4. Never refuse to move forward in your spiritual journey — God has so much more to show you in the sojourn that lies ahead.