

"Departure from Egypt"

Part 3

Exodus 12-14

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of the life of Moses we are going to continue to look at the departure of Israel. Last week we looked at the mixed multitude which went with them on their exodus. This was a group that caused many problems for Israel and this was a group that was planted in God's people by Satan. Satan desired to keep Israel in Egypt and when he could not do so he was more than happy to send part of Egypt along with Israel.

The picture for us is that Satan would love to get the church plugged into the world and when he cannot be successful, he is more than willing to place people of the world in the church. These people are usually exposed by their fleshly appetites. Just as the mixed multitude became tired of the manna in Numbers 11 and began to complain and cried to return to Egypt, so the unsaved will begin to complain in the church when the Word of God is the main focus and they will cry out for more entertainment and more programs.

Numbers 11:4-6

⁴ And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

⁵ We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

⁶ But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

Tonight, in our study we are going to look at the PATH which Israel started on as the departed Egypt.

I. The Path of the Journey

As Israel departed from Egypt there are three places that are mentioned which we are going to consider.

A. Rameses - The Place of Bitterness.

Notice Exodus 12:37

The city of Rameses was the starting point for the Exodus. They traveled from Rameses to Succoth which was about 15 - 20 miles. Many believe this was the first day's journey. It is the city of Rameses that we need to focus on here. Let us notice another verse that will help us to see why Rameses was a BITTER place.

Exodus 1:8-11

⁸ Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

⁹ And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

¹⁰ Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

¹¹ Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. **And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.**

This is where the slavery started. This was one of the treasure cities and it was used to fortify the land of Egypt. God had determined that Ramses would be the place where Israel would rally together as they began their journey out of Egypt. Let us consider two points from Ramses.

➤ **The Purpose**

This was the perfect place for Israel to depart from for it would be a reminder of the bitterness they went through under the heavy hand of the Egyptians. We have talked about this before, but it is good to be reminded again. God wanted to be sure they did not forget what life was like in Egypt. He knew that with the challenges and the trying of their faith in the journey that there would be the thought of going back to Egypt.

Numbers 14:1-4

And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

² *And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!*

³ *And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?*

⁴ *And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and **let us return into Egypt.***

➤ **The Picture**

The picture here for us is that we too need to remember the bitterness that was associated with our unsaved lives. We too were slaves and we too had pain and suffering because of the sin we were enslaved to. The tests and the trials that we face as believers can also cause us to want to go back to the old life. As believers we are called to walk by faith and there are times when the what we see with our eyes makes that walk of faith very difficult. It is in those difficult times that many have abandoned the path God has placed them on. Notice what Paul said about Demas:

2 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica;

Let us notice what was said about him in Philemon.

Philemon 1:24

²⁴ Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.

Demas' motive for forsaking Paul seems to have been love of worldly ease, safety, and comforts at home, and reluctance to brave danger with Paul.

Getting back to our live; We must remember what it was like to be enslaved to sin. We must remember the bondage and the emptiness of the old life.

B. Land of the Philistines - The Place of Battle.

Notice Exodus 13:17

Israel would experience battles and the first would be with Amalek in Exodus 17. But here in our text and at this time they were not ready for any battles. God knew that it would have been a great discouragement to the Israelites. These were God's people and He would protect them since He knew them better than they knew themselves.

Application:

We can be very thankful that our Lord also knows us better than we know ourselves. For this reason, He can guide our steps on a path where He controls what happens. He knows the pressure that we can withstand. Let us notice the words of Mackintosh:

"The Lord in His condescending grace, so orders things for His people that they do not, at their first setting out, encounter heavy trials, which might have the effect of discouraging their hearts and driving them back."

This can be seen in the life of Abraham also. The offering of Isaac was not until Abraham had years of experience in serving the Lord. God adjusts our trials to our strength.

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³ *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Now we must understand that God shelters us when we first begin our new life in Christ and He continues to sift every trial that we face, however as we grow and mature in our walk it is our responsibility to be strengthened with God's might in the inner man because there will be tests and trials along the way that will be very difficult.

James 1:2-4

² *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

³ *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

⁴ *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

The tests and trials that we encounter are for the purpose of strengthening our faith and our endurance, thus bringing us into spiritual maturity.

As we move on to the next point, we will take this thought a little further.

C. Wilderness of the Red Sea - The Place of Barrenness.

Notice Exodus 13:18

Instead of going the way of the Philistines God would lead Israel through the barren wilderness of the Red Sea. This was the long way to Canaan.

The quickest route would have been by the way of the Philistines but that was not God's plan. He would lead them the long way to Canaan. The flesh hates the wilderness because the flesh desires to have things quickly. But here in our text there were lessons that Israel needed to learn and they would be lessons which Israel could draw from later in their journey.

- 1. Israel would see the greatest miracle of the Old Testament as they journey to the Red Sea and they would cross on dry ground.**
- 2. They would see the destruction of Pharaoh and his military as God will drown them in the Red Sea.**

From these two events Israel would see the power of God in their lives when they had no hope, humanly speaking. They would see that even the greatest military was no match for the Lord. They would see that no matter how large the obstacle God was greater. They would learn of God's protection over their lives. The point is there were lessons in the long way that were priceless.

Application:

These are priceless points for us to learn from. Our flesh always wants things quick and in a hurry. The flesh hates the "long way" and the flesh hates the "barren wilderness". But there are lessons for us in the barren wilderness that prepare us for what lies ahead and sometimes the long way can take years. Let me take you on a quick journey through part of Joseph's life to see what the long way can look like.

Genesis 37:2, 5-10

² *These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren;*

⁵ *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*

⁶ *And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:*

⁷ *For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.*

⁸ *And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.*

⁹ *And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.*

¹⁰ *And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?*

Genesis 37:23-24, 28

²³ *And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him;*

²⁴ And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

²⁸ Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Genesis 39:1

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

It was here that he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife.

Genesis 39:20

²⁰ And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Genesis 41:1

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

Joseph was in prison for two full years. Joseph interpreted the dream of Pharaoh and was then made Prime Minister of Egypt.

Genesis 41:46

⁴⁶ And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

This all started when Joseph was 17 years old and the long way lasted for 13 years. In these 13 years Joseph learned many things that he would carry with him in his service of God.

We must know that many times God takes us on the long path. It will be on this path that He will teach us lessons that we will need for what He will have us to do at a later date. The long way is not easy. There can be situations that are frightening. There can be situations where we are not treated fairly. There can be situations where we become completely exhausted because of what is required of us. There can be situations in which we feel as though we have been forgotten. There will often be times of barrenness where it seems as though nothing is happening.

It is so important that we learn to wait upon the Lord to bring us to where He wants us to be. Let us remember what Abraham experienced because his flesh was in a hurry. He fathered Ishmael, the father of the Arab nations, and they have been a thorn in the flesh to Abraham and his descendants since the birth of Ishmael.

Conclusion: Let us notice the poem "WAIT".

*Desperately, helplessly, longingly, I cried.
Quietly, patiently, lovingly, He replied.
I pleaded, and I wept for a clue to my fate,
And the Master so gently said, "Child, you must
wait."*

*"Wait? Your say wait??" my indignant reply.
"Lord, I need answers, I need to know why.
Is your hand shortened? Or have you not heard?
By faith I have asked, and I'm claiming your
Word.*

*"My future, and all to which I can relate
Hangs in the balance, and you tell me 'wait'?"
I'm needing a 'yes', a go-ahead sign,
Or even a 'no', to which I can resign.*

*"And Lord, you have promised that if we believe,
We need but ask, and we shall receive.
And Lord I've been asking, and this is my cry:
"I'm weary of asking: I need a reply!"*

*Then quietly, softly, I learned of my fate
As my Master replied once again, "You must
wait."*

*So I slumped in my chair; defeated and taut
And grumbled to God; "So I'm waiting, for
what?"*

*He seemed then to kneel and His eyes met with
mine*

*And He tenderly said, "I could give you a sign.
I could shake the heavens, darken the sun,
Raise the dead, cause the mountains to run.*

*"All you see I could give, and pleased you would
be.*

*You would have what you want, but you wouldn't
know Me.*

*You'd not know the depth of My love for each
saint;*

You'd not know the power that I give to the faint.

*"You'd not learn to see through clouds of despair;
You'd not learn to trust, just by knowing I'm there.*

*You'd not know the joy of resting in Me,
When darkness and silence was all you could see.*

*"You would never experience that fullness of love
As the peace of My Spirit descends like a dove.*

*You would know that I give, and I save, for a start,
But you'd not know the depth of the beat of My
heart.*

*"The glow of My comfort late in the night;
The faith that I give when you walk without sight;
The depth that's beyond getting just what you ask
From an infinite God who makes what you have
last.*

*"And you never would know, should your pain
quickly flee,*

*What it means that 'My grace is sufficient for
thee.'*

*Yes, your dreams for that loved one o'ernight
could come true,*

But the loss! if you lost what I'm doing in you!

*"So be silent, my child, and in time you will see
That the greatest of gifts is to get to know Me.*

*And though oft' may My answers seem terribly
late,*

My most precious answer of all....is still...wait."