

Tuesday, February 4, 2020—Exodus 25-27

Walking daily with the Lord provides continual opportunities to compare His glory with the things of the world. Only Jesus died and rose again. Only He has given the Holy Spirit to guide, teach, encourage, correct, and strengthen. Despite that, the comforts of wealth, the approval of people, and the uncertainty of the future sometimes outweigh His worth.

God told Moses to have “each man whose heart prompts him to give” to bring an offering (25:2). These people were newly-freed from slavery, but they were in the desert. They had seen the wonders of the plagues and the Red Sea, but they weren’t sure what the future held. God only wanted offerings from those whose hearts fully trusted in Him.

Those gifts would help construct a sanctuary for God, a place for His presence to dwell. Those gifts were costly to the people, yet they would provide the treasure of His presence. Those gifts required a giving heart, yet much of what they were giving they had freely received from the Egyptians when Israel was preparing to leave. God has a wonderful way of giving lavishly so His people can give in return.

These instructions provided details about how to interact with the Creator of the Universe, the Almighty I Am, the Liberator and Leader. They could not take this lightly, so God told them to follow exactly His instructions (25:40, 26:30, 27:8). For the first time in history, God was preparing to live among a people and giving them the opportunity to give to make it happen. What a gracious God He is!

Praise God for the gift of His presence in your life. Pray for faith to give so He might show His presence and power in your life.

Monday, February 3, 2020—Exodus 21-24

God’s people had never lived as God’s people in community and in freedom. In order to live in holiness before God and to flourish with one another, they needed laws. Rules and regulations may seem oppressive, but they make driving on the highway safer and games between opponents more entertaining. These laws Moses was to set before the people (21:1) were God’s gracious gift for abundant life.

God makes each person in His image, so the first laws remind

His people of the value of people. When someone owed a debt he couldn't pay, he would go into slavery, but that slavery was to end in the seventh year. Just as God freed them, they were to free one another. Because each person bore the image of God, personal injury was prohibited—whether physical or verbal harm. The payment for sin was to match the harm (21:23-24).

God also gave personal property that each person was to manage. For someone else to steal or even covet that property was a lack of faith and could not be tolerated (22:1-15). The judges made sure the decisions were just and objective and that someone did not take justice into his own hands.

God wanted His people to be holy (22:31), so the way they treated Him (23:10-13, 31-33) and one another (23:1-9) was a direct reflection of the condition of their soul. God's desire was that the people would flourish under His care and celebrate three times each year (23:14-19).

As Israel agreed to live with God's leadership (24:7), do the same.

Sunday, February 2, 2020—Exodus 18-20

Reading of the powerful works God had done through Moses may make Moses seem larger than life. In reality, he dealt with everyday issues like everyone else. God was at work in him, but he was limited. He was the leader of the nation, but he couldn't do everything.

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, knew God was the real hero (18:11), and he knew God was using Moses to lead the people, so he urged Moses to equip many of the men around him to take leadership. This was a win for everyone. More people received judgment. More men were helping the people, and Moses was not burdened from dawn to dusk. He was free to give specific attention to hearing from God and leading the people.

Who knows how valuable this advice from Jethro was? Moses listened to him, and the nation flourished. Then, God called Moses to Mt. Sinai. If Moses had been overworked, would he have heard God's call to the holy mountain? Heeding godly wisdom pays perpetual dividends.

God told Moses to tell the people that they were to obey Him fully and keep His covenant. Then, they would become to Him His treasured possession—a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. He wanted them to be set aside for His purposes and His glory (19:5-6). The people agreed to God’s purpose for their lives, so God gave the 10 Commandments—standards which detailed their relationship with God (20:1-11) and with others (20:12-17). By putting God first, the other commands fell into place.

Praise God for godly advisers and His standards for your life.

Saturday, February 1, 2020—Exodus 14-17

To this point, God had written His story through the journeys of one man—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. Now, in liberating an entire nation, He chooses a new way of making Himself known and leading them into His blessing. With a cloud by day and fire by night, God reminds the people of His presence, power, provision, and promise. This was critical as Pharaoh second-guessed himself and pursued the Israelites in the desert.

The Israelites immediately showed their immaturity as they told Moses they would have been better off to stay in captivity (the place from which they begged God for 400 years to release them). Moses assured them they only needed to stand still and see the deliverance of God (14:14). Moses raised his staff, and God provided protection while the sea parted and the people passed through the waters. God is sovereign and gracious.

They had seen the plagues. They had seen Him destroy the army. They put their trust in Him (14:31), and Moses and Miriam sang a song of worship to God (15:1-21). Despite this awe, a few days into the journey, the people began to grumble again (15:22-27). In His grace, God provided water and food, but the people had to listen and obey to enjoy it.

When Israel was attacked, Aaron and Hur held Moses’ arms up. Like the cloud and fire, Moses’ staff was a reminder that God was a banner of protection and identity over His people. Praise God for giving His people His identity, provision, and protection every day.

Friday, January 31, 2020—Exodus 11-13

God has made people with the capacity to worship Him. When we forsake the idols of the world and give our heart's affection, mind's attention, and life's actions to God, we find joy and fulfillment nothing else can provide. God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him.

Through Moses, God was attacking all the idols and powers in the hearts, minds, and lives of the Egyptian people. God was showing He truly was the one and only, the almighty I Am. Because Pharaoh was not willing to repent of his idolatry (including his worship of himself), God sent the final plague, the plague of death.

Those who trusted in Yahweh took an innocent lamb and slaughtered it. They then placed the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their home. That night, the angel of death passed through Egypt and took the life of the firstborn in every home not covered by the blood. God did not consider whether the people in the home were rich or poor, successful or failures, disciplined or lazy. He simply looked for the blood.

The final plague moved Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. The Egyptians gave the Israelites valuable metals and cloth, and God's people were finally free. The people instituted a yearly feast to commemorate God's provision, and while the Egyptians had lost their firstborn, Israel consecrated their firstborn to God as an act of worship.

Praise God for Jesus, the Lamb, who takes away sin and gives life. Pray for a life that points people to satisfaction in Him.

Thursday, January 30, 2020—Exodus 8-10

Pharaoh thought he was god. Yahweh was God. The great I Am wanted His people to be able to leave their land of captivity and worship Him, so He was demonstrating His power over Pharaoh and over creation to validate His worthiness for being worshiped.

Each time Moses announced a plague, God brought that plague, bringing frogs onto the land or sending gnats throughout Egypt. Pharaoh's magicians could mimic the frogs, but they couldn't make them go away. They could not mimic the gnats and admitted this was God's handiwork (8:19). Pharaoh remained hardened despite

the mounting evidence.

When God sent flies, Pharaoh said the people could go worship, but they had to remain in the land (8:23). He tried to make repentance work on his terms, not Yahweh's. This was not acceptable. God continued to strike the land, the people, and the livestock, and Pharaoh continued to harden his heart. He could not admit God was powerful and worthy, so God continued to send plagues to show there was no one like He is (9:14).

When Moses announced the coming hail, some of the Egyptian officials took precautions (9:20). They knew God was worthy of reverence. Despite the widespread devastation, God's people were shielded from it. Pharaoh admitted he had sinned (9:27), but he would not let them go (9:35).

Like Pharaoh, when we know God is worthy of repentance, we try to make it on our terms. God is not calling people to mere adjustment but to radical life change, leaving the worship of self to worship Him.

Wednesday, January 29, 2020—Exodus 5-7

The freedom of religion is one of the founding principles in the United States, detailed in the First Amendment to the Constitution. God has made us to worship, and our country guarantees this right. Over 3,000 years ago, Moses was fighting for this privilege for Israel.

Moses wanted to take Israel in the desert to offer sacrifices (5:3). Pharaoh was not interested. He did not know this Jehovah who Moses wanted to worship. Besides, he was more interested in Israel's making bricks for him. Moses' discussion was hindering that labor. In spite, Pharaoh made it more difficult for Israel to reach their daily quota.

Emotions began to boil. Pharaoh called the people lazy. The people were angry with Moses and Aaron. Moses questioned God. God was working so His people could become exactly who He made them to be, and that required breaking free from the chains that bound them in Egypt. Breaking free is never comfortable, but it is ultimately good. Nonetheless, the people were greatly discouraged and burdened (6:9).

Despite the trouble, God was confident. He knew the people He was going to bring to freedom (6:14-25). He knew the weakness and uncertainty of Moses, yet Jehovah was going to use him powerfully (6:28-7:2). God knew Pharaoh would harden his heart in unrepentance to the works and truths of God Almighty (7:3), so the great I Am began to demonstrate His power and worthiness to all of Egypt (7:14-24).

Thank God for being free to worship the One who is worthy.