

Note: The crossing probably took place north of the present day Gulf of Suez.

These waters are still affected today by the strong east wind, similar to the wind of Exodus 14:21. The miracle lay in the timing of the wind.

2. What can we see here of Moses as (a) a leader and (b) a servant of God? What had he learnt since his first encounter with God by the burning bush? How far do you expect your experiences with God, and your work for him, to leave their mark on you?

3. God's ability to rescue Israel stirred Moses to lead the people in a song of praise. As you read Exodus 15:1-18, written using much poetic language, note down some of the things he says about God.

4. Is it important to you that there is no-one like the Lord (verse 11)?

Praise God that he was, and is, a God who rescues his people from all danger.

Weekend

1. The Exodus always played an important part in the history of Israel, and biblical writers took up the theme again and again. For example, prophets reminded the people of God's greatness and faithfulness. The Psalm writers used the Exodus to evoke praise and gratitude. Read through Psalms 77:10-20; 78:1-16; 106:6-13 and 114 to see how they viewed the Exodus. Then read Hosea 12:9; 13:4.

2. List some events in your life that remind you that God is a rescuer.

Notes



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Meeting With God Bible Reading Notes

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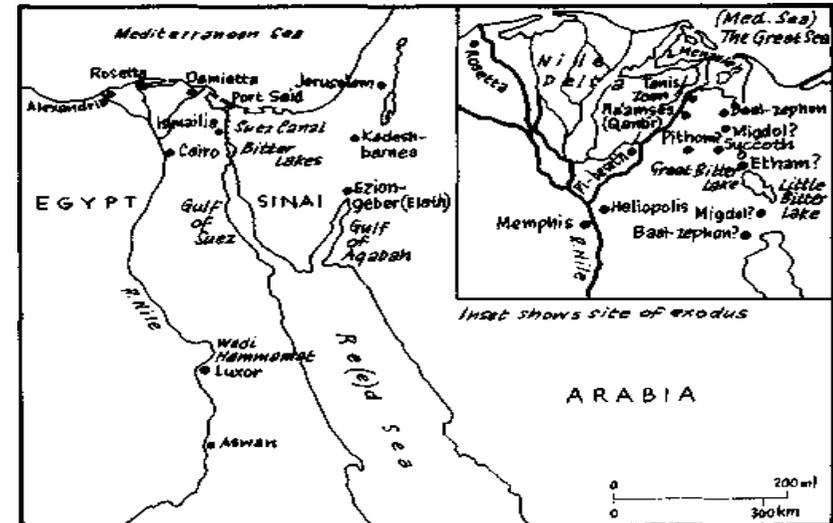
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Week 35: The Exodus (A historical study)

By the time of the Exodus, which most scholars take to be in the first half of the thirteenth century BC, the family of Abraham had multiplied, fulfilling the promise made in Genesis 12:2. Outside the Bible, there is little evidence for the Exodus, since for the Egyptians it was a shameful event not worthy of mention. But this does not alter the fact that it was a historical event which had a deep and lasting impact upon the people of God and demonstrated God's power to rescue. Moses is traditionally the author of the book of Exodus.

Here is no heroic epic of migration but the recollection of shameful servitude from which only the power of God brought deliverance.

John Bright, *A History of Israel* (SCM, 1981).



Day 1. Help!

Exodus 1:1 - 2:10

Rameses II was probably the Pharaoh. He was acting from fairly shrewd political motives.

1. What threat did he see the immigrant minority posing to the native Egyptians? How would you summarize his victimization of the descendants of Israel? With what result?

Throughout these studies we shall see the stark contrast of God's determination and ability to deliver, with Pharaoh's feeble efforts to thwart God's power.

2. What examples of this contrast do you notice in this passage?

The Jews have never underestimated their desperate plight in Egypt. From then on God was seen as one who rescued them.

3. In what ways personally, or as a church, or society in general, do we need to experience God as one who comes to the rescue? For example, think of situations of danger, moral decline, effects of sin. How true is it that the more we realize our need for deliverance, the more we will depend on God's power to deliver? How would you encourage those who felt their situation was so awful that God couldn't deliver them?

Pray for any you know who need God to rescue them.

Day 2. The means of rescue

Exodus 3:1 - 4:17

Israel's suffering continued for at least eighty years. Yet in all that time, God had not abandoned them, although at times they must have wondered if he had (2:23-25).

1. Read 3:1 - 4:17 and make a note of all that God said (a) about himself and (b) about his plan to rescue Israel. Take one of these aspects of God's character and spend some time thinking what he means to you. Thank God that he is such a God.
2. In the face of all that God had shown him, Moses still hesitated. What excuses did he make (see 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13)? What was the basic reason behind these excuses?

Has there been a time recently when you knew God wanted to use you but you were reluctant? Ask God's forgiveness and consider if there are ways still open to rectify your action.

Day 3. A brick wall?

Exodus 6:28 - 11:10

The situation for the Israelites went from bad to worse and Moses was blamed for this (chapter 5). But God had not deserted them (chapter 6).

1. Look at 6:28 - 11:10. As you do so trace the progress of Pharaoh as he gradually relented, compromising all the way (see 7:3, 13 etc.).

Note: The plagues probably lasted over at least a six month period. So Pharaoh's resistance was prolonged as was the judgment upon Egypt.

2. Had they been open to God, what could the Egyptians and Pharaoh have learnt about the God of the Hebrews?

Note: Commentators have written at great length on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The phrase does not imply that Pharaoh isn't responsible for his stubbornness.

God's power yet awesomeness was very striking. What situations personally, nationally or internationally do you know where you need to be reminded that God is all-powerful? Pray to the great God to act.

Day 4. Rescued at last

Exodus 12: 1-39

1. In the instructions for preparation for the Passover, what signs of God's love towards Israel can you see? Read these verses carefully as they are full of fascinating detail.

In verse 28 the Israelites did just what the Lord had commanded. We do not always anticipate obedience as the response to love. Yet both the Old and New Testaments demonstrate the demand that we show our love for God by obedience.

2. Are there any commands of God which you are finding hard to obey at present? Pray that God will help you to express your love for him by obedience.
3. God gave the Israelites the ceremony of the Passover to enable them to remember forever his goodness to them at the Exodus. Why might they need a reminder? How easy do you find it to remember how good God has been to you? Make a note of all that God has done for you this week.

Jesus himself took part in a meal which certainly bore a strong resemblance to the Passover meal. He then bequeathed it to his church as a reminder of his death until his return. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, and Luke 22:7-23, especially verses 7, 8, 11, 15.

4. How important is that meal in your life as a reminder of God's goodness?

Day 5. Backs to the sea?

Exodus 13:17 - 15:18

This is an action-packed story. Read Exodus 13:17 - 14:31, and as you do, try to picture the scene.

1. How would you have felt if you were an Israelite?