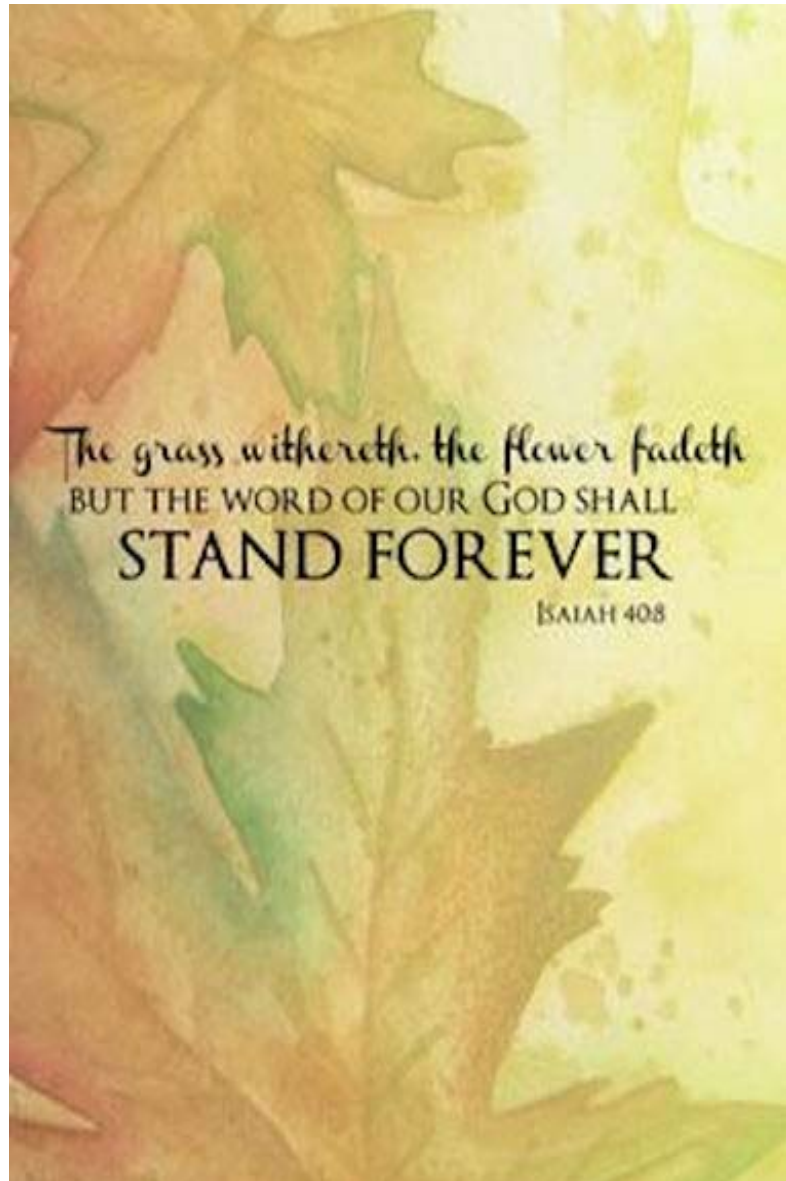


# **Daily Devotional**

**May 2016**



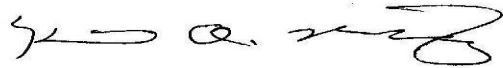
## Foreword

If you are still with us in May—fantastic! By now you have developed a habit of taking in the Word of God daily—a habit that will not easily be set aside. This is a full month of study in the book of Exodus, but if you haven't noticed yet—the content of Exodus has a lot to do with the doctrine of the New Testament.

For this reason we will be reading quite a few chapters of the Bible in the New Testament to supplement our readings in Exodus. Make sure to read the Scripture each day—think about the truth you have interacted with—and then see if this devotional can provide a little bit more insight.

God bless you in your study of His Word

In His grace,



Kevin Redig



# Return to Exodus

## Monday, May 2: Read Exodus 3 (Note Verses 10-12)

As we return to Exodus once again for another collection of daily readings, I want to remind you of how strongly the narrative of Moses and the Israelites is a microcosm of our own story (and the story of mankind)! That, of course, is one of the reasons it has been preserved for us. Perhaps you are thinking, “Are you serious, what does it have to do with me? This is just ancient history!” Well, let me show you what I mean. In the NIV translation of Exodus 3:10, we find these three words: “*So now, go.*”

What else does Moses need to be told? Actually, nothing! The sovereign of the universe has just told him to “go,” and the rest of the verse makes clear his destination—Egypt. Does Moses immediately pack his bags and go? He does not! Not for the last time, this should cause us to observe that our God is very gracious!

Now, for our first parallel: Have we, as God’s children, been told to go? We have, on at least two levels. First, per Matthew 28:19-20 we have been told to “*Go and make disciples of all nations. . .*” This is directed to the Church of Jesus Christ, but all of us are to be involved and recognize the weight of this command on a personal level.

I think it is helpful to recall a very interesting observation by Archbishop W. Temple, “*The church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members.*” Although we do not exist solely for the benefit of non-members, he is certainly right about what should be a major portion of our focus! Spend some time meditating on Matthew 28:18-20.

We will develop the second level in which we have been instructed to go in tomorrow’s devotional.

# Return to Exodus

Tuesday, May 3: Read Exodus 4  
(Note Verses 7-17)

Yesterday we saw the first way in which all believers have been told to “go,” just as Moses was. Today, I want to develop a second way in which we have been directed to “go” by God. We have, in essence, been told to “go” with respect to the exercise of our spiritual gifts. Ephesians 4:7-f tells us that Christ himself distributes the grace of a spiritual gift to each believer.

*But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it . . . It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastor-teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. . .*

In I Corinthians 12, we see how important it is for each member of the body to put their spiritual gift in play. And in Colossians 3:17, 23 we are encouraged to do whatever we do with all our hearts as unto the Lord. So although there is no one Scripture which says, “Go and put your spiritual gift to work,” I think we can make a pretty good Scriptural case to support exactly that idea. So we have been told to “go” on at least two levels—specifically, to represent Christ to lost people with the aim of turning them into followers (disciples) of Christ, and to exercise our spiritual gifts within the body of believers.

Did Moses budge when God told him to go? No he didn't—at least not at first. How are you and I doing on responding to the clear direction of God's Word? At times, probably no better than Moses.

**Like I said—what a microcosm!**



# Return to Exodus

## Wednesday, May 4: Read Exodus 21 and then Exodus 3:10-12

So what did God do after telling Moses to go, and getting an excuse in return? Meditate on Verse 12, and consider just how gracious God is to His people (including us):

- God tells Moses that He will go with him! You can count on the fact that whatever God has for us to do—He will always go with us. This should *really* be enough for Moses to get packing and take off!
- Are there still parallels between what God has told Moses and our own circumstances? Consider just these two verses:

*“And I (Jesus) will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.” John 14:16*

*“But the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”  
John 14:26*

Are you beginning to see how consistently God works with his children? He never asks without providing the means, and He never leaves us on our own.

- Did you notice that not only did God promise to go with Moses, but He also promised a sign. In essence, God gave Moses literal and specific fulfillment of His promise to redeem the Israelites. How often does God do the same thing for us—show us that he is concerned and intimately involved in our lives by preserving us through some crisis, answering prayer, fulfilling a promise?

*Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not  
all his benefits. . . Psalm 103:2*

# Return to Exodus

**Thursday, May 5: Read Exodus 3:13-21  
and Acts 1:1-14** (Does Verse 8 use *might* or *shall*?)

In the course of the next chapter and a half, Moses is going to raise three issues with respect to why he shouldn't go. And once again, the parallels are amazing—for we use almost exactly the same excuses to justify why we shouldn't go when God calls us.

Remember, as a minimum, God has already told us to:

- Go and make disciples.
- Go and put our spiritual gifts into play.

## The First Issue—Competing Voices

The first issue (excuse) can be found in Exodus 3:13—I call it *The Issue of Competing Voices!*

*Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His name?' Then what shall I tell them?"*



# Return to Exodus

Thursday, May 5: Read Exodus 3:13-21  
and Acts 1:1-14 (Continued)

I call this question the issue of *competing voices* because the Israelites have a *voice* that consists of a faint recollection of their heritage and some kind of associated blessing. But, they also have another much louder *voice* in terms of Pharaoh's decrees and their harsh task-masters. And now they have yet another *voice* giving them both hope and a promise. However, this promising voice is in the midst of very tough circumstances.

They are going to have to decide whom to listen to—just as we do! Moses knows this is going to be a very challenging issue, because although the Jews have grown greatly in terms of numbers, the same cannot be said of their spiritual status.

Now note the way that God gives Moses a two-part answer to his questioning:

- First, He wants to make clear that His *voice* is that of the uncaused Cause of all things; the self-existing one who stands above all. (I AM!)

*And God said unto Moses, "I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, 'I Am hath sent me unto you.'"*

- Second, He is the God of history! He is the One who controls and directs in accordance with His purposes.

*...the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,  
and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you*

# Return to Exodus

Friday, May 6: Read II Corinthians 4  
(Note Verse 7)

Now let's make some application from yesterday's discussion. Let me ask two questions: What is keeping us from answering God's call to go? Are there competing voices in our day?

How about the recent bestseller, from Carol Delaney that traces the problem of child-abuse back to Abraham willingness to sacrifice Isaac. I mention what might seem like an absurd example to you because academic reviewers call her work, "a strikingly original analysis." Or, let me give you another example, PBS recently aired a special called *The Bible's Buried Secrets*. This series demotes Abraham and his descendants to the realm of mythology, dismisses the Exodus, and denies any written Old Testament record prior to the Sixth Century B.C. (This means Moses could not have authored any of the Torah.) These are two very specific examples.



I can also mention the general case of Big-Bang cosmology, Darwinian evolution, and nearly every college psychology, philosophy, and religion course taught on nearly every college campus in our country! Oh yes—there are many competing voices telling us to do something other than what God is telling us to do. So what is God's answer to us? The same as it was to Moses!



# Return to Exodus

Friday, May 6: Read II Corinthians 4  
(Continued)

Just mediate upon the following verses, and realize our response to these truths will determine whether or not you and I go when God speaks:

*"I am: The maker of heaven and earth..." Psalm 115:15*

*"My arm is not too short to save..." Isaiah 50:2*

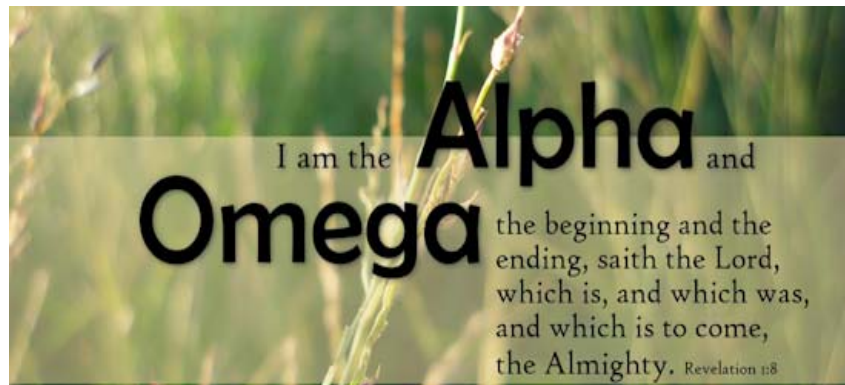
*"I say my purposes will stand..." Isaiah 46:10*

*"I am the Alpha and the Omega . . .who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. . . "*

Revelation 1:8

*Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.*

Revelation 1:3



# Return to Exodus

Monday, May 9: Read Exodus 4

## The Second Issue—External Resistance

We now come to the second excuse that Moses puts on the table in an effort to get out of responding to the calling of God. I call this *The Issue of External Resistance*. This issue is summed up by Moses' response to God in Exodus 4:1

*But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, "The LORD has not appeared to you."*

In other words, what if the Israelites resist God's commission of Moses—something which did happen.

Let's think this issue through. First, is this something we too can expect with respect to our calling to go and make disciples and to exercise our spiritual gifting? It most certainly is! In fact, it is uncanny how closely the concerns of Moses mimic our concerns today! For both you and I worry about how others are going to receive, from us, the good news of the Gospel.

So how did the Lord address the issue for Moses—maybe it will be of help to us as well! The full answer is in today's reading, but the short version is that God was going to perform

miraculous signs through Moses in order to authenticate the fact that God was with Moses.



# Return to Exodus

## Monday, May 9: Read Exodus 4

I know what you are thinking: “Ah, there is no parallel here!” or “I’ve got a legitimate excuse to worry about the resistance of others.”

All I can say is, don’t let God hear you say (or think) there are no miraculous signs that attest to His calling today! For turning a rod into a snake, clean hand to leprous hand and back again, are nothing in contrast to:

*Being a new creature in Christ. . . II Corinthians 5:17*

*Have Christ dwelling in us. . . Colossians 1:27*

What about having a love for one another that is so distinctive it sets us apart as followers of Christ.

*“...By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35*

Or, bearing fruit in our lives that point to the Father.

*“...By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples...” John 15:8*

Or, reflecting the glory of God.

*But we all...are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.  
II Corinthians 3:18*

Or, living in the power of God

*in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left;. . .  
II Corinthians 6:7*

And the Bible provides many, many more examples of the miracles and signs we can see in our own day! I think it is fair to say that God’s grace of giving, that which testifies to Himself, has been even more abundantly provided in this day in which we live than it was in Moses’ day.

# Return to Exodus

Tuesday, May 10: Read Exodus 6  
(Be Sure to Note Verse 9)

We are going to skip ahead a few chapters to continue the story of Moses and his reluctance to *go*. To reinforce what we saw yesterday, that God is potentially at work in *miraculous* ways in our lives, I want you to think about two things with respect to our witness in the face of the external resistances we might be experiencing:

- Our lives will truly bear witness in the manner we are discussing only if we are following after Him—growing in grace and knowledge, and being conformed to His image. So God’s answer to how to deal with external resistance is in part an admonition to walk closely with Him!
- The second item is an answer to this question: “If we potentially have God at work in us in such powerful ways, why don’t people listen?” Good question. I find it helpful to recall the example of Exodus 6:9. Read it for yourself, but in essence it says the Israelites did not initially listen to Moses because of “*their discouragement and cruel bondage.*”

You and I need to remember that our neighbors who resist our efforts to open a spiritual dialogue are in reality doing *hard labor* to whatever lie they have believed. And unbelief is not passive—if you reject Christ, you do not live in a vacuum! Rather, it is because something else has taken His place and is held more dearly. Let me give you an example: you have no doubt met people during the course of your lifetime who have decided that material prosperity is the most important goal in life. They will not be interested in hearing what you might have to tell them about storing up treasures for eternity, because they are doing *hard time* to the lie that material prosperity can provide happiness. Allow the Spirit of God to prove otherwise—you and I need to just keep holding out the truth.

# Return to Exodus

## Wednesday, May 11: Read Exodus 22 and then Exodus 4:10-12

We have come to Moses' final excuse. Before I tell you what it is—do you think God is finally going to be persuaded, or do you think He has this one covered too? No, He will not be deterred and, of course, He has this covered! Our God shall “supply all our needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19

### The Third Issue—Fear of Failure

Here is Moses' final excuse:

*“O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since You have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” Exodus 4:10*

So how does God address this final excuse? Verses 11-12 almost have the feeling that God is losing patience. He reminds Moses that He is the designer of the tongue and mouth, and He confirms that He himself will help him and teach him what to say. As we have seen time after time, when God calls you to go, He will provide everything that you need, every step of the way. Have you made the connection yet with parallels in our day? Consider Mark 3:11.

*“Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.”*

And don't think this just covers the specialized case of being arrested—for we know one role of the Spirit is to always remind us of what we have learned (John 14:26). You might also want to see Ephesians 6:19 in which speaking boldly with the words given is the outcome of prayer. In closing, we have our calling just as Moses did; and a set of excuses similar to his in many ways. Were any of his adequate? Do you think any of ours are?

## Return to Exodus

Thursday, May 12: Read Ezekiel 33  
and Exodus 4:13-18

God tells Moses to go—and in his reluctance he tries out three excuses on God. I have been trying to point out the similarities both to the fact that each of us have been told to go (make disciples and use our spiritual gifts), and in the way we too justify our failure to respond to the call of God. Now follow this next part very closely—for Moses takes his resistance too far. Look at Verse 13:

*Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it."*

God has called and Moses says, "Just send someone else." How often do we do the same thing with respect to sharing the good news of Christ's payment for sin with those we call our friends. Isn't it true that we often invite them to church in the hope that someone else will tell them the Good News?

So how does God feel about this effort to *pass the buck*?

*Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses. . .*

Exodus 4:14

Oh, oh! This is certainly a place that you and I do not want



to go! So think about this: If God has addressed all our shortcomings via His grace, and the only unacceptable option is to go AWOL, what should we do? How about:

### Heed the Call!

You see the book of Exodus isn't just about redemption. It is also about those through whom God is going to communicate His message of redemption!

# Return to Exodus

Friday, May 13: Read John 10

We have been looking at God's call to go—both for Moses and for us. In this context, have you ever thought about the difference in quality of life for those who respond to the call of God and those who do not? Let's start with Moses as an example:

- Did he respond to God's call? As we are about to study, despite his initial reluctance, he did.
- How did that turn out for him? Can you ascribe a certain richness to the life of Moses? Can we go so far as to say that he had an *abundant* life?

Space is too short to describe a full answer to this question, but how about these examples:

- His time in front of the people before the Red Sea when he thundered out "Stand still and watch the deliverance of the Lord," and the Lord opened a path for two million people.
- His 40 days with the Lord on Mount Sinai that led to his face shining so the people could not look at it.
- His successful pleading with God to spare the rebellious people in order to preserve God's reputation.

Of course Moses failed on occasion, but even then we can learn that, despite the consequences, God can restore and still work through those who will trust Him. Now imagine for a moment the alternative for Moses—assuming that he did not heed the call of God. There might have been a certain *comfort* to his life, but my goodness, it would have been comfort tending sheep in the desert of Midian! Why not choose the challenges associated with answering God's call, in order to be in the presence of God, rather than comfort in this world, which in and of itself we already know is vanity! (Ecclesiastes 1:14) And, by now, you know every bit of this holds true for us—just as it did for Moses!

# Return to Exodus

## Monday, May 16: Read Jeremiah 29 (Note Verse 11) and Exodus 4:18-23

We are on the verge of the *big showdown* that is going to begin in Exodus Chapter 5. But before we get there, we have a few details to look at as we close out Chapter 4.

To begin, look at Verses 21-23. Who really knows ahead of time what is going to happen? God does, and those to whom He chooses to reveal snapshots of the future. How awesome it is to respond to the call of a God who knows everything that is going to happen, controls history, promises to look out for us, and in quite a number of areas has even revealed bits of the future to us.

This understanding brings to mind the question—why do we fret? You know we do—over circumstances in which we find ourselves, problems which seem insurmountable, challenges faced by our loved ones, and a host of other things. So I repeat, why do we fret? Perhaps it is because we forget what God's omniscience, sovereignty, and love really mean.

When I find myself beginning to fret over any of the myriad possibilities, I find it very helpful to remember these truths:

- That God knows all about the circumstances in which I find myself (that's what it means to be omniscient).
- That He is completely in control and nothing is out of hand (that's what it means to be sovereign).
- That He loves me.

Understanding all this certainly does not mean that my circumstances are good or I have to like them, but I find knowing they are under the purview of a loving Heavenly Father very helpful.

(By the way, if the phrase "I will harden his heart" has raised some questions in your mind—rest assured we will come back to a discussion of it in the future.)



# Return to Exodus

**Tuesday, May 17: Read I Peter 1  
(Note Verses 15-16) and Exodus 4:24-26**

This short passage adds a very curious piece to the narrative, which has two important things for us to note:

- There is reason to interpret this as a very near thing for the son of Moses, and not Moses himself. (I don't have space to develop this, but consider in the immediately preceding verses how Pharaoh's disobedience leads to the death of his son. If the parallel holds, it is Moses' son who came close to dying.)
- What might seem like radical action in Verse 25-26 must be connected with Genesis 17, especially Verse 14. You see, uncircumcised males were to be "cut off" from the people of God.

Here is our first point of application: **Every child of God needs to know that our God is holy, and we stand on "holy ground."** I like the way Oswald Chambers states this truth:

*There is no heaven that has a little corner of hell in it. God is determined to make you pure, holy, and right and He will not allow you to escape from the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit for even one moment.*



Moses nearly learned the hard way that God is no respecter of persons when it comes to His holiness. And if God won't let Moses *slide*, should we expect anything different? One final item to note, we must remember who wrote this little vignette. Moses did! And so he used his own failure to impart a very important spiritual truth—which is why the Scriptures call him a humble man!

# Return to Exodus

**Wednesday, May 18: Read Isaiah 48**  
(Note Verses 1-18, 22)

Yesterday, God showed the high regard He has for obedience to His revealed will. I want to continue that concept today, because many believers have difficulty with the following kind of statement:

*“The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.”*

Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*



No doubt, Dawkins would apply at least part of this to the near death of Moses' son for the sin of his father. Let's forget Dawkins for the moment and note the facts. In the midst of a narrative in which Moses is going to build his *reputation*, is it not clear that the one who remembers the covenant promises of God, and is thus a heroine, is: 1) a woman; 2) a foreigner; and 3) one who saves a child.

In fact, unlikely and socially unacceptable heroes show up over and over again in the plan of God: Rahab, Tamar, Ruth, and so on. The issue is not, as Dawkins alleges, a lack of character on the part of God; but rather the fact that He is Sovereign (makes the rules) and Holy (establishes what is right and what is wrong).

And mankind (Dawkins) simply proves its status of rebellion when it responds in righteous indignation! Don't be bullied or apologetic because of the petulance of a hardened and lost heart!

## Return to Exodus

**Thursday, May 19: Read I Corinthians 10  
and Exodus 4:27-31**

So Moses is, finally, not only on the move, but has also cleared up a matter of disobedience between himself and the Lord. He teams up with Aaron, after many years of separation, and together they meet with the elders of Israel. The Lord actually directed this liaison with Aaron (Verse. 27), which proved very helpful because it provided an immediate entrée to the Jewish leadership.

Now notice how they explained everything to the leadership and showed the signs to the people. Perhaps this was the first time that many of this generation of Jews had heard about their special relationship to God as a people—and the specific identity of the one who cared for them. Now look at their response in Verse 31—they bowed and worshipped. With 1 Corinthians 10:3-4 in mind, I am wondering if we are observing the conversion of many.

*They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them and that rock was Christ.*

Of course this passage has ongoing fulfillment throughout the time of the plagues, the Passover, the deliverance through the Red Sea, and travels in the wilderness. I find two things worth noting about the salvation of this generation of Israelites. First, the revelation of God they had was so much more limited than what we have today in the completed canon of Scripture and post-cross. Second, despite these differences, what was revealed to them is clearly declared to be Jesus Christ. Apparently Jesus means what He says when He declares in John 14:6,

*“ . . . no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”*

And this clear declaration is not limited by the variances in the extent of revelation through the centuries.

# Return to Exodus

## Friday, May 20: Read Exodus 5

Here, we have the beginnings of a great contest! Think for a moment about who is participating. Don't be too quick to say that it is between Pharaoh and Moses. For it is actually between the gods of Egypt, which includes Pharaoh, and the Great "I Am" (Yahweh). Isn't this, in reality, a contest that has been going on throughout human history—and, in fact, is going on right now? Don't we today have a contest of sorts between the theories of origin, philosophies, and psychologies of our day and Revelation from the Creator of all things who stands far above His creation in unapproachable light? Can't you also sense the antagonism and tension between the two?

Who is the audience for this great contest that is about to begin? There are actually three audiences:

- The audience naturally includes the Exodus generation.
- It also includes the Egyptians. You can see the effect in Exodus 12:35-36.
- The audience was not limited to a specific time and place, but also includes future generations of Israelites (Psalm 78). It also includes all those who hold a copy of the Word of God in their hands—for, over and over within the Scriptures, the work of God in redeeming His people out of Israel is both referenced and applied in the present (Hebrews 11:29).

Let me close by explaining something in the text that might have caught your attention. Notice Moses asks for a "three-day journey" into the desert. This seems to be at odds with the Lord's intent. This phrase is actually an idiom, which means a long time. It is similar to the office manager at your doctor's office telling you, "The doctor will be with you in a moment!" Note how Pharaoh recognized the request for what it really was. We will study his response in the next lesson.

# Return to Exodus

**Monday, May 23: Read Exodus 23**  
(Also Note Exodus 5:3)

So what can we learn about Pharaoh?

- In our passage, and through the chapters to come, he is going to show consistent disdain for the ultimate Sovereign and Creator of this universe. To tell you the truth, I see exactly the same attitude in elite academic and political circles today.
- He is not the least bit afraid of resisting the will of God, nor does he seem to understand the limitations of his own power. Again, in our day I see this same tendency. Consider atheist Richard Dawkins, who at a rally in Washington D.C. in March of 2012, encouraged the crowd to “ridicule and show contempt” for people of faith, including their doctrines and sacraments. No Fear of the Lord anywhere in his heart!
- We are going to see that Pharaoh is very stubborn—a characteristic which typically makes any lesson that God is going to teach very painful.

So how well did Pharaoh’s approach to forthrightly reject the demands of God, delivered through Moses, work? (In fact, he actually punished the Israelites for the insolence of Moses and Aaron for daring to make such a request!) Initially, it is pretty effective. If you look at Exodus 5:21, 22-23, 6:9, you will see that Moses, the Israelite foreman, and the rank and file workers are all pretty discouraged. In fact, can you imagine how things would have gone if there was no further revelation (and encouragement) from God. This is why the Scriptures say:

*Where there is no vision (Revelation)  
the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

For it is the Word of God that is going to get Moses back into his role of leading the people—that is what we should always allow God’s Word to do for us when we are discouraged.

# Return to Exodus

**Tuesday, May 24: Read Exodus 5:10-23**

The next step in the process of redemption was a very hard lesson for the Israelites—and, not surprisingly, continues to be something we resist or try to avoid in our day! We will focus on Israel today, and the application in our day tomorrow. So to begin, think through the following:

- The good news is delivered, and what happens? Do things get easier or harder? *Much harder!* (I am not sure we can appreciate the difficulty faced by the Israelites to make bricks without straw—and the severe physical abuse that came their way for the failure to maintain their production schedule.)
- Was this an expected outcome? *Absolutely not!* After all, God had seen their suffering and promised to do something about it! As we saw in our last lesson, it caught everyone by surprise: Moses, the Israelite leadership, and the rank and file. (Was God caught off guard?)
- Now what is so surprising about this is that God told Moses ahead of time how things were going to go in Exodus 4:21-23:

*"I will harden his heart so that  
he will not let the people go."*

- I can understand the others, but why is Moses discouraged? I want to suggest the erroneous, but common, expectation that if we do the will of God then we will experience *smooth sailing!* I like the way theologian D. Stuart describes the reason the Israelite foreman rebuked Moses:

*Behind this rebuke (Exodus 5:21) appears to be the conviction that Moses and Aaron needed judgment because the nation's God, Yahweh, would never have let such a thing happen. The presumption that a good God never lets dangerous or harmful events happen to His people, false as it has always been, is a very old belief.*

# Return to Exodus

Wednesday, May 25: Read John 15  
(Highlight Verse 20)

We saw yesterday that the Israelites, from top to bottom, had difficulty dealing with the fact that their physical circumstances had worsened after they had begun to trust God. As if a good God would never let harmful or unpleasant circumstances befall His people.

Don't we often feel the same way? Don't we question God when things don't go well, and we know we have been *working hard* for Him? Now I am not saying that God doesn't protect and provide for us—He most certainly does. But haven't we also been warned of the following:

*"Remember the words I spoke to you: No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed My teaching, they will obey yours also."* John 15:20

So isn't it possible that some difficulty could come our way *because of* our stand as Christians? Of course, since we minister in a fallen world under the sway of Satan, we should also expect some *fallout* to find its way into our lives.

And, what about this promise:

*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.* Romans 8:28

How can this verse ever be proved true in the fullest sense unless we find ourselves in the middle of bad circumstances? You see it doesn't say that all things are good, but that in all things God works for good. This isn't so hard to believe when we are in the midst of good times, but we really see the hand of God when bad things happen and God causes them to ultimately work for good in your life and mine!

# Return to Exodus

Thursday, May 26: Read I Peter 1  
(Highlight Verses 6-7)

To continue a theme we have been looking at for the past few days: Imagine a case where Pharaoh had let the people go. Now tell me, how do you think things would have gone from there? Given how much the Israelites belly-ached and griped after the plagues and Red Sea crossing, I would have to say not very well. For it seems very likely that the first real obstacle would have caused the people to fall completely apart!



Instead, how does God prepare the people? He brings a terrible trial, really a number of them, upon the people before he brings them out of Egypt. Why would He do this to the Children of Israel or to us? The New Testament very concisely answers this question: to build our character (James 1:3), to refine our faith (I Peter 1:6-f), and to bring us to the point where we depend upon His power (II Corinthians 12:9).



# Return to Exodus

**Thursday, May 26: Read I Peter 1**  
(Highlight Verses 6-7) (Continued)

But wait, God is not done yet. Not only are there trials, but also in contrast to the trials, the capability of God!

*“...I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.” Exodus 6:6-8*

And so on top of trials, God shows His mighty power and capability by means of both the plagues He brought on Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea (and later, by means of constant provision during 40 years of desert survival).



Still the people struggle to trust! Repeatedly they show a propensity to turn from their Redeemer! Can you imagine any possible scenario in which this could have occurred without the trials that God brought their way? Neither can I! And, of course, by way of application, that is the only way we are going to really learn to trust Him in our own lives—as we see Him deliver us through one trial after another!

# Return to Exodus

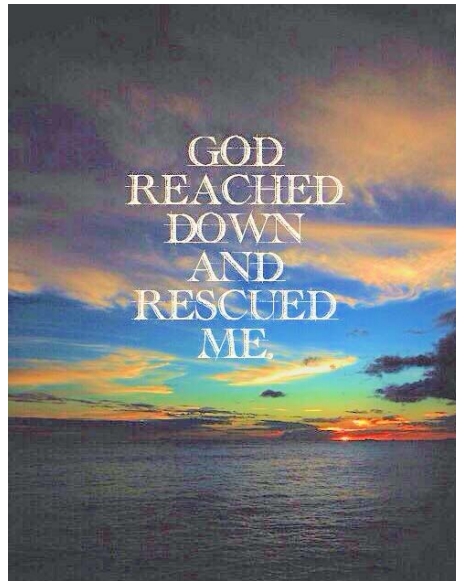
## Friday, May 27: Read Exodus 15

This is a day to look at the *Big Picture*, so let's pause and take stock of where we are. First, consider our theme passages for the book of Exodus:

*" . . . I will redeem you with an outstretched arm  
and mighty acts of judgment. . . "*  
Exodus 6:6-8, see also Exodus 15:13

Here is what we have learned about redemption to this point in our study—remember, this is in the context of physical redemption.

- **Redemption implies enslavement.** In other words, the appeal of redemption is its contrast to a personal sense of being burdened and truly oppressed. (Exodus 1:14)
- **Redemption requires a redeemer.** Those in need of redemption reach the point where they recognize they are powerless to redeem themselves. (Exodus 2:23)
- **The Redeemer must be powerful.** In order to appreciate redemption, it must be clear that the redeemer is more powerful than the oppressor. (Exodus 5-15) This is where we are in our study right now and the main focus of these 11 chapters—the contest between the Great "I AM" and the gods of Egypt is very one-sided!



# Return to Exodus

**Friday, May 27: Read Exodus 15** (continued)

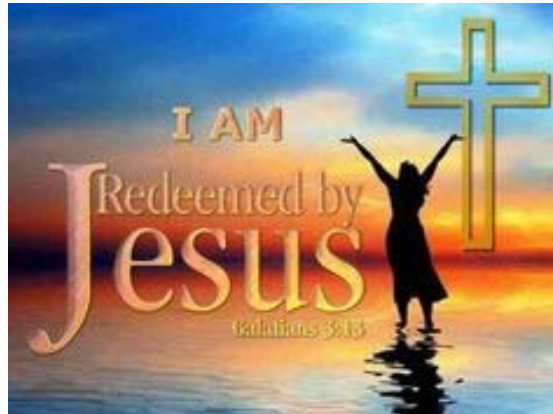
And that covers what we have learned in our studies of Exodus to this point and brings us to what we can yet extract from our study of Exodus.

- **Redemption is a work accomplished solely by the Redeemer.** And yet, ultimately, there must be a response by the redeemed—this can teach us a lot about faith. (Exodus 12:3,34) This is very important—each Israelite family decided to either offer the Passover Lamb, or not. Each decided whether to leave Egypt, or not. This was not the work of redemption; but rather the response to the redemption provided by God. Faith is not a work—but a response!
- **Redemption implies out of a bad place and into a good place,** that is out of slavery and into “a land flowing with milk and honey.” (Exodus 6:8)

Now the book of Exodus is not the only place these principles are taught—it is just that they are historically grounded in the book of Exodus.

These principles can be found many other places in the Scriptures. You can see the cycle repeated many times in terms of physical redemption in the book of Judges. And, of

course, these principles find their spiritual fulfillment in the pages of the New Testament centered in the person and work of Jesus Christ.



# Return to Exodus

## Monday, May 30: Read Galatians 3

This is a second *Big Picture* day, so here is a follow-up question for you to ponder: Is the physical redemption described in Exodus helpful in understanding the spiritual redemption emphasized in the New Testament? Let's take a look at each of yesterday's principles in light of this new question:

- Redemption implies enslavement. In other words, the appeal of redemption is its contrast to a personal sense of being burdened and truly oppressed. (Exodus 1:14)

**In John 8:34 Jesus himself tells us that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. This is the *bad news* every lost person must understand prior to grasping the appeal of the *good news* of the Gospel.**

- Redemption requires recognition. The one in need of redemption must reach the point where they recognize they are powerless to redeem themselves. (Exodus 2:23)

**Ephesians 2:1-4 makes clear our needy condition before a holy God. Couple this with Titus 3:4-f, which makes it clear that we are saved not by any righteous deeds we do, "but because of His mercy."**

- Redemption requires an understanding of God's power. In order to appreciate redemption, it must be clear that the redeemer is more powerful than the oppressor. (Exodus 5-15) This is where we are in our study right now and the main focus of these 11 chapters—the contest between the Great "I AM" and the gods of Egypt is very one-sided!

**Colossians 2:14-15 makes clear that God took away our sins, disarmed all spiritual powers and authorities—triumphing over them in a "public spectacle."**

# Return to Exodus

**Monday, May 30: Read Galatians 3** (continued)

And here is what we have yet to extract from our studies.

- Redemption is a work accomplished solely by the Redeemer. And yet ultimately, there must be a response by the redeemed—this can teach us a lot about faith. (Exodus 12:3,34). This is very important—each Israelite family decided to either offer the Passover Lamb or not. Each decided whether to leave Egypt or not. This was not the work of redemption; but rather the response to the redemption provided by God. Faith is not a work—but a response!

**In John 6:29, just what *work* is required on the part of those who respond—no work at all, but only to believe! So then, each member of the human race is going to have to decide how to respond to the person and work of Jesus Christ!**



- Redemption implies out of a bad place and into a good place, that is out of slavery and into “a land flowing with milk and honey.” (Exodus 6:8)

**Colossian 1:13-14 makes it clear every believer is transferred into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and I can't think of any definition of a “good place” that is better than that!**

Therefore, is the physical redemption described in Exodus helpful in understanding the spiritual redemption emphasized in the New Testament? To answer my own question: Absolutely!

## Return to Exodus

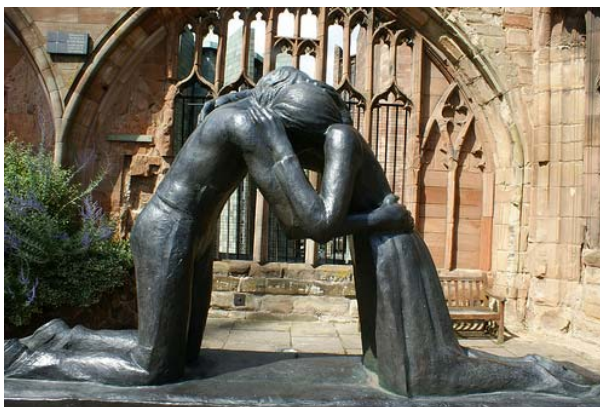
Tuesday, May 31: Read II Corinthians 5  
(Highlight Verses 18 and 20)

Before going back into the text of Exodus, I have one more thing I want you to think about: Whose job is it to communicate the message of redemption at our time in history? To answer this very important question, consider II Corinthians 5:19:

*And He (God) has committed to us  
the message of reconciliation.*

The answer I want, of course, is “**we are** responsible to communicate the message of redemption in our time.” All believers in Jesus Christ are responsible!

Now reconciliation and redemption are not quite the same thing. Reconciliation is the restoration of good relations with another. Literally, the picture is of two disparate parties who are now face-to-face in peace and fellowship.



# Return to Exodus

**Tuesday, May 31: Read II Corinthians 5**  
(Highlight Verses 18 and 20)

Redemption is a necessary early step in the process—for as slaves to sin, no member of the human race is on good terms with God. Rather we are by nature objects of His wrath! (Ephesians 2:3) However, God has made a provision for us:

- To be redeemed out of this slave market of sin and into His kingdom (Colossians 1:13),
- To become his children (John 1:12)
- To have peace with our Creator (Romans 5:1).

Who is it that has been given the great privilege of sharing this “good news” to those otherwise hopelessly lost in the slave market of sin? We have! No wonder the great song-writer Fanny Crosby was moved to pen this verse:

*Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!  
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;  
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,  
His child and forever I am.*

Do you love to proclaim it as well?

VISTOSO  
Community Church



He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit... *John 15:5*

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