

(Through the Bible) Exodus - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

God's plan for our lives will never begin to be fulfilled until we are broken and humble before Him.

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Scripture: Exodus 15:23

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Gods Provision"

Description

This sermon delves into the book of Exodus, highlighting the journey of the Israelites from slavery to freedom, emphasizing the importance of faith, obedience, and God's provision. It showcases how God's laws were given to guide His people towards health, righteousness, and proper worship. The significance of one faithful leader, like Moses, in preserving the ways of God among many is also emphasized.

Transcript

We are going to begin now. Let's turn to Exodus in chapter 1. If Genesis we could say is the book of beginnings, we could title Exodus as a nation is born, the birth of the Israeli nation as a nation, the beginnings we saw in Genesis and now we find them becoming a full-fledged nation. And in the first 15 chapters we read of their slavery in Egypt and their deliverance or we could call it redemption from Egypt.

And the rest of the chapter deals with their time in the wilderness and God's giving them his plan for building the tabernacle. So let's look at this. In the beginning we read of how Pharaoh was disturbed.

The Israelites, even though they were slaves, they were becoming more numerous and more powerful, numerically, and he was afraid that these men would finally stop working for him and overthrow his government. So he decided on a scheme to kill all the male children. Now that was the scheme of the devil.

Now what did we see in our last studies? Not just that God protects us from the devil's schemes, but God does something better. He uses the devil's plan to fulfill his purpose. That shows his all-mightiness in a much greater way.

I mean God could show his all-mightiness to us by protecting us from the devil, that itself would be great. But he shows it in a greater way by turning the tables on Satan, using the very thing that Satan does to destroy him. And the greatest example of this is Calvary, where Satan got everybody geared up and engineered opposition to Jesus, got him crucified, and that was the very thing that resulted in the

overthrow of Satan, because Satan was defeated on that cross.

We can say Satan contributed to his overthrow. Now this is not just for Jesus. It's for you and me.

It's not just for Joseph. It's not just for the people in the Bible. That the things which the devil seeks to do for you, if you live with a clear conscience and in humility before God, he'll turn it back on the devil.

And the very thing that evil people and the devil and all his agents seek to do to you, will ultimately fulfill God's purpose for your life. This is the message of the Bible. How do we see it here? Because Pharaoh passed an order that all the male babies must be killed.

That was the reason why Moses' mother put Moses in a little ark and put it in the river. And that's how Pharaoh's daughter saw Moses, picked him up, and Moses could grow up in Pharaoh's palace, which is the place where God wanted him to be. That could never have happened if the male babies were not being killed.

If the male babies were not being killed, Moses would have grown up just to be another slave. You see how God's purposes are fulfilled through what the devil does. And the thing we see here is a great lesson for us.

We see it in church history too, that when God wants to do something for his people, he always begins with a man. He had to find a man before he could deliver the Israelites. And the training of that took 80 years.

And it wasn't academic training alone. Moses was trained in the best academies of Egypt. But that did not qualify him to serve God.

Acts chapter 7, Stephen says that Moses was mighty in words and in deeds. That means he was a powerful, eloquent speaker when he was 40 years old. He was a great military leader.

He was a very rich person. He had been trained with the best education that Egypt could give. And Egypt was the world's superpower in those days.

And at the end of it all, he did not fit. In fact, Stephen says, Moses thought that the Israelites would recognize that God had raised up a prince in Egypt's palace to deliver them. But it says they did not recognize him.

He was not ready. All his earthly training, all his earthly abilities could not prepare him for the task God had for him. Today people go to Bible schools and study the scriptures and they're qualified.

They think they've got a singing voice. They've got abilities with instruments. It's all good.

And oh, they've got money. So we can use money for God's work. And so many things, so many resources, abilities.

Learn a lesson from Moses with the best that he had. Egypt was the world's superpower in those days, something like the United States today. Pharaoh was the most powerful man in the world.

And Moses was growing up in that palace with the best training, with engineering ability to build pyramids. With all of that, he was not fit. Powerful speaker, no use.

Forty years of the best that the world could give did not prepare him for God's service. God took him for another 40 years into the wilderness to a completely opposite life to what he had. Looking after sheep, living with his father-in-law for 40 years.

I mean, living with your father-in-law for one year itself can be pretty difficult for a man. I mean, women in our country live with their father-in-laws all their life very often. But man, living with his wife's father and getting a job from his wife's father.

Can you imagine anything more humiliating than that? Not just for one or two years, but 40 years. That's how God broke Moses. That's how God broke Jacob.

You remember? He had to live with his father-in-law for 20 years. And God uses fathers-in-law, I tell you that, to break people. And mothers-in-law also, I presume.

I don't know how it goes, Moses' mother-in-law was. But God uses mothers-in-law, fathers-in-law to teach Moses what all the world's abilities cannot teach him. All the universities in Egypt cannot teach what he learns there.

Looking after sheep, working for his father-in-law, all the humiliation of living in the same tent. And at the end of 40 years, he's so broken that he says, Lord, I can't speak. Please send somebody else.

And God says, now you're ready. What is the message we learn from Jacob and from Moses? When you think you're ready, you're not. When you think you're capable, you're strong, you've got knowledge, you've got ability, you can do this, you can sing, you can play, you can speak.

And God says, I have to wait. I have to wait till you're broken. With Jacob, it took 20 years.

With Moses, it took 40 years. With Peter, it took three years. With Paul, at least three years.

It need not take long. That depends on you. How long does it take to go through school from first standard to 10th standard? How many years? 10 years? I'll tell you people who've taken 15 years.

20 years. I know some people who study in some of the medical colleges in Bangalore who spend 15 years to finish a four-year course. So if the course may be only so much, but how long you take depends on you.

It's the same in the Christian life. God had a training program for Moses. Now I'll give you my personal conviction.

It says here, there's a verse in Exodus in chapter 12 and verse 40, which says that the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. Now, when God spoke to Abraham in Genesis chapter 15 and told him that your descendants are going to be slaves in another land, he told him in Genesis 15 and verse 13 that they will be there for 400 years. And actually we read they were there for 430 years.

Did God make a mistake? God is very exact. In the fullness of time, God sent his son. It was exact.

You read Daniel chapter 9, the very year is predicted when Jesus will be crucified. So God doesn't make a mistake. When God spoke to Abraham, his plan was the Israelites should be in Egypt for 400 years.

Why did it take 430 years? Let me give you another example. When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, his plan for them was that they should be two years in the wilderness. How many years did they spend in the wilderness? 40 years.

God may want to break you in two years. How many years may it take? 40 years. In other words, God may want to use you in two years.

He may not be able to use you for 40 years. That depends on you. So God's plan for the Israelites was 400 years, but it took 430 years.

How many years extra? 30 years. Why? I believe the reason is God's man was not ready. And from that, I deduce that when Moses left the palace of Egypt at 40, God had wanted him to spend 10 years in the wilderness with his father-in-law broken by then and come out at the age of 50 to be a leader.

But Moses did not learn his lessons in 10 years. His father-in-law had to trouble him some more for him to learn some lessons. 30 more years.

Now this is a warning for us. God may have a plan for your life. It will never begin to be fulfilled till you're broken.

And what he has planned to do in 10 years may take 40 years. Learn a lesson from that and take a warning. It's good, Lamentations 3 says, it's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.

When we are young, if we can learn this by the time we are 30, we are ready. Yeah, God takes us through many lessons to break us. Humble yourself under those circumstances.

Don't fight against those circumstances and delay God's plan. Any amount of Bible knowledge, any amount of musical ability, any amount of money cannot serve God. Brokenness.

Jacob becomes an Israel when he's broken. Moses becomes a servant of God and a prophet when he's broken. Now let's turn to Exodus in chapter 2. We read there of a time when Moses goes out to deliver the Egyptians and Israelites from the Egyptians.

And he meets an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, Exodus 2.11. And he beats him and kills him. Can you imagine what a powerful man he was that with his hands he could kill a man. Now if he had continued killing the Egyptians at that rate one by one, how many years do you think he would have taken to kill all of the millions of Egyptians? He would have died before all the Egyptians were killed if he had killed them one by one.

That's the result of human ability. But when God had broken him at the age of 80 and he lifts up his rod over the Red Sea, in a moment the entire Egyptian army is buried under the Red Sea forever. That is the difference between human power and God's power.

That is the difference between a man serving with his human ability and a broken man serving with the power of God. Let me encourage you my brothers and sisters. The message in the scriptures right from the beginning is if you want to build Jerusalem, if you want to build a church, you got to be broken.

You got to be a broken man. You got to be humbled by God through circumstances, through people. And if you don't rebel in those circumstances, God can do a quick work in you.

Yeah, God can do a quick work in you. I've seen a lot of people, very zealous young people who know all the doctrines and who think that they can serve God and they go out in their strength. Twenty, thirty years later they are frustrated, discouraged, critical, blame this person, that person, they've accomplished nothing.

I feel sad. I tell you my life is exciting. I'm 61 years old today.

I've been born again for over 41 years. And I believe the best lies ahead of me. I'm so excited to live for God.

I'm so excited to live for God. It's the best possible thing in the world. I don't have a complaint against anyone in the world.

Nobody's ever done any harm to them. People have tried to do harm, many, many people, but all that they did only worked for my good. Like it says in Romans 8, 28.

I have no complaint. But God's had to break me even in the last few years through circumstances and events that other people try to do to harm me. I humble myself under God and he breaks me, continues to break me throughout my life.

And the more we are broken, the more God can make us a blessing to others. You see in the book of Exodus, when the rock is smitten, the waters flow. If the rock is not smitten, the waters will not flow.

When the alabaster vial the woman brought and broke it at Jesus' feet, the perfume filled the house. When it's not broken, it doesn't fill the house. When Jesus took the loaves and blessed it, nothing happened.

When he broke it, 5,000 were fed. What is the message in all these things? Brokenness, brokenness, brokenness, brokenness. When the atom is split, what tremendous power is released to give electricity to a whole city? Small atom, so small that you can hardly see it.

The message in nature, the message in the Bible is power is released through brokenness. If you've got that message and it's gripped your life, God gripped me with that message. 36 years ago when I was seeking God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and power, before I left my job, I was seeking God for power and the Lord showed me that the way of brokenness was the way of power and I've never lost my sight of that.

I want to encourage you young people to learn that lesson when you're young. We read here that when God finally called Moses and he says I'm reluctant to go, just one thing I want to say here, God made a promise here through Moses to the people. He said to them in Exodus 317, I will bring you, he told all those elders and the leaders of Israel, I will bring you out of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites.

There were two promises there, I'll bring you out of Egypt, I'll bring you into Canaan. Only one was fulfilled, the other was not fulfilled. This is to prove to you that God's promises are not fulfilled always.

Here is a clear proof, all those elders who heard the promise of God, I will bring you out of Egypt, I'll bring you into Canaan, none of them entered Canaan. Only half was fulfilled because they did not respond in faith. That's what I want to say to you.

God's promises are not fulfilled until you respond in faith. It's like a switch, you know what happens in a switch? One wire, you know electricity, you need two wires and at the switch the electrician puts those two

wires next to each other. They don't touch, that's why the lights are not burning.

The moment you put the switch, they touch, the lights come on, the fans come on. God's promise and your faith, it may be that close, it doesn't touch and no lights, no fan, nothing works. The moment it touches, everything, power.

Can you imagine a small switch and the whole building becoming full of power? Such a small gap there is in a switch between those two wires. It makes all the difference. God's promise, you can hear about it, you can understand it, but when your faith reaches out and says, yes it'll be fulfilled in my life, that's when it's fulfilled and only Joshua and Caleb believed that it would be fulfilled and only Joshua and Caleb experienced it.

Exodus chapter 4, we read about God calling Moses and in order to encourage him and to teach him, he gave him three signs. The first sign was, you know, when Moses said, how they won't believe me, verse 1, what will I say? The first sign he said, the Lord said, what is in your hand? The Lord always begins with what is in our hand. You don't have to go looking for something you don't have.

What do you have? That's enough. Elisha asked the widow, what do you have in your hand? A pot of oil? That's enough. With that pot of oil, all your problems can be solved.

The Lord asked Moses, what's in your hand? A shepherd's staff? That's enough. If God is with that shepherd's staff, all types of things can happen. And what is the first sign? Throw your shepherd's staff on the ground.

It became a serpent. Verse 3, and Moses fled from it and the Lord said, don't be scared. Stretch out your hand and take it by the tail and caught it and became a staff in his hand.

What is the message there? Overcoming Satan. That's the first thing we need to learn. We need to learn that we don't have to be afraid of Satan.

We don't have to be afraid of that serpent. We have to learn that Satan is so close to us, right in our hand. Do you think Satan is far from us? It was right in Moses' hand.

Cast it down and you see there's a devil there. There's selfishness, very close to us, right in our flesh. Satan has got his citadels and his forts.

But we don't have to be afraid of him. We don't have to run away from this serpent. In Jesus' name, we can take that and the very thing we're afraid of becomes a rod of authority in our hand to split the Red Sea and to lead God's people on.

One of the first things God's servants need is authority, not knowledge. Authority. I would rather have a man who has spiritual authority, even if he has less Bible knowledge, than a man with a lot of Bible knowledge but no spiritual authority.

The trouble today is a lot of preachers have a lot of Bible knowledge. Some don't even have that. But some have knowledge but they have no authority.

The first thing God said to Moses, you need authority in your life. You need authority over the enemy. You must not be afraid of Satan.

Satan shouldn't put a fear in your heart. Secondly, the Lord said, now, verse 6, with the same hand, now put your hand inside your bosom. Put it inside your shirt.

And when he took it out, it was full of leprosy. That's the second thing you need to learn. The corruption that is inside your own heart, inside your flesh.

You think it's not there. Put your hand inside and see. Ask God to give you light on what's inside your self.

And you'll see a lot of it. It's like leprosy. Corrupt.

That's the second thing you need to see. That in your flesh, like Paul said, dwells no good thing. Romans 7, 18.

Nothing good dwells in my flesh. You cannot serve God until you learn that. Because if you don't learn that, you will go on condemning people as if they have got a worse flesh than yours.

I thank God that God has shown me one thing. Well, he showed me this first thing that Satan, I don't have to be afraid of him, that I've got authority over Satan. He's also shown me the second thing that my flesh is as corrupt as the flesh of anybody in the world.

Nobody can commit a sin which I'm incapable of. If I have not done it, maybe it's God's mercy or circumstances or something like that, but I'm not worse than that fellow. If you think that you are better than another human being on this earth, I want to tell you in Jesus' name, you are unfit to be a servant of God.

To be a servant of God, you've got to recognize that you are no better than the worst human being on the earth. Put your hand inside and see. That's the second lesson.

The third lesson was, he said in verse nine, take some of the water from the Nile and pour it out on the dry ground and it'll become like blood. Now, water is the most essential thing for life. It's not like food.

You can live without food, you can't live without water. And blood is a picture of death. So, I see this as a symbol.

God was trying to, for me, the lesson is that all the things of this earth, you know, the River Nile was the thing that Egyptians worshipped. That was their God, the River Nile. He said, even all this, you must pour it out to death.

A picture of being crucified to the world and the world being crucified to me that I have no more attraction. This is not like water to me now. It's like blood.

If it were water, I would drink it. You drink blood when the water is turned into blood. Can you drink it? You would rather be thirsty than drink that filthy blood.

And that's the way I need to see everything in this world. If you want to be a servant of God, you've got to look at all the attractive things in this world. And not only the attractive things, even the things that you think are necessary.

And say, Lord, I'm crucified to it. Nothing in this world can attract me anymore. These are three essential qualifications for a servant of God.

That's what we see there in Exodus 4. And then he sends him out. And Moses, before he goes to meet Pharaoh, he has to learn one more lesson. In verse 24 to 26 of chapter 4, as Moses and Moses has now agreed to go to Pharaoh, he is equipped and he goes.

The man whom God has trained for 80 years. There's only one man on the face of the earth who is important to God's purpose at this time. We are not like that today.

Today, God has many servants. But at that time, he had only one man. All his purposes depend on one man.

And it says in Exodus 4.24 that the Lord tried to kill him. Now, we read there that Satan tried to kill him. We can understand that.

I can understand Satan trying to kill Moses. But the Lord trying to kill him? Why? Because there was disobedience in his own house. He had not circumcised his son because his wife was not a Jew.

His wife was the daughter of Jethro, who was not a Jew. And she said, no. They had an argument when the son was born.

We're not going to circumcise. You keep all your Jewish customs to yourself. And Moses humbly obeyed.

And he was living in his father-in-law's house and his wife was the boss. And he said, okay, I won't circumcise. And God said, you can't go and lead Israel out of Egypt if you can't lead your own home.

The Bible says, if a man cannot run his own home, 1 Timothy 3, how can he run God's house? Be the head in your own home first. I've seen people who go out to serve God who are scared of their wives. How can such a man serve God? That's what God had to teach Moses.

Be the head in your home. Get your son circumcised. If you can't bring up your children, at least when they're in your home in a godly way, how can you serve God? That's the lesson we learn here.

Such a serious thing that God said, Moses, even though you're the most important man for me on earth, if you don't obey me, I'll kill you. And his wife understood it. And so as soon as she saw that her husband is dying delirious with fever, she knew what the reason was.

She took a sharp stone and cut off her son's foreskin and in anger said, you are a bridegroom of blood to me. And I think Moses did one wise thing. He sent his wife home and carried on with his ministry.

He didn't want any hindrance there. And you see there how God is so strict with his servants. Other people he'll allow them to do many things, but if you are to be one of God's choice servants, he's going to require obedience in the smallest thing.

He's going to look into areas of your life that other people he doesn't bother about. If you borrowed 10 rupees from somebody and didn't return it, you're to be a choice servant of God. God will keep on troubling you till you go and return it.

You borrowed a book from someone that you just completely forgot about to return. You kept it in your house and he's lying there. You see it.

He's gone to go and give it back. He doesn't do that for everybody because all of them are not God's choice servants. Most of them are just compromisers and living for themselves.

God leaves them alone. But if you're a choice servant of God, he will not allow you to write one false statement in a report. He will not allow you to be unfaithful with one rupee of money.

Not even one rupee. Other believers can do what they like. They can be unfaithful with millions, but not you.

You want to be a choice servant of God? You want God to watch over you with such a jealous care? That's a price you have to pay. This is the man who finally stands before Pharaoh. You know, when you got a clear conscience before God, when you have stood before God, what is a world's most powerful man, Pharaoh? A bit of sand, dust.

For a man who's lived before God's face, Pharaoh is nothing. This is how a servant of God must be. This is the type of servant of God we need in India.

People who live before God's face, like Elijah told Ahab, I live before God's face. I'm not worried about anyone. I don't fear man.

I don't go buttering cabinet ministers, MLAs, MPs, like we see a lot of preachers doing today. That's the only way to survive, brother, in India, because we don't know God. That's right.

When you don't know God, that is the only way to survive. I fully agree with you. But that's not the way Moses survived.

That's not the way Elijah survived. They lived before God, and when they lived before God, they had God backing them, and they couldn't care less. Leave alone MPs and MLAs and cabinet ministers, they could not care less for Pharaoh, the most powerful man and the greatest superpower in the world at that time.

You want to be a servant of God like this? I tell you, don't look around at the servants of God you see in our land. Look into the scriptures. That's the type of man God's looking for, even today.

Men who don't care for man's approval, who don't want man's money, who don't want backing from political people or anybody. They want the backing from God. That's how Moses stood before Pharaoh, and God backed up Moses completely.

Why doesn't God back up so many people who claim to be servants of God today? Why do I say God doesn't back them up? I've heard these preachers, when they get up to preach, they bore me to death. Can you say a man who's boring is backed up by God? Rubbish. There is no anointing in their word.

There's no authority in their life. Even young people, wishy-washy, sluggish, compromisers, because they're seeking to please men. Paul said, if I seek to please a single man, I cannot be a servant of Christ.

That's how Moses lived, and I want to encourage all of you to be like that. Don't seek to please men. Seek to please God.

Let men treat you as they like. Let them treat you like dirt. The apostles were treated like garbage.

Jesus was treated like garbage, but they were men of God. They lived before God's face. They didn't want any backing from human beings.

They wanted God's backing, and he stood before Pharaoh, and God backs him with all those miracles. There were, you know, the plagues of blood, and frogs, and lice, and flies, and diseases on the livestock, and boils, and hail, and locusts, and darkness. Nine plagues, and then the last one, the death of the firstborn.

And it says, some of those plagues, we read in chapter 7 and verse 11, that the magicians of Egypt could also do it. They could do it up to a certain point as tricks. You know how magicians do tricks? But they did it to resist Moses.

And this is quoted in the New Testament, in 2nd Timothy 3 verse 8, as a picture of counterfeit Christians opposing godly people. You know, 2nd Timothy 3 speaks about those who have a form of godliness without its power. 2nd Timothy 3, 5, and then it goes on three verses later to speak about Janus and Jambres opposing Moses, just like the Pharisees opposed Jesus, just like the Jews opposed Paul.

Janus and Jambres opposed Moses, like the false prophets opposed Elijah, and the false prophets opposed Jeremiah. And throughout church history, there have been the professional preachers who stand against the prophets of God, that God has raised up in generation after generation in the different lands. It's always been the same thing.

There's a man whom God has raised up as a prophet, and there's the professional preacher who's got all his certificates, and his degrees, and his robes opposing the man of God. It's always been like that. John the Baptist opposed by the professional religious establishment.

It's the same thing pictured there, but it didn't make a difference, because ultimately Moses triumphed. He stood before God. He didn't want to please that professional religious establishment.

And if you're going to be a man of God, you're not going to seek to please the professional religious establishment, whatever their titles, whatever their robes, if they don't know God. The knowledge of God is the most important thing. I respect a man who knows God, and in whose life I can see by his life and his words.

Here is a man who knows God, who's got discernment of God's ways, because he lives before God's face. That's how Moses was. That is what we learn in those early chapters of Exodus.

That is what God wants to do and produce in our lives. And in Exodus chapter 12 onwards, we read about the deliverance of the Israelites. They were told to put the blood upon the doorposts and eat the Passover.

They were to use hyssop. Hyssop was a very common plant easily found, and it's a picture of faith. Faith is very easily found.

Use the hyssop, dip it into the blood, put it on the door. That's what we do with the blood of Jesus Christ, the lamb that was slain. Pictured way back there in Exodus chapter 12, a picture of Jesus Christ, who was crucified nearly 1,500 years later on the same Passover day, on the day when Israel left Egypt, the 14th day of the first month of the Israeli calendar.

That is the day Jesus was crucified. And God, who looked into the future and saw the day that Jesus was crucified, that was the day he chose to deliver Israel out of Egypt. That's why Israel's deliverance from Egypt has got a big lesson for us.

How were they delivered? Not by their good life, not by good works. Ephesians 2 is very clear, not of good works. Faith.

God didn't go checking inside each household, however you live. Let me examine your life for the last 30 years. He only examined, do you have faith that the only way you can be delivered is by the bloodshed of an innocent lamb? You dip the hyssop in the blood, put it outside your door and say, this is what I trust in.

Not my good works, not my religious activities, and the angel of death will never come into your house. That's the way of salvation. So that no man can boast saying, I got saved because I lived a pretty good life.

No, the man who lived a pretty good life and the man who lived a bad life have both got to be saved through the blood of the lamb. And if somebody thought there in Israel, one of the Israelites thought, well I lived a pretty good life, I don't believe God will judge me, and he didn't put the blood outside the door, do you know what would have happened? Death would have come into his house and he would have discovered that the best life was not good enough. The blood of the lamb alone could save him.

And now I know that people have misused this truth, abused it to live careless lives and say, oh then it doesn't matter how we live. No, it does matter. Because Ephesians 2 which says, not of works lest any man should boast.

In the next verse Ephesians 2 10 says, after you're saved God has created good works for you to do. So we're not talking about good works before salvation. You can't save yourself by your good works.

But after you're saved, if you don't have good works, I doubt whether your faith is genuine at all. That's what James says. Okay so that's a picture, one of the clearest pictures of redemption way back there with the blood of the lamb.

And feeding on the unleavened bread that night was a picture of feeding on Christ. It's not enough to put the blood, we've got to feed on the living Lord. And they were to, it says the Lord told them, eat it in your traveling clothes.

They were to wear traveling clothes. Ready to travel. And that is how we are to live in this world.

Always ready to go any moment when Jesus calls us in the rapture. That's how we are to live every day of our life. Feeding on Christ, trusting in the blood, in our traveling clothes.

This is not our home. Egypt is not our home. We've got a journey to go and make any time the call may come, we've got to go.

That's how we're to live and that's what we see there in that passage. I just want to point out one thing to you. God's righteousness in Exodus 12 verse 35 and 36.

It says the sons of Israel asked the Egyptians to give them gold and silver and clothing. Why was that? Does God ask his children to demand like that? With the Israelites it was right. It's not right for you and me to go and ask people to give us gold, silver and clothing.

But it was right for the Israelites because those Egyptians had made these Israelites work for 430 years or at least 400 years nearly. A number of years and never paid them. God said I'll make sure you get your pay before you leave Egypt.

And they got their full pay for 400 years before they left Egypt. I tell you God's righteousness is so wonderful. In these little things you see God's righteousness in scripture.

Read the scripture carefully. It's a book of tremendous encouragement in the little little things. And finally they come to the Red Sea and God hangs his people in one test of faith after another.

Behind are the Egyptians, left side mountains, right side mountains, underneath is hell, in front is the Red Sea. Which way to go? There's only one way to look, up. And God delivers them.

You know when God brings us into circumstances where we are surrounded on all sides, there's only one direction we can look. And deliverance will come from there. Like the psalmist says, I lift up my eyes unto the hills.

Is my help going to come from there? No help from there. The Lord who made heaven and earth, he's the one who's going to help me. Psalm 151.

And so finally God brings them. The Lord tells Moses in Exodus 14, you don't have to fight in this battle, just stand still. Exodus 14, 13 and see the salvation of the Lord, which he's going to accomplish for you.

And he splits the Red Sea and they go into the Red Sea and out a picture of baptism. 1 Corinthians 10 says that is a picture of baptism in water and they come out there and there's a pillar of cloud that comes from heaven upon them another baptism. We read in 1 Corinthians 10, a baptism in the cloud, a picture of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

So what all did they experience there? Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, baptized in water in the Red Sea, baptized in the cloud that came from heaven. Those three were the initial experiences with which the Israelites came out and it's exactly like that in the Acts of the Apostles. When people were converted, they were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Immediately they were baptized in water and the very same day they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came down upon them from above. Why did that pillar of cloud come? Not just to give them an experience.

Some people have got baptism in the Holy Spirit for an experience. No, the pillar of cloud came down from above. It was a pillar of fire at night.

That's what John the Baptist said. He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. The purpose of that pillar was to lead them to the promised land, to a land of victory where the giants would be under our feet.

Why has God given us the baptism in the Holy Spirit? To lead us into the promised land of victory where the giants of lust that have ruled this. This is the land of Canaan, head to foot. Many giants have ruled here for many, many years.

Anger, dirty thoughts, jealousy, bitterness, love of money. These giants have ruled the land of Canaan by the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The pillar of cloud leads me into that land and says, I'm going to bring these giants under your feet.

You're going to possess this land. This land belongs to God. Canaan belongs to God.

It doesn't belong to those giants. Many people haven't understood the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit because the God of this world has blinded their eyes, not from the message of redemption through the blood, not from the message of baptism in water, but from the understanding the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. When they came out of the river, they praised God.

And there's a verse in Psalm 106, verse 12, which says, when they saw the Egyptians buried, then they praised the Lord. That's how the man of sight praises. A lot of people praise God after the enemies have been buried.

That's what it says in Psalm 106. They saw the Egyptians buried. Oh, praise the Lord.

But the man of faith, he says, thou has set a table before me, Psalm 23, in the presence of my enemies. My enemies are still there. But in the presence of the Lord, I sit and I eat and thou anointest my head with oil and my cup runs over with praise, even though my enemies are there because I have faith that God will destroy them.

That's the man of faith. So you are either a man of sight who are waiting for God to answer the prayer and destroy the enemies, and then you say, hallelujah, praise the Lord. That's old covenant life.

Or you're a new covenant Christian who says, well, thou has set the table before me in the presence of my enemies, thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runs over, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I'll dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The spirit of triumph, even when the enemies are there, because we know that God will take care of them. Satan, for example, he's not dead.

He's been defeated, but he's not dead. He's alive. We're not afraid of him.

And all his agents in the world who try to harm us of any religion, we're not afraid of it. They cannot touch a hair on my head without God's permission. God may allow them to kill me.

That's okay. He allowed them to kill Jesus. He allowed them to kill Paul.

He allowed them to kill Peter. He allowed them to kill James. All the apostles except John were killed, but not before God's time.

So we're not afraid. Yeah. Then we read of Israel in the wilderness.

In chapter 15 onwards, we read of their coming to the waters of Mara in verse 23, 15, 23, bitter waters. And they began to complain. Everything was a test.

Test of faith. The trial of your faith, Peter says. Can you trust me, God says.

Can you trust me when you come to the bitter waters that I've already got a solution for it? Or do you grumble and complain? The man of sight grumbles and complains. They already praised God in chapter 15, first part for deliverance from the Red Sea, but then they grumbled again. Now the lives of many Christians is like this.

Like in physics, they have a thing called a sine wave, up and down and up and down. Praising God, complaining. Praising God, complaining.

Sunday morning, praising God. Sunday afternoon, complaining, getting angry. Monday morning, praising God.

Or sometimes till Monday to Saturday, complaining. Again, Sunday morning, praising God. This is not God's will.

This is Exodus 15. Praising in the beginning, grumbling at the end. It's not God's will.

This is old covenant. The Bible says rejoice in the Lord always. In everything give thanks.

That's God's will for us in the new covenant. But for that we have to believe that God has got a solution for every problem we face. As soon as they had a problem, they went to Moses and said, what shall we do? Where shall we drink? And he cried to the Lord.

And the Lord said, the problem is right there. And the solution to the problem is right there in front of you. Verse 25, the Lord showed him a tree.

He cut down the tree, put it in the waters. The waters were healed. I want to ask you a question.

Who planted that tree in the wilderness? Who? Was it a man or God? God. Why did he plant that tree in the wilderness, say 30 years earlier? Because he knew 30 years from today, my children will come here. They will find the waters bitter.

I must start making a solution for their problem now itself. Do you know that the solution to some of your problems God has already planned for 30 years earlier? That's what you get from this book. If you can see it's there, have faith, have faith in God.

There's no problem that can suddenly crop up that takes God by surprise and say, oh, I didn't know that would happen. He already knows. Not only he already knows, he's already made a solution for it.

He's planted a seed 30 years earlier so that you'll have a solution to your problem. You can look at every problem you face in life. I'm telling you that after 41 years, I've not just been converted for one year, I have never found a problem in my life.

I've faced umpteen problems, thousands, but I never found one for which God had not already planned beforehand. He planted a seed 30 years earlier because he knew I, his unworthy child, would come there one day and face a problem. I would need a solution.

He's got people planned to solve it for me. Walk before God in humility and Satan will never be able to overcome you. And you read in Exodus chapter 17 that they come to another place.

Again, there's no water to drink and again they are grumbling. And the Lord this time says, look at that rock. Exodus 17.6, go and stand there and smite that rock.

And he smites the rock and the waters flow. You know, when I was young and I read that passage, I used to picture a little rock and a little trickle of water coming out and everybody drinking. But as I understood how many people needed water, do you know how many people there were in that wilderness? 600,000 men between the ages of 20 and 60 alone.

How many women and children below the age of 20, over the age of 60? I think it must have been 2 million people there. 2 million people. How much water do 2 million people need to drink? Is it a little trickle? No, it has to be one river this way, another river this way.

Can you imagine 2 million people standing in a queue to get water? The last man would die of thirst by the time he gets to the front. No, it was rivers flowing in all directions. So you didn't have to stand in a queue.

It was flowing right by your leg. You could just stoop and drink. This is the rivers of living water that the New Testament speaks about.

It comes when the rock is smitten. When Jesus was smitten, that prepared the way for Pentecost. Calvary and then Pentecost.

And if rivers of living water are to flow out from us, when the Spirit of God baptizes us, that doesn't mean automatically rivers are flowing from us. You can be baptized in the Holy Spirit the day you're converted, but then God has to do a work of smiting, calvary, the cross, brokenness. And when that is done, then the rivers will begin to flow from you and 2 million people can be blessed.

No problem for God. He can pick up an ordinary, unknown, good for nothing, weak, stupid person like you, brother or sister, and bless 2 million people, every family on the earth through you. It just depends on whether God can break you.

That's all. Okay, we go and see further. Immediately after this, it says in verse 8, then Amalek came.

Amalek throughout the Old Testament is a picture of the flesh. The Spirit and the flesh. You see the conflict there in Exodus 17.

As soon as the rivers begin to flow, then, then, then Amalek came. The flesh comes into conflict with the Spirit and wants to destroy God's people. And that was overcome by a combination of Moses lifting up his hands in prayer and Joshua fighting the enemy in the valley.

This is the combination that overcomes the flesh. Using the sword of the Spirit against the enemy and lifting up our hands in helplessness before God. And when we are tired, we need an Aaron and a Hur to hold us up.

It says in verse 12 of chapter 17, Moses was tired. You know, you can't make it alone, my brother, sister. You can't make it alone.

One of the things I've discovered in my life is I cannot make it alone. If I stand here today without having fallen by the wayside 30 years ago, without having compromised, it is because I have brothers and sisters who have encouraged me through these years, who have helped me, who have prayed for me, who have exhorted me. I've got Aaron's and Hur's by the plenty and I value them.

Learn to value. They may not know as much as you. Moses was a much greater man than Aaron and Hur.

Who was Hur? Hur is even unheard of. But learn, he needs to hold up your hand. I praise God for those who recognize that.

That you may be the greatest man of God. You need an unknown brother like Hur to hold up your hand if you are to continue to the end. From chapter 19 onwards on through chapter 34, in between here and

there, you see about God's laws.

God gives his laws, the 10 commandments in chapter 20. All those 10 commandments are listed there from verse 1 onwards right up to verse 17. The one commandment with promise, honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may live long on the earth.

The only commandment with promise, verse 12, for children. And at the end of this, these commandments, we read, Moses says to the people, verse 20, don't be afraid. And the people say, yeah, we'll do everything that God says.

See, they said that even before the commandments. In chapter 19, verse 8, when the Lord said his plan for them, they said to Moses, yeah, we'll do everything the Lord says. Chapter 19, verse 8, God says, okay, here are the 10 commandments, do them.

And they spent 1500 years disobeying those commandments, proving that you cannot keep the law. And you see a beautiful example of that in chapter 21. Immediately after the law was given is this beautiful story of the Hebrew slave who was allowed to go free because he had finished his six years of slavery.

The law was in the seventh year, you let him go free. But in the seventh year, he comes to his master and says, I don't want to go free. I love you, my master.

I'd like to be with you. Verse 5, I love my master. 21.5, I'd like to serve you.

See, that comes immediately after giving the 10 commandments to teach one thing, that the type of service that God wanted was not this obedience to the law out of a legalistic spirit. Here is the 10 commandments, and then is the story of the way we are to serve our master. I love my master.

That's why I want to keep the commandments. That's what Jesus said. He loved me, keep my commandments.

And right through these chapters, I'm not going to go into all those details you can read. God gave them little, little details about, you read in the book of Leviticus and others about cleanliness and so many laws. And when he said to them, I just want to show you one verse in Exodus in chapter 15 and verse 26.

He says, if you will listen to the voice of the Lord and everything he tells you to do and give ear to his commandments, I will put none of these diseases on you for I am the Lord, your healer. Now, many people think healing is the greatest thing. No, I'll tell you something better than healing.

Health. Don't you think health is better than healing? To get healing, you got to be sick first. Is there anything better than that? Health.

And the Lord was telling them, listen, if you fellas obey my laws, a lot of these sicknesses that the Egyptians get, you will not get. It's true. The laws of hygiene he gave them, the laws of, you know, if you're a glutton and you get sick, you got yourself to blame.

You don't follow God's laws. God's laws preserve us in health. You don't need to go to God for healing so much.

If you obey God's laws, he'll keep you in health. You'll grow old as a healthy man without getting sick, without tension, cast your burden on the Lord. And then we go on to different laws.

Like, let me give you one example, 23 verse 9, don't oppress a stranger because you were strangers and you get, people have been kind to you. Be kind to them. Keep the Sabbath, chapter 31, verse 16 and 17.

See, this is the, you know, there's a lot of argument among scientific people today, whether the six days of creation were actually six days or six million years. Well, it's very clear in Exodus 31, 16 and 17, the Lord made the earth in six days. And the seventh day of the week is a day of rest.

It's so clear. One last thing I want to mention is how they broke these laws when they made the golden calf. In Exodus 32 and 33, you read about the golden calf they made to worship just because Moses had gone up for 40 days.

You know who preserved Israel in the ways of God? Not 25 men, one man. One man preserved 2 million people in the right way. Throughout the ages, God has raised up very often one man.

God looks for one man. One man like John Wesley preserved England. One man like Moses.

As soon as that man was gone, decay set in. God is looking for one uncompromising man. He can do more through one man like that than a thousand compromisers like Aaron.

And Moses comes in and sets matters straight in that camp. And he leads the people back to God. Let's pray.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/jWys4-LitVw.mp4>

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