

As we emerge from lockdown...

Introduction

We will be looking at some passages from Exodus through which I hope the Lord will help us to emerge well and better prepared for where he is taking us next.

Exodus is the second book in the Old Testament. The book gets its name from the nation of Israel's mass emigration from Egypt. Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, records God promising Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation, they would possess the land of Canaan, and through them the whole earth would be blessed by God.

God is faithful and keeps his promise to Abraham. There is a gap of 400 years between the end of Genesis and the start of Exodus during which Abraham's descendants had grown to be numerous. Apart from God, Moses is the key figure in Exodus. Moses is the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. He was the mouthpiece of God but also a man of action. He developed a close relationship with God and was obedient to God's call on his life.

There will be five sessions in this study series:

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- Hearing the voice of God (Exodus 3:1-22)
- Trusting the promises of God (Exodus 4:29-6:5)
- Receiving the grace of God (Exodus 12:1-31)
- Experiencing the salvation of God (Exodus 13:17-14:31)
- Accepting the provision of God (Exodus 16:1-36)



Week 1: Hearing the voice of God

WELCOME

Spend time relaxing and sharing together.

Icebreaker. In what ways has God caught your attention during your life?

WORSHIP

Psalm 90 is the only Psalm attributed to Moses. Read Psalm 90:1-6 (or more if time allows). Use these verses as a catalyst for worship and prayer.

WORD

Read Hebrews 11.23-29, which is a bit like Moses' CV.

1. What are your thoughts on Moses' achievements? Why was he successful? What can we learn from Moses' life?

Read Acts 7.17-29 (a summary of Moses earlier life up to the age of 40 based on Exodus chapters 1 and 2)

2. What do you think God was doing in Moses during these years?

Read 3.1-15 (or to v22 if time allows)

God told Moses that he was concerned about the suffering of his people and he was ready to free them from slavery in Egypt and take them into the land that he promised them. God said to Moses, "So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

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3. Moses responds by saying, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” To which God replies, “I will be with you.” God seems to ignore Moses’ question. Why might that be?
4. What other reasons does Moses give for why he is the wrong person for this calling (Exodus 3.13; 4.1,10,13)? Do any of these resonate with you?
5. In v12, why does Moses have to complete his task before he gets a sign?

In ancient times, the Hebrew scribes didn’t use vowels. The English translation of God’s name, ‘the LORD’, comes from the Hebrew word ‘YHWH’. The absence of the vowels means we don’t know for sure how YHWH was originally pronounced; but the generally accepted pronunciation is ‘Yahweh’. This was the name that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob used for God (Genesis 22.14; 26.22; 49.18)

6. In vv13-15, why does God answer Moses’ question this time and in this precise way?

WHAT NEXT?

Moses saw the burning bush, he was drawn to it. Moses had been walking in these parts for forty years as a shepherd looking after Jethro’s flocks.

Growth Group Notes

Spring 2021



This land that Moses was familiar with became holy on that day because the Lord, the God of Israel, had chosen to show up.

I wonder how often we miss out on a close encounter with God as we tread on familiar ground. I wonder how often we miss out seeing what God is doing in our community, our workplace, our schools, in the conversations that we have with our neighbours, families and friends, and even with acquaintances and strangers.

Moses saw a strange sight and went over to investigate. It was then that God called his name. I wonder how often we miss out on hearing God's calling because we weren't curious enough or because we're too focused on what we're doing rather than what's happen around us.

As we emerge from lockdown the world may look different and may indeed be different. Could it be that the Lord is calling us to be different and act differently? Could it be that the Lord wants us to be more sensitive to our surroundings and more responsive to the needs of the people around us? Not just those we know and love, but those outside our networks who are struggling, perhaps destitute or desperate for compassion or a little kindness.

The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen the misery of my people". Where are our burning bushes? Where is God drawing us to? Which people are we being called to rescue?

God sees everything, calls us to some people and situations, and then he says, "I will be with you".

As followers of Jesus, we believe we have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside us. If God is that close to us, it means that every step we take is a step on to holy ground.

Encourage each other to each think of something they could do differently this week to be more sensitive to our surroundings and more responsive to the needs of the people around us. Then prayer for each other.