



The Seventh Plague of Egypt, John Martin, 1823

About the artist and painting: The English Romantic painter John Martin was no stranger to death and despair. Out of the 13 children born to his mother and father, John was one of only 6 that survived childhood. He grew up in poverty, the son of a farm laborer. In 1813, John lost his grandmother, mother, father, and youngest son all in the same year. Despite his popular appeal to English society, he was never really celebrated much less even accepted by the art community. Yet he was somewhat of a revolutionary by choosing to paint very fantastic, biblical scenes and landscapes. One can't help but think John looked to the extraordinary aspects of the bible to deal with the harsh realities of life in a broken world.

His 1823 work, *The Seventh Plague of Egypt*, helps to capture the deliverance theme so prevalent in the Book of Exodus. In the painting you have these mighty structures of Pharaoh's palace, city, and pyramids all displayed in their grandeur. In Moses' day this represented to God's people Pharaoh's power and oppression towards them as he ruthlessly made their lives harsh. Yet God is breaking into these circumstances, "showing up" to bring about His deliverance. In this painting, over and above the Egyptian structures is something more magnificent, the storm of God: thunder, hail, and fire being poured down upon the oppressor and persecutor of His people. And your eye is drawn to the man standing on the left side of the painting, Moses, with outstretched arms looking to the LORD and His deliverance.

The purpose of Exodus:

“The original purpose of Exodus was theological, to teach God’s people about himself and their relationship to him.” - Peter Enns, NIVAC, 25.

“Exodus is about a man, Moses. He is central to the narrative in a way in which no single character, not even Abraham, dominates Genesis...Exodus is about a nation, Israel, moving from slavery in Egypt into freedom...but ultimately Exodus is about God, about the God of the covenant who has instituted a new relationship between himself and those whom he has called to be his people.”
- John Mackay, Exodus, 9.

“The whole story of Exodus is a covenant narrative. The God who pledged himself to Abraham and his descendants remained the faithful God. He had made promises and intended to honor them, and when his moment came, honor them he did...in a word, Exodus cannot be described simply as the book of the holiness of the Lord, nor simply as the book of the presence of the Lord, but as the book of the holy God present in all his holiness at the heart of his people’s life, their provident savior and friend, who makes provision whereby they, in all their unworthiness, may live safely with him.” - Alec Motyer, The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Exodus, 20, 23.

The setting for Exodus 1:1-2:25 is Israel in Egypt. The opening section sets the stage for the rest of the book by describing: the connection to the narrative of Genesis (Ex. 1:1–7), the oppression that has arisen under a new pharaoh (1:8–22), the preservation of Moses at birth (2:1–10) and later in Midian (2:11–22), and the declaration of God’s intimate knowledge of Israel’s suffering and God’s faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (2:23–25).

Exodus is a journey in two parts.

Part One: Egypt Exodus 1-15 Aug. 7th – Oct. 30th

Part Two: Sinai Exodus 16-18 Nov. 6th – Nov. 20th

Pause for Advent: Nov. 27th – Dec. 18th

Part Two Cont. Sinai Exodus 19 - 39 Jan. 8th – June 25th

Pause for Capital Campaign Series: Jan. 22nd-Feb. 12th

Pause for DNOW: February 19th

Pause for Missions Sunday: March 26th

Resources for further study:

Exodus: A Mentors Commentary by John Mackay

Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture
(Volume 2) (The New American Commentary) by Douglas Stuart

APRIL 9, 2023

Delivered to a Full Access

Exodus 26:1,6-7,11,14,15,26-27, 31-37 ESV

“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them.

6 And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be a single whole. 7 “You shall also make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make.

11 “You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together that it may be a single whole.

14 And you shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and a covering of goatskins on top.

15 “You shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood.

26 “You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, 27 and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward.

31 “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. 32 And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. 33 And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy. 34 You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place. 35 And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table, and you shall put the table on the north side.

36 “You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework. 37 And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

Scriptures for further study:

1 Peter 1:13-15

Romans 12:1-2

Exodus 26:44-46

“Christianity in this country was a little more than a superficial, privatized veneer on a secular lifestyle characterized by animistic values and longstanding tribal hatred and warfare...the church was silent on such critical life-and-death issues as the dignity and worth of each person made in the image of God.”

- Cobert and Fikkert

DELIVERED TO A CONSECRATION
EXODUS 29:1-21 ESV

BIG IDEA

Jesus’ perfect and perpetual sacrifice has set you apart today to minister in all contexts of life, whether making sandwiches, serving your neighbor, or suffering well that the world may know that the LORD is God.

OUTLINE

- 1. Consecrated
- 2. Called
- 3. Cleansed
- 4. Committed

NOTES

"Shouldn't those most passionate about the gospel and God's glory also be those most dedicated to the pursuit of godliness...I worry that there is an enthusiasm gap and no one seems to mind."

- Kevin DeYoung

"Lasting service comes when we serve God from His acceptance, not for His acceptance."

- Bryan Chapell

"Washing was necessary before they could be permitted to come into contact with holy things. It represented the removal of uncleanness caused by sin in the realm of the ordinary or common, which had to be dealt with before they could enter the realm of the holy."

- John Mackay

"It is the death of Christ that qualifies his servants to be holy enough to enter into the work of his ministry."

- Daniel Stuart

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

"Aaron and his sons are to be consecrated to serve the Lord as priests in a manner that reflects some of the regular service they will perform as priests on behalf of the people (see Lev. 1:1–7:38): preparation (Ex. 29:1–9), a sin offering (vv. 10–14), two burnt offerings—one for the Lord (vv. 15–18) and one for ordination (vv. 19–28), followed by instructions for the practice and perpetuation of ordaining Aaron's sons as priests (vv. 29–37). These instructions will not be carried out until the tabernacle is built (see Lev. 8:1–9:24). "

-*ESV Study Bible*

"Aaron's consecration involved washing, vesting, anointing, and sacrifice. The washing, vesting, and anointing is all ultimately fulfilled in the priesthood of the sinless Jesus: He was already clean, clothed, and Spirit-empowered for His work as priest. And these three actions all came before the sacrifices, which were offered, not for Aaron and his sons as persons, but as priests (Heb. 5:3). The blood of the sacrifice was applied to ear, hand, and toe to speak of the total consecration of the priest: he would hear, act, and walk only for God's holy purpose."

-*ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible*

Praise to Jesus. Today offer praises to Jesus our perfect High Priest, who met all of God's requirements for holiness through His death and resurrection. Offer praise to Jesus for his calling to you to proclaim his excellencies, grace, mercy, compassion and love through the many jobs that you have today; this is a life of great purpose and for this task Jesus provides all you need. He is with you and will protect you through every setback, challenge, and dead end.

Repentance through Jesus. Reflect on your attitude about serving in the places where you have been set apart to serve. Confess the times when you forgot God's amazing grace and that He consecrated you to serve where you are. Confess the times you made service about yourself either through being a martyr or seeking praise. Confess the times that you were unwilling and joyless in your service to God. Repent and ask the Lord to sweep you up and overwhelm you by his amazing redemption, to see with renewed vision and attitude your areas of service (see Ephesians 2:10)

Consecration for Jesus. Because Jesus' perfect and perpetual sacrifice has set you apart today to minister in all contexts of life be consecrated for Jesus whether making sandwiches, serving your neighbor, or suffering well, so that the world may know that the LORD is God.

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. What is your job? What is the difference between a job and a vocation. Was the role of High Priest a job, a vocation or both? Why?
2. What was the purpose of consecration? What character traits of God are spotlighted through consecration? What does consecration look like in the New Testament?
3. It is easy to elevate the High Priest because of the ritual which was required to set them apart so they could fulfill their vocation or calling. How did Paul frame consecration and calling? What do Christians today have in common with the High Priests? (1 Peter 1:13-15)
4. Why was cleansing or washing Aaron and his sons necessary? What elements were used to wash the priests? How does cleansing point to Jesus? What qualifies you for the different roles that God has called you to? Have you ever been overwhelmed by the responsibilities of your many roles? How can your cleansing and the reality of your ultimate calling assure you in the midst of a demotion, lay-off, failing grade, unwanted divorce, or other hard circumstances? (1 Peter 2:4-10)
5. What is the ultimate goal of consecration? Part of the work of the priesthood was helping the people of Israel know the LORD God. How has Jesus’ death and resurrection changed how you relate to God? Where are the places that you can be God’s representative today?

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

1. Why do the priests need to be cleansed and why do bulls and rams need to be sacrificed to prepare the priests for their service in the tabernacle? *(Talk with your children about how Aaron and the priests were sinners like the rest of the Israelites and like us. Also talk with your children about God's holiness and perfection.)*

2. Read Exodus 29:45-46. What are some of the purposes for these preparations of the priests? *(We read in these verses that these preparations are part of the covenant that God made with His people that He would be our God and we would be His people. God would be with His people. We also read that these preparations would also remind His people that He is the LORD God that saved them from the slavery in Egypt and delivered them to freedom to worship God and delivered them to consecration for His ministry.)*

3. Why don't Christians still sacrifice animals and use a tabernacle for our worship of God? *(You will want to talk with your children about Jesus fulfilling all the ceremonial and worship Laws of the Old Testament. Jesus is the Great High Priest (see Hebrews 4:14-16) and is the Lamb of God (see John 1:29) that was sacrificed for sinners.)*

4. What is the connection of this story to our Easter celebration of the resurrection of Jesus? *(If Jesus were still dead, then we would still be in slavery to sin and death. Jesus' victory on Easter changes everything.)*

5. Take time to pray this Easter for your family to praise God for His victory over sin and death.

Note to parents: Exodus 29 includes many animals being sacrificed and the use of their blood and other body parts. Some children may struggle with the graphic nature of it while other children may be intrigued about it. Use caution and discernment in how much detail you discuss.

Scriptures for further study:

Hebrews 9:22

Hebrews 10:5-14

1 Corinthians 15:17

1 Peter 2:9

FOR STUDENTS

1. God takes seven actions to consecrate the priests in Exodus 29:1-43. What were some of those actions? How do those actions resemble the same actions God takes to set us apart and make us holy in Jesus?
2. In Jesus, God issues an invitation to redemption and holiness, washes us clean, provides us with a substitutionary sacrifice, clothes us with garments of His righteousness, covers us in His blood, marks us out as royal priests, and provides for our daily needs. What do all these reveal about God's grace?
3. In Exodus 29:10-21, God requires a substitutionary sacrifice to sanctify the priests. What is the significance of placing the hands on the head of the bull and burning its waste parts outside the camp? (Exodus 29:10, 15, 19; Leviticus 16:27; Hebrews 13:11-12)
4. What is the significance of placing the blood on the priests? Where else have we seen this pattern in Exodus? (Exodus 12:1-7 and 13)
5. Unlike the priests who were sinners and need consecration, what do we have in Jesus according to 1 Peter 2:22, Hebrews 4:15, and 7:27-27? What did Jesus come to do according to John 1:29, 1 John 3:5, Romans 8: 3-4 and Hebrews 9:22?
6. Read 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:5-6. If we are now consecrated royal priests, what is our role and responsibility according to Hebrews 10:19-25? In what ways can we specifically fulfill Hebrews 10:24-25 together this week?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. The last two verses of our passage (Exodus 29:45-46) make clear that all of these requirements regarding priests and priestly sacrifices were for the purpose of making it possible for God to dwell among (and be in relationship with) His people. The New Testament likewise makes clear that God's purpose is to make a way possible for us to dwell together in relationship with Him. But such a relationship only comes through the blood sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ.

Question: Have you accepted and received Jesus Christ as your Savior, the one who sacrificed himself for you? There is no other way to be made right with God.

2. Here in the Old Testament, it was just an elite group of priests (Aaron and his sons) who were allowed to enter the tabernacle and make sacrifices in the presence of God on behalf of the people. But the New Testament tells us (see 1 Peter 2:9) that because of Christ, all of us as believers have now become a "royal priesthood".

Question: It is so easy for us to take this privilege for granted. Would you spend some time reflecting and giving thanks to God for allowing all of us, through Jesus, to have this special access and closeness to Him?

3. If we are a new kind of priesthood, then that means we are to offer sacrifices. Here in Exodus 29 these were animal sacrifices, as well as a variety of offerings—wave, fellowship, burnt, and sin offerings. But what kind of sacrifices might we make today? Romans 12:1 tells us that our whole lives are indeed a kind of sacrifice to Him.

Please read and consider: Romans 12:1; Philippians 4:8; Hebrews 13:15-16 for just a few examples of ways we can make offerings to God.

4. Three times in Exodus 29 we find the phrase "a pleasing aroma" (see verses 18, 25, 41), referring to the sacrifices and offerings made to the Lord.

Question: How and in what sense do you think such offerings were a pleasing aroma to God? Furthermore, in what ways do you think your own life does (or should) serve as a kind of aroma before the Lord?