

EXODUS 35-40 REDEMPTION AND A NEW HOPE

We come to the conclusion of a journey through the book of Exodus. Even though we are at chapter 35 and there are six chapters remaining, most of this is review of what we have already studied in earlier chapters of Exodus. Not that, we just want to ignore it, since this area deals with the Tabernacle and its furnishings and the priests clothing. This is about worship and that is central to this book since the Lord wanted them to be brought out of Egypt so they could worship Him. These instructions are now going to be carried out as the Lord commanded. That phrase is continually repeated throughout this section. They will obey Him in every detail in all these instructions which certainly contrasts their disobedience in the idolatry of the golden calf. God is so gracious and forgives, even such despicable acts as Israel had done as they lost their patience and played the harlot. God could have completely obliterated them, but instead He put on display His mercy as He withheld His wrath when Moses, the mediator, interceded and pleaded greatly for the people. God did not destroy the people but He then said His presence would not go with them. Moses pleaded again to God that they had to have His presence. God, once again, answered Moses and graciously relented and guaranteed His presence would be with them in all their journeys. At that time, Moses asked to see God's glory. By this display of God's character, Moses knew that God was merciful, gracious, good, and a glorious God. Moses even showed he had been in the presence of God by the glorious glow that was on his face as the people witnessed and were afraid. The mediator was now taken very seriously by the people. They were thoroughly convinced that they needed the mediator God had for them. That brings us up to where we are now. There is great hope for Israel in this redemption story. This is story, and it's the story of the ages. God created but man fell and reaped the consequences, but God.....reaches down and redeems His people who now have a new hope. By giving the Tabernacle to them and all that goes with it, the grace of God is demonstrated and the people have a way to truly worship God as they go on their journey. This should sound familiar to us as we have been redeemed because of the Mediator, Jesus Christ. We worship our glorious, supreme God. We are on our journey to the consummation knowing the presence of God is with us. This gives us great hope.

1. EXODUS-THE STORY OF RESCUE OVER AND OVER

All throughout the Bible is woven the scarlet thread of redemption. Exodus just may be the greatest book in the Bible for telling this wonderful redemption story. God rescued the children of Israel from their bondage to slavery in Egypt. It took the plan of God and His might to get them freed from this bondage so they could worship Him. It is not that they just needed to be rescued but they needed to know they had a mediator and they had access to worship Yahweh. We have seen that God is the master of deliverance as He has demonstrated in this book time and time again. Redemption is the main theme and it is certainly repeated several times in Exodus. We shall look at a few occasions where God rescued His people.

A. BIRTH OF MOSES

Of course where this all started was with the Israelites in captivity in Egypt that had been 400 years. In God's perfect timing was the birth of Moses when baby boys were tossed into the Nile. We all know this story about God's providence in having Moses being rescued by his sister and mother and Pharaoh's daughter. This is a picture of redemption at the beginning of Exodus. The deliverer was delivered so he would be able to deliver his own people.

B. BURNING BUSH

After Moses had tried his own way of delivering his people he spent 40 years on the back side of the desert as a shepherd. God honed his skills on shepherding. Then Yahweh appeared to Moses in the burning bush. This is where God delivered Moses out of the foreign country to

return to his homeland and be the deliverer of his people. Moses actually had an encounter with Yahweh and truly began to know the character of God.

C. PLAGUES

God brought judgment on Egypt through the 10 plagues but at the same time, He kept the Israelites from the judgments. He favored them as He delivered them from the plagues. The final plague was the Passover as God passed over the Israelites in taking the first born because He provided a way for them as they applied the blood over their doorposts. Egypt did not get this benefit and they lost all their first born children.

D. PASSOVER

E. RED SEA

As Israel was escaping from the Egyptians, they got backed up to the Red Sea. The great Egyptian army was ready to attack them and keep them from going any further. Once again, the supernatural God rescued the Israelites and let them cross the Red Sea as it dried up for them to cross, but as the Israelites crossed, in came the Egyptians and the Lord caused them all to drown, chariots, horses, and all. The Israelites were victorious and were rescued again, even when it seemed like there was no hope.

F. MANNA AND WATER

Once the children of Israel got out into the desert, reality struck and they found themselves hungry. When it seemed like they could not go any further, Yahweh provided the manna.. Yet another supernatural event in the Exodus story happened. The same thing happened when they got thirsty and God provided water from the rock. He rescued them from hunger and dying of thirst in the forlorn wilderness. God kept redeeming them. He rescues His people.

G. GOLDEN CALF REBELLION

We have already talked about this, so we won't elaborate on it, but enough to say that they were so close to destruction and the deliverer Moses who is a picture of Christ, the supreme deliverer, interceded and the people were rescued from the wrath of God. How so much like us when we were in our own idolatry and Christ delivered us up from the wrath of God. The rescue missions kept on mounting up.

H. SHINING FACE OF MOSES

Last week we looked at this story of the glorious glow on Moses' face as he had been in the presence of God. It showed to Moses and the people that at least the presence of God was going to go with them, since He was with Moses and the people were following Moses. This made Moses more legitimate to them than ever before. They needed a mediator and their mediator has close communion with God. There is definitely the hope being restored back to Israel. They have been redeemed, rescued so many times by a merciful, gracious God.

2. BUILDING OF THE TABERNACLE

The last chapters of the book climax on the story of the building of a tent. It must be very important. It is because it deals with the worship of God and His presence. All those previous adventures lead up to this, worship and the presence of God.

If God hadn't put this here we couldn't have pictured this tabernacle. We've never seen one. We haven't seen a tabernacle. You've seen models, but the only reason you've seen models, the only reason there's a drawing in some of your Bibles of it, is because this section is here. You wouldn't have known what the tabernacle of God was unless God had repeated it here in this exhaustive, intricate, and (let's face it) sometimes to you, *boring* detail. You wouldn't be able to picture it. But after you've gotten through this once, twice, you've at least got a fuzzy outline in your head of what this tabernacle business was all about. Ligon Duncan

What better way to get the message to the people that there is new hope for them. The covenant had been brought back down to them and now they will build the Tabernacle and have a priesthood so they can worship Yahweh like nobody had ever done before. This is the best way to show that God was amongst them. His presence is going before them as they journey across the desert. It is very interesting that God starts up right where He left off before the chapter 32-35 incident of the golden calf.

A. SABBATH REST 35:1-3

At the end of chapter 31 God had given the law on the Sabbath. Moses brought the law down the mountain and as he saw the Israelites partying and in revelry, he threw the tables of the law down and they broke. The Law is written again and as God gives them instructions to build the Tabernacle, He wants them to know that they are not to build on the Sabbath Day. This was a fast and hard law and they were to do as the Lord commanded as this is stated all throughout this ending portion of Exodus. They would be tempted to get this thing done as quickly as possible and work on the 7th day. God makes it very clear that is not going to be done, even for building the Tabernacle, the place of worship. The Sabbath was a very important law to them throughout the generations. God made His people to have rest.

B. CONTRIBUTIONS 35:4-9

They were commanded to bring in the gold and silver and other valuables to build. But at the same time it was to be from a willing heart. The finest of materials were going to be used and the people played a part in the making of this place of worship. God wanted them to do it but unbegrudgingly.

C. COMMAND TO BUILD 35:10-19

God had made certain men to be skilled. They were especially gifted to do great work.

D. GIFTS 35:20-36:7

The people had such willing hearts that there was an overabundance of the gifts they brought. They had enthusiasm in helping and took pleasure in it. And they were very generous. There was so much there that Moses had to tell them to stop. They had more than enough. They had been willing before, when they made the golden calf, but this time they know that what they are doing is right. What a good thing to see when God's people gather together and give to the Lord's work. Imagine so many offerings that the church would not know what to do with it all.

E. BUILDING THE FURNISHINGS 36:7-38:20

It was very important for them to do in accordance with God's command.

The elements of our worship services are to be drawn directly from God's word, preaching, prayer, praise, Scripture reading, sacraments and giving, and not from our own imaginations. This is one of the distinctives of the Reformed approach to worship.

The very fact that they're building this tent is an act of God's grace, because they deserve to be dead in the wilderness, and this tent, you see, is the sign that God is going to draw near to them and fellowship with them and be their God and they His people.

F. PRIESTLY GARMENTS 38:21-39:31

The clothes they wore were absolutely splendid, representing the beauty of holiness. The priests are types of Christ, who is the beautiful one. His holiness demanded a hearing, and His holiness brings us into God's presence, and He Himself, in one person, fulfills all the symbolism of this great tabernacle system.

G. COMPLETION ANNOUNCED 39:32-43

H. TENT OF MEETING SET UP 40:1-33

On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.” So, when is the tabernacle supposed to be set up? It’s supposed to be set up on New Year’s Day. Now that’s very significant, because that’s a year from the Exodus, and about a year, of course, from the Passover. This time last year, they were out looking for those Passover lambs that they were going to slaughter for the celebration of that feast for the first time. Now the tabernacle is being set up. The dedication of this whole tent of meeting is appointed for the first day of the first month, and that is obviously a reference first of all to God’s creation; and, tying together the tabernacle as a reflection of God’s new creation,

3. THE GLORY CLOUD 40:34-38

Two themes are presented here, God’s awesome majesty and His nearness. **He dwells high and lifted up, yet He condescends to His people.**

A. GOD’S MAJESTY

Manifestation (Theophany)—a visible manifestation of the invisible God.

Glory filled the tabernacle—The glory is visibly manifested in that of the cloud.

And now that glory is coming down, and even Moses can’t enter into the tabernacle as the glory of the Lord indwells it.

You see, Moses is reminding us again there of our need of a mediator if we are to experience communion with the High and Holy One, but this passage reminds us that when God draws near, it is the transcendent God and no other, who draws near.

Nearness—This shows His favor and approval. They wanted the nearness of God when they built the calf, in their own way. Now He is among them, in the way He wanted to do it.

B. GOD’S PRESENCE

God was constantly going to be present with them.

Presence

The nearness of God is one of the great covenant blessings and promises that we enjoy. God is high and exalted in His nearness, and He is near in His high and exaltedness.

Protection

And these final three verses of Exodus stress that the Lord led and guarded His people by His cloud of presence:

When the body of Christ, when the temple of God is gathered in that corporate worship, that is the place where the new covenant believer experiences the special presence of God.

4. ISRAEL’S STORY IS OUR STORY

As God condescended to the people in His majesty and actually tabernacled with them, he was saying: “All is well”. He did not scrap His building project when they sinned. He changed their hearts and they had a new loyalty to Him based on mercy and grace. We see a complete repair of rupture in these closing chapters. They were broken people who were renewed and given hope.

God is saying, “All is forgiven, I will be with you.” The New Testament invites us to look at this redemption as a reflection of our own redemption in our lives. Israel’s story is our story. Their story pointed to the future that we are experiencing now through Christ. We have been delivered and we have a bright hope for the future through Christ. We have been delivered from slavery and He continues to deliver us and be with us.

Life in the wilderness, however is difficult. 1. We are broken sinners who don’t always respond with fruit. We complain, we are hostile, are miserable, are angry, impatient. We are focused on

selves. 2. We live in a broken world. Because people are broken , the world is broken. 3.
There is the enemy, the devil.
But God is still redeeming, rescuing us from the bondage of self, world, and the devil.
Let us pray.