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eadings: Exodus chapters 1-3,12,20,40; Hebrews 11v23-29 and Acts 7v17-44.

In Exodus we read of the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15v13,14.

Israel, now in Egypt, thrived and prospered until they became a threat to the Egyptians who made them into slaves. For four hundred years they cried out to God for deliverance, and He heard their cry (Exodus 3v7). When Pharaoh tried to kill all Israelite boys, God over-ruled so that Moses not only survived but was also taken into the Royal household.

Seeing himself as his peoples' deliverer he killed an Egyptian soldier, and had to flee to Midian where he spent forty years as a shepherd.

After forty years God met Moses in a burning bush (Exodus chapter 3) and told Moses he had been chosen to deliver God's people from bondage. In this famous passage God told Moses His Name – I AM – the eternal, self-sufficient, sovereign God. A number of times during His ministry Jesus pointed back to this and referred to Himself as I AM.

Together with Aaron, his brother, Moses went to Pharaoh and called upon him to let God's people go. Nine

Exodus and Redemption

"He [Moses] was sent to be their [Israel] ruler and deliverer by God Himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert. This is that Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will send you a prophet like me from your own people'" Acts 7v35-37

times God sent terrible plagues on the Egyptians, and nine times Pharaoh ended up hardening his heart and refusing to let the people of Israel go. Finally God visited the Egyptians with the final and most awful plague – the death of the firstborn son in each household.

Before sending the angel of death on Egypt, God told the Israelites through Moses and Aaron that they should kill a perfect lamb, and paint its blood on the doorposts of their homes. When the angel of death saw the blood he literally passed over that home. God commanded the Israelites to remember that deliverance annually in the festival of the Passover. Looking forward to the New Testament, it was at the Passover that Jesus died. The blood of the lamb on the doorposts, causing the angel of death to pass over, is a picture of the blood of Jesus shed on the cross, sufficient for our salvation and deliverance from sin and death.

After this final plague Pharaoh let Israel go. However, he later changed his mind and followed after them. The Egyptians caught

up with the Israelites at the Red Sea, but again God delivered His people. He parted the Red Sea so that the Israelites could cross over in safety, and then caused it to crash down on the Egyptians, drowning them.

As the Israelites were led by the Lord through the wilderness, they were tested by Him again and again as they had to depend on Him for food and water. Again and again they failed to trust Him and instead grumbled and complained until God provided them with food and water.

Finally the people arrive at Mount Sinai and God gives them His Law. This starts with the Ten Commandments, and then God expands on these commandments with guidance of how to apply them to different situations. In Hebrew the word for law (Torah, which encapsulates Genesis to Deuteronomy) means "to fire [an arrow] in the right direction". In giving the people His Law, God was acting as a loving Father guiding His people in the right direction.

God entered into a covenant relationship with Israel there at Mount Sinai. The covenant was sealed with the sprinkling of the blood of bulls. This was a covenant that required the obedience of the people. The people promised "Everything the Lord has said we will do" (Exodus 24v3).

Having given the people the Law, God then gave very specific instructions concerning the construction of the Tabernacle, which was to be a kind of mobile temple. He gave specific instructions concerning the altars and all the furnishings that should be used in the Tabernacle, including the Ark of the Covenant which sat in the Holy of Holies, and in which the tablets containing the Ten Commandments were kept.

God gave instructions concerning the High Priest and the Levitical priesthood who would offer sacrifices on behalf of the people. God also instituted the rules for the Sabbath day – the day of rest when the people were not allowed to work but instead were to set the day apart for God.

Of the daily sacrifices to be made at the Tabernacle (or Tent of Meeting), God said the following: "For generations to come this offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the Lord. There I will meet you and speak to you; there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will

be consecrated by My glory. So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve Me as priests. Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God" Exodus 29v42-46.

A summary of Exodus is that God delivers His people from bondage, brings them to Himself, enters into a loving relationship with them, and dwells among them. This is a foretaste of the coming of Immanuel, God with us – a foretaste of when God would dwell among His people in the ultimate sense in the person of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In order to understand how the Law, the Tabernacle and the Sinai covenant point forward to Christ, we need to turn to the books of Romans, Galatians and Hebrews in the New Testament.

In Galatians Paul explains how the Law was given by God to show us that we are sinners who can never live up to His standards, so that we realise we need salvation and turn to His means of deliverance – the death for us of Jesus Christ His Son.

In Hebrews the writer explains how the earthly Tabernacle was modelled on the reality in Heaven, and how the earthly sacrificial system and priesthood pointed forward to the

sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus is the only true High Priest, and is now the only Mediator between God and man. Now that Jesus has come we no longer need a human priesthood. All of this is explained in Hebrews.

The redemption of Israel from Egypt is a picture of the redemption of lost sinners from bondage to sin. It is also the real history of God's people in the real world.

Moses is a 'type' of Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate Redeemer. Moses pointed forward specifically to Jesus when he prophesied that God would send a prophet like him from Israel (Deuteronomy 18v15).

The book of Exodus finishes with these verses: "Then" *[after Moses had set up the Tabernacle and followed God's instructions exactly]* "the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out – until the day it lifted. So the cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the House of Israel during their travels" (Exodus 40v34-38).