

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

SESSION 1

BUILDING AN EXODUS MIND-SET

A. WHY EXODUS?

1. A Story of Freedom

The human race is in trouble. But it is exactly here, in the trouble, that we find God powerfully at work setting his people free from the mess they're in.

2. A Story Within a Story

As God rescued and restored Israel to be his representatives in a new land, so he does the same for worldwide humanity, through Israel's Messiah, so that ultimately, heaven comes to earth in the new creation.

3. A Story That Invites Our Participation

It is this story of rescue and freedom which is referred to over and over again throughout both the OT and NT which happens for no other reason than ... "because the Lord loves you.." (Dt.7:8).

B. OVERVIEW AND BOOK STRUCTURE

The book is half narrative and half instruction:

CH.1-19 Narrative of Whole Exodus Event

CH.20-24 Commands and Covenant

CH. 25-31 Tabernacle Instructions

CH. 32-34 Narrative of Golden Calf

CH. 35-40 Construction of Tabernacle

The Book records three defining events:

1. God's miraculous deliverance of the people from slavery (Salvation motif that runs through the Bible)
2. The gift of God's Commands and Covenant (Centrepiece providing the basis for relationship with God and one another)
3. The return of God's presence (What was lost in Eden is restored with God dwelling with his people)

Exodus Express (Exodus in a day!)

C. WHY BOTHER WITH THE OT?

1. God gave us the whole Bible. 2 Tim. 3:14-17
2. The OT lays the foundation for our faith.
3. All the OT points to Jesus. Lk. 24:27

D. GOD'S STORY AND OUR STORY

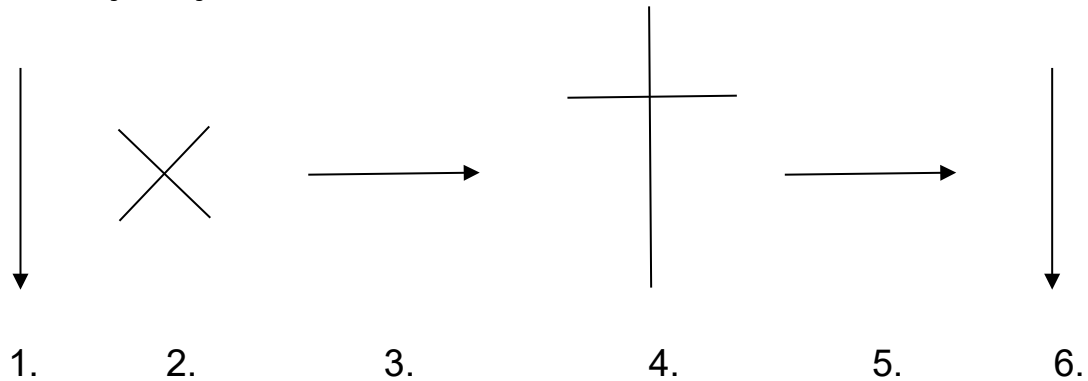
Everyone has a story that is essential and significant.

One story however stands apart from all the rest. it claims for itself an authority, not derived from human beings, but from God; a story which addresses the fundamental questions of life:

1. Why is there something rather than nothing?
2. What has gone so terribly wrong in the world?
3. Can anything be done about it?
4. Where is it all headed and what is the future?

It is this story which is vitally important because there is not one book within the whole collection of the Bible that can be interpreted satisfactorily in isolation from the rest.

God's Story in Symbols:



Stage 1. Creation - God came down and created the earth (Gen.1-2). Creation, of course, includes the whole space-time universe with the Bible focusing upon the earth where we, made in the image of God, live. Creation was like a vast temple for God to dwell in, filling it with his glory and all the abundance of life.

Stage 2. Fall - The X indicates something wrong. Gen. 3-11 describes the fracture that sin created as it entered the experience of human beings.

Stage 3. Promise - God's promise to Abraham in Gen. 12 launched the rest of the Bible story but especially the story of Israel in the OT. The Promise was to bring blessing and salvation to the world through this people, Israel.

Stage 4. Gospel - The centre of the whole Bible drama. God, faithful to his promise, sent Jesus as the Messiah of Israel and therefore the Saviour of the world.

Stage 5. Mission - Following the Ascension of Jesus the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the disciples for their mission to the ends of the earth.

Stage 6. New Creation - The final arrow symbolises the return of Christ, the removal of all evil, and heaven coming down to earth in the new creation (Rev. 21-22).

EXERCISE

From the diagram, we are able clearly to see the place of the Exodus story (Stage 3) and our lives (Stage 5) in God's meta-story. What are the implications, given our location in God's story, for our understanding of the Bible and our purpose in life?

Share how God's big story answers the four fundamental questions of life mentioned above.