

# EXODUS

## Introduction

**SLIDE:** FRODO

Frodo quoting Bilbo Baggins: “ ‘It’s a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door’, he used to say. ‘You step onto the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there’s no knowing where you might be swept off to.’ ”

~ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Rings*<sup>1</sup>

*‘You step onto the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there’s no knowing where you might be swept off to.’*

**SLIDE:** EXODUS – THE BOOK WE THOUGHT WE KNEW...

Well, today we step out into a new road – a journey through the *Book of Exodus* – the Book that we thought we knew.

I’m reading from Exodus Chapter 1:

“1 And these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob; they came each one with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun and

Benjamin; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the persons who came from the loins of Jacob were seventy in number, but Joseph was already in Egypt. Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them. Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt."

I *love* WWII movies, especially where POWs escape from prison: *The Great Escape* with Steve McQueen, *Von Ryan's Express* with Frank Sinatra, *Victory* with Sylvester Stalone. There's just something about them – the good prisoner escapes the *EVIL captor*. Well, the Book of Exodus is about the 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest escape even – 3 million people all at once. The difference is that the evil power is not merely outsmarted but it is completely overcome. **What was the greatest escape ever?** It's when you or I or anyone accepts Jesus as Lord and savior.

- The central event of the Book of Exodus is the Passover, the Lamb's blood on the doorpost to save the firstborn Israelites from death. This is the story of OUR GREAT ESCAPE – Jesus is the Passover Lamb of God, and if we are followers of Him, we have been grafted into the Israel of God and escaped the captivity to sin.

I've added the subtitle "*The Book we thought we knew.*" Of all the Books in the OT, the storyline of Exodus is probably the most familiar for Christians – at least it was to me. But do we really know the story?

- Why did God wait so long to rescue them?
- Doesn't the name '*Passover*' seem a bit strange? Why not just call it '*Freedom Day*', or '*Independence Day*'?<sup>2</sup>
- And did the Exodus have to be so complicated? Couldn't an All-Powerful God have just teleported the Israelites out of Egypt and spared everyone the grueling process of the Ten Plagues? And – Why Ten, why not 5?
- And the Book of Exodus contains some *uncomfortable* parts – for example, why, exactly, did God harden Pharaoh's heart? *Was that really FAIR?* Why did so many innocent Egyptian firstborns have to die?

The fact that God did not pursue an easier and quicker road to freedom indicates that there is *some other agenda* at work in Exodus.

At the last men's meeting, Lyle read from Psalm 92, which fits in very well with these questions:

Psalm 92<sup>3</sup>: "It is good to give thanks to the Lord And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night, With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp, With resounding music upon the lyre.

For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands.

And then Verse 5 says: "How great are Your works, O Lord! Your **thoughts** are very deep."

- The verse can also be translated "How great are Your works, O Lord! Your **purposes**<sup>4</sup> are very deep."

**God's purposes are very deep.** Exodus is a much more thought-proving story than I first believed.

There are 39 books in the OT and 27 in the NT, a total of 66, and the Book of Exodus is related to all 65 other books. It's related to Genesis, it is related to Numbers, it is related to Matthew and Luke, and it is related to Revelation.

### RELATIONSHIP OF THE TABLES

Even though the Old and New Testament Books are linked, however, at first they may *seem* to be independent of each other. But... many things in life are also like that. For

example: let's consider that you have just come into this church *for the first time*. You are probably surprised at the round tables setup and that people are drinking coffee. You'll notice that some tables have families sitting around them, some have single individuals and some are unoccupied. You could choose to sit at a table, or you could choose to sit on a chair against the wall (by the way – sitting in the back is almost always a sure sign that you have Catholic roots). After a while, you might feel comfortable enough to move to a table or you might prefer to remain where you are and keep an eye on this odd group. And, why do they never start on time?

You're probably OK with this unusual setup for a church. You might wonder how long it has been used and why it started. There doesn't seem to be any logic as to who sits where, although to the trained eye, it's pretty obvious that the MOST BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE sit on this side of the room.

The truth is that, while the tables and chairs *seem* to be independent of each other, in fact each table and chair has a certain relationship to the other tables and chairs. Everything in creation ultimately has a common goal and purpose in its existence. The tables are not individual items just hanging there, because – put together – they made the seating arrangement of where a local expression of the Church of Jesus Christ sits.

- When we use a table as a place for revealing God's hospitality and kindness and for sharing His Word, the table is no longer merely a place for eating; rather it is a vehicle for holiness.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, these are *special* tables, special chairs. And they are here for a *special* purpose. Each one of the tables contributes to and is a part of that special purpose.

**SLIDE: FENG SHUI** – Now, as a side note, I've been told that the *idea* of the round tables is good but that our *arrangement* of the tables does not meet the principles of *Feng Shui* (pronounced *fung shway*) – the Chinese concept of arranging your surroundings in harmony and balance. The size and placement of some of the larger tables in the room are said to block the *flow of movement*.

- And, it's probably true – it is somewhat challenging to move gracefully from one end of the room to another when the bathroom is calling. But, at the same time, the AGE of many of us probably contributes to this lack of graceful movement also.

<CLICK> However, as Kwai Chang Caine (for us David Carradine/*Kung Fu* fans) might say: whatever the arrangement of the furniture – *Grasshopper* – the Holy Spirit will still provide us with spiritual food.

## WHY I LIKE OT

### SLIDE: DESERT SCENE

For more than half my Christian life, I had mostly avoided the OT because it puzzled me. It seemed like a bunch of *independent* stories – some interesting, some odd; it had long passages of names and ceremonies with which made no sense at all to me. It was about a time long ago and about customs and human actions that are considered crude – sometimes even *cruel* – by today’s standards.

- My reluctance to get into the OT is a trait common to many Christians, even though **the OT is the MAJORITY OF THE BIBLE**. In my bible – the New American Standard Bible – the OT covers 1,334 pages and the NT covers 396 pages! The OT is more than 3 times larger than the NT. If it’s all God’s word, **I was missing a whole lot of what God wanted to say to me.**
- That all changed when I was asked to lead an OT Bible study. We were members of a church in Massachusetts back then, and I chose the Book of Exodus because it seemed like a fun book; it was different and I considered it to be the *most* understandable – *after all, I had seen the Ten Commandments Movie* twice! The plagues and

miracles were intriguing, and I figured that the dramatic events in the story alone would hold the class' interest.

- I began my approach from purely an *historical* standpoint but I found something that I wasn't expecting – I began to see patterns in the book. Gradually, the seemingly independent story began to fit with other incidents in other OT Books into an ongoing story that had escaped me before. I saw the coming Messiah in Exodus.
- Why did it take so long for me to see this? Because my problem had been the same problem that the two disciples on the road to Emmaus had. Remember the incident – (relate) – and Jesus said to them,

<CLICK> “O **foolish** men and **slow of heart** to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?”

SLIDE: EMMAUS Then **beginning with Moses** and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures.” Luke 24:25–27

- Jesus was telling these men that they had both a deep-seated problem and a compelling need. Their **PROBLEM – AND MY PROBLEM** – was a **DRYNESS OF HEART to make**



the effort to read, listen, and believe what was written – it takes an effort that I had been unwilling to do; and their COMPELLING NEED – and mine – was that it be a **Christ-centered study of the OT Scriptures**.<sup>6</sup>

I sometimes forget that the books of the OT are the scriptures that **Jesus used** and quoted from. And since God is the God of the living and not the dead (Mark 12:26–27), these Scriptures can be Alive to us today thru the Holy Spirit.

So, as we begin this venture into Exodus, I want to recommend that we try to look at the Bible AS ONE UNIFIED WHOLE, not two independent parts – the OT and the NT.

\*\*\* Because if we take away the OT, and we only have half a Bible. Take away the NT, and we only have half a Bible; half the Word of God.

- And, when we take away EITHER HALF, **it's NOT that we lose HALF THE UNDERSTANDING; rather, it's that much of what we THINK we know is often quite INCOMPLETE AND SKEWED**.<sup>7</sup>

**SLIDE:** TEN COMMANDMENTS MOVIE

Now – most of us are familiar with the overall basics of the Exodus story because of the 1956 movie The Ten Commandments with Charlton Heston. It's hard to believe that the movie is 60 years old this year! The movie captures the major events of Exodus fairly well.

The end of the movie has the Israelites wandering in the desert for 40 years and Moses dying – which are true events but which are not in the Book of Exodus; they are in Numbers and Deuteronomy. But overall, the movie captures the Biblical story fairly well – certainly much better than several recent movies like *'Exodus: Gods and Kings'* and *'Noah'*.

Is it just an amazing story, or does it reveal things that help us better know who *we are* as redeemed people and *Who our Redeemer is?*

- The answer is 'Yes', it is an *amazing* story – and 'Yes', it is *more* than an amazing story.
- It's an insight into God and our redemption.

So... let's begin.

Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You. I said (say) to the Lord, "You are my Lord; I have no good besides You."

Psalm 16:1–3

There are several themes throughout the Book of Exodus: the Holiness of God, the Sovereignty of God, the Providence of God, and Covenant.

**SLIDE: TORAH BOOKS**

First, a brief introduction for some who might be new to the OT. As I mentioned, there are 39 books in the OT.

**SLIDE: TORAH BOOKS#2**

The first five books of the Bible are called 'Torah' – this includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Torah is sometimes called the Pentateuch (five books) or the *Humash (Chumash)*.<sup>\*</sup> All five books were written by Moses<sup>†</sup>.

Grammatically, the word *torah* simply means to *guide/teach* (Lev. 10:11) – in other words, *instruction*. The word "*Torah*" itself is a tricky one because it *can be* a reference to more than just the five Books – *sometimes* Jews will use the

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<sup>\*</sup> A Torah in printed form, as opposed to a Torah scroll. It normally contains the entire first five books, divided up by the weekly readings (*parshiyot*), with the haftarah portion inserted after each week's *parshah*.

<sup>†</sup> Just a housekeeping comment: Moses is the author of the Torah, but he didn't write 100% of the Torah, just 99.9%; the last half of the last chapter of the last book – the Book of Deuteronomy - records Moses' death and burial, and Joshua taking over the reins of leadership of Israel. Undoubtedly, someone added that after Moses died – probably Joshua; but it doesn't matter, because the entire Torah was written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

word to refer to the *ENTIRE Written* Old Testament (e.g.; Joshua, Judges, Isaiah, and so on)..

And at other times, “Torah” can also refer to all of traditional Jewish learning, which then includes the Written Torah plus the *Oral* Torah, which includes the compilation of laws and rulings known as *Mishnah*, plus the discussion and debate of that material, known as *Talmud* or *Gemara*, plus any other teaching that has been accepted by a long-term consensus of the observant Jewish community.<sup>8</sup> For our purposes, ‘Torah’ will refer to the five books of Moses.

\*\*\* I ran across a great quote on an Orthodox Jewish website that beautifully summarizes the true end of studying the Torah:

*“When you immerse yourself in Torah, your goal is not simply to amass information, but to gain a sense of how the Creator of the Universe relates to His creations. To think in a G-dly way. It is a sharing of spirit, until the same preferences and desires breathe within the two of you. His thoughts are your thoughts and your thoughts are His.”<sup>9</sup>*

- That’s a great insight – the goal of studying Scripture isn’t to gain information for its own sake but so that my thoughts may better align with His thoughts. Now, of

course our thoughts will never perfectly align with His, but as Christians, our charge is for us to decrease so that Christ will increase (John 3:30).

**SLIDE: THE LAW**

We will come across the phrase "THE LAW" in the Bible. Most Christians believe that this refers to the 10 Commandments we learned in Sunday School. However, there are actually **613** commandments (called 'mitzvoth') in the Torah<sup>10</sup> – these include the 10 commandments written on the stone tablets plus 603 others spoken by God to Moses and recorded in the Torah. There are 248 positive (*thou shalt*) and 365 negative (*thou shalt not*) *commandments*. Judaism considers that all 613 are *equally* sacred, *equally* binding and *equally the word of God*. They all treated as equally important because human beings, with our limited understanding of the universe, have no way of knowing which *mitzvoth* are more important in the eyes of the Creator.<sup>11</sup>

Judaism looks at the 10 Commandments as **categories** of commandments.<sup>12</sup> They're somewhat like chapter heading of a book. For example, the commandment is "not to work on the Sabbath"<sup>13</sup> (Exodus 20:10); this falls under the 4<sup>th</sup> category of "*Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day*".

**SLIDE: PURPOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS**

What's the PURPOSE of the commandments? The purpose of the 613 commandments is twofold: to reveal the Holiness of God and to illustrate the lifestyle and conduct of beings *created in His Image*. Judaism believes that we are obligated **to imitate God and to "walk in His ways"** (Deut. 28:9).

*"Just as He is merciful and kind, so you should be merciful and kind. Just as He clothed the naked, so should you; as He visited the sick, so should you; as He comforted the mourners, so should you; as He buried the dead, so should you."*<sup>14</sup>

<click> The 613 commandments are primarily a **Revelation of GOD'S Holiness.**<sup>15</sup> This is a major concept, so I'll repeat it: the 613 commandments are primarily a **Revelation of God's Holiness.** We tend to look at the commandments and think they're primarily **about US, don't we?**

➤ It's like the Carly Simon song: *"You're So Vain - I bet you think this song is about you..."*

It's true – we think the commandments are about us, about how holy a person we are or are not, and about how not to get God mad at us.

I received an email this month from a leading Jewish website that relayed an incident that reminded me of my own state of mind when I was in Catholic high school. The email was written by a Rabbi concerning his recent plane flight. He writes:

*"I was sitting next to a middle aged, Israeli business man. He told me that he was on his way to India to meet his wife who's already in the Ashram where they're going to be studying Buddhism and meditation.*

*I said to him, "Why?". And he said, "You know, you reach a point in your life where just going out to eat and seeing shows is just not enough anymore. You want spirituality in your life."*

*Which led me to say, "You know, you're Israeli... Did you ever consider Judaism?"*

*So he laughed and responded, "What does Judaism have to do with spirituality? Judaism is about doing Mitzvot." (keeping the commandments)*

*And at that point I realized therein lies the problem... We do mitzvot.... we eat a Matza. We go through the steps and learn how to do this and how to do that,*

***BUT, where's the meaning in it all?"***<sup>16</sup>

The email was an intro to an upcoming webinar of his that addresses questions like:

- *What's really meaningful to me? Why am I alive? What is my purpose? Why am I Jewish?*

The conversation reveals the deep spiritual wasteland common to many people when they see the commandments as a gauge of how holy or not **THEY** are. But, Scripture is **NOT** primarily about us, **it's about Him**. The commandments describe how we who are made in **His** image are to demonstrate **His** Holiness to the world. The emphasis is on HIM.

The Law itself – the commandments, all 613 of them – are not something that is bad – after all, God Himself dictated them to Moses. However, the term “*the Law*” takes on a negative connotation because people began to believe that keeping the commandments was the way of *meriting* acceptance with the Holy God and becoming holy in and of themselves. You know – “*God is lucky to have me on His side.*” Jesus criticized such belief as sinful pride, “the leaven of the Pharisees”. (Matthew 16:6).

- In fact, when you think about it, relying on one's personal goodness was Satan's foundational temptation in the Garden – “You will be as *God*” (*Genesis* 3:5) – in other words, you can be holy in and of yourselves.

It's so foolish – Paul says that it is logically *impossible* to merit acceptance based on your own holiness; there are 613 commandments and numerous rabbinical additions thereto, so there's no way you can keep them all – all of the time – you simply can't do it. **The KEY is to TRUST the God of Israel, not**



trust your own efforts, and then He **DECLARES** you righteous. And you follow His instructions on what to do whenever sin is found in our lives!

As soon as you introduce the concept of merit because of your personal holiness, you've missed the fundamental point of God's **UNIQUE** Holiness – only Jesus could keep all the Torah all of the time – *you can't do it*. **Break one commandment and you've under a "death" penalty.**

- It's as if – in baseball – you come up to the plate, take a swing at the ball but miss, and the Holy Spirit (the umpire) say "*Strike One – you're OUT!*"

Many people do not accept such a strict standard. "*One sin and you're out*". Or *one inaccurate prophecy and you're no longer a prophet to the church*. It seems unfair, and God is always fair, right?

Yes – He is always fair, but perhaps His sense of fairness is different than ours. Mankind's sense of fairness says that if your good deeds outweigh the bad, God will say that you are OK with Him. This, by the way, is Islam's view of righteousness as expressed in the memoirs of the late Mohammad Ali.<sup>17</sup>

- However, that concept was NOT the experience of Adam:

Adam only broke ONE command and he was exiled from the Garden and couldn't get back in *no matter HOW the rest of life went.*

God's standards are holy standards. We sometimes *think* they're unfair because our standards are so much *lower* than His.

Just like the devilish doctrine of Karma, the '*good outweighing the bad*' concept of righteousness implies that you can earn your way into heaven. If so, then Jesus didn't need to go to the cross. Adam's '*one strike and you're out*' experience, however, reveals how absolutely Holy God is and how absolutely NECESSARY is the Cross.

**SLIDE:** PSALM 119

In Psalm 119, David wrote the following

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. I praise you, O Lord; teach me your decrees.

I have recited aloud all the regulations you have given us. I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches."

Psalm 119:11-14 (NLT)

I point to these inspired words of David because of his *radical* approach to the commandments. David saw that the commandments were ultimately about God, not about himself. If you want to do something, even a difficult task is enjoyable; if you don't want to do something, even an easy task is difficult. David wanted to reflect God's holiness in all his actions.

I'm not so sure that the modern church has the same attitude toward God's holiness. God's standards of Holiness have often treated as if they had an **expiration date**— like that **container of sour cream in the back of the refrigerator**.

Jesus said:

"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass from the law until everything takes place." Matthew 5:18

- Well, since it is obvious that heaven and earth have *not* yet passed away, and since Jesus IS the Truth, then what God considered as sin in the OT STILL APPLIES and GOD'S HOLINESS IS STILL AN ISSUE.

David – a man after God's own heart – stated that he **rejoiced** in the commandments, that he did his utmost to have all of God's word – His commandments – in his heart and mind. WHY? – Because David didn't want to sin against Him. **To**

David, finding out what they were and follow them was **not a burden to carry but rather a treasure to keep close.**

## SANCTIFICATION – GOOD CONSCIENCE

But, does this mean that we are *saved by grace* but *sanctified by our own effort to keep the commandments*? **No!**

As believers, we can only grow in holiness as Christ lives in us by the power of His Holy Spirit. **The Holy Spirit is the Agent in sanctification**, not us. (Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Cor. 6: 11).

It is in drawing closer to Christ that we begin to change, NOT from the outside in, but from the INSIDE OUT. And part of this process does involve cooperation on our part – **we are instructed to form a “good conscience”**.

I’m going to read from a source that – as protestants – we may find surprising. It is from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON , ARTICLE 6, MORAL CONSCIENCE:

*“Deep within his conscience, man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment. . . .*

*For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. . . . His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths.”<sup>18</sup>*

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?** It means that we all should follow King David’s example to form a good conscience in ourselves. *“In the **formation of conscience**, the Word of God is the light for our path– as David said (Ps 119:105); we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice.”<sup>19</sup>*

Paul tells Timothy that there are two things he must do to fight the spiritual fight. He has to hold on to **his absolute trust and confidence in God** and **maintain a good (clear) conscience**. (I Timothy 1:18–19) Paul also says that there are some who have rejected the urgings of their conscience and as a result have "made shipwreck" (KJV) of their faith. So, Paul and David state that the formation of a good conscious is a key to a faithful life.

IT FEELS AS IF GOD IS SAYING...

Unfortunately, there is a belief – usually unspoken but often implied – that ALL we NEED to keep us from sin is the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. I’ve even seen it stated

that Scripture can become an idol that people depend upon too much and thereby avoid an intimate relationship with Christ.<sup>20</sup> This is a dishonest and straw-man type of statement because no believing Christian holds the position that the Bible is more important than Christ Himself.

The idea that we can rely solely upon what we *think* the Holy Spirit is saying to us is both dangerous (1 Tim. 1:19–20) and unscriptural (2 Tim. 3:16). We cannot make our *personal* feelings the guide and rule for conduct rather than the written Word. It is an attitude that Jesus described as “*foolish and slow of heart*”.

You see – a person may be perfectly **sincere** and believe that the principles he/she follows in his actions are sound and true principles of human conduct and development, but he may be *quite mistaken* if the principles depart from the Word of God. And... “*If he is mistaken, despite his sincerity, the principles he follows in his actions may lead him on to a frustrated and unhappy human life. Just as a man may sincerely choose a road he believes leads to Birmingham. But if he is mistaken in his choice, if the road he is following does not actually go to Birmingham, his sincerity will not get him there.*”

- Scripture study is essential to a good conscience – to take the right road. We don't worship Scripture any more than a birdwatcher worships her binoculars. Scripture is a tool given to us by God for seeing Him more clearly.‡

Ok – The main point about the 613 commandments is that they are *not* about how holy WE can make ourselves by our own efforts but about how Holy HE IS.

#### USING HEBREW–GREEK WORDS

Now, occasionally, I'll mention a specific Hebrew word. I've noticed that a lot of people nowadays like quoting Greek or Hebrew words when giving a teaching, especially a teaching with a new twist that may be problematic in historic Christianity. Well – quoting another language certainly lends an atmosphere of scholarship and proper breeding to the speaker – but unless the person is expert in NT Greek or OT Hebrew, it's often just pretense – sorry to say but that's my opinion.

- I DON'T PRETEND to know Hebrew, so I PROMISE that when I mention a Hebrew word, I will use ONLY the

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‡ 2 Tim. 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

historic interpretation for that word that is agreed upon by consensus of Jewish scholars, not some outlier or hypothetical opinion.

- And, so that you can keep me honest, I put ALL the text of my presentations in pdf form on the church website; they contain footnotes documenting the word's interpretation, so you can check them out.

## CONCEPTS

We'll get into Exodus in a minute, but first I want to touch upon some concepts that are foundational to the effective application of any Bible study to our lives.

### SLIDE: FOUR CONCEPTS

- Divine Simplicity
- God has been and will forever be Holy
- That God does not change His mind, and
- The Bible is one book.

## DIVINE SIMPLICITY

To begin – *Divine Simplicity*. I will be saying something that – if this is the first time you've heard of the concept – will sound odd, but please bear with me until you hear the entire point. I assure you that this is a historic Christian concept,



one of the first declarations that Classical Theism makes about the nature of God – **God is a simple being.**

**SLIDE:** DIVINE SIMPLICITY

- God is a simple being. God is **NOT** a composite being.

(no clicks) Wow! What are you saying? The adjective ‘Simple’ here doesn’t mean ‘easy’, in the sense that a “simple” task is not a “difficult” task. The word ‘simple’ here is about how something is *composed*. When I say that God is a *simple* being, it means that He is NOT the sum of His parts – He HAS no parts; **He is not the sum of His attributes – He IS His attributes all of the time.**

This concept is based on texts such as Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God, the Lord is One”, The doctrine of divine simplicity emphasizes the unity of the being of God.

- **OK, you’re still probably thinking: what in heaven is he talking about?**

**SLIDE:** MOUSETRAP

Here’s an example that may help distinguish between a composite thing and a simple thing. Take a mousetrap. A standard mousetrap is a composite thing, not a simple thing. It has:

- a wooden base,
- a spring,
- wire,
- latch to hold the trap bar,
- a latch plate, and
- some staples to fasten the parts to the wood.

Put them all together in the proper order and add some cheese, you have a working mousetrap – that is, as long as all parts work as they are *meant* to work. But should one part be missing or be defective, the mousetrap doesn't work as it should. This is a composite thing.

WE also are composite things – as human beings, we are composed of many parts – arms, legs, eyes, brain, etc. **And – as we are so well aware – as time goes by, more and more of our composite parts are *artificial*** – knees, hips, teeth.

➤ But, God is a simple being – He is NOT made up of parts as we are.

Well, 'duh' – you might say; God is Spirit, so He by *nature* would not have PHYSICAL parts.

- But He DOES have ATTRIBUTES – love, compassion, mercy, jealousy, hatred, and so on. *Don't these add up to Who He is?*
- **Divine Simplicity says “NO”.** It is not so much that He *HAS* attributes but rather that He *IS* His attributes. In fact, He is ALL of His attributes **ALL OF THE TIME.**<sup>21</sup> (“I am that I am”).

I know that this still may not be entirely clear the first time you hear it; that was my reaction the first time I heard this back in catholic high school with the Christian Brothers.<sup>§</sup> But, I want to assure you that *divine simplicity* is a classic doctrine that is found in Augustine (354–430), Anselm (1033– 1109), and Aquinas (1225–74).<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps it will be clearer if we consider the question:

**SLIDE:** *Why do so many people view that the way God acts in the NT is different from how He acts in the OT?*

e.g.; More wrath in OT, more mercy in NT.

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<sup>§</sup> The Fourth Lateran Council taught that God is a “*substantia seu natura simplex omnino*”—an “altogether simple substance or nature”. The doctrine of divine simplicity was at the center of Aquinas’ natural theology

**SLIDE: GRAPHIC**

The answer is because we often view Him as a *composite* being like us, not a simple being. Even though He is NOT as man but Spirit (John 4:24), we often approach Him *as if* He was a man. *One day I'm in a bad mood, the next day I'm not...*

Here's the typical view of God that comes from the standpoint that He is a composite being like we are – subject to shifting moods and changes in attitude. Consider the two columns.

<click> Here's what a lot of people perceive in the OT – He is, say, 60% wrath and 10% love;

<click> here's the NT view – God is 70% love and 5% wrath.

<click> I would venture to say that these two views are held by a lot of people. God in the NT is seen as more Loving with only a hint of wrathfulness.

However, both views are WRONG because they are based on the assumption that **God's makeup as a ZERO-SUM GAME, that His Nature in either the OT or the NT is the SUM of the attributes, and all attributes ADD TO 100.**

So, if some attributes in the NT (like *love and mercy*) seem to have increased, then others (like *wrath and*

*judgement*) must have decreased in order to add up to 100. The God of the OT was the judgmental God of the Jews, and the God of the NT is the loving Father of Jesus.

- **Actually, a modified form of this viewpoint was a real heresy** in the early church when a heretic named Marcion taught that the wrathful God of the OT was a separate and lower entity than the merciful NT God and Father of Jesus.

But the fallacy of the composite viewpoint is that God is NOT the sum of His attributes – He IS ALL of His attributes ALL OF THE TIME. He is 100% Love and has 100% Wrath toward sin AT ALL TIMES!

#### **SLIDE:** GOD'S SIMPLICITY

I'm going to use an illustration of Divine Simplicity that is made by Dr. Wayne Grudem in his book *Systematic Theology*. Let's say that this circle is God's being. He has many attributes, one is that He is that He is Holy.

<click> **HOLY** Now, of course, His Holiness permeates His entire being, so individual lines can't fully capture the reality; but just for illustration purposes, I will use lines.

<click> Another attribute is **Wisdom**. Wisdom permeates His whole being – but again, I'll use lines.

<click> God is also **Love**, and

<click> God also is **always** angry against sin. (**Wrath**)

<click> where you see the lines intersect, it means that all these attributes exist at the SAME TIME to the SAME DEGREE.

- ✓ This is what is meant by Divine Simplicity. God is ALL of His attributes at ALL times.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?** Dr. Grudem: *“In terms of practical application, this means that we should never think... that God is a loving God at one point in history and a just or wrathful God at another point in history. He is ALWAYS the same God, and everything He says or does is fully consistent with ALL of His attributes... God has always been infinitely just and infinitely loving as well, and everything He does in the OT and in the NT is completely consistent with both of these attributes... This should caution us against attempting to single out any one attribute as more important than all of the others.”<sup>23</sup>*

Divine Simplicity helps us see **WHY** Jesus saved us the way He did. Jesus had to satisfy GOD'S wrath and death sentence toward sin. The teaching that Jesus died to ransom us from

Satan is downright profanity and a sign that the teacher is woefully ignorant of biblical theology.

It was God's Holy Wrath and Justice that HAD to be satisfied. God could not *overlook* His justice by not giving sinners what they deserve. If He did, He would have compromised His Holiness, and He is incapable of doing this. If He merely waived His hand and said "*Olly Olly oxen free*", He would not be a Righteous God – He would be the Merciful God but not the Holy and Just God. Jesus paid OUR penalty. But Christ on the cross for our sins both demonstrated and satisfied all attributes. As Psalm 85 says:

"Lovingkindness and truth have met together;  
Righteousness and peace **HAVE KISSED** each other."

Psalm 85:10

- I like that – In Christ, Righteousness and Peace **have kissed** each other.

#### IDOLATRY

But we so often keep coming back to a composite view of God, don't we? Why? – **because it's more comfortable.**

It's **more comfortable** to believe that God is the sum of His parts and that *it is a zero-sum game* – meaning that if I increase one, I must reduce another because they must add up

to 100%. So, when we believe that one attribute (love) increases in the NT, another (wrath against sin) MUST have decreased. And, of course, WE – who are *always infallible* and *completely unbiased* – get to CHOOSE which is which.

What *inevitably* happens is that we always pick LOVE as supreme, and then WE ASSIGN PERCENTAGES to some other attributes that are *easier to live with in our own eyes*. Whatever percentage is LEFT OVER goes to those more “*nasty*” attributes such as wrath.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul warned us precisely about this exchange in values. He said that our most fundamental inclination as fallen human creatures is to *exchange* the truth that God has revealed about Himself for a lie, and to serve and worship the *creature* rather than the Creator (Romans 1:18–32).

- *Exchanging the truth that God has revealed about Himself for a lie.*

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?** It means that we must always be careful NOT to substitute for the biblical God a *composite god* that has room for only one or two attributes – love and mercy – and no room for any others.

*“A god stripped of justice, of holiness, of sovereignty, is as much an idol as a statue of wood or stone.”<sup>24</sup>*



## THE SECOND CONCEPT: GOD IS ETERNALLY HOLY

The second concept is that God is ETERNALLY holy.

### SLIDE: ETERNALLY HOLY

I think that most people, even those who are agnostic, would agree that – if there is a God, He is holy. So, why do I mention this here as if this is something new? Because we – and I include myself here – we tend to see God’s holiness as something *passive*, like the blue sky at the ballpark – it’s just quietly there. However, Exodus will show that His holiness is an *active*, even intimidating, part of His character. He is a fire that brings darkness to the Egyptians but light to the Hebrews.

The Holiness of God is “*one of the most important ideas that a Christian can ever grapple with. It is basic to our whole understanding of God and of Christianity.*”<sup>25</sup>

*“The Bible says that God is holy, holy, holy. Not that He is merely holy, or even holy, holy. He is holy, holy, holy. The Bible never says that God is love, love, love, or mercy, mercy, mercy, or wrath, wrath, wrath, or justice, justice. It does say that He is holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is full of His glory.”*<sup>26</sup>

Just like we use bold, italic, and underline to emphasize a point, Hebrew uses repetition. Holiness is the only attribute of

God spoken about in this fashion, both here in Isaiah and in the Book of Revelation (Revelation 4:8).

In the Book of Numbers, you may remember that we came across many Biblical concepts regarding the Holiness of God. And some of them seemed foreign to us, even shocking when we first encountered them. We saw that **God is a Holy and Jealous God** – jealous of protecting what rightfully belongs to Him ALONE. Jealous does not mean envious – jealously here relates to refusing to share that which is rightfully His and His alone.

He will protect what rightfully belongs to Him, and that includes: the RECOGNITION of His **Sovereignty** over all creatures and nature; the RECOGNITION that the ALL Glory belongs to Him; the RECOGNITION that His **Name** is to be always hallowed; and the RECOGNITION that **His people** are to be His and His alone.

#### SATAN'S AUTHORITY

As a brief aside, there is an understandable but mistaken belief that when Satan offered the kingdoms of the world to Jesus in exchange for worship (Luke 4:6), Satan was revealing that he had authority over the earth because of Adam's sin. This is not true. There is and has ever been only One Supreme SOVEREIGN Lord over all the world, and that is the YAHWEH:

Psalm 24:1 "A Psalm of David. The earth is the YAHWEH'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it."

Any authority that Satan may have has been either given to him by God to serve Good's ultimate purpose (e.g.; Satan was given limited authority over Job's health (Job 2:6-7) or because people and rulers voluntarily give it to him over in their lives. What you worship often is a god in your life.

\*\*\* We'll see in Exodus how the sorcerous and magicians of Egypt were able to *counterfeit* the first several miracles of Moses (staffs into snakes, blood in River Nile and plague of frogs). But they quickly reached the limit of their occult power – and more importantly – **they could NOT reverse what God has done. THIS IS A CRUCIAL INSIGHT.** Satan can NEVER reverse what God has done because God is Sovereign! And any power that Satan had over our lives was dealt a fatal blow by Christ.

## HOLINESS

OK – What does Holiness *mean*? Well, I readily admit that I'm **totally inadequate** to describe it. **But I can sense that Holiness exists.**

Holiness involves Someone Who is completely Other than anyone else, and Who is **completely Pure**. Holiness is real. It's deep, it's overwhelming, and it's even somewhat scary. It is beyond words to adequately describe.

- If a question on a SAT test asked, “*what does ‘God is Holy’ mean?*” , all I could answer is that it means that God is God.

This leads directly into the third concept...

#### **SLIDE: NO CHANGE OF MIND**

**God does not change His mind.** He stated so in Numbers chapter 23, verse 19:

“God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a human being, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it?”

Let me ask you a question:

**Q:** have God's standards for Holiness that were set forth in the OT changed now that we're in the NT?

Not everyone would give the same answer. In the world today, I think that it is obvious that the concept of Biblical holiness is *continually downplayed* and *outright ridiculed*. And, in many parts of the Churches, the attitude is often the same – although

it is not as blatantly expressed. It's like **we're at a Monster-truck rally at New Lebanon Speedway** – where the concept of Holiness *is frequently run-over and crushed by the latest psychological study or the pressure of political correctness or by the self-help/seeker-sensitive Pied Pipers, or by the stream of new “revelations” from fallible prophets.*

**A:** So, the answer to the question of whether or not God's standards of Holiness have changed **depends on whether you believe Him or not when He said that He does NOT change His mind.** If that is true, and it is, then the God we deal with today is the EXACT SAME God with whom the people in the OT dealt. His standards of Holiness are the same.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?** It means many things, but the main one for today is that **God's opinion does NOT EVOLVE** – even though the *convictions* of many POLITICIANS and CHURCH LEADERS EVIDENTLY HAVE. Whether it concerns lifestyle choices, or the murder of infants, or the unconditional necessity of the Cross for everyone ...

- His standards for holiness have NOT *lessened* – actually, **THEY CANNOT!**

Does this mean that God is *inflexible* where His holiness is concerned? YES, most definitely.

## Commandments were Not Revised

Consider what happened on Mt. Sinai. God wrote the 10 commandments\*\* on tablets of stone – they were a reflection of His Holiness.

Remember how Moses SMASHED the tablets when he came down the mountain and saw the golden calf festival going on? Well, God called Moses BACK UP the mountain and wrote the EXACT SAME WORDS a second set of stone tablets – the EXACT SAME WORDS. (Exodus 34:1)

- ✓ **God DIDN'T MODIFY** or soften the commandments to make it easier on the people, or so the congregation would grow, or so that Moses could get elected to office.
- ✓ The original tablets were NOT the **Beta test version** to see how well it went over with the customers. God DIDN'T make them more user-friendly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> version.

**\*\*\* HOLINESS STARTS WITH GOD!** Discussions about holiness get off on the wrong foot when they begin with what we do and don't do, rather than with **Who God is**.

Because the commandments reflected His Holiness, and He NEVER CAN – never WILL –compromise His holiness.

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\*\* the Hebrew text calls them the 10 Words

If we fail to recognize the ongoing nature of His Holiness, we will not recognize what offends that Holiness today.

### WHY AM I SO CONCERNED?

Why am I fixated on this point? **Is it that I am trying to come across as a holy person?**

- **Actually, it's the exact opposite!** (as R.C Sproul writes), *"I have a deep hunger for the holiness of God precisely because I am NOT a holy person. I am a profane man – a person who spends more time out of the temple than in it. But, I have had just enough of a taste of the majesty of God to want more. My soul cries for more."<sup>27</sup>*

You see, I came across a **reality in the OT** that was totally unexpected. THE REALITY is that God's Holiness is absolute, and that **our opinions on how things SHOULD be don't apply** – **example Uzzah's** death and the Ark of the Covenant – sincerity didn't cut it..

Remember also how – in our study of the Book of Numbers (Numbers 15:22–31; Leviticus 4) – we were **surprised to see** that even **UNINTENTIONAL** sins required a sacrifice.

**What do I mean** – that if I do something against God's law but I

didn't know it was against His Law, that still is sin? **Yes. You got it absolutely right!**

**Because God's Holiness is absolute, Red paint spilled on a white rug is no less damaging to the whiteness of the rug whether the person was sincere or insincere.**<sup>††</sup>

I emphasize this point for two reasons: (1) the cross is absolutely necessary, and (2) because we are called to be a **Holy Nation**, a Royal Priesthood. We don't judge a person's heart, but Scripture demands that we judge whether an idea or practice or new teaching is compatible with what God has revealed as truth (Isaiah 8:20). Truth glorifies God.

- *"Those who tell you the Truth love you. Those who tell you what you want to hear love themselves."*<sup>28</sup> *"It's our obligation to speak the truth, and (the reality is that) everyone can either take it or leave it. **But truth must be in us.** We live in such a poverty of truth today."*<sup>29</sup>

✓ As a dear nun use to say: ***"Holiness is not for wimps and the cross is not negotiable, sweetheart, it's a requirement."***<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>††</sup> All sin is cosmic treason; the intentional sins were more serious in their consequences to the person or the nation, but all sin – intentional or unintentional - needed atonement.



## The Book of Exodus

OK – let’s step out into the road of the Book of Exodus and see where it takes us.

**SLIDE:** EXODUS

### KEY VERSE

OK –the Book of Exodus. Every book in the Bible has a **KEY VERSE** or key verses. If you can find that key verse, it will help you better know where you’re going. Now – there are a lot of different opinions as to which is the key verse of Exodus. For me, a major candidate has to do with the fact that Exodus is a turning point in God’s covenant history.

**SLIDE:** INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL GROUPS

Up until now, God had been dealing with individuals and small family groups. In Genesis, we have the story of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and then Joseph. God dealt with individuals and their immediate families – they were seeds He planted. But now, in Exodus, He deals with a Nation.

**SLIDE:** KEY VERSE: EXODUS 19:5–6

So I offer Exodus is in Chapter 19, Verse 5–6; as the key verse; I'll start reading at verse 3:

"Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, "Thus you will tell the house of Jacob, and declare to the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I lifted you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then **you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.** These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.'" Exodus 19:3–6

The seeds have grown in Egypt. God is now after a People, a **COMPANY** that will be His Company, His people, and they are to be Holy.

Exodus is the story of how – against all odds – He brought together of this company of people. God brings them out of the land of Egypt, and He brings them to Sinai. At Sinai, He announces to them what He's doing – *He really hadn't told them up until then.* But He now tells them that they will be His people. They are now established as a holy nation.

A key point often overlooked in the Exodus story is WHY God brought them out. Just to let them be free? No. Salvation

is always salvation with a purpose in view. It's not *just* deliverance from slavery. That's not what it's about. If we read Exodus thinking this is what it's about that, we've missed a crucial point. They were being delivered from being slaves to Pharaoh in order to become bond-slaves to God.

- He was bringing them out from one kind of slavery to a NEW KIND OF SLAVERY – but this new kind of slavery had INFINITELY GREATER RETIREMENT BENEFITS!

Sometimes sermons emphasize that the purpose of the Gospel is to save you from hell – it does, but this entirely misses the point of your salvation. **The confession of salvation is Jesus is Lord.** You were a slave to sin and under the Holy Wrath of God; now, you're in a new kind of slavery – a voluntary bondservant of Jesus Christ – **and only in this am I truly free.**

*“You'll be a kingdom of priests. You will stand before Me on behalf of the rest of the world. You'll be My people. You'll be a holy nation, separated to Me.”* So this is the key verse and it is the theme of the whole book. The rest of the Bible is how God achieved that purpose.

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POEM

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Ephesians 2:10 says:

"For we are his **workmanship**, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them."

I was reading a book the other day<sup>‡‡</sup> and was startled when I came across the statement that the Greek word that is translated 'workmanship' in this text is the word from which we get our English word "**POEM**". Well, I didn't want to take the author's word for it, and so I checked out Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.

And sure enough, Vine's Expository confirmed that the word used here translated *workmanship* is indeed the same word as *poem*:

*"[B-1, Noun, G4161, poiema] whence Eng., "poem," denotes "that which is made" (from poieo, "to do, make"), Romans 1:20, "the things that are made;" Ephesians 2:10, "(His) workmanship." <sup>31</sup>*

You are God's creation. **YOU ARE GOD'S POEM**. The Psalms are poetry, and we are supposed to be a walking Psalm. Unfortunately, I often sound more like rap music than a poem. *"If the Psalms aren't poetry, they're useless"<sup>32</sup>*

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<sup>‡‡</sup> O.J. Hawkins, *The Joshua Code*, Thomas Nelson, 2012, page 27

**SLIDE: THE LAST LINES OF GENESIS**

The last lines of the Book of Genesis state: "Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But **God will surely come to you and lead you up from this land to the land he swore on oath to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**" Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He said, "**God will surely come to you.** Then you must carry my bones up from this place." So Joseph died at the age of 110. After they embalmed him, his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt." Genesis 50: 24–26

So, in this last chapter of Genesis, Joseph is dying. He's 110 years old and has been the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest official in Egypt under the Pharaoh for approximately 80 years<sup>§§</sup>. As he is dying, he reminds his fellow Israelites – **who are at the time living very comfortably in Egypt and multiplying rapidly in number** – that God WILL come and make good on His promise to lead them to a promised land. Joseph then makes them promise to take his bones with them when they eventually leave. He dies and they embalm him in the Egyptian style and lay him in a coffin. The Israelites will keep their promise to him, and Joseph's bones WILL be carried out in the Exodus and eventually buried at Shechem when Joshua enters Canaan.<sup>33</sup>

**SLIDE: SILENCE**

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<sup>§§</sup> Genesis 41:46 says he was 30 years old when he first appeared before Pharaoh.

Scripture is a saga of God revealing Himself, Who He is and how He always fulfills what He has promised – and HE ALWAYS DOES SO ON HIS OWN TIMETABLE.

After Joseph’s death is recorded in Genesis, hundreds of years pass, perhaps as much as 350 years pass, and Scripture records *nothing* about the events that happens with the Israelites in Egypt. Scripture does not tell us all that we may WANT to know. It tells us all that we NEED to know. Scripture records historical events only when they illustrated *divine principles*.

So, for hundreds of years as the Israelites grow in number and prosper, there is Complete Silence...

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#### NEW REVELATIONS?

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By the way, there’s a teaching going around that claims that, in these last days, Jesus is going to be revealing things about Himself **beyond what is written down in Scripture**. This will supposedly occur “*through dreams, visions and prophetic insights*”.<sup>34</sup> Don’t fall for this.

- It is a classic *Danger –Will Robinson* situation that opens the church up to deception.

The words that we have are the very words God wanted us to have. If something is NOT in the Scripture, the Holy Spirit did NOT WANT it there. There is even an instance where

certain information was expressly forbidden to be written down (Revelation 10:4).

Ok – Scripture is silent for hundreds of years after Joseph’s death...

**SLIDE:** AND THEN,

And then, Moses picks up the story with the Book of Exodus... To get started, let’s consider the Name of the book...

**SLIDE:** These are the Names

“And *these are the names* of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob...” Exodus 1:1

<Click>: – the first words of Exodus are “And *these are the Names*”. Many translations have this as “Now *these are the names...*”, but “And” is more proper since it better shows the connection between Genesis and Exodus as **one continuous narrative**.<sup>35</sup>

So, the Hebrew title of the book is 'Shemot'.<sup>36</sup> Shemot (pronounced *shMOTE*) means *names*. That may seem strange to us, but the Hebrews named their books by the first words of

the book. Remember how the name of the Book of Numbers in Hebrew is 'Bamidbar' – which translated to “*in the wilderness*” after the first words of the book: Then the Lord spoke to Moses *in the wilderness* of Sinai. (Numbers 1:1) It may seem odd to us, but that’s just how they did it.

✓ So, the official name of the Book of Exodus is Shemot.

<Click> *Exodus* is the title that the Greeks and Romans gave to it when they translated the Hebrew into Greek and then into Latin.

The Greek title for the book is *Exodus Aigyptou*, which translates as “*Departure from Egypt.*” The name Exodus is an abbreviated form of that title. Exodus means “departure.”

The author of Exodus, as well as the other four books of the Torah, is Moses. This is confirmed by thousands of years of Jewish Tradition, plus the fact that the books themselves say that Moses is the author and God commanded him to write the events down (Numbers 33:1–2). The supreme confirmation of Moses’ authorship was given by Jesus Himself on several occasions. For example, Jesus said to the Pharisees,

“If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?” (John 5:46–47)



- Jesus' confirmation of the Mosaic authorship is the final word on the subject.

### THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT

As I said, hundreds of years have gone by with the Israelites in Egypt. Egypt today is not a great military or economic power, but back there in the period of Exodus, Egypt was a **super-power**. Not only did it have great engineers and architects as well as being a military juggernaut, Egypt was in touch with dark power.

It appears that the Israelites, by and large, kept some cohesion as a people and enjoyed a good life in Egypt for perhaps 150 years. It appears obvious that they kept their basic *tribal structure*; in the incident of the golden calf several months after the exodus, the text says that "all the Levites rallied to Moses". (Exodus 32:26)

### SLIDE: Pyramids

And I want to dispel a myth regarding the Israelites building the Pyramids. The Great Pyramid at Giza was completed about 2560 B.C. Jacob and his small group came down to Egypt in approximately 1640 B.C., which is 900 years **after** the pyramids were completed. As slaves, they would be building roads, canals and store sites for grain and the army.

You know the saying *"All good things must come to an end."* It supposedly was coined by a guy named Geoffrey Chaucer in 1374 – maybe [Kristin Scace](#) can verify that...

All good things DID come to an end...

**SLIDE:** NEW PHARAOH

"Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land." So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor." Exodus 1:8-11

We'll pick up the story from here next time.

In closing, I want to briefly read from the incident at the burning bush:

**SLIDE:** WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

At the burning bush, God gave Moses the task of leading the people out of Egypt; Moses offered a string of excuses why

he was a bad choice. One of them was that he didn't even know God's Name:

Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"

<Click?: And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:13-14

God revealed Himself to Israel by making His name known to them. Up until this point, no one knew God's Name; *El Shaddai* and such are just titles. It's like today when Mr. President is a Title; Barack is the president's name. GOD HAS A NAME; He is not an anonymous force.

- ✓ He is the eternal 'I AM'. *'I am that I am'*. Some translate it...
- ✓ *I will be that which I will be*. And even...
- ✓ *I will be there as I will be there*.

*I will be there...* On the **road to Emmaus**, Jesus comforted the discouraged disciples:

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself... ” (Luke 24:27)

Jesus COMFORTED them by showing that He had **ALWAYS been there**. He was there in the OT and He was walking with them NOW. **ALWAYS...** perhaps *unseen* to the natural eye, but *not to the spiritual eye*.

SLIDE: ALWAYS

Perhaps we can capture what God was saying by his use of the word “*Always*”.<sup>37</sup>

- Always... My Redeemer
- Always My Healer
- Always My Light
- Always My Good Shepherd
- Always My Rock
- Always My Provider
- Always Faithful to Forgive
- Always My Father...

Revelation 4:8 “Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “**Holy, holy, holy** is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.”

Jesus promised: "I am with you **ALWAYS**, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20) ALWAYS.

More of Exodus next time.

All Glory and Praise are Yours, Lord.

Amen.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Book One, chapter 3, Frodo quoting Bilbo

<sup>2</sup> Questions posed by Rabbi David Fohrman, *The Exodus You Almost Passed Over*

<sup>3</sup> Written by David; *Gill's Exposition, Introduction, Psalm 92*, <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/gill/psalms/92.htm>

<sup>4</sup> NASB, Psalm 92, footnote (g).

<sup>5</sup> Rabbi Mordechai Becher, *Gateway to Judaism: The What, How and Why of Jewish Life.*, p.397

<sup>6</sup> Thurman Wisdom writing in Michael Barrett, *Beginning At Moses: A Guide to Finding Christ in the Old Testament*, Forward

<sup>7</sup> Tom Bradford's Torah Class, *EXODUS Week 1, Introduction*, <http://www.torahclass.com/old-testament-studies/35-old-testament-studies-exodus/120-lesson-1-intro-to-exodus>

<sup>8</sup> Tzvi Freeman, *What Is Torah?*, Chabad.org

<sup>9</sup> Tzvi Freeman

<sup>10</sup> Tractate Makkot 23b (note: the Talmud does not list what they are)

<sup>11</sup> Judaism 101, *Aseret ha-Dibrot: The "Ten Commandments"*

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Mendy Hecht, *The 613 Commandments*, Chabad.com

<sup>14</sup> Becher, p.394

<sup>15</sup> Nachmanides, *Commentary on the Torah*, Exodus 13:16

<sup>16</sup> Rabbi Dovid Orlofsky email dated June 7, 2016. [aishwebinars@aish.com](mailto:aishwebinars@aish.com)

<sup>17</sup> Bucktin, Christopher, "Heavyweight legend Muhammad Ali fights for life in hospital", *Manchester Evening News*, June 3, 2016, <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/sport/boxing/heavyweight-legend-muhammad-ali-fights-11426464>

<sup>18</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON , ARTICLE 6, MORAL CONSCIENCE, 1776, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p3s1c1a6.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s1c1a6.htm)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 1785

- <sup>20</sup> Don Rumble, *Prophets & Prophecy Today*; “Some people, out of fear of deception, have found safety solely in the Scriptures, to the neglect of an intimate relationship with Christ.”, page 7, [http://www.thefountain.org/Dons\\_PDF/Prophets%20and%20Prophecy%20Today.pdf](http://www.thefountain.org/Dons_PDF/Prophets%20and%20Prophecy%20Today.pdf)
- <sup>21</sup> R.C. Sproul, *Chosen By God*, page. 14
- <sup>22</sup> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Divine Simplicity*
- <sup>23</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, page 180.
- <sup>24</sup> R.C. Sproul, *The Holy Love of God*, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/holy-love-god/>
- <sup>25</sup> R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God*, page 12
- <sup>26</sup> R. C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1985), p. 40.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid. p. 33.
- <sup>28</sup> Mother Angelica, [http://www.azquotes.com/author/18179-Mother\\_Angelica](http://www.azquotes.com/author/18179-Mother_Angelica)
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> [http://studybible.info/vines/Made%20\(be\)](http://studybible.info/vines/Made%20(be))
- <sup>32</sup> Alicia Ostriker as quoted in Poetry Foundation, “If the Psalms Aren’t Poetry, They’re Useless”
- <sup>33</sup> Joshua 24:32
- <sup>34</sup> Don Rumble, *Prophets & Prophecy Today*; “The Bible itself states that it gives but a partial picture of Jesus’ earthly ministry. ‘And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.’ (Jn. 21:25) ... how much more is it true that the Scriptures give only a partial (though inerrant) picture of God in His eternal habitation?! God has much to reveal about Himself through dreams, visions, prophetic in sights, etc.”, page 6, [http://www.thefountain.org/Dons\\_PDF/Prophets%20and%20Prophecy%20Today.pdf](http://www.thefountain.org/Dons_PDF/Prophets%20and%20Prophecy%20Today.pdf)
- <sup>35</sup> J. H. Hertz, ed., *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Soncino Press, p.206
- <sup>36</sup> Judaism 101, *Torah*, <http://www.jewfaq.org/torah.htm>
- <sup>37</sup> David Pawson, audio tape, *Exodus Part I (Unlocking the Bible Series)*