

UNIT 4

+

OUT OF EGYPT

I CALLED

MY SON

“I Will Be Your God”

by J. A. Medders

Iconic. That’s one of the first words that comes to mind when I think about the Book of Exodus. Maybe you’ve seen the multiple movies depicting one of the most epic scenes in our sacred Scriptures. Water spreading, ground drying, Israelites marching. The parting of the Red Sea will be high on the list of most requested footage in the New Jerusalem.

Exodus is filled with famous scenes, such as baby Moses floating down the river to escape Pharaoh’s genocide of Hebrew boys, only to end up raiding Pharaoh’s fridge while growing up in Pharaoh’s house. You may recall the account of Moses killing an Egyptian and fleeing into the desert, where he eventually encountered a burning shrub that would not burn up as it burst forth with the voice of God. Here, Moses was charged with the mission and the words, “Let my people go” (Ex. 5:1). And it was here in the Book of Exodus that God revealed His personal name—YHWH (pronounced Yahweh). Before long, we see this covenant God devastate Egypt with plagues, litter

the land with frogs and hail, cover the skies in darkness and death, and lead His people on an exodus toward their holy land.

The incredible scenes of Exodus get imprinted on our imagination, and that’s kind of the point. The pyrotechnics in Exodus serve a spiritual purpose.

GOD IS THE MESSAGE

God worked His wonders in Exodus to set His people free, yes, and also to make an announcement to every Israelite, to every Egyptian with their pantheon of gods, to Pharaoh and his palace, and to everyone who would ever read Exodus. That message: There is no one like God.

- To the Israelites, God declared them to be His people, and He promised that they would know Him as the Lord their God who brought them out from their slavery in Egypt (Ex. 6:7).

God delivered His people from the chains of Egypt—and He delivered them to Himself. God wants people to know Him.

- At the conclusion to the plague of frogs, Moses gave Pharaoh the honor of deciding when Moses was to pray for the plague to end so Pharaoh would know the uniqueness and power of the God of the Hebrews (Ex. 8:10).
- The Lord declared to Pharaoh that He could have struck and killed the king at any moment, but He hadn't for a purpose—so God's power would be shown in Egypt and God's name would be known throughout the earth (Ex. 9:16).
- God performed His wonders against Egypt so that the Israelites and the generations after them would know that the Lord alone is God (Ex. 10:2).

- God parted the Red Sea for His people to pass through and planned to bring it back together to the destruction of Pharaoh's army, which would result in God's glory among the Egyptians (Ex. 14:18).

The verses identified above illuminate for us that Exodus is also about how God gives an exodus, a deliverance, a freedom from spiritual ignorance. God delivered His people from the chains of Egypt—and He delivered them to Himself. God wants people to know Him. God is the subject of the exodus: His power, His might, His mercy, His provision, His glory, His attention, His invitation to know Him.

An exodus can only be an exodus if there is a destination. So the Book of Exodus is both departure and arrival. It is leaving Egypt to walk with God. Leaving darkness to walk in the light. Exodus is a blueprint for Christian spirituality—God's mercy sets sinners free to make them His people. This ancient account is part of the believer's testimony. It's more than Bible stories; it's your story in Christ.

This ancient account is part of the believer's testimony. It's more than Bible stories; it's your story in Christ.



ears, and we still manage to get tripped up in our walk with Jesus. Paul gave us his warning in 1 Corinthians 10 because he knew that if we aren't careful, then we will answer our temptations just like our spiritual ancestors did. If we don't learn from our history, our spirituality will continue to be sluggish, floundering, and lack the zeal we truly desire.

So what can we do? Know the Lord. Trust His deliverance, redemption, and power. Get ready to drink from the spiritual rock, who is Christ the Lord. While you pay attention to the narrative, the movements, and the plagues found in Exodus, also pay attention to your discipleship with the same Jesus who saved a people out of Egypt (Jude 5). Follow your Lord God who was crucified and raised for you, who provided His blood to deliver you from sin, Satan, and death, and who calls you to know Him and the power of His resurrection. Recall how you have been delivered to a new destination—an abundant life in Christ and filled with His Spirit. This is your life, your story, your God.

If we don't learn from our history, our spirituality will continue to be sluggish, floundering, and lack the zeal we truly desire.

Paul wanted us to learn our family history so we won't be doomed to repeat it. It's not uncommon for people in small groups and studies to throw their heads back in disbelief at the Israelites, saying, "They saw these amazing things in Egypt, saw all that God did, and they still whined and complained!" But are we sure we would have been much different? We have full and finished Bibles, ones wrapped in cowhide and ones in apps on our phones, and we still struggle. We have shelves of books, hours of sermons that have hit our

There is a reason for the existence of multiple services that will trace your ancestry, piece together your family history, or provide your genetic makeup with a kit in the mail. We want to feel connected. We desire a discovery of meaning in our histories. The apostle Paul wanted us to take that same approach in our intake of Exodus. Fight to overcome the gap of time, space, place, culture, and customs. Fight any familiarity you have with Exodus that could breed apathy. Paul told every disciple of the risen Lord Jesus that Moses wrote these events down—both the good and the bad—for our spiritual health (see 1 Cor. 10:1-6).

YOUR SPIRITUAL LINEAGE