

Discipleship Questions

Why were the Israelites enslaved in Egypt?

What did God want Moses to do?

How did God deliver the Israelites from Egypt?

How did God ultimately defeat the Egyptian army?

What was the covenant God entered into with Israel at Mount Sinai?

What were some things that were part of the Law God gave Israel?

What did the twelve spies say about the Canaan land, and how did Israel respond?

What did God do to Israel because of their choice regarding the Canaan land?



PART 2: THE EXODUS

THE BIG PICTURE

Of The Bible Story

After the creation of the world and the fall of man, sin continued to spread. But God determined to use the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to accomplish His great plan. He promised to make their descendants into a great nation, give them a special land, and then bless all peoples of the earth through their Seed. For 400 years, however, their descendants would live in another land and be enslaved and oppressed (Genesis 15:13-16). As Genesis concluded, Jacob's family had moved to Egypt to survive a severe famine. Now, we focus on the second major section of the Bible story: "The Exodus."

Exodus 1:6-14

Jacob's twelve sons all died. Their descendants multiplied rapidly in Egypt, and a new king (Pharaoh) came to power who no longer honored Joseph's impact. Instead, he perceived the Israelites (descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as a threat to Egypt. Therefore, he enslaved them. The king even ordered the murder of male Israelite children (Exodus 1:15-22). It was during this time that Moses was born, hidden by his parents, and discovered and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 2:1-10). After Moses grew, he saw the oppression of his people, killed an Egyptian, and had to flee to the land of Midian (Exodus 2:11-25).

Exodus 3:1-10; 6:2-8

During this time, Jehovah God appeared to Moses from a burning bush. God called Moses to go to Pharaoh so the people could leave Egypt and enter the land God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses and his brother Aaron were then sent to Pharaoh to demand that he allow the Israelites to go into the wilderness and hold a festival for the God of Israel

(Exodus 5:1). However, Pharaoh refused – and even increased their workload (Exodus 5:2-14). God, however, was going to prove His superiority over all other gods in the way He would deliver Israel from Egypt. In doing so, God desired that Israel would be His people and that He would be their God. God proceeded to bring a series of ten plagues on Egypt: Water turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-25), frogs (Exodus 8:1-15), gnats/lice (Exodus 8:16-19), flies (Exodus 8:20-32), death of livestock (Exodus 9:1-7), boils (Exodus 9:8-12), hail (Exodus 9:13-35), locusts (Exodus 10:1-20), darkness (Exodus 10:21-29), and the death of the firstborn (Exodus 11:1-12:42). At this tenth plague, Pharaoh commanded Moses to take the Israelites out of Egypt, and the Egyptians gave them many possessions (Exodus 12:31-32, 35-36).

Exodus 14:5-14, 19-31

After Israel left Egypt, Pharaoh changed his mind and pursued them. The sight of the Egyptian army terrified the Israelites. However, Moses promised the people that God would accomplish something special to deliver them. God then caused the waters of the Red Sea to be parted through the hand of Moses so the Israelites could pass on dry land. Then, when the Egyptians attempted to pursue them, God caused the water to crash over them. Thus, God delivered His people from Egyptian slavery, and the people celebrated Jehovah, their God (Exodus 15:1-21)! As they continued their journey in the wilderness, God provided for them (despite their complaints), and they eventually reached Mount Sinai.

Exodus 19:3-8

God led the Israelites to the Sinai Wilderness and Mount Sinai. There, God told Moses to tell the Israelites about what they had seen Him accomplish. Now, God wanted to make a covenant (agreement) with this nation (Israel), that they would belong to God and be His special possession – a kingdom of priests and His holy nation. The people agreed to this by promising to do everything the Lord spoke. Throughout the Old Testament, Jehovah wanted to be Israel's God and for them to be faithful to Him as His people!

Exodus 20:1-17

These verses contain the foundational commandments for the Law God gave to Israel, known as the Ten Commandments. They demonstrate how God expected His people to be devoted to Him and to conduct themselves honorably toward others. However, God gave them many other laws in addition to these (e.g., Exodus 20-23; Leviticus). Furthermore, God instructed them to build a tabernacle (tent) that could be transported, which would serve as the place where God would meet with His people and

where they would perform the sacrifices and services God commanded from them (Exodus 25-40). Central to God's service was a priesthood, animal sacrifices, and special days and festivals that were to be observed. After the laws were given, the Israelites formally entered the covenant with God, promising to obey Him (Exodus 24:1-8). God would then lead them through the wilderness toward the promised land (Exodus 40:34-38).

Numbers 13:1-2, 26-33; 14:1-10

As God prepared to lead His people into the promised land (the Canaan land), the Israelites were to send twelve spies (one from each tribe of Israel) into the land and give a report of it. When the spies returned, they all agreed that the land was fruitful and prosperous, but that there were large and fortified cities with men of great size. Ten of the spies concluded that they should not go to fight against the people of the land. However, Joshua and Caleb concluded that Jehovah God would keep His promise and lead them to victory! Yet, the Israelites followed the advice of the ten faithless spies and refused to enter the land at that time.

Numbers 14:20-35

The faithlessness of the ten spies and the Israelite people greatly displeased God. Because of their rebellion, God declared that none of the Israelites above 20 years old would enter the promised land. The only exception would be Joshua and Caleb. They would then spend 40 years wandering in the wilderness rather than entering and conquering the land God had offered to give them (Numbers 33:1-49). Note that even Moses would die without entering Canaan, due to his later disobedience (Numbers 20:1-13).

Conclusion

God had demonstrated His holiness before the Israelites in delivering them from Egyptian slavery. As the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had multiplied and God brought them out of Egypt and gave them a law, God fulfilled the promise of making them into a great nation (though it was just the beginning). Now, God wanted to give them the land He had promised the Patriarchs. However, the people had rejected God's ability to give them the land, and they would wander in the wilderness until all but the younger generation was left.

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