



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Exodus 1:1-7

Exodus

"Introduction"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Well, good morning. This morning we begin with a new series in the book of Exodus. Turn in your Bibles to Exodus and we're going to look at verses 1-7 this morning in the beginning of this series and we will spend a great deal of time, the larger measure of our time, on an introduction to this book. But we begin with verses 1-7.

"Now 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; Daniel and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. And all the persons who came from the loins of Jacob were seventy in number, but Joseph was already in Egypt. And 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."

Let's bow together in a word of prayer and ask the Lord to bless this reading of His word and bless our time of study together. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we thank You that we have opportunity again this morning to come together and to study the scriptures. And as we move this morning from the New Testament to the Old Testament and take up a study in a very large and very important book, we pray that You'd bless our time in the months ahead and bless our time this morning, that it would be fruitful, that it would be enjoyable, and that

as we look into the scriptures together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we might see Christ, and as a result we might become more like Him. And we recognize this is Your work, a work of Your grace, and so we begin with heads bowed in submission to You, seeking Your blessing upon our study together.

We pray for those who are not with us this morning, who cannot join in this study due to sickness. We ask that You would extend mercy to them. We remember all of the names on the calendar of concern and those that are not there whose needs are very great. We pray that You'd give encouragement, and if it be Your will, that You would extend the mercy of healing.

We pray, Father, particularly though, that You'd give encouragement that they might look to Christ and gain the encouragement that He offers, with the realization that He is the author and perfecter of faith and that He has accomplished all and that His will is being worked out on their lives. Bless those who are away on travel due to business or due to vacations. We pray that You'd give them a safe return.

And now, Father, we ask Your blessing upon us as we look into the scriptures. May this be a time of edification for us and may we glorify You in our time together. For it's in Christ's name we pray. Amen.

[Message] As I mentioned, we are turning this morning to the book of Exodus, a book which has been called the Old Testament's greatest book. Now that's not necessarily the universal consensus, and when choosing from a list of such books as Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, and others, it's perhaps a little difficult and maybe even a little dangerous to try to select one that has preeminence.

Now every book, whether it be Jeremiah or Zephaniah, has an essential place in the Bible. All are inspired of God. Having said that, however, it's doubtful that any book of the Old Testament supersedes the book of Exodus in importance. And the two main events of the book are crucial to the Old Testament: the departure from Egypt and

the making of the covenant at Sinai. In fact, the book essential involves movement from Egypt to Sinai and describes Israel's redemption and adoption by God in His faithfulness to the promises that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

But the central event of the book of Exodus is the exodus from Egypt. It has been described as the pivotal event of the Old Testament. It's a theme that is referred about 120 times in the Old Testament. And so it's a very important event, an event that's essential for us to study and to understand. It's an event and it's a book about the redemption of God's people from slavery.

And this morning we will begin our series in it by an examination, a study, of the first chapter and the first seven verses of that chapter. But first, some words by way of introduction regarding the historical background of the book, some of its themes, and its author.

The book of Exodus was written by Moses. Now that's, of you that perhaps isn't surprising to you, but it's not the view that's held by all modern scholars today. But it is the view of tradition, both Jewish and Christian, and that tradition is built upon the scriptures, because it's the view of scripture. It's supported by Exodus itself and it's supported by the New Testament. Frequently there's mention made in those book of Moses writing. I'll give you two examples: In Exodus 17:14, the Lord said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial." Or 24:4, it stated, "And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord."

And so throughout this book – and that's just two examples – we have statements that Moses did in fact write. But in the New Testament we can see testimony to this with Mark 12:26. The Lord refers to Exodus 3:6 as being in the book of Moses, the book that he wrote, the book of Exodus. And so there's ample evidence of the Mosaic authorship of the book of Exodus. It's a book that is the inspired report of an eyewitness.

There's not as much evidence, however, to give a precise date as to when this book was written or as, to be more specific, when the

events recorded in it took place. But there are two dominant views on its date. There is one that's called the Early Date Theory, and the other is called the Late Date Theory. The Early Date dates it at about 1445 B.C. – 1445. And the Late Date – that's the Early Date – the Late Date is from 1295 to 1290 B.C. The Early Date looks at the event in the 18th dynasty of Egypt. The Late looks at the 19th dynasty of Egypt.

The main support for the Late Date is the statement found in Exodus 1:11. If you'll look down at that verse, we read how the Israelites were forced to build the storage cities of Pithom and Raamses. Now, that word "Raamses" would lead one to believe that it bears the name of the Pharaoh, Rameses II, who's exhibit came through town about a year ago. He was one of the most ambitious builders of all time, and so it would seem logical that since it bears his name and since he was a great builder that he's the one who built that city. And so assuming that he did, that would put these events in the 19th dynasty, a dynasty that was established by his father, Seti I, and which was carried on and really flourished even more so under Rameses II. That would date the exodus around 1290 to 1295 B.C.

And those who advocate this Late Date also claim that it's supported from the evidence of archeology, because there is a lack of archeological evidence for the Israelites being in Canaan at an earlier date. So that all of the archeological evidence, and this is – I say all, but these who advocate the Late Date suggests – supports a later invasion by the Israelites into Canaan. There's no evidence, according to archeology, that they were in at an earlier date.

Well, you don't really want to base your understanding of things on archeological evidence. I'm not convinced that that's precise science, particularly in view of the fact that the scripture seem to indicate a different date. Principle argument in favor of the Early Date is the statement made in 1 Kings 6:1, which states that Solomon built the temple 480 years "after the sons of Israel came out of the land Egypt." And most date the building of the temple in the year 966 B.C. And so added to that date, the 480 years, we come up with a date

around 1446 to 1445 B.C., which was the period of the 18th dynasty and would make Thutmosis III the pharaoh of the oppression, and his son Amenhotep II the pharaoh of the exodus.

And one reason I mention this and we spend some time on this is because this is a major issue in Old Testament studies. In fact, some have suggested that the exodus and the identity of the pharaoh is one of the most difficult problems in Old Testament study. And we can't come to a precise understanding of this – and I'm not sure that it's really all that critical –but I mention it because it is an issue that we should be familiar it. Plus, it gives us some background, historical background, for these events.

Now those in favor of the Early Date explain the reference to the city of Rameses in verse 11 of chapter 1 as not being the original name of that city. This is probably a scribal update that was made some later date from the writing of this book. What may have happened was Rameses rebuilt these cities after they had fallen into disuse; or simply, just put his name upon them, changed the names. We seen some of that in our history. New York City was originally New Amsterdam. And so the change of the city's name is not all that unexpected and not all that unusual. And so many think that what took place here were these cities were built under a different name. The name was changed for whatever reason, and because that was the name familiar to the audience of this book, the readership of this book at a later date, the name was simply changed so that they would know what cities were being referred to.

Support for that is seen in Genesis 47:11, where the district is described, or the district is named, in which Joseph settled his father and brothers after they came down to Egypt from Canaan. And there we read that he settled them in the land of Rameses. Well, this is centuries before Rameses II, and so that would see to be a scribal update. So it's not unlikely that these names are due to an updating of the text and something like we might do today if we were speaking of New Amsterdam as New York City.

Other evidences for the Early Date are that first born son of Rameses did not die. He succeeded him to the throne, whereas there's very good evidence that the first born son of Amenhotep did die and was succeeded not by his first born son, but by a younger son, Thutmosis IV, in which we could explain as being the result of the tenth plague.

Other evidence is that Amenhotep's father, Thutmosis III, was a great empire builder. And due to his military expeditions, he expanded the empire of Egypt as far as the upper Euphrates. He conquered Canaan. He conquered Syria. He conquered the areas near Babylon. So his influence was very great. When Amenhotep II came to the throne, there's very little military activity. And then following him, Egypt is in a state of retreat. How does one explain this vast empire suddenly retreating? Could be explained by the fact that disaster occurred to the army at the Red Sea.

Well, for those who are familiar with this issue, you can see that I'm dealing with it in a very cursory way. We don't have time to deal with it in any kind of detail. I think that if we were to do that, we could spend a whole hour on that very issue. None of the theology of this book really hangs on that date, and there are evangelicals on either side. Most are on the side of the Early Date, due to that passage in 1 Kings and other passages as well. But with the evidence we have, it's very difficult to be dogmatic upon that issue. Nevertheless, with the evidence we do possess, it seems to me that the best support is in favor of that Early Date, and so we'll study the book of Exodus against that background, the background of the 18th dynasty, a period of Egypt's greatest power, with the pharaoh being Amenhotep II.

More significant than the date of Exodus are the themes of the book. It's a book rich in instruction on the person and the work of the Lord, so we want to spend a few moments this morning looking at some of those themes. As indicated earlier, a major theme of this book is that of deliverance. But it reveals much about God's sovereignty, about God's holiness, about His justice and His mercy.

Many, many of the themes of the Old Testament are exemplified in the themes that we find in the book of Exodus. His sovereignty is witnessed in His absolute control over nature. In Genesis God creates the natural realm. In Exodus, He controls and directs nature. As one writer states, "Unlike the pagan gods, the God of Israel does not inhere in nature, but exists outside it and above it." And that's epitomized in the ten plagues. Rather, I should say nine of the ten plagues, because all but the tenth plague are plagues in terms of nature.

You think about that. There's the Nile turning to blood. There are the frogs that come forth. There is the hail that falls. And there's the darkness and other things such as that. They're all plagues that deal with nature, because the gods of Egypt were gods of nature. But unlike the gods of Egypt, unlike the gods of the ancient world, God is not part of nature. He's distinct from nature. He's the creator of it, and so Exodus makes a statement that's really unusual for the ancient world. Its theology is totally different. God is not part of nature who can be manipulated by ceremonies and magical formulas as the priests of Egypt would seek to do, and the priests of Canaan and other religions. God is distinct from nature. He cannot be manipulated. He Himself manipulates or directs nature. And so what we have here is a book that speaks to an issue that's really rather prevalent today, a theology that is held by many today and has been for millennia, and that is the theology of pantheism. It's not the teaching of scripture, as we see from the book of Exodus.

His sovereignty is not only witnessed in the way He controls nature, but also man. In Genesis He creates man. In Exodus we see Him controlling and directing the hearts of men. The conflict with Pharaoh demonstrates that He controls not only the hearts of men generally, but even the hearts of very evil men. As He explains to Moses in chapter 10, "I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them," speaking of the plagues that He brought upon Egypt. They were signs.

But none of this was the doing of a capricious god. There was purpose involved in all of it. The signs and the plagues had the purpose of demonstrating that the Lord is God, and not the gods of Egypt. They were done, the Lord explains to Moses, so that He, as a Father, and the other fathers of Egypt, could explain to their sons and their grandsons, as God says, how I made mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, that you may know that I am the Lord." So these signs, these plagues, occurred on Egypt for the purpose of revealing who God is, revealing that He, and He alone, is God, not the gods of Egypt, not the gods of Canaan or Babylon, or any other gods of the ancient world, but He alone. And of course that's the message that speaks to us as well.

We have various gods in our own day and age that can be alluring and can attract us. But if this book is true, as we believe it is, then He's made a clear demonstration of who it is that is God. And so as we read this, we don't read and study a dead book. We read and study a book that is an historical record, a record penned by one who is an eyewitness under the direction of God to demonstrate not simply to Israel, but to us, that He is the living God who controls all things, as He Himself tells Moses before He gives the Ten Commandments in chapter 20. He states in 19:5, "All the earth is Mine." In other words, there's no other God but Me. He alone.

Now, we'll read references in this book, and we see this in the Old Testament, where reference is made to the other gods, and some might draw the conclusion, "Well, see, they believed in other gods. They just believed that Yahweh, the Lord, was the chief God." No, not at all. He is, as He says, the God of all the earth. "All the earth is Mine." And all of these other gods are false gods, gods of the imagination. And the book of Exodus makes clear demonstration of that. That was the purpose in the plagues, to make a clear statement to the people of God, to Israel, that He is the Lord God.

The signs are also done in order to bring glory to Him. So they reveal Him, they demonstrate that He's the true God, and bring glory

to God throughout the earth. And He instructed Moses in chapter 9 to declare His purpose to Pharaoh in the statement, "I have allowed you to remain." Literally, I have caused you to stand. In other words, I raised you up on the throne. And I think Paul makes that very clear when he deals with that in Romans chapter 9. "I've caused you to stand. I brought you into existence in order to show My power and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth." And if you'll remember, when Joshua leads the armies of Israel into Canaan, the people of Jericho tremble, because they know the God of this people crushed Egypt, the greatest power of its day.

And so it achieved that very end and that very purpose. It was to bring glory to Him. And so God is in complete control of Pharaoh. He rules his heart, which proves to be a good illustration of Proverbs 21:1, "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes."

Now that proverb and the example of Pharaoh should offer a great deal of encouragement to us, particularly as we face an election on next Tuesday and consider the various candidates that are offered to us. Consider the situation that we have. We can be a great discouraged over the budget problem. We can be somewhat alarmed by the disquieting news that comes out of the Middle East and various parts of the world. And yet what we should remember, in light of all of that, is that God is on His throne and God's in control. And if an evil king such as Pharaoh could sit upon the throne and oppress God's people and we learn that God's in complete control of the whole event. In fact, using that to work out His purpose. And we should be very encouraged by what we see around us, because the testimony of this book is He is in control. And whether it be a Saddam Hussein or whatever tyrant or ruler there be, he or she, or whoever it may be, is under the complete control and direction of God. In fact, He uses those people to bring about His will and His plan for His own glory and for our deliverance, our salvation. Pharaoh demonstrates that man

cannot effectively thwart the plan and the purposes of God.

Ultimately, men can only fulfill the plan and will of God.

But as sovereign God, He is also holy. We see this very clearly in the book of Exodus. While Pharaoh's resistance fits within God's plan, it was evil. His resistance was sin, and in him God also demonstrates that man cannot successfully defy the will of God. God humbles the proud. He punishes the wicked. He is a holy God who judges lawlessness. And His holy character is not only demonstrated in His judgment on Egypt, but clearly revealed in the law that is given at Mount Sinai. There we see the character of God unfolded, and also in the Tabernacle that was constructed.

Alan Cole, who's written a commentary on the book of Exodus makes this statement. He says, "If the Law was a verbal expression of God's holiness, the tent was a visible parable of it and the nation of Israel was intended to be a walking illustration of it." So we see the grace of God presented very clearly. Rather, the holiness of God presented very clearly in this book of Exodus.

But the God who is holy, the God who is just, who calls men to purity and punishes the sinner, is also gracious. And He delivers the oppressed. In the book of example, perhaps more than any other book of the Old Testament, illustrates God as redeemer and illustrates the grace of His salvation.

In chapter 2, when the Israelites were greatly afflicted by Pharaoh and their Egyptian taskmasters, and they were to make more bricks and things were becoming very difficult, Moses writes, "God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." We don't see Him much until that point. There doesn't seem to be a presence of God in the first chapter. We do see His hand, but we don't see mention of His name. But then we come to chapter 2 and we hear that God remembered His covenant.

And that remembrance is a signal of action. God never remembers that He doesn't act. To say He remembers is to say He began to intervene on their behalf, and this is where the deliverance of

Israel, the beginning of it, is signaled with His remembrance. Now, why did He remember them to deliver them from slavery? Well, it wasn't because He was so moved to compassion by their inhumane treatment. There were other slaves in Egypt. There were slaves in other kingdoms who were greatly mistreated, but God did not deliver them from their slavery.

He delivers Israel, not the others. And the reason He did is because He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He remembered the promises that He had made to them. So it's not based upon Israel. It's not based upon anything in them. It's not based upon their situation. That was, the slavery and the oppression, was the occasion, but it wasn't the reason for His intervention and His remembering them. It was the covenant that He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And if you go back to Genesis 15 and you consider that covenant, you will see that it was an unconditional covenant. It's a work of grace. And so we have here that work of grace. He judges men according to justice, as we see with Pharaoh and the nation Egypt. He saves men according to grace. And more than a book about the judgment of Pharaoh and Egypt, this is a book about the salvation of Israel. It is a book about God's grace and redemption.

Exodus is the Bible's great example of God's salvation. It illustrates the nature of His salvation. It's a work of grace and it's an effective work. We have Moses speaking about this on more than one occasion, but in Exodus 32:11, Moses says God brought them out of Egypt, brought His people up out of Egypt with "great power and a mighty hand." And throughout the book of Exodus – it may not be translated this way in the English text, but there's frequent mention of the strong hand of the Lord. It is with that strong hand He brought these slaves up out of Egypt. It wasn't because of the slaves. It didn't depend upon them.

As we go through this book, I think we'll see from start to finish it is God intervening and God accomplishing all of it. It didn't hinge upon them. It depended completely upon Him. From the beginning to

the end, it is God's work, and that work of salvation was never in question. It is an effectual deliverance. And God's deliverance is. Ultimately it doesn't depend upon us to deliver ourselves. It depends upon Him. He is the one who accomplishes, and He does so because of His grace.

But the realization of that, that His deliverance is a work of grace and His deliverance is effectual, that it's never in question, that it always accomplishes its end, should produce in God's people a sense of gratitude, which should lead to obedience. And to that end, Israel was commanded to remember that God brought them up out of Egypt.

As you read through the Old Testament, you will see frequent mention of this. When they speak of God, they speak of Him as the one who brought them up out of Egypt. They were to continually remember that, and that should influence their thinking, their attitude toward God and toward men, and to that end, to help that, the feast of the Passover recorded in chapter 12, which we'll give some time to in our study, was instituted as a memorial of the exodus and a permanent ordinance that Israel was to observe forever, they're told.

It was to remind them that God was their Savior in whom they could trust. When you consider the plagues that came on Egypt, the way they were delivered, with the miraculous parting of the Red Sea, all of that served as a clear demonstration that God had delivered them. There's no other explanation for it. And the God who had delivered them was great, was powerful. It's all designed, not only to tell them who He was, that He is the Lord of the earth, that He is the only God – not only to bring glory to Him throughout the earth, but also to give them confidence in Him, confidence that springs from the knowledge that He is great and He is powerful, that He does have a strong arm and is able to effectively deliver His people. He's reliable. He can be trusted.

Well, their attitude and behavior toward Him and toward man, toward their fellow man, is to be affected by this remembrance. And we have an example of this in Exodus 22:21, where God instructs

them, "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." In other words, remember where you came from. Remember your own condition. Remember what you were delivered from. And as you think back on that, you have sympathy and compassion for those who are in difficulty.

I think the principle we have in that – and we have more than one example of that in the book of Exodus – is that salvation involves remembrance. And remembrance is to lead to right conduct. And so out of this event, they were to be a people devoted to God's service, and that service was to be seen not only in the way they faithfully worshipped Him, but in the way they treated their fellow man.

Well, as you study through the history of Israel – in fact, as you study through the book of Exodus – you see that Israel failed in this. Not long after leaving slavery, they began to grumble about the difficulties of the desert and long for Egypt and the pots of meat and the bread that they had there. But all of this, the revelation of God's character, the picture of redemption from Egypt, the backsliding of the people in the wilderness, has direct relevance to us. Paul makes that point in 1 Corinthians 10:11, where Paul writes, after reviewing Israel's history, in the tenth chapter, "Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages have come."

The Exodus pictured and predicted the salvation that Christ would accomplish for sinners on the cross, which significantly took place following the celebration of the Passover with His disciples. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 5, Paul speaks of Christ as our Passover. So that Passover feast, that lamb that is slain, the blood that's applied to the doors, the sacrifice and the blood that delivered those people from the angel of death, pictures Christ and the deliverance that He accomplishes for His people.

In Luke 9:31, we have the record of the transfiguration. And there Luke writes that Moses and Elijah were speaking with the Lord of His departure, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

That referenced to His death. Literally that word, the Greek word translated "departure" is the word "exodus." And so following the Passover, Christ made His exodus, made His departure, His going out from the earth. And with Him all of this people who are represented by Him at the cross also made their exodus spiritually from this world.

As Israel was redeemed from slavery in Egypt, we were redeemed from slavery to sin. This book of Exodus gives us a beautiful picture of that and enables us to study the grace of God and enables us to study the work of Christ in redemption. What is pictured in that physical deliverance from slavery finds reality in the spiritual delivery that we have experienced. And yet, who of us who have been delivered from this world and its deadly pleasures and its impending judgment, who of us have not, like Israel, been attempted to go back to Egypt? Long for its leeks and its onions and its flesh pots, the selfish pleasures of this world?

The book of Exodus speaks very much to our own experience. And as we see them grumbling in the desert, we can see ourselves in this present life and the temptation that we face, as they did, to go back, to turn from the Lord, to grumble and to complain and to sin. And so all of these things are for our instruction. Paul says they happened, they were written down for our instruction. Now that, I think, is an amazing thing when you consider that for a moment. God had you and me in mind when these events took place. These event occurred, Paul tells us, so that you and I, the church of Jesus Christ, could be instructed by all of the events. And so we do well to study the book of Exodus. It has direct relevance to us, and a study of it should yield rich rewards for each of us. We have so much of the character of God unfolded for us, the way He deals with men and what is so true and characteristic of men, and the temptations that we are faced with. Well, we see them here and we have instruction given concerning those things.

The book of Exodus falls into three main divisions. The first section concerns Israel's deliverance from Israel, beginning with

chapter 1 on through chapter 15:21. The second section concerns the journey from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai. From 15:21 through chapter 18 and then the rest of the book, chapter 19 through 40, deals with Israel at Sinai. So Israel is stationary in Egypt. It moves in the second section. And in the third section it's stationary at Sinai. And in that second half of the book, from chapters 19 through to the end, we have such events as the giving of the Law, the establishment of the covenant, the introduction of the priesthood, and instruction concerning the priesthood, instruction on the building of the Tabernacle, and the Tabernacle being built.

In the beginning, in chapter 2, God remembers His people. At the end of the book of Exodus, God is dwelling with them in the Tabernacle. And that's another thing we learn about God and His people in the book of Exodus. He is a God who reveals Himself to His people. He's not silent. And He's a God who dwells with His people. Certainly a picture of the day of Pentecost, the day when He takes up residence within the hearts of His people. In the midst of all of this, though, we have that incident of a golden calf, in which we are again reminded of the inclination of man to turn from God and to go a foolish way.

And so the book of Exodus involves a variety of events, a variety of material. There is historical material, legal material, ceremonial material. It's a book rich with history, rich with theology, and principles of conduct.

One final point before we look at our passage and before we run out of time is that which concerns the title of the book. We know it as the book of Exodus, and that's a title that was attached to it when the Old Testament was translated into Greek in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. That Greek word "exodus" means a departure or the road or the way out, the escape, the exit. And it was also attached to the Vulgate, which Jerome translated when he translated the Greek into the Latin. So it has come to us from the

Septuagint and the Vulgate. And of course, it seems an appropriate title because it reflects the central event of this book.

But it's not the title of the Hebrew Bible. The original Hebrew title follows the ancient practice of naming a book after the first words of the book. Genesis is named Barasheet, which in Hebrew is "In the beginning," because that's how it starts. And here the book of Exodus is named after the first words of this book, "and these are the names of," or the Hebrew word "Shemot." This is Sefer Shemot, "the book of names." And you'll notice in verse 1, the first word of this title, "Now," or "And," is significant. Because it makes a connection with what preceded, which is the book of Genesis. In fact, the book of Exodus is really a sequel to the book of Genesis. It's almost as if Moses finished the last line of Genesis and without stopping, dipped His quill in His inkpot and began to write the first verse of Exodus. And you'll notice the connection between the last verse of Genesis and the first verse of Exodus just by reading it. "So Joseph died at the age of 110 years and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt." "Now these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob." And then he begins to list those names.

And the connection between the two books is very deliberate. Genesis gives the account of the seed of the woman, back in chapter 3. And it traces the righteous line, the people of God, focusing particularly, from chapter 12 on, on one family, the family of Abraham. And Exodus continues the history of God's people by tracing the development of that family into a nation, from a tribe of shepherds that comes down to Egypt. They become a nation of warriors, a kingdom of priests who enter back into Canaan.

And so this is the general development of the book of Exodus. It continues the history that was begun in Genesis and shows fulfillment. And to put this development of this family into perspective, Moses repeats, in summary fashion, Genesis 46:1-27, where the description is given of Jacob and his sons going down to Egypt as Pharaoh's guests.

Their names are listed and the number of all who arrived is calculated to be 70.

Now Acts 7:14 lists the number as 75, and this is a question that can also give opportunity for a long discussion. It seems that number is probably given by including the additional descendants of Joseph's grandchildren, five of them, and so that would be the explanation for that number, at least one of the explanations. Moses briefly repeats this in the first part of our first chapter of Exodus, listing only the heads of each tribe – it deals with the passage from Genesis in a very brief manner – and the number of all who arrived. Each one who brought his household with Jacob was, he says, beginning in verse 2, "Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; Isachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; Daniel and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. And all the persons who came from the loins of Jacob were seventy in number, but Joseph was already in Egypt."

Now that was a fulfillment of God's promise, first to Abraham, and then to Jacob. To Abraham He said, "I will multiply you exceedingly." And before Jacob went down to Egypt, God encouraged him in a vision of the night when He said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there." And the multiplication of these people, which is very great – and in fact the way Moses words it, you can see that this is something unusual. Well, the number of people, the way that it is described, makes it very clear that this was a miraculous event, a fulfillment of God's promise.

But God had also promised Abraham and Jacob that He would also bring them up again from Egypt. And so the increase was for the purpose of creating a nation that would then come out of Egypt and inherit the land, the land of Canaan, that God had promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

In Genesis, God makes promises to the patriarchs. He make promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In Exodus He fulfills them. And so we have here the lesson, in one of the chief lessons in this

book, that God is faithful to His word. The God who make promises to His people always fulfills them. And to fulfill His promise to bring the sons of Israel that He had multiplied and caused to increase greatly, out of that land and into the land He had promised, God will raise up one man, Moses, to be their leader and deliverer.

We've mentioned Moses primarily as the author of this book, but he is also its main character. But the prominence of his role in the book of Exodus in no way detracts from the glory of God, because he acts as an ambassador of God. He acts as His agent. He acts as His instrument, to carry out His will. In fact, his role as ambassador is one of the most relevant features of the book of Exodus for us, because it shows that God's redemption of His people, His adoption of them to Himself, always involves a mediator, a go-between. And in that way, as well as others, Moses is a type. He is a picture of Christ.

Christ is the final mediator between God and man. He is the one who leads us out of sin and leads us to God, leads us from slavery, leads us into freedom. As the author of Hebrews describes Him in Hebrews 2:10, "He is the author," or the captain, the leader, of our salvation, bringing many sons to glory. And the picture we have in that passage is of Him leading out a whole company of people, a whole nation, a kingdom of priests, into glory, just as Moses led the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt. And we make our Exodus from this world, from this spiritual realm, and from the judgment on this world. We join His company and we become a member of His nation of kings and priests through faith in His person and through faith in His work, the One who offered Himself as our priest as sacrifice for sin.

And so if you're here this morning and you don't know Christ as Savior, then I invite you to believe in Him. What a wonderful way to begin a study in the book of Exodus, a study in a book about redemption, about the grace of God, about the faithfulness of God, by coming to Him in salvation and trusting yourself to Him. He is one who can be trusted. He is one who is reliable. He is one, as the book

of Exodus so beautifully demonstrates, who is faithful to His word and to His people.

Well, let's bow with that in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we do thank You that we have opportunity to continue our study together and to begin a new study in this book of Exodus. And we ask that You bless our time in it together. May we see this book as it is intended to be seen, as a book that is theocentric and Christocentric. May we see You and Your Son in this book and may we be edified in our study.

Bless these things that we've studied this morning to our understanding. Prepare us for a time of study in the months ahead. And bless us in our walk with You in the week ahead. We pray in Christ name. Amen.