

## Journey Into God's Word



**Exodus 1-15**

**Psalms 59-72**

**Acts 1-7**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

God has chosen you to manifest His love in this time and in this place. While this miracle unfolds, you will see Him do exceedingly above what you can ask and think. As we have read this past week in Exodus 1-15, Psalms 59-72 and Acts 1-7, God will take ordinary people such as you and me and will do extra ordinary things through them. Whether it was Moses, Peter, or Stephen, we see individuals who were set free from themselves to the extent they were able to serve God and those in need. Such freedom is a result of committing our lives to Christ as Peter declared in Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Such a commitment sets us free from the paralysis of fear and the pleasures of sin. Hebrews 11:25-27 describes Moses' commitment this way, "He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the King's anger; he persevered because he saw Him who is invisible."

God often trains his great men and women by placing them first in insignificant positions, allowing their desires to serve Him result to in serving others. For Stephen this meant being involved in the distribution of food to the needy. Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law when God spoke to him through a burning bush. God tells Moses "I will be with you" as Moses returns to Egypt to liberate the children of Israel. The trouble is, things seem to get worse rather than better. Please read Exodus 5:17-21, and note Moses' prayer and God's response in Exodus 5:22-Exodus 6:8.

Sometimes when you try to encourage people, they may not respond (Exodus 6:9) That is why you must stay focused on God's promises rather than people's responses.

As the power brokers resist the integration of the homeless into the mainstream of life in downtown areas, I draw strength from God through prayer and meditations on His Word. "Deliver me from my enemies, O God; protect me from those who rise up against me." (Psalm 59:1) "I find my strength, in God my great fortress of love, protection and power. My hunger in

life is for the Living God.” Note how this hunger is reflected in Psalm 63:1, 2. “God-you’re my God! I can’t get enough of you! I’ve worked up such hunger and thirst for God, traveling across dry and weary deserts. So here I am in the place of worship, eyes open, drinking in your strength and glory. In your generous love I am really living at last!” (Message Bible)

As Moses contended with Pharaoh, note how each one of the plagues was actually God showing He was more powerful than the Egyptian gods, whether it was the sun god which darkness over ruled, or the swarms of flies or a specific species of beetles which were worshipped by the Egyptians as a symbol of life. In verse 26 of chapter 8, Moses said the sacrifices by the children of Israel would be an abomination to the Egyptians because it involved killing the cow, ox or bull that was sacred to them. The blood in the river and the frogs coming from the river was a direct attack on their worship of the Nile River. What gods exist in your life that the living God must plague to show you He is indeed the Lord of all? “I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt.” (Exodus 12:12)

After Jesus’ resurrection, what does Acts 1:3 says He did to prove He had risen? What promise does He make in verse 8 that is fulfilled in Acts 2? How does Acts 2:17-21 and Acts 2:39 show that this promise applies to us today?

How does believing that “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact,” (Acts 2:32) make a difference in your life? Acts 2:21 says, “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Calling on the name of the Lord means more than just a profession of faith. It involves a belief in the Living Christ to the extent that obedience follows. Stephen emphasized how obedience involves more than just receiving the law in Acts 6:51-53. Read this carefully and see how his message was so direct that it resulted in his death. How does Scripture show that we are die to ourselves and be resurrected in Christ Jesus? (Romans 6:1-14) What role do verses 3 & 4 of Romans 6 say that baptism has in this? What comparisons can you draw between the children of Israel going through the Red Sea and baptism?

The firstborn of the Hebrews were not killed on Passover because the blood of the lamb was applied to the tops and sides of the doorframes of the house. How can it be said that the blood of Jesus Christ now protects us from eternal death and, as a result, Jesus is the Passover Lamb? (See Hebrews 9:11-28) Experiencing this cleansing through the shed blood of Jesus Christ involves being set free from sin. In Exodus 12:15 the children of Israel prior to celebrating the Passover were told to get rid of all the yeast in their homes. This yeast represents the sin in our lives, which we are told to have removed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions.” (Psalms 65:3) “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to man by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12) Jesus is

that name and now we are invited to “come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man’s behalf! He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot – come, let us rejoice in Him. He rules forever by His power, His eyes watch the nations – let not the rebellions rise up against Him.” (Psalms 66:5-7)

When you are up against the “Red Sea” of circumstances beyond your control, are you going to trust God to lead you through or are you going to rebel and go back to your old way of life? How does Psalms 68:4-6 describes who God is and His deep love for those in need? How does both Exodus 1-15 and Acts 1-7 show that “The Lord hears the needy and does not despise his captive people?” (Psalms 69:33)

“Stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears” (Acts 7:51) try to spiritualize the freedom that Christ provides to such an extent that they see no need to fight for the justice of the poor and needy. As a result, they refuse to work for justice and aren’t concerned that God “will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in His sight.” (Psalm 72:12-14) Let us arise and move forward, knowing that, “The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation. He is my God and I will praise Him, my father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a warrior, the Lord is His name.” (Exodus 15:2-3)

Faith in the power of the Living God is absolutely essential whether one is fighting for justice for the poor and homeless or reaching out in Christ centered compassion to members of their own family. Such an expression of faith is possible only as one stands on the promises of God found in the Word of God. An example of applying the promises of God’s Word to real life situations is found in Acts 2:38-39. Please read these verses and then explain how you can claim the promise of salvation for your children even if they express NO interest in such. After a man is suddenly healed in Acts 3 Peter explains the reason for such in verses 15 and 16. “You no sooner killed the Author of Life than God raised Him from the dead - and we’re the witnesses. Faith in Jesus name put this man, whose condition you know so well, on his feet - yes, faith and nothing but faith put this man healed and whole right before your eyes.” (The Message Bible) Whether it is healing, helping the poor and elderly or experiencing salvation, faith in Jesus is the way to God our Living Father. “By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the One you killed on a cross, the One God raised from the dead, by means of His name this man stands before you healthy and whole. Jesus is the stone you masons threw out, which is now the cornerstone!” Salvation comes no other way; no other name has been or will be given to us by which we can be saved, only this one.” (Acts 4:11, 12) What examples in Acts 1-7 do you see where dynamic faith in

the name of Jesus is in action? In what ways are you applying God's word through faith in your daily life?

This week let us continue to study how God is very much involved in the lives of His people. Please read Exodus 16-24, Psalms 73-Psalms 89, and Acts 8-15. As you read, note how God desires to relate to us both now and for all eternity. Remember that you are not alone. He cares deeply for you. As we read earlier in Psalms 68:6, "God sets the lonely in families." You are a valued part of the New Life Evangelistic Center family. Now let us pray for and support one another as we reach out in love to a hurting world through the grace and power of our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In His Service,  
Your brother in Christ,

Larry Rice