

Free At Last
Exodus 12:29-42

Hello and welcome; thanks for joining us as we continue our study in Exodus. It is encouraging to hear from God and learn more about Him in the Bible. This happens no matter which book of the Bible we are focusing on. This is an amazing aspect of the Bible, and it is one of the things that sets the Bible above all other books. This is not just a book. It is alive, and in every section of the Bible, there is more for us to learn.

Looking at the children of Israel, we can see how God directed and led them from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. And really, that is what God longs to do for each of us. He has provided the way for us to go from slavery to freedom. We can be free from the slavery of sin and experience true freedom by following Jesus and living according to the commands Christ gave.

And think about Pharaoh. He is an example of someone who, despite all the evidence and proof for God, rejects God and continues in his own way. Time after time, God reveals His power, and each time Pharaoh's heart becomes harder and harder. This pattern has been repeated by many men down through the ages. God, in His mercy, shows Himself alive and real in many incredible ways. This turns some hard hearts even harder, which is exactly what Pharaoh was doing.

We look forward to what J Mark Horst will teach us from Exodus and how these truths will teach us more about God and how we can live for Him. Let's give him our attention now.

People all over the world long for freedom, for independence. They hope someday to throw off the yoke of bondage. They want to be free!

Bondage comes in various forms. Many people are bound by some physical illness. Many are bound by political situations. Others feel bound by economic conditions, and many are bound in their spirit; they are controlled by their selfish desires and appetites.

To be under the bondage of the spirit is the most serious. But I am happy to tell you that you can be like the people of ancient Israel: FREE AT LAST! Yes, there is freedom for you and me, but there is only one way to achieve it. God's Word gives us the path to freedom.

Exodus 12:29-42 is the basis of our meditation on freedom.

29. And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

30. *And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.*

31. *And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said.*

32. *Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.*

33. *And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, we be all dead men.*

34. *And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.*

35. *And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment:*

36. *And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.*

37. *And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.*

38. *And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very many cattle.*

39. *And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.*

40. *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.*

41. *And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.*

42. *It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.*

The STAGES to achieve freedom are demonstrated in this Scripture and are available to you. Let me point to them.

The first stage was for Egypt:

Judgment.

In previous chapters of Exodus, we have emphasized the judgment of God upon the land of Egypt. Here it is again. The Bible tells us that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. That was total involvement. The firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, died, as did the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon. Even the firstborn of cattle died. The judgment of Egypt was complete. It was total. A great cry went up throughout the land of Egypt because there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Freedom demands the judgment of the oppressor. In this case, Egypt was the oppressor. Because God was concerned about the oppressed, He judged the people of Egypt. The stages to achieve freedom are demonstrated in this experience.

In the first stage, there must be judgment of the oppressor, and God has done that. Judgment to achieve freedom is in the hand of God. It must come from the LORD. He has exercised judgment upon the oppressor of the spirit, that great archenemy of God, the devil. God has exercised a judgment against him, and you and I can be free if we accept the judgment God has made.

The second stage was for Israel:

Emancipation

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and issued an emancipation proclamation for the people of Israel. It was Pharaoh's command. Before, he always said, "No, I will not let you go." Now in the middle of the night, he called these Israelite leaders, Moses, and Aaron, and issued a command to them. He said, "Rise up and get you forth. Go and serve the LORD. And take your flocks and your herds and be gone." He issued this demand for departure, an emancipation of deliverance to freedom.

The Egyptians urged the people of Israel and said, "Go, for we are all dead men." You can try to imagine what the conditions must have been like in the land where every house had at least one dead person and one dead among the beasts. No wonder they were insistent that the people of Israel get out.

Freedom demands emancipation of the oppressed. The people of Israel were the slaves, the oppressed. They were forced to serve with harshness. They were beaten by their taskmasters. But God brought them emancipation or freedom by this proclamation of Pharaoh.

Emancipation, true emancipation from the bondage of the spirit, must come from the LORD. He has promised you and me that He will free us from the bondage of the spirit. Only when the LORD takes over can you have emancipation and freedom from the bondage of the spirit.

When Jesus was here on this earth, He made this statement; *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* Satan wants to keep us

in bondage, so he tells us lies, and he urges us to believe those lies. But Jesus wants you and me to be free to serve Him. We can do that when we embrace the truth.

In our text, the LORD moved Pharaoh, the oppressor, to issue a command of emancipation for these oppressed people of Israel. It is no secret what God can do. He can emancipate your soul and your spirit right now if you will follow Him.

There is a third stage which is:

Emigration

So, the children of Israel left Egypt. They left behind the land of bondage. There were 600,000 men on foot beside women, children, and a mixed multitude. It must have been quite a large number, well over a million people. Besides, they took all their flocks and herds along, and they had very many cattle. They took along the bowls or troughs in which they mixed the ingredients for their bread. They did not have time to properly mix the bread and wait for the dough to rise. So, they were prepared to eat unleavened bread as they were on the move.

That is what emigration means: get out, separate, move on, away from the land of bondage. There was a certain time element here. The Bible tells us that they had sojourned in Egypt 430 years. And then, on the very day that completed those 430 years, they came out.

But now they have been delivered. Freedom at last! And they are on their way. They are emigrating. They are moving out. Freedom demands emigration to separate from the former condition of slavery. But this freedom must be of the LORD because the separation from bondage and oppression must be complete.

The stages for freedom come in this way: judgment, emancipation, and emigration. The judgment must be brought by the LORD on the oppressor. The emancipation of the oppressed must be of the LORD. Emigration, and separation, must be under the direction of the LORD. Then there will be freedom at last.

We know from history that Egypt was a real country; in fact, it still exists today. But Egypt is also used as a symbol of sin or a symbol of the world. Those who live under the control of the world and sin are slaves, they are not free to do as they choose.

Listen to these words from Romans 6:16 to 18. *“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”*

Are you still a slave in Egypt? Are you still a slave of sin? Are you powerless to escape the bondage of sin? I have good news for you; Jesus Christ can set you free! He can and will change you from the inside out if you will only come to Him in believing and obedient faith.

Ancient Israel was delivered from physical slavery, and that was wonderful. But we discover quickly that they didn't experience spiritual freedom. You can be different; you can experience complete deliverance through Jesus Christ. You can be FREE AT LAST.

Thank you, J. Mark, for this teaching from Exodus, and we thank you for joining us. As Christians, it is a privilege to serve and trust our God. Our God, Who is above every nation. As His people, it is good for us to remember the important principle in Daniel 4:17. It says, "that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men, and gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men." This verse teaches our sovereign God is over the kingdoms on earth. What happens here among our leaders is known and directed by Him.

Our leaders may be powerful and important or minor and less known, but it is our God who has placed them there, and our God is using them to accomplish His will. I admit we don't always know how this can be, and when I don't, I usually tell God I don't know why this is happening or why You are allowing this, but I trust You and pray that Your people stay faithful. Be encouraged from this story from Exodus, that our God was in control, and the same God who was in control back then is still in control now.

Do you have any thoughts from today's teaching? If you want to share them with us, here are a few ways you can contact us. One of the best ways is via email. Our email is hope@heraldsofhope.org. If you don't have email, no problem, our address is Hope for Today, Box 3, Breezewood, PA 15533. Or you can connect with us on our website. Our website is Heraldsofhope.org. While you are there, please check out the listen tab and listen to other teaching. Again, the website is www.heraldsofhope.org.

This brings us to the end of today's program; thanks again for being there. Please join us next week for another lesson from Exodus. Go with God this week and know that He is big enough for your circumstance. Trust Him because "the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men."