

# Journey to Freedom

## PART 1 - SETTING THE SCENE



Welcome to Part 1 in our new "Journey to Freedom" series in which we will be delving into the book of Exodus in the Bible and journeying together through the accounts of Moses and the Israelites as God takes them from a place of restriction and immobilisation to one of freedom and fulfilment.

It's a most remarkable journey where we see, for the first time in history, God revealing Himself and His plans to the world. It is in the accounts of the people recorded in Exodus that God's desire for fellowship and relationship with us is revealed. It's where we see His plan for restoring us to Himself begin. Here, in stunning and intimate detail we are given a most remarkable glimpse into the character and nature and person of the Creator of the Universe. And, finally, we discover the pinnacle of our lives as we unveil the true nature of our life's purpose and the goal for which God has created us and the means by which we can fulfil this purpose.

This week is intended as a warm-up before the journey begins. Next week we will start at the beginning (a very good place to start someone once said...) and begin looking in detail at all the different facets of the accounts recorded. This week is an opportunity to 'set the scene' by sharing with each other your perceptions of the book, what you know/don't know/would like to know etc. and gaining a deeper understanding of the bigger picture so that the rest of the story is much more 'alive'.

You may need to refer to your Bible footnotes, Study Bible Introduction, Timelines etc. but the intention of this week is not so much to begin *studying* Exodus, but to pool your collective knowledge, interests, and questions which will be a reference point for the following weeks.

### HISTORY



*When do you think the account of Exodus occurred?  
Can you think of anything else happening in the world around this time period?  
How did the Hebrews end up living in Egypt?  
Where did they live/what was their lifestyle before settling in Egypt?*



*How long did the Hebrews live in Egypt in total?  
How long were they slaves in Egypt?  
Did the Hebrews build the pyramids?*

### FAMILY TREE



*Is there a difference between 'Hebrews', 'Israelites', 'Children of Israel', and 'Jews'?  
How did they get the name "Israelites"? Who was 'Israel'?*



*The Israelites trace their history right back to Creation and Adam & Eve, however, one couple more than any other are recognised as being their "Father". Who were this couple?*



*The Bible often refers to the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". Who were these people?  
How do they fit into the hugely expanded family we meet in Exodus?  
Discuss what you know about these people and their interaction with God?  
What does this say about God's eternal purposes right through history?*

## **THE BIG PICTURE**



*In your opinion, and with whatever knowledge you have; what do you feel the main idea of Exodus is? Why is it in the Bible? How is a 3,300 year old story relevant to you today?*



*How many plagues are there in Exodus before Pharaoh lets the people go free?  
How old was Moses when he fled Egypt after killing the Egyptian?  
How long did Moses stay in the Land of Midian?*



*How many years did the Israelites wander in the wilderness for?  
How old was Moses when they finally re-arrived at the Promised Land?*



*Can you name any other major characters in the account of Exodus?  
Can you give any information about these people; who there were, what they did etc?*

## **THE EXODUS**



*Why do you think the Israelites wandered in the Wilderness for Forty Years?  
Do you think there are times when God only gives us one opportunity at a given time?  
Do we always get a second/third/another chance with God?*

## **ALL THOSE RULES**

Considering the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20); discuss the following questions:



*How revolutionary do you think these laws were in the culture of the time?  
How relevant are they to us 3,300 years later?  
Are there any of the Ten Commandments which you feel are not as relevant today?  
If so, which ones and why?*

There are a lot of other laws given by God in Exodus which may seem unreasonable and severe to us today. However, discuss the following:



*What do we know about God? Is He good; just; fair; righteous; merciful etc?  
Do we need to understand some of these rules in context of:*

- (i) Culture?*
- (ii) Historical time-period?*
- (iii) Social time-period?*
- (iv) The nature of God's Covenant (Law vs Grace through Jesus)*



*What are some of the dangers of establishing context for interpreting the Bible?  
If the Bible sets one precedent in the Old Testament but appears to counter this in the New Testament (e.g. 'eye for an eye' vs 'forgive your enemy') which one do we follow and why?  
When a precedent is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments is there a need to put it into a specific context?*

We trust this discussion has raised some interesting questions and given a good basis for exploring this most amazing Journey to Freedom. Stay tuned next week; same bat time, same bat channel. Kapow!

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Ph: (09) 235 7341 Mob: (021) 187 1928 Email: [waiukuag@wag.org.nz](mailto:waiukuag@wag.org.nz) Web: [www.wag.org.nz](http://www.wag.org.nz)  
PO Box 196. Waiuku 2341, NZ