

## UNIT 2 PART 1

### BF232 OUR FUTURE HOPE

We're going to pick up now in the book of Exodus. We look again at the plans and promises of God. These determine the future hope.

Because God is a God who finishes what He starts, and because God always keeps His word, we can expect our future hope to be the fulfillment of what He has said.

This is Exodus 2; and in it, we find that God remembered His plans and promises. Maybe you remember in an earlier session that God told Abraham his descendants would be slaves for 400 years in a strange land. And that then, God would bring them out. Well, when we open the book of Exodus, that's where we find ourselves 400 years later.

*Exodus 2:23-25 Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.*

I think this is a beautiful picture because it shows that God is compassionate. He saw that His people were suffering; but also, His actions are based on His promises. He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**WHEN GOD REMEMBERED HIS PROMISES, HE CHOSE TO RAISE UP A DELIVERER TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE AND ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM.**

I guess I should say that when God remembers, it doesn't mean that God could forget. God knows everything at the same time. When the Scripture says that God remembered, it means that God acts on behalf of those whom He remembers. It speaks about His action. God raises up a Deliverer. We know that it's Moses. We won't read the story about when he was born, but we'll go to the call of Moses. God confronted Moses when he was in the desert. God said to him from the burning bush,

*Exodus 3:5-6 "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."*

Now, I've got to say something about this. God could call Himself the great "I AM". He does call Himself that in this passage. When God uses this long description to give His name, "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob", He gives that form of His name because He wants us to know that He is the God who is keeping the promises that He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He's showing the reader that what He is doing is connected

to His earlier promises. That's why I said in our first session that our future hope is connected to the storyline of Scripture. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

*Exodus 3:6-8 When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.*

*Then the Lord told him, "I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries of distress because of their harsh slave drivers. Yes, I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land."*

This is incredible to think about. Can God deliver His people from a wicked king that oppresses them and bring them into freedom? Yes, He can. The bigger question is can God deliver His people from the oppression of Satan and defeat the enemy, Satan, and establish His kingdom on earth? Of course, He can; and God is going to deliver His people, Israel.

Now when Moses stood before Pharaoh, God claimed that He had the right to rule on the earth. Pharaoh thought that he was like a God and that he was the one who had authority to rule. God wanted Pharaoh to know that God is the one who rules over all things.

This is what Aaron and Moses told Pharaoh.

*Exodus 5:1 They told him, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Let my people go so they may hold a festival in my honor in the wilderness."*

God says, "Let my people go". God claims that He has authority over Israel. Pharaoh thinks that he has authority.

*Exodus 5:2 "Is that so?" retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the Lord? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go."*

Look at the problem. God says, "Let my people go." God says He has authority over Israel. Pharaoh says, "I will not let Israel go." Pharaoh thinks that he has authority over Israel. Who's going to win? Who has authority over Israel? Who has the right to rule? Well, God sent plagues on Egypt to prove that He alone is God. We know that there were 10 different plagues that God sent. I'm not going to read all of that. You know about that story; but I'll show you some examples.

*Exodus 9:13-16; 12:12 'This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so they can worship me.'*

I see this everywhere we look in the Scripture. God wants to fill the earth with people who worship Him. That's God's plan. But Satan wants to fight against that. Well, God said,

*Exodus 9:14 If you don't, I will send more plagues on you and your officials and your people. Then you will know that there is no one like me in all the earth.*

God wanted Pharaoh to know that He wasn't like the Egyptian gods where they had many, many gods and they were all the same. God says, "No, I am God alone; and there's no one like Me in all the Earth."

God says,

*Exodus 9:15 By now I could have lifted my hand and struck you and your people with a plague to wipe you off the face of the earth.*

But God says that He spared him

*Exodus 9:16 to show you my power and to spread my fame throughout the earth.*

Well on that night, God says,

*Exodus 12:12 On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn son and firstborn male animal in the land of Egypt. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt, for I am the Lord!*

You see what God wants to prove? God wants to prove that He alone is God. God wants to demonstrate to all the world that He alone has the right to rule. Satan had challenged that authority, and Pharaoh as a king, was under the kingdom of Satan. Well, God sent plagues on Egypt to prove that He alone is God. Look at these statements.

*Exodus 6:7 I will claim you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God who has freed you from your oppression in Egypt.*

God said, "When I do this, then you will know that I am the Lord, your God." He's talking to Israel. He wants Israel to know that He alone is God. Now, He talks about the Egyptians.

*Exodus 7:5 When I raise my powerful hand and bring out the Israelites, the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord."*

*Exodus 9:29 Then the thunder and hail will stop, and you will know that the earth belongs to the Lord.*

Then when we open the book of Joshua, we read about Rehab, the Harlot. When the spies came to her, she said

*Joshua 2:10-11 For we have heard how the Lord made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two*

*Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.*

You see what God did through the Exodus? God proved that there's no one else like Him in all the earth. God alone rules the earth. He alone is God. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He's taking them to the promised land. He wants to establish them as a kingdom. God's plan continued with Israel. At Mount Sinai, God made a covenant with the nation of Israel. In that covenant, God said that Israel would be a kingdom of priests in a special land. I'll show you the Scripture about this in just a second. But what I want you to know is that God wanted His blessing to go out to the nations as Israel told the nations about God. This is huge because it shows that just like God's plan in Genesis 1 and 2 was carried on with Noah in Genesis 9, and carried on again with Abraham in Genesis 12, God is carrying on His plan again. God wants to have a kingdom on the earth. Israel is going to be His kingdom. He wants to have a kingdom of people who worship Him as the living God; and He wants that blessing of God and God's worship to spread over all the earth so that all the earth knows the Lord. God was at work in history to bring His plan to fulfillment.

*Exodus 19:3-6 Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The Lord called to him from the mountain and said, "Give these instructions to the family of Jacob; announce it to the descendants of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' This is the message you must give to the people of Israel."*

God wanted the entire nation of Israel to represent God to the nations.

***HE WANTED ISRAEL TO SHARE THE MESSAGE ABOUT GOD TO THE WORLD SO THAT ALL THE WORLD COULD WORSHIP GOD AND COULD LIVE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.***

God's plan was going to be fulfilled through Adam, then Noah. God promised it would be fulfilled through Abraham and Abraham's descendants. Now, God is going to use the nation of Israel to take the blessing of God to the nations.

But there's a catch. It's only going to work if they will obey Him and keep His covenant. If they don't obey God, they won't be able to represent God to the nations, and it's not going to work. Well, God spoke of Israel's future. In the covenant that God made with Israel, He spoke of Israel's future; and God's plan would work if Israel would obey God. We just saw

that in Exodus 19, but I'm going to read something from Deuteronomy 28. I'm not going to read everything. I just want you to see what God does. God says.

*Deuteronomy 28:2-3 You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God:*

*Your towns and your fields  
will be blessed.*

*Your children and your crops  
will be blessed.*

*The offspring of your herds and flocks  
will be blessed.*

He goes on and on about how He will bless to them. If they obey God, God will bless them. But in Deuteronomy 28:15, God says,

*Deuteronomy 28:15 "But if you refuse to listen to the Lord your God and do not obey all the commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you:*

God talks about how He will curse their animals, their livestock, their gardens. In everything in their world, they would experience the judgment of God.

Even when the covenant was made, God predicted that Israel would fail. Look at what He says in Deuteronomy 29:24-25. He says, in the future,

*Deuteronomy 29:24 "all the surrounding nations will ask, 'Why has the Lord done this to this land? Why was he so angry?'*

That means, why did God judge his people? Why was He so angry? The answer will be, this happened because the people of the land abandoned the covenant that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, made when He brought them out of the Land of Egypt. God predicted that He would have to judge Israel because He knew they would disobey Him.

God also said that Israel's disobedience would be punished with exile (Deuteronomy 30:1). God would start out by withholding rain. If it didn't rain, their gardens wouldn't grow. That would be kind of like an alarm clock. If you set an alarm, you want it to wake you up. Well, God would use the curse of removing rain to wake Israel up so they would know, "Oh, we should do what God said to do." But if they did not listen to those warnings, if they did not learn, God said that He would send them into exile. He would take them out of their promised land and scattered them among the nations.

But God also predicted that when Israel returned to Him, He would bring them back to their land. God said, He would give them a new heart. God says,

*Deuteronomy 30:1-3 "In the future, when you experience all these blessings and curses I have listed for you, and when you are living among the nations to which the Lord your God has exiled you, take to heart all these instructions. If at that time you and your children return to the Lord your God, and if you obey with all your heart and all your soul all the commands I have given you today, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes. He will have mercy on you and gather you back from all the nations where he has scattered you.*

He goes on to say He will change your heart. He will make them prosperous and numerous and He will bless them. So, this is all the way back in Deuteronomy. Moses gave this prophecy about Israel's future hope. Israel's future would first of all be judgment because they would disobey. But then, there would be a time that they return to the Lord and God would bring them back to the land. God spoke of Israel's future.

Now in another passage, God said that when He punishes them, like when God takes away the rain or let the locusts eat their gardens and crops, if they did not repent, He would make their punishment seven times as bad.

*Leviticus 26:18 "And if, in spite of all this, you still disobey me, I will punish you seven times over for your sins.*

*Leviticus 26:21 "If even then you remain hostile toward me and refuse to obey me, I will inflict disaster on you seven times over for your sins.*

*Leviticus 26:23-24 "And if you fail to learn the lesson and continue your hostility toward me, then I myself will be hostile toward you. I will personally strike you with calamity seven times over for your sins.*

*Leviticus 26:28 then I will give full vent to my hostility. I myself will punish you seven times over for your sins.*

I want you to remember this because it's going to be important. What God says in the past, sets the direction for the future; and God told Israel if they disobeyed and they would not learn from their warnings. they would be scattered into the nations. And God said if they didn't learn from that, He would punish them seven times over. Well, how did Israel do? We know that Israel did not keep God's covenant. As the history unfolds, David was a good king; and God promised to establish his kingdom forever. But we also know that David was a sinner just like us. God said that He would make David's kingdom strong, secure his throne forever and his kingdom would continue forever.

This promise is called the Davidic Covenant. It's the covenant God made with David. The reason I share this promise is, we know that God had a kingdom on earth with Adam and Eve. We know that God told Abraham that kings would come from him. We know in Genesis 49, God said that there would be a king from Judah that comes, and his kingdom

will spread over the Earth. Well now, we're told that that kingdom will also be the seed of a woman, the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David. The kingdom will be in David's family. God's going to keep his promises, but Israel didn't keep God's covenant. Solomon turned aside to other gods and led Israel astray.

*1 Kings 11:1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women.*

The Lord had clearly instructed the people, you must not marry them because they will turn your hearts to their gods. Solomon married foreign women. They believed in different gods, and Solomon's heart turned after those other gods. He was worshipping other gods. The Lord was angry with Solomon for his heart had turned away from the Lord. God said that He was going to take the kingdom from Solomon, but that He would still leave part of it. This is because He's going to keep the covenant in David's family.

Well, the reason I shared the passage about Solomon is, Solomon brought idolatry, worshipping false gods, into Israel. That's going to be a problem because God said that He alone is God. What happens as Israel's history goes on, throughout her history, God sent prophets to warn of judgment if they did not repent. The Lord God of their fathers or their ancestors repeatedly sent His prophets to warn them. God warned them in two different ways. One warning was by removing rain, was by allowing enemies to conquer them, was by making it to where their gardens wouldn't grow. Those were the curses of the covenant that God intended to wake them up.

The other way that God warned Israel is that God sent prophets. God sent to them men like Hosea, men like Amos, men like Zephaniah, men like Isaiah and Ezekiel. God sent these prophets to warn Israel; but the people mocked the messengers of God and despised their words. They scoffed at the prophets until the Lord's anger could no longer be restrained, and nothing could be done.

God was patient with Israel. But there came a time when the only choice was judgment. The Lord brought the king of Babylon against them. The Babylonians killed Judah's young men. That's talking about the tribe of Judah. It's talking about the kingdom of Judah. They even chased them into the temple. They had no pity on the people, killing both young men and young women, the old and the infirm. God handed all of them over to Nebuchadnezzar. We'll talk about him later. Then, his army burned the temple of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, burnt all the palaces and completely destroyed everything of value. The few who survived were taken as exiles to Babylon; and they became servants to the king and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power.



of the Babylonian captivity. The Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and took away people into captivity. We read about this. They took a group in 605 BC. They took another group in 597 BC. They took another group in 587 BC. Out of those people that were taken, Daniel and his three friends that we know as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were taken into captivity. Well, Jeremiah had warned about this. God said through Jeremiah, they would be in Babylon for 70 years. Their punishment for not listening to God's Word, not listening to the alarms that God gave, is that they would be in Babylon for 70 years.

But after that, God said,

*Jeremiah 29:10-11 I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*

Israel's future hope was based on the promises of God. Even though God would send them to Babylon for 70 years, that wasn't God's final word for Israel. God wanted to bring them back to their own land and restore them. Jeremiah also predicted Israel's restoration. He said,

*Jeremiah 31:10 The Lord, who scattered his people, will gather them and watch over them as a shepherd does his flock.*

The problem with Israel is that they had a heart that would not obey the Lord. But God gave a promise. He said,

*Jeremiah 31:31-33 "The day is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. This covenant will not be like the one I*



*made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife," says the Lord.*

*"But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.*

God says He will completely forgive their sins. God gives these promises. Now, when God brought Israel back from captivity after 70 years, they came back home. But even though Israel returned to the promised land, they did not fully return to the Lord.

I need to tell you that we're moving very fast now through the Old Testament history. You have Israel in the promised land as a kingdom. First, it's Israel under judges. Then, they are under King Saul. Then, David and Solomon. Then, the kingdom splits. You have the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. The southern kingdom goes into captivity as Jeremiah said they would. They come back after 70 years. But when you read the prophets that spoke after the 70 years captivity, you learn that the people did not learn their lesson from the captivity.

In Haggai 1. the people were being greedy. They were making their own houses very comfortable; but they were not working on the House of God.

In Malachi, we learned that they were giving sacrifices to God that had problems, bones broken on lambs, things like that. God said He demanded a perfect sacrifice. They were being greedy.

In Nehemiah who was also after the captivity, we read that certain Israelite men had married foreign wives. That was a problem because they would be tempted to believe in the false gods of those foreign wives, just like Solomon did. Even though they came back to the promised land, they did not fully return to the Lord.

Now, do you remember what God said would happen if they did not learn from their punishment? If they did not learn from God's judgment, God said He would punish them seven times over. Do you remember that from Leviticus 26? Well, what happens after the 70 years of captivity? God is going to judge them seven times over because they did not learn. Their judgment would be multiplied to extend for many, many years. That's what we're going to find when we look in the book of Daniel in our next lesson.