

## That the World May Know – God Heard Their Cry: Session 1 – How Big Is Our God

### God's Power Over Chaos

The Exodus experience is a paradigm for God's ongoing work to exert his power over chaos and restore shalom to his broken creation. Since creation itself is a demonstration of God's power over chaos, it is not surprising to find parallel experiences in God's creation story and the Exodus story.

1. At the beginning of creation, God's Spirit hovered over the waters of chaos and separated them to create the land, sky, and seas. How did God, in a sense, repeat this conquest of chaos at the beginning of The Exodus? What was the result?  
Genesis 1:1 – 10  
Exodus 14:21 – 22
2. When God decided to deliver his creation from the oppression of sin during the time of Noah, what did God use to save Noah and his family?  
Genesis 6:5 – 18  
Genesis 7:22 – 23  
  
What did God use to save Moses, who in turn would save Israel from the oppression of sin in Egypt?  
Exodus 2:1 - 3
3. After the flood, the three sons of Noah and their sons became the fathers of the nations (70 in all) and spread out over the earth. By the time Jacob went to Egypt to reunite with Joseph, how large was his family?  
Genesis 10:1 – 32  
Genesis 46:26 – 27
4. God connects rest on the Sabbath to his creation. What is the Sabbath rest connected to? What does this mean to the Hebrews?  
Exodus 20:8 - 11

### The Return of Chaos

The creation story clearly demonstrates God's power over chaos. Merely by the power of his words, God set boundaries for the chaos and brought shalom to the universe. No sooner had God's beautiful creation been put in order than chaos, in the form of the crafty serpent, reared its ugly head.

1. God created Adam and assigned a role for him to fulfill in the Garden of Eden. What was Adam's task? In what ways could it be considered to be a type of partnership with God?  
Genesis 2:8 – 17  
  
What happened to that partnership when Adam and Eve accepted the serpent's invitation of participate in his story rather than God's story?  
Genesis 3:1 – 1-
2. Chaos starts with an individual choice to choose sin over partnership with God, but it does not end there. When humans are sinful individually, they begin to create relationships, systems, and structures that are based on evil and devoted to evil, resulting in corporate, as well as individual chaos. What form did chaos take in Adam and Eve's family?  
Genesis 4:1 – 8  
  
How extensive had chaos become by the time of Noah?  
Genesis 6:5 – 7  
  
What were people committed to doing in order to preserve and build up their own culture of chaos at the time of the Tower of Babel?  
Genesis 11:1 – 9

### Discovering the God of Shalom in Egypt

In Egypt, Pharaoh, in cooperation with the gods, kept order. A person could not live in Egypt and not know the story of Pharaoh and chaos. So how was the God of the Hebrews going to show them his story? How would they come to know that he, not Pharaoh or the gods of Egypt, was the all-powerful God who kept the universe in order?

1. God gave Moses a specific message to give to the Hebrews while they were enslaved in Egypt. What was that message?  
Exodus 6:6 – 8  
  
What did this message say about who had the power to keep order in the world?
2. What was at least part of the purpose for the plagues by which God afflicted Egypt?  
Exodus 10:1 – 2  
  
How effective was this strategy in demonstrating to the Hebrews who God was?  
  
Imagine yourself being in Egypt at this time. How would these events have influenced the importance of Pharaoh's story? The importance of God's story?
3. What motivated God's awesome display of power in redeeming his people from slavery in Egypt? How would his actions have challenged Egypt's story?  
Deuteronomy 7:7 – 8
4. What did God want from his people in response to his great acts? How would this response make his people part of his story?  
Deuteronomy 7:9 – 11

## The Story Shapes the Culture

Although there are significant similarities between God's story about the origin and nature of the universe and his plan to restore shalom and Egypt's story about the origin and nature of chaos and order in the universe, there are even more significant differences. Worldview matters because it shapes a society. It defines morality, determines values, and describes proper behavior.

- 1 The Hebrews knew all too well what it was like to live in a culture shaped by Egypt's story. How did the Egyptian worldview affect the Hebrews? What indicates that God did not share the Egyptian view?  
Exodus 1:8 – 22  
Exodus 2:23 – 25  
Exodus 3:7 – 9
- 2 God gave commands to the Hebrews. What were the differences between the worldview of God's story and the worldview of Egypt's story? What would a culture shaped by each story be like?  
Exodus 23:1 – 9  
Leviticus 19:32 – 36  
Deuteronomy 5:12 – 15  
Deuteronomy 10:17 – 19  
Deuteronomy 24:17 – 22
- 3 How essential was the exodus from Egypt to God's plan to restore shalom to his creation? Why?
- 4 God's story has a message for people who seek to know and obey him today.  
Luke 12:22 – 34

## Take In the Story and Live It Out!

God's call to the Hebrews was not just to leave Egypt, but to leave behind everything Egypt stood for. Until they were completely convinced of the truth that God alone was the one, true, all-powerful Creator who could bring order and harmony to a world that sin had destroyed, Egypt's story would always retain its hold on the Hebrews' hearts. God had to completely reshape their identity. They had to reject Egypt's gods, its view of chaos and order, its moral standards, its glorification of human achievement and accompanying devaluation of hum life, its focus on death, even its leavened bread! All of this was necessary if they were to buy into God's story and live according to its worldview.

God called Israel to love, serve, and obey him because of his mighty acts in Egypt. The following passages describe how God's act of bringing the people out of Egypt is foundational to their identity, how it molds their understanding of God, and how it shapes their lifestyle.

Exodus 13:3 – 16  
Exodus 29:42 – 46  
Leviticus 11:44 – 45  
Leviticus 19:33 – 36  
Leviticus 22:31 – 33  
Leviticus 25:35 – 43  
Deuteronomy 6:10 – 24  
Deuteronomy 13:1 – 5

## References

Genesis 1	Genesis 2
Genesis 3	Genesis 4
Genesis 6	Genesis 7
Genesis 10	Genesis 11
Genesis 18	Genesis 46
Exodus 1	Exodus 2
Exodus 6	Exodus 7
Exodus 10	Exodus 13
Exodus 14	Exodus 18
Exodus 20	Exodus 23
Exodus 24	Exodus 29
Leviticus 11	Leviticus 19
Leviticus 25	Deuteronomy 4
Deuteronomy 5	Deuteronomy 6
Deuteronomy 10	Deuteronomy 13
Deuteronomy 24	Joshua 1
Joshua 24	Psalms 19
Psalms 97	Isaiah 31
Jeremiah 24	Ezekiel 12
Ezekiel 15	Ezekiel 20
Amos 3	Matthew 11
Luke 12	Acts 14
Romans 1	

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. They you will be prosperous and successful  
Joshua 1:8

## The Land of the Hebrews' Slavery

