

Belmont Exeter House Group Notes
w/c 1st October 2023
The Bible Jesus Read – Exodus 20:2 – Exodus

The Old Testament can often feel confusing and out of date but at heart it is a drama with people playing their part on the grand story of God's work in creation. The Old Testament is the scripture that Jesus read and taught. It is the scripture that all the New Testament writers relied upon. This series is based around the book by Christopher J Wright 'The Old Testament in Seven Sentences' if you would like to read a bit more background. You don't need a copy of the book for the Home Group studies.

Although each week of the sermon series is based on a single verse, it is intended as a way to discover some key themes of the overall Old Testament story. Each study will offer some longer sections to read and consider.

In this study, we're looking at the moment when Israel is rescued by God, called to be a nation. The exodus from Egypt is 'the story of redemption in the Old Testament, which shapes Israel's concept of God as Redeemer and provides believers in both Old and New Testaments with their template for what redemption means' (Christopher Wright, p49).

BIG IDEA: God creates a community of people to fulfil His mission in creation. Israel is the start of this community in the Old Testament which is fulfilled in the church in the New Testament. We live as His people.

Context: The bible is a set of books, written across 1500 years by many authors, in 3 languages (OT mainly in Hebrew with small portions of Aramaic, NT in Greek). The Bible speaks of the work of God from beginning to end. The book of Exodus describes how God moves forward the fulfilment of his promise to Abraham. Exodus can be divided into 3 sections, chapters 1 to 15 – the escape from Egypt, chapters 16 – 24 – the covenant summary, chapter 25 – 30 – the tabernacle instructions. The books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy expand on the principles of law, covenant, worship, identity. The book of Numbers contains much of the narrative about the wilderness wanderings of the people of God.

WAY IN: *a couple of options...*

Word association / definition on the word 'Redemption' – what ideas and questions does this word provoke?

Identity – is there a group / club / activity you are part of (other than Belmont)? Are there shared ways of behaving that you notice?

DIG IN

READ: Exodus 2:23 – 25; 6:6 – 8; 15:11 – 13

1. What is the motivation for God's action? What do we learn about God's character?
2. Describe God's actions and intentions.
3. What are the reasons for Israel's worship and obedience?
4. Are there other things in the exodus story which excite or puzzle you?

READ: Exodus 19:3 – 6; 20:1 – 2

5. Outline the steps of God's work as described in 19:3- 6.
6. What does God's covenant with the people include?
7. How does the sequence illustrate God's grace and our response to Him?
8. What do the phrases 'kingdom of priests', 'holy nation' mean?
9. Why does it matter that the statement of 20v2 comes before the list of commandments?

LIVE IT OUT *work in pairs or triplets*

1. What has God's act of redemption meant in your own life?
2. How can you celebrate His mighty and gracious works in your life?
3. These phrases 'kingdom of priests', 'holy nation' are used by Peter in 1 Peter 2:9-10 to describe the church. How are we doing on this? What can we celebrate, what challenges do we see?
4. When things go wrong and we fail to live to God's standard, how does God's rescue and covenant law help us?

PRAYER *together in the pairs*

Give thanks for God's rescue, for the difference it is making and for the specific challenges to live differently as individuals and community.