

## **Parish of Holy Saviour – Bible Month September 2017**

### **Theme: Revealing Christ through Leadership – studying the Book of Exodus**

#### **Introduction**

##### *A Brief Review of the Pentateuch*

Exodus is the second book of the Bible. It falls within the grouping of the first 5 books of the Old Testament known as “The Pentateuch” That name is derived is the Greek word meaning ‘five scrolls’ (‘penta’ – ‘five’ and ‘teuchos’ - tool, vessel, book, scroll). In ancient Hebrews, it is called ‘The Torah’ ( The Law) The word ‘Torah’ in Hebrew means ‘instruction,’ which is a term suitable to describe the 5 books since they contain both the historical as well as the legal foundation of the Old Testament covenant or God’s law and importantly, they attempt to teach the reader how to live.

The Pentateuch comprises the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It sets out “...how the world came into existence, how sin began, how the Jewish nation was born, how Israel went to Egypt, and how Moses led Israel to freedom (Gen. 1-Ex 19). Through these chapters one meets the forefathers (patriarchs) and first mothers (matriarchs) of Israel. God is revealed as Creator, Covenant Maker, Sustainer, and Deliverer.” (Paul R. House and Eric A. Mitchell, 2007) The first book, Genesis tells of:

- the creation of the world and man’s God-given place in it – the history of the human race;
- the history of the Old Testament patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;
- God’s call to Abram to leave his homeland, Ur of the Chaldeans, and journey to the Promised Land of Canaan, and the divine promise that Abram will become the father of a great nation—a nation that will live in covenant with God, dwelling in His land and being His unique possession. As a token and assurance of the Lord’s commitment to His

promise, He gives to Abram the new name, “Abraham,” meaning, “father of a multitude” (Gen. 17:5.);

- the embryonic covenant nation (consisting of Jacob, re-named “Israel,” and his twelve sons together with their families) journeying down into Egypt.

The Book of Genesis sets the stage for the Book of Exodus and the story of the people of Israel continues in the other books and they will be examined in terms of the particular leader being studied.

### **The Book of Exodus - Authorship/Date/Content/Theme**

There is no consensus regarding the authorship and dating of the Book. Traditionally, Moses is accepted as the author in the fifteenth century around 1440-1400 B.C.

The Book of Genesis is appreciative as a backdrop to the Book of Exodus which captures the birth of Israel, the ‘embryonic covenant nation’. Through the Lord’s blessing, it has grown into a great multitude to the extent that the powerful Egyptian empire found it a threat and oppressed its people. (Ex. 1:7-10.) The Book of Exodus records:

- The Lord’s miraculous deliverance of His people from their Egyptian oppressors in their safe passage through the parted waters of the Red Sea. Under the divinely appointed leader, Moses, and by means of the Lord’s overall leadership and visible presence as in the pillar of cloud and fire, and overall leadership, the Israelites are brought safely to Mt. Sinai, the mountain of God.
- The Lord upholding His original covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15), enters into covenant with the nation of Israel, claiming them as His own people/possession and pledging to be their God.

- The highlight of the Book of Exodus is the covenant nation dwelling in the presence of the Lord at the foot of Mt. Sinai with the sacred ark of the Lord's in their midst in the tabernacle, (Ex. 40:34.)
- The Book ends with God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would possess the Promised Land of Canaan unfulfilled but his descendants, God's people, are being led by Him throughout the journey in the cloud and fire. (Ex. 40:38.)

**The Main Leaders identified in Exodus to be examined and highlighted in the preaching/teaching and bible study series throughout September 2017:**

1. God 2. Moses 3. Aaron 4. Miriam 5. Jethro 6. Joshua

2. Schedule for study:

- Week 1 starting Sunday September 3, 2017 Moses
- Week 2 starting Sunday September 10, 2017 Aaron and Miriam
- Week 3 starting Sunday September 17, 2017 Jethro and Joshua

**Bible Study**

- Holy Saviour - Wednesdays 10.00 - 11.30 a.m.
- Christ the King - Thursdays 6.00 - 7.30 p.m.

**NOTE:**

- *The role and style of God, the ultimate leader, and his influence on the outcome should be examined as each leader is considered.*
- *The Sunday sessions are only introductory and persons should participate in the Bible Studies in the month of September to have a*

*deeper appreciation of leadership in the Book of Exodus. An interactive approach will be used.*

- *For you to participate in the study meaningfully, you should read the Book of Exodus thoroughly. Other reference Books of the Bible should be read as required.*

3. Aspects of Christian Leadership to consider:

- a. Recognition of God in our lives ;
- b. Listening for God's call and being obedient;
- c. Being uncompromising with our Christian values.
- d. Staying focus on the mission – God's mission;
- e. Being determined in the face of adversity;
- f. Demonstrating humility;
- g. Delegating;
- h. Teaching;
- i. Appropriate systems put in place and how.

**Application:**

***How can the learning be applied in your life and the life of the Church? – (in categories such as liturgical/spiritual/pastoral/community building/administrative)***

To prepare for the sessions, let us first ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds and to give us receptive hearts for the scripture and the unfolding of God in it all. Also, let us ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten us in how we can apply the learning to strengthen our relationship with God and to serve him in our daily lives as individuals and collectively, as Church.

**Week 1 beginning Sunday September 3, 2017**

**God as the Sovereign Leader**

- 1:1-15:21            God liberates Israel from slavery by defeating Pharaoh
- 15:22-18:27        God journeys with Israel to Mount Sinai
- 19:1-31:18         God establishes the covenant with Israel
- 32:1-34:35         Israel breaks the Covenant, but God re-establishes it
- 35:1-40:38         Israel obeys instructions, and God takes up residence  
with them

### **The study of Moses as Leader**

Moses is the main human leader in the Book of Exodus. With the help of God, he singlehandedly led the pilgrimage of his people out of bondage under the reign of Pharaoh. He is the epic leader throughout the Book.

#### **1) Exodus 2:11-13**

Moses grown up, visited his people, the Hebrews and observed how they were forced to work. He witnessed an Egyptian beating Hebrews. He looked around, saw no one watching, killed the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand.

*Discussion point: Was Moses right?*

Principle: *Observation:*

Moses saw what was happening to his fellow Hebrews, and he knew that it was not right. Thinking no one was watching, he took matters into his own hands by killing the Egyptian.

*Principle:* A morally wrong action can hinder effective leadership. An effective leader must practice what he says or people will not follow his direction or vision.

#### **2) Exodus 3:1-2**

Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the Midian priest. He led the flock into the wilderness to Mt. Sinai, the mountain of God. The angel

of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire in the middle of a bush. The bush was engulfed in flames but did not burn. Moses stared in amazement.

Discussion point: God approached Moses in a foreign land while he was doing the normal work of tending the flock.

Principle: God can choose to approach a leader in any situation.

### **3) Exodus 3:11**

But Moses protested to God, “Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?”

Discussion Point: Moses felt he was unworthy to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt and moreover to approach Pharaoh.

Principle: God chooses those he wants for leadership -. even if that leader seems incapable for the task in the eyes of men.

### **4) Exodus 6:12**

Moses objects appealing God that His people no longer listen to him and he was not articulate –he does not speak eloquently and cannot speak to Pharaoh.

Discussion point: Moses showed honesty as he conceived his weakness but also showed that he did not understand God’s ability for him to overcome it.

Principle: A leader may tell others about his shortcomings but must be able to rely on God to overcome them.

### **5) Exodus 14:13-15**

Moses told the people not to be afraid but to watch God work to rescue them. God told him to get the people moving.

Discussion point: Moses showed faith that in God would save him and the Israelites; God showed that there must be action with faith.

Principle: A leader must have faith in God but must act to carry out God's plan.

## **6) Exodus 14:31**

The Israelites were amazed by the power of God against the Egyptians and had faith in God and his servant, Moses,.

Discussion Point: Should persons' faith in God and his leaders depend on miraculous works?

Principle: Followers build confidence in leaders who yield results.

## **7) Exodus 15:22-25**

Moses led the people of Israel away from the Red Sea into the desert for three days without water. When they came to the oasis of Marah, the water was too bitter to drink. The people complained and turned against Moses. They demanded water. Moses cried out to the Lord for help, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood which Moses threw it into the water purifying the water making it for drinking.

Discussion Point: The people complained to Moses because the water did not taste good. People look up to leaders as well as complain to them leader, he is the one they looked to and complained to.

Principle: Listening to complaints is important for an effective leader even if the source of complaint is beyond his control.

### **8) Exodus 18:7-10**

Moses meets his father-in-law, Jethro greeted him respectfully with bow and kiss. He told him all that the Lord had done for them and the freedom from, and the victory he gave them and the victory over Pharaoh. Jethro praised God for rescuing Israel from the powerful Egypt!

*Discussion Point:* Moses appears to have a close and good relationship with his father-in-law, Jethro.

*Principle:* A leader needs to have at least one close relationship. That person can serve as a “confidant” to the leader whom offers advice to the leader or encourages him when needed.

### **9) Exodus 18:17-24**

Jethro listened to Moses and how he carries out his functions. He advises him that it is too burdensome on him and his people. He needs others to help. Continue to represent them before God, take their disputes to God, teach them God’s decrees but select some honest capable God fearing and them as leaders over identified groups. Those leaders should solve simple/common disputes and Moses, the major cases. This will be beneficial to all.. Moses listened to, and followed his father-in-law’s advice.

*Discussion Point:* Moses listened when Jethro gave advice. He did not interrupt him, but listened quietly and patiently.

*Principle:* A leader must be a good listener who can be quiet, listen to what is said, so that all is heard correctly.

### **10) Exodus 18:24**

Moses listened to his father-in-law’s advice and followed his suggestions.

Discussion Point: After listening to Jethro's advice Moses immediately puts that advice into action.

Principle: A leader must be teachable. This means that he is willing to learn new ways of doing things and that he follows through on what he learns.

***Note: To have a full appreciation for the leadership of Moses, it is important to examine details given in the Book of Deuteronomy***

### **11) Deuteronomy 4:1-3, 5-6**

Moses asked Israel to listen carefully to these decrees and regulations that he is about to teach them.. He adds that they should obey them completely as given so that they may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. He reminded them that at Baal-peor, the Lord God destroyed everyone who had worshiped Baal, the god of Peor. In obeying them, they will be displaying their wisdom and intelligence among the surrounding nations.

Discussion point: Moses strongly encouraged the people to obey and be obedient to God's laws and God's desire for how they should live.

Principle: A leader must urge people to live obediently and faithfully to God. Emphasis must be placed on living correctly in God's eyes.

### **12) Deuteronomy 31:9**

Moses wrote the entire body of instruction in a book and gave it to the priests, who carried the Ark of the Lord's Covenant, and to the elders of Israel.

Discussion point: Moses wanted the Israelites to be obedient to the law so he wrote the instructions in a book and gave it to them.

*Principle:* A leader must take steps to ensure that his people are faithful and obedient to God's teaching. Therefore, a variety of teaching techniques should be used to make information accessible to persons with different learning styles e.g. use of video, audio, written.

(Source: adapted with revision from:

<https://crt010304.wordpress.com/2007/09/17/leadership-principles-of-moses/> and <http://christopherscottblog.com/leadership-principles-moses/>

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**NOTE:** *Throughout Moses' life, God was always in charge and he always allowed God to provide direction as he led his people. He always put God in charge, God as sovereign. God modelled and shaped him into a great leader of His people.*

*As you reflect, what aspect stands out for you? Do you see God's role in it all? What leadership principles have you learnt from Moses? How would you apply these leadership principles to your life and life of the church? Categories such as liturgical/spiritual/pastoral/community building/administrative may be considered.*