Bible Study Nineteen

November 17th, 2021

The Book of Exodus

The Book of Exodus is the most important book of the Torah, the first Five Books of the Old Testament.

Moses had fled across the desert after killing the Egyptian guard. Now he dwelled for many years around the Mount of Sinai caring for the sheep and herds of Jethroe his father – Law.

The strange story of the Burning Bush reveals God’s presence to Moses. He names himself Yahweh—or I am.

Next Moses is commissioned to go to Pharaoh and demand the release of the Israelites from slavery. He is resistant to this role claiming he is slow of speech and afraid, a mere shepherd. God gives a staff that turns into a snake and a hand that becomes leprose.

It is the beginning of the great Epic of Israel’s Salvation. When Moses returns to Jethroe’s camp the people are astonished. His hair has turned white and his skin and face glows like the sun. His wife covers his head with a cloth.

Moses begins his long journey back to Egypt with his wife Zipporah and his sons. With him he carried the staff of God. On his way Aaron the brother of Moses comes to meet him having been told all by God. Together they bring together all the elders of Israel. The people gathered and all that God had spoken to Moses was revealed.

Chapter 5

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and tell him “The God of Israel demands that you ‘Let his people go!’” But Pharaoh’s heart has been hardened and he refuses sending the people back to hard labor. Instead, Pharaoh orders that the taskmasters work the people harder and deny them the straw to make strong bricks. Failing to meet their quota, the workers are beaten.

Chapter 6. Moses returns to God and tells him that he has brought nothing but trouble on the Israelites. For the first time God promises that the land of Canaan will become Israel’s promised land. Fr the first time God speaks and says: “I have heard the groaning of my people and I will take them from their yoke and out of the land of Egypt.”

As if to authenticate his words Moses lists the sons of the sons of Jacob. The people have doubts and will no longer listen to Moses, blaming him for their oppression. The signs of wonder before Pharaoh do not work as the Egyptian magicians do the same.

Now God tells Moses that Pharaoh has tried his patience and he will send the first great plague against him.

The River Nile turns to blood in the sight of Pharaoh and at the touch of Moses’ staff. But Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, and he refuses to let the people go.

The waters of the Nile are the life-blood of Egypt, without it the whole of Egypt dies. So Chapter 7 ends with Pharaoh in the ascendency.