

Exodus

Introduction to the Book



Story of Foundations

- Israel as a Liturgical Community
 - After the chaos of Egypt and the salvation at the Sea, the people are brought to order at Sinai when they receive the Law, the statutes, and the liturgy
 - This identifies the people of Israel as a unique and holy community gathered amongst a world of chaos and paganism
 - Sinai becomes the foundation for Israel and whenever Israel was faithful, they sought the Laws and the statutes and they practiced the liturgy. Whenever they were unfaithful, the first thing to go was ALWAYS the liturgy
- The Foundation was given by God
 - The Israelites didn't invent the laws, or the statutes, or the liturgy;
 - It was given by God
 - Are these things merely relics of the past or do they still hold significance today?



Story of Foundations

- The REAL question:
 - Is God a God of order or of chaos?
 - Is God a changing God or a God who stays the same?
- God as a God of order LOVE order
 - It is why He gave orderly liturgy to the people of Israel
- God does not change (even though we change)
 - It is why we continue to use and cherish the liturgy today
 - God gave it to us way back at Sinai!
- God's creation was an ORDERLY creation
 - Sin and the Fall turned His creation into chaos
 - Our sinful nature yearns for that chaos
 - God, by sending Jesus, returns us to orderliness



Story of Foundations

- Life has meaning, fulfillment, and connection to God and His creation when we have order
 - Worship, by extension, also has meaning, fulfillment and connection to God and His Creation when it is orderly.
 - This is why the Church, for thousands of years, has used liturgy!
 - It reaches out into the chaos and disorder of this fallen universe and proclaims the Gospel through orderly, clear, and meaningful things (repetition, tradition, connections to the past, proclamations of the future we have in Christ)



Story of Foundations

- Postmodernism and the need for Institutions
 - Our postmodern world derides institutions
 - The Church
 - The government
 - “organized religion”
 - But in the absence of organization/purpose/order, all that remains is chaos
 - Who is in charge?
 - What is the purpose?
 - Where are they going?
 - Why are they doing it?
 - When will they start/stop



Story of Foundations

- God established the institution of Israel by use of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.)
 - God authorized the use of institution so that man may work with God/serve God and one another effectively
 - God uses institutions to do His work through Word and Spirit. The Church is the God-established institution in which He works through to save sinners.
 - The Divine Service (our worship service) IS God's working through His institution (the Church) to deliver sinners to salvation and strengthen His servants to be witnesses in the chaotic world, just as it was for the people of Israel.



Story of Foundations

- God institutes the Divine Service by His Word.
- He instituted the statutes, not as a killjoy for His people to suffer through, but as a gift!
- God set ordinances in place so that His people know the right way to do things, the right rituals and traditions to follow
- Through these statutes and ordinances God works! He works because He said He will
- God gave the statutes and ordinances to:
 - Keep pagan practices from seeping into Israel
 - They are essential to God and His Work (God of order)



Story of Foundations

- The 10 Commandments
 - LAW for the unrepentant and sinners
 - GOSPEL for we who are being saved!
- A “command” is not always “law” but can actually be Gospel!
 - God’s command to follow the liturgy, ordinances, statutes and liturgy is not LAW but GOSPEL! These are gifts from God!
 - We can be absolutely certain that God works through these things



Entry into Exodus

- The Role of Moses
 - The Law Giver (absolutely)
 - The leader of the rituals and liturgy
 - The pioneer of the ritual
 - Receives the instructions from God
 - Carries them out
 - Hands off responsibility to others
 - He sets up the tabernacle in accordance with God's ordinances
 - He consecrates the priesthood in accordance with God's ordinances
 - He inaugurates the Divine Service in accordance with God's ordinances
 - Moses REPRESENTS God to the people - stands as the mediator - prays on their behalf - offers sacrifice on their behalf - and proclaims the decrees, forgiveness, and statutes of God on God's behalf to the people
 - Moses is not like the people in this respect, but very much like Christ



Entry into Exodus

- The Role of Moses
 - Moses receives the Law at Sinai, including the whole Torah (teaching on worship) from seven “speeches” given by God to him (compare to the 7 days of Creation)
 - Moses constructs an altar at the foot of the mountain and sprinkles the blood of sacrificed animals atop and then “baptizes” the whole people in the blood
 - Because God has ordained it, this sprinkling of blood makes the people holy (not that they were suddenly sinless, but that God accepted them as holy for the sake of the sacrificed animals)
 - This sacrifice and sprinkling of blood inaugurates the Sacrificial System. The Tabernacle is built which would be used for the sacrifices. In the midst of the Tabernacle is the Most Holy Place, where the presence of God dwelt. It was upon Him that the blood of the sacrifice would be poured each year.
 - Moses consecrates the priests and the tabernacle. The Divine Service begins (Leviticus 9)



Entry to Exodus

- Summary
 - God establishes the liturgy
 - Moses was His mediator between He and the people
 - Through the Divine Service, God set His people apart from the rest of the world to be holy and to serve one another in love and faith
 - Moses holds many offices (law giver, mediator, founder, spokesman, intercessor) which are later divided



Historical Exodus

- The Nation of Israel
 - It was NOT the blood or ethnicity or culture or language which made the people into a nation!
 - It was NOT that they were powerful or large (compared to other nations) which made them into a nation!
 - What made Israel a Nation??
 - It was the Divine Service (the statutes, the ordinances, the liturgy, etc.)
 - The PURPOSE which God gave to Israel was to proclaim His word to the world and draw others into the Divine Service (the “royal priesthood”)
 - Why did God set the people of Goshen free and make them into a nation?
 - Pagan religions served their gods by bringing things to the altar of their gods so that their gods could be nourished, appeased, clothed, etc.
 - Israel served God by bringing food to God, whereby God made the food holy and served it back to His people.
 - God set the Hebrews free, not because they were so deserving of it, but so He could dwell among them in the Divine Service and apart from the chaos of the fallen world
 - God is everywhere, but He wanted to be specially with His people, dwelling with them in a way no one else could experience outside the Divine Service

