

Exodus 1-2 - Will God's Promise Fail?

To Read:

1. Jeremiah 31
2. Matthew 2

I. Introduction

I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me. In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted. When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints. Selah You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I consider the days of old, the years long ago. I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah

A. This morning we are diving into the book of Exodus with Exodus 1-2

1. And, like the start to Psalm 77 which I just read, Exodus 1-2 records a time when the people of God were in misery, crying out to God and wondering what happened to God's promise
2. Following the story of Genesis, when God appeared regularly to the patriarchs and made great promises to them, the following generations must have expected that God would quickly fulfill His promises
3. But, instead, the promises appear to be lost and the people cry out to God - they ask, 'Where is God?'

B. Read Exodus 1-2

C. Proposition and Outline

1. **Proposition:** Although from a human point of view God appears to be absent, He is working out His perfect plan which includes demonstrating the depth of our problem so that we can rejoice in the greatness of salvation.
2. **Outline**
 - a. Where is God?
 - b. God is acting in Christ
 - c. God is acting for us

II. Where is God?

A. Multiplication and oppression

1. Exodus starts with a celebration of the promise of Genesis
 - a. In Exodus 1:1-7, the sons of Israel are recounted to remind us of God's promise and God's faithfulness to the patriarchs, especially God's promise to Abraham
 - b. Then the last of the twelve sons of Israel die, but God is still faithful to His promise
 - c. Even in a foreign land, the people of Israel are fruitful and multiply, recalling God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2 - *And I will make of you a great nation*, or in Genesis 15:5 - *And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."*
 - d. Exodus starts with everything going right - God chose a new people in Abraham and that new people is being fruitful and multiplying, God's promise has been powerful
2. But then the story changes, and gets much darker, much faster - what appeared to be a celebration of how easy God's promise had come turns into a dark tale of death and woe
 - a. Exodus 1:8 - *Now there arose a new king over Egypt,*
 - b. As you'll remember from the story of Joseph, Joseph had risen in the ranks of Egypt to become second to Pharaoh himself and saved Egypt from a great famine, and, in gratitude, Pharaoh agrees to harbor Joseph's family during the famine
 - c. But, after Joseph dies, a new Pharaoh or maybe even a new dynasty takes control of Egypt, a ruler who does not feel the same gratitude to Joseph and his family, a ruler that is threatened by Israel's fruitfulness
 - d. In fact, this new ruler of Egypt hates the promise made to Israel and tries to destroy the promise - it is specifically because of God's promise that Pharaoh enslaves Israel, Exodus 1:9-10 - *"Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply..."*
 - e. This earthly ruler could not abide the fulfillment of the promise that challenged his rule and his authority so he tries to destroy the promise and the Israelites end up enslaved and eventually slaughtered
 - f. The promise of fruitfulness had not been enough, Genesis had not completed the tale of God's work, something was lacking in the promise still
3. Despite the apparent failure of the promise, though, some of God's people continued to strive after the promise
 - a. This is the story in Exodus 1:15-21, the story of the midwives of Israel - Pharaoh's plan to enslave the Israelites works, to a point, but the promise is more powerful than Pharaoh - the people keep multiplying!
 - b. So, Pharaoh steps up his persecution of the Israelites by aiming to undo fruitfulness directly and orders the midwives to kill all the male children - by killing the male children Pharaoh aims to destroy all the promises of God and set himself up as the ultimate ruler unthreatened by God's people
 - c. But the midwives politely refuse to obey Pharaoh, they valued the promise of God and instead of fearing Pharaoh's power they feared God and allowed the male children to live
 - d. Pharaoh hated the promises of God that challenged his rule, he hated the promise of Genesis 3 that a son would be born who would conquer, he hated to promise of Genesis 15 that God's chosen people would be fruitful and multiply and inherit the land, but the midwives rested in God's promises and acted on God's promises - the very definition of faith
 - e. And, in response to the midwives faith, God blesses them as well and gives them the opportunity to participate in the promise as well as God gives the apparently formerly childless midwives families
4. But Pharaoh isn't discouraged yet - he has more powerful weapons at his disposal than Israelite midwives
 - a. If the midwives won't participate in his murderous attempt to squelch the promise, then he will turn to his own people and command them to destroy God's promised people which happens in verse 22
 - b. God's promise has been more powerful than Pharaoh at each turn, but something is missing, because the promise has not brought joy and prosperity to God's people, instead God's people are in bondage and slavery, God's promise seems to be leading to death - the promise of fruitfulness was not enough
 - c. For almost a century, God's people must have wondered, 'what happened to God's promise?' 'Was the promise a big joke that led us into slavery?' 'Has God multiplied and then forgotten His people?'
 - d. Exodus 1 calls us to feel the anguish of the Israelites under bondage and cry out with them, 'where is God?'
 - e. And it calls us to see that the promise and story of Genesis was integral to God's plan but was not enough, no matter how much the people multiply, they are still in bondage in Egypt - something new must happen

B. Acting in Obscurity

1. By our best count, the events of Exodus 1 occurred over a period of around 135 years, with the enslavement and slaughter of the Israelites occurring for more than 65 years - this was no minor problem, three or maybe even four generations of children were born during this slaughter - three generations of boys were under the threat of death
 - a. But, in the midst of this slaughter, something very ordinary happens - yet one more son is born
 - b. But this was no ordinary son, Exodus 2:2 takes care to record that this child was a 'fine child' a remarkable child even from birth, but, like every other Israelite boy, he is in danger of being thrown into the Nile
 - c. And, eventually, he is thrown into the Nile, but something different happens, a reminder of a story that went before, because the young child is thrown into the waters of the flooding Nile but first he is placed in an Ark
 - d. The word in Exodus 2:3 translated basket in most modern versions is the same word used in Genesis 6-9 for the Ark - a deliverance like the story of Noah is about to happen, but right now it is happening in obscurity
 - e. The people are crying out, 'where is God?' But God is acting, He is acting to bring about a great deliverance - the people might not see it, but God is preparing a deliverer
 - f. And, just as Noah was brought safely through the flood, the child was brought safely through the Nile and was brought out of the flood a - God provide and preserved a child in order to make him the deliverer
2. But, God has a sense of humor, and a predilection for showing how much greater He is than all challengers
 - a. So, ironically, it is Pharaoh's family that rescues God's deliverer from the floods of the Nile
 - b. And it is Pharaoh's family that raises and trains the deliverer of God's people
 - c. Pharaoh has set himself up in opposition to God, so God uses Pharaoh's own family to destroy his dynasty - God sends His deliverer to live among the enemy to prepare him to deliver God's people from the enemy
3. But, there is a danger as Moses goes and lives among the Egyptians - what if Moses doesn't realize God's call on his life, or what if Moses rejects God's purpose and sides with the Egyptians?
 - a. Moses could choose to seek the power and the riches of Egypt - he was in the position to - he could have renounced his birthright and turned his back on the promises and refused to be the deliverer
 - b. But, Moses passes the test and renounces his place of privilege in Egypt; he instead has compassion on his brethren, demonstrated when he acts to deliver one of his countrymen from the cruel whips of the Egyptians
 - c. Unfortunately, the time was not yet ripe and Moses had not yet been fully prepared, and God's people reject Moses' deliverance, even sneering at Moses asking who made him a prince and judge over Israel
 - d. The Israelites did not realize and perhaps even Moses did not realize yet who would appoint him a prince and judge over Israel, and Moses attempt at delivering his people ends in apparent failure - Pharaoh tries to kill him and Moses, fearing for his life, flees from Egypt
 - e. By the middle of Exodus 2, we seem to be right back in Exodus 1 asking, 'what is going to happen to God's promise?' because the preserved deliverer appears to renounce his role in delivering God's people
 - f. Moses takes up residence away from God's people and marries and has children in Midian, even naming his child Gershom, saying that he was a sojourner in a foreign land
4. In the midst of Moses fear and rejection of God's purpose, though, God continues to point to the promise
 - a. Moses flees from Egypt, but he flees to a well in the middle of the desert where he meets his wife, ironically paralleling Isaac and Jacob's stories from Genesis
 - b. And Moses tries to renounce his place with God's people by naming his son Gershom, deciding to live as a foreigner with a foreign people, but he merely recalls the role of Abraham - a sojourner in a foreign land
 - c. To all human eyes, the promise of God seems to have failed miserably, God sent multiplication but it led to death and destruction, God sent a deliverer but the deliverer failed and ran away
 - d. But in obscurity God is preparing His plan and is preparing a stage on which He will display His glory through a mighty and awesome deliverance of His people

C. So, Exodus 2 ends with a short narration, making sure we understand the point of these two chapters

1. 2:23-25 - *During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel---and God knew.*
2. For many years, the people cry out to God - they are in dire straits and God appears to be silent
3. But God had not forgotten the covenant, He heard His people's cry, He remembered His promises and He was preparing, in His perfect time and His perfect sovereignty to keep the covenant
4. But God wanted the people to know how great a deliverance He was going to provide, how much they needed a deliverer to save them from their bondage, and how much more they needed than simply the choosing of Abraham

III. God is acting in Christ

A. So, Exodus 1-2 is a powerful story of God's hidden work in the midst of His people's sorrow to prepare a mighty deliverance for them - but what does it have to do with us? How do we fit into this story?

1. Exodus 1-2 has to do with us because it has to do with Christ, like the rest of the Old Testament, the story of Exodus 1-2 points us forward to Christ and teaches us what He will be for us
2. So, as we continue on, I want to look at what Exodus 1-2 teaches us about Jesus Christ, the great deliverer

B. Christ is the Preserved Son

1. In Exodus 1 and 2, Pharaoh sets himself up as the enemy of God's promise, particularly by killing the sons of Israel
 - a. But why does God ordain for this to happen? What is the purpose of this story in redemptive history?
 - b. To answer, we must go back all the way to Genesis 3:15 and the promise made before the serpent - *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*"
 - c. There was a male child coming to fulfill the promise, and Pharaoh hated the promise of God - so Pharaoh killed every male child to prevent the one male child from fulfilling the promise and ruling in his place
2. And so, the slaughter of the children becomes a motif in each major cycle of deliverance and redemption
 - a. The promise was a son, so the enemy of God's people were always trying to prevent the birth of the son
 - b. In the first major cycle of redemption and deliverance, in Exodus 1 and 2, the male children are slaughtered
 - c. And then during the time of the prophets, Jeremiah looks forward to another exile of his people that recalls the anguish of Egypt in Jeremiah 31:15-16 - *Thus says the LORD: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more." Thus says the LORD: "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.*
 - d. Jeremiah foresees the anguish of the exile as the people are marched into exile and the children are cut off - the enemy seeks to cut off the promise of God by destroying the children of Israel
3. This motif is repeated because it was fulfilled in Christ
 - a. Matthew 2 records how the Wise Men came to visit the baby Jesus and alerted Herod to the birth of the king
 - b. Then Matthew 2:16-18 records - *Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."*
 - c. Herod, the foreign ruler of God's people, like Pharaoh before him, hated the promise of God and determined to kill all of the male children to prevent the promise from being fulfilled
 - d. But, as God had promised in Exodus and Jeremiah, the Deliverer was preserved, and God protected His deliverer in the land of Egypt, preserving Him until He could work His great deliverance
4. Moses was spared the wrath of the king of Egypt to point forward to Christ who was spared the wrath of Herod
 - a. The slaughtered children and the preserved deliverer should increase our anticipation for and, in measure, increase our rejoicing in the fulfillment of God's promise - God promised a son who would deliver His people, though every enemy sought to destroy this promise, God fulfilled His promise in Christ

C. Christ is the Humble Emissary

1. In Exodus 2, we see that after Moses is preserved and grows up in the midst of the Egyptian court, he rejects the Egyptian court and chooses to identify with the people of God instead, as Hebrews 11:24-26 interprets - *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*
2. Moses rejected the place of power and prestige, the place of honor and exaltation in order to serve his brothers, and, in doing so, Moses rejected the promise of the world in favor of the promise of God
3. But, once again, Moses is merely a type, a figure pointing forward to One who would come and reject the promise of the world in a much greater way and empty Himself in order to identify with His brothers for their deliverance
4. Moses rejected the allure of the riches and rule of this world because Christ would ultimately reject to allure of this world, Matthew 4:8-10 - *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus*

- said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"
5. And Moses humbled himself and identified with the people of God because Christ would humble Himself in a much greater way in order to join His people in their bondage for their deliverance, Philippians 2:6-8 - *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*
 6. Moses rejection of Egypt was merely a small foretaste of the much greater rejection that Christ would have for this world, Moses gave the wealth and the power of Egypt because Christ would give up much more for us

D. Christ is the Rejected Deliverer

1. Moses starts his time as the deliverer by killing an Egyptian taskmaster to free a Hebrew slave, but when the Israelites hear about Moses' actions, they reject his deliverance and they question his authority
 - a. As Acts records in Acts 7:24-25 - *And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.*
 - b. Those who should have received Moses with open arm rejected Moses, and once more, this points to Christ
2. Christ would be the very hand of God working deliverance for His people, but like Moses, Christ would be rejected by those He came to deliver and they would question His authority
 - a. John records the rejection of Christ in John 1:10-11 - *He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.*
 - b. And Matthew records the questioning of Christ authority in Matthew 21:23 - *And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"*
 - c. Moses was rejected by the sons of Israel and his authority was questioned because Christ would come to His own people and His own people would reject Him and question His authority

E. Christ is the perfect plan of God

1. The burden of Exodus 1-2 is the question, 'where is God?' while God's perfect plan working out in His time
 - a. The people, in bondage and under the threat of death were crying out to God, you can hear their voices crying out, 'how long O Lord?' as you read through Exodus 1 and 2
 - b. But, interwoven with the people's cries for mercy, God was acting - the time may have seemed long, the path may have seemed non-straightforward but God was acting according to His perfect plan to raise up a deliverer and to display His glory to the Israelites and the Egyptians
 - c. And once again, this points us forward to Christ
2. So, the New Testament records over and over again how Christ came at the right time, thousands of years had lapsed since God's promise, but God had not forgotten His covenant
 - a. Paul records in Ephesians 1:9-10 - *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.*
 - b. And again in Romans 5:6 - *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.*
 - c. And again in Galatians 4:4-5 - *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*
 - d. The time may have seemed long, the path tortuous and the covenant may have seemed to be forgotten, but God's perfect plan was waiting for the perfect time to provide the deliverer
3. And, the New Testament points forward to Christ as still the perfect plan of God waiting for the perfect time
 - a. We have seen the fulfillment worked out in Christ, yet we still can say, with the Israelites, 'how long O Lord?'
 - b. We have seen the fulfillment yet still wait the consummation - Christ has fulfilled the promise but the enemy still exist next to us, still opposes us, even still dwells within us
 - c. But, God is still not slow to keep His promises, He will consummate them all in Christ, as Peter tells us in II Peter 3:8-10 - *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*
 - d. God's time is perfect, He has remembered every one of His promises and He will keep them all in Christ

IV. God is acting for Us

A. We are those who are in bondage to death

1. The story of Exodus 1 and 2 calls us to see how we relate to the people of Israel
 - a. If we want to hope in God's promises as part of God's people, we must first see the depth of our bondage - like the Israelites, we are enslaved and condemned to death and have no hope of obtaining God's promise
 - b. We should feel the hopelessness and the horror of the story and then realize that we are in worse bondage than the Israelites ever were - the Israelites were physically enslaved by a physical enemy, but we are in spiritual bondage in sin - the Israelites were condemned to a physical death by Pharaoh but we are condemned by God's wrath
2. The New Testament points us to this over and over again
 - a. Jesus tells us in John 8:34-36 - *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*
 - b. Paul tells us in Romans 6:6 - *We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.* - implying that we were once enslaved to sin and more plainly in Romans 6:16-18 - *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.*
 - c. Paul tells us again in Titus 3:3 - *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*
 - d. And Paul concludes Romans 6 with Romans 6:23 - *For the wages of sin is death*
 - e. Sin is a slavery worse than any physical slavery ever could be, binding us to corruption and death - it is a slave master that we could never hope to overcome
3. So, like the Israelites, we are those who need a better deliverer - we need the full promise of God to free us

B. We are those who must live by faith in the promise

1. The story of Exodus 1 and 2 also calls us to see how we relate to the midwives of Israel
 - a. In the midst of bondage and death, the midwives of Israel continued to seek after the promise, they rejected the command of Pharaoh and preserved the male children of Israel - they rested in the promise of a son and so they acted on the promise of a son
 - b. You can almost feel the midwives sense that they needed a deliverer to come, if they were to be saved, then a son needs to be born that would crush the serpent that Pharaoh wore on the top of his crown
 - c. If we are like the Israelites in bondage, then we must also be like the midwives in faith - the midwives saw that the only hope in bondage was to trust in the promise of God, to wait for the promise of God and to act on the promise of God
2. Again, the New Testament calls us to a faith that seeks God's promise to free us from bondage to sin
 - a. Galatians 3:22 calls those imprisoned under sin to put their faith in the promised Son, Jesus Christ - *But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*
 - b. And Galatians 2:22 tells us that such faith is not passive, but active, it is lived out in our lives - *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*
3. So, like the midwives, we should place all of our hope of deliverance in faith in the promise of Jesus Christ
 - a. We should let neither the pleasures nor the hardships of the world turn us away from seeking Christ
 - b. And, if we are seeking Christ, then our faith will be active, as the midwives refused to obey the king of Egypt, we also will live in ways that demonstrate that the promise is true, we will live out our faith by conforming our lives to Jesus Christ

C. We are those who should imitate our deliverer

1. In a Christocentric reading of the Old Testament, we should be careful about reading ourselves into the main character of the story - usually the main character is pointing to Christ and not to us
 - a. Yet, after seeing how the main character of the story is pointing to Christ, then there is a way that we should

- read ourselves into the story, because if the main character is pointing to Christ, then, in Christ, the character is pointing to us, because, in Christ, we should be imitating the things of Christ
- b. As Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:1-2 - *Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*
 - c. So, Moses is not first and foremost a type of us but a type of Christ, but, inasmuch as he is a type of Christ, we should imitate Moses as we imitate Christ
2. So, like Moses and ultimately like Christ, we should be those who reject the world
 - a. Moses rejected the pleasures and the power of Egypt to point to Christ who would reject the pleasures and the power of this world
 - b. And so, in Christ, we should be rejecting the things of the world, in fact, Hebrews holds up Moses as an example of what our faith in Christ should look like - Hebrews 11:24-26 - *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*
 - c. So, we should follow the example of Moses by following the example of Christ and obeying John's command from I John 2:15-17 - *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world---the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions---is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*
 - d. The pleasures of this world are nothing compared to the pleasures of Christ, in fact the pleasures of this world are merely corruption and death in the end, so we should seek Christ and not this world, whether it would be power or prestige, wealth or status - the things of this world are antithetical to Christ, they will sap our pleasure in Christ, and ultimately they will lead to death and destruction
 - e. So, reject the things of the world and seek out Christ and His Kingdom, identify yourself with the people of God and not with the things of this world
 3. Like Moses and ultimately Christ, we should be those who seek justice and love mercy
 - a. Acts 7 records Moses acts in Egypt in this way, Acts 7:23-24 - *"When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.*
 - b. Moses acted to save the oppressed man, he acted to uphold justice and mercy, he acted in compassion for the hardships of those around him
 - c. And Christ, like Moses, acted to save the oppressed man, He acted to uphold justice and mercy, He acted in compassion for the hardships of those around Him, the Gospels recorded over and over again how Christ had compassion on those around Him and acted for their good
 - d. Because the liberal church has often taken this issue as their own in opposition to the Gospel, sometimes, as those who love the Gospel, we stray away from this application sometimes - but Exodus calls us to make this application - God love's justice and mercy and the Gospel calls us to love justice and mercy
 - e. So, like Moses and Christ, we should be full of compassion for those around us, we should seek ways to oppose injustice and to show mercy - not in opposition to the gospel but as a testament to the Gospel
 - f. Moses and ultimately Christ demonstrated what Micah 6:8 looks like - *He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?* - and, in imitation of our Lord and Savior, we should seek justice, mercy and humility as well
 - g. And James tells us plainly in James 1:27 - *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*
 - h. Living by faith in Christ will be marked by compassion and mercy, a heart tuned to feel the suffering of those around us and attempt to alleviate their suffering, as Paul says in Colossians 3:12 - *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,*
 - i. We do this because Christ acted in compassion for us, He showed us mercy, He fulfilled justice on our behalf so we do this for others
 - j. And the ultimate way that we show mercy and compassion to others is by seeking to free them from the bondage of sin and death, to point them to the grace of Christ and call them to follow after Him as well
 - k. Our lives should be filled with compassion and mercy, we should seek the cause of the poor and oppressed and we should do so in order to point to the Gospel of Christ, to represent what He has done for us

V. Conclusion

- A. I started the sermon this morning with Psalm 77:1-9, a Psalm of lament that questions where God is, a Psalm that captures the feeling of Exodus 1-2 well, but I want to finish the message by reading the whole Psalm**

I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me. In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted. When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints. Selah

You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I consider the days of old, the years long ago. I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah

Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High." I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples. You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled. The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side. The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook. Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen. You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

- B. God had not forgotten His promise, He had not forgotten His covenant - His way may have been unseen, but He was fulfilling His promise in Moses and He has perfectly fulfilled His promise in Jesus Christ**