

Mercy is Covenant





Gathering: The Exodus story is one of God’s mercy to the Hebrew people. It is a time when Hebrew lives were far from simple. The Egyptian enslavement posed struggles beyond anything we could imagine. The Theological Framework highlights the fact that God’s action is not just freeing the Hebrew people but establishing a relationship with them. It places mercy in the context of reciprocity, “I will take you as my people, and I will be your God” (Exodus 6:7).

From the *Theological Framework*

The Old Testament speaks powerfully of God’s mercy in relation to deep, human need. The very act of establishing the people of God occurs as an act of divine mercy in the liberating exodus of the Hebrews from their captivity in Egypt. The experience of being delivered from the dehumanising totality of slavery profoundly informs the Scriptural understanding of God and community. No longer can the oppressiveness of a worldly power define God’s people, for even in times of suppression and apparent defeat, God’s love gives an oppressed people a new identity and the promise of redemption (Exodus 6:7).

For personal reflection

What is your Exodus? Are there things you need to leave behind in your spiritual journey?

SCRIPTURE
PASSAGE

Exodus 6:7

“I will take you as my people

Reading

Today marks a new time. God said to Moses, “This month shall mark for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you” (Exodus 12:2). The first day. Why? It’s the beginning of freedom-time. The Hebrews were on their way out. God told them there was only one way to eat this last meal in Egypt. You have to eat it with shoes on your feet, traveling clothes on, staff in your hand. Be ready to move fast into freedom. Why a staff in your hand? It’s going to propel you forward on that hard road, it’s going to hold you up when you feel like giving up. And it’s going to keep us from holding on to all the things we need to let go. If we are going to leave Egypt, the furniture can’t come with us.

– Anatheia Portier-Young, *Slavery, Surrogacy and Society: Making a Future in the Wilderness*. Read the full document at goo.gl/xGaj7j.

Freedom without covenant becomes selfishness. And that’s what we see at the top of society, in our politics and the financial crisis. Freedom without connection becomes alienation. And that’s what we see at the bottom of society — frayed communities, broken families, addiction. Freedom without a unifying national narrative becomes distrust, polarization and permanent political war.

– David Brooks, *Our Elites Still Don't Get It*. Read the full document at goo.gl/FWWGdd.

Discussion

Are there times in your ministry when your collective travelling shoes are on? How does the Exodus story challenge ministries to a new understanding of God’s Mercy?

Prayer

God of the Journey,

You invited us into relationship,

Help us to always seek freedom with covenant and connection.

May we let go of those things which hold us back.

Strengthen us as we take our staff and move into new places bringing your love and mercy to others.

Amen.

Reference: *Mercy Partners Theological Framework*,
Chapter 2 – The Experience of God’s Mercy.

READ MORE

You can read more on Exodus from the scriptures in:
The Book of Exodus,
Acts 7:36-41,
John 3:14-17,
John 6:32,
1 Corinthians 10:1-11.

and I will be your God”



3 Mercy is a Covenant

The Path of God's Mercy

A journey in scripture, church and human experience

Mercy is Relational

Mercy is Communion

Mercy is Covenant

God's Eternal Mercy

Gospel of Mercy

Walking in Mercy

Church of Mercy

Hearts of Mercy

God's Name 'Mercy'