

Week Four: The Meaning and Means of Salvation

Connecting some dots...

- Shift from the essential *nature* of God (Exodus 34:6,7) to the concrete *actions* of God in salvation.

Salvation history and “motif”

- Linear history and eschatology
 - On every continent, in every society, [Abraham] would have been given the same advice that wise men as diverse as Heraclitus, Lao-tsu, and Siddhartha would one day give their followers: do not journey but sit; compose yourself by the river of life, meditate on its ceaseless and meaningless flow—on all that is past or passing or to come—until you have absorbed the pattern and have come to peace with the great Wheel and with your own death and the death of all things in the corruptible sphere. -- Thomas Cahill, *The Gifts of the Jews*
- Plan of salvation (Psalm 33:10,11; Isaiah 14:24; 46:8-11; Micah 4:12)
- Paradigms and the meaning of salvation
 - “Motif” is a *pattern* or *theme recurring* in the Bible. The meaning of a defining event spills over into future events or a promise develops fuller implications through the movement of biblical history.
 - The barren woman as a paradigm of God’s faithfulness to his promises
 - The seed (Genesis 3:15) that sprouts into a branch (Jeremiah 23:5)
 - *Creation motif: regeneration*—life out of chaos and lifelessness, new life by the hand of God, the Maker, Creator, the Beginning and the End.
 - *Kingdom motif*—in forming a unique covenant people, God the King exercises his *reign* over the earth
 - *Exodus motif: redemption*—from bondage to freedom, God is the Redeemer
 - Thus says the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, “For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and will bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” Isaiah 43:14,15
 - He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He

is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or in heaven. --Colossians 1:13-20

- Fulfillment and the unity of scripture
 - Filling (*pleroo*) of history—"fullness of time" Gal. 4:4
 - Contrasted with the prediction—fulfillment pattern, history itself is being fulfilled

The Exodus Motif: Salvation As Redemption

- *Concept of redemption*
 - Abraham—*go'el* to Lot.
 - "Redeemer," "redeemed," "price of redemption"
 - Ruth—kinsman redeemer
- *Exodus and redemption from Egypt. Exodus 3—19*
 - God remembers and redeems
 - It came about in the course of many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them. Exodus 2:23-25
 - "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. The Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their suffering. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite...Now behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them." Exodus 3:6-9
 - Father/son relationship of God to Israel
 - You shall say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, 'Let My son go that he may serve me.'" Exodus 4:22-23a
 - *Corporate sonship* of Israel (Deuteronomy 14:1; Isaiah 1:2; Jeremiah 3:14). One represents the many; the many are defined by the one.
 - Defeat of Israel's spiritual and natural captors (Exodus 7-11)

- The Lord said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. When Pharaoh does not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt and bring out My hosts, My people the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments. The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.” Exodus 7:1-5
- Plagues and the gods of the Egyptians
 - I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. Exodus 12:12
 - The Lord struck down their firstborn. The Lord had also executed judgments on their gods. --Numbers 33:4
- Exodus deliverance, redemption is historical (“house of slavery” 11x) *and* spiritual
 - No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him—for the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease trying forever—that he should live on eternally, that he should not undergo decay... But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me. Psalm 49:7-9,15
- Price of redemption and a new beginning for God’s people (12:1-14).
 - “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household... Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs... Now you shall eat I in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the Lord’s Passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of the Egyptian I will execute judgments—I am the Lord.” This day will be a memorial

to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.” Exodus 12:2-14

- Redemption requires a price—*ransom, purchase*
- Principle of *substitution* and *representation*
 - Purpose of sacrifice differs in the extreme with ancient Near East practices
 - Redemption (freedom) and atonement (propitiation, satisfaction). See also Hebrews 9:12,15; Colossians 1:14; Ephesians 1:7
- Beginning of the year and permanent annual celebration
- Pathway to freedom (13-19)
 - The Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night... Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right and left....Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s chariots and horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea... then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and horsemen... Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians. Exodus 14
 - cloud and pillar of fire for *guidance* and *protection*
 - water from the rock in an arid land and manna for hunger as a *provision*
 - You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. If you indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Exodus 19:4-6

Exodus and the flow of biblical revelation: forming the motif of salvation:

Recollection of the ancient exodus from Egypt serves the speaker as a hedge against despair and a catalyst towards renewed hope. The simultaneous capacity of the exodus paradigm to elicit memory and expectation, recollection and anticipation, discloses once again its deep embeddedness as a fundamental structure of the biblical historical imagination. -- Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture*, 140

- Exodus 15—who is like Yahweh! (15:11)
 - In your lovingkindness You have led the people whom you have redeemed...the people whom you have purchased (15:13,16)

- The Lord shall reign forever and ever. (15:18)
 - Memory of the *past* (15:1-13) provides *hope* for the future (15:14-18) so God’s people can live confidently by faith in the *present* (15:1)
- Psalms—warnings to the pattern of forgetfulness 78:13-53
 - He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should teach them to their children, that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children, that they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God... Psalm 78:4-7
- Deuteronomy—Redemption is the basis for observing the law (6:12,13, 20-25)
 - “Rock” as a title for God—the gift is the Giver (cf. 1 Corinthians 10)
- Joshua—continuing the exodus flow of history
 - “Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you” 1:5 (1:17)
 - Parting the Jordan (3:14ff; 4:23; cf. Psalm 114:3)
 - Memorial stones from the Jordan (4:6)
 - Circumcision (5:2ff)
 - Passover celebrated (5:10-12)
 - Theophany (5:13-15)

Exodus unfolds in the prophets: [Exodus] recurs in texts of each generation... the “exodus” motif emphasizes the temporal-historical paradigm in whose image all future restorations of the nation are to be manifest. A concord between the first and succeeding redemptions is the issue, for each generation looked to the first exodus as the archetypal expression of its own future hope. -- Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture*, 121

- Micah: Israel’s future hope defined in terms of the past exodus
 - Shepherd Your people with Your scepter, the flock of Your possession which dwells by itself in the woodland, in the midst of a fruitful field. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old. “As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you miracles.” Micah 7:14,15
- Return from Babylonian captivity is a “second exodus” for Israel
 - When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son. Hosea 11:1
 - Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people who will remain. Isaiah 11:11
 - For thus says the Lord God, “My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what do I have here,” declares the Lord, “seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?” Again the Lord declares, “Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually

blasphemed all day long. Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, “Here I am.” Isaiah 52:4-6

- Therefore behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when it will no longer be said, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.’ For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.” Jeremiah 16:14,15
- Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought you the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt.’, but; ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.” Jeremiah 23:7,8
- The concept of “shadow and substance” and “day” in the exodus motif:
 - This formulation, phrased as a radically new teaching (“behold days are coming... when no one will say... but rather”), is similar to other Jeremiah texts which anticipate a religious change in the future (cf. 3:16; 7:22; 31:28ff; where the phrase “in future days...no longer...but” recurs). -- Fishbane, *Text and Texture*
- Exodus and the nations
 - All of the nations are to be blessed in Abraham (Genesis 12:3). The prophets put forth the picture of a coming time when the nations will join in with the blessing of Israel’s redemption.
 - Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people. --Zechariah 2:11 (see also Amos 9:7; Isaiah 56:1-7; Zephaniah 3:9,10; Zechariah 8:20-23)
- Redemption for Israel’s enemies
 - In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord near its border. It will become a sign and a witness to the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the Lord because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver (redeem) them. Thus the Lord will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the Lord in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the Lord and perform it. The Lord will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to the Lord, and He will respond them and will heal them. In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. In that day, Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My

hands, and Israel My inheritance.” Isaiah 19:19-25

- Consider Isaiah’s context—Jerusalem under siege and both of her enemies are engaged in horrific battle (see ch. 20); and Heschel’s in the shadow of the holocaust:
 - What is history? Wars, victories, and wars. So many dead. So many tears. So little regret. So many fears. And who could sit in judgment over the victims of cruelty when their horror turns to hatred? Is it easy to keep the horror of wickedness from turning into a hatred of the wicked? The world is drenched in blood, and the guilt is endless. Should not all hope be abandoned? What saved the prophets from despair was their messianic vision and the idea of man’s capacity for repentance... The God of Israel is also the God of her enemies, without their knowing Him and despite their defying Him. The enmity between the nations will turn to friendship “in that day.” -- Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets*, 236,237
 - No longer is the exodus the private tradition of Israel alone: it becomes the symbolic form through which a messianic movement is envisaged. Egypt, the first oppressor of Israel, will one day have its share in an “exodus”-type event.... Isaiah pushed the language of cultural memory to the limit of its innermost possibilities. This is acutely felt in 19:25, where Egypt is called “My people.” In fact, such a transfer of a designation used pointedly of Israel (Exodus 3:10) weighed heavily on ancient Jewish translators. Unable to tolerate such a theological paradox, the Septuagint and Targum traditions renationalized the text and substituted Israel for Egypt. Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture*, 130,131
- Messianic redemption for the nations: 13x in Isaiah—41:14;43:14; 44:6; 44:24; 47:4; 49:7; 49:26; 54:5,8; 59:20; 60:16.
 - “Holy One” and “Holy One of Israel”

Exodus and the New Testament: It is impossible to understand Christ without the exodus motif and it is impossible to understand the exodus motif without Christ

- Jesus is the “son” out of Egypt
 - Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” Matthew 2:14,15
- As messiah, Jesus totally identifies with Israel.
 - Lamb of God: The next day John the Baptist was Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29
 - See also 1 Timothy 2:6, Matthew 20:28 Christ our ransom.

- Wilderness testing (Matthew 4:1-11): Where Israel failed in the wilderness, God’s Son, his “firstborn” passed the test. Jesus is an authentic representative of Israel.
- New Moses (Matthew 5-7)
 - Jesus went up on the mountain... 5:1
 - You have heard it said... but I say to you... 5:20-22, 27,28, 31-35, 38-42, 43-48
 - Your Father in heaven. 5:16, 45,48;6:1,4,,6,8,9,14,15,17,26,32;7:11,21
- The Bread of Life and the source of living water
 - Messiah (John 4:25,26), giver of “living water” (4:10)
 - “I AM the bread of life” (John 6:35)
 - I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. --1 Corinthians 10:1-4, cf. Exodus 13-17
- Passover/last supper
 - “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” John 6:54
 - Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26:26-28
 - Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. 1 Corinthians 5:7
- Revelation: end of salvation history: Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth (5:9,10)...the throne of God and the Lamb (22:1).

Assignment

Read the handout from Bruce Waltke on the creation narrative and creation theology. That will help you follow next week’s class.

Read J.I. Packer, “Sons of God,” from Knowing God.

Identify two blessings of being a redeemed child of our Father that are particularly important to your spiritual life today. Provide practical reasons how these blessings make a concrete difference in how you relate to God, others, and yourself.

Side Bar: New Testament use of the Old Testament-- Matthew 2:15 cf. Hosea 11:1

key interpretative questions:

- How does Matthew understand Hosea 11:1 to be *fulfilled* in Jesus' family's flight to Egypt? How is Hosea's text legitimately messianic?
- Is Matthew's use of Hosea consistent with the prophet's own interpretative approach to Exodus 4:22 and Numbers 24:8?

Observations from Hosea

- *Context* of Hosea 11 within the flow of the book

Hosea 11 is one of the three major oracles of hope after God's case against Israel is declared (4:1). In contrast to Israel's unfaithfulness and the exile to which they will go, God cares for and will *preserve* Israel (6:1—3; 11:1—11; 14:1—9).

- *Informing theology*: "My son." Israel as God's son was an accepted technical term (Exod. 4:22,23; Num. 24:8). The many were represented by the singular, "son." And the one representing the many is an established messianic term (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 9:6).
- *Prophetic concept of history*: Hosea uses Israel's departure from Egypt as a reminder of God's *ongoing exodus hope* for his people (Isaiah 11:11) through the Davidic King (Isaiah 11:1—5).

For Hosea, Egypt is synonymous with Assyria (metonymic parallelism 9:3; see Ps. 114:1—3). Egypt is thus a *symbol* of bondage (8:13; 9:3, 6; 11:3—5; 12:13). See also Rev. 11:8.

- *Hosea's prophetic message*: Consistent with the prophetic understanding of history, Israel's hope, rooted in the historic past, will look to the future exodus of God from the current "Egypt." *The past overflows into the future as history fulfills God's redemption.* And by invoking the *part* of the motif that fits the situation, the *entire* meaning of the motif is presumed by the author.

Matthew 2 and the use of Hosea 11:1

- Matthew looks to the exodus theme as it unfolds in the prophets, using exactly the same view of history:

Just as under Moses God preserved his *son* in Egypt and "called out my son," so, Hosea declares, he will again under Assyrian (Egypt) captivity with a new exodus. In Matthew, as Son in the *fullest* sense, Jesus completes (pleroo) the motif—as his ministry also bears witness. As Hosea fits into the broader prophetic motif of exodus, which includes an explicit messianic dimension (Isaiah 11; Jeremiah 23), Matthew is invoking that part of the motif that fits the situation he is describing in the Gospel narrative of Jesus. But by invoking part of the motif, the assumption is that it carries the breadth of the motif's meaning.

Both Hosea and Matthew understand that God preserves his “son” in “Egypt” and anticipates the time when the Lord will “call out my son.” In this sense Matthew uses Hosea 11 in the *same* sense Hosea used Exodus 4 and Numbers 24.

No rabbinic approach such as *midrash* or *peshet*, or the Roman Catholic doctrine of *sensus plenior* need be assumed, but a consistent exegetical approach by both Hosea and Matthew.