

## Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 407

Exodus Old and New

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### Episode Summary

Listeners to the podcast are no strangers to the book of Exodus. Our series on that book of the Torah took almost a year. In this episode of the podcast, we welcome Old Testament scholar Dr. L. Michael Morales to the podcast to revisit the exodus event in biblical-theological history. Rather than looking at the exodus in granular detail, this time we're taking a wide-angle perspective, toward how the content of that Old Testament book informs the way the work of Jesus is described in the New Testament as a new exodus—a new deliverance from spiritual bondage—complete with a new and better Moses.

### Transcript

**TS:** Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 407: Exodus Old and New with Michael Morales. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

**MH:** Well, pretty good. Pretty good. Can't complain. Looking forward to this interview, actually, and have been for a good chunk of time.

**TS:** Yeah. Before you tell us what we're going to be talking about, we *do* have a discount for his book on our website ([NakedBiblePodcast.com](http://NakedBiblePodcast.com)). So be sure you go there to get it. And Mike, what are we going to be discussing today?

**MH:** We're going to be talking about the exodus! I know, shock of shock. We spent so much time talking about it and taking a real granular look at it. But this is sort of the bird's-eye view of how things in the exodus, the way the story is told, not just in the book of Exodus, but really the wider Old Testament... How patterns emerge from the whole episode in Israel's history. And these patterns are intelligent, they're intentional, and they get worked out in the way Jesus gets presented in the New Testament, ultimately. So we're going to be doing some dot-connecting across the testaments using the exodus event.

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Well, we're excited to have L. Michael Morales with us on the podcast, as we noted. And boy, there are a lot of things we could do with Dr. Morales. I'm going to ask him to introduce himself a little bit first. Just the basics, Michael: who you are, where you went to school, your doctoral work maybe. If that was something that you know will interest the audience, please tell us what that was. What do you teach? All those introductory sorts of things just to help us to get to know you a little bit better.

**MM:** Sure. Well first, thank you for having me on the show. I'm really grateful. So yes, my name is Michael and I was born and raised in South Florida. My parents are from Havana. Skipping a lot of the journey to my graduate work, I did my dissertation under Gordon Wenham in the UK...

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** ... on the books of Genesis and Exodus. I'm now living with my wife, Elise. I've got four sons, ages 17 down to 11. And I'm teaching at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Greenville, SC. So I teach courses in the Pentateuch, Old Testament Biblical Theology and New Testament Biblical Theology, Hebrew Exegesis, Prophets... I guess the standard biblical studies stuff.

**MH:** Yeah. Well, you've got some choice titles there. [laughs] Anybody who gets to teach Pentateuch, there's just so much there.

**MM:** Yes.

**MH:** So your parents are from Havana?

**MM:** Yes. They came after the revolution as teenagers. They actually met in South Florida.

**MH:** Wow. Boy, I'll bet that's quite a story.

**MM:** It is. Yes. My grandfather wound up in prison and somehow escaped. He was part of the intellectual imprisonments.

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** And the Lord was kind. He used that whole situation to bring my grandfather and my parents to himself.

**MH:** Wow.

**MM:** So in the end we're really grateful.

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**MH:** Yeah, absolutely. Wow.

Well, we want to focus on your book. Again, your name is going to be familiar to my audience because you're the Leviticus guy. And we actually... We started the podcast doing Leviticus. It was kind of an inside joke, because when Trey convinced me that I should not have canceled the podcast... It was seven or eight years ago now. Because I was doing it myself and I couldn't do it logistically. I said, "We're going to do Leviticus. If we have any listeners after Leviticus, then we'll know we have something. [laughter] So we actually did that. And so your name has been invoked on a number of episodes because of your work in Leviticus.

5:00

But today we're going to focus on your more recent title, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*. And we actually took a really granular tour through Exodus on the podcast. It took us, I guess, a year (something like that) to get through it. But today we're going to be taking sort of a wide-angle lens look at it from the perspective of biblical theology and these consistent patterns that are going to cross between testaments that inform us that what Jesus did... The way his work is characterized is often as a new exodus, a new Moses, these sorts of themes. And so I want to get into that with you. And this is an excellent resource. I want my audience to know. Yeah, some of this you're going to have heard of before, and that puts you ahead of the game. If you know the phrase "new exodus," that's a good thing. Because for a lot of people in church, this sort of content doesn't filter down, but it's really important for thinking theologically across your testaments.

But we want to take a quick look in this episode specifically on these sorts of themes and we're naturally going to get into Pentateuch and Torah and all different parts of the Old Testament because the new exodus—the exodus theme... These patterns carry through Scripture. And so this is once again, for those of you in my audience, this is the sweet spot—one of these interviews where if I'm recommending the book, I know you'll love it because it does biblical theology. It connects dots. We like to connect dots here. And there are a few that are more important than the ones we'll talk about today.

But let's just jump into the book. You begin the book with an introduction called "Exile Before Exodus." So what are you getting at with that chapter title? I mean, that's kind of an intriguing title, just to ramp things up. How does it set up the rest of the book?

**MM:** Yeah. When we think of the fall of humanity into sin, we often just focus on, "Well, there was a transgression of God's law and so we need forgiveness of sins." But when we really look at the biblical story and do biblical theology, we see that that whole idea of sinning and being separated from God is presented in terms of exile. And so in writing a book where I'm trying to demonstrate that

salvation is the pattern of the exodus, I need to first demonstrate that the exodus is necessary because our natural state and condition now (apart from salvation) is that of exile. And so obviously with Adam and Eve, when they sin, they're exiled from the Garden of Eden. And really the book of Genesis, before you come to the book of Exodus, is a book entirely about exile. So you know, Cain...

**MH:** Yeah, give us a few indicators of that. We just... Seth Postell is going to be fresh in the minds of a number of listeners here. So I'm hoping you guys will track similar paths here.

**MM:** I'm sure we will. Seth is a dear brother and yes, we have a lot of overlap. Genesis begins after creation with the exile of humanity—the first human couple exiled from the Garden of Eden. The very next story finds in chapter 4 of Genesis Cain being exiled further away from Eden—from God's presence in Eden. Eventually humanity is wiped off the face of the earth in the Flood while Noah and his family are saved, and they're sort of a new creation start. Noah's sort of like a new Adam figure. He has three sons the way that Adam did. But as soon as you start over, then, the exile begins. And we have humanity scattered into nations, away from God, and then even the patriarchal narratives, which by and large is the beginning of God's work of bringing humanity back to himself. But if you look at the transition from Abraham to Jacob to the 12 sons, the Lord meets with Abraham (maybe "frequently" is too strong of a word). But he meets with them. We don't get the details. It seems like face-to-face. Once we get to Jacob, Jacob has these sort of visionary encounters, like at Bethel. And then we get down to the 12 sons. And Joseph has dreams. So there's this distancing. But then the book ends in Egypt with Joseph buried. And so Jacob himself, like Moses at the end of the Pentateuch, will die outside of the land. And so there's this great theme of exile, but particularly the Tower of Babel that serves to indicated that the nations are in exile from God.

**MH:** Mm hmm.

10:00 **MM:** And so a reader may have been born and raised in Ohio and still live in Ohio, has a job in Ohio, but the hope is that if the biblical message penetrates, such a person will realize that, "You know, apart from fellowship with God through the messiah, I'm in exile." And in a greater way, not just separated from God, but of course we're not in the Garden of Eden. We're not in paradise anymore. And this is really what the whole Bible story is about. Salvation is described in terms of being brought back to God, but also to the *place* where humanity can dwell with God face to face. And so I find it really fascinating that when God says, "Well, I'm going to bless the nations through the seed of Abraham," Israel, who has the vocation of spreading God's glory among the nations, they end up in the same predicament as the nations. So by the end of Genesis, they're there in Egypt (the beginning of Exodus). You have Israel in exile. And so the way that God orchestrated history is the remedy for the nations

is being put on stage as Israel is brought out of exile and into the land. You know, that serves to demonstrate for the nations that although you are in exile away from God, outside of the land of Eden, God has a plan for your salvation as well.

**MH:** What do you think there is about... Gosh. I don't want to make this too loaded of a question. But just what you said—this exilic consciousness... That's not typically the way we're taught in church to think about Israel. It's not typically the way that even Jews think about Israel. [laughs]

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** It's very atypical, but it's very transparent when you start looking at some of these themes where the main characters in the family God wants is continually estranged and there's this distancing that's created. It's very palpable. How in the world do we miss that? What is it about the way we teach Old Testament, or the way we approach Old Testament Israel—the Old Testament story? How do we not get this? How is it not more intuitive?

**MM:** You know, I really think that it's the absence of the Old Testament in at least Western evangelicalism that has a large burden to bear for this ignorance. You know, we come from an era where you just hand out the New Testament maybe with the Psalms in the back.

**MH:** Right.

**MM:** And I think that the Church is just really anemic. I mean, the Church is like a tree and the trunk is the Torah. And right now, the Church looks like a lollipop. You know, the trunk is just so thin and emaciated. So I think that's part of it. We're just not emphasizing, even canonically, the foundational role of the Torah. I mean, this is something that I'm thinking about all the time in doing biblical theology. I've realized over the past few years I need to emphasize Deuteronomy more. Deuteronomy gives us the whole goal of a society of justice—living with God in the land—that we see at the end of the Bible. But that gets missed when evangelicalism is shallow and it's just, as I said before, where you need your sins forgiven, you make a decision, and that's it. I do think biblical literature partakes of that genre of exilic literature. It's like a lot of... I mean, obviously it's God's Word. But...

**MH:** Yeah, you can't miss it. Once you see it, there it is again.

**MM:** Yeah. Yes, that's right. And this... You know, it's becoming more and more popular in recent decades to approach the New Testament this way. Even though Israelites were in the land, there's a great sense where they understood (if we can judge rightly by the intertestamental literature) they were still in spiritual exile, which is precisely where the New Testament comes in, to meet that need—

that the people are in the land but they haven't yet experienced the great exodus that the prophets foretold.

15:00

**MH:** Well, it's really interesting. Yesterday I was reading a little something on *mashiach* (some messiah terminology) and you know, it was one of old Father Fitzmyer's essays in his book, *The One Who is to Come*. He just made the simple observation that as time went on, *mashiach* was a title that began to be transferred to the high priest because they didn't have a king. [laughs] So obviously... And you know, you think... I mean, how many times have you thought about Israel and not had that specific thought? But it's so telling because there they are, "Oh, yeah. We're in the land all right. Kingless." [laughs] "Our big authority figure is this guy," that this language, the language of anointing isn't really supposed to be this guy anyway. He's a stand-in. He's a placeholder. He's a substitute. So even *that* gives you a sense of exile.

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** You know, something as simple as that. But yet we don't sort of stop and pick up on it. And right there it is in front of our faces. I mean, how can you read through the Gospels and Acts without running into the high priest?

**MM:** Right.

**MH:** You know? "The Lord's anointed" gets transferred to... All that jargon. And it's still proof of exile. [laughs]

**MM:** That's right.

**MH:** You can't get away from it.

**MM:** I was just thinking, Jesus captures that well, of course, with the Prodigal Son. And that's a story that touches everyone's hearts. But again, we're failing to see that that's really the story of the Bible—that we are in exile and God brings us home to himself. And part of the other side of that is, again, the Church in the West (it looks like things are changing), but for so long I think the Church has just been at home in the world.

**MH:** Yeah.

**MM:** And I think that kind of gives you those blinders to realizing that "No, Hebrews 11. We're strangers and pilgrims. We're still in exile until the resurrection into the new earth."

**MH:** Well, that's good preaching. Because, I mean, look at the way the Church wants to use the trappings of power on the secular side to accomplish its mission.

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** I mean, that's a dereliction of duty. But it's so unconscious now that we've adapted so well to being this secondary thing—you know, government and political power and these sorts of things that are part of the world, and we're very comfortable with them. Yeah. I mean, I think you hit the nail right on the head there.

When you transition from that intro to Part 1 (which for the listener is chapters 2 through 7), the book concerns the historical exodus of Israel from Egypt, of course, which we covered a lot in the podcast series. But generally (and you don't have to go too deeply into this)... But generally, how important do you think the historicity of the exodus is for doing biblical theology?

**MM:** That's a complex question in the sense that I think the historicity is important, but when you're doing biblical theology, part of what makes it difficult is that biblical theology is an ever-changing discipline. In the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century, biblical theology (what went under that name) was basically the history of religions, and so historicity mattered a lot. But biblical theology *now* really has become a literary and exegetical discipline. And so to one degree... And I've read guys who say... They'll do great biblical theology and these truths we can embrace even if these stories aren't historical in the sense that it's textual. However, depending on how much weight we put into theology (part of biblical theology), these truths about God are anchored in the fact that his Word is true and that what it's saying he has done and will do is true. And so for my part, I think that true biblical theology (where we get a true theology) does demand historicity. And of course, according to genre. You know, depending on...

**MH:** Right. Historicity is one of those things that professional historians can get away with quite a bit without their audience ever even knowing it. I have this pet lecture I give where I challenge the historian to write the story of their own wedding.

**MM:** Hmm.

**MH:** And of course, you probe it for external sources. Did anyone record the conversations? How many different perspectives have we included here? I mean, you just go right down the grocery list the way we "do history" and nothing that that person's going to give to me is going to be considered reliable. And let's not even get into God talk.

**MM:** Right. That's so true.

**MH:** And that's the reality, though. It's a kind of sophistry, when you get right down to it—that we tend to view ourselves as these professional pursuers of this particular discipline, when the result is that nothing we say can be taken at face value. [laughs]

20:00

**MM:** Right, right.

**MH:** And then we're stuck, you know? And we're supposed to live in this and appreciate how enlightened we are. And we are completely non-communicative at that point. So I think there's a bit of sophistry with this. I'm on your side of this, obviously, with historicity. But I think historicity has become sort of a cloak. [laughs] You know? There are things you can hide behind and things that you don't want to hide behind. It's a bit of a cat-and-mouse kind of thing, which, you know, it takes a good scholar to do that. That's what scholars are for. They can sometimes take clear things and muddle them [laughter] for the benefit of all, I guess. Ah, anyway. I just wanted to work that in because we did spend a good bit of time in this podcast on historical issues, tracking through Exodus. And it is important. I like the way you put it—that these are truth claims so it would be nice to know that they're true, or at least attempt to approach it from that perspective.

In Chapter 2 you talk about “the exodus pre-figured.” Can you explain what you mean by that?

**MM:** Yeah. So there I'm dealing primarily with the life of Abraham. And I just really needed to limit myself. IVP was gracious to extend my word count [MH laughs], so my volume is slightly thicker than at least the first volume in that series. And that was constantly the great dilemma that I faced, is, “This theme is so pervasive, so how on earth can I cover it adequately?” And I'm not a big fan of broad brushstrokes, covering the Pentateuch, like, in 15 pages.

**MH:** [laughs] Good for you. [laughs]

**MM:** So I always err on taking just sort of a little section and trying to show some of its layers and depths. And so I said, “Well, let me focus on Abraham.” And I was just amazed that from beginning to end of Abraham's life he just had exodus themes and motifs. I mean, one great example is Genesis 15:7, where God says, “I am Yahweh, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees.” And this is the great exodus formula we're familiar with from Exodus 20:2: “I am Yahweh who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” But then as soon as Abraham's in the land, there's a famine and he goes down to Egypt. And lo and behold, God brings him out by plaguing the pharaoh with plagues, and Abraham ends up bringing many spoils out of Egypt. You have the entire pattern there that Israel's going to follow. There's a rabbinical saying that says, “Everything that



happened to the Israelites first happened to the fathers—the patriarchs.” And that was proven over and over again as I looked at the life of Abraham. The great climactic point in his life, the Akedah—the binding or near sacrifice of Isaac... It’s just shot through with Passover things. Here you have the firstborn son through Sarah, who is in danger of death, and God says that he’ll provide a lamb. I mean, that’s the great hope of Abraham, so that his son will be spared. In fact, the book of Jubilees (I think that was written around the second century B.C.), actually it’s a commentary on Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus. It actually dates the Akedah to Passover. There’s a sense in which it was the first Passover. It’s incredible.

**MH:** Wow. I spent a little bit of time in Jubilees, mostly for the demonic stuff. [MM laughs] So I was getting the good stuff. But I was not aware of that, but that’s actually really interesting.

Can you give us a bird’s-eye view of Chapters 3-6? Because I think for this audience, they’re going to pick up right away what you’re doing here. So the Torah itself tells us we’re in exile. Just out of the gate, you get these themes that are associated with the first exodus. It naturally is going to sort of stoke the reader for these second exodus themes. But how do you sort of, in those chapters (3-6) in the rest of Part 1, how do you set that up?

**MM:** Knowing that the historical exodus would be sort of the foundation for the prophesied exodus, I really thought about, what are four major themes? And so it’s worth clarifying that the book is not about the book of Exodus, chapters 1-40, but the pattern of exodus proper, which is chapters 1-15.

25:00

And so in Chapter 3, which is entitled something like “Glory to God in the Highest,” given one of the major goals of the exodus is to publish the glory of Yahweh... And this is crucial. Often when we think of exodus, we think of things like liberty and freedom, which are certainly there, but they’re not the priority. I mean, if that was the Lord’s major goal, then he would have softened Pharaoh’s heart instead of hardening it. But God wanted to display his glory, and so he actually confirms Pharaoh in his own rebellion. It’s sort of like watching boxing. In a three-second knockout, you don’t really get to see all of the glory of the boxer, so to speak, because his opponent was just too weak. And so God has to uphold Pharaoh so that he can turn that proverbial gem and let Israel and Egypt and really the nations see who he is. And I try to develop the discussion, why was this so necessary? You know, we forget, this is a world without Scripture. And talking about Genesis and that steady exile away from the presence of God also leads to an ignorance of God. And so God is going to orchestrate this deliverance that will publish his name among the nations. And that means that even Israel’s suffering needed to be prolonged for a little bit for their own greater good, so then they would have stories by the fireside to tell their grandchildren and great-grandchildren about the wonders and glories of God.

And so the chapter culminates with the way that the exodus culminates in Exodus 15 with the Song of the Sea. And Israel declares, “Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods?” And that was really the point of the way that God delivered his people. And we find out later, Jethro, when Moses is telling his father-in-law all that God had done, he praises God and says, “Surely he is King above all the gods,” and he offers sacrifice. We’ll find in Joshua, even a harlot in Canaan, in Jericho, has heard about the wonders of the Lord and makes a profession of faith, marries into the line of Judah, and become an ancestress of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so that was the great goal. And I tried to position that from the beginning.

The [fourth] chapter talks about slaying the dragon. And I had fun with that one. I basically was looking at some of these themes we find throughout Scripture. Egypt is something like a theological Sheol; you always descend (to go down). You go down into Egypt.

**MH:** Yep.

**MM:** It’s the place of the dead. So the Israelites very sarcastically in chapter 14 are saying, “It’s because there weren’t enough graves in Egypt that you’ve brought us out here to die?” And I try to bring out some structural features like Moses’ deliverance from water, the waters in Exodus 2 and Israel in 14. So it’s almost like Egypt is surrounded by waters. To escape Egypt, you have to get out of Sheol. But I also lean on Exodus 29, where Pharaoh is specifically likened to a dragon, fouling his waters. He’s waiting in the Nile. And so I look at some examples in the actual book of Exodus, even though as we were saying before, it’s historical narrative, yet it’s theologically-oriented. And there’s a few occasions where some scholars (and I would agree with them) see that Pharaoh is being depicted as a dragon. We also have the first sign given to Moses with the rod turning into a serpent, and then Aaron does that as well.

**MH:** Yeah, the cosmic Leviathan figure. Our audience is going to enjoy that.

**MM:** Oh, okay, good. Yeah, I forget I’m talking to the choir here, so I don’t really have to do a lot of explaining.

**MH:** [laughs] Oh, no. We all know what Leviathan is here. [laughs]

**MM:** Sweet. So yes, that’s basically what I’m trying to show is happening. And so then the exodus story is positioned within that broad biblical story where the messiah is going to slay the serpent—the dragon of old—which begins all the way in Eden and continues into the book of Revelation. So that was Chapter 4.

The fifth chapter is on the Passover. And that’s also very key.

**MH:** Oh sure, yeah.

30:00

**MM:** Because without the Passover, the exodus just becomes political liberation. It's not really redemption. And through the Passover, the exodus actually becomes deliverance from death. So you have the threat of death and the firstborn son, who in a sense represents the whole household, and the whole household partakes of the lamb that is the substitute for the son. They get delivered through the son. So that it's not just, "Hey, we were set free by Pharaoh," but, "No, we were delivered from death. And the key is we can only be delivered from death through the shedding of the blood of the lamb." And so when we look at Israel, whom God refers to as "my firstborn son" (I think it's in Exodus 4), and we can say that the story of the exodus is God delivering his firstborn son from death. And that's got a lot of theological weight, of course. Already have an eye toward the New Testament section.

**MH:** Yep.

**MM:** But this is a way to show that it's actually there in the Pentateuch and the New Testament fulfillment truly is a flowering and fulfillment of these concepts.

**MH:** It's amazing how you get both the individual and the corporate sonship just tied right back in there. And again... I asked earlier; we're not going to rehearse it again. But how do people in our churches not intuitively have a feel for this? Because once you see it... And all you really have to do is know the stories. You don't have to go out and get degrees and do Hebrew word studies and all this. If you just know the stories, God in his wisdom makes so much of this trackable in such a human way, as something as simple as telling a story. It's just there.

**MM:** Right.

**MH:** Once you know the story, you'll see where the story's being repurposed elsewhere.

**MM:** Yeah, and it's amazing that the Gospel authors... These images and motifs come up time and again. And even the early Church, I love so much of the beautiful language in mind of so many of the early Church fathers, where they'll talk about baptism as re-entry into paradise. And it seems like the ancient Eastern culture just embraced a lot of these figures intuitively. And of course, they're in Scripture. And so I don't know if it's a straw man to talk about rationalism and all of that and Aristotelianism. But we have... Really, we're so influenced, I do think, by the Greek mentality—that everything is syllogisms. And the Bible is narrative art. It's a story.

**MH:** Yeah. Because that's the way we teach it. We teach it like we're preparing for a quiz.

**MM:** Right, right. And I'm not in any way denigrating systematic theology. I love both. But I think to some degree, when we can get things sort of just written out as principles, we lose some of the beauty and ability of reading (narrative especially), which historically, it seems like the Church was able to do.

**MH:** Yeah, personally I think this is why things like... I'm a friend of Tim Mackie's. But over at the Bible Project, I think this is the key to their success—to restore the story approach.

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** It's intuitive. It's purposeful. Frankly, it's biblical to present truth this way, because it happens so many places. And they've just more or less gone back to that simple thing with the skill set they have. I mean, look at all the good stuff that has been turned out that really helps the audience in this generation. It helps me, too. I mean, I'm not in whatever the age group is now. I'm a Boomer. So I'm still stuck in the mud back in 1963. I was born on that cuff year. [MM laughs] So I get hit from both sides, you know? But I think that's really why their impact is what it is. And that ministry has exploded. I didn't know when I wrote *Unseen Realm*... I didn't realize I was doing the same thing.

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** Until I sort of could see it from the other side and got a little... I'm not a literary guy by nature. I'm a nuts-and-bolts guy. But I love literary guys. Like you and Tim are really strong here, which is why I tend to gravitate... And Seth. I gravitate toward those things because I love the interconnectivity of it all. I'll be the one who's working in the weeds for this or that. But it's like, "Just show me the connections." It's so intelligent on God's part. [laughs]

**MM:** Right, right. [laughs]

**MH:** This way. It's so much better.

Now Chapter 7, of course, reminded me a lot of your work on Leviticus, which this audience knows. So you titled this one "Cultic Exodus." So summarize "Cultic Exodus" for us. And again, this audience will know that refers to ritual and sacrificial system and whatnot.

35:00

**MM:** Right. It's good to clarify. I do find readers of the Leviticus book, they're used to the word "cult" only for these aberrant groups, where...

**MH:** [laughs] Yeah, UFO cults.

**MM:** Right. So yeah, just referring to the sacrificial system. And trying to show that in Israel's sacrificial system—the ritual—you have this exodus movement. And I'm really banking on... I embrace that there's primarily two movements in Scripture. It's exile and exodus—either being driven away from God or brought to him. And so in one sense, any approach to God is like an exodus. But I don't think it goes beyond that with the ritual system. So I cover very broadly the threefold liturgy of Israel, which moves from the purification offering to the whole burnt offering, then to the peace offering. You can see that triad, for example, in Leviticus 9 at the inaugural worship ceremony at the tabernacle. The whole burnt offering always comes with the grain or the tribute offering. So I just include that. So basically it's the three. And the purification offering emphasizes the blood and the expiation necessary through the shedding of blood. In the whole burnt offering, you're really looking at that column of smoke ascending to heaven. We read in the Flood narrative that the Lord smelled that soothing aroma, and that phrase (soothing aroma) will be all over Leviticus. It basically is the picture of atonement, of propitiation, of God's wrath being satisfied. But the whole burnt offering... The name (*olah*, the ascending one) points us to that column of smoke. But it's also the offering where the entire animal, apart from its skin, is placed on the altar. So it has the idea of consecration. So we're moving from expiation to consecration. And then the peace offering is under that rubric of offerings where the worshiper actually got to partake of some of the meat himself. And typically, it was like a sacramental meal, where your whole family... And according to Deuteronomy, you invite the Levite and the indigent to celebrate a meal in the presence of God. So the movement is from expiation to consecration to fellowship. And it really does follow the movement of the exodus pattern, where to be released from Egypt we have all of this emphasis on the blood of the lamb.

**MH:** Yeah.

**MM:** And then they're brought to Sinai, where they're consecrated in covenant. And by representation, the elders ascend to God and have this fellowship meal where they see God and are not put to death. Or you can extend the peace offering to the third great movement, which is being brought into the land of Canaan, where they are living in the land before the face of God. And Deuteronomy describes just the joyous life in God's presence there. So that threefold movement is experienced and re-experienced through worship. And I think it's the same for God's people today. There's a sense where every time we approach God that we are experiencing our exodus. We're coming out of the world. We're approaching the heavenly Zion. And there's a way that good liturgy can emphasize that journey to God.

**MH:** Yeah. Now when you... Your book obviously has a Table of Contents. And I'm going to loop that into the liturgy comment that you just made. Because it's very apparent, if we were sitting here looking through the TOC of the book, I

mean, you've got all these patterns established by the time you hit Part 2. And that's the more familiar Old Testament stuff, as slim as that can be in our churches, unfortunately. Where you move next is the Prophets—the historical books and the Prophets—which get even less attention. But the patternings are still there. So in Part 2, you have the initial chapter there, Chapter 8 (it's going to be Chapters 8-11 for that whole Part)—the Pattern of Sacred History. I'd like you to talk about how the exodus stories and some of the liturgical imagery that you're talking about... Obviously your goal here is to see how that echoes through or reverberates through other parts of the Old Testament. So can you give us a few examples of that?

40:00

**MM:** Sure. Well, in Chapter 8, as you mentioned (the Pattern of Sacred History), I really developed the idea by... I want to say it was a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Anglican by the name of William Phythian-Adams. And though I wouldn't agree with him on everything, he had great biblical theology. And he basically said, "You know, it comes down to this threefold pattern: redemption, consecration, inheritance. Redemption out of Egypt, consecration at Sinai, inheritance of the land (life with God in the land)." And that fit a lot of the work I'd already done for my dissertation. And so it rang true. And the beauty of that simple, historical, redemptive historical pattern is that it really enables us to grasp the history of Israel, and even into the Church today. And so...

**MH:** The "already, but not yet" is right there.

**MM:** Yes.

**MH:** It's right there on the surface.

**MM:** So in one of his articles Phythian-Adams says, "You know, all the Prophets do is say, 'Look, because of your sins breaking faith with the Lord, committing idolatry and then refusing to repent, prophet after prophet, God is going to send you into exile.'" Which means we're going to back to the beginning of the book of Exodus. So you know, we have a first redemption, a first consecration, a first inheritance from our first exile. And that was, again, what we see in the Torah. But the Prophets using this rubric also (and I think also based on Deuteronomy 30 and, of course, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) are saying, "When you're in exile, God is going to renew this sacred pattern of history. There's going to be a new redemption—a new exodus—which is going to lead to a new consecration and a new covenant." And in one sense you just add "new" to everything. A new exodus will lead to a new covenant, and that language is even used by Jeremiah (new covenant). And it's going to lead to a new inheritance where the prophet's saying, "This time you'll never be plucked out because the redemption will be so thorough-going. The second exodus will be so much greater than the first that it will solve the problem. Because otherwise, if we just have another exodus, it's okay, well, we're going to end up in exile again and this is going to go on ad

infinitem. But God is going to deal definitively with the root problem: sin. And so the redemption—the Passover—is going to be an atonement that actually cleanses completely and we’re going to be given that greater outpouring of the Spirit that will cause us to rejoice in the Law and to walk in the way of the Lord. And when we’re finally brought into the inheritance, it’ll be forever.

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** But the Prophets... And this is something that I tried to develop in... I think it’s the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter. (I’m not even sure right now.) But this is really important. In fact, for New Testament biblical theology, when I teach that, we actually take the first half of the semester, and it’s basically a Prophets course. Because it’d be very easy to... You know, you go to the Gospel of Matthew, for example, and then look for exodus motifs...

**MH:** Sure.

**MM:** ... which means basically you’d be looking at Exodus and Numbers, maybe Deuteronomy. And that’s all there. So we see Jesus and the new Moses and things like that. But the problem with that is that when the prophets prophesy a second exodus, they’re actually *adding* motifs to the original exodus. In other words, there’s a lot of things we miss that the Gospel writers are doing if we don’t look at the prophesied second exodus as its own block of material.

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** So one of the big ones is that the new Moses, he is going to unite the Southern and Northern kingdoms. And Luke is showing this specifically in the book of Acts that Jesus is doing this. But if you don’t even realize anymore that’s an expectation for the new exodus, then you won’t even see the wonder of what Luke is expressing.

Another motif is that the new Moses will actually be a new David. So in Matthew’s Gospel, it’s no wonder... You know, many commentators you look and it’s all about David, David, David. Then you get some others like Allison and no, it’s the new Moses. Well, they’re both right.

**MH:** Yeah.

**MM:** The new Moses is the new David. And then, of course, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is one of those motifs as well. And so I’m trying in that section of this book to say, “These are motifs that we need to add to the historical exodus motif.” And so I treat... Even though scholars vary and I just make the distinction to make it for my own purposes, the historical exodus out of Egypt is the Torah. The prophesied second exodus is the prophetic corpus. And then when I get to

the New Testament, I just call it the new exodus. And the new exodus will then encompass motifs from the second exodus prophesied, but also from the historical. That's a lot of the ground that I try to cover in that section.

45:00

**MH:** Yeah, and I'm hoping listeners are picking up on this. If you're a Jew living in Jesus' day and you're a literate Jew, you're familiar with the content of your Old Testament—your Hebrew Bible or the Septuagint. You're familiar with the sacred texts of your faith—your belief system. It should not be a hard sell to say things like, "They still believe they were in exile. They're expecting deliverance." They're not on the other side of deliverance where we're just waiting to be happy or happier than we were yesterday or something like that. We're going to go off and live our best life now, or something like that. They're not sitting around thinking these thoughts. There are significant things that need to happen for God to get what he wants—what he's always wanted—all the way back to *What Does God Want?* And it's God wants a people. He wants a family. It's not terribly overcomplicated. And you go through all these steps and they still don't have what God wants. And they don't have what they're going to want. [laughs] You know? Because they're designed by God to want it. You know, all these things. There's a lack there that, if you're a Jew, you're not thinking you're on the other side of deliverance.

**MM:** Right.

**MH:** You're just not. There are just so many of these holes that have to be filled. And so in the book, when you loop around through Part 2, you get to Chapter 9, and this is the... In the exile itself (what we think of as the exile and the return), they still have this consciousness. They're still expecting a second exodus. So talk a little bit about that, some of this latter material, without getting into theories of authorship and Isaiahs and all this sort of thing (but the latter portions of Isaiah having kind of the grander culminating vision). How does that work? How does that sort of reinforce, for a Jew, a sense of exile by the time that Jesus of Nazareth is going to show up?

**MH:** I think not only Isaiah, but so many of the prophets, when they talk about the return, there's almost this idea where, when you return to the land, it's going to be like Eden. It's going to be like paradise. There's going to be a Davidic king. The nations will be streaming. We see that particular vision in Isaiah 2. Those early chapters give us a summary of the whole book. Mount Zion is established above the mountains. The nations are streaming there. You have all these messianic prophecies in the early part. And so when we think about the return from Babylon and you read those post-exilic Prophets, I mean, that is enough, I think, to get to the point where you're saying, "Well, yeah, by the New Testament, we're still waiting." Because they come to an arid land. They're suffering. There's a locust plague. There's a drought. The people are so weary. They're not even worried about building the temple anymore. God has to raise up prophets to...



Haggai: “Let’s move on with God’s house.” And then it’s clear in the literature of Ezra and Nehemiah that the people are falling into the same sins.

**MH:** Yeah.

**MM:** I mean, that’s what they say. “This is why your fathers were exiled.” But I really lean a lot on the book of Daniel. Here you have Daniel who’s reading the prophecies from Jeremiah, who says, “After 70 years, we’re going to have the restoration.” And God sends the angel Gabriel to him. And says, “Yes, but no.” You have your first “already, not yet.” “God’s people will return, *but* all of those expectations... It’s not 70 years, but 70 *weeks* of years. You’ve got to push back. And in fact, the hard message of Daniel is, “Your great grandchildren are going to be under foreign powers.”

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** Your M.O. is to bring up the next generation to be willing to even die for their faith and to be willing to endure hardship *before* these “seasons of refreshing” will come. I find it fascinating it’s the same Gabriel that then is sent in Luke’s Gospel to announce, “Well, the time has come. The kingdom of God is at hand.” But then Jesus, through all his parables, does something very similar to the message of Daniel. He says, “Already, but not yet. The kingdom of God as we’re expecting it, with political might and glory and restoration, all of that is going to be put off a bit further. Now is the time for the *spiritual* exodus.” But other features that make it clear... And I try to deal sensitively with this in the book, but also when I’m teaching...

**MH:** Right, there’s so much of it. You know, there’s so much of it, you have to be selective.

50:00

**MM:** You don’t want to falter at extremes. So you’ll have some that just say, “Well, basically the restoration, to the people back then, it means nothing.” Well, no, we want to acknowledge that God’s good hand was upon his people, while at the same time saying this was nothing close to what the Prophets prophesied. I mean, this is why, in an earlier chapter, I emphasize that the second exodus will be so much greater. Clearly historically, the return from Babylon was much less a work as far as number of people that returned to the land. You have these other... You know, *sine qua nons*—there’s no Davidic king reigning on the throne. There’s no atonement that’s been made. There’s no outpouring of the Spirit. So all of these things foster longing. And I think that (getting back to Isaiah) he’s dealing with that. And beginning in chapter 40, where you have these suffering servant passages, you have this figure that is sort of taking on the mantle of Israel’s vocation. And clearly, it’s not the nation of Israel itself because part of his goal is to bring Israel (Jacob) back to God. And of course, we get Isaiah 52:13-53:12, where we just have these brutally vivid scenes of the servant

suffering, taking on the sins of his people upon himself. And then suddenly, after that, you have this great invitation to God's salvation. It's amazing. But it's preceded by these exodus motifs, and then it's followed by an invitation to salvation. So clearly this suffering servant has accomplished the spiritual redemption—the spiritual exodus—that then leads eventually to the new heavens and the new earth with which the book of Isaiah ends.

**MH:** Yeah, and you never lose either side of it, either the individual or the corporate side of it.

**MM:** Right.

**MH:** Again, that becomes window dressing for people who want to resist things like biblical prophecy in terms of an individual redeemer. But you know, that's cheating. They're both there. [laughs]

**MM:** Right. Because his followers will be called servants. And I think Luke has this in mind in the book of Acts. The disciples of the messiah are servants under The Servant. And they're carrying on that vocation of bringing the Lord's salvation to the ends of the earth.

**MH:** Yep. Now in Part 3, you get into the New Testament and new exodus themes. And there's so much here. I want to ask you... Really our final two questions would be using the Gospel of John... Let's talk about how John communicates new exodus themes. And then specifically in Chapter 13, you devoted a chapter to the Holy Spirit's role in the new exodus. So let's take those one at a time. Give us some indications of how the Gospel of John communicates the new exodus.

**MM:** Oh. [laughs] There's no way I can do it justice. I'm not sure that I did in the book, but I tried. It is so rich. But one idea to point out are the bookends (what I'll refer to as Passover bookends in the Gospel of John). So in chapter 1:29 and 36, Jesus is introduced into his public ministry by John the Baptizer with the words "behold the Lamb of God." And there's debate among scholars. What does that refer to? And I think there's a lot of false either/or thinking along the way. But the leading answer to the question would be "the Passover lamb." And then we have in chapter 19, when Christ is crucified, John alone of the four Gospel writers gives us this incident where Jesus' legs were not broken because he had already died. And he tells us that it's to fulfill Scripture, that not one of his bones should be broken, which ultimately brings us back to that Passover legislation. So when Jesus is introduced as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, that's putting a label on him literarily.

**MH:** Mm hmm.

**MM:** And so throughout the rest of the Gospel, he's "Lamb of God." So it becomes natural, then, when we see his crucifixion, and not one of this Lamb's bones were broken, to think about the exodus. But John is doing many more richly conceived things. He's the only Gospel writer that refers to the garden near the end of Jesus' life.

**MH:** Oh, yeah. The garden is a big deal.

55:00

**MM:** Yeah. He's the only one that uses... I think Luke uses it once in a parable, but besides that the word is never used again in the New Testament. And especially for the resurrection of Jesus, it's like the Garden of Eden. The woman mistakes him for the farmer. We're back to Adam and the woman in the garden. And so I think he's showing us that the crucifixion was the Passover release from Sheol, and he eventually emerges out of the tomb, and he's back in paradise. So he's not only giving us the story of Israel, but he's giving us the story of humanity. And after all, Jesus, before the crucifixion, is pointed out by Pilate as "behold the man." So he's showing us the reversal of exile that we begin the Bible with: through sin, humanity was separated from God, exiled out of Eden. And so he's showing us that this new exodus, it's spiritual, but it's what ultimately will enable those who embrace the messiah to find themselves back in the Garden of Eden. And spiritually, we are restored to paradise as we're restored to God. And so the Passover theme is just really richly developed in the Gospel of John, and those are just some examples.

**MH:** Now I hope the audience was tuned in just for those last few minutes. Because we've done episodes... Like we did an episode on Jesus and the gardener, garden motifs with kings, and so on and so forth. But here it's even more subtle. In these examples, it's even how the Gospel itself was written, how it's arranged. I mean, if we have a goal on this podcast, it's that you would learn to read your Bible and not take anything in it for granted. In other words, there's messaging there. Nothing is supposed to be considered in isolation. It's too intelligent for that. And here you get this retelling of the exile story and the deliverance from exile, and just even how John decides to arrange material (under Providence, of course). It's just great.

**MM:** And what's so beautiful about just John's brilliance and again, yes, under the Spirit's inspiration... But the way he interweaves the books of Genesis and Exodus together, so that ultimately the new exodus is out of the old creation, into the new. And so he begins his Gospel with "In the beginning," and then from the cross, "It is finished," which brings us to the end of creation, and his emergence out of the tomb into the new creation. I mean, it is so... It's just...

**MH:** "Where have we run into these phrases before?" I mean, this should be the constant question of the reader of the Bible. "Where have I seen a phrase like this before? Where have I seen this wording before? Where have I seen this

event, this institution, this person, this...?" It just gets repurposed with such regularity.

**MM:** Mm hmm.

**MH:** Again, just designed to teach these things. That, honestly... Look, if we could read Scripture like that, we would get so much more out of it. This is why I'm always harping on "we should read the Bible as though it were a novel—as though it were fiction." Because our senses are tuned to know that fiction writers do things to us on purpose.

**MM:** Right.

**MH:** We don't read a textbook that way. You know? We're looking for the bullet points for the quiz or something like that. But we know if it's fiction, there's nothing that just happens.

**MM:** That's true. Yeah, you've really caught, I think, the gist of the problem: we approach the Bible like a textbook or like a newspaper. And probably that arose out of good reasons.

**MH:** Sure.

**MM:** Because we know that it's giving us true history, but we lost the literary aspects do we're not even looking. And I think that's really part of the solution. I found once people learn that the Bible is doing things like this... And suddenly their mindset changes. They're reading with a new expectation. And they're starting to see the glories of God's Word afresh on their own. They just need to be shown the genre of the Bible.

**MH:** Yeah. Well, let's leave off with the Holy Spirit. How about the Holy Spirit's role in the new exodus? What are some of the touchpoints with the first exodus?

**MM:** I'll say that that might be my favorite chapter. I enjoyed so meditating on these concepts and just going back to Scripture with this idea. I took my lead from the prophet Isaiah, just simply because I had to limit myself. And Isaiah is part of the new exodus. You know, this is another motif that you constantly see—the gift of the Spirit, the gift of the Spirit. But Isaiah does it in an amazing way. He uses the imagery of a barren land that needs water. And when the water falls on the land, it turns into the Garden of Eden. And then Isaiah will show us that that also represents God's people. They are dry and thirsty spiritually. But when God pours out his Spirit upon them, they'll be renewed and recreated. And I think that John has this in mind in a beautiful way. I mean, the Gospel after the prologue begins in the wilderness with the voice in the wilderness. And what does that voice declare? It declares that this Lamb of God is going to be the one who

1:00:00

baptizes with the Spirit. And as we've already seen, the Gospel ends back in the Garden of Eden. So you track that trajectory from the wilderness to the Garden of Eden, and part of the key is the gift of the Spirit. And so if you just have that in mind throughout the Gospel, you'll see that scene by scene, this is the underlying issue. This is the emphasis. So when Jesus meets with the woman at the well, he's talking about water that he'll give her. She'll never thirst again. And there's that Isaiah motif. And even from the cross, Jesus says, "I thirst." This clearly goes back to Isaiah. Also the feast of Tabernacles. "Anyone who thirsts, come unto me. And out of his heart abundant waters will flow." So this is something that John is developing step by step. And talking about Genesis, at the end where he breathes on the disciples the Spirit, that's taking us to Genesis.

**MH:** Is this... Do you use that to lead up to the resurrection material in the book? Is that correct?

**MM:** Yes. And there I... You know, when you're working with John, there's always this temptation, "Well, is that really what he said?" But when you go to the book of Revelation... which is weird, because Revelation's the apocalypse and we think it's got more confusing imagery, but he's actually... You know, he puts his cards on the table. At the end of Revelation, there's the tree of life, the Garden of Eden, the river's flowing. And then you have the same invitation Jesus gives.

**MH:** "Guess where we're going." [laughs]

**MM:** Yeah. "Come and drink." And that's how he's ending theologically and spiritually the Gospel of John. But at the very basic foundational point for the Holy Spirit (and Jesus teaches this in the Upper Room discourse—he dedicates three chapters, it's so important)... In terms of the new exodus, Jesus has been raised from the dead. That's the exodus—the emergence out of the tomb as a new creation. Well, that's great. For Jesus. But what does it do for us? And this is where theologically the Holy Spirit comes in. The Holy Spirit unites us to Christ. And this is why you have all of this beautiful teaching in John's Gospel about union with Christ. Because when we're united to his death, burial, and resurrection, then that means we undergo (spiritually at first) the three-day resurrection, and our great hope is for the consummate exodus, when we emerge out of our own graves and are ushered into the new Jerusalem.

**MH:** Well, I'm just thrilled that we were able to have you on the podcast. Because the new exodus idea (or it's actually a set of ideas, as is pretty clear from this) is really significant. Anything we can do to become more intelligent readers of Scripture—that we ought to go into it knowing that not only each individual author had a plan... They had a purpose. Lots of different purposes and strategies—trajectories—to communicate their ideas to us intentionally. They're doing things to us on purpose. And to not let go of that sense, but to read with it and to expect

that we're going to see things that are familiar used in clever, different, and really (in some cases) even startling ways to help us to think theologically through the story of what God wants—really, God wanting a family, how these things echo each other in consistent patterns. These are the kind of Bible reading (we're not even in Bible study at this point, but just Bible reading) muscles that if we were to develop, we would just get so much more out of Scripture and see it for the wonder that it is. So I'm really thankful that we were able to do this, Michael, and I appreciate you coming on the program.

**MM:** Well, I thank you so much for having me. It's been a delight to spend this time with you, Michael.

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**TS:** Alright, Mike. Another great discussion. Again, we have a link to his book on the NakedBiblePodcast.com website. So be sure you go there and get that discount. It runs for the next 30 days, so be sure you don't miss that. And also, Mike, we're going to have another interview—Chad Bird—next week. Do you want to let us know what we're going to be talking about?

1:05:00

**MH:** Yeah. We're going to be talking about two books that Chad has written. Chad is somebody who's familiar with our content through the 1517 Project, which is part of the Lutheran tradition. And I've been on their podcast. This is several years ago now. But he has two works. One is a little older: *Unveiling Mercy*. It's 365 daily devotions, which is not the kind of thing I would normally gravitate toward for the podcast. But what's interesting about this is that each one is kind of a mini-Hebrew word study. So all 365 days are a different Hebrew word and talking about its meaning and context and illustrating that, connecting dots with the New Testament. And then the second book is called *The Christ Key: Unlocking the Centrality of Christ in the Old Testament*. So those are the two books that we're going to be discussing briefly when we have Chad visit with us. So I think, again, listeners will get a lot out of it, and these are good resources to jump in on. In the case of *Unveiling Mercy*, that devotional. If you've never even thought about a word study, or don't know what a word study is, that's a good place to start. Even in a devotional context it will get you on the way to doing that sort of thing in your own personal Bible study.

**TS:** Alright, sounds good. Looking forward to it. And with that, Mike, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.

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