

Coming Out Of Egypt

"Out of Egypt I called my son." (Matt. 2:15)

Psalm 106 tells us about Israel's rebellion during the forty years in which God led them out of Egypt into the promised land of Canaan. In the Bible, Egypt represents the world (sin) while Canaan was the promised holy land of rest for God's people. In the same way that the Israelites rebelled during their journey out of the sin of Egypt into the promised holy land of Canaan, you and I rebel on our journey out of our world of sin into a sanctified, holy rest in Jesus. As we examine Psa. 106, we will see that Israel's rebellion, thousands of years ago, is a picture of our rebellion today, as God strives to sanctify our sinful souls.

Psa. 106:1-5 - These verses praise God for His love and faithfulness.

Psa. 106:6-12 - Before crossing the Red Sea, Israel rebelled in fear when they saw the Egyptian army coming. Even though they had only just left Egypt, they had already forgotten the mighty miracles God had done there, right before their eyes. Amazingly, even the presence of God in the pillars of cloud and fire did not comfort them. We often do the same thing when problems come our way because we also forget the many times that God has faithfully delivered us from our troubles. We remember those times when things are going well but, when trouble comes, our memory soon fails and we rebel. Despite Israel's rebellion, God saved them from the Egyptian army and v.12 says, *"then they believed his promises and sang his praise."* Like the Israelites, we seem to need a miracle each day to keep us praising God and believing His promises. To stop our rebellion, we need to constantly meditate on His faithfulness and *"stand strong in the Lord and in His mighty power"* (Eph. 6:10).

Psa. 106:13 tells how their memory soon failed again: *"But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel."* Israel quickly forgot and continued to rebel, just as we do.

Psa. 106:14-15 - Israel again tested God by craving other food: *"In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wasteland they put God to the test. So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease upon them."* God gave them the meat they wanted plus a little extra in the form of disease so we need to be careful. Many of us crave things like money but what comes with such craving? 1 Tim. 6:10 says, *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."* This is a solemn warning for us not to test God by craving things but to be satisfied with His provision.

Psa. 106:16-18 - Certain men rebelled and coveted the leadership. They *"grew envious of Moses and of Aaron ... the earth opened up and swallowed Dathan; it buried the company of Abiram ... Fire blazed among their followers; a flame consumed the wicked."* In those days, Israel knew very well whom God had appointed as leaders but they rebelled anyway. Today we have many leaders, some good, some bad, but we must not speak against them unless they are going against God's Word. Also, we need to be aware of our ability and gifting in the body of Christ. In Rom. 12:3 we are told, *"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."* The fact is, if we want to be great then we must follow Jesus' advice and be humble: *"The greatest among you will be your servant"* (Matt. 23:11). Whereas we love to promote ourselves, God loves humility so we must take care not to grow envious and rebel like some of the Israelite men did.

Psa. 106:19-23 - The Israelites made a golden calf idol; they worshipped a grass eating bull. God got so mad that Moses had to plead with Him not to destroy them. We also make idols of certain people, power, money, sports, movies, games etc. Also, prayer meetings and church often come second to things like sporting events. This is the same as making a golden calf so once again we can be just like the Israelites ... and no doubt we grieve God also.

Psa 106:24-27 - The Israelites grumbled and despised their promised inheritance of Canaan because they feared the giants in the land so God let that generation die in the desert. Our promised inheritance is

eternal life but we must stand firm and suffer hardship in order to inherit it. Rom. 8:17 tells us that *"we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."* and Jesus said in Matt. 24:13, *"he who stands firm to the end will be saved."* There are Goliaths opposing us also. We can be intimidated by the majority of the world which hates Christianity but we must stand firm to the end and not cower. Let's not despise our inheritance and die in the desert like the Israelites.

Psa. 106:28-31 - Through immorality with foreign women, some Israelites were enticed to join the pagans in Baal worship so God destroyed thousands of them with a plague. We must avoid ungodly groups like the Ecumenical Movement which is drawing most Christians into unholy fellowship with false religions like Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. 2 Cor. 6:14 warns us, *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"* We must resist the great peer pressure which entices us into this type of unholy fellowship, which is supposedly in the name of love.

Psa 106:32-33 - The Israelites rebelled so often that Moses got mad at them and was punished by God for speaking rashly. We can drive leadership to do the same thing so we need to be obedient as Heb. 13:17 tells us, *"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."* Of course, we must separate from false teachers and bad leadership as Rom. 16:17 says, *"I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them."*

Psa. 106:34-42 - Israel disobeyed God in many other ways: they failed to destroy nations when commanded to; they mingled with the pagans; adopted pagan customs and worshipped their idols; they sacrificed their own children to demons and prostituted themselves etc. Because of this, God handed Israel over to the nations and their enemies ruled over them. Today, God commands that the church hand unrepentant sinners over to our enemy, Satan. In 1 Cor. 5, a man was proud of his immorality and God said, *"hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord ... Expel the wicked man from among you"* (1 Cor 5:5, 13). Just as God disciplined Israel by handing them over to their enemies, He commands that the church expel unrepentant sinners in the hope that they will repent and later be restored to the church.

Psa. 106:43-48 - These verses tell of God's love for Israel. He often disciplined them and then later delivered them when they cried out in repentance. Like the Israelites, we quickly forget God's purity and faithfulness and as a result we fear, crave, covet, envy, idolise, despise our inheritance, join with false religions etc. and, just as God did with the Israelites, He forgives us when we repent of our rebellion.

So it can be seen that in whatever way the Israelites rebelled thousands of years ago, we do the same thing today. It seems amazing that they could witness so many great miracles yet so easily forget and grieve God through their rebellion. But the fact is, we do the same thing and probably deserve greater wrath because we have the Holy Spirit as a constant witness of God's presence. Just as the Israelites deliberately chose to forget the miracles and God's physical presence in the pillars of cloud and fire, we deliberately choose to forget God's faithfulness and the spiritual witness of the Holy Spirit. And, just as God brought His rebellious people out of Egypt and eventually into the promised holy land, He wants to deliver you and I out of our rebellious ways and into a holy rest in Jesus. Isa. 30:15 says: *"In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength."*

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