

## Week 4

### Read Chapter 4 of *TIOT*, pages 99-130

Questions to keep in mind while reading (and note that the focus question for your group will appear on your discussion board page):

- 1) In the 6th century BCE, most of what was left of Israel was taken away to Babylonia to live in exile, and it is during this time that the final shape of Exodus was done. (p103) How was this situation like or unlike the situation in Exodus?
- 2) The Exodus is often taken as a paradigmatic for Liberation Theology which emphasizes freedom (both socio-political and 'spiritual') for the oppressed. The analogy has not been without critics, however. How is the Exodus appropriate or not as a model for liberation (*focus for Genesis Group*)
- 3) "It is significant that the central redemption story of the OT begins in the context of oppression and suffering marked by the absence of God from the narrative." (p108) How do you find it to be "significant"?
- 4) *TIOT* (p111) highlights the "vulnerability of God, the willingness of God to be wounded in solidarity with human woundedness." Sure, that sounds nice, but wouldn't an invulnerable God who prevents human woundedness be better? (*focus for Exodus Group*)
- 5) "The Exodus story is a major biblical corrective to a spiritualized notion of God's salvation." (p115) What's deficient about a spiritualized salvation? What's the alternative?
- 6) "Oppression exacts its cost on victims and beneficiaries alike." (p118) Do you agree? What is the cost to each party? (*focus for Leviticus Group*)
- 7) "God's salvation is experienced as liberation." (p118) What does this mean?
- 8) "Why must the moment of salvation come in terms of such violence?" (p119)
- 9) *TIOT* talks about the importance of "The Pattern of Exodus Faith" on pp123-125. Does the description of such faith correspond to your own experience?
- 10) "God does not liberate without also calling human agents to the task of liberation." (p127) In what ways are you a liberating agent?

(When I say, "skim," I mean page through and look at the section headings in your study Bible to at least have an idea of what is being discussed.)

**Skim over Exodus 19-40, but read Exodus chs. 19-24 and 31.18-34.35.**

**Quickly skim over Leviticus.**

**Quickly skim over Numbers, but read Numbers 10.11-14.45, chs. 16-17 and 19-25.**

**Quickly skim over Deuteronomy, but read Deuteronomy chs. 1-6 and 32-34.**

- 1) Exodus 20.4-6 provides something of God's own self-description. What do you make of the claim, "For I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments"? (You might note the other ways this passage is cited in Exodus 34.6-7, Numbers 14.18 and Deuteronomy 5.9-10.) (*focus for Numbers Group*)
- 2) Exodus 32 - The Golden Calf: Should God have been surprised at the people's apostasy? Why should Moses argue for them with God and then execute the idolaters later? How could Aaron have done such thing in making the calf? What sort of "ordination" is this (v.29) for the Levites that comes at the cost of death? >>> What do you make of this event of the golden calf? (*focus for Deuteronomy Group*)
- 3) Numbers 11.10-15: From this passage and the others in this week's reading, how would you describe the relationship between God and Moses and the people? (*focus for Joshua Group*)
- 4) Compare Exodus 19.6 and Numbers 15.40 with Numbers 16.3. Is Korah and his group speaking the truth? What's the issue that causes such a problem?
- 5) First mentioned in Deuteronomy 3.25-28 and later confirmed in ch. 24, Moses is prohibited from entering the promised land. Why? How might this be appropriate both on the story level of the Exodus account and the discourse level reflecting on the relation between God and the chosen people.
- 6) In Deuteronomy 33, Moses pronounces a blessing on each of the tribes. Remembering the power of such blessings in the biblical accounts, which of the tribes receives the greatest praise? From which of the tribes might you expect a king (or future Messiah)?