



God's Unstoppable Promise

Exodus 1

You know one of my favorite things to do at night is to read to my boys. That's kind of strange because growing up I hated to read. I hated to read through middle school and high school. It wasn't until college, after I became a Christian, that I enjoyed reading. So now I'm trying to play catch up on all the books I never read. So one of the ways I do that is by reading to my kids. One of the book series that we've been reading is The Chronicles of Narnia. I love The Chronicles of Narnia. Now, my kids are five and seven; so when I introduced this series, they were like "Dad, couldn't we read a short book that's got pictures in it?" Each book in The Chronicles of Narnia has like 100 to 150 pages. They don't have very many pictures, and it's all about the story. So I'm trying to convince my kids that it's going to be awesome. They have two choices. They either get to go to bed, or have dad read. So they're like "Okay Dad we'll let you read." In other words, 'We'll comply.'

The really important part in starting a new book is the first chapter because the first chapter is either going to hook them (and cause them to want keep reading), or it's going to lose them (and it's going to be an uphill battle for the rest of the book if that happens). So we introduced a new Chronicles of Narnia book this week. It's the third book in the series, The Horse and His Boy. So we were really excited, or should I say, 'I' was really excited about this book... and we're getting ready to read chapter one to my two boys. I'm trying to amp this up to read the book to them, and they're like "Dad, it's really

long. Are there any pictures?" I told them "No, but you're going to love the story!" So I begin reading it. I'm trying to read with a lot of enthusiasm, trying to be very dramatic so they'll be hooked. When I finish reading chapter one, I look over at my 5 year old and I say "Finn, what did you think?" And he's dead asleep. I'm thinking "Alright, okay. So maybe we'll try the other one." So I turn to Crider and I say "So Crider, what did you think about the book?" And he rose up out of his bed with a big smile on his face and he said, "DAD, this story is going to be AWESOME!" And I was like "YESSSS! I did it!" Chapter one had hooked him!

And what I hope, my prayer is, that Exodus chapter one will do this for you. It's sort of setting things up to come. So hopefully after chapter 1, your reaction is not like Finn's... that you won't fall asleep. Hopefully your reaction will be like Crider's and on your way home you'll be talking to your spouse, or your kids, or your buddies and you'll say, "Wow, Exodus, this is going to be an awesome story!"

So we're going to be setting up a lot of what's to come, but also I don't want us to miss what God has for us in Exodus chapter 1 because there's some good stuff in it. So if you're new with us, we are starting today a one year journey through Exodus, that's why it looks a little bit Egyptian up here this morning. But what we're going to do is we're actually going to preach these three different sermon series for the book of Exodus. So, here's how it's going to go. In the spring, which is now until May, we're targeting God's great rescue, and we're going to looking through chapters 1 through 19. And it's going to be an awesome story. There's going to be epic events like a burning bush, parting of the Red Sea, the plagues, God rescuing His people from Egypt and the Egyptian gods. It's going to be a lot of narrative and a lot of exciting things as we see God rescue His people.

Then over the summer, those two months in the summer, we're going to see Moses go up on Mt. Sinai, and he's going to receive the law. And we're going to take the whole summer and look specifically at the Ten Commandments. And as we come to the Fall, we're really going to look at how God is WITH us while we get instructions to Moses about how God will dwell with His people, how they're to be

holy, and how they are to live in a covenant with God. So we're doing three separate sermon series, all covering one giant book.

Now I want to make sure you understand our resources. So if you got a bulletin, there is a resource guide in that. I just want to cover that quickly. We have daily readings for you. The daily readings are going to work a little differently than they have in the past, so if you've never done them, today is a good day to start on daily readings. So tomorrow, what we're going to do is read together chapter 1. So it's a review of what we're going to talk about today. And then, we're going to read Mark 1 on Tuesday as well, because Mark is where God does the greater rescue; Jesus Christ rescues us from our sins. And then Wednesday through Friday we're going to read ahead towards chapter two. And then Monday we're going to re-read chapter 2. So during the week you'll be reviewing, and also looking ahead. So we encourage you to follow along. Also, we have provided you a devotion over chapter 1. So sometime over the week, we encourage you to read our devotion that might have some more tips from chapter 1. Also, on the back of the bulletin, there is a family devotion that goes along with chapter 1. So as an adult, you have a devotion to read, and you also have a devotion to do with your kids as well. So the best place to get this is to sign up at our resources at hardinbaptist.org, if you click on daily readings or exodus resource, everyday we'll give you your dialing readings as well as your devotions. What we really encourage is to not make Exodus a Sunday event. Make Exodus a whole week event where all throughout the week you're leaning in to Exodus as we see what God is going to do in the life of our church.

With that said, now we enter into exodus Chapter 1. I actually want you to go to the page before. This is because we're actually going to start in Genesis chapter 50, which is the book that precedes Exodus. So if your Bible is like mine, it's got both of them on the same opening. So it's got Genesis 50 and Exodus 1 on the next page. So go ahead to Genesis 50, and I'm going to read this to us. I want to read how Genesis chapter 50 closes. So look with me in verse 24. The word of God says this: "And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Then

Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

So, Joseph died at 110 years old, they embalmed him, and they put him in a coffin in Egypt. So the very last word in Genesis is 'Egypt'. So Joseph and his family are in Egypt, Joseph is about to die, and what does he tell his family? Make sure when I die that you don't bury me in Egypt. Make sure you take my bones, embalm them, and keep them with you. Why? Because God is a promise keeper. God has made a promise. He swore to Abraham that we would be a great nation, we would have a land of our own, that we would be blessed, and that we would bless the world through Abraham. So he's made a promise to us. So, just know that even though you're living in Egypt, Egypt is not your home. So when God fulfills His promise (because God is a promise keeper) I want you to take my bones with you and bury them in the land that he's going to give to us.

So Genesis 1 ends with a remembering of the promise that God made to Abraham. Now if you're unfamiliar with that, it happened in chapter 12. We had this promise given to Abraham. God steps into Abraham's life, and He says I'm going to make you great, I'm going to give you a land, and I'm going to make you into a nation. And through the nation, I'm going to bless the world. So it was a promise to Abraham. And then in chapter 15, He actually tells Abraham what's going happen in the Exodus: Your family is going to go into a foreign land, they're going to be afflicted for 400 years, and then they're going to come out on the other side with great possessions, as a great nation. So exodus is the place where God is going to fulfil his promise to Abraham in making his family into a great nation.

And then we have that first verse in Exodus, it says this: "These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob..." Now if you're reading your text, you don't have an "and" there, but if you go to Hebrew text there is an "and" that begins the book of Exodus. So Exodus starts with the word "And" in Hebrew. Now why would you start a book with "And"? I mean, usually, "and" comes AFTER something. That's probably why in English they don't start it with "And." It seems awkward to start a book with "And," but the

reason the Hebrew writers did that is because Exodus is a continuation of the story of Genesis. It's continuing that promise that God made to Abraham, to Jacob, and to Isaac. It's that promise that is going to turn them from a family into a great nation.

So now, what we're going to see in the very opening of Exodus is that God's promise is growing in prosperity. Man, they're blessed; they're prospering. Everything is good. God's promise is growing under great prosperity. So we're going to see this, and what we're going to concentrate today is on God's unstoppable promise. And what WE'RE going to see is that God's promise is unstoppable whether you're in prosperity OR in persecution. In both places, God's promise is going to go forward. So if you have Exodus chapter 1, go ahead and stand out of reverence for the Word or God, and we'll read verses 1 thru 7 together. "These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them."

(Prayer)

"Father God I pray that you help us to see that no matter what situation we find ourselves in, in prosperity or persecution, your promise and mission continues to go forward. We pray this in the good name of Jesus. Amen." You may be seated.

So what's this introduction really showing us? Why does he start with 'Okay, here's Jacob, here's his family, here's that promise.' Now here's Joseph who brought the family to Egypt to save them. Now they're in Egypt under prosperity. And then all the sudden it tells us there's 70 of them. So why does it highlight there's 70 of them? It's supposed to make us know it's a small number. It's just a big family; I mean a pretty big family. Imagine your family with 70 people there. They're travelling with 70 of their relatives, 70 brothers. So there are 70 of them, and it's a big FAMILY, but it's a really small NATION. In others words, they haven't become a nation yet; they're just a big family. But then what's amazing is that generation dies. So it's like

'Okay, has God's promise died?' All the generation dies, and then it says but the people of Israel... they do what? They multiply; they increase. "They were exceedingly strong" is what that last verse says, and what I want to highlight.

So His promise is continuing. That promise that God has promised, is growing in Egypt. And we'll take note: it's growing under prosperity. The Israelites are the good guys here. I mean think about the Israelites in Egypt. They're in Egypt, and it's a time where they actually helped rescue Egypt, right? Joseph got news there was going to be a famine (when Pharaoh's dream got interpreted), so he tells him 'There's going to be a famine. Things are going to be bad, so I'm going to help you to save this land and everyone in it.' Pharaoh listens to God through Joseph, and Egypt is saved because of Joseph... because of the Israelites, because of God's people. So now, they're in Egypt, and they're the good guys. I mean Egyptians are showing them favor: Pharaoh is blessing Joseph, and he's blessing his family. Everything is going good! They're seen as the good guys of culture because they saved the land. Everything is grand! They are the BLESSED ones. They're the good guys!

But then, all of a sudden, everything drastically changes. God's promise was multiplying under prosperity, and the obvious response is 'Yeah, of course it's multiplying in prosperity.' But what happens when persecution comes? And what we're going to see in the next section is God's promise also grows under persecution. It grows not just in prosperity, but also under great persecution. We're going to see that God's promise still goes forward.

Just look with me in the next section, we're going to introduce the villain of our story. Every good story has a villain... a bad guy. He's going to be Pharaoh. Here's what it says in verse 8-11: "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us, and escape from the land. Therefore, they set

taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh, store cities, Pithom and Raamses.”

So all the sudden, the situation has changed dramatically. They were blessed and prospering, and seen as the good guys. Then all the sudden things have changed. There's a new pharaoh in town. There's a new king, and the new king forgot about Joseph. Now I don't think he forgot as in 'nobody told him about Joseph'. I think it means he's CHOOSING not to remember what Joseph did for Egypt. He's choosing not to remember how God's people saved Egypt. He's choosing not to remember that. He doesn't want to remember the how this people brought great blessings to their land. He wants to rewrite history and say 'No. We're going to forget all of the Israelites because now they're becoming big. They're multiplying under the blessings of God.' They're growing, and now they're a threat to Pharaoh. Pharaoh says 'What if somebody comes and attacks us and these Israelites (who are now a mighty nation) turn with the enemy and pursue us too? We'd be done for.' Here's the mightiest person on the planet, the Egyptians... the Pharaoh, and he is afraid of Israel. Why? Because they're becoming a great nation. And all of a sudden, everything changes. The Israelites are no longer seen as the good guys. They're now seen as the bad guys. They're no longer getting cultural blessings. Now, they're feeling cultural curses. They're being put into slavery. So plan A is: 'Here's how we're going to end this multiplication. Here's how we're going to end all these baby blessings services that they're all having. We're going to put them to work. We're going to make them slaves so that they don't have as much free time. We're going to make them work hard and that will cause them to stop all of this growth.'

So all of a sudden, they're seen as the bad guys instead of the good guys. And you know, as I was reading this and thinking about this, I think we can somewhat relate to how Israel is feeling right now. Now, we're not in the same place where we're being persecuted quite like they were, but I think even as the church in America we can somewhat sympathize with what they're going through. You've got to imagine, Israel went from being blessed, liked, and loved ones (the good guys) to being the bad ones who are being cursed and

hated, and what we're feeling right now, as the church in America; we once were seen as the good guys. We once were seen as those that you wanted to aspire to be. Our values and morals that we have were seen as good things in the midst of our culture, but now we're facing a moment where (in the past few years), things are starting to dramatically change. All of a sudden, the church inside of American popular culture is NOT seen as the good guys anymore. We're actually seen as the bad guys now. Instead of receiving cultural blessings for being a Christian, you might receive some persecution for being a Christian. You might receive some hard times for being a Christian. All of a sudden, the culture that celebrated and loved the church, is now the same culture that is now cursing and sometimes even hating the church. I mean just take your Christian world view to Facebook. Start posting about Christ centered morality. What happens? It's jumped on, it's attacked; it's no longer seen as a good thing. It's a bad thing. So we're beginning to feel what the Israelites felt here. They were the good guys under prosperity, now all of a sudden they're the bad guys under persecution.

So the question is what about God's promise? What about this continuation of multiplying and growing and becoming a great nation? What happens to God's promises under persecution? What happens when the culture no longer loves us like it used to? What are we to do? What will God's mission do in that sort of environment? Well, here I just want to read what it says in the next verse, verse 12. "But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad..." I love this! That, yes, in prosperity they were multiplying, and they were spreading God's blessing and His mission was going forward. That was God's mission to them... growing into a great nation. But what happens when affliction comes? What happens when persecution comes? What happens to God's promise? It continues to grow. The most powerful man in the world at that time, Pharaoh, tries to attack the blessings and the mission of God. He tries to stop them from doing what God wanted them to do, and what happens? He can't stop it. Why? Because God's promises are unstoppable! And that's what we need to hear for ourselves right now, in our current culture. That no matter how bad things get, no matter how culture turns against us... as believers in

our commitment to Christ as Lord and king, no matter what the climate looks like, no matter how many clouds are over us...here's what we can have confidence in: God's promises are unstoppable. His promises to us: that the kingdom will go forth, that the gates of hell will not prevail against us, that He will build His church, that He will proclaim the gospel to all nations... that can't be stopped! So what do we do in our culture? Do we back down? Do we stop talking? Do we stop telling people that they're sinful and they need a savior? Do we just sort of be quiet and huddle together because we're afraid now because there's a little bit of persecution coming upon us as the church now in America? Do we just stop? NO! We take note from our past brothers and sisters who, when it came to their persecution, they continued with the mission of God. They continued to do what God told them to do, and that's what WE must do. We must continue to teach and continue to spread the good news of Christ, because there's nothing that hell, Satan, or anyone else can do to stop the mission of Christ. God's promise... it's unstoppable. And that's confidence to us so that we don't step back. Instead, we lean in, and we press forward.

So, plan A for Pharaoh was 'Let's deal with the adults. Let's make them labor hard, and that will kill this whole mission of God. That will kill this idea of them spreading into a great nation.' But what happened is that plan A didn't work. So then, what happens is that Pharaoh moves into plan B, which is more sinister. He's going to actually kill the males while they are being born. So he's going to attack the babies... the baby boys. Here's what it says in verse 15-16: "Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birth stool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." So here's plan B: 'Okay, so it's not working. Slavery didn't work. Now let's go and attack the baby boys.' Pharaoh knew if he could stop baby boys from being born and he let the baby girls live, then in one generation, you no longer have Israelites... you only have Egyptians. The girls will marry Egyptian boys, and they will become Egyptians; and there will be no more Israel... no more promise of God. So this is a real threat that these Hebrew women are hearing. It's a threat

again God's great promise that he promised to Abraham. But notice what Pharaoh does first. It is a hidden agenda. It is a secretive thing that Pharaoh does. He goes to the midwives, and I think these two midwives were the representatives of all the other midwives. They were supposed to tell all the girls under them that 'when you go to a Hebrew who is giving birth, here's what you do if it's a baby boy... kill the baby boys coming out.' And this would be sort of a secretive thing. Like the mom would assume something happened during birth. The grandparents would have assumed something happened through natural causes. And they wouldn't really understand what was really going on because it was a secretive, hidden thing. So this brings us to a question. Here's our question just to think through, what should we do when man's laws and God's laws collide? This is a good question because this is what they faced. Here these two ladies are, and they're hearing from their king 'here's what you should do. Here's an order. Here's a new law. When this happens, you should kill the baby boy that's being born.' But there was a problem. If these ladies obeyed the law of pharaoh (the law of the land), then at the same time, they would be sinning against God. So what do we do when we come across laws that, if we obey the law, it means that at the same time we're sinning against our God? I mean that's what these ladies are facing. So let's just see what they do. What are their reactions? What does God want us to do in that situation? Here's what it says in verse 17-20: "But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the male children live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. "(listen to it again, this has been repeated three times in our text) "they multiplied and grew very strong." Verse 21: "And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families." So what happens? What do we do when God's law and man's law collide? Here the king is telling us to do one thing, but if we do that, it's going to be breaking the laws of God. We know that God says, "Thou shalt not murder." So murdering these baby boys as they come out would actually be sinning against our God.

What do we do in those situations? We take the example of these two godly ladies, and we fear God before anyone else. And in fearing God, we obey God, and we disobey any law or any command that is against our heavenly father. When the laws of God and the laws of man collide, we practice 'rebellious obedience'. We rebel against the law. We rebel against culture. We rebel against even our own government if it comes to the government giving us a law (or our culture is giving us a norm) that if we obey it, then at the same time we are sinning against our God. So when these laws collide, what happens? We fear God. We obey God rather than the king, rather than the government, rather than our culture... because our allegiance is not to Caesar; our allegiance is to King Jesus first and foremost. So when it comes to your life, if you're in a moment where obeying this cultural norm, actual law, or whatever it is... if obeying it means you're going to sin against God, then you practice 'rebellious obedience'. Through your rebellion and disobedience, you're actually obeying because you're doing what is actually true what is actually right. And none of these situations is too farfetched in the culture that we're living in. We're seeing religious liberties being squeezed and squeezed. We're seeing laws that would cause us as believers not to practice and do our businesses and different things in a way that Christ would say for us to do, but rather we're starting to see laws that would cause us to have to compromise what Christ says.

So in those situations, what do we do? We look to the example of these two ladies. In those situations, we disobey man's law. In some of those situations, we go to jail, because obeying a law that causes us to sin against God is worse than disobeying God to obey a law that is disobeying Him. } So when man's law and God's law collide, and inevitably they will, when they collide... what happens? We fear God. We honor God. And if you'll notice, what happens? I mean these two women had to assume that by fearing God and doing this, they were going to be killed. I mean pharaoh is a bad dude. If he's going to murder babies, he's going to have no problem hacking these midwives. I mean this is going to mean nothing to him. They had to know what was coming. But they faithfully obeyed the Lord. And what happens? God dealt graciously with them. And he continued to make his promise abound. His promise continued to grow under

great persecution and he actually blessed these two ladies, and he gave them an abundant family. So we see that God was gracious to these ladies because they feared Him above any other power. They knew that God is the one in whom ALL authority resides. So we see even in this second act it seems (I mean this is almost a for sure thing) that God's promise is not going to make it. The greatest super power on earth is targeting the Israelites to systematically exterminate them. God's promise has no chance. Yet what do we see? God's promises are unstoppable! You can't stop the promises of God because God is greater than Pharaoh! God is greater than Egypt! He is THE super power of the cosmos. So these ladies, they faithfully surrendered to King Jesus over Pharaoh. And God dealt graciously with them.

Then we see, as we walk on, a THIRD plan. So now, Pharaoh gets even more ruthless with his plan against this people. No more secretive extermination where it looks like it could have been a natural cause. Now it is very open. It is very obvious that he's coming after God's people. Here's what it says in verse 22: "Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live." Imagine the king stands before his people and tells all of the Egyptians ' if you see a Hebrew family, and you see a little toddler, and he's a boy... grab him and throw him in the Nile river. If you see a Hebrew family out to eat, and they have a little baby and it's a boy, grab him from them, take him to the Nile, and throw him in.' No longer subtle. It's no longer undercover. Now it's very obvious what Pharaoh wants the Egyptians to know is 'We are out to get God's people. They are the enemies and our role is to go and get them.' And probably what the Egyptians would have assumed is (because they would have believed the Nile is in a way divine) this was an order from their god to make sacrifices to it. So it wasn't just a kingly order, it was a divine order. If they were going to remain faithful to the Egyptian gods, (because Pharaoh was their spokesperson) then they would have to obey this edict. So now if you were a Hebrew person, you would have to assume there's no way God's promise will continue at this point. 'Now all the people of Egypt are against us.

We can't even go out in public with our little boys. They're going to be thrown into the Nile.'

Now chapter 2 ends with all the babies supposedly thrown into the Nile. But just a little prelude to next week... we know that not all the babies were thrown into the Nile. There was actually one baby that was floated into the Nile. And we're going to see that this baby that was floated into the Nile, well God is going to use him to do the great rescue of God's people. Why? Because God's promises are unstoppable. You can't stop the promises of God no matter who is against God's people. They CANNOT be stopped. God's promise continues to march on. And see, this is good news for us. The church needs to remember that as God's people today. God's promises STILL are unstoppable. And He's given us, as the church, a mandate to go therefore and make disciples of all nations. And He's given us promises along with that: that he's going to be with us until the end of the age, that all authority is His, and He gives it to US. He's promised the church that He will crush Satan's head under our feet. He's promised us that the kingdom will grow into a tree that is so big that all the birds are going to want to come to it. He's promised us that He will build His church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. See He's promised us the gospel will go forth. So we, as Christians in America can know:

No matter how things get, whether we're in a time of prosperity (where it's really easy to be a Christian, and it's easy to share the gospel) OR we're in a time of real persecution (where it's hard to speak the gospel at work, college campuses, on social media, etc.; where it's really hard because we're feeling cultural persecution)... guess what? In both of those areas, the same truth remains; God's promises are unstoppable.

So no matter if we're in persecution or in prosperity, we can continue to do what Christ wants us to do. And that is to preach the good news of Christ, because His promise is unstoppable. It's not up to us. It's up to Him, and He is a promise keeper.

You know it's also good news for us as Christians...as individual believers. I don't know about you, but sometimes I get a little anxious thinking about the future. What about in ten years? If certain

things happen, will I remain faithful? Will I still be following Christ ten years from now? What about tomorrow when I wake up, and I just don't feel like serving Christ? Does that mean I'm falling away? Does that mean things aren't going good? What about me? Will I make it to the end? In those situations as a believer, what should I do? I should remind myself that God's promises are unstoppable. And God has promised that if I have given my life to Jesus Christ as my Lord and savior, He that began a good work in me, will complete it. He who foreknew me will also glorify me. It is a promise, and it's not up to me to keep it. It's up to a God who is a promise keeper...a God who always keeps His promises. So I can look ten years from now, and even if I don't know where I'll be, I know I'll be in Christ. And I'll know that at the end of my life I'll be with King Jesus. Why? Not because Kory is a good promise keeper, but because God IS... and God's promises are unstoppable. And He's made a promise to me. He's given me the Holy Spirit as a guarantee, as a down payment, that I will make it to the end. So tomorrow, I'll walk in confidence, and so should you if you're a believer.

But you know, if you're a non-believer, if you've not given your life to Christ... I think knowing that God's promises are unstoppable is really good news for you too. And here's why. Because some of you, you've been coming to church and you've been listening to the gospel, and you're hesitant to claim Jesus as your lord and savior. You're hesitant to repent and believe in Christ because here's your fear: 'What if I do, and then a year from now I'm back to where I was? What if I claim Jesus and get baptized, and then as life goes on I just turn away from him and no longer follow him? I mean won't I be made a fool? Won't my family be made a fool? Won't everybody laugh at me? I just don't know if I've got enough to make it through.' So you wait and you're hesitant and you think, 'I just don't know if I've got enough in me'. Well, I just want to give you some good news. You don't have enough in you to make it to the end. You don't have what it takes. And that's where it starts... by admitting that. Because there's someone who does, and his name is Jesus. And He lived the life you couldn't, and He died the death you deserved. And what He says is "If you shall believe in me, you shall not perish but you shall have eternal life." That is a promise that Christ gives to us.

If you will come to Him, He's going to take care of it. If you come to Him as your lord and savior, he is promising himself to you, not just the other way around. So if you're thinking 'I just don't know if I can do it', I'm just going to tell you that you can't. But guess what? Christ promises that He has and that He will. All you have to do is just come to Christ, surrender your life to him, and He will take care of the rest. He will ensure that you make it all the way to the end... not because of how good you are or how good you keep your part of the deal, but because of how good HE is. And now He has already kept His part of the deal. He reigns in heaven right now, and in a way (as believers), we reign with Him right now as well. So God is a promise keeper. That's good news for the church, that His promises are unstoppable. That's good news for you as a Christian, and that's also good news for you as a non-believer. If you're waiting, don't wait anymore. Come to Christ. He keeps his promises.

So what we saw in chapter 1 is God's promise. His promise is unstoppable, and it points forward to what's going to happen in chapter 2. In chapter 2, we'll see that we're in affliction and slavery, but we're going to see just how God keeps his promises. So here's what my prayer is: as we've started chapter one, and now that we're at the end of it, I pray that you're not like Finley...that you're not asleep/nodding off. My prayer is that now after chapter 1, you have the reaction that Crider had. And here's what your reaction is: that as you go home you're talking to your spouse, your buddy, or you're talking to your kids; and when somebody asks you about Exodus chapter 1, I hope here's what you say... "Man, this is going to be an awesome story!" That's what I pray your heart is seeing, and I pray you'll come back next week because we'll be getting into chapter 2 as we continue God's great rescue of his people. And we're going to see, for all of us to see, that God's promises are unstoppable.