

EPISODE 18 (SESSION 1)

A Tale of Two Kingdoms

NO PRIMARY TEXT: Review EXODUS 4–6

Since the first episode of the podcast, we've been referring to the Text as one whole narrative. Not a collection of disjointed stories, a history book, or lab report, but an inspired story that challenges us, confuses us, convicts us, and calls us... to what?

As we've wrapped up what we find at BEMA to be the Preface and Introduction of God's narrative, we've now reached the beginning of the main narrative—the rising action, if you will—of this beautiful Story God is writing for us. A story of goodness and community and restoration and hope and that calls us to do and be those things to the world.

Yet, there is a dichotomy in the Story so far, and it isn't resolved with the next chapter or plot twist or next strong protagonist—we still find it today in every space we come into contact with. We're a part of this tale of two kingdoms, and, much like the children of Israel had to choose which kingdom they wanted to be a part of, we still have to make that choice today.

EMPIRE	<i>or</i>	SHALOM
CHAOS	<i>or</i>	PEACE
SELF	<i>or</i>	KINGDOM
FEAR	<i>or</i>	TRUST

The answers may seem obvious, easy almost, from where I'm comfortably seated now. But when the empire seems to offer what I need, or want... When fear creeps in—as pandemics strike, jobs are lost, and famines fall upon us (through the stockpiling of toilet paper or skyrocketing egg prices)... Which kingdom do we choose?

When we're standing with one foot in the fertile lands of the Nile Valley and the other in an unknown, wild desert, which do we choose?

Which kingdom have *you* chosen?

Whose cries do you hear? And how do you act?
Whose cries have you turned a blind eye or deaf ear to?
Or, whose cries have you caused or are you complicit in?

When empire waves its staff and flaunts its power, as it has repeatedly throughout history, do we hear the cries of the alien, orphan, and widow, seeking to feed and clothe and shelter them, or do we cement our own security upon their backs?

Just like the family God chose in Genesis, we are not perfect. Empire has worked its way into us, and we may need some time in the wilderness to find and *yada* God again. That is how we can actively trust the Story, how we begin to rid our hearts of Egypt. That is how we can be the Kingdom on Earth. Our faith no longer static, but active and working, just like the *ruach* God breathed into us in the beginning.

**When we're
standing with
one foot in the
fertile lands of
the Nile Valley
and the other in
an unknown,
wild desert,
which do we
choose?**

PRAYER

*Father God,
In a narrative that tells me
to look out for myself first—
help me to choose Your Story.
In a culture that's too busy
to notice the cries of the oppressed—
help me to hear them and act.
In a world where empire and power reign—
help me to trust and find refuge in You
and community.*

*We choose Your promise over Egypt.
Trust over fear.
Shalom over empire.
We choose You.*

Amen

THE FOUR PILLARS

EPISODE 18

BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember to **elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the Story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:



TEXT

What might be important to review and meditate over from the Text we've studied so far? What Text could you continue to meditate on, memorize, or dig deeper into?



COMMUNITY

In what ways does your community seek to be a community of peace rather than chaos, shalom rather than empire? How do you, as a community, choose God's Story?



DISCIPLESHIP

Who in your life would benefit from a mentor-like relationship that models trust in THE Story instead of trust in the empire? Who might God be placing in your life to show them what this Kingdom-living looks like? Who have you kept close that does this for you?



WRESTLING

If you've stuck with us this far, you know we have a LOT of questions we are still wrestling with. How does the conversation of these two kingdoms sit with you? What might you need to study or look at more deeply? Remember—wrestling is good!



Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.



BEMA SESSION 1



MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE SPIRITUAL FORMATION

*We believe that **if we do our part of creating space for God, He will fill it**, and if we fill that space with things of the empire—that can fill it too. What spiritual practices or disciplines might you need to create time and space for that will continue to get Egypt out of you? How might the smallest practice make you readily available to be used by God—to restore peace and trust in our communities and around the world. How have you created a space to hear God speak to you? How might you be ready to respond?*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

***We believe young adults are shaping the future of this world**, and they need to be shown by people like you which Story brings goodness and hope. Which Story hears their cries and the cries of others and seeks to restore them. They need to see generations before them actively caring about the poor and oppressed—caring about them. They are a generation of world-changers, and hearing that God is a God of love and peace is critical. What young adults might you be able to bring this Kingdom to?*

SACRED STATION THEOLOGY OF WORK

*Trusting in the Story and being a part of the Kingdom isn't just for Sunday mornings or Bible study; this is about what we do in our everyday lives. How do we choose God's Kingdom over empire with our actions and words during our 9–5? Does our physical work bring shalom or chaos? Do we create space to hear the cries of the oppressed and choose to act or ignore them? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products should bless others—not just ourselves. **The work we do every day, and how we approach it, is sacred and matters!***