



## Introduction

"Exodus," (Gr. for "exit" or "departure") is the name given the book in the LXX, a Greek translation of the old Testament made in 100BC. The Hebrew's simply called it *Shemoth* meaning "And these are the names of". This phrase emphasises the fact that Exodus continues the story that began in Genesis. Exodus is the second book of the Hebrew canon known as Torah ("law," or "teaching"), or, "the Pentateuch" ("the five books").

In the Pentateuch as a whole, one discovers six major themes:

- (1) God's deliverance of his people from Egypt;
- (2) God's revealing himself in, law, and in relationship in the tabernacle
- (3) The wandering in the wilderness
- (4) God's blessing on all nature and humanity.
- (5) God's promise to the patriarchs.
- (6) Preparation for entrance into Canaan.

All these themes are given extensive treatment in Exodus.

## 2. Authorship and date

The book itself makes it clear that it was written by Moses. He is told to record on a scroll the episode of Israel's victory over Amalek (17:14). He is instructed to write down the Ten Commandments (34:4, 27-29). He "wrote down everything the LORD had said" (24:4), which included at least the Book of the Covenant (20:22-23:33). Since Moses began to lead the Israelites after his eightieth birthday (7:7), the book must have been written between then and his one hundred and twentieth birthday, when he died (Deut 34:7). So the approximate date for the composition of *Exodus* rests on the date of the Exodus from Egypt.

## 3. Date of the Exodus

*Exodus* nowhere gives us definite specific links to Egyptian events or chronology. Pharaohs are not mentioned by name and so one is left trying to make much from very small numbers of clues in the text. Some have indicated that *pharaoh*, which meant 'the palace' was not used as a title for the king until the Eighteenth Dynasty so this makes the earliest date to be around 1580 B C. However this can only be accepted if one makes the unlikely assumption that no anachronisms have crept into the text. The two most commonly held dates are during the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1580-1321 BC) and the Nineteenth Dynasty of the thirteenth century (c. 1321-1205 BC). More recent work has been carried out by David Rohl that indicate the Exodus occurred 1447 BC during the time



of the little known pharaoh Dudimose<sup>1</sup> and that the name of the pharaoh mentioned in chapter one is lost in antiquity. The idea that Ramesis II was the pharaoh of the Exodus is therefore far from certain.

## 5. Route of the Exodus

The wilderness itinerary begun in [Exodus 12:37](#)--and continued in [13:20](#); [14:2](#); and [15:22](#)--resumes after the crossing on the shores of the Red Sea on the western side of the Sinai Peninsula ([15:22-27](#)).

## 6. Theology

“Exodus lays the foundations for a theology of God's revelation of his person, his redemption, his law, and his worship. It also initiates the great institution of the priesthood and the role of the prophet and formalizes the covenant relationship between God and his people.

This book focuses on the fact and significance of his presence (as given by his name Yahweh and his glory). But his attributes of justice, truthfulness, mercy, faithfulness, and holiness are also highlighted. Thus to know God's "name" is to know him and his character ([3:13-15](#); [6:3](#)).

God is also the Lord of history, for there is no one like him, "majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders" ([15:11](#)). Thus neither the affliction of Israel nor the plagues in Egypt were outside his control. Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and all Israel would see the power of God.

Most reassuring of all is the fact that God remembers ([2:24](#)). What he had promised some four hundred to six hundred years earlier to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he began to bring to fruition as Israel left Egypt for the Land of Promise. The covenant at Sinai was but another step in God's fulfillment of his promise to the patriarchs ([3:15-17](#); [6:2-8](#); [19:3-6](#)).

The theology of deliverance and salvation is likewise a strong emphasis of the book. The verb to "redeem" (*ga'al* one who acts the part of a kinsman-redeemer) is used in [6:6](#) and [15:13](#). But the heart of redemption theology is best seen in the Passover narrative in chapter [12](#) along with the sealing of the covenant in chapter [24](#). The death of the Passover lamb was fulfilled in Christ ([1 Cor 5:7](#)). Indeed, John the Baptist called Jesus the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" ([John 1:29](#)), just as the Last Supper was a celebration of the Passover meal. The Passover lamb, whose blood was applied to the doors of Israelite homes, (1) provided a covering to that house, (2) provided a

<sup>1</sup> David Rohl *A Test Of time* 1995 pp 280-281



substitute that allowed the firstborn to live (12:13), and (3) propitiated the wrath of God so that the angel of death passed over the protected homes.

Exodus also tells us how we should live. The foundation of biblical ethics and morality is laid out for us first in the gracious character of God as revealed in the Exodus and then in the Ten Commandments and the ordinances of the Book of the Covenant. From the case law in chapters 21-23, we learn how to apply the Ten Commandments that have their grounding in the permanency of the character of God.

The book concludes with an elaborate discussion on the theology of worship. The tabernacle was very costly in time, effort, and monetary value; yet in its significance and function it pointed to the chief end of man: to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Above every other consideration was the fact that the omnipotent, unchanging, and transcendent God of all the universe had, by means of the tabernacle, graciously come to "dwell" or "tabernacle" with his people, thereby revealing his immanence as well. Therefore, not only was God mighty in their midst, he was the God who had been, was, and would be present in their midst as well<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> From Expositors Bible Commentary



## **Chapter 1 – The state of God’s people, the need for redemption**

When the Russian prisoners of war were returned to their homeland after world War II they should have been given a hero’s welcome but in fact many of them were slaughtered under the orders of Stalin. The same fate fell upon some of his best generals. Stalin was afraid that their association with Germans and western allies may have in some small way undermined their commitment to Stalinist communism. So those who were a blessing to the nation were seen as a curse and exterminated.

Men who try to play God become deeply insecure. This insecurity leads to paranoia and paranoia leads to panic which, in the hands of one having absolute power leads to uncontrolled tyranny and oppression. Thus the people of God who were to be a blessing to the nation of Egypt became a curse in the eyes of Pharaoh who, like Stalin, made the classical mistake of forgetting where he stood in history and who it was who truly controlled that history.

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

1. Exodus begins with a genealogical statement about the Israelites why?
2. The Israelites that came to Egypt are mentioned by name whereas the identity of pharaoh is a mystery, is that significant? Why?
3. In what ways do you think the Israelites would be easy to distinguish from the Egyptians? Is this significant in understanding the narrative?



4. What do you think the author is trying to convey in the words “The Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them”(1:6)? (cf Genesis 1:28,9:7, 17:2-6, 26:4).
5. The blessings of God upon the Israelites was a very great problem to Pharaoh. Consider his problem in terms of the following headings:
- Spiritual
- Political
- Historical
- Psychological
- Cultural
6. Is there something ironical in the fact that the Israelites are harshly exploited in the manufacture of storage cities? (11).

The term "slave masters" (*ser*) is common to both Hebrew and Egyptian and appears as an official Egyptian name on the wall painting from the Thebean tomb of Rekhmire, the overseer of the brick-making slaves during the reign of Thutmose III. This Egyptian title is found as early as the Sixth Dynasty under Pepi.

The two storehouse cities Israel built were for the storage of provisions and perhaps armaments (cf. [1 Kings 9:19](#); [2 Chron 8:4-5](#); [11:5](#), [11-12](#); [32:28](#)). The location of one of those cities, Pithom (*Per-itm* "House of Atum" [the god] ) in all probability may be equated with Tell er-Retabeh ("Broomhill"), which some equate with Heliopolis (cf. ZPEB, 4:803-4; the LXX of [Exod 1:11](#) adds to the two storehouse cities, "and On, which is Heliopolis"), or less likely with another site eighty and one-half miles east, Tell el-Maskhuta ("Mound of Idols"), both in Wadi Tumilat (see the map on p. 300). The other site, Rameses, has most recently been located at or near Qantir ("Bridge") instead of the more popular but remoter Tanis/Zoan site<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Expositors Bible Commentary



7. Oppression and persecution seemed to make the Israelites even more fruitful – what are we to understand by this in a more spiritual sense?
  
8. “..the midwives however feared God”(17). what is meant by this, particularly in the context of the danger of severe punishment from pharaoh? Does this relate to anything Jesus taught in the Gospels?
  
9. What does God’s honouring of the midwives (21) and the author’s mentioning their names<sup>4</sup> indicate about God’s view of history?
  
10. Matthew (2:1-23) sees some obvious parallels between pharaoh’s actions and those of Herod’s. What do you think Matthew trying to say to the Jews?
  
11. Why do you suppose God seems to take so long to act in the defense of his people particularly in the face of terrible infanticide?
  
12. What do you suppose kept the Israelites together as a race during this time?

---

<sup>4</sup> The two names mentioned here most certainly would be the two superintending midwives for the region of Goshen as a population of fast breeding Israelites would need more than two.



13. The midwives said that the Israelite women were not like the Egyptian women in that they were more vigorous in childbirth (19). What might be the lesson for us in this statement in light of the differences in lifestyles between the Egyptian and Israelite women?



## Chapter 2 – Preparation for The Rescuer

Interesting stories often surround the conception, birth or early childhood of key Biblical personalities. Isaac was born of ancient parents, Jacob held onto Easau as he was being born, Samuel was born of a barren woman, Samson's mother was also barren and her conception was announced by an angel and John the Baptist came also from a barren woman and an incredulous father who also had an angelic visitor. Finally the real saviour was born of a virgin to the sound of the hosts of heaven singing his praises. God makes it clear in this that one becomes an important person for the kingdom, not because he decides it would make a good occupation but because he is chosen even before his birth. In the story of Moses childhood we can see clearly that God is organising some essential training for the man who will be Israel's deliverer and it is obvious that God, the ultimate ruler of history works through human nature, be it good or evil, to achieve his purposes.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What might one make of the fact that the names of Moses' parents are not mentioned?
2. What motivated his mother to try to save him? (Heb 11:23)?
3. What do you think was in the mind of his mother as she cast him into the water?
4. What do you think is significant in the detailed description given to the way the floating basket was constructed? (3)
5. What might you make of the name given Moses by the Egyptian woman?(10)





6. How can you account for Moses' apparent passion for his race? How did he know he was Hebrew<sup>5</sup>(11)
  
7. Do you think Moses was justified in killing the Egyptian?
  
8. What do you find to be a consistent characteristic of those that are chosen by God to great things for him? (cf Gen 22:32, Numbers 25:11, 1 Sam 17:34-37, Psalm 69:8-10, Judges 16:23-31, John 21:1-9, Acts 22:3, Ex 2:11-12)
  
9. Why do you think his own people were less than enthusiastic about his killing the Egyptian? Compare this to the treatment of Jesus (eg John 11:46-50)
  
10. Why do you think the pharaoh was angry?
  
11. What does Moses' action in rescuing the Midianite girls confirm in our minds concerning his character which will make him the right man for the job? (17)
  
12. What do you make of the name of Moses' first son (22)?
  
13. What things caused God to respond to the plight of the Israelites (23-25)
  
14. What important aspects of God's character as it relates to the salvation of man does one see in this passage?

---

<sup>5</sup> *Hebrew (Habiru)* was used to describe the ethnic race of the Israelites as early as the time of Abraham. It is usually only used by gentiles or when speaking about the Israelites from a gentile perspective.



## Chapter 3 – The Call of The Rescuer

There is a familiar pattern to the way God calls men and women into service for him. He does it unexpectedly and it always happens to men who seem to have pretty well made up their mind as to the direction their lives would go. Paul was committed to chasing down the Christians and dealing with them, Peter was dedicated to the fishing trade, David was a keen shepherd, Matthew was making a fortune collecting taxes and Gideon was busy threshing grain. Moses had been forty years in the dessert and it seems happy to see his life out tending the flocks of his father-in-law's and looking after his wife and children.

It is hard to believe that one can be in a state of preparation for God's work by simply going about one's business but that is the way it is and God prepares and then calls his people at exactly the right moment. So the person and the time are incredibly significant to God. Also the place of their calling is significant – as far as Moses was concerned Mt. Horeb was simply a place on the other side of the desert which apparently offered food, water or shelter to his sheep – little did he know that he would have two of the most incredible encounters with the living God that man has ever had at this rough barren place.

Mount Sinai, also called MOUNTAIN OF MOSES, or MOUNT HAREH, Hebrew HAR SINAI, Arabic JABAL MUṢĀ, granitic peak of the south-central Sinai Peninsula, Janūb Sīnā' (South Sinaite), Egypt. Mount Sinai is renowned as the principal site of divine revelation in Jewish history, where God is appeared to Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5). According to Jewish tradition, not only the decalogue but also the entire corpus of biblical text and interpretation was revealed to Moses on Sinai. The mountain is also sacred in both the Christian and Islamic traditions. Because scholars differ as to the route of the Israelite exodus from Egypt and the place-names in the scriptural account cannot be identified in terms of present sites, a positive identification of the biblical Mount Sinai cannot be made. Mount Sinai itself, however, has long been accepted as the site in the traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

In the early Christian era the area was frequented by hermits, and in AD 530 the monastery of St. Catherine was built at the northern foot of the mountain. Still inhabited by a few monks of the autonomous Orthodox Church of Mount Sinai, it is probably the world's oldest continuously inhabited Christian monastery called Saint Catherine's. Its library of ancient biblical manuscripts, including the famous 4th-century Greek Codex Sinaiticus (now in the British Museum), has been invaluable in reconstructing the text of the Bible. The mountain, which rises to 7,497 feet (2,285 m) above sea level, was under Israeli administration from the Six-Day War of 1967 until 1979, when it was returned to Egypt. It has become an important pilgrim and tourist site.



## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Moses meets God (1-6)

1. What is significant about the mountain called Horeb?
2. Why did God reveal himself through a burning bush that was not in fact burning?
3. The authors of the Bible often use dialogue as a means of telling their story (e.g. verse 3) why do you think they do this?
4. Moses is told not to come closer and to take off his sandals; why?
5. Notice how God identifies himself at verse 6, and Moses turns his face away what does this reveal about Moses' knowledge of God and his attitude to this God?

### Moses is Commissioned by God (7-10)

1. What has motivated God to act at this time?
2. Who is going to do the rescuing?
3. How does one sensibly equate the fact that God says "I have come down to rescue them"(8) with the statement "I am sending you to pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt"(10)?
4. Moses is told that God people will replace the current tenants of the land of Canaan (8). Is this fair? Why is God justified in carrying out this action? (cf Genesis 9, 4-6,15:16).
5. How does this relate to God's wrath revealed in Romans 1:18-32?



**Moses Attempts, unsuccessfully, to refuse the Commission(11-22)**

1. Moses is obviously afraid of going to Pharaoh, but what do you think makes him the obvious choice for the job?
  
2. Why do you suppose, given that God can be identified by the term “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” that Moses wants to know his name?
  
3. God reveals that his name is “I am who I am”, or Yahweh, what does this tell us about God?
  
4. The Jehovah Witnesses make much of the fact that God said that this was to be his name forever as justification for their argument that we must call him Jehovah. Do you agree with them?
  
5. The name *Yahweh (Jehovah)* is found first at Genesis 4:26, does this mean that Moses should have known the name of the Lord?
  
6. If God could make the Egyptians favourably disposed to the Israelites (21) why could he not have done the same for the pharaoh without having to use his “mighty hand”?
  
7. The Israelites will take away “plunder” from the Egyptians and eventually take the land from the Canaanites etc. How might this apply to the Gospel in our time and how should that effect your attitude towards material things in this world?



## Chapters 4 – 6 God Convinces His Rescuer that He can Rescue

History shows that years of tyranny produces a social order which is incapable of change. Those in power are convinced of their divine right to remain. Those under their feet are convinced, not only that there can be no change, but that change would only make their situation worse. This is especially the case when the nation happens to be the super-power of the day as was Egypt at the time of Moses. The people may have preserved the story of Yahweh's dealing with Abraham and such belief gave them a cause for a certain amount of national unity but the overwhelming presence of the Egyptian power, given to them, it seems, by their pantheon of gods made them doubtful that Yahweh could ever keep his promise. So God has not only to convince the Egyptian as to who the real Lord of the universe is, he has to convince the Israelite and not least his chosen leader Moses. It is one thing to perform a little trick like making bushes seem to burn and talk but it is a far bigger thing to take on the might of Pharaoh and win.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. God gave Moses a repertoire of three miracles and told him that these would convince the Pharaoh that he should believe in him (4:1-10) Why did this fail to convince Moses?
  
2. What had God already planned to deal with Moses' reticence (14-17) and why might this have greater effect than a few miracles? (cf Luke 10:1)
  
3. God promises to give Moses the power to speak (4:11) in the same way as the disciples in Jesus' time (Matthew 10:19-20). How do you think God does this? Does it relate to us also?
  
4. What would your comment regarding the appropriateness of Moses' mode of transport be (4:20)?
  
5. God says that he will harden the Pharaoh's heart so that he will not let the people go (22), What do you make of this paradoxical statement?
  
6. The Lord tell Moses to describe Israel as his firstborn son; how might this be understood by Pharaoh?



7. What do you make of God's threat against Moses and Zipporah's reaction (4:24-26)?
  
8. The people responded very favorably to Moses and Aaron at 4:29-30 but Pharaoh reacted to God's demands by increasing the suffering of the Israelites so that when Moses came again to them with the word of the Lord they refused to believe him (6:6-12).
  - a) Why did the pharaoh respond this way?
  
  - b) What very important spiritual lessons might one get from this?
  
  - c) What was God doing in this?
  
9. Consider Moses' complaints at 5:22-23 and again at 6:12 who was really at fault? Did Moses have a right to complain? Consider how this whole event highlights God's persistent grace.
  
10. What might the pharaoh's greatest fear be if the Israelites were to escape?
  
11. It is clear when comparing 5:2 with 6:2b that God is choosing a particular nation in which to establish a personal covenant, does this imply favouritism? How does this rest with such verses as Romans 2:9-11?
  
12. Many liberation theologians find inspiration from the exodus – some to the point of taking up arms to save the oppressed groups around the world. What do you feel the Bible has to say about this?



## Chapters 7-10 A Plague upon the house of Pharaoh

### Introduction.

The story of the ten plagues pose more difficulties for the honest seeker of truth than any other parts of scripture. We can accept that God created the universe and further that he created life – there is no other reasonable explanation for these two things but when we look at the story of the plagues we find ourselves struggling with not only the miracles themselves but with a God who seems to be playing a kind of cruel cat and mouse game with mortal, defenseless human beings.

Many try to come to grips with the miracles with naturalistic explanations of one kind or another. For instance that the blood caused the frogs to breed prolifically, then when they all died they provided food for the gnats who multiplied to feed the flies which spread a disease that killed all the livestock and that the people were infected by boils from handling the dead carcasses etc. Apart from a serious problem with the timing of the events, these attempts to make God plausible leave us even more incredulous especially when they do nothing to solve the problem of the hail, locusts, darkness and the death of all the eldest sons. The best solution is simply to take the texts at face value and accept that our creator can do these things. A miracle is nothing more than a temporary incursion by God into his world in space and time where he suspends his natural laws for a moment to show that he is there and that he demands to be taken seriously.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What purpose do the plagues serve (7:1-5)
2. There appears to be something of a contest between God and the Magicians and sorcerers in the plagues. What is God attempting to show here?
3. How might you explain the fact that the magicians were able to perform quite amazing feats? (2 Thess 2:9-11)
4. Can you see any connection between the plagues and categories mentioned in story of creation in Genesis 1 as summarised in the following diagram?



**Summary of Creation**

Day of Creation	Separation	Domain	Categories	Relates to Plague
One, four	Day and Night Seasons	Whole universe	Light and darkness Sun, moon and stars	9 - Darkness
Two, Five	Water from water	Sky and Sea	Bird life Marine animals	1- Water to blood 2- Frogs, 7 – Hail 8 - Locusts
Three, Six	Land and water	Dry Land	Animals Creeping things Livestock Man	3 - Gnats, 4 - Flies 5 – livestock 6 – Boils

**A summary of the plague and pharaoh’s reaction**

Pass age	Miracle/ Plague	Reaction of Magicians, Sorcerers and court officials.	Pharaoh’s reaction
7:8-13	Staff to snake	Magicians copy but theirs eaten by Moses’ snake	Heart hard would not listen because the Magicians mimic the plague
7:14-24	Water to blood	Magicians do the same	Heart hardens would not listen because the Magicians mimic the plague (7:22)
8:1-14	Frogs from river to land	Magicians do the same	He asks for prayer, promises to allow them to make sacrifices. “But when pharaoh saw there was relief he hardened his heart and would not listen” ( 8:15)
8:16-19	Gnats	Magicians said “this is the finger of God” could not copy	Would not listen (8:19)
8:20-32	Flies but not on Goshen	No response	Offers them sacrifice in Egypt – knocked back by Moses so allows sacrifice a short distance into desert. Moses prays, flies depart and Pharaoh hardens heart.(8:32)
9:1-7	Egyptian Livestock	No response	Would not let them go even though he learned that Goshen had not been effected by the plague.
9:8-12	Boils on people and livestock	Magicians were also effected	The Lord hardened his heart and he would not listen.
9:13-35	Hail	Their hearts hardened also	Requested prayer made promises to let them go then changed his mind again.
10:1-18	Locusts	They advise the pharaoh to let the people go. “Egypt is ruined”	Pharaoh at first heeds the preliminary warning but then reneges and only lets the men go. So the locusts come and he confesses to sin and begs for mercy – but afterwards the Lord hardens his heart.
10:21-29	Darkness	No response	Pharaoh tries to let people go without their livestock – the Lord hardens his heart and he sends Moses away never to appear before him again.



## Studies in Exodus



11-12	Death of firstborn son	No response.	Pharaoh orders them all out and asks for a blessing. The Egyptians beg them to leave before something worse happens. However he hardens his heart and chases after them and is (probably) destroyed with his army in the red sea.
-------	------------------------	--------------	---

5. Consider Pharaoh's responses to the demands and the plagues. Sometimes we are told that Pharaoh hardened his own heart and at other times God hardened pharaoh's heart. How might you explain this in light of the tension between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man?
  
6. Is Jesus saying something very similar in Matthew 13:11-16.
  
7. Consider this in the light of Romans 8:28-30 and 9:13-21. What should our reaction to this difficult truth be?
  
8. How does this effect our witness to the world (Romans 10:11-15)
  
9. What is there in the story of the plague that indicates that Pharaoh and the Egyptians had real opportunity to repent and are judged rightly for their rebellion?



## Chapters 11-12 A New Beginning at a great Cost

### Introduction.

One of the great themes of the Bible is that of the new beginning. When Jesus said “Behold I am making all things new” (Rev 21:5) he was not exaggerating because he could see far better than us that there’s not much in this world and in this life that is really worth holding onto. The same could be said of the Israelites who were brought out of Egypt. God goes to great lengths to communicate the idea that redemption – the purchase of slaves to bring freedom means, in every sense of the word, a new life. This new life effects everything at a national level and at a personal level, there is to be no going back. Even the calendar will be effected by God’s mighty work of redemption – a hint that what happens to the people of Israel has true universal, even cosmic significance.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why does God want the Israelites to ask for silver and gold? Consider this in light of Genesis 2:11-12
2. Was God justified in killing every firstborn son?
3. Why is the firstborn son so significant?
4. The Lord restarts the calendar at the Passover. Why do you think this is necessary?
5. The details of the Passover lamb
  - (a) Why are they to be only one year old?
  - (b) What is the significance of the lamb being without defect?
  - (c) Does this ordinance give us a better understanding of the story of Cain and Abel?
  - (d) Why do you suppose the family is to take care of them from the tenth day to the fourteenth day?



- (e) Is there something special about the time of the day the lamb is to be slaughtered?
  - (f) Why is the blood to be put on both the tops and the sides of the door-frames?
  - (g) The whole lamb is to be consumed, after roasting it over the fire. Why?
  - (h) The lamb is to be eaten with bitter herbs and in haste, why?
5. What is God expressing his judgement against in the death of the eldest sons (12:12)?
  6. What do you think is the problem with using yeast in the bread?
  7. How well does the Passover week line up with the last week of Jesus' life? (Cf Luke 2:41-46, Matthew 26:2,17-20, John 13:1, 18:23, 39, 19:14,
  8. The Jews were expressly forbidden to work during the week of the Passover – what then do you make of the clandestine operations of the Jewish leaders that week?
  9. In what ways does the Lord's Supper continue the tradition of the Passover?
  10. What are the important differences?
  11. Does the Passover throw some light on the purpose for the Lord's Supper? (Exodus 12:24-28, Luke 22:15-21)



## Chapters 12:43 –14:31 Free at Last and Don't you forget it!

### Introduction.

The latter half of this century has given us ample proof of the foolishness of only partially destroying an enemy. Many argue that if one is going to spend the lives of men and women to defeat evil, then they really ought to do the job properly so that there is no danger of that evil returning to do its dirty work again. Two recent examples are that of the war against Iraq in 1992 and the Serbian regime of Milosevic. It is the nature of evil never to give up until it is soundly destroyed – the absolute stubbornness of Hitler and the Japanese Emperor proves that. Sadly for pharaoh and his army this truth applied to him as well. Freedom for God's people means not only to be taken away from their captors but also the removal of them so they can never be a danger again.

The reason that God allowed his people to spend 400 years in Egypt was that they would grow as a nation and also that they would thirst after the things that only God could give them. They needed to see that real freedom and purpose could never be found in a world ruled by men. The story of the Exodus has survived so that we might all learn from history and God did everything he could to ensure that his people would never forget.

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Was salvation ever truly restricted to true descendents Abraham? Who in fact are the true descendents of Abraham (Matthew 3:9, John 8:39, Gal 3:6-7)
2. What is the significance of not breaking the bones of the Passover lamb(John 19:36)?
3. What is the significance of Joseph's bones? (cf Gen 50:25, Josh 24:32)
4. Why was the first-born male of every man and animal sacrificed to the Lord? Men and donkeys could be redeemed with a lamb, what does that tell us?
5. How might such sacrifices communicate the nature of the faith of the Israelites to the world in which they lived? How might this relate to the early church? (Acts 2:42-47)



6. Some might see such sacrifices as a kind of penalty, what do you think?
  
7. How are New Testament Christians to express the idea of sacrifice? (cf Rom 12:1-2) Has this ever really changed (1 Sam 15:22)?
  
8. Many see in pharaoh as a symbol of Satan – what aspects of his life do you think shows this?
  
9. How does this relate to the overall concept of redemption?
  
10. What other men in scripture sometimes find themselves fulfilling a similar role?
  
11. In 1 Thessalonians 2:10-11 we are told that God sends a spirit of delusion to those who reject the truth. How did this manifest itself in pharaoh? (14:5-9)?
  
12. Can you see any connection between Exodus 14:13-14 and Jesus' action in Mark 8:30-32, consider this also in connection with Revelation 20:14-15.
  
13. God understands that it takes some time for young believers to acquire real faith and trust, how is that displayed in these verses?
  
14. What was the state of the Israelites as they saw the Egyptian army pursuing them?



15. God seems to be a little hard on Moses at vs. 15 why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. The idea of God gaining glory at the destruction of his enemies (4:18) is one that people find difficult to reconcile with the idea of a loving God. What might you say to this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. What is the point of the Egyptians knowing that Yahweh is God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
18. Of all the miracles in the Bible the crossing of the red sea seems to have captured the imagination of man more than any other – why do you think this is so?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
19. Is there something sadly ironic about 14:31? How might that relate to many Christians today?



## Chapters 15-18 God Proves He is All-rounder

### Introduction.

It has never been hard to imagine God as an all powerful mighty warrior – in fact that is the one aspect of God that most religions will accept. After all doesn't popular fiction always imagine him behind every bolt of lightning and earthquake? Now that God has rescued his people by an all out declaration of war against every principality of darkness represented in Egypt, the big question is; what will he be like as a provider? In Egypt the gods did very well, there was food in abundance for all, even the slaves rarely experienced hunger.

The dancing and singing eventually dies down and Yahweh leads his people from the shores of the red sea into the Desert of Sin (pronounced shin). Their eyes scan the bleak horizon for some sign of eatable food and potable water but they see none. Like the two men on the road to Emmaus they feel the whole thing has been a terrible mistake – what's the good of redemption if all that is offered is death?

### STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the major aspect of God's nature that is being celebrated in Moses' and Miriam's songs?
2. What is the test facing God in 16:1-3?
3. What is the test facing God's people in 16:4-5?
4. What very damaging misconception is being addressed in 16:6-8?



5. God is has brought the people into a land where only miraculous intervention can supply food. What is he trying to teach the people in this?
  
6. What were they meant to learn by the fact that the food kept over night went bad?
  
7. Is God's provision any less real when it does not involve miracles?
  
8. Why do you suppose obedience to the Sabbath was so difficult for the Israelites?
  
9. Why was God so adamant about the Sabbath (cf 20: 8 and 31:12-17)?
  
10. How does this square with New Testament teaching (Mark 2:23-28, Col 2:16-17, Hebrews 4:9-11, Romans 14:5-6)
  
11. What things made the Israelites complaints at 17:3 so irrational?
  
12. What important lesson can be learned about the partnership between God and his people in the business of spiritual warfare in the account of the war with the Amelakites (17:8-16)?
  
13. What insights can we get from Moses' character and his relationship with his father-in-law (18:1-12)?





14. What was God's purpose in sending Jethro to visit Moses?
15. What does chapter 18 tell us about the essential qualities one looks for in a Christian leader?
16. By bringing the Israelites through the Red Sea God proved he could rescue his people from slavery. What do chapters 16-18 seek to prove about God?



## Chapter 19 – 20 The Engagement

### Introduction.

There was a time when a man would truly woo his bride. Part of the process was to prove to her that he was a worthy husband, that he respected her, that he had her best interests in mind, that he could defend her and provide for her and her children. When he felt he had established that he would then pop the question. At this point, if he was a man with a true self awareness, he would make it clear that his intended had two directions to travel – acceptance or rejection. The option of waiting, of keeping her options open was not available, he had done his best and now it was time to respond – will you give yourself to me and be my wife or do I look elsewhere?

This is where we have arrived here. The people of Israel are standing at the rock – the same place that Moses confronted God in the burning bush some time before. God has shown that he can defend his bride and rescue her from her enemies. He can provide for her, he can govern her and he can guide her through the dessert. He has shown that he is truly God of the universe and he is prepared to commit himself to her and to none other. Now its time for her to respond.

#### The Covenants of the Kings

The formula of God's offer is like that of the covenants of the Eastern Suzerainty Kings. The Strong Hittite Kings, when taking control of another state would use this formula when presenting an offer of covenant to them.

This formula usually consisted of the following parts- which are shown in Exodus 19 as follows:

1. **Preamble--vs. 3b, a summons**
2. **Historical prologue--v. 4**
3. **Stipulations--vs. 5a**
4. **Blessings--vs. 5b-6a**
5. **Acceptance in a solemn assembly--vs. 7-8**

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### A. The Proposal and acceptance (19:1-8)

Why does God speak through Moses instead of speaking to the Israelites personally here when they arrive at the mountain?

What things does God offer the people of Israel?



What was there about the Israelites that made them attractive to God? (Cf Deut 7:6-7)

God is offering them the right to become a nation of priests – what do you think they would have understood by that?

What was the extent of the people's choice?

What did the people actually choose?

### **B. Preparation For Marriage**

What do you make of the imagery of God descending onto the mountain like fire, the smoke earthquake and trumpet blast? What is God trying to say in this?

There are frequent and severe warnings against coming too close to the mountain why?

How is the imagery of the bride brought out in verses 10-14

What Aspects of God's Character are most heightened by these passages of scripture?



What four fundamental things does the Ten Commandments as a body of Law teach us?

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)



## Chapter 21 - 23 The Case Law

### Introduction.

Statute Laws, of which the ten commandments is a prime example, can only provide the overall boundaries for proper human behaviour. For statute law to work there needs to be a body of case law; that is particular examples of human disharmony, whether actual or anticipated, that illustrate and guide us in the application of statute law. The English system of law, has been adopted by most western countries is a combination of statute and case law. The government legislates to create statute laws and the courts seek to interpret the mind of the legislators through careful exegesis of these laws in order to apply them in real cases. Such cases provide us with a body of precedents which help to interpret the law for the future. The advantage of such a system is that the law grows and develops to cater for a changing society. The downside however is that there is a tendency in our postmodern culture for the Judges to become un-elected legislators.

There are two clear strands of law in most countries – criminal law and civil law. In criminal law the state, who stands in the place of God, is the plaintiff. It was God's intention that the individual victim would be compensated by the offender where possible. So crimes against property tended to be treated more as civil than criminal matters. However as society became more complex and the property classes became the legislators, crimes against property were treated in the criminal courts and compensation to the individual was only possible if the victim took the offender to a civil court. Of recent times compensation, in some circumstances, has been paid to victims by the state.

In the case of civil law the actual individual/s who was harmed is the plaintiff. He will take the defendant to court, not necessarily to punish, but in an effort to obtain compensation for loss or damage (22:1-7).

Until recently, no damages could be awarded unless the plaintiff was able to establish that the defendant had failed in his duty of care or had been negligent. This could only be proved if the plaintiff could demonstrate that the defendant could reasonably foresee the chain of events that led up to the damage. (Eg 21:28-34) Also a person can not be held accountable for things that are beyond his control (22:13)

No man could be held guilty of a serious crime against the person unless both *mens rae* and *actus rae* could be established. That is it had to be proved that he intended to commit the crime and in fact committed it (Eg 21:12-13)

It is essential in a civilized country that the state be the judge of all matters of law be it criminal or civil and that the state have a clear understanding of the laws of evidence and well established and just penalties.

The English law was founded very much on the model given to us from the Old Testament. This explains why it has been long regarded as the best system of laws in the world – the departure from the spirit of the Bible of recent times has destroyed much of what was good about our law.



**Read through Chapters 21-23 and consider the laws laid out against this check list**

**Which of the following applies**

- a) Civil or Criminal?
- b) Intention or accident?
- c) Negligence or misadventure?
- d) Protection from human behaviour

**Criteria for good laws.**

- a) They will acknowledge God as King and ultimate judge (22:20,28)
- b) They will be easy to understand and apply to real life situations
- c) They must be enforceable
- d) They must protect and enhance the basic fabric of society (21:17)
- e) There must be clear rules of evidence (23:7, Deut 17:6-7)
- f) There must be just and reasonable punishments (21:24)
- g) All men to be equal before the law (23:3)
- h) There should be a minimum of delay between the crime and the punishment
- i) There must be consistency (23:2)
- j) Justice must be carried out openly and honestly (23:2)
- k) They must encourage love and compassion and restrain evil. (22:21-25)
- l) They must anticipate human passion and protect people from it (21:13).
- m) A wrongdoer should never be able to benefit from his actions
- n) 'Natural' penalties and rewards are better than legal ones. (21:20-21)
- o) They must be realistic – i.e. they should be content with a *better* solution when the *best* solution is not possible or reasonable in a fallen world (21:10)