

# The Book of Exodus

So far, the notes have been transferred from **Exodus Introduction** and **Exodus 1–40** to individual chapters of the book of Exodus. Links to these more complete studies can be found here: **Exodus Individual Chapter Links**: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). The examination of the material of Exodus is much more thorough there ↗ than below. For instance, the study of Exodus 1 below is 10 pages; whereas the exegetical study of Exodus 1 is 159 pages, which includes a word-by-word exegesis, the addition of translations taken from over 90 translations, all the notes from below, and a considerable addition of new notes.

| Three Studies from the book of Exodus   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| The Original Study  | The Weekly Study Emailed out  | The Chapter Study   |
| Short, lacking in detail.<br>Approximately 490 pages.   | A more detailed study, emailed out to those who request it. When completed, this will be about 500–600 lessons at 4–5 pages per lesson.               | Everything on the left will be integrated into a word-by-word, verse-by-verse study of each and every chapter of Exodus. Each chapter will be typically 200–400 pages long. The overall study is currently in excess of 9000 pages. |
| The first study is the document which you have open before you. ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ) ( <a href="#">folder</a> )   | As these are completed, they will be placed here: ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ) ( <a href="#">folder</a> ) | Each chapter may be accessed through this document here: ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ) ( <a href="#">folder</a> )  |
| The primary reason why I continue posting this document is, many people choose to access it. I have begun to do a summary of each chapter for the two studies on the right, and I will use those summaries to replace the original Exodus study (replacing chapter by chapter). | Each lesson is self-contained and designed to be read in 10–15 minutes. A double lesson may take as long as 30 minutes to read.                       | All of the information found in the previous two sets of documents is found here, along with much more information.   |

While doing to weekly emailed studies, I have decided to start summarizing the chapters. I will be integrating those summarized chapters into this document below. So far, this is Exodus 9, 12–18 (which chapters are marked by shading). This new commentary is better and more accurate than what used to be here.

| Links to Chapters Below (with very limited Commentary) |                          |                          |                          |                           |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <a href="#">Exodus 1</a>                               | <a href="#">Exodus 2</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 3</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 4</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 5</a>  |
| <a href="#">Exodus 6</a>                               | <a href="#">Exodus 7</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 8</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 9</a> | <a href="#">Exodus 10</a> |

|                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Exodus 11</b> | <b>Exodus 12</b> | <b>Exodus 13</b> | <b>Exodus 14</b> | <b>Exodus 15</b> |
| <b>Exodus 16</b> | <b>Exodus 17</b> | <b>Exodus 18</b> | <b>Exodus 19</b> | <b>Exodus 20</b> |
| <b>Exodus 21</b> | <b>Exodus 22</b> | <b>Exodus 23</b> | <b>Exodus 24</b> | <b>Exodus 25</b> |
| Exodus 26        | Exodus 27        | Exodus 28        | Exodus 29        | Exodus 30        |
| Exodus 31        | Exodus 32        | <b>Exodus 33</b> | Exodus 34        | Exodus 35        |
| Exodus 36        | Exodus 37        | Exodus 38        | Exodus 39        | <b>Exodus 40</b> |

# Introduction to the book of EXODUS

**Introduction: This is semi-finished at the end of the Exodus series!**

**Charts, Short Doctrines and Maps**

**The Location of the Sons of Israel During Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (a graphic)**

**Authorship:** See Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties. p. 112 concerning Mosaic authorship.

## Outline:

- I. Prelude to the Exodus
  - A. Historical introduction Exodus 1
  - B. Moses early life and training Exodus 2
  - C. The calling of Moses Exodus 3-4:19
  - D. Moses travels back to Egypt and meets his people, the Jews, and his brother, Aaron. Exodus 4:20-31
  - E. Moses before the Pharaoh Exodus 5-
- II. The exodus out of Egypt
- III. Beginning of the desert wandering

Exodus could be divided up by location as well: [1] *Exodus 1:1 to Exodus 12:36, in Egypt*; [2] *Exodus 12:37 to Exodus 18:27, to Sinai*; [3] *Exodus 19:1 to Exodus 40:38, at Sinai*.<sup>1</sup>

**The Great Metaphor of Israel being taken out of Egypt:** As I was in the middle of my study of Psalm 47, I suddenly connected it to the history of Israel. Then, a lot of *why's* suddenly began to be answered. God has Jacob and his family in the Land of Promise; why does He remove them from the Land of Promise, put them into Egypt, and then take them out? There are several reasons: (1) this is an unprecedented event in history, known to the entire world (both at that time and now). It was clear to the world that the God of Israel was more powerful than the gods of Egypt, the most powerful nation of the world at that time. (2) God then gave the Land of Promise to Israel, which involved the destruction of a variety of nations, show His superiority over their gods. Anyone outside the Land of Promise could hear about these events and recognize their God as the God of Creation, and believe in Him. (3) A great reason for God choosing these sets of events is also metaphorical. As men, we are born in subjection to sin with no way to remove ourselves from our slavery to sin. God makes Himself known to us and He takes those of us who believe in Him out of our slavery to sin.<sup>2</sup>

After this point, some men die in the desert, not appropriating to themselves by faith what God has promised. Some seize this promise and take all that God has for them (the Land of Promise) along with the many blessings

<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Constable *The Expository Notes of Dr. Constable*; ©2012; from e-sword, Genesis 11:27-50:26.

<sup>2</sup> This does not mean that we no longer sin, by the way.

which God has for them in this life. This is the generation of believers who believe God after salvation and advance spiritually. In the book of Exodus through the book of Numbers, we will see the first generation of Jews, which I will call Genesis X, who fail time and time again and who all die the sin unto death in the desert, never entering the Land of Canaan which God has promised them (well, they reach this land but they back down).

The next generation, the generation of promise, those who came out of Egypt being 20 and younger, believe God and believe His promises, and they will take the Land of Promise and all there which God has for them (houses they did not build, wells they did not dig, a land flowing with milk and honey). As believers in Jesus Christ, we are taken out of slavery to sin, but then we have a life to lead after that. Some believers fail time and time again; some believers do not believe God, and some are taken out of this life by the sin unto death. Others believe God and seize what He has promised, and end up with great prosperity and blessing.

So one does not overly romanticize the generation of promise (those who followed Moses and eventually took the land of Canaan), they will fail on many occasions (even Moses will fail on a significant occasion). There is no perfection in our life on earth, apart from the plan of God, which is always moving forward, whether we are onboard or not.

**Theory Regarding Egypt:** One of the problems in the exodus is the lack of corroboration of evidence from Egypt. We have no Egyptian records indicating that there was this great exodus of Jews from their land; nor one of the great devastation which occurred. In fact, we do not even know which pharaoh was the pharaoh of the exodus. I've got a theory, and I do not know how accurate this is, but: the Egyptians suffered an embarrassingly decisive defeat at the hands of their slaves, the Israelites. What occurred was unprecedented in human history. Slave revolts do not result in the complete decimation of the country of their masters. There is no indication that the pharaoh died—only his firstborn—my thinking is that this was such an embarrassment that the Egyptian government did everything possible to cover it up and to remove it from their history. It is even possible that the pharaoh of the exodus was expunged from Egyptian history and the pharaoh's on both sides were given longer reigns to take up the slack. We have seen history rewritten in the United States and we have definitely seen it rewritten in the Soviet Union—so it is not a stretch to think that perhaps the rewriting of history has been done before and that is what occurred here. Also, Satan does not want records of this. He does not want us to clearly look back and see the power of God; and Satan certainly played a big part in the history and culture of Egypt, being closely tied into its religion. So, a combination of Satanic influence and human and national pride would result in events of the exodus being expunged from the history of Egypt.

We do know that the history of Joseph was removed, so that a pharaoh arose who did not know Joseph. So, removing things from history can be done. Even in our schools in the United States, I grew up thinking that all of our founding fathers were gnostics and that FDR saved the United States from the Great Depression. Both of those were *facts* that I was taught; and both of them are false.

### **Fundamental Questions for the Book of Exodus:**

[Just because these questions occur to me, this does not mean that I will be able to successfully answer them]

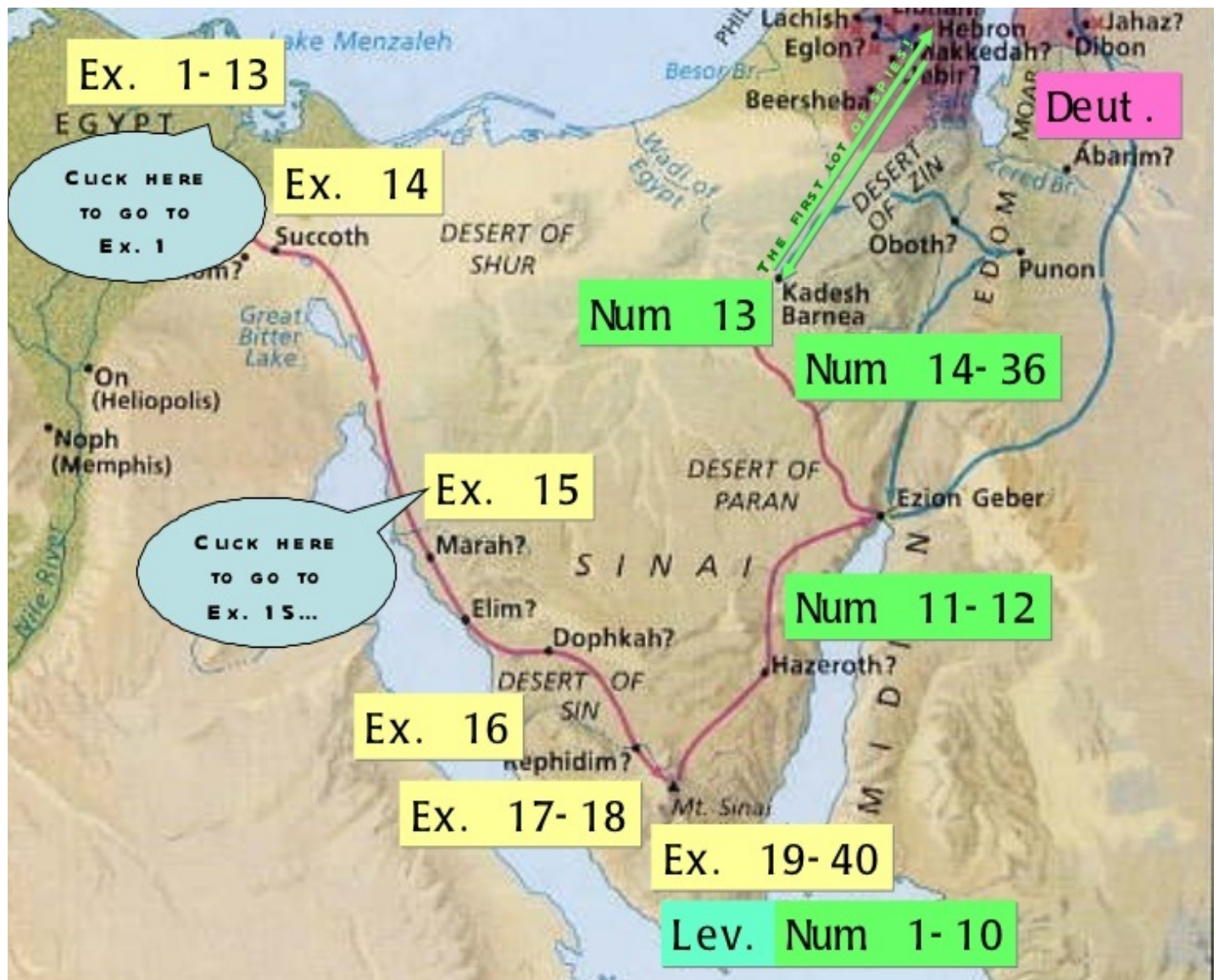
What did it mean for God to harden Pharaoh's heart? Did God actually change his volition?

Were the plagues upon Israel miracles or natural occurrences or a combination of the two?

What did God mean in Exodus 6:2–3: *And God spoke to Moses, and said to him, I am YHWH: and I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty; but by my name YHWH I wasn't known to them.*

Why were all of the plagues necessary? Was there not a way to remove Israel from Egypt miraculously?

**The Location of the Sons of Israel During Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy** (a graphic); from [slideshare.net](https://www.slideshare.net); accessed June 20, 2016.





**Exodus 1** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

# Exodus 1

## Exodus 1:1–22

### Outline of Chapter 1:

- vv. 1–7 **Introduction to the Israelite population in Egypt**
- vv. 8–14 **Pharaoh's first solution: enslave the Jews**
- vv. 15–21 **Pharaoh's second solution: command the midwives to kill the Israelite male children**
- v. 22 **Pharaoh's third solution: cast the Israelite male infants into the Nile**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** The book of Exodus picks up 200–300 years after the death of Joseph and follows seamlessly the history of Israel in Egypt for another century or so. This chapter begins somewhere between 1650–1550 B.C. The Exodus took place between 1550–1440 B.C.

At some point in time, Joseph as a part of Egyptian history, which history has been lost to the Egyptians entirely. Whatever happened, whether the Hyksos dynasty followed Joseph by 50–100 years, destroying most of the records of all recent rulers, or whether this was just lost to that time period, we do not know, but there comes a point where the Egyptians recognized that they had a substantial non-Egyptian population residing in the midst of Egypt, growing incredibly fast. One of Pharaoh's solutions is to enslave the entire Jewish population. When this does not stem the tide of Jewish birth, this Pharaoh or another unofficially orders the midwives to kill the children of the Israelites. When this does not have the achieved result expected, Pharaoh then issues an official decree, demanding the death of all male Jewish babies.

### Introduction to the Israelite Population in Egypt

Genesis leaves Joseph, the Prime Minister of Egypt (placed and promoted there by God), in a coffin. Joseph first came to Egypt as a slave, sold into slavery by his older brothers. Through a series of unusual events, he became the second-highest official in Egypt.

He had brought with him to Egypt, under God's direction, his brothers. The book of Exodus begins with a conjunction. It is a continuation of the previous Genesis. This conjunction means that it does not stand by itself. Exodus lists the sons of Jacob, also called Israel:

**And these are the names of the sons of Israel, who came into Egypt—with Jacob did each man and his household had come—Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.** [Exodus 1:1-4]

Jacob was their father. Jesus Christ renamed him Israel in Genesis 32:28. The sons are named in the same order as they are found in Genesis 35:22b-26. However, they are grouped differently. Whereas the author of that portion of Genesis (Joseph or Jacob) may have grouped them strictly as to their mother, the author of Exodus, Moses, groups them slightly differently. Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah are grouped together, all of whom are sons of Leah, who eventually (after the time of Moses) settled in the southern portion of the land of Canaan (with the exception of the tribe of Levi, who was scattered amongst the other tribes, as the Jews are scattered today throughout the world). We will learn more about these four tribes than the others in the remainder of the Law.

Issachar and Zebulun were born to Leah later in life after Jacob sired children through Leah and Rachel's personal servants, Bilhah and Zilpah. Leah later seduced her husband Jacob and bore him three more children.

Benjamin was the last child born to Jacob through Rachel when Rachel died in childbirth (Joseph was the first). Dan and Naphtali were Bilhah's children, and Gad and Asher were Zilpah's.

**And it came to pass that all the persons who were descended from [lit., going out of the loins of] Jacob were seventy-five souls—but Joseph was already in Egypt. So then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation.** [Ex. 1:5-6]

For the number 75 rather than 70, see Norman Geisler and William Nix; *A General Introduction to the Bible*; Chicago; Moody Press, ©1968, p. 262. Consider my examination first, and then look back and take from there.

The word generation, *dōwr* (τῆ) [pronounced *dohr*] is used in a number of different ways in Scripture. It can mean *a period of time, a generation, an age* and even *a dwelling, a circle, a ball*; it can refer to a time in the past or in the future and to a particular group of people. In this case, it was a reference to the generations which Joseph saw. We are told that he saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons, so this refers to Joseph's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and their contemporaries. This would place us roughly 100–150 years past the end of Genesis 50.

The Jews grew in population from seventy to two million. This indicates a lot of right man right woman relationships where there is a great deal of affection and love between the couples. Population growth conforms to the equations  $A_t = A_0 e^{kt}$  where  $A_0$  is the original population,  $A_t$  is the population after  $t$  years, and  $k$  is a constant ( $e \approx 2.71$ ). If we assume that a family grows from two to seven over a period of forty years (that is, they have an average of five children in each family) then the population constant  $k \approx .0313$ . Or, if we take Jacob's family as typical, we have, over a period of fifty years, twelve children resulting from five adults; and by that time, three of the children have between them another two children, our population constant would be approximately 0.0277. These two population constants give us a time period of 300–400 years. Jacob would have been more successful and therefore more prolific (since he had his wives' maids) than the average family. This all mathematically squares with the Bible's time table of 430 years in Egypt<sup>3</sup> (Ex. 12:40).

Joseph had been put on the throne of Egypt by God. Because he was second-in-command in all of Egypt, he was able to watch over his people and to protect them. However, there came a time when God's geographical will for the Jews changed, so God caused the circumstances to change. After a few generations, what has occurred in the past is, at best, history, and at worst, forgotten. Government leadership was not perpetuated in the Jewish sojourners.

**But the sons of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly [lit., swarmed] and multiplied and became extremely strong (or, numerous)—that the land was filled with them.** [Exodus 1:7]

We have a polysyndeton here—a repetition of *and*'s to indicate the incredible population growth of the Jews. Combined with this, we have a synonymia [pronounced *syn-o-NYM-i-a*], which is a repetition of synonyms. The writer here has told us in five ways about the population explosion of the Jews. This indicates growth which even the author Moses finds surprising.

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<sup>3</sup> Some think that the 430 years includes Abram's sojourning in Egypt (see Genesis 12:10–15:13), but I doubt that

Shârats (שָׂרָט) [pronounced *shaw-RATS*], translated *increased abundantly* means *to swarm, or abound*. It is also translated *breed, creep or move*. It is in the Qal imperfect. The same word is used in Genesis 1:20, 21 7:21 8:17. Simply put, the Jews had a population explosion.

*Multiplied* is also in the Qal imperfect and it means *to multiply, to become many*. The imperfect means uncompleted action, meaning that during the time this passage refers to, they were still multiplying. They were in God's geographical will and we receive blessings as a natural result of being in His will. At first, Joseph, one of their own, was on the throne as the Prime Minister. However, all things are subject to change. It was time for them to return to the land of Canaan and they will require a lot of prodding.

People often complain that they do not understand God's will or cannot determine what God's will is for their life. The Jews knew some portion of their heritage and yet they were very stiff-necked. God had to subject them to extremely unpleasant conditions in order to get them to leave Egypt.

Most people take a very dim view of slavery, particularly in the United States; however, God often used slavery to achieve His purposes. Here, a very evil, unjust brand of slavery was imposed upon the Israelites for the specific purpose of causing them to get off their duffs and move into God's geographical will. Had their misery from being enslaved not been intensified, then they would not have left Egypt under Moses. Because of the slavery which took place in the United States, there were millions of black people who were saved and will spend eternity in God's presence.

From this, we know that there are two ways: there is the easy way or the hard way. God has provided His Word and therein we find our direction in life. It is in His Word where we discover God's plan for our life; His will for our life. If we refuse to know Him and His will through His Word, then we learn it the hard way—as did the Jews in the Exodus.

Over time, anti-Semitism developed in Egypt. Under the Pharaoh who put Joseph into power, there was very little anti-Semitism. The Pharaoh put Joseph into power due to his abilities and his race and background were not issues to Pharaoh (he was known to be a foreigner at this time; no Egyptian understood Joseph to be a new race of people). However, in almost any country where there are Jews, we eventually find anti-Semitism. It is Satan's plan to try to wipe out the Jewish race so that the promises made by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could not be fulfilled. Even in areas where the Jews resemble everyone else, and there will still be pockets of anti-Semitism. On the surface level, it is one of the most unreasonable prejudices found. The Jews are generally hard-working, agreeable, prosperous and peaceful. Any nation which treats them fairly is blessed and any nation which discriminates against them or persecutes them is reduced in power and often eliminated from history.

We had this doctrine earlier in Genesis 13 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### The Doctrine of Antisemitism

- 1) Although the term antisemitism comes from Shem, a son of Noah, the father of both Arabs and Jews, it is properly applied to Jews. The term “anti-Semitic” is used to mean intolerance, hatred, prejudice, opposition to, and persecution of the Jews.
- 2) Abraham (Abram) is descended from Shem. Genesis 11:10–27
- 3) The Jewish race was founded upon spiritual regeneration, which is illustrated by circumcision. Genesis 15:6 17:10–14
- 4) There are 3 overlapping categories of Jews today:
  - i. Racial Jews: those who are descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
  - ii. Religious Jews: those who practice Judaism.
  - iii. Regenerate Jews: those Jews who have believed in Jesus Christ.
- 5) Antisemitism was first described and predicted in Genesis 3:15a: God said to Satan, “[I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed.](#)” This great hostility is applied to Jews, believers in Jesus Christ (Christians) and to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The Doctrine of Antisemitism

- 6) That some men would revile Jews is implied in Genesis 12, where God first spoke to Abram: “Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, **I will curse those who treat you with contempt**, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (Genesis 12:1b–3).
- 7) The two most recent illustrations of extremely vile antisemitism are the holocaust and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict today.
  - i. Adolf Hitler sponsored an unimaginably inhuman attack upon the Jews, where they were first gathered into ghettos, and then gathered into camps, where 6 million were killed. It is less than a century later, and some people both deny and celebrate the holocaust (most notably, the little dictator of Iran). The fact that this can be lied about and millions of people can buy into this lie is because, Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44).
  - ii. Although the Jews occupy approximately 0.2% of the Middle East, and have lived in this general area continuously for 4000 years (since Abraham), various peoples throughout the Middle East act as if this was the most awful incursion to ever occur. Palestinians, currently ruled, to some decree by Hamas (whose charter calls for the obliteration of Israel), are involved in hundreds of small rocket attacks against Israel. In the past 50 years, Israel has fought several wars to hold onto this land.
- 8) Throughout human history, there are a myriad of examples of antisemitism.
  - i. In ancient history, nations and peoples, like Babylon and Assyria, were destroyed for their antisemitism. Persia and Greece both were on the rise during times when their leaders had a benevolent attitude toward the Jews.
  - ii. In more recent times, Germany and the U.S.S.R. were both diminished as nations because of their fierce antisemitism.
  - iii. Further back in history, Spain, once a leading nation in the world, became antisemitic, and became a 3<sup>rd</sup>-rate nation, a status it has maintained since the crusades.
  - iv. Almost all Arab nations are antisemitic, and, despite their great per-capita wealth, are the most wretched nations in the world. The United Arab Emirates is one of the few nations where capitalism is more important than antisemitism, and they have enjoyed great prosperity (although, there is certainly prejudice against Jews there as well).
- 9) The United States has received great blessings as a nation for several reasons (we are the most blessed nation in human history):
  - i. A huge number of people in the United States believe in Jesus Christ.
  - ii. There is a reasonable number of mature believers in the United States. This has resulted in a great deal of Bible teaching, evangelization and missionary activity, all of which originates in the United States.
  - iii. The race and religion of the Jews is not an issue in the United States. We do not practice antisemitism as a nation.
  - iv. Israel is our ally.
- 10) This does not mean that we ought to treat Jews any differently than anyone else. That is, when it comes to hiring someone, recommending someone for a job or school, working with someone, we evaluate them based upon their strengths and weaknesses, and their racial or religious heritage has nothing to do with it.
- 11) The Second Advent concludes anti-Semitism in human and angelic history. Zech. 12:1-9 Rev. 19:11-21 Psalm 53

### References:

<http://www.gracebiblechurchbaytown.org/doctrine/antisemitism.PDF>

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/anti-semitism.html>

R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s *Anti-Semitism* which can be ordered for free [here](#) (go to **General Information** for ordering). There is a great deal of history, both ancient and modern, which Bob covers in detail.



We have a difficult time placing a date on this time period. I have heard opinions which vary from 1800's B.C to as recently as 1100's B.C. We do not have absolutely confirmed reports of the exodus in Egyptian history. We do have mention from time to time of 'Apiru (or Hapiru) peoples in the Delta region. Whereas this could be the Hebrew people, it may be a word for any outside tribal group residing within the borders of Egypt. The Hebrew word for *Hebrew* is 'Ib<sup>o</sup>rîy (יִבְרִי) [pronounced *gib-REE*] and we first saw it used in conjunction with Abraham; after that, it was never used until Joseph's stay in Egypt. In the Egyptian historical documents which we possess, there are several documents which refer to Hapiru peoples populating Egypt; however, these are likely different peoples living in Egypt between the years 2000 and 1200 B.C. This is simply a general word which was applied to foreigners, which eventually became synonymous with the Jewish people. It is possible that this word was first applied to the Hebrews in the early documents and then came into general usage for any and all displaced peoples in the land of Egypt.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Pharaoh's First Solution: Enslave the Jews

**Then a new king, who had not known Joseph, arose over Egypt.** [Ex. 1:8]

All of the kings of Egypt are referred to in the Bible by the title *Pharaoh*. This Pharaoh is not the Pharaoh of Exodus 5. The Pharaoh in this verse arose two to eight generations after Joseph. A country requires very little time to degenerate. A country can go from its highest to its lowest point in one generation (take the WW II and the post WW II generation in America; followed almost immediately by the hippie generation, who brought serious degeneracy into our midst). When Joseph died, his position of authority was not perpetuated by another Jew, therefore the Jews lost their position of partial power in Egypt. This was not necessarily a matter of anti-Semitism as we saw the Joseph was head and shoulders above his brothers, his father and his grandfather in the realm of spiritual growth and orientation to God's plan and to His grace (although Jacob, his father, appeared to experience some spiritual growth near the end of his life). So it is possible for the Pharaoh of Joseph and his sons to recognize the innate ability of Joseph; but to also see that this is lacking in his brothers.

This text reads *arose over against Egypt*. Rather than saying there *arose a king over Egypt who did not know Joseph*, this king is qualified by the adjective *châdâsh* (חָדָשׁ) [pronounced *khaw-DAWSH*] means *new, fresh*. This word which is so common in our vocabulary, is found 50 times in the Old Testament. The preposition is 'al (עַל) [pronounced *gahl*] and it means *upon, on account of, concerning, together with, beyond, over, to, towards, against*. What is possibly implied here is an imposition; and definitely elevation. The verb is *qûwm* (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*] and it means *to arise, to stand, to stand up*; however, this is in the Qal imperfect, indicating a process, not a completed event, which could mean a dynasty. None of this is absolutely conclusive, but there is a strong indication that this is a new, foreign dynasty rising over Egypt. A reasonable guess would be that this is the Hyksos dynasty **or** the end of the Hyksos dynasty. The latter seems very probable since an Egyptian control would automatically be suspicious of foreigners.

**So he said unto his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are too many and mighty [lit., strong due to numbers] for us! Come, let us show ourselves wise with regard to them—so that they do not multiply so much that it would come to pass when war befalls us that they also shall join themselves unto them who hate us, and shall make war upon us, and then go up out of the land."** [Exodus 1:9–10]

This Pharaoh, who did not know Joseph, looked upon the Jews as an infiltration and not as a blessing. Obviously, he was not a student of Egyptian history. As was mentioned in our study of Genesis, we do not have any historical documents from Egypt for several hundred years, around the time of Joseph's rule. It is possible that this is the first Hyksos dynasty king—a foreign king who has taken over Egypt. The phrasing of this verse would easily allow

for this to be from a foreign dynasty.<sup>4</sup> In any case, if these records were destroyed and say 100 years had passed or this is a foreign king with no sense of Egyptian history, then this Pharaoh would have no way of knowing who Joseph was or how the Jews came to be there. This Pharaoh's concern was to control this foreign population, which seemed to grow much faster than the Egyptian population (which is the result of the lack of right man/right woman relationships).

According to this passage, the Jews were not large enough of a population at this point to be a threat to Egypt in terms of a revolution, but they were large enough and indigenous enough that if another nation came to make war with Egypt, their potential alliance with the Jews could be the determining factor in the outcome of such an attack. This Pharaoh will set the stage, but will be long gone by the time of the exodus out of Egypt. His plan of action was to enslave the Jew:

**So they set over them chiefs of tribute [or, forced labor], to the end they might humiliate them with their burden—and they built store-cities for Pharaoh even Pithom and Raamses.**

[Ex. 1:11]

Most translations use the word *taskmasters* rather than *princes of tribute* (the literal meaning). It is two Hebrew words: *sar* (שָׂר) [pronounced *sar*] which means *Lord or prince* and the other is the word *maḥ* (מַח) [pronounced *mah*] which properly means *burden*, and has come to mean *tribute, tax or tribute in the form of forced labor*. That is, the Jews were expected to serve the Egyptians with slave labor as a form of tribute or tax (this in exchange for living in Egypt). *Burden* is the plural word *ḥib'loth* (חִבְלוֹת) [pronounced *sihb-LOHTH*] and it refers particularly to the heavy burdens placed upon the Israelites by Egypt. This word is found only in a few passages in Exodus (Exodus 2:11 5:4, 5 6:6, 7) and could be a blend of Egyptian and Hebrew. Nevertheless, it was likely a word first used when placed under slave labor and never used again after the exodus.

The term "store-cities" is rendered elsewhere as "treasure cities" or "storage cities." It is actually two words: the feminine plural noun *miḥ'kênôwth* (מִיחְכְּנֹוֹת) [pronounced *mihḥ-kehn-OATH*] and it means *treasure, storage, supply* and the feminine plural noun construct *'ârîym* (עִירִים) [pronounced *gaw-REEM*] which simply means *cities, towns, encampments*. The construct means that it modifies or is closely related to the previous noun, so together they means *cities of treasures, storage cities*. The Greek word used is "fortified cities." The two would go hand in hand; if a city was used to store a lot of Egypt's wealth, then it would very likely be well-fortified. The Egyptians were degenerate but not stupid.

Pithom is mentioned only here in the Bible, but it is definitely a proper name from Egypt from at least 1300 B.C. on. Its location is disputed. Raamses [pronounced *RĀ-ăm-sez*] was the city where the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> dynasties resided (this is circa the first half of the second millennium B.C.—not too far off from this time period). It is located in the northeast delta area, but its exact location is disputed also.

**But the more they were humiliating them, the more were they multiplying, and the more were they breaking forth—so they were filled with alarm, because of the sons of Israel.**

[Exodus 1:12]

The Piel imperfect of *'ânâh* (הָנִיחַ) [pronounced *gaw-NAW*] means *to look down, to browbeat, to afflict, to humiliate*. In the intensive Piel stem, we are being told that the Egypt resorted to prejudice and viciousness. Slavery is not a horrible institution; however, when it is abused, as it is here, only being in God's will with one's right-man or right-woman can counteract the affects of its cruelty.

The Egyptians tried to confine the Israelites to specific areas, to forced labor, to a humiliated state of being; yet the Jews continued to *pârats* (פָּרַט) [pronounced *paw-RATS*], which means *to break out, to break forth, to spread out*. Because of the tremendous population explosion that the Jews enjoyed because of their good marital situations, the Egyptians could not confine them in any way. In fact, they, the slave owners and taskmasters feared Israel in general because their population growth far exceeded that of the free Egyptians.

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<sup>4</sup> See Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible* p. 84, footnote

**And the Egyptians rigorously made the sons of Israel serve with [unusually brutal] rigor; and embittered their lives with harsh service, in clay and in bricks, and in all manner of service in the field—all their service, wherein they served them under [unusually brutal] cruelty. [Exodus 1:13–14]**

Vv. 13 and 14 contain the same two words. At the end of v. 13, we have the Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural of 'abad (עָבַד) [pronounced *gaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHD*] and it means *to work, to serve*. The Hiphil is the causative stem, meaning the Egyptians caused the Israelites to serve them. In v. 14, this verb is in the Qal perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, so the subject of the verb is the Israelites and this verse looks upon this as a completed action. The way in which they caused the Israelites to serve them was *with rigor*. We have the preposition b<sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced *beh*] and this means *in, into, at, by, on, with, within*. Here, *with* is the most likely translation. Perek (פֶּרֶק) [pronounced *PEH-rehk*] and it means *harshness, severity*; its root word meaning is *to break, to fracture*. Therefore the translations which merely state that the Jews served *with rigor* leaves the cruelty and severity out of the meaning, which certainly belongs here. I have translated those last two words somewhat differently in both verses, one corresponding to the causative stem and the other to the active stem of 'abad.

The Jews occupied the land of Goshen, which was only a short distance away from all the building projects that the Egyptian Pharaoh's had going. King Rameses II (the Great) was a man who was deceitful and had a passion for building. His name is found on an incredible number of temples, public buildings—a number which are beyond human imagination (and these are the ones which we have uncovered). After a great deal of detective work, it became clear that many of these buildings had been built centuries before Rameses II; he just saw to it that his monogram was carved on all of them. However, it is very likely that the archeological findings of Professor Pierre Montet of Strasbourg between 1929 and 1932, with Rameses II's stamp were likely created during his reign. In this area, which is near the present fishing village named San there were found a very large number of statues, sphinxes, columns and fragments of buildings, all with his name on them. The Pharaoh's in general had a great lust for building and the Israelites were located quite nearby in the land of Goshen, on a few miles south of the new capital.

The Jews themselves were bright and learned, yet the Egyptians forced upon them hard-labor, designed for slaves. Still, because these Jews had a relationship with the one God of the universe, because they had found their right woman, and because some of them have doctrine, they did not only bear up under these pressures but they thrived. Imagine how difficult it would be to be involved in various forms of mental labor and then be suddenly thrown into hard, physically-demanding labor. This is hot, hard, and physical labor, the kind that would cause many men to buckle under. The Jews, among other things, actually built two fortified storage cities, which would certainly demand a lot of stone and brick. With today's modern equipment, that is difficult work. Then it was strenuous beyond what most men today could imagine. This took patience and trust. They waited upon God's perfect timing. In fact, they waited possibly two centuries and served Egypt as slaves for that long, waiting upon God. There is no mention of revolution or of rebellion. The Jews endured this servitude. God had not directed them to do otherwise. However, what occurred in the Jews was a certain type of mental attitude caused by being under generations of slavery. Because of this, God had to destroy that generation like a cancer before they infected their sons and daughters with their slave mentality.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Pharaoh's Second Solution: Command the Midwives to Kill the Israelite Male Children

**Then spoke the king of Egypt to the Hebrew midwives—of whom the name of the one was Shiprah and the name of the other was Puah; [Exodus 1:15]**

For this population, there were not only two midwives. There has been a hierarchy set up of midwives, with two women in charge, Shiprah and Puah. It would not make sense for there to be this few midwives for a population of two million Jews, nor would it make sense for all the midwives to be directly under the Pharaoh. The midwives

reported to Shiprah and Puah and they reported directly to Pharaoh. In any large city, there is one district attorney—however, he is not prosecuting every criminal case. Under him you have assistant district attorneys. Don't think that those in the ancient world were so backward as to not understand levels of authority. Gleason gives these two famous women the title of administrative superintendents over the obstetrical guild of the Hebrew community.<sup>5</sup>

**He said, "When you act as midwives unto the Hebrew women, then you shall observe its gender [lit., look upon the birthstool]—If it is a son, then shall you kill it. But if it is a daughter, then shall it live. [Ex. 1:16]**

There are several things to note in this passage. First of all, there has been a passage of time from v. 11 to v. 15. The Jews endure slavery, they build two fortified storage cities and they continue to multiply as a race. This would cover at least a generation at least. My point here is that this is probably a new Pharaoh. This could be two or three or more generations later. Each Pharaoh warns the next Pharaoh about the Jews; or they know why the Jews are under slavery and each new Pharaoh watches them with interest. This is a new tact. Insofar as God is concerned, one anti-Semitic Pharaoh is no more important than the next, so God the Holy Spirit does not even bother to record either Pharaoh's name. In fact, there might be four or five Pharaoh's in this book and God does not distinguish one from the other. At the same time, God the Holy Spirit records the names of the midwives and their names have come down to us almost 4,000 years later. Notice the difference in their stations in life, the midwives as versus the Pharaohs, yet we can only guess as to who each Pharaoh is and God the Holy Spirit has recorded for all eternity the names of the midwives. God has a much different value system than we have. Fame and power in the human realm mean absolutely nothing to God. Personal integrity and day to day choices is much more important. How we treat the Jew is important to God.

The names of these midwives mean "Beauty" and "Splendor." Since God occasionally renames those that are His (which, incidentally, is not something that we do ourselves), this could be His viewpoint of these two women and these would be their names throughout eternity. It is also very likely that these two women did have a place of authority over the midwives throughout all of Egypt, as it was unlikely that there were just two midwives. Or they were the midwives for that particular area. In either case, they were believers in Jesus Christ and they had enough doctrine to realize when they were to obey the civil authorities over them and when they should disobey those authorities.

Also note that this is not an official decree here, as slavery was. The Pharaoh went directly to the midwives and this was to be done surreptitiously. "Here is what I want you ladies to do," he said. So, this is not a law or a decree.

**But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt said unto them—but let the male children live. Then called the king of Egypt for the midwives and said to them, "Wherefore have you done this thing—that you should let the male children live?" And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, "Because not like the Egyptian women are the Hebrew women—for [possibly, but] they are full of life; and before the midwife can come in unto them they have given birth." [Exodus 1:17–19]**

The Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine plural of *châyâh* (חָיָה) [pronounced *khaw-YAW*] means *to live, to revive*. Although the midwives are the subject of the verb, therefore *causing* the action, this is *causing* by way of permission; therefore the use of the word *let*.

Even Pharaoh realized that this was such an outrageous proposition that (1) he could not make it official policy and (2) he could not have the babies murdered right in front of their mothers. So Pharaoh went to the midwives directly and give them an unofficial directive. The midwives, while assisting the Hebrew women, were to kill the male babies but not to be so tactless as to do it right in front of them. They were to deliver the babies and tell them that the baby had been born dead if it was a male. What the midwives have done here is they have lied to the Pharaoh as opposed to lying to the mother. Even the Pharaoh realized that you cannot kill a woman's baby in

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<sup>5</sup> *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, p. 131.

front of her. So their story to the Pharaoh was that the babies were born before they could get there and born clearly alive. Therefore there was nothing that the midwives could do. It is also possible that they did not lie to Pharaoh—they could have intentionally arrived too late to the births.

In general, the Bible does not encourage civil disobedience. Paul makes it very clear in Romans 13 that we are to obey the civil authorities over us. Jesus Christ has told us to pay our taxes ("**Render unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's.**"). However, this is a situation which demands that the midwives, as believers in Jesus Christ, oppose the Pharaoh, and, in this situation, possibly even lie to the Pharaoh. They were not disobeying a lawful decree or an official policy. This order was directly from the Pharaoh; it was his idea (although it may have been suggested by one of his underlings) but he did not enact this into law.

Disobeying the law is generally not condoned by God; however, in this situation, these women are not disobeying the law. This is akin to a government official (even the president) commanding a woman to have sex with him, or commanding someone to assassinate another official; or demanding that we perjure ourselves in court on his behalf. Pharaoh has put them in the situation where they must either disobey his intentions or disobey the will of God. They chose to disregard Pharaoh's mandates. Therefore, their behavior is not only condoned, but these women have their names recorded forever in God's Word whereas we do not even know the exact names of the Pharaoh's involved. At best, we can make some educated guesses using archeology.

For some people, this is all the light that they need. They take a concept like this and somehow manage to distort it into bombing abortion clinics and terrorizing those who work for abortion clinics; becoming pacifists under any and all circumstances and refusing to serve their country; refusing to pay all or a portion of their taxes; maintaining an arsenal of unregistered weapons; etc. Before you ever disobey the law in any way, you need to be certain that you are on firm Biblical ground, having been taught carefully verse-by-verse on the topic at hand. Taking three or four verses out of context to support your view is not good enough. Notice exactly the action that these two midwives took: they were unofficially ordered by Pharaoh to surreptitiously kill babies that they had just delivered and they did not kill any babies. They refused to do something which was clearly wrong. And, instead of lying to dozens of mothers (which would have been necessary), they lied to Pharaoh. Rather than obey Pharaoh, they feared God.

A minor problem must be dealt with here. We have two midwives serving a population of 2,000,000 Jews in the midst of a population explosion. This does not seem possible. Well, in fact, it is not possible. According to Gleason Archer in his *Difficulties of the Bible*, it was common for the Egyptian to set up bureaucratic chain of command with any governmental agency or activity. We saw this with Joseph. Pharaoh okayed his plan to maintain grain repositories and then put Joseph in charge of it. Joseph would have hired a staff under him to handle this as he would have been the chief administrator of this project. The two midwives named here were the ones who were heads over all the Jewish midwives in the land of Goshen. They were the link between this medical service and the Pharaoh.

**So then God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became extremely numerous. And it came to pass because the midwives feared God, that he gave them households [and families].** [Ex. 1:20-21]

In v. 20, the population explosion continues. We find the word *waxed* in the KJV and it is old English for *became*. The Hebrew word *ʾātsam* (אַצַּם) [pronounced *gaw-ZAHM*] means "to become mighty or numerous." Probably, in this case, the best way to understand it is that the Jews became mighty because there were so many of them.

Bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced *BAH-yith*], in v. 21, pertains to *family, house or household*. This literally says that *God gave them houses*. This is a metonymy where house stands for the accessories of a home—a husband and children. The midwives were often unmarried and therefore without children (as this implies) and in their work, they tended to meet mostly married couples where the wife was about to give birth. God brought to them their right men and provided for them both a household and family. This tells you that it does not matter what your



vocation is or where you spend your time; God will bless us with that right person as long as we are patient and remain in His will.

In the Hebrew, one of the equivalent words for salvation was *to fear* or *yâre'* (אָרֵי) [pronounced yaw-RAY] and it means both "to fear" and "to revere." When we find this phrase in the OT, we are speaking of people who have believed in Jesus Christ. In the OT times, deities were often very country-specific. We have a similar situation today. In certain areas, such as India, we have people who mostly believe in Hinduism and in the East we have Buddhism. These are no different (and no better) than pagan religions of the old world. However, there is but one true God and there are not many roads to find Him but just one (as Jesus said, "**Narrow is the gate and few that are that find it.**" and "**I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man comes to the Father but by me.**"). Here, these midwives believe in Jesus Christ, the God of Israel. Furthermore, God recognizes their correct judgement and blesses them for it. Before you engage in any sort of civil disobedience, do not use this passage as an excuse, and make certain that Romans 13 has been thoroughly exegeted for you. Christian activism is a trap and a detrimental to the cause of Christ.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Pharaoh's Third Solution: Cast the Israelite Male Infants into the Nile

**Then Pharaoh commanded to all his people, saying, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews, into the river shall you cast him; but every daughter shall you allow to live." [Ex. 1:22]**

Although *to the Hebrews* is not found in *Textus Receptus*, this phrase is in the western Samaritan, the Vulgate, and in several targums. Context implies this phrase even if it was not originally written here, but most modern translations insert it.

It is at this point that Pharaoh issues the official decree. He has ordered the murder of thousands of baby Hebrew boys. Here, civil disobedience is appropriate. Notice the hand of Satan behind all of this. The seed of the woman, who will crush Satan's head, shall come through the Jewish race; therefore, it is one of Satan's plans to kill the male children. Also, it has always been Satan's attempt to amalgamate the Jewish race into the population as a whole. If there is no Jewish race, then God's promises to them cannot be fulfilled. The Pharaoh has similar motives (although he has certainly been influenced by Satan). With the large male Jewish population—particularly as slaves—they could revolt at any time, which would be a messy and distressful situation. It is not that the Egyptians could not handle the Jews in war (at that point in time) but that this would disrupt the Pharaoh's rule and engage his army in what would amount to be a civil war. Furthermore, as a male, he doesn't mind having the Jewish women around and it would not be a problem if they were integrated into the Egyptian race. Satan has influenced Pharaoh to both destroy the Jewish race by killing the male population and this could in turn cause them to amalgamate into the general population.

**Exodus 2** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 2

### Exodus 2:1–25

**Introduction:** Chapter 2 covers the birth of Moses and his young life in the palace. We are told very little about this time in his life—as royalty in training—although Moses was undoubtedly the greatest genius in Egyptian royalty.

Moses had to choose between ruling over Egypt or ruling over a group of ungracious, stiff-necked Jews, as a part of God's plan for his life. It was not a choice made all at once; it involved many small decisions, many of which are made in this chapter. There are few one-shot decisions which impact your entire life for good; in fact only salvation comes to mind.

There are a number of one-shot decisions which cause you great grief throughout your life: the choice to engage in pre-marital sex the first time; the decision to try drugs; the decision to marry the wrong person. Almost all the correct things which affect your life for the best requires you to make many correct decisions: the decision to marry the right person is a result of hundreds of decisions; the decision not to take drugs is sometimes almost a daily choice for some people (as is the decision not to drink; or not to drink too much); spiritual growth is based upon several decisions every single day of your life, the most important of which is to take in God's Word as presented by a pastor-teacher. Moses makes many of those decisions in this chapter. We will follow him from birth to almost age 80 in one chapter. The rest of the *Torah* cover the last 40 years of his life.

#### Outline of Chapter 2:

- vv. 1–10 **Moses as a child**
- vv. 11–14 **Moses kills an Egyptian**
- vv. 15–18 **Moses flees Egypt and meets his future family**
- vv. 19–22 **Moses moves into the house of Reuel and takes one of his daughters to wife**
- vv. 23–25 **God remembers Israel**

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 2 **Moses as a Type of Christ**
- v. 10 **The Intelligence of Pharaoh's Daughter**
- v. 12 **Moses Commits Murder**
- v. 14 **The Familia Background of Moses**
- v. 25 **Why Did God Move Israel out of the Land of Canaan and into Egypt, and then out of Egypt and back to the Land of Canaan?**

### Moses as a Child

**And there went a man of the house of Levi, and married [lit., took] a daughter of Levi. [Exodus 2:1]**

The literal word here is *house*, but it stands for the lineage of Levi. Further, as we have seen in the past, the use of the word *daughter* means *female descendant*; but not necessarily *daughter* as we use the word.

We have already examined Levi. We have seen that in conjunction with Simeon, he had a tendency toward horrible cruelty. Together they were self-righteous and they over-reacted to a serious problem (the rape of their sister). However, even though there are a great many characteristics which are transmitted genetically, everyone has free will and people can choose not to be ruled by their emotions.

After a study of Genesis 34, we would never suspect that the Levites were to be priests to God. Because of certain denominations and one particular church (which will go unnamed), we have a lot of confused ideas about what the priesthood. We see them as religious figures; those who are closer to God in some ethereal way, those who have a particularly high ranking in the church. In the church age, the time in which we live, every believer is a priest. A priest is someone who represents man to God (whereas, conversely, the prophet represented God to man).

There has to be a go-between man and God—particularly between unregenerate man and God. This was made very clear in the Levitical priesthood laws, which we will study. They had to go through all kinds of purification rituals and there were many things which were forbidden them, because it would make them unclean. When a priest is unclean, he cannot be in God's presence or do God's service.

Man, at this time (and throughout the Jewish Age), could not go to God either; not directly. Man is unclean. We are all stained with our personal sins; we all have a sin nature; and we all have Adam's original sin imputed to us. Moses came from this stock; from the family which were to become priests to God on behalf of the Israelites.

Moses many times represented the Jews to God and argued on their behalf. Being a man who understood God's Word, Moses was able to do this. To head off any bizarre thinking; Moses argued with God and God was glorified because Moses understood God's Word. Moses did not come up with some kind of an argument that God hadn't thought of, changed God's mind, and then God did things differently. On occasion, it appears that is what is happening, but that is simply God communicating to us by way of the language of accommodation. However, God does not change His mind (or "repent," as per the old English term).

**And the woman conceived and bare a son; and she observed him, that he was a healthy child [with a good temperament], so she hid him three months. [Ex. 2:2]**

We have the Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of *râ'âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*] which is the simple word which means *to see*. However, it has a wide variety of applications; here, in the imperfect (continuous sense) and considering the object, I have translated this *observe*. We are not made aware of the nuts and bolts of this law—whether there was a bounty on these male Hebrew babies or whether Pharaoh had commissioned his own soldiers to enforce this law, but even in the land of Goshen, which was primarily Jewish, they still had to hide their infants.

Moses, in v. 2, is described via translation variously as *good*, *beautiful*, *goodly*, or *fine*. The Hebrew word is *ṭōwb* (טוֹב) [pronounced *tohb*<sup>h</sup>*v*] and it is used of men and women, describing them as *good*; but it seems to have a very wide range of meanings, translated variously as *precious*, *joyful*, *kindly*, *cheerful*, etc. It is important, in interpretation here, to remind ourselves that we are speaking of a three-month-old baby. At three months of age, few babies are into gross immorality and almost all of them appear precious to their mothers. In my very limited field of expertise here, I have noticed that what does separate some babies from others is their temperament and their health. Therefore, we might translate this, *healthy* (with a good temperament).

## Moses as a Type of Christ

It is important that we see that Moses is a type of Christ, as were many of those whose lives have been recorded in Scripture. A type is someone or something which foreshadows the person of Jesus Christ or His first advent (possibly his second advent, but I cannot come up with an example of that). We will take it in points:

1. The ruler of the land, influenced by Satan, tried to have Moses and the humanity of Jesus Christ killed almost at birth (Exodus 1:22 Matthew 2:16)
2. Both were divinely chosen deliverers (Exodus 3:7–10 Acts 7:25 John 3:16; check also Isaiah 61:1–2 Luke 4:18–19 2Corinthians 1:10 1Thess. 1:10)
3. Moses forsook the crown of Egypt for the Jews; our Lord forsook His place as Deity<sup>1</sup> in order to take on the form of a man (Hebrews 11:24–26 Phil. 2:6–8)
4. Both Moses and our Lord went to their people and their people did not receive them (Exodus 2:11–14 John 1:11 Acts 7:23–29 18:5–6 28:17–28)
5. When rejected, they both turned toward the Gentiles (Exodus 2:11–14 John 1:11 Acts 7:23–29 18:5–6 28:17–28)
6. During this time of rejection, both took a bride (Exodus 2:16–21 Matthew 12:14–21 2Corinthians 11:2 Eph. 5:30–32)
7. Moses represented the Jews before God; Jesus Christ represents us before God (Num. 14:11–20 1Timothy 2:5)
8. Moses interceded on behalf of the Jews and Jesus Christ intercedes on our behalf (Num. 14:11–20 John 17:1–26 Romans 8:33–34 Hebrews 7:25 1John 2:1)
9. Furthermore, Moses and Christ both acts as prophets (Acts 3:22–23); advocates (Exodus 32:31–35 1John 2:1–2); and leaders or kings (Deuteronomy 33:4–5 Isaiah 55:4 Hebrews 2:10)
10. After having been rejected, Moses and Christ both return to their people to be accepted as leaders (Exodus 4:29–31 Acts 15:14–17 Romans 11:24–26)
11. Moses presented the first covenant to the children of Israel, Jesus the second (Deuteronomy 4:1–2, 23 Hebrews 8:6 9:15)

<sup>1</sup> He did not forsake His Deity, however.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark [made out] of papyrus-reeds, and covered it over with bitumen and with pitch, and put therein the child and laid it among the papyrus reeds, upon the bank [lit., lip] of the river. Then did his sister station herself at a distance; to see what would be done with him. [Exodus 2:3–4]**

I very much enjoyed the KJV that the ark was covered with "slime and pitch." That would make a wonderful Mother's Day sermon. How many mothers are going to allow their child to get anywhere near "slime"? Perhaps the translator was the kind of man who liked to chide the ladies? The Greek word used in the Septuagint is ἄσφαλτος, which, transliterated, is asphaltos. This is bitumen, which boiled up from the subterranean fountains not far from Babylon and from the bottom of the Dead Sea. It hardens in the sun and is gathered up on the surface of the water (*Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies*). "Tar" is a better rendering. The bitumen is very easily melted and is very brittle when cold; however, when it is combined with the tar, it becomes a strong cement once it sets up. The ark itself was made from papyrus reeds, very plentiful along the banks of the river.

Did the mother of Moses have a source for this idea? She knew about Noah and his ark and how it saved him and his small family, the only uncorrupted humans of the antediluvian race.<sup>6</sup> She had an uncorrupted baby and she was going to put him in the ark for God to save him. The Hebrew word here and in Genesis are the same word (however, it is not the same word as found in the *ark of the covenant*). In each case, the ark held God's

<sup>6</sup> I am assuming that she knows about the Great Flood and the events surrounding it.

super grace hero of his generation in the midst of turmoil all around. Vv. 5-6: the *bulrushes, rushes or the flags*, as they are called in some translations, where the ark was placed, are papyrus reeds.

Furthermore, the mother of Moses was very authority oriented. It had been the command of Pharaoh to cast all of the male babies into the Nile. This is exactly what she did. She cast Moses into the Nile—however, it was in an ark—something which Pharaoh's edict did not address. Pharaoh did not specify that Hebrew male children could not be placed in a container of sorts.

**So then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe by the river, and her maidens were walking by the side of the river—where she saw the ark in the midst of the papyrus reeds, and sent her handmaiden and get it. And she opened and examined the child, and saw [the] infant weeping, so she took pity on him and said, "Of the children of the Hebrews is this." [Ex. 2:5-6]**

I have taken a lot of liberties with the translation of this verse. Rā'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], which we recently saw is the verb *to see*, I have translated *examined*. The word for *child* is na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced *NAH-ġahr*] and it can be translated *boy, lad, youth, male-child*, and in this situation, *infant*. For some reason, the KJV particles *Lo, behold* sound too dated for modern English. Instead of translating it as a demonstrative particle, I translated it *saw*.

The intention of the Pharaoh's daughter to bathe in the river tells us that even she lacked indoor plumbing (which did exist later in Rome). Whereas public bathing for orientals today, it is quite acceptable to the ancient Egyptians. We have actual pictures from monuments of women of rank bathing, attended to by four female servants.

When she picked the baby Moses up, she immediately knew that this was a Hebrew child because he had been circumcised (when a baby is crying, we all know one of the first things a mother will check for).

**Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call for you a woman who is nursing, of the Hebrew women—that she may nurse for you the child?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maid went and called the mother of the child. [Exodus 2:7–8]**

Miriam, Moses' sister, has been watching from the background. Even though she is very young, she seems to know that right time to make herself known.

Notice that there will be a bit of protocol here. The Pharaoh's daughter is not a stupid woman; she carries the genes of the Pharaoh, and therefore has to have a reasonable amount of intelligence and training. She knows that this woman who is potentially offered up to nurse the child is not simply some random woman that this young girl will go out and find. And when the daughter meets the woman (assuming that she does), by her size, age and health, it is unlikely that she is the mother. The Pharaoh's daughter probably immediately surmised that this young girl is the boy's sister. Everyone there knows that the woman offered up to nurse the boy is actually the child's mother. None of this is ever stated outright to protect the mother and to protect the child.

The verb yânaq (יָנַק) [pronounced *yaw-NAHK*] in the Qal means *to suck* but in the Hiphil, it means *to cause a baby to nurse* or simply *to nurse*. It is often translated in the KJV, *to give suck*, however, our modern term *to nurse* is more than adequate.

**And Pharaoh's daughter said to her [the mother], "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. [Ex. 2:9]**

Note that nothing is said about the true parents of the child; no one is acknowledging that they are doing anything illegal. Miriam, Moses' sister—which she never admits to—just happens to be passing by, and she just happens to know someone who could nurse this child.



Furthermore, the woman, Moses' mother, is paid by the Pharaoh's daughter to nurse the child on her behalf. All of these points of protocol protect the mother and the child. If she is ever caught with the child and questioned, she need only say that she is being paid by the Pharaoh's daughter to nurse it for her. All of this could be verified and the child would remain safe. If the Pharaoh's daughter is questioned with regards to her own lawfulness, she simply discovered an abandoned child—how was she to know it was condemned to death? If this matter were pursued, then she would appeal to her father.

Satan has been warned from the beginning of human history that the seed of the woman would crush his head. Although Satan is not omnipresent, he still has a huge demon force which keeps him informed as to what is occurring throughout the world. Satan is a genius and is able to process a great deal of information; more than we could imagine. He does not know what exactly the savior/deliverer of Israel is going to be; who the seed of the woman who will crush his head will be. He looks for certain signs and is a better student of the Bible than 99.9% of all Christians. So when the time is right, Satan will make an attempt to kill this child before it has grown. He did that here and when Christ was born. And notice: he was not going to take any chances but he would attempt to kill an entire generation, if possible. However, Satan's plans, no matter how genius they are, are no match for God's plans. To those few confused individuals who think that Satan is always after them; first of all, he isn't, and secondly, God is far greater than Satan and God's plan is far greater than Satan's. If you are alive, God has a plan for your life and this plan is far greater than anything Satan could devise. Even if you are a believer and believe (rightly so) that demons plague you; they are a part of Satan's plan and God's plan is far greater. There is no suffering or disaster or persecution or demonic attack that can befall us that God has not made provision for in eternity past. What is usually the case is that a believer, very negative toward God's word and God's plan, has made a total mess out of his own life and now thinks that it is irreparable. Even David with his escapade with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband; that was terrifically bad judgement and one sin compounded after another; and God not only blessed David (after the discipline) but the line of Jesus Christ came through Bathsheba because she was David's right woman. Can you imagine that? After all that David did, God even gave him his right woman and restored the kingdom to him. Don't get any foolish ideas; David was a great man who loved God's Word and grew daily by it. Furthermore, he received discipline which would crush any other person. God blessed David despite his shortcomings. This is how God treats a super grace believer. Had he not married all those other women, he would have met and married Bathsheba and have needed no other woman. But, I digress.

**As the child grew, and she (the mother) brought him in to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said, "For out of the water I drew him." [Exodus 2:10]**

One of the explanations given for Moses' name is that it is a combination of the word for son (*mos*) and the name of an Egyptian river God; further, it is stated that this woman may have thought he had been given birth to by the river-god. This is nonsense—she knows that he is an Hebrew and has said so. She is a bright, observant young woman who was raised in the palace whose superstitions are probably not too different from our own. Furthermore, she tells why she named him what she did.

Moses was not an unusual name for an Egyptian. In fact, several Pharaoh's names were compounded based upon that root. "Rameses" is actually "Ramose" and "Thutmose" is based upon that root word. The Egyptians and the Jews grew up side-by-side for 400 years. During that time, although the Hebrews kept themselves relatively isolated, genetically and socially, they would still have a strong influence upon each other's language. In the Hebrew, Moses is Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced *moh-SHEH*] and the word for *to draw out* is *mâshâh* (מָשָׂה) [pronounced *maw-SHAW*]. *Môsheh* also means *to draw out of the water*. It is very possible that *mâshâh* is Hebraized Egyptian, seeing that the Pharaoh's daughter named Moses and not his own mother. This word is not found but here in in two much later passages (2Samuel 22:17 Psalm 18:16).

The Pharaoh's daughter, by the syntax of the sentence, emphasizes *out of the water*, using two very Hebrew words, *min* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and *mayim* (מַיִם) [pronounced *mah-YIHM*]. My guess is that she spoke in Egyptian, not using these latter two words but words which were Egyptian for *water-saved*. Very likely, this was

a word of intersection or similarity between the two languages and, the Pharaoh's daughter being as brilliant as she is, rightfully deemed this the most appropriate name for Moses. The name of Moses certainly has elements of Hebrew and Egyptian both in it; which is very appropriate and is one way that we recognize the genius of Moses' adopted mother.

### The Intelligence of Pharaoh's Daughter

Now, let's have some points on the intelligence of Pharaoh's daughter:

(1) She immediately recognized the baby as being Hebrew. In checking the child, she knew what to look for. (2) Not one time does she acknowledge that the "nurse" for the baby is the baby's mother. Without missing a beat, when speaking to Moses' sister, she arranges for the baby's survival. If she is confronted, it is a baby that she has adopted and is having a Hebrew woman nurse it. If the mother of Moses is confronted, she is merely working for the Pharaoh's daughter. (3) In an instant, the Pharaoh's daughter chooses the perfect name. (4) The name is similar to the name of several Egyptian rulers, which is absolutely necessary if she is going to raise this child. (5) It is a name which has Jewish origins also. (6) In the Hebrew or in the Egyptian language, the meaning of this word and similar words describe how she found the child. (7) The simple conclusion: God chose this woman to raise Moses.

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She could provide him the protection that he needed when he was young and the proper training once he has reached an age where he can tell right from wrong (somewhere between 2 and 4). During this time of youth, her brilliance with the languages of the two races would be one way that Moses would develop his ability to think and to reason. Afterward, after Moses has gone through perhaps the most important stage of child growth, he would be exposed to education and training that no other child, other than his step-brother, would have access to. Not every person can appreciate this kind of training and upbringing. No one else would have benefitted by this as much as Moses did. A prime example of the same opportunities is his step-brother.

We all have free will and our free will reacts differently to the same stimuli. With two million complainers and stragglers and reversionists, God need to have the right person in leadership. God raised up a leader who knew what to do, although almost everyone in his generation opposed him in some way or another. It was like Noah: Noah taught the gospel for 120 years without a single convert other than his own family and daughter's-in-law. Not only would most people view Noah as an extraordinarily failed evangelist, but no one in his shoes could have taught God's Word for 120 days even, without some sort of positive response. It is human viewpoint to think that there must be a good response to indicate that we created in God's will. Both Moses and Noah faced very negative responses. Again, to head off those who take everything wrong; who see a little light at the end of the tunnel and race for it. Just because you are stubborn and hard-headed and you make everyone in your periphery angry; this does not mean that you are in God's will or that you are doing God's work. While that is a possibility, is highly unlikely. God only chooses the very best men to lead in the face of constant adversity. These are men of His Word.

We find out about Moses growing up from Acts 7:22: "Now Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds." We find that Moses was treated, as we would expect, just like royalty in his youth from Hebrews. By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. (Acts 7:24–26) I know that some people are concerned when I mention Jesus Christ in the Old Testament and when Y<sup>ehowah</sup> Elohim appears to a patriarch, I tend to call Him Jesus Christ. I take this cue from the writer of Hebrews, this passage. These passages tell us that (1) Moses was raised in the palace; (2) he was given a royal education; (3) his intellectual power was great, as were the things that he did; (4) he chose between a relatively easy life in the castle and a life of hardship leading the Israelites out of Egypt; (5) when it

reads that *he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*, this is renouncing his royal claim to the throne of Egypt.

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### Moses Kills an Egyptian

**And it came to pass in those days when Moses grew up that he went out unto his brethren and looked [with sympathy] on their burdens—and saw an Egyptian hitting a Hebrew—of his brothers.** [Exodus 2:11]

It is Stephen, in Acts 7, who tells us that Moses was almost 40 at this time. **"But when he was approaching forty, it entered his thinking [lit., heart] to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel."** (Acts 7:23)

In v. 11, the verb for *looked* is our friend *rā'âh*, which means *to see or to observe* but there is some emotion involved. In this situation, because he sees his fellow Hebrews and observes *their burden*, this emotion is sympathy.

Moses was aware of the fact that he was an Hebrew. At what point in time he found this out, we are not told; nor do we know who told him. His adoptive mother knew this; all of her slave women knew this; and no doubt, many others in the Egyptian palace knew this. Still, we have no idea when Moses was made aware of this—whether as a child or as a young adult (or most recently).

To get the proper picture, you must understand that from Moses' infancy up, he was raised in the palace as the son of the Pharaoh's daughter. This would put him in line for the throne of Egypt. Therefore, he received the best training and education. In examining his life, we will see that Moses was a genius in many categories and this was due to his innate ability which was fostered and challenged by a royal education.

As a youth, Moses had been brought up to take Hebrew slavery for granted—and few of us realize just how much we simply accept or take for granted simply because this is what we are born into.

Being in the palace, Moses was likely exposed to a great deal of anti-Semitism (not from his adoptive mother, naturally, but from others).

We do not know when Moses' contact with his birth mother was cut off—did it happen after he had stopped nursing.

There is certainly a great deal of speculation that we might have. Did Moses' adoptive mother hear him make one too many anti-Semitic remarks and decide to set him straight? Perhaps she told him just a few days prior to this? Perhaps because Moses was now fully an adult, he had been sat down by his adoptive mother and told that he was a Hebrew and told the circumstances of his birth. Or did Moses figure this out early on in his life because he was circumcised? Such information would give any young man pause for thought and serious introspection.

From a distance, Moses had seen Hebrews doing slave labor and this was just a part of life. Then, at some point, he finds that these are his people; not some foreign race which just happened to be there. Consequently, Moses takes a day to more closely examines the lives of his brothers and the slavery that they endure. This moved Moses so that he reacted when he saw one of his brothers being treated cruelly at the hands of an Egyptian.

**So he turned this way and that, and, when he saw that there was no man he struck the Egyptian, and hid his body [lit., him] in the sand.** [Ex. 2:12]

It sounds as though Moses waited until after the beating; when he believed that he and the Egyptian were alone, and then he killed him with his bare hands. Obviously, Moses was a very powerful man, his physical body being trained as well as his mind in the palace.

There is no moral commentary one way or another about what Moses did. People are confused by acts of believers (in this case, Moses was possibly still an unbeliever) and tend to become involved in over-thinking; so we will take this in points:

### Moses Commits Murder

1. Murder was wrong and murder carried with it a sentence of death (Genesis 9:6).
2. It is unclear whether Moses knew this as a part of God's law. We have no idea how widespread the Scriptures were in this era.
3. He certainly had moral training in the palace and from his adopted mother. Besides, the Egyptians were not backward barbarians with no moral code or concept of right and wrong.
4. In any case, the law is written on every man's heart (Romans 2:15).
5. Obviously, this was a powerful emotional response on Moses' part.
6. Furthermore, it is wrong to take the law into one's own hands.
7. Moses did recognize that what he did was wrong, and he fled, fearing retribution.
8. God used this situation as He would have any other situation. The Bible does not condone what Moses did; however, Moses was not executed for this deed. God allowed him to escape.

Bear in mind that Moses is trying to achieve some sort of justice here, but his efforts are of the flesh.

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In what follows, we are dealing with a narrative and the specific renderings of each word is not quite as important to understand what is going on.

**And he went out on the second day, and saw two Hebrews quarreling together; so he said to him that did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?" And he said, "Who has set you for a man as a chief and a judge over us? Are you intending [lit., saying in your heart] to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? Then was Moses afraid and said [to himself] "Surely this matter has become known!" [Ex. 2:13-14]**

The Hebrews under slavery are not of possessors of high moral character themselves. The one who is in the wrong attacks Moses, verbally (he would not do it physically). Despite the fact the Moses acted on behalf of another Hebrew, he has something on Moses and he uses it. This man here may even be the person who sees to it that this becomes known to Pharaoh (see the next verse).

Furthermore, the bully here lacks any sort of respect for Moses as royalty (which could suggest that Moses was not dressed in such a way as to call attention to his royal upbringing). No matter how Moses is dressed, his people recognize him and this man here knows who Moses is.

Moses falls immediately into mental attitude sinning (fear). At no time do we hear Moses appealing to YHWH or calling on God's name. This possibly indicates that Moses is an unbeliever or out of fellowship for a long time.

We'll need to do some reconstruction here and attempt to cover some details not covered in these verses:

### The Familial Background of Moses

1. In Exodus 2:11, the two allusions to Moses' *brothers* (referring to the Jews as a race and not to his

## The Familial Background of Moses

- literal brothers) indicates that Moses knew that he was a Jew. Acts 7:23 also implies that he knew that he was a Jew at this point in time.
2. Moses is almost 40 years old here (Acts 7:23)—had he known earlier of his background, it would make more sense that he go out among his race years earlier.
  3. This sudden interest in his family, the Jews, indicates that he had a reason to go out among his *brothers*. Logically, that reason would be that he just found out that he was a Jew.
  4. Having been raised as royalty for almost 40 years, being raised around Egyptians who saw the Jews as inferior, and always seeing the Jews as slaves, it would be easy for Moses to have been prejudiced against his own race. I theorize that a racial slur eventually prompted his adopted mother to tell him of his origins.
  5. Since he goes out to the Jews twice without going to his family indicates that he did not know, at this time who his family was. If he did, he was allowing it to all sink in before he visited them.
  6. V. 15 indicates Moses had to leave soon thereafter, possibly within hours, and, if he spoke with his adopted mother, she likely told him at that time of his exact origins.
  7. Whereas we are not certain whether Moses knew of his true parents in v. 11, he certainly knows more details about his heritage by Exodus 3:14, where God mentions Aaron, Moses' brother.
  8. The portion of the conversation recorded between God and Moses in chapters 3 and 4 does not have Moses eliciting information concerning his family, indicating that he knew something about them by that time

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## Moses Flees Egypt and Meets His Future Family

**So Pharaoh heard about this matter and sought to kill Moses; and Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian and sat down by the well. [Ex 2:15]**

Even as the heir to the throne, Moses was subject to the laws of the land and Pharaoh would have had him executed. Moses fled quite a distance, dressed as an Egyptian (but not as royalty) so that he could slip out of Egypt undetected. There was obviously very little physical difference between the Jews and the Egyptians, as the daughters of Midian will identify Moses immediately as an Egyptian (this is probably based upon his clothing and accent). He ended up southeast of the promised land.

Midian was one of Abraham's sons through his concubine Keturah. She had six sons by him and Midian had five more sons. Abraham sent these sons away (along with his other progeny by his concubines) into the east (Genesis 25:1-6).

**Now the priest of Midian [had] seven daughters and they came and drew [water from the well] and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then came the shepherds and drove them away, so Moses rose up and helped them and watered their flock. [Exodus 1:16–17]**

There was a priesthood which existed prior to the priesthood of Aaron. A priest represented man to God. This was often a family priesthood and this indicates that this man and his seven daughters are very likely all believers in Jesus Christ. A priest-father would certainly be found in a family of believers, such as this one; however, Midian was not a country of believers. There will be later dealings between Israel and Midian which will reveal great animosity and enmity (Num. 22:4 25:18 31 Isaiah 9:4 10:26).



Usually in the Bible, the sons of a woman are mentioned and the daughters are excluded. Here is an exception. It appears as though this priest (obviously not celibate) had seven daughters and very likely no sons. They were handling the work that his sons would have done. There was not much water in the well and there had been some dispute between them and the shepherds in that area. Whereas the shepherds should have been supporting the priest and growing under his ministry, they were in fact not doing either, indicating that they were a group of unbelievers (hence, the general spiritual degeneracy of Midian). Obviously they were a group of bullies and possibly very immature men. An intelligent believer in Jesus Christ would want to know and ingratiate himself to the daughters of a priest. Not these men.

Moses, again and again, is portrayed physically as a very powerful man. He stood his ground against these shepherds and they backed down. His presence and authority and physical prowess were enough to cause these three or more shepherds to back off.

Watering a flock of sheep took a great deal of time and even with seven women, it still took a lot of strength to drop the bucket and pull up the water. This caused their chores to take time. Moses was able to cut this time simply based upon his superior strength.

**Then they went in to their father, Reuel, and he said, "Why have you returned so early today?"**  
[Exodus 2:18]

What may have been a factor in the quick return (and I am speculating here) is that, having met Moses, these young women were a bit more focused and returned home quickly, without having to go shopping, or whatever they would do when feeding their flock. Moses was a different kind of man. They had been harassed by the unbelieving shepherds for possibly years (perhaps a result of bullying; perhaps because of a territorial dispute over this well). This was finally a man who stood up for them.

What has occurred up until this time is that it was difficult for them to water their cattle due to the dispute with the other shepherds, who behaved like bullies. They would have to take their cattle there surreptitiously and water them either before or after the other shepherds had been there. Often times they would be chased off, as the shepherds had begun to do that day and they would have to wait for a more opportune time to water their herd. Furthermore, they were not as strong as Moses and could not fetch the water as quickly. Therefore, today, with the help of Moses, they finished watering their cattle much faster than they normally would have. They explain the reason that they have returned so early from watering the flock; they left out the part about running back to their house.

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### Moses Moves into the House of Reuel and Takes One of His Daughters to Wife

**So they said, "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds. Moreover also he drew [water from the well] for us and watered the flock." And he said to his daughters, "And where [is] he? Why [is] it [that] you left the man [there]. Call him, that he may eat bread." [Exodus 1:19–20]**

These women had never met anyone like Moses before; they were reasonably shy around him and must have jumped at the chance to go back to get him. Even shy people, under orders from their father, lose a great deal of their shyness. They returned, brought Moses home for dinner, and Moses was invited to stay with the family.

The father may have had some ulterior motives were (1) to evangelize Moses; (2) to get much needed help with the cattle; and, (3) for Moses to marry one of the daughters. Like any good father, this priest would like for his daughters to marry someone of character and strength. This was perhaps the first man in that area that he had met who had these qualities. The other males in that area were weak, overbearing, thick, contentious, herd-bound and petty.

The protocol exhibited by this family was as it should have been. Certainly they thought of asking Moses to eat with them at their father's house, but that would have been too forward and presumptuous. Instead, they raced back, told their father, and, under orders from him, returned to ask Moses to dinner.

It is possible that Moses left Egypt as an unbeliever. Although Joseph's bones were a heritage to the Jews and one of the things in their life which they associated with the Revealed God, Moses had not been brought up under that environment. Instead, he was brought up in the palace, very likely cut off from his birth mother prior to the age two (or so), and would have had no reason to have believed in the Revealed God.

Actually, we do not know if there were many believers among the Egyptians (some will join the Jews when they leave Egypt). Based upon what is coming in the future, there appear to be very few Egyptian believers at this time (there were quite a few when Joseph was prime minister of Egypt). Many of the Egyptians were probably evangelized through the mighty works of God.

At the same time, it appears that almost all of the Hebrews at this time and at the time of the exodus believed in the Revealed God. Here is how we know this: when the Passover is instituted, the Hebrews have to splatter blood on their door sills to keep their firstborn safe from God—generally speaking, this is a ritual that you will participate in if you are a believer.

In growing up, Moses may have been prejudiced against the Jews, and therefore against their God. This priest, on the other hand, is a believer in Y<sup>e</sup>howah, as were his daughters.

Did Moses believe at this time, under their influence? Or did Moses believe in the God of the Jews, but experience greater spiritual growth while in Midian with this family? When Moses speaks to the Burning Bush, he is clearly a believer in the Revealed God. It seems reasonable that Moses experience some spiritual growth when with this family (otherwise, why else would God guide Moses to this particular place?).

Here is another example of a believer in Jesus Christ with a public ministry which had practically no response. This priest had a congregation of eight—his seven daughters and Moses. He had been unable to even evangelize the shepherds in his periphery. He had one convert outside of his family that we are aware of; a spiritual failure by anyone's standards today. Yet it was his witness to Moses and his teaching to Moses which gave Israel its greatest leader. **"Who has despised the day of small things?"** (Zech. 4:10) Moses' late conversion may have been one of the reasons that God spared him judgement for killing the Egyptian. Our sins from the past are wiped out once we become believers in Jesus Christ. This is not way made what Moses did right nor does it mean that we should set free prisoners who believe in Jesus Christ. They have a ministry to others who are in jail.

**And Moses was well-pleased to dwell with this man; and he gave Zipporah, his daughter, to Moses. And she bare a son and he called his name Gershom, for he said, "I am a alien in a foreign land." [Ex. 2:21-22]**

Generally speaking, the father of the bridegroom would make the official proposal of marriage to the father of the prospective bride. However, in this case there was no father of the bridegroom to consult so tradition was reversed here and it is implied that the father of the bride did the proposing. This did occur in other instances (Joshua 15:16–17 1Samuel 18:27)

Gershom is Gêr<sup>e</sup>shôwm (גֵּרְשׁוֹם) [pronounced *gay-rehsh-OHM*]. The Hebrew word for *alien* is gêr (גֵּר) [pronounced *gare*]. A related word is gârash (גָּרַשׁ) [pronounced *gaw-RASH*] and it means *to drive out, to cast out*. The KJV reads *I am a stranger in a strange land*. Moses has a second son, not mentioned until Exodus 18:4. Some ancient translations have Moses' second son listed in this verse.

Moses spent 40 years living with this family (Acts 7:30). This was Moses' extended vacation. He had a completely different kind of family, doctrine was taught to him by his father-in-law and God prepared him for forty plus years struggling with a group of hard-headed, obstinate Jews. It is possible that his father-in-law had portions of

Scripture from prior to Abraham. We have no idea how it was transmitted during that time period. The popular theory is that it was handed down almost in its entirety as oral tradition, committed to writing by Moses. Here Moses was prepared and trained for what he was about to do. Since the Midianites were sent out during the time of Abraham, this man would have had no information on the Jewish race and the immediate heritage of Moses. Certainly he would not have had the last 35 chapters of Genesis. At best, and this is even doubtful, he had the first ten chapters of Genesis, or a reasonable knowledge of the events that took place during those years. What I am saying is that we do not know the nuts and bolts of Moses' spiritual growth (and we have bare bones information concerning his growth in the human realm as a leader of men). We can only intimate that it occurred during this time as he had the ability to lead the Jews once he left Midian.

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### God Remembers Israel

**And it came to pass during those many days that the king of Egypt died, and the sons of Israel sighed because of the[ir] slavery and lamented; and their cry for help, because of [their] slavery, went up to God. [Exodus 2:23]**

As long as the Pharaoh, Moses' adoptive grandfather<sup>7</sup>, was alive, Moses could be prosecuted and executed for murder. However, at this point, the statute of limitations ran out.

The cruel treatment of the Jews by the Egyptians continued and escalated. It was so cruel that the words used here are *during those many days*. The emphasis of this cruelty is further seen with the use of the polysyndeton (the use of several *and*'s) along with synonyms (*sighed, lamented, cry*). That is, the life of the Jews was so difficult, that their lives were seen in terms of days and not years.

We often do not see God's plan in our lives or in the lives of others because of some suffering. God had to move a population of 2,000,000+ Jews from Egypt to the land of Canaan. You would think that a simple command from God would do the trick; but then you would think that all it would take is for the Bible to forbid pre-marital sex, and that would take care of that issue for all Christians. The Bible does forbid pre-marital sex (1Corinthians 7:1 Hebrews 13:4) and as you certainly know, millions of Christians ignore this simple command. In the same way, no matter what God did by way of appealing to the Jewish people as a matter of reason, they would not have moved. It took decades of cruel slavery to cause the Jews to leave Egypt—and even then, they still desired to return to the *leeks and garlic of Egypt* (Num. 11:4–5).

It is a sad fact but the only way God can reach many of us is through pain and discipline. For those who are parents, you may have two different children, one of whom does what he is told and the other who can only learn something after being spanked. We are the same way. Some of us learn and are guided by God's Word and others of us have no interest in the Scriptures and our only part in God's plan is a recipient of discipline.

**And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham with Isaac and with Jacob; so then, God looked upon the sons of Israel and God knew [their plight]. [Exodus 2:24–25]**

That God is aware of His covenant with the Jews, the Hebrew reads *and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob*. God's response includes the use of an anaphora (the repetition of the word *with*); a polysyndeton, and synonymia [pronounced *syn-o-NYM-i-a*], which is the use of synonymous terms. This emphasizes the closeness of God's observation of the situation and His divine concern.

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<sup>7</sup> This is a guess on my part; he could have been another sort of relative of Moses' adoptive mother.

Obviously, God does not have ears, so He does not hear as we do; and, He doesn't forget us or our problems. This is called language of accommodation. When this verse reads *God remembered*, this is an anthropopathism. God does not forget. He did not get busy on the other side of the universe, suddenly snap His fingers<sup>8</sup> and say, *Omigosh, I forgot all about those Jews; I'd better take care of them right away*. God did not put the Jews into slavery, get busy with some other divine project, and then suddenly remember that He needs to do something about this situation. This is you or me, but not God. God has to allow the proper amount of time to pass in order to fulfill His plan.

The Jews, because of their negative volition, had to reach a point of almost unbearable suffering before they would listen to Moses. As we have seen, 40 years ago, Moses was not ready to lead them and they were certainly not ready to follow him. The Jews have been enslaved for about four hundred years. God is fully cognizant of this. He knew it in eternity past and made provision for it. However, to us, four hundred years seems like an inordinately long time. Therefore, to us, it seems as though God has forgotten about this situation and, when He finally intervenes, it seems to us as though He has suddenly remembered. That is an anthropopathism; taking divine action, thought and motivation and expressing it in terms of human thoughts.

God's Person is spoken of 4 times in this one passage. Despite the awful oppression of slavery, God is right here, with His people, knowing all about the suffering that they were enduring.

The last word in v. 25 is *yâda'* (יָדָעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*], is translated quite a number of different ways. It means *to know by seeing or by observation* and care can be inferred by the use of this word. What has happened is that the Jews prospered and multiplied, and the Egyptians became increasingly more tyrannical. This passage indicates that it had gotten to a point when the Jews as a whole were severely burdened by this slavery. As we will see by their comments throughout Exodus, the Jews needed to be placed in a position where this was almost more than they could bear; otherwise, they would not have left Egypt. Just as there are times in our lives when God must place pressure upon us so that we can depend upon Him to make the right choices. However, the more of God's Word that you know, the less often it is that God has to put pressure upon you to make the correct choices.

Why did God wait? Why did he allow this slavery to go on for perhaps 100 or 200 years? Let's go back to the days of Noah, when the population was eating, drinking and marrying and giving in marriage. They were too preoccupied with the details of life to give much thought to God. Even though the Jews were under slavery to Egypt, as we have seen, they continued to marry and to have large families. They continued to be preoccupied with the details of life. God had to allow more increasingly pressure to be put upon them by the Pharaoh until they finally cried out to God. God is glorified when we come to Him with our problems. This is a tricky point here. We are to live our lives with knowledge and to deal with our problems by using God's Word in our life. Our souls should be inundated with doctrine and our lives should reflect this. However, there will always be problems and situations that we cannot resolve; it is with these things we go to God in prayer. God is glorified when we recognize His omniscience and call to Him to deal with the situations which are beyond our control. He is also glorified when we deal with the situations within our control as a result of intake of His Word. He is glorified when we recognize we act and when we wait upon Him. The slavery of the Jews had to come to a point where they would depend upon Him. In v. 23, it got to the point where they had to call upon God and God could answer their prayers.

More importantly, why did God move the Jews out of the land of Canaan and into Egypt; and then out of Egypt, back to the land of Canaan?

### **Why did God Move the Jews out of the Canaan to Egypt and then back to Canaan?**

1. The land of Canaan had become more and more degenerate as time progressed; God already had to level Sodom and Gomorrah due to their tremendous degeneracy.

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<sup>8</sup> An anthropomorphism

2. These peoples had a far reaching, negative influence upon the Jews and the Jews needed to be removed from that environment.
3. This would allow the Jews to progress spiritually without the horrible influence of the degeneracy of the Canaanites.
4. The Egyptians were better disciplined and had a better sense of morality.
5. God had to give the Canaanites one more chance—that was the reason behind the famine for the land of Canaan. Sometimes our last chances with God come in the form of great natural catastrophes.
6. The Jews returned to the land of Canaan to destroy the degenerate Canaanites and repossess the land given them by God

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**



**Exodus 3** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 3

### Exodus 3:1–22

#### Outline of Chapter 3:

- Vv. 1–9      [Moses encounters the burning bush](#)
- Vv. 10–22   [God gives Moses his marching orders](#)

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

[Links to Doctrines on the Preincarnate Christ](#)  
[God's Preparation of Moses](#)  
[How Should We Deal with the Pronunciation of JHWH?](#)

**Introduction:** For approximately 40 years, Moses has been living in the land of Midian, married to a priest's daughter. We do not know when Moses believed in the Revealed God. It is possible that this occurred while Moses was living in the land of Midian. Certainly Moses has experienced some spiritual growth during this time period, although it is difficult to gauge how much, as he will resist God in the next chapter.

Moses' new father-in-law (Jethro) was a priest, but we have no idea if he had any sort of a following or the only ones interested in what he had to say were his daughters and Moses. It is my estimation that, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had a congregation (of sorts) which consisted of his daughters and no men, other than Moses. The reason for this assumption is, when Moses stood up to the shepherds who harassed Jethro's daughters, Jethro immediately sent his daughters back to get Moses and he married the eldest daughter. This would suggest that, whatever Jethro's ministry was, it probably did not include any young males.

Therefore, all of Moses' training and preparation took place in a congregation of approximately nine persons. Whatever this early training was, Jethro prepared Moses to the point where God was ready to use Him.

Furthermore, in God's eternal record, His Word, we will have recorded permanently the name of this priest living out in the middle of an Arabian desert, unknown and seemingly unimportant. On the other hand, God treats the Egyptian Pharaohs all as though they are the same person. Their names are not recorded because they received all the glory that they will ever get in their lifetimes as Pharaohs. Now they are persons lost to us in history. We can at best make educated guesses as to the identities of the Pharaoh's during Moses' time.

### Moses Encounters the Burning Bush

[Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian; so he led forth the flock behind the desert and came in unto the mountain of God; to Horeb. \[Exodus 3:1\]](#)

Moses' father-in-law obviously had two names, both Reuel (or Raguel) in Exodus 2:18 and Jethro in Exodus 3:1 (see also Exodus 4:18 and Num. 10:29). For anyone who has had a brother nicknamed Junior or Bubba, or anyone who went by their middle name instead of their first name, this is easily understood.

Apparently, It was not abnormal for a shepherd to take the flock for a very long distance away, being gone for months at a time. They did not stay in their immediate area because there was room around them and so they did not use up the land and its resources. As Freeman points out, the Midianites with their borders along the eastern portion of Edom, took their flocks as far north as Gilgead and Bashan and as far south as the Ælanitic Gulf.

Chôrêb (חֹרֵב) [pronounced *kho-RABE*] means *waste, desert, desolation, desert*. Not much of a mountain to go to for scenery. It may have been called the mountain of God because of the following incident.

**Then appeared the messenger of JHWH unto him, in a flame of fire, from the midst of the thorn bush. So he looked and saw [lit., lo] the thorn bush burning with fire and yet the thorn bush was not consumed. And Moses said, "Please, let me turn aside and see this great sight—why the thorn bush does not burn up." [Ex. 3:2-3]**

Jesus Christ is the burning bush. This can be seen in many passages, but from comparing Exodus 3:2 with vv. 4, 6 and 7, it is easy to see that the messenger (or angel) of YHWH = YHWH = God.

Exodus 3:1–7 Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. And **the angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah appeared to him** in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and noticed that the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

And when Y<sup>e</sup>howah saw that he turned aside to see, **God called to him out of the midst of the bush**, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here I am. And he said, Don't come any closer: take off your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. **Moreover he said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.** And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look at God. **And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said**, I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;... (Updated Bible Version 2.16; emphasis mine)

The following seem like reasonable information on the Preincarnate Christ.

### Links to Doctrines on the Preincarnate Christ

Answers in Genesis on *Theophanies in the Old Testament*:

<https://answersingenesis.org/jesus-christ/incarnation/theophanies-in-the-old-testament/>

Got Questions.org on *What is a theophany? What is a Christophany?*

<https://www.gotquestions.org/theophany-Christophany.html>

Valley Bible Church Theology Studies on *The Preincarnate Christ*:

<http://www.valleybible.net/AdultEducation/ClassNotes/TheologySurvey/Christ/PreincarnateChrist.pdf>

The Preincarnate Christ by CAS Ministries:

<http://www.angelfire.com/tx5/jeansptx/preinc.htm>

Come Meet Jesus Christ as Pre-Incarnte God by Louis Rushmore

<http://www.gospelgazette.com/gazette/2006/jun/page2.htm>

I cannot vouch for the rest of the information on their web pages, but these seem to be reasonably accurate.

See also the **Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

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There are three persons in the Godhead, three equal in essence and perfection yet different in personality and function. God is one in essence, yet three in person. It has occurred to me, as I am certain that it has to many people, that perhaps the concept of the trinity is an anthropopathism and that we are better able to understand the function of God by seeing Him as three persons. However, the trinity is portrayed in the Bible again and again, both Old Testament and New, to where, if anything, the early revelation of the trinity in the Old Testament, as it is revealed here, for instance, would do more to confuse the reader than to clarify. Furthermore, there are passages which indicate that this is a great truth, rather than language of accommodation (Isaiah 48:16 reads: "[Come Near to Me, listen to this; from the first I have not spoken in secret, from the time it took place, I was there. And now, Lord YHWH has sent Me, and His Spirit.](#)").

The trinity is composed of God the Father, who is not seen or felt, who has planned our salvation. Jesus Christ is the revealed member of the trinity, who is YHWH in the Old Testament, when YHWH is anything visible or tangible to man. He is the creator of the universe, the One Who accomplished our salvation, the one Who came to earth as a man and lived among us. The Holy Spirit is the person in the trinity Who is not seen, but, in some instances, felt. He restored the earth; He indwells us, providing us power and self-restraint; He accomplishes God's will within us. The Holy Spirit does not glorify Himself but God the Father and God the Son. When it comes to language of accommodation, the description of the three members of the Godhead as *God the Father and God the Son* is language of accommodation. God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are co-eternal and co-infinite.

For more information, see **The Trinity in the Old Testament** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

There is a portion of *The Emphasized Bible* which appears to be unique among the various translations in v. 3. It is translated that Moses turns aside and *prays*. I cannot find another translation which contains the word "pray" in this passage. Certainly, what comes to my mind, is that Moses turns aside, prays, and then looks to the bush. However, this is the Hebrew noun *nā' (נָא)* [pronounced *naw*] which means is a particle of incitement or entreaty. Is is often translated [*I*] *pray [thee]* or [*I*] *beseech [thee]* (see Exodus 4:18, for instance). It is also rendered *now or then*. Moses, in speaking to someone else, might use this term as an entreaty to them; here he is using this term as an entreaty to himself, while talking to himself. When this word is used as directed toward someone else, it is very similar to our use of the word *please*. To oneself, it is more or less an order or a decision or an act of volition which begins in the mind and is verbalized and then carried out. It is as though Moses is saying to himself, "Okay, Moses, please, get up your nerve and turn aside and look at this marvelous sight." Or, he is saying to himself, "Now I will turn aside and look at this marvelous sight." Moses is telling himself what to do as he is somewhat afraid. It is an imperative to oneself. I mention this so that if anyone else is reading *the Emphasized Bible*, they do not become confused over its translation here. Moses is not going to stop and pray about this. What he feels is some normal apprehension, if not healthy fear.

Now, I want you to notice something which is evident throughout Scripture. *God calls out to Moses*. God does all of the work in our salvation. God searches us out and God speaks to us. No doubt, you have heard of this or that person who gets together a rucksack and goes out into the forest or the desert or to a hill and looks for God. This is human arrogance! You aren't going to go off somewhere and find God. When it is the right time, God will reveal Himself to you, just as He reveals Himself to Moses (or to any other prophet of the Old or New Testament). When Jesus chose His disciples, did they all search Him out? Jesus searched them out and He chose them. The exceptions to this would be one person witnessing to another and leading him to Jesus (John 1:35–42). There is always a calling by God or the witness of another person (which is God calling to us). No one in Scripture ever goes off on a spiritual search for God. That is man's arrogance thinking that he can find God and man's arrogance thinking that he can recognize God when he finds Him.

**And YHWH saw that he turned aside to look, so God called to him, out of the midst of the thorn-bush, and said, "Moses, Moses" And he said, "I am here [lit, behold me]." [Exodus 3:4]**

This is God's call to Moses. It is one of the very few times that God has called a man using his name twice. We saw it with Abraham (Genesis 22:11) and with Jacob (Genesis 46:2). Moses has been under preparation for God's calling for some time. He is now almost eighty years old (Ex. 7:7); he's been under preparation for eighty years and now God calls him.

It is unfortunate that in today's world, people believe in Jesus Christ and within days of their conversion, they are out hustling for God. This is not always wrong, but it is most often premature. God has a plan for our lives and it is not to go out and hustle for Him when we know practically nothing. Such enthusiasm and dedication sounds great, but as babes in Christ we rarely have enough sense to come in out of the rain. We should examine Moses' preparation and life in points:

### God's Preparation of Moses

1. Moses spent only three months as an infant with his birth mother and father (Exodus 2:1-2 Acts 5:20).
2. For forty years, Moses received the training of an aristocrat and a royal leader in the castle of Pharaoh. He had no choice. This was what God chose for him. Exodus 2:10-11 Acts 7:22-23.
3. At age forty, after finding out that he was a Jew and not naturally born aristocracy, Moses went out to see what the Jews were like. Up until this time, he had known Jews simply as slaves and inferiors. Exodus 2:11-14 Acts 7:23-28
4. After killing an Egyptian taskmaster with his bare hands and receiving no support from the Jews, Moses fled to the Midian desert for fear of being captured and executed by the then Pharaoh of Egypt Exodus 2:15 Act 7:29
5. Moses spent approximately forty years in the desert under the tutelage of his father-in-law, a priest. Exodus 2:15b-3:1 7:7 Acts 7:29-30 It is possible that this is when he first believed in Jesus Christ.
6. Moses actually service will begin at age eighty, when he will go speak to Pharaoh, demanding Pharaoh to allow God's people to depart; and then he will spend forty years in the desert with this whining batch of malcontent reversionists. Exodus 7:7-Deuteronomy 34:5 Acts 7:30-44
7. Moses was 120 years old when he died, still strong and full of vigor. Deuteronomy 34:1-7
8. Therefore, after being raised as royalty for forty years and then after spending forty years in the desert with the Jews and perhaps less than one year prior to that dealing with the Pharaoh, God called Moses to do His work. This means that God prepared him for eighty years before he was drafted to do anything of real spiritual significance. Too many believers think that a weekend of prayer after salvation prepares them to begin to do great things for God. The chief difference between Moses and these people was that Moses was great, and they will often burn out in a year or five after muddying up the water. They have no foundation, no background. God expects us to grow. Peter writes, **Grow in the grace and [in] the knowledge fo our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ** (2Peter 3:18). This is a command. *Grow* is in the imperative mood. It is in the present active imperative. That means that we are to continually do this; it should be our lifestyle. And we are to pursue this growth—active voice. This is not an option for the Christian.

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**And He said, "Do not come any closer; take off your sandals from your feet because the place where you are standing is holy ground." [Exodus 3:5]**

*Do not come any closer* is the negative and the Qal imperfect of *qârab* (בָּרַק) [pronounced *kaw-RAB*] and it means *to approach, to come near*. It is a very common verb used extensively in the Old Testament. This is followed by the adverb of place *hălôṁ* (הֵלֶם) [pronounced *hal-OME*] and it means *hither* in the old English and *here* in normal person English. *Do not come any closer* gives a good English rendition of what has been said here.

The ground being called *holy* is only because there is a manifestation of God there—Jesus Christ. His presence makes the ground holy. *Holy* is the word qôdesh (קֹדֶשׁ) and it means *apartness, holy, sacredness*. It is *ground* and not *holy* which is in the construct. The construct is a noun which acts like a genitive; even as an adjective to a certain degree. When we translate this *holy ground* or even *a ground of holiness*, we have it exactly backwards; it should be that *holy* is the primary noun and it should be translated *sacredness*. Ground is more of the modifier. Everywhere around there is *holy*; the ground is because it happens to be in the periphery. *For where you are standing upon—holy it [is] the ground*. Another way to render this verse is the recognize that *holy* is a noun and it is being emphasized.

Removing one's shoes before entering a temple or any other place of worship is a typical Oriental custom. This is a mark of respect. We find something similar in Joshua 5:15. Once Moses realized what he was seeing, a manifestation of the living God, he became extremely frightened. We read about some of this in Acts 7:30–33: *“And after forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai in the flame of a burning thorn bush. And when Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look closely, there came the voice of the Lord: ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God Of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.’ And Moses shook [in fear] and would not venture to look. But the Lord said to him, ‘Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place one which you are standing is holy ground.’”* (Exodus 3:6b, 5).

**And he said, "I am the God of your father, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. [Ex. 3:6]**

God tells Moses that He is the God of his father. Moses possibly doesn't even know who his real father is or has had no contact with him. His mother played a part in his infancy, but possibly none whatsoever in his youth. His father has never been mentioned except as a Levite in Exodus 2:1. We do not know if his mother was known to him at all during his youth or adulthood. And recall that this is written by Moses. It is possible when he wrote Exodus 2:1, he placed in that verse the sum total of his knowledge concerning his mother and father.

Moses is not being evangelized at this point. He has already been evangelized and he has responded. He has been under the training of his priest father-in-law. We do not know how much he learned about his true genetic heritage when in the palace of Pharaoh. He obviously knew about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; otherwise this reference would have been lost on him (and it would have been less likely for him to record it). What I have said about his life in the palace concerning his training is reasonable conjecture.

We do not know at what point that Moses learned of his true heritage; we do not know if he heard this out and then went out to his people, the Hebrews, a day or so later; or if this was known to him for years before he acted upon that knowledge.

It is possible that the Pharaoh's daughter (Moses' adopted mother) knew enough to instruct him concerning his lineage (this she would have learned from Moses' birth mother as her father was a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph).

Reuel, Moses' father-in-law, would have known some information about the Jews in general and he may have even known something about the promises which God had made to Abraham (he was, after all, descended from Abraham). As a priest, Reuel may have had some portion of the book of Genesis (maybe all of it); and some portion of the book of Job.

The point here is, Moses had to have a frame of reference here for what God said to him. When God said, “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” Moses did not ask, “So, who are those guys?”

Moses behaves as he should in the presence of God. He is not arrogant and he recognizes his own inadequacies. He doesn't feel as though he must first respect himself and then he can respect God. He doesn't treat God as his best friend and buddy. He respects and fears JHWH and recognizes His power and authority. We have



moved so far away from the *fear* mentioned in the Bible (which we, in fact, like to associate with the Old Testament, but it is found throughout the New) that we no longer possess any sort of respect for God our Father.

**Then said JHWH, "I have seen the humiliation of my people who are in Egypt and their outcry. I have heard away from the face of their task-masters, so I know their sufferings." [Exodus 3:7]**

The second sentence in this verse is a bit confusing as to its sentence structure. It begins with the Qal perfect of *shâmaʿ* (שמע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHG*] is the simple word for *to hear*. The perfect tense means that God has known about this from eternity past—He is not in the process of learning a little bit at a time. This is followed by the preposition *min* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] which attaches itself to a noun or to a verb and carries with it the idea of separation. It can mean *out from, out of, on account of, off, on the side of, since, above, than, so that not*. Then we have the noun for *face*. This is most commonly translated *from the face of, from the presence of, from before* are common renderings of this combination<sup>9</sup>. It can be translated as *by reason of, because*, which is the route most translators took. This could be translated *I have heard away from the face of their task-masters*, although other translations are quite different. *The Emphasized Bible* reads *by reason of their task-masters* and the NASB reads *because of their taskmasters*.

Then we have a conjunction and the Qal perfect for *I know* and the direct object, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix, *their sufferings*.

**"Therefore I have come down to deliver them from the hand of the Egyptians and to take them up out of that land into a land good and large, into a land flowing with milk and honey; into the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite." (Ex. 3:8)**

The Canaanite was descended from Canaan, a son of Ham (one of Noah's 3 sons). However, *Canaanite* is also used as a general term for the peoples who inhabit Canaan. They are further subdivided into Hittites, Amorites, and Hivites in Genesis 10:15, 17. The Perizzites, although an early grouping of peoples, are not mentioned in any of the genealogical lists—they spring forth as a tribe in full form in Genesis 13:7 15:20 34:30. Sometimes those who occupied the land prior to the Jews are called the Canaanites and the Perizzites, thus covering all of the different peoples in the land (Genesis 13:7). This is the first mention of the Hivites, who seem to always be grouped with the Jebusites and/or the Perizzites.

There is a right time for everything. God has perfect timing. He knew when the Jews were at a point at which they would be willing to leave Egypt. Prior to this, they were relatively happy (despite being enslaved) and quite prolific. Obviously, this people found their right man or their right woman and that was enough to keep them contented under moderately brutal slavery. It was not until their slavery became even more cruel and unjust that they cried to their God in pain.

So, here they are, God's people, serving godless heathen. God is going to give the Jew the land, the land flowing with milk and honey. God also prepares Moses by mentioning the tribes of people who are in the land. This land is large enough to support at least six different warring tribes or factions. This indicates that Israel both has their work cut out for them; but what they will receive will be a large chunk of real estate. The timing is also ideal for the tribes which presently occupy the land of Canaan. God had to wait until their degeneracy had reached such a severe level that they would have to be wiped out like a cancer.

It is fairly easy to determine when the Bible is to be taken literally and when it is to be taken figuratively. When God speaks of a land flowing with milk and honey, this does not mean that there will be literal floods of milk and honey. *Zûb* (זֹב) [pronounced *zoob*] is used in four relatively distinct ways. (1) It means *to flow away [with hunger]* as we would use the expression *pine away [with hunger]* as we have in Lam. 4:9. (2) It means *to flow or*

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<sup>9</sup> BDB, p. 818

*to issue* from a woman (Lev. 15:25); it can also refer to the act of discharging from a man (2Samuel 3:29). (3) *Zûwb* can mean *to flow out* or *to gush out* as Psalm 78:20 105:41 Isaiah 48:21. (4) And this word is always used in the Qal participial form when describing the promised land. In all four instances, the concept of *to flow, to gush* is there. Milk and honey speak of prosperity, of wonderful additions to the diet; and here, what is implied is an overabundance of such things, indicating that this will be a land of abundance, prosperity, luxury and divine blessing. This expression is used several times throughout the Bible, as in Num. 13:27 14:8 Deuteronomy 6:3 11:9 Joshua 5:6 Ezekiel 20:8 etc. Sometimes the words *oil, figs, or butter* are added.

**"Now therefore, lo, the outcry of the sons of Israel has come in to me; moreover, I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. [Exodus 3:9]**

The Israelites had also reached a point at which they appear to be turning to God for help. Their pain and suffering had reached crisis levels. Someone there had God's Word, as much as had been assembled up to that point, but the majority of the Jews, having found their right woman and begun huge families, were too satisfied for a long time to become concerned about God's plan for their lives.

### **God Gives Moses His Marching Orders**

**Now, therefore, come, that I may send you unto Pharaoh, so that you might bring forth my people—the sons of Israel—out of Egypt." [Ex. 3:10]**

In verse 10, God uses the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular vocative three times (He says, "Come (you)."). God is telling Moses to step forward and to come to attention. He is calling Moses into service. God makes it very clear by using the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular three times that it is Moses and no one else that He is drafting into service. Moses very likely had long ago decided that he would grow old and die in the desert of Midian with his wife and children and in-laws.

**But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go unto the Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" [Ex. 3:11]**

Only in the Hebrew or with a very literal translation can you appreciate this. God has used the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, referring to Moses, three times. Moses responds by using the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular three times. "You, step forward, and I will send you to the Pharaoh and I will have you bring forth the children of Israel." So Moses answers, "Who am I that I should go to the Pharaoh; that I should bring out the children of Israel?"

This is the beginning of the *show me a sign* mentality that the Jews fell into. Moses was the first. He sees a burning bush which does not burn up, he recognizes with fear and respect that this is God. Now he wants to know how will he actually know that he is really the person for this job. For gosh sakes, man, you are talking to God right now—is that not sign enough.

This verse is an example of erotesis [pronounced *ER-ō-TEE-sis*], which is a question which is not used as a question per se—that is, to illicit information. It is used here in the expostulatory sense; that is, to reason earnestly with someone else. Moses is asking God why would he be chosen for a responsibility such as this; implying that he is not qualified. Moses has been out of the palace for forty years now and has been a shepherd and a family man all of this time. He doesn't even look upon his time in the palace as being important as he was only there through adoption and not by birth.

**And He said, "I will be with you and this to you shall be the sign that I have sent you: when you bring forth the people out of Egypt you shall do service unto God upon this mountain." [Exodus 3:12]**

God has always had a sense of humor. Notice that Moses is asking for some substantiation as to God's choice of him to deliver Israel from the hands of Egypt. He is living a very comfortable life with very few pressures, an okay wife and two sons, and a great family (Moses did have problems with his wife, but those problems may have been related to her not wanting to be a part of God's plan for Moses' life<sup>10</sup>).

So he asks God are you sure it's me you wanted? As if God has made a mistake or has got Moses mixed up with someone else. So God gives him a sign: after Moses goes to the Pharaoh, after he leads his people out of Egypt, **then** God will give Moses a sign that God has chosen the right person for this job. The sign that God promises Moses is, Moses will lead the Jews by this mountain and they will worship here. That will be the sign to Moses; after leading the people to the point, he will worship God at Mount Horeb. This is after the job has been done the God will give Moses a sign to let him know that God did not make a mistake (when Moses leads the people by the mountain there, obviously God has not made a mistake; because Moses has accomplished what God has sent him to do—or at least, part I; God has not yet clued Moses into Part II; 40 years of wandering through the desert).

**And Moses said to God, "Lo, as surely as I go in to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you' they will certainly say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" [Ex. 3:13]**

Not every nation had a direct line to God. Nations were not given their own gods who were equal to the true God, the God of Israel. There has never been an *all roads lead to Rome* insofar as God is concerned. Sincerity and religious fervor mean nothing to God. God has set up one program; there is one God, existing in three persons; and there is no other. Exclusivity has always been a part of God's plan. **"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, by which we must be saved."** (Acts 4:12). God chose to come to a race of people and to work through that race of people in Old Testament times. He chose to do it that way and not to communicate directly to the other races and nations which inhabited the earth at that time. The Hebrews will not follow just any religious or military leader. It is important that Moses is representing the true God. So he asks God for some sort of identification. Here God is providing a miracle for Moses, the burning bush; a miracle that has caused Moses to be filled with fear and respect and now Moses wants to make certain that this is really God.

**And God said to Moses, "I AM the One Who keeps on being." And He said, "Thus you will say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" [Ex. 3:14]**

The Hebrew copyist reverently transcribed the letters *JHWH* or *YHWH*, which is the personal name of any of the three individual members of the Godhead. These are not two different Hebrew forms but two different English forms. Such reverence for God's name (also called the Tetragrammaton) is clearly refreshing to the familiarity used with the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, this Jewish reverence for God's name turned into legalism. The reader of the Scriptures was enjoined to never pronounce this sacred name, but to use a less sacred name, *Adonai* or *Elohim*, instead when speaking aloud. In this way, the Sacred Name never reached the ears of a listener, leaving the pronunciation lost forever. The Septuagint further concealed this Sacred Name by using the Greek word *kúrios* (kurios, meaning "Lord") to translate YHWH [it is significant to note here that Jesus Christ did not anywhere concern Himself with the correct way to pronounce YHWH; He most naturally accepted the title "Lord" (*kúrios*)]. The Latin Vulgate did the same thing as do most of our English translations (however, there are visual clues in the English translations: when we find the words "Lord" or "God" written in small caps, this is the translation of YHWH).

To further add to the confusion, although YHWH occurs approximately 7,000 times in the Old Testament, it is translated *Jehovah* less than a dozen times in the RSV and in the AV.

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<sup>10</sup> The first time that we get a sense that there is some trouble in paradise is, Moses will leave with his family and he finds that he must circumcise his sons. His wife does not care much for that procedure.

There are actually two problems when it comes to the correct pronunciation of the name of God. First of all, there is no *J* in the Hebrew (or in the Greek). Even though there are dozens of names like Jacob, Joshua, Judah, Jedediah, James, Jude, etc. there is no letter *J* in either language. This *J* has been inserted instead of a *Y* (and, occasionally, instead of other letters). In the original Hebrew manuscripts, the words were in all capital consonant letters. When read, the vowels were put in, but not with the tetragrammaton, which was not read. Therefore, the pronunciations have been lost forever to history. The vowel points were added well after the birth of Christ, millennia after some of the Scriptures were written. Now the vowel points are put in, but it is too late. What has been done is the vowel points for "Adonai" have been placed within JHWH for the present day translation Jehovah. This occurred as late in history as 1520 AD by Galatinus. Even several of his contemporaries objected to this pronunciation as being historically and grammatically inaccurate. Most scholars prefer the pronunciation/translation *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*.

"*Y<sup>e</sup>howah* is almost always regarded as the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, masculine, imperfect tense from the root hawah, an old form of the root hayah" [*The Emphasized Bible*].

Hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] means *to be, to exist, to become*. Some scholars do not believe that this name for God is tied to the imperfect tense [*The New Bible Dictionary* by J.D. Douglas, p.478] but regard it as strictly a substantive built upon the word hâwâ. When God told Moses to *say I AM has sent you*, this is written 'eh<sup>e</sup>yeh (הִיְיָ) [pronounced 'e-h<sup>e</sup>-YEH] (the superscript *e* is sometimes the way that the Hebrews indicated that there was not to be a vowel there). This is not the same as the tetragrammaton YHWH (יהוה). As Rotherham pointed out, this is closer to the verb *become*, which is hâwâh (הָוָה) [pronounced *haw-WAW* or *haw-VAW*].

One of the unfortunate results of this confusion about God's name is that Jehovah's Witnesses have distorted this loss and have touted it as though they had suddenly discovered it. Then they have distorted JHWH and do not realize (even as the Jews did not realize) that Jesus Christ is JHWH. Strictly speaking, as Douglas points out, this is the only *name* for God used in the Old Testament. When anyone would *"call upon the name of..."*, the last word would always be YHWH. God will say, "This is My Name forever" [Ex. 3:15]. In the incarnation, we now call on the name of the God-Man, Jesus Christ.

God's name is tied directly to this passage of Scripture. In the authorized version, this is translated "*I am that I am.*" In *The Emphasized Bible* this is translated "*I will become whatsoever I please.*" The verb hâyâh in this verse is repeated, twice in succession then at the end of the verse. It means *to be, to exist, to become*. Verbs are repeated in the Hebrew to give great significance to their meaning. This could be translated, *I am that I am; I am the one existing [eternally]; I keep on being the one existing [eternally]*.

What will help us in this translation is an examination of John 8:58. Of all the disciples, he seemed to be the only one to have a grasp as to what was occurring during our Lord's earthly ministry. He may well have been one of the simplest disciples, or, at the very least, the least literate (his Greek is simple enough for the first year Greek student to translate), yet he understood that Jesus Christ claimed to be equal with God and he understood that the cross was necessary. These two points eluded the other disciples during our Lord's earthly ministry, therefore we find His deity emphasized primarily in John's gospel. John 8:57-59 reads: *The Jews therefore said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old and have You seen Abraham?" Jesus said unto them, "Truly truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM." Therefore, they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple.* One important significance of this passage is, this is a clear reference to Jesus in the New Testament to JHWH in the Old. Certainly, many do not grasp this, but the Jews understood, and saw this statement as blasphemy, and took up stones with which to stone our Lord.

A portion of the Greek from this passage reads: πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί (or, *prin Abraam genesthai ego eimi*). Γίνομαι is in the aorist middle infinitive, meaning a point in time. It is a deponent verb, which is why it is called the middle voice. The infinitive often states purpose. The word itself, in its most simple derivation means *to become*; however, *to be born* or *to come into existence* are also accurate renderings. The point in time referred to was Abraham's lifetime. Ego is "I" and it is added for emphasis, because grammatically it is not needed. The final word is the absolute status quo verb "to be" in the present active indicative., which is continuous action in the

present time. This puts our Lord outside of time, prior to Abraham and continuing up until that moment. Literally, this reads, "Prior to Abraham coming into being, I [even I] AM [or, I kept on existing]." In the Septuagint (Greek) version of the Old Testament, when Moses asked our Lord what is His name so that he could give this to the Hebrews, God said, "Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν." The additional two Greek words are the definite article and the present participle of *I am*. The participle is a verbal adjective, which, in this case, functions as a substantive. Or, "I, even I, keep on being the one being." Or, "I, even I, am, the I am." Or, "I, even I, keep on being the one who exists [eternally]."

There are several questions to be answered: How should we leave this translation? What should our pronunciation of God's name be? Should the Unspoken Name be spoken?

### How Should We Deal with the Pronunciation of JHWH?

1. There seems to be agreement that YHWH has been built upon the Hebrew verb "to be." There is disagreement upon whether or not it is the imperfect tense, but that it is based upon their verb for "to be" seems certain.
2. YHWH or JHWH depends upon the transliteration of the Hebrew letters. Over time, we have taken their *y* and have substituted in a *j*.
3. YHWH does seem to be the only proper name for God in the Old Testament. Elohim (God) is more of a title or designation. Elohim also refers to the Godhead; it is in the plural and sometimes refers to the trinity. JHWH refers to each individual member of the trinity.
4. Jesus Christ is YHWH (Ex. 3:14 cpw John 8:58 Isaiah 43:3,14,15 cpw 2Peter 2:1 Rev. 5:9 Mark 1:24 Luke 1:49 Isaiah 43:11 Hosea 13:4 cpw Luke 2:11 John 4:42 1John 4:14)
5. The Holy Spirit is YHWH.
6. God the Father is YHWH Psalm 143:1 (all prayer is directed toward God the Father).
7. God's Word is placed above His Name Psalm 104:
8. **Jesus Christ nowhere makes an issue out of His name YHWH.** One of the poorer explanations which I have heard for this is that He was not a scribe or a literary critic. He was not learned in textual criticism. Another explanation is that He did not want to confuse the religious people of that day by bringing up deep theological issues. He was being accommodating to the populace by not using God's true name but instead He followed the conventions of the day. Our problem here is that Jesus Christ is YHWH and therefore He knows His Own name. He often taught things which were difficult for the disciples and for others to understand. He knew the Scriptures. Jesus Christ was neither illiterate in the Scriptures nor was He necessarily condescending to man; leaving out the deeper theological points. And He was certainly not ignorant of His Own Name. We are saved by believing in Jesus Christ. This was not the way the early Jews or Greeks pronounced His name. This is not how His name is pronounced in Mexico. This is not how His name is pronounced in France or Germany or in Japan. The pronunciation is a matter of regional significance. We believe in Jesus Christ, in His work and in His person. Just because we pronounce His name differently than those in other countries; and, more significantly with respect to this study, differently than He pronounced it, we are not any less saved. Furthermore, if this were an issue of great importance, then Jesus would have spoken about it. He did not accommodate anyone when it came to blasphemy or spiritual ignorance.
9. Paul, who undoubtedly delves into deep theological issues nowhere in the New Testament epistles makes an issue out of the pronunciation of YHWH nor does he make any allusions to correcting the way YHWH's name was buried in the Septuagint. The same goes for the other writers of Scripture.
10. When quoting Old Testament Scripture, both Jesus and Paul use the word κύριος to translate YHWH. They do not use a transliteration. Matthew 4:7,10 Mark 13:36 Romans 9:28-29 2Corinthians 6:17-18
11. Therefore, if Jesus never made an issue out of this and Paul never made an issue out of this, we should not. That is, if we can figure out how to pronounce *YHWH*, that will not make us any more spiritual or any more mature.
12. It is important to understand that God was revealed to man in the Old Testament and that the God that was revealed to them was Jesus Christ. 99% of the references to YHWH in the OT refer directly to Jesus Christ, the revealed member of the trinity. In His incarnation, as the unique Person of the universe, as the



## How Should We Deal with the Pronunciation of JHWH?

God-man, YHWH is now known to us by a different name: Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament prior to the cross, His name was YHWH (or, more properly, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah* or *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*). In the New Testament times, in the church age, His name is Jesus.

This information was not given to you so that you can grab the first Jehovah's witness that you see and corner them. They are like any other religious unbeliever—this issue is Who and What Jesus Christ did and what He did for them on the cross. They trust completely in His finished work on the cross and they are saved; if they do not, then they will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire (another issue which you do not need to argue with them). Unbelievers who are trying to earn their way into heaven are the most difficult of all to deal with. Jesus Christ and John the Baptist called religious legalists vipers and serpents because they led the Jews astray. If a Jehovah's Witness is interested in the gospel, then they will approach you or God will call you specifically to work with them; but in general, you are wasting your time to argue with a Jehovah's Witness (or any other kind of cult member).

[Chapter Outline](#)

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**And God said yet further to Moses, "Thus you will say to the sons of Israel: 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah, [the] God of your fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob has sent me to you.' This is my name to times age-abiding, and this my memorial to generations after generation. [Exodus 3:15]**

God's Word is God's Word. We often forget that when witnessing to people. We often do not believe in the power and reality of God's word so we think that we must prove that it is true. We feel as though we must somehow back up that it is God's Word. I am not knocking apologetics—it is a favorite field of study for me—but the power is in God's Word, not in apologetics. That is, no matter how good your arguments are, if someone refuses to be convinced, then they will not be convinced.

God had prepared the Israelites for their deliverance. All Moses has to do is to return to Egypt and to take control. God has already handled all the nuts and bolts of the situation. On the other hand, this does not mean that we begin witnessing or that we take much of an active part in God's plan in the beginning of our new birth.

Don't forget that Moses was prepared for perhaps eighty years prior to going into action. Then, *after he was prepared*, God used Moses. Youthful exuberance is wonderful and is, at times, far preferable to the older Christian who has lost his love of the Word, who is not growing, who is dead in his Christian life. Certainly, a newborn baby is far preferable to a 40 year old man who is still 15 in his lifestyle and thinking. But, a mature person is far superior to the newborn. And he has got the capacity for life, the vision, the direction and the drive. A Christian needs to grow and an emotional lift every Sunday is not enough. Even good Bible teaching every Sunday is not enough. Grounding in the Word is a daily process and God designed, for this dispensation, for pastor-teachers to take us to maturity. Self Bible-study is not a part of the New Testament plan for our growth. Moses learned from his Father-in-law, a priest. We learn and grow through a pastor-teacher. No new baby can pack a lunch box and go off to work and make it in the world at age four weeks. He requires eighteen to twenty-five years of training until he can do this. As Christians, we are the same way. We require the growth and the training. Then, when God opens up a significant role in His plan for us, then we move into position.

**"Go, and you will gather together the elders of Israel and you will say to them, 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah, [the] God of your fathers has appeared to me, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, saying, "I am concerned [lit., in visiting, I have visited you] for you and for what is done to you in Egypt" [Exodus 4:16]**

The last sentence is called a zeugma [pronounced *ZEUG-ma*] and it means of unequal yoke (ζεύγμα = yoke). This is where there are two subjects and one verb. Here, what we actually have is the lack of a second subject and

a second verb; where there is a second direct object. What is even more unusual is that the verb *visit* is found here twice, first in the Qal infinitive absolute and secondly in the Qal perfect. As the Qal infinitive absolute, it can stand alone as a verbal noun or it can be used to intensify the meaning of the verb, as it does here. Pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAD*] means *to visit, to attend to, to muster*.

When God is the subject of the verb *visit*, two things are implied: this is much more than casual observation; God is not in heaven, He looks down and notices that the Jews are having a rough time of it and decides to do something about it. God realizes completely what is occurring to the Jews and this verb emphasizes the amount of empathy that He feels for Israel. Secondly, God the Holy Spirit liked to use this word *visit* as God the Son would actually take up residence on this earth and walk among us, visiting us, an event of 33 years which divides history and stands out as an event like no other—God visiting man on earth; taking part in man's sufferings and day-to-day activities. This continual use of the word in the Old Testament where God is the subject foreshadows the first advent of our Lord (Genesis 21:1 50:24, 25 Exodus 3:16 4:31 13:19 etc.).

**"There I say [that] I will bring you up out of the humiliation of Egypt into the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite, and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, into a land flowing with milk and honey." [Exodus 3:17]**

Moses is standing there dumbfounded. God has told him in v. 15 exactly what to do. Since it did not seem to sink in, God tells Moses again just exactly what to do in v. 16. He is to go directly to the elders of Israel and tell them that he is there as a representative of the God of their fathers.

**"So they will listen to your voice; and you will go in—you and the elders of Israel—to the king of Egypt, and you will say to him, 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of the Hebrews, has fallen in with us. Now therefore, let us go, we politely ask you, a journey of three days, into the desert, that we may sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, our God.'" [Exodus 3:18]**

In v. 18, we have the phrase "we pray thee." This is the same word used for "pray" back in v. 3. It is a polite request and "pray thee" is too old English to communicate what is being said.

A fascinating verb that we have in that verse: the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular, Niphal perfect of qârâh (קָרָה) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*], which means *to encounter, to meet, to befall*. The Niphal stem is usually the passive stem; what it indicates here is *a chance encounter, one which has not been prearranged*. The Niphal can be used in other ways, such as progress or development of the action, but the perfect tense runs counter to that. This stem often emphasizes the action of the verb upon the individual members of the group. Moses is telling Pharaoh that they have had a chance encounter with God (a chance encounter insofar as he, Moses, was concerned—the encounter was known to God from eternity past). God is the subject of this sentence, not Moses or the Hebrews.

**"But I know that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go—not [even if compelled] by a firm [or, mighty] hand." [Exodus 3:19]**

The last phrase is a bit difficult and several translators differ as to its sense. We have a negative and a prepositional phrase; no verb. The prepositional phrase is *by a mighty hand*. Rotherham, the literalist, translates this: *not even by a firm hand*. Owen: *unless compelled by a mighty hand*. The NASB: *except under compulsion* with the alternate reading, *except by a strong hand*. Both renditions can be appropriately interpreted. The Pharaoh would not let the people go, not even under the mighty hand of Moses. It will only be after God puts forth His hand and smashes Egypt with signs and wonders that Pharaoh will allow the Jewish people to leave.

Bullinger, in his marvelous *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, gives us a different slant on this last phrase. He calls this an epitasis [pronounced *e-PIT-a-sis*], which is primarily a figure of speech found in the Greek. It means *to stretch* and it is an addition to the original phrase for emphasis. This means that the Pharaoh will not just initially say *no* to Moses, but he will continually say *no*, even when faced with God's mighty hand. The next verse indicates that this **is** God's mighty hand that we are speaking of.

God gives Moses a short explanation of the game plan. Most of us have heard the story of the Exodus, or have seen the movie, and realize that this is a bare bones summary. But this is all that Moses needs to know. Most of us, if we knew every detail of our future, could not face it. God, however, as our future unfolds, provides for us and provides the strength to move through it. God has told Moses everything that he needs to know. Ideally, the plan would be for the Jews to first go to the desert and receive instruction from God as to their next move.

**"So then, I will put forth my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders, which I will do in the midst thereof; and, after that, he will send you forth." [Ex. 3:20]**

An issue brought up here is the "wonders" which God will perform. Since we are mostly acquainted with the more spectacular portions of the Bible, we seem to think that the Christian life should be fraught with miracles and signs and wonders. We should walk out our front doors and there should be a cloud in the sky indicating that we should make a left turn or a right turn. How did we ever become so foolish? Firstly, our lives are filled with supernatural activity that we will never recognize until we have passed into phase three of the Christian life. However, the kinds of signs and wonders which we associate with the Christian life did not occur on a regular basis throughout history. These things were the exception to human experience.

Every thousand years or so, there might be a short period of time when there would be signs and miracles and wonders. These things all occurred when God was making an important change in the way he dealt with man. Or they would occur at a particular cross roads. When God went from dealing with mankind through all families and centered in on the race of the Jews, there were some miraculous things which occurred, but miraculous to Abraham and Sarah only, and not to the outside world. When designating exactly what that line would be, God played a significant role in that family through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The bulk of their lives, including the portion with Joseph, were not filled with miracles. After this, we find that there will be miracles on the exodus because God is not going to work through a nation (which was the natural outgrowth of the family of Abraham). There will be some miracles associated with Elijah and some unusual things which will occur in David's life. Then there will be a host of miracles and wonders associated with our Lord Jesus Christ and the foundation of the church (because that indicates a complete change in God's plan). However, in between those times are long periods of time where God's hand is present and fully recognizable (which it should be in our lives today) but there are a dearth of signs and miracles and wonders. **[see the doctrine of signs and wonders...not finished yet!!]**

In v. 22, the Jews will *spoil* the Egyptians. This is outdated language which does not communicate. We associate that with buying Nintendo games<sup>11</sup> for a six-year-old. Here, the Jews are merely taking what is rightfully theirs for services performed while under slavery to the Egyptians. It is payment due for services rendered.

**"Then I will give grace to this people in the eyes of the Egyptians; so it will come to pass that when you do go, you will not go empty [-handed] but every woman shall ask of her neighbor, and of her that live in her house, jewels [possibly, articles] of silver and jewels [possibly, articles] of gold and clothing; and you will put them upon your sons and upon our daughters; so shall you recover [or, take] from the Egyptians." [Exodus 3:21-22]**

We first must deal with the specific words in v. 22; then we can handle the interpretation. The KJV translates the word *shâ'al* (שָׁאַל) [pronounced *shaw-AL*] as *borrow*. It does not mean that; it means *to ask, to inquire*. It is in the Qal perfect, meaning that once they ask and once they leave, that is it. They have worked as faithful slaves on behalf of these Egyptians and for these Egyptians for over a century.

The word often translated *spoil or plunder* is *nâtsal* (נָטַל) [pronounced *naw-TSAL*] and it means *to snatch away (in a good or a bad sense)* and it is often translated *pluck, preserve, deliver, recover, rescue, save*. Here, *recover* contextually fits; although *take* is a reasonable translation also. This is in the Piel perfect, which is a completed

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<sup>11</sup> Now, a very *outdated* reference. :)

action and the Piel stem is intensive. At that point in time, the plagues upon Egypt and the circumstances surrounding their leaving will be very intense.

The Jews have worked for years under the hands of the Egyptians and have produced and built and slaved for the country as a whole and for individual families. God has allowed that and has not said anything about the evils of slavery. However, it is now time for the Jews to become established and God will see to it that they are paid for what they have done. The amount of compensation that they will receive will be small compared to what they have done on behalf of Egypt; but it will be a beginning. When the slaves were freed here in the United States, every slave-owner should have given that slave some seed money or some land or something with which to begin a life. We will see in Exodus 12:33 that the Egyptians wanted the Jews to leave, as they were afraid of the dire consequences if they remained. This is one of the few places in the Bible where it is implied that there is a price for keeping slaves and that the Egyptians did owe the Israelites something for their years of slavery.

We may wonder why the Jews needed any kind of jewelry in their circumstances; it was an Oriental custom to wear fine jewelry when going to a sacred festival. This way they did not displease the deities. It is also common for us today to dress up for Sunday church. However, this jewelry and the like was payment for services rendered. It was also somewhat like a savings account. It could be bartered when in difficult circumstances.

You may have certainly noticed the poor place in which this chapter got divided from chapter 4. Moses continues speaking to God in Exodus 4:1 and God continues speaking to and being patient with Moses. There should have not have been a chapter break until between vv. 19 & 20 of Exodus 4.

**Exodus 4** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 4

### Exodus 4:1–31

#### Outline of Chapter 4:

- Vv. 1–17 **God continues to reassure Moses**
- Vv. 18–23 **Moses and his family begin to travel to Egypt**
- Vv. 24–26 **Moses under the sin unto death**
- Vv. 27–31 **Moses meets Aaron and the elders of Israel**

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 21 **What is wrong with the hyper-Calvinist view of hardening Pharaoh's heart**

**Introduction:** As we have noted, the chapter breaks are not inspired and this particular chapter break is a good example of a bad chapter break. We are still observing the conversation between Moses and the Revealed God (Jesus Christ). Then, suddenly, in mid-conversation, the chapter suddenly ends. Chapter 3 should have been continued as far as Exodus 4:17, which is the end of the conversation between Jesus Christ and Moses and chapter 4 should have begun with Exodus 4:18, when Moses takes his family and returns to Egypt.

The reason I do not re-do the chapters and set them up properly is, I make these documents to match up with the common English Bible translation. If someone is studying Exodus 4:1–5, then I prefer for them to find that information under Exodus 4, even though those verses are properly placed at the end of Exodus 3.

During this return, Moses is required to circumcise his children (who are grown men now) and this duty is relegated to his wife, who finds the experience repugnant. This portion of God's Word is amusing because we have the very bitchy opinion of the wife of Moses given to the man who would lead two million Jews out of Egypt. We will also have the opportunity to meet Moses' brother Aaron.

### God Continues to Reassure Moses

Moses is still not going for it. He voices another objection: In Exodus 3:18, God has told Moses that the people will listen to him. Still, despite what God says, Moses finds reason to object.

**Then Moses responded, and he said, "And look [lit., /o], they will not believe me, neither [will they] listen to my voice; for they will say 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah has not appeared to you.'" [Exodus 4:1]**

Moses is taken aback by all of this. He has no idea how he can pull this off. He does not see himself as a messenger of God but, at this point in time, can only see this from the human viewpoint. He would just be some fool from the Midian desert who comes to the people of Israel alleging that he has spoken to God. He appears to discount the fact that God would be with him.



God told Moses that the people will listen to him; Moses says that they won't. God's word is filled with promises and mandates that we often find ourselves contradicting. Whereas, it is crystal clear in the Bible that sex is allowed only on the playing field of marriage between a man and a woman and not until after the marriage, how many Christians adhere to this? Here is one place where you have the opportunity to compare yourself to one of the greatest men who ever lived. God said one thing; Moses told God that He is wrong. God has given you specific mandates; you have told God that He is wrong.

Some people have no concept of how inconsequential their opinion is. As a young person, one of the very few areas where my viewpoint lined up with God's was with respect to school. During my tenure at high school, the latest thinking was to ask us students how we felt about this issue or that. I personally was quite uncomfortable with this; I was going to school in order to gain the knowledge to someday have an opinion and I did not have enough information at that time to have an opinion on those things I was expected to have an opinion on. How arrogant we are to have any opinion which is in opposition to God. How much smaller it makes us appear. However, luckily for Moses, God will entertain Moses' concern.

Along these lines, I recently saw a video on Watters' World where high school students had a massive walkout over Trump's temporary and limits immigration ban. When Jesse Watters interviews the students, it became apparent that they did not really have a clue why they were protesting, but it was also clear that they were sincere and passionate about it. No knowledge but lots of emotion. The Communists called such people *useful idiots*.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to him, "What is this in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." Then said he, "Cast it to the earth." And he cast it to the earth and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from the face thereof. [Ex. 4:2-3]**

As Scofield points out, a staff or rod, in Scripture, is often indicative of power and authority (Psalm 2:9 11-:2 Rev. 2:27). Cast down (that is, held in the carnal, earthly realm, it becomes a serpent striking fear in the hearts of all those under it. Taken up by the man of God, it becomes a rod of God (Ex. 4:20).

What exactly was extent at that time in terms of the Scriptures, we do not know; and we know even less about what Scriptures Moses was familiar with. Perhaps Moses was aware of a prototype Genesis (from which Moses got his information) existed and possibly Job, or maybe he knew the entire book of Genesis and Job. However, we have no clear indication that Moses had access to either of those books at this time—apart from the references by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Moses never said, "Who are those guys you keep talking about?").

For the next 40 years, Moses' primary source of revelation will come directly from God. Today, our primary source of revelation (99.99999%) comes from the written word. When someone tells me that God has spoken to them or has spoken to their heart or has let them know something, I personally have serious doubts in this area. If we are filled with His Word and filled with the Spirit, we do not require a cloud overhead telling us should we make a right or a left turn. However, at this time, there was very little if any written revelation. There certainly was a system of sacrifice, which taught salvation and rebound (definitely the former and very likely the latter). Information about what has happened in history and God's relationship to man over the previous 1000 years or so has been passed down orally.

Although Moses lived in the Jewish Age, he is alive in the first period of the Jewish Age before the existence of nation Israel. Moses will lead what is more or less a people out of Egypt toward the land of Canaan; but he will not rule over them as an actual nation with a plot of ground and borders.

## **What Was the Spiritual Life in the Day of Moses?**

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Moses' father-in-law has certainly passed on to Moses whatever he knew and Moses has experienced some growth. As unusual as this might sound, it is important to realize that we have the opportunity to know more and have an impact equal to Moses in God's history because we have the entire Word of God and the opportunity to know the entire Word of God. Moses is speaking directly, face-to-face with the living God, Jesus Christ, and he is telling Him, "I don't know; I don't think Your idea is going to work. I think that Your plan has several flaws." Because of the lack of divine revelation in Moses' soul God will have to work with Moses using some signs and wonders. Afterwards, as Moses becomes further and further entrenched in His Word (this will be by divine revelation and by writing God's Word) there will be fewer and fewer signs for Moses himself. However, there will be a great many signs for the children of Israel.

Back to the passage itself; God did not ask Moses what was in his hand because God was not sure. He asked Moses so that Moses would have no doubt in his mind as to what he was holding. The miracle which was performed was nothing. It was a very small thing for God to do. The less that we require in the way of miracles, the better off we are. Miracles and wonders do not ground one in the faith. Similarly, Christian apologetics, although they have their place, do not appreciably cause one to grow. Moses will in later life not hearken back to this miracle and find strength and power in it. This miracle was good for a few hours; or, at best, a few days.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Put forth your hand and take it by its tail."—so he put forth his hand and laid hold of it and it became a staff in his hand— "that they may believe that Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of their fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, has appeared to you." [Exodus 4:4–5]**

God is performing some minor miracles for Moses which will do two things: (1) it will give Moses a place to temporarily place his faith until he becomes more inculcated with God's Word; and (2) it shows Moses what miracles he will be capable of when he meets with his people, the Jews. This way, just in case they do not believe him, Moses will realize that there are certain things that he can do by way of miracles to show that he really did speak with God. Moses is concerned first of all that the Jews will not believe him (Exodus 4:1); and God performs this miracle so that he will see what he is capable of doing before his own people the Jews. These same miracles will also be performed for the Egyptian Pharaoh. As we will see, the elders of the Hebrews will appear to accept Moses immediately (Exodus 4:31) and these signs would be used more extensively later on (Exodus 7:8–13).

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to him, yet again, "Bring, if you would, your hand into your bosom." So he brought his hand into his bosom, and took it out and lo, his hand was leprous, like snow. And He said, "Put your hand back into your bosom." And he put back his hand into his bosom and lo, it had come again, like his own flesh. [Ex. 4:6-7]**

The heart is what we are and the hand is what we do as a result of what we are. Moses had both a corrupt and an honorable heart; when he put his hand near his heart and took it out, what was revealed was his dishonorable, leprous heart; a heart filled with excuses and negative volition. However, Moses was also saved and he did have some doctrine. So when he put his hand back inside his cloak it came out whole again. A passage in the New Testament which deals with this issue would be Luke 6:43-45.

Again, these are just miracles which are done to impress Moses enough to give him the courage to do what God has told him to do. As amazing as it may seem, this will not be enough to convince Moses to go ahead with God's plan. He has had some training, but we have no idea how much Scripture Moses has learned.

Moses will, when he receives God's Word on the Mount Sinai, become much more grounded and that will prepare him for the forty years of living in the desert with a bunch of spiritual degenerates.

**"Thus it shall come to pass: if they will not believe you nor hearken to the voice of the first sign, then will they believe the voice of the next sign. And it shall come to pass if they will not believe even those two signs nor hearken to your voice, then shall you take of the water of the river and pour it out on the dry land; and the water which you have taken from the river shall certainly become blood on the dry land." [Ex. 4:8-9]**

God is telling Moses that there is a backup plan to the backup plan. Moses is still thinking about the elders of Israel believing him and God is giving Moses the contingency plan when Pharaoh refuses to let the people go. God is a couple steps ahead of Moses. God knows what He is doing and will perform whatever miracles need to be performed in order to accomplish His purposes.

Moses has another objection. Moses is a very bright man and can come up with a lot of objections.

**The Moses said to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Pardon, O My Lord, [but] I am not an eloquent man [lit., a man of words]; neither, heretofore, nor since You have spoken to your servant, for heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue am I." [Exodus 4:10]**

Moses is thinking of excuses why he cannot participate as quickly as he possibly can. It does not occur to him to just trust God and go with God's program. So Moses thinks about this—even though he can perform a couple of miracles, he still has to speak to the men of Israel and he is not accustomed to public speaking. He may have had some training in this decades ago, but apparently he has never had to put it into practice.

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to him, "Who appointed a mouth for man or who appointed him to be dumb or deaf or seeing or blind. Is it not I, Y<sup>e</sup>howah?" [Exodus 4:11]**

Moses' objection is not an excuse to God. God has chosen Moses. It is God who has decided who can speak and who cannot. This is not Moses' prerogative to second guess what God has provided for him.

**"Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth so will I direct you, what you will speak." [Exodus 4:12]**

Y<sup>e</sup>howah has made it quite clear that Moses has a mouth (by divine design) and that God will tell him what to say. What more does he need? Jesus Christ told His disciples the same thing fifteen hundred years later. **"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore, be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak. For it is not you who is speaking but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you." (Matt 10:16-20; also see Mark 13:11 Luke 21:12-17).**

Some have taken this verse or the passage just quoted from Matthew out of context. You cannot claim either of these passages in lieu of learning God's Word. When the time comes, we cannot simply open our mouths and God will just speak for us. God chose the disciples who were, for the most part, spiritually weak. Jesus Christ told them time and time again about the cross and they later remembered that when writing Scripture, but did not seem to know about it when the time came.

Jesus knew when He spoke these words to them that they were for all intents and purposes, without resources. Under circumstances of pressure; the eleven disciples would fall apart. He therefore promised them that they would be able to communicate His Word as they should be able to even under pressure. Most, if not all of the disciples, would develop the doctrinal resources in their souls and be able to speak God's Word under tremendous pressure through the power of the Holy Spirit to the courts and rulers that they will be brought before.

Today, we have the entire Word of God and the ability to grasp its meaning and intention. We claim such a promise in cognizance, not in ignorance. God can and does prepare us to a point where we are not robots but our souls take an active part in what we say and think. This is certainly not a full exposition of these three passages, which actually were spoken on two occasions, the first time spoken to all the disciples as a near prophecy, and the second time as a near and far prophecy said to only certain Apostles.

In this context, Moses was still coming up with excuses and God was answering those excuses. God has a plan for our lives and we should fall into this plan willingly. It is not some obscure maze that we have to continually pray about and ask for miracles to direct us. In Moses' case, God spoke to him directly because (1) there was a dearth of Scripture and, (2) because God had an extremely important and individual job for Moses to do. Once we learn some doctrine, what God wants us to do is often too clear; and we, due to negative volition and not due to ignorance, will choose against His plan.

**And he said, "Pardon, O my Lord, send [your message], if you would please, by the hand of him whom you will send." [Ex. 4:13]**

Moses is saying, "Please, if You would, send someone else." The hand is the agency by which something is done. Whereas this verse literally reads: "And he [Moses] said, O Lord, send I pray you by the hand You will send." In other words, *accomplish Your work through any agency except me*. God has all the patience in the world; a thousand years is as a day to Him.

God does not have anger as an emotion. The next verse is put in terms of language of accommodation. It is put on a level which we can understand. At this point in time, even we should start becoming impatient with Moses.

**Then the anger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah was kindled against Moses, and He said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he is certainly able to speak [lit., *in speaking, he can speak*]. Moreover, also, I see [lit., *lo*], he himself is coming forth to meet you as surely as he sees you, so sure will he rejoice in his heart." [Exodus 4:14]**

God knew in eternity past that there was no one else for this job other than Moses. He was the perfect person to perform these miracles and to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. He was also aware that Moses would refuse to lead the children of Israel and that Moses would refuse to stand up to Pharaoh. Moses needs someone there to hold his hand. So God provided Aaron, the brother of Moses, in eternity past. The way that this is expressed is somewhat humorous: "What about your brother, Aaron? I know that he can speak."

Actually, the Hebrew word is our common word for speaking: *dābar* (דָּבַר) [pronounced *daw-BAR*]. This is first found in the Piel infinitive absolute and then in the Piel imperfect. The double use of this word means that Aaron can undoubtedly speak. Normally the Piel tense would stand out as being quite intensive, but *dābar* is found in the Piel much more often than in any other stem. We will see that, although Aaron is enthusiastic and eager to please, he does not have what it takes to stand up to Pharaoh or to lead the Israelites. As Thieme paints this picture, Aaron will be the spokesman for Moses until Moses finally gets tired of listening to him handle it the wrong way so that he finally pushes Aaron aside and speaks directly to Pharaoh.

There is an important shadow here. Aaron becomes a part of God's plan by virtue of the fact that he is related to Moses. There are a number of greater men in Israel than Aaron—however, only Aaron is the brother of Moses. Aaron will become a High Priest and all those who are descended from him will be priests or high priests. They are so designated because of their relationship to Aaron and he is so placed in God's plan because of his relationship to Moses. Here's the deal: we have nothing whatsoever to recommend ourselves to God. We are in absolute opposition to God. We should expect condemnation. However, because we are in Christ—because of our relationship to Christ Jesus, we are accepted in the beloved. In fact, we are a nation of priests. What we have is a parallel situation. Moses is representative of Christ—the Great Prophet Who would come. Aaron has a place in God's plan, as do all of his descendants, simply because of his relationship to Moses. We have our place in God's plan simply because of our relationship to Christ Jesus. We have nothing else to recommend us.

**"Then you will speak to him and will put the words in his mouth, so I will direct you [as to] what you will do. And he will speak for you unto the people; and is shall come to pass that he will become a spokesman [lit., a mouth] on your behalf [lit., for you] and you will become to him as God." [Exodus 4:15–16]**

V. 16 may not be translated completely correctly. We have the absolute status quo verb *to be* hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] used twice here. It is first in the Qal perfect with a subject which is not altogether clear; and it immediately follows in the Qal imperfect. We could also translate this as: **he has become and he will continue to become a mouth on your behalf and you will be to him as God.**

So God will speak to Moses; Moses will tell Aaron what to say, and Aaron will speak to Pharaoh, on behalf of God. What Moses says to Aaron will be just as though God is speaking to Aaron—therefore, Moses will become as God to Aaron. Although this is God's second choice as to how things should be done; He does allow Moses his free will. What God would prefer (and it will eventually occur this way) is that there will be one man between Himself and Pharaoh; one mediator speaking God's Word to Pharaoh. That sets up a better shadow image of Jesus Christ revealing God to man and the perfect God-man, the One Mediator between God and man. Throughout the Old Testament, God will continually use spiritual men who both act in the process of His plan and also act as a shadow of good things to come.

**"And this staff, take it in your hand; with this you shall perform the signs." [Ex. 4:17]**

When Moses' mother, the queen, told him of his background, she possibly told him about his real family. There is no indication that they had ever met prior to this. Very likely, his birth-mother kept in touch with the queen and would inquire as to Moses and his life.

It seems reasonable that Moses' entire family knows about him all the time that he is in the Pharaoh's palace. Recall that Miriam, his older sister, watched the ark the Moses was in until the Pharaoh's daughter took up Moses; and then she retrieved her mother to feed the child until he was weaned.

God certainly knew Moses' entire background and at this point, we do not know how much about it that Moses knew. It is my educated guess (yet, at this point it is just a theory) that Moses did not fully grasp his familial background until a day or so before he went out among the Jews to observe them in slavery. He behaved as if he was seeing them in a new light, although, at forty years old, he could remember Jews being slaves under Egypt and under the authority of the palace for his entire life.

Based upon his actions when he had gone out among the Hebrew people, it does not appear that Moses fully appreciated his heritage and his people until then—and it is possible that he was not aware of it until a short time prior his going out that day.

When he went out to observe the Jews, he may have been told more details of his family and perhaps not. Since no intention of meeting his family was mentioned and since he goes out into the Jews twice without a mention of his family, it is my educated guess that he did not know any of the specifics of his birth at that time. However, his first visit out to the Jews in Exodus 2:11 mentions the word *brothers* twice; indicating that he knew at least at this time that these were his *relatives* by birth. Exodus 4:14 and the following verse indicates that Moses at this time knew who his family was.

## **Moses and His Family Begin to Travel to Egypt**

**So Moses went and returned to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said to him, "Let me go, I ask of you, and return to my family who are in Egypt, that I may see whether they are yet alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go and prosper." [Ex. 4:18]**



I've taken some liberties with the translation; Moses asks to return and see his *brothers*. Also, *I ask of you* is actually *I pray thee*. It is interesting to note that Moses says nothing of his encounter with the burning bush to his own father-in-law, who is a priest.

A guess on my part is that Moses will go half-heartedly to Egypt, first to see his family, and then he might go and speak to Pharaoh. He is still possibly going to play this by ear.

Notice that this parting is much better than the one between Laban and Jacob. Jethro recognizes the importance of Moses returning to Egypt to see his family and does not do anything untoward to make him stay. There is a mutual respect between Moses and Jethro, so Moses does not feel that he needs to hide what he is going to do.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses in Midian, "Go and return to Egypt, for all the men are dead who were seeking your life." [Ex. 4:19]**

How God spoke to Moses this second time, we do not know. This could have been a reference to Mount Horeb because that is in Midian, near the border of Midian and Egypt. If God did come to Moses a second time, then we are given no specifics whether He came in a dream or a vision or as another phenomenon of nature. Moses originally left Egypt because his life was in danger and now he can return since the statute of limitations has run out (which, in this case, is the fact that those who remembered the crime and intended to prosecute Moses had died).

**So Moses took his wife and his sons and caused them to ride upon the donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt; and Moses took the staff of God in his hand. [Exodus 4:20]**

This staff was the staff which Moses had used for years to walk with and to herd his cattle and sheep with. However, when God caused it to change into a serpent and back into a staff, it became the staff of God.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "When you go to return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your hand; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go." [Exodus 4:21]**

Moses likely recorded all of this years later. It is possible that he recorded his conversation with God at Mount Horeb, and as he records his steps from Midian to Egypt, he recalls other things which God had said to him. It is also possible that God had again appeared to Moses, possibly several times, reassuring Moses in little steps.

Then we come to the place which most people find confusing. God hardens Pharaoh's heart. The only people not confused by this are the hyper-Calvinists who do not believe that we have the free will to act apart from God's plan. I should rephrase that. When it comes to salvation, there are the chosen and there are the damned. The chosen believe in God because God turned on their positive volition. They see *faith* as being the *gift of God* in Eph. 2:8,9<sup>12</sup>. We are all corrupt; none of us has enough positive volition to chose God; and if we did, that would be works. That would imply some goodness in us which we do not possess. God foreknew those He would save—those who's volition He would turn to positive—and therefore, Christ only died for those people. God is glorified in all of this. Therefore, the hyper-Calvinists see nothing unusual about God "hardening Pharaoh's heart."

### **What is wrong with the hyper-Calvinist view of hardening Pharaoh's heart**

The problem with their position is this:

1. Man is corrupt and totally negative toward God.
2. Pharaoh is not only all of those things, but he will die an unbeliever.
3. Therefore, why would God have to do anything to Pharaoh's heart? It would be natural for Pharaoh to react

<sup>12</sup> It is not; not according to Eph. 2:8–9; *faith* is feminine and *it is* is in the neuter

## What is wrong with the hyper-Calvinist view of hardening Pharaoh's heart

negatively toward God's plan in the first place.

4. Hyper-Calvinists believe in the total depravity of man.
5. It is illogical for God to do inside Pharaoh what he would do out of his own depravity.

So, you observe that the people who do not have a problem with this passage are the ones who theology is overturned by what they believe.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

When we get further along in this, we will examine God hardening Pharaoh's heart. At some point in time, we will cover **the Doctrine of The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart**. A problem with the Calvinists, as it is with many theological positions, is this "all or nothing" mindset. On the one hand we have the Armenian way of thinking, which emphasizes man's free will as over ruling God's sovereignty; and the hyper-Calvinists on the other hand seeing God's sovereignty as overruling man's free will. Furthermore, they see man's free will as being illusionary at best when it comes to things spiritual. The theological conclusions of both positions are dangerous. The Armenian believes that everything depends upon them. However, everything depends upon God. The hyper-Calvinists become fatalistic. However, the Bible asserts our free will throughout the Old and New Testaments. Both positions are theological ones and it may not seem to be that important to the reader, but that theological position seeps into their Christian life and into their way of thinking. Their participation in God's plan is confused and contradictory. Their motivation is confused and their actions are confused. However, when the time is right, we will straighten all of this out.

What might help to allay your troubles temporarily is that the Hebrew sometimes has a verb denoting action which expresses not the doing of the thing, but the permission to do so.<sup>13</sup> Bullinger points out several passages where this is done: Genesis 31:7 Jeremiah 4:10 Ezekiel 14:9 20:25 etc. God is not forcing Pharaoh to harden his heart, but He is permitting him to do so. More of that later.

**"Then shall you say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, My Son—my firstborn—is Israel. Therefore, I say to you, let my son go that he may serve me But, if you refuse to let him go, behold, I am going to slay your son, your firstborn.'" [Ex. 4:22-23]**

Whether God is appearing to Moses on several different occasions or whether Moses is recalling these things to his mind as he sets off toward Egypt, the implication is clear: Moses, on this trip, is thinking doctrine and is being exposed to doctrine. Doctrine is God's Word and Moses has doctrine now pervading his soul. This is the only way to approach one's spiritual service. God has given Moses the overview of what will occur (the Pharaoh will not listen to Moses) and what the final ultimatum to the Pharaoh will be. the death of the first born.

Under Egyptian bondage, it is possible that circumcision among the Israelites had been neglected by some (however, not by Moses' parents because his adoptive mother recognized that he was a Hebrew immediately in Exodus 2:6). We do know, however, that Moses did neglect the circumcision of his own children—at least his youngest.

Circumcision is one of the things which sets the Israelites apart from surrounding heathen. Because "sons" is in the plural in v. 20, we know that Moses had two or more sons; and because "son" is in the singular in v. 25 that we have two possible scenarios: (1) Moses had all of his sons circumcised until the last one which his wife overruled; or (2) Moses did not have any of his children circumcised, and when cutting off the foreskin of the last son, his wife threw a tantrum. It is possible that Moses had suggested circumcision before but had been overruled by his wife; or it is possible that he never took this stand. Whatever the case, not all of his children were circumcised.

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<sup>13</sup> Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*

What God will expect from Moses is an all or nothing stance. He is about to lead two million malcontents across the desert for forty years. He is about to stand in front of Pharaoh and do what is unprecedented: demand the release of two million slaves because this is God's demand. Not only is it the demand of God, but the Pharaoh will see Him as a local god; peculiar to the Israelites. Therefore, Moses cannot follow God's plan in a half-assed way.

I need to add an OT Doctrine of Circumcision; and an abbreviated Doctrine of Circumcision here.

## Moses Under the Sin Unto Death

**And it came to pass on the way, in the resting place for the night that Y<sup>e</sup>howah fell upon him [Moses] and sought to kill him. [Exodus 4:24]**

A son (or sons) of Moses has not been circumcised since birth. Now suddenly Moses is under the sin unto death. The sin unto death is a sin or sins or point of degeneracy when God requires the believer to be removed from this life painfully and under discipline. For the casual reader, the fact that God has come to Moses and has spoken to him on at least one occasion, and the fact that Moses finally decides to go along with God's plan, might become rather disconcerted by this verse. However, whereas Moses, a shepherd out in the desert, apart from his people, can get by with not circumcising his son(s); Moses, the leader of the Jewish people, the instrument of God, the man to stand before Pharaoh and demand Pharaoh allow the Jews to leave—that Moses does not have the same leniency. As we move higher up in God's plan, we have more rewards, more happiness, more responsibility and the discipline becomes much more strict.

We have seen men of great spiritual prominence brought down by a few acts of carnality. These men do not even have to be spiritual giants; but they are perceived by many to have a great ministry and dedication to God. On the other hand, I can think of one man in particular who stands out as a very public person whose reputation is just about unimpeachable—Billy Graham. He has had a tremendous responsibility all of his life and, with God's grace, has been equal to the task. God sees that those who are leaders in the Christian community are disciplined far more than the average Christian would be.

**So Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and it was cast down at his feet [Moses'], and she said, "Surely, a bridegroom of blood are you to me." [Exodus 4:25]**

*Foreskin*, surprisingly enough, is a feminine noun. *Cast down* is in the Hiphil stem—the passive stem—and it is in the feminine singular. This is how we properly determine the subject of this verb.

Women do not like to see their children suffer any kind of pain, no matter what. Sometimes a child is so protected from pain, that they have no concept of what the real world is like and they have totally unrealistic expectations. Zipporah is practically never mentioned in the Bible, and she is never mentioned with regards to any great spiritual thing. Moses' life was at stake and she was concerned about a small amount of pain. She has no big picture view. She has no concept of Moses' role in history. In order for two people to have a happy life together, they need to both be growing spiritually. We may not know the full implication of what she has said, but it is clear that she is unhappy with the situation and any husband knows that there is hell to pay when the little woman is unhappy (this works both ways).

**So He withdrew from him. Then that she said, "A bridegroom of blood" with respect to the circumcision. [Ex. 4:26]**

God fell upon Moses, or met Moses with the intention of killing him. Because Moses had not circumcised youngest son, and was off to lead the nation Israel out of Egypt, he found himself under the sin unto death. He delegated the responsibility of circumcising the children to his wife (it is possible that he was too sick to perform this operation—again, God has not given us all the details here). Once she had done that, God allowed Moses to

recover (*He withdrew from him*) and Zipporah was allowed her moment of bitchiness. How embarrassing to have a husband who is the single greatest man in the Old Testament and the only thing that we remember about the wife is how pouted and bitched in the face of God's plan and the possibility of the death of her husband. What a sad memorial. We must understand that this is not an indictment against all women; this is a sad piece of commentary about one woman who did not have the foresight, the spiritual growth, the personal sense of destiny that her husband possessed.

Zipporah was under a lot of pressure here. She was raised with her family out in the desert and for the past forty or so years has lived with Moses in the desert. She certainly assumed they would live out there lives together there, so she is certainly unhappy about this trip to Egypt. Even though it is unlikely that Moses has told anyone as to why he is really going to Egypt, it is certain that she suspects that this is more than just a family reunion. This circumcision is the last straw. She had thought that this issue had been settled. She had raised her children under Dr. Spock, seeing that they experience little or no pain in their lives, therefore, she would not allow circumcision to be done; and now she has found that she has been overruled. All in all, a bad day for Zipporah (which means *bird*.).

This issue of complete obedience was obviously of utmost importance to God. It was important enough to put Moses under the sin unto death. He was given enough time to deal with this situation properly as the man of the house, and he did. Zipporah, just in case Moses didn't hear her the first time or receive the entire impact of her statement, she calls him a bloody bridegroom twice. Because of Zipporah's failure here, we will never hear about her again. One theologian theorized that she left Moses at this time.

## **Moses Meets Aaron and the Elders of Israel**

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Aaron, "Go your way to meet Moses, towards the desert." So he went his way and he met him in the mountain of God and kissed him.** [Exodus 4:27]

Aaron knew about his brother Moses, raised in the palace. Their sister, Miriam, saw with her own eyes what had happened. All of this was apparently kept quiet in order to preserve the life of their brother Moses. However, the time is proper and God reunites this family, speaking to Aaron and guiding both Aaron and Moses. It is not easy for one man to leave Midian with his family and another to leave Egypt and to meet one another in the midst of the desert. God had to guide both of them in order for that to happen.

**And Moses told Aaron all the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, with which He had sent him, and all the signs with which He had entrusted him.** [Exodus 4:28]

God sent Moses on his way with doctrine in his soul. What God said to Moses was the Word of God—it was doctrine—and we see Moses recounting this throughout this journey. When God sends us to do His work, it is with His Word—His doctrine—in our souls; that is how we are sent. Moses also told Aaron about the signs which were his responsibility. The Hebrew word is *tsâvâh* (צַוָּה) [pronounced *tsaw-VAW*] and it means *to lay charge [upon], to give charge [to], to command, to order, to place under one's authority or into one's responsibility*. *Entrusted* is a reasonable one-word translation, if one infers duty and responsibility as a part of it. This verb is in the Piel perfect, meaning that God gave this once and for all to Moses and this was an intensive responsibility (meaning, solemn). This signs and wonders were a great responsibility to have. This is one of the reasons that Moses almost died the sin unto death.

**So Moses and Aaron went their way, and gathered together all the elders of the sons of Israel.** [Ex. 4:29]

The way this is written, it sounds as though Aaron did not have as much trouble with God speaking to him as Moses did. God told Aaron to go out to the desert and he did. Moses tells Aaron what God had planned for them and Aaron immediately takes Moses to the elders of Israel. We don't know how quickly Aaron consented to all

of this, but the text suggests that Aaron went along with all of this almost immediately. Since Moses wrote this, we will find more details concerning his conversations with God than with Aaron's. Even though Aaron makes some serious mistakes in the future, one should not underestimate his spiritual impact. The entire Levitical priesthood began with Aaron at the head. Also, I believe that it was his influence over Moses that caused Moses to be less difficult about going through with God's plan.

This is likely the first meeting between Moses and Aaron and they are about eighty years old. Israel was operating on a family, elder system of rule. We began with a family priesthood and God worked through various family members. When the population grew, God chose a particular race to work through. This is called the age of the patriarchs ("fathers") because their primary organization was through the elder members of the tribes. The major change to occur is that God will organize them as a nation and rule over them as their king. Later on, the people of Israel will reject Jesus Christ as their king. In 1Samuel, they will reject Jesus Christ as their king and ask for a human king to lead them.

Moses did not want to speak and desired for God to choose someone else. God chose Aaron, knowing that Moses was by far the more powerful and dynamic speaker and leader. In speaking to the pharaoh, Moses will soon become frustrated when he listens to Aaron speak (while he ruminates that he should have said it this way and he should have said this or that, etc.). Finally Moses will push Aaron aside and begin doing his own speaking.

**And Aaron spoke all the words which Y<sup>e</sup>howah had spoken to Moses, and he did the signs before the eyes of the people. [Exodus 4:30]**

It is unclear in the English and in the Hebrew as to who performed these signs—whether it was Aaron or Moses. However, it would be most likely that Moses did so that the Jews were able to understand the chain of command (from God to Moses to Aaron). Furthermore, when Moses stopped communicating through Aaron, it would be important that the elders recognized that God had spoken through Moses and had called upon Moses.

**And the people believed, and when they heard that Y<sup>e</sup>howah had concerned himself with [lit., visited] the sons of Israel, and that He had looked upon their humiliation, they then bent their heads and bowed themselves down. [Ex. 4:31]**

When we are in God's plan, He opens up the doors for us. Moses spent more time objecting and asking "what if" than it took for he and Aaron to talk to the elders of Israel and convince them that God had spoken to Moses and that it was time for them to leave Egypt.

Prior to this time, and despite being enslaved, the elders and the people coped while living in Egypt. They apparently had some doctrine and the blessing of God and found their right women (or men) and they had many children and the picture of the Israelites under Egypt was one of peace and prosperity and security. However, when it was time for God to take them out of Egypt, they had suffered enough pain and degradation and humiliation to desire to leave Egypt. This is not an easy thing to do, even as a slave, when you have lived under slavery all of your life. There is a lot of security involved here. People are more than willing to bargain their freedom for a little security.



**Exodus 5** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 5

### Exodus 5:1–23

#### Outline of Chapter 5:

- Vv. 1–3 **Moses and Aaron first confront Pharaoh**
- Vv. 4–14 **Pharaoh increases the workload of the Israelites**
- Vv. 15–19 **The Israelite foremen complain to Pharaoh**
- Vv. 20–23 **The foremen complain to Moses and Moses complains to God**

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Natural Consequences of Sin; Discipline from God**  
**God's Ability to Mix Everything Together for Good**

**Introduction:** In this chapter, Moses and Aaron will go before Pharaoh. God has told Moses already that Pharaoh will not let the Jews go immediately; that signs and wonders will be required (Exodus 4:21). In fact, Y<sup>e</sup>howah has told Moses that He will have to go so far as to threaten the firstborn of Pharaoh (Exodus 4:23). So, as God has promised, Pharaoh does not allow the children of Israel to go (the first request would be to go to the mountains and make sacrifices to God). Chapter 5 ends with Moses complaining to God that He has brought more harm to the people of Israel than good; and that Pharaoh did not let them go.

#### Moses and Aaron First Confront Pharaoh

Ex. 5:1 marks the first use in the Old Testament of the phrase, "The Lord God of Israel" (literally, "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of Israel"). They are now large enough to be considered a nation and God is over them. Prior to this, it was "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Now he is the God of the nation Israel. This would be the way that God sees this. On the other hand, to most people at this time—including Moses—they would understand God to be saying that He is "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of ~~Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.~~" *Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel* would probably be understood by Moses as the shortened version of *Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

I am speculating here, somewhat. I am making the assumption that, although the people of Israel see themselves as a separate, cohesive people, they do not see themselves as a nation. Up to Exodus 3:15, we do not find the name *Israel* alone used as a reference to the people. We find the phrase *sons of Israel* instead (it is found more than 10 times). The only variance is in Exodus 3:16, 18, where we speak of the *elders of Israel*. The first place where they seem to be spoken of as a people called *Israel* (without any modifiers) is in Exodus 4:22; and then again in Exodus 5:2, where God speaks of *Israel* as a people. *Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me."'* (Exodus 4:22–23a; ESV) *But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."* (Exodus 5:2; ESV) My point being that, God saw His people as a singular people, as a nation, called *Israel*. The people were not yet there in their thinking.

**And afterwards, Moses and Aaron went in and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go that they may hold a feast to me in the desert.'" [Exodus 5:1]**

The fact that Moses and Aaron could get an audience with Pharaoh is unusual enough. They come to him with the straightforward Word of God. That is the very best that we can bring to anyone. What they would like to do is *châgag* (חָגַג) [pronounced *khaw-GAG*] and it means *to make a pilgrimage, to keep a feast, to celebrate a feast*. For some reason, my remembrance from my unbeliever days emphasized the concepts of fasting but the Old Testament more often emphasizes feasting and celebration. God asks of Pharaoh what is reasonable: to take a few days off to journey into the desert and hold a celebration-feast on behalf of the Reveal God (Who is Jesus Christ).

**Then Pharaoh said, "Who is Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I should hearken to his voice to let Israel go? I do not know Y<sup>e</sup>howah and I will certainly not let Israel go." [Ex. 5:2]**

*Hearken* is a marvelous Old English word for which we do not have an exact one-word equivalent in Modern English. It means *to listen and to obey* or *to listen and to comply*. The Hebrew word is the Qal imperfect of *shâma'* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*] and this word can mean *to listen and comply* (as in Genesis 3:17 16:2); it can simply mean *to hear* (Genesis 3:8, 10); or it can mean *to hear and sympathize* (Genesis 16:11 Exodus 2:24). These six passages<sup>14</sup> make it clear that we do not have the exact same implication each time.

Israel is the name of the patriarch of the Israelites and we have his name here used by God in such a way that it stands for all of the Israelites.

Everything is going exactly as God planned it. He told Moses to speak to the elders of Israel and then to go to Pharaoh and speak to him. God gave no indication that there would be trouble with the elders, but indicated the Pharaoh would not be so inclined. Any thinking person understands the reluctance of Pharaoh, however, a stranger coming to the Israelites and telling them that he was going to lead them out of Egypt; that is pretty phenomenal too. The Pharaoh admits to being an unbeliever. He does not know Who Y<sup>e</sup>howah is and has no intention of turning the Jews loose. For the past century or so, it has been the practice of Egypt to have the Jews in slavery. It is difficult for anyone to see past that. After all of the years of slavery in the United States, it was difficult for the Blacks to receive proper respect. That, however, is an entirely different topic.

Notice too that God does not speak directly to Pharaoh. Pharaoh is an unbeliever. What fellowship has darkness with light? God works through a mediator, Moses (and Aaron). Moses is a believer so he has fellowship with God. Therefore, he can speak to God and God will speak to him. However, the Pharaoh does not believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel, so he cannot have any sort of fellowship with God. Moses, as a believer, can speak to God, and as a man, can speak to Pharaoh. Therefore, he will act as a mediator between God and Pharaoh. Throughout the next several chapters, God will always communicate with Moses and Moses with Pharaoh.

Unbelievers do not have direct communication with God, except in one area and one area only: when God the Holy Spirit reveals the gospel to the unbeliever, the channels between him and God are opened for a short time so that the unbeliever can believe in Jesus Christ (God has the gospel revealed often by a mediator—someone like you or me—but making the gospel real to the hearer is all God the Holy Spirit). Other than this revealing of the gospel of the unbeliever and the response of the unbeliever, there is no direct communication between God and man. Furthermore, this gospel, although revealed to the unbeliever by the Holy Spirit, is still often presented to the unbeliever by means of a believer, who represents Jesus Christ to this unbeliever.

**And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us; let us go, we ask of you, a journey of three days into the desert and sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God, lest He attack us with pestilence or with sword." [Ex. 5:3]**

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<sup>14</sup> I have included the Qal perfect and the Qal imperfect in each illustration

Moses and Aaron understand the issue; they have a job to do; to remove the people of Israel from Egypt. If they do not do this, it means the sin unto death to themselves and to Israel. Moses already knows first hand that if he does not obey God it will mean the sin unto death. What they are requesting is exactly what God told them to request (Ex. 3:18). However, God has made any threats to Israel. His threats are toward Egypt. Here, Aaron is adding to God's Word. He claims that if he does not round up the Jews and haul them into the desert, then God will attack them with either sickness or with war (sword is a metonymy for war). This sounds better, but it is not what God told them to say (insofar as we know). Prior to the exodus, God wanted the Israelites to go out into the desert and worship him and receive divine instructions there.

### Pharaoh Increases the Workload of the Israelites

**And the king of Egypt said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, are you causing the people to refrain from their labors? Get [back] to your [own] slave-labors." [Exodus 5:4]**

V. 4 has the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of *pāra'* (פָּרַעַ) [pronounced *paw-RAH*] which, generally speaking, means *to loose*. It more properly means *to let go, to let alone* and in the causative stem, it means that Moses and Aaron are causing the Jews to let go of their labors. Better English is they *are causing them to refrain from their labors*. We have two different words for *work* in this verse. *Ma'āseh* (מַעֲשֶׂה) [pronounced *mah-as-EH*] and it means *deed, work*. Since it is in the plural and has on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix with the preposition *mī* (-n), which is used with verbs of separation or removal and, in that context, means *from*, I have translated this phrase *from their labors*. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix gathers Israel as a whole; we still translate that suffix as *their*.

The second word is *ṣēbālâh* (צִבְלָה) [pronounced *seb-aw-LAWH*] and it is the word used in Exodus exclusively for their slavery. The masculine form of this is a *tyrannical burden* and this, in the feminine, is a *burden placed upon the Israelites in slavery*. *Slave-labors* or *burdens of slavery* would both be good translations of *ṣēbālâh*.

**And Pharaoh said, "Listen, many now are the people of the land; and are you to make them rest from their labors?" [Ex. 5:5]**

In v. 5, some Bible translations use the word "lo" to begin Pharaoh's statement, and others use "behold or look." All of these are accurate, but dated. The word is *hên* (הֵן) [pronounced *hane*], is a primitive particle which means "lo!" There is a prolongation of this particle, *hinnêh* (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*], which means the same thing. We have seen it continually throughout Exodus (and the rest of the Old Testament). It is a word which is supposed to grab the listener's attention. It would be close to the translations "now listen to this" or "look here (now)" or "listen up" or "pay attention to this." The only difference is that it is a particle and not the imperative of a verb. With this in mind, and to capture the brevity of it, I have translated this "listen." This is a freer, more idiomatic translation than a literal one, however, it sounds more modern, which should be one of the goals of any translator. Many modern translations use the word *look*.

Pharaoh is totally amazed that anyone should come into his palace and ask to let two million of his laborers rest for three days (actually, that is simply their trip into the desert-wilderness to worship God). This catches him completely off guard. God has prepared everyone for their part except Pharaoh. God has allowed the pharaoh to act as he would. This is not too dissimilar to someone walking into the office of the CEO of Apple Computers and asking him to let his workers take a sudden paid seven-day vacation (the total time period if we allow only a single day for worship). You can tell that Pharaoh doesn't even know exactly what to say. He expresses his surprise twice and says the same thing twice, with different words. If it were a part of his vocabulary, the Pharaoh would have prefaced his remarks by, "You have got to be kidding!"

He is so taken back by this ridiculous (in his eyes) request, that he decides that he needs to exert some authority and make the Israelites pay for making this kind of a request. Unfortunately, up to this point in time, the Pharaoh's have added burden upon burden on the Israelites that it would be difficult to make their work any harder.

**So then, Pharaoh gave command on that day to the taskmasters over the people and to their overseers, saying, "You shall not from this point on give any more straw to the people for making bricks as before. Let them go themselves to gather the straw." [Exodus 5:6–7]**

Ancient Egyptian bricks were made of clay mixed with water, some with straw and some without, and then the mixture is put into a mold, 14.5–20" long, 4.5–7" thick and 6.5–8.75" wide. Once they had set, the mold was removed and they were placed in the sun to dry completely. These bricks were used in Egyptian homes, tombs, tower walls, fortresses, various buildings and for the sacred inclosures of temples. Often they would bear the imprint of the name of the king who was in power when they were made (which helps us to date the buildings found). The Egyptians also use stones, but they were confined to temples, quays (these are docks built out into navigable waters for loading and unloading ships) and reservoirs.

Those who had ruled over the Israelites had become cruel and unrealistic. They expected far too much of the Jews. Each ruler attempted to outdo the previous one when it came to production and increasing the burdens that the Jews bore. The Jews were already under almost unbearable cruelty. This Pharaoh, even hours later, was still taken aback by Moses and Aaron walking into his palace and demanding time off for the Israelites. He decided that the Jews must have too much time on their hands for them to be concerned about having a feast to their God. Prior to this, it was the responsibility of those over them to see that straw was provided for them to make the bricks. Now they would have the added responsibility of gathering this straw themselves.

It is here that we can see how Aaron's addition to divine revelation misled Pharaoh (about God falling upon them with sickness or war). The Israelites would not be disciplined if they didn't go out to worship God. This was not an option given to the Israelites to decide—they were commanded to go out and worship God and Pharaoh would be under grave discipline if *he* did not comply. You see how the slightest change or addition to God's Word, and something entirely different is perceived. Aaron made it sound as though the Jews, during their down-time, got together and decided that they had better go worship God or God would discipline them.

There is another issue here. There is this delicate line between natural consequences, man's sinful behavior, discipline and God's ability to mix everything together for good to those who love Him. We tend to get these all mixed up, so we had better take this in points:

### **God Produces Good from Man's Free Will, Man's Sin, and Divine Discipline**

1. God is able to take man's free will, the natural consequences of man's sin along with His divine discipline and produces good from all that
2. What the Egyptians did to the Jews was wrong; enslaving Jews in the first place was wrong and increasing their burdens to a point of grievous torture was wrong.
3. For committing those sins, Egypt will have to be disciplined.
4. Today, even though we are temporarily out of the Jewish age and in the church age, the Jews are God's people and we are blessed when we treat them with love and respect and we are disciplined (either individually or as a nation) when we commit acts of prejudice against them or carry mental attitude sins against them.
5. It was God's plan for the Jews to be under slavery to Egypt and to suffer great suffering; otherwise, the Jews would not leave Egypt and return to their land. In fact, it has to get so bad that, they have no other choice but to exit Egypt.
6. It is God's plan today for the Jews to be scattered throughout the world; and regardless of the status of that little country in the mid-east; the Jews as a whole will remain a separate entity throughout all of the nations wherein they reside; and they will face attacks of prejudice from man and from Satan. This is God's plan for their lives prior to the second advent of Jesus Christ.
7. Even though these things are all a part of God's plan, this does not relieve any individual or nation from the discipline that they will receive due to their anti-Semitism.
8. God is able to take things which are wrong and combine them with motivations which are sinful and work these things into His plan so that it will all result in good. God is perfect and He is able to not only rectify,

## God Produces Good from Man's Free Will, Man's Sin, and Divine Discipline

supercede and nullify the results of the sinfulness of man, but He is able to actually use those results to fulfill His plan.

9. Even though God is able to work all things together for good, we are not pardoned for our sinful behavior, even if it is used in His plan. We cannot use God's abilities or our personal predilections to pardon us from sin.
10. For those who want to deal with the *what if's*: if man did not sin, God's plan would still work all things together for good. God's plan will continue to work all things together for good to those who love Him even in the millennium, under perfect environment; and in eternity, where there will be no sin.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Now I realize that does not put it all together for everyone, that should at least help to understand God's plan, man's sin, and our responsibilities.

**"Nevertheless, the fixed number of bricks which they have been making up until now you will continue to expect from them; you will not diminish [the number required] from them; for idle they are since they are crying out, saying, 'We must go our way; we must sacrifice to our God.'"**

[Exodus 5:8]

In this verse we have the negative plus the Qal imperfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural of *gâra'* (עָרָה) [pronounced *gaw-RAH*] and it means *to diminish, to restrain, to withdraw*.

It is obvious to Pharaoh that these Jews have far too much time on their hands if they are sending representatives to him to discuss time off for feasting. Moses should have told Pharaoh that God had come to him, Moses, and ordered him to take the people from Egypt to worship; and if Pharaoh didn't, then there would be hell to pay. It may not have had any different affect, but it would have been more accurate than claiming they might face sickness or war.

**"The labor must be made heavy on the men, so that they may labor on it; and let them not pay attention to falsehoods [lit., to words of lying]." [Ex. 5:9]**

We have yet another word for *work* in v. 9; the feminine singular of *'ăbôdâh* (עָבְדָה) [pronounced *ab-o-DAWH*] and it means *labor, service, work*. It is very similar to the Hebrew word for slave: *'ebed* (עֶבֶד) [pronounced *eh-bed*]. The transliteration and the pronunciation make them sound like very different words; however, the Hebrew was written originally in all consonants and in this way they are exactly the same word except that *labor* has an ה (he) on the end of it. The result that Pharaoh expects to have when the labor is made heavy upon the Jews is that they may *'âsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *aw-SAWH*] in it. This is a verb which goes way back to Genesis 1:7, 16, 25, 26, 31 2:2, 3, 4. It is a widely applied verb which generally means *to do, to make, to make something out of something*. They are given the materials to make brick; prior to this, they did not have enough time to fill so Pharaoh has added to their responsibilities. This verb is followed by a preposition with a 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular suffix, meaning *at it, on it, in it*. It refers back to *labor*. I did a rather free translation at this point (although many other translators have also).

The point of what Pharaoh is saying is that they have too much time on their hands if they are contemplating going out into the desert-wilderness to sacrifice to their God. Because of this outrageous demand (which Pharaoh sees as having come from the people as a whole; and not as having come from God), he increases their burden. Apparently there were other workers, very possibly paid Egyptians (or possibly other slaves) who provided the straw with which to make bricks (my guess is, this was the excess produced by agriculture). That additional task was given to the Hebrews. What was expected of them was a set number of bricks from each crew; they had apparently decided that it was easier to say, "we will now require you to produce 500 bricks where you must gather



the straw for these bricks, instead of 500 bricks" rather than to increase the hours. Very likely they worked from dawn to dusk as it was.

There were two sets of authority over the slaves: the taskmasters (who were Egyptians) and the overseers (who were Jews). *Taskmaster* is nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced *naw-GAS*], which means *to drive [an animal, workman, debtor or army]*. By implication, it means *to tax, tyrannize or harass*. It is a verb, found here in the Qal active participle masculine plural construct. A participle acts as an adjectival noun (that is, it is a noun which often modifies another noun) or as a verbal adjective, and in the construct it is also dependent upon another noun. The noun that this word modifies is the word for *people*. *Taskmasters of the people* is a reasonable translation and the *people's taskmasters* is even closer in meaning.

The second word is shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced *sho-TARE*], which comes from an unused primitive root word which means *to write*. Therefore, this means *writer* or *scribe*. However, in this context it would mean *an official, a foreman, a superintendent, an overseer*. Egyptian slave service was organized into levels of authority over the slaves; those who were constantly with the slaves while they did their work, seeing that everything was done as expected, and people above them who gave the directives, spot checked the work and the amount of production and reported back to Pharaoh when necessary. The writing is probably related to them keeping records of what work was done (how many bricks were produced).

It is not clear from "Strong's" which word is which, but v. 10 indicates that the *overseers* (or *foremen* or *officers*) were out in the field with the Jewish slaves and v. 14 indicates that these *overseers* were taken from the men of Israel. The Egyptians had found that it was better to set up levels of authority with the Jews themselves in those levels; that would possibly set up a buffer between the slave laborers and the taskmasters themselves. The point is that the Egyptian were very organized. They had to be. With two million slaves, they could not be haphazard about this. These were not primitive, two steps away from being cavemen civilization. Egypt was a highly organized, highly civilized nation. Two million slaves requires an incredible amount of organization.

I have had my own, very small business over the past 30 years, and on occasion, it involved coordinating 4 or 5 workers at the same time. This requires great skill and organization (and, obviously, that is a very small number of workers). So, with two million slaves, there must be skilled people in the hierarchy as well as excellent organization and paperwork.

**Then the taskmasters [Egyptian officials] went forth among the people and their foremen [Jewish overseers] and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh, I am not going to give you straw, you yourselves get straw for yourselves wherever you can find [it]. Yet there has not been a diminishing of your labor [expectations] a single thing." [Exodus 5:10-11]**

The proclamation is the announcement directly to the Jews that they must obtain straw for themselves by themselves. Pharaoh, with his wording of this proclamation, is rubbing it in. In five places, the Pharaoh used the word *you* or the second masculine plural of the verbs. This verse also tells us who did what. The taskmasters were those who were in charge of the overseers and the slaves both. When proclamations and policies came down from the king (Pharaoh), the taskmasters and overseers announced them. The overseers then heard what they were responsible to expect from the Jews. Already, their expectations had been driven to a point where the Jews were no longer content with living in Egypt. In Exodus 1:11-14, we have seen that their labors were increased, but the Jews increased also. However, in Exodus 2:23–25, we see that their slavery had become a burden and the security which they received was no longer enough to compensate for the incredible work and degradation that they had to suffer.

The Pharaoh, like each preceding Pharaoh, increased their labors again with this proclamation. Having been a teacher, I would dread the beginning of each year after the legislature had met. There would always be additional duties or changes which would make my job of teaching more and more difficult. Rarely did new legislation come down the pipe and cause us as teachers to exclaim, "This is great news." It was far worse for the Jews. With each succeeding Pharaoh, more and more burdens were imposed upon them.

As is true of all of the details in Exodus, this kind of cruelty is typical of that inflicted on slaves in Egypt. A French Egyptologist (M. Chabas) discovered some papyrus on which a story of twelve brick-making slaves who had failed to produce what was expected of them and had their work increased as punishment. This was not from this time period nor did it involve Jews; it is just corroborating evidence of the reasonableness of this narrative.

On the walls of one spacious vault there are a series of ancient paintings which depict the life of vizier Rekhmirê of Egypt. One has him overseeing the manufacturing of bricks and the workmen who are involved are light skinned as opposed to the darker skin of the Egyptians. An overseer is saying, by the inscription, "The rod is in my hand; be not idle."

**So the people dispersed themselves throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw; the taskmasters, meanwhile, were urgent, saying, "Complete your work quota [lit., your works], the task of a day in its day as when the straw was provided [lit., when there was straw]." [Exodus 5:12–13]**

The gathering of straw was like a second job. These Jews already had a grueling, schedule to maintain. Now they had to gather the straw. Furthermore, the taskmasters informed their foremen, and the foremen informed the Jewish slaves that the quotas must remain the same. This is not unlike a factory which has laid off half of its work force, but demands the same production of those who remain. There are times that there is fat to trim; however, with the Jews, they were already overworked. What was given to them was impossible to accomplish.

**Then the foremen of the sons of Israel were beaten, whom the taskmasters of Pharaoh had set over them, saying, "Wherefore, you have not completed your task for making bricks as before either yesterday or today?" [Exodus 5:14]**

Those in charge of production quotas were slaves also, as we see here; and when the production quotas were not met, unlike today where a bonus might be withheld, here, they were beaten. At first, these might have seemed to be the cushier jobs, but they took responsibility for the crews that they managed and for the quality and quantity of their production. When production was down, they were beaten.

### **The Israelite Foremen Complain to Pharaoh**

**Then the foremen of the sons of Israel came in, saying, "Why are you doing this to your servants? No straw is given to your servants, yet bricks—they keep saying to us—make. And notice, your servants are beaten. You, therefore, are doing wrong to your people." [Ex. 5:15-16]**

The last phrase of v. 16 is a bit difficult to unravel. The NASB renders it as, "...but it is the fault of your own people." *The Emphasized Bible*, which tends to be fairly literal, says: "thou dost, therefore, wrong thy people." Owen wrote: "But the fault is in (are wrong) your own people." The difference in meaning is one rendering, *The Emphasized Bible*, the Pharaoh is doing wrong to his people, and, in the others, the fact that the Jews cannot produce the amount of bricks required is the fault of the Egyptian taskmasters. It is merely a conjunction, a verb and a noun. The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect of châṭâ' (חָטְאָה) [pronounced *khaw-TAW*] and it means *to miss the mark, to sin, to do wrong, to go wrong*. The problem here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular. There is no relative noun to which this can refer. The Septuagint and the Syriac text indicate that this is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, which is a pretty strong thing to say. Even though there is no emphasis here on the word *you*, it takes a lot of courage to go and tell the Pharaoh that he is wrong. The last word is the word for *people* with a 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix, meaning *your people*. Usually, in the ancient world, in polite society, the word for *servant* or *slave* would have been used here, even if the person speaking were not a slave (see Genesis 42:10 44:16). The word used is 'am (אָם) [pronounced *am*] and it means *people, tribe, company*. They have already called themselves slaves, but they present the Jews in general as the people of Pharaoh and Pharaoh is doing wrong to his own people.

The foremen (or, overseers), even though they were Jews, were given certain privileges. One of these was an audience with the Pharaoh. Even though this is a inhumane practice and it was daily becoming more so, the Egyptian Pharaoh still would hear his slaves out.

The foremen were a go between the Jews as a whole and the taskmasters. They were almost like labor union representatives, except that there was no striking and no collective bargaining. What Pharaoh said was the law. However, this had gotten to a point at which the impossible was expected from the Jewish slaves. This group of foremen has come to tell the Pharaoh that the task set before them has reached the point at which it is impossible to perform.

**But he said, "Idle, you are idle on this account [because] you keep saying, 'We must take our journey; we must sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.' Now, therefore, go labor, but straw shall not be given to you; yet the expectation of bricks shall you render." [Exodus 5:17–18]**

Although this Pharaoh would allow an audience from the foremen of the Jews, he was not at all reasonable. God knew this and told Moses that Pharaoh would not capitulate easily. It is in this narrative that we see how unbending this Pharaoh is.

**Then the overseers of the sons of Israel saw that they were in an evil [no-win] situation when it was said, "You will not diminish from your bricks, the task of a day in its day!" [Ex. 5:19]**

This is not what the overseers wanted to hear. It was not their idea to go into the desert and worship God. And although things were not great in Egypt, because of Moses and Aaron (and ultimately, because of God), things became even more intolerable. Very possibly they thought that they could reason with Pharaoh; explain that it was literally impossible for them to do what was expected of them. However, Pharaoh puts it back on them.

Pharaoh has, essentially, put the blame back on Moses and Aaron. The Pharaoh seems to have assumed that the Jews themselves came up with this idea of going out into the desert and worshiping God. He may not have fully understood that this demand came directly from Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses and Aaron which brought this to the elders of Israel and then to the Pharaoh. Even God works through levels of authority.

### **The Foremen Complain to Moses and Moses Complains to God**

**So they fell upon Moses and upon Aaron, stationing themselves to meet them, as they came forth from Pharaoh [Exodus 5:20]**

The translations sound quite different for v. 20. NASB reads: *When they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting for them.* *The Emphasized Bible* reads: *So they fell upon Moses and upon Aaron, stationing themselves to meet them,—as they came forth from Pharaoh;* The verb used, *pāga'* (פָּגַעַ) [pronounced *paw-GAW*] means *to meet, to encounter* and it can imply friendly terms, an accidental encounter, or meeting with hostility. *They* refers to the foremen, as Moses and Aaron are direct objects here. They are described by the Niphal participle of *nātsab* (נָצַב) [pronounced *naw-TSAB*] which means *to take a stand, to station oneself*. The participle is used as an adjectival noun, describing Moses and Aaron; the Niphal is usually the passive of the Qal, but it can be used to describe an action which is in progress or development. Moses and Aaron are to be speaking to Pharaoh; not these foremen. Moses and Aaron are just standing by waiting to hear what Pharaoh said.

This is followed by the Qal infinitive construct of *qār'ah* (קָרָא) [pronounced *keer-AWH*] and it means *to meet*. The 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix allows us to add the word *them*. So, instead of going right back to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron appear to be taking a secondary role, standing off to the side, and hoping that the foremen will be able to straighten things out. They are waiting for foremen to come out to find out how things went.

**And they said to them, "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, look upon you and judge in that you have made us odious [lit., you have caused our odor to be offensive] in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, putting a sword into their hand to slay us." [Exodus 5:21]**

The foremen can hardly wait to run into Moses and Aaron and give them an earful. They are extremely angry at Moses and Aaron because they have taken an intolerable situation and have made it even more intolerable. No one stops to think that God has chosen these things to occur. They are looking to place blame. The last phrase is better understood as *you might as well have given them a sword to kill us with*.

Very noticeable here is the incongruity of their smell being offensive to Pharaoh's eyes. This is called catachresis [pronounced *CAT-a-chree-sis*] or incongruity. One word is changed for another and this is contrary to the ordinary usage and meaning of it. It draws attention to the strength of the statement. On the other hand, these men could have been so upset that they just blurted this out, barely able to think of what they were saying.

This is a shadow of things to come. Moses and Aaron would face an uphill battle with the Jews for the next forty years. The Hebrews under slavery never did quite grasp the full impact of what was occurring. They never did fully understand the importance of their freedom. This is why Moses had so much trouble with them in the desert and why God made them wander the desert until of the first generation He killed them all. These foolish overseers don't see the Pharaoh as being the one out of line, but Moses and Aaron. They are short-sighted.

**And Moses returned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and said, "Oh My Lord, why have you caused harm to this people? Why now did you send me, seeing that since I went to the Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he has caused harm to this people and in delivering, You have not delivered Your people." [Ex. 5:22–23]**

When a verb is used twice in the same breath, it places great emphasis upon the assertion or the expression. In terms of verbs, it is a superlative with respect to magnitude and gravity of the action involved. Moses did not listen carefully to God and now he claims that in God's deliverance of the Jews, he did not deliver them. This is a scathing indictment levied by Moses.

Pharaoh blames the foremen and the Jewish people; the foremen and the Jewish people blame Moses and Aaron. We don't hear from *spokesman* Aaron, but he certainly blamed Moses, if silently. Now Moses blames God.

Also, this is a very odd place to end this chapter—God is about to answer Moses. However, that will wait for chapter 6.

**Exodus 6** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 6

### Exodus 6:1–22

#### Outline of Chapter 6:

- Vv. 1–13     **A conversation between God and Moses**
- Vv. 14–26   **A rather incomplete genealogy is inserted**
- Vv. 27–30   **The resumption of the conversation between God and Moses**

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v.     3     **The Name of God**
- v.     6     **The Illustration of the Slave Market of Sin**
- v.     6     **The Doctrine of Redemption**

**Introduction:** Chapter 6 continues the conversation between God and Moses; God promises Moses that He will bring Israel out under compulsion and Moses still complains that Pharaoh will not listen to him because the elders of Israel will not listen to him. Then there will be an odd break in chapter 6 when the families of the patriarchs are mentioned and the conversation between the Lord and Moses will continue.

### A Conversation Between God and Moses

By Exodus 6, God has already told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen to him. All of this is going just as God planned it; just as He told Moses what would happen. Moses appears to have become as short-sighted as those who met him.

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh; by a strong hand he will send them out and by a strong hand he will drive them out from his land." [Exodus 6:1]**

Moses is speaking to God the Father and God is speaking to Moses. Although we are told some of the specifics of their first meeting (where God manifested Himself as a burning bush); we have no idea how this meeting was initiated, or whether there is anything which Moses is actually able to see (this tends to be the rule rather than the exception when people directly interacted with God).

When it is time, God the Holy Spirit will give Moses his power and strength to produce the miracles. So it will be God the Holy Spirit Who will actually cause Pharaoh to drive the Israelites out of the land. Here, it is Pharaoh who is said to drive the people out of the land; meaning he will desire for them to leave and order Moses to take them out of Egypt. It appears that the *strong hand* here belongs to Pharaoh; but some might understand this to be *the strong hand of God*.

The NASB translates *by a strong arm as under compulsion*, which is an excellent rendering of the idea. There is a preposition involved here; one which is ignored by Owen and by Zodhiates; it is the preposition b<sup>e</sup> (ב) which



is pronounced as a part of the noun and its basic meaning is *in*. However, the limited number of prepositions in the Hebrew wear a great many hats. This can mean *among, within, into, at, by, touching, with, by means of, through*. It is the latter two uses that we have here. Pharaoh will require a little encouragement by the hand of God. Most of us have some basic understanding of the judgments/plagues/blows of God delivered against Pharaoh and against Egypt. As a result of these judgments, Pharaoh will send the people of God out of Egypt.

**And God spoke to Moses, and said to him, "I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah; I appeared therefore to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty; although by my name Y<sup>e</sup>howah was I not known to them?"**

[Ex 6:2-3]

V. 3 has been a source of consternation for a long time. Some have wrongly theorized that because of this statement, the writer of the Exodus had not read certain portions of Genesis (therefore, he did not write it) so he wasn't aware that the name "Y<sup>e</sup>howah" had been used of our Lord Jesus Christ. That makes little sense. This, first of all, is God speaking, not the author of Exodus. God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the land of Canaan as an inheritance forever. He was known by several names to them (as well as to all the saints from the book of Genesis) but His identifying name has always been "Y<sup>e</sup>howah." This is the equivalent to them as the name of Jesus Christ is to us. That was our Lord's name prior to the incarnation.

We are enjoined to believe in Jesus Christ and they were enjoined to believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah. In the Old Testament, those who placed their faith in the Revealed God were justified (Genesis 15:6).

### The Name of God

- 1) Moses was the writer of the last 4 books of Pentateuch. He probably assembled the book of Genesis from memory or from existing source material, which he (possibly) edited under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The five books of Moses are originally presented as one book. The only portion that Moses did not write was the account of his death; this was likely added by Joshua. It is possible that Joshua inserted the genealogy found in this chapter of Exodus.
- 2) *To know* is not a word which means simple knowledge; it is rarely used in that way in the Old Testament. It can refer to anything between carnal knowledge to intimate knowledge.
- 3) Jesus Christ is the only God and He was known to the Jews (and the saints prior to the Jews) in several ways.
- 4) V. 3 is rhetorical. "Was I not known to them also as Y<sup>e</sup>howah?" God is telling Moses that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and He has now come to begin to fulfill His covenant to them.
- 5) As El Shaddai, God was the One who provided for all of the patriarchs needs; however, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah, there is a more personal relationship.
- 6) God has for the first time in Exodus 5:1 identified Himself as Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel.
- 7) As Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim of Israel, God will now begin to fulfill the promises which He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob some 400 years previous.
- 8) Another contrast between El Shaddai and Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim is that the Jews will now see miracles and signs unlike anything witnessed in the past 600 years. In fact, only Noah, his family, and corrupted mankind in the flood had ever seen power which was similar to the power about to be unleashed against Pharaoh of Egypt.
- 9) Moses is discouraged (Ex. 5:22), the elders oppose him (5:21) and Pharaoh does not take his demand seriously (5:2-9). Therefore Moses is having second thoughts about this. God is reassuring Moses that He really is who He claims to be.
- 10) El Shaddai, which is the English transliteration of the Hebrew word for "Almighty God," was the way in which many pre-Abrahamic saints knew Jesus Christ. It occurs thirty-one times in the book of Job (which predates the law), which is as often as the name Y<sup>e</sup>howah occurs.
- 11) However, Y<sup>e</sup>howah is used much more often than El Shaddai in Genesis, indicating (a) it is very likely written by the same person and (b) and appears to support the translation, "**was I not also known to them as Y<sup>e</sup>howah?**"
- 12) This question, with the negative, demands the answer, *yes, You were known to them as Y<sup>e</sup>howah.*

## The Name of God

- 13) The point here is that Jesus Christ is one and the same God and, from this point on, He will be known to them as "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of Israel." The first use of this is found, as previously mentioned, in Exodus 5:1.
- 14) The problem with situations like this, is that liberal theologians and Biblical critics begin with a certain mindset, get an hypothesis from the barest of evidence, and then try to justify this hypothesis by any and all means possible. The mindset involved here, in one case, is that the Pentateuch was composed by four different authors, woven from tales of old, long after the death of Moses and that this is one of the authors who is unaware of the other three, who has not used Y<sup>e</sup>howah in his portion of Genesis (I think that I am getting that theory straight).
- 15) There is nothing wrong with a search for the truth about the interpretation of a passage or a concept. Sometimes hypotheses must be tried and then examined from all angles of Scripture. Every good teacher of God's Word will do this. However, when we come across an interpretation or a translation which is not mainstream, so to speak, then we had better investigate it quite thoroughly before purporting it to be truth.
- 16) However, here the point is that God was known to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as both an All-Powerful God and also as a personal God—not like the personal gods of various nations, but One Who cares about them and One Who keeps His Word.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

The exodus was the primary method of evangelism for the next several centuries. When people heard of it and believed in that God, this was salvation. Salvation is by faith in the Revealed God. It will be well-known throughout the world that God's power over Pharaoh is absolute. This standoff between the God of Israel and the Pharaoh of Egypt will have some symbolic references as well as literal. By this I mean that the plagues which God uses to glorify Himself all cut deeply into the religion and culture of Egypt. All that which is held sacred by the Egyptians will face God's wrath.

**"Furthermore, I also established by covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan—even the land of their sojourning wherein they sojourned. [Exodus 6:4]**

Moses must take the Jews out of Egypt and return them to the land of Canaan because God gave the land of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He allowed them specifically to sojourn (a temporary stay) in the land that would be an inheritance to them forever.

**Furthermore, I also heard the groaning of the sons of Israel whom the Egyptians were holding [lit., holding them] in servitude; and I remember My covenant." [Exodus 6:5]**

God had not forgotten His covenant and then suddenly realize that He has some Jews down there and thought, "What are they up to and what can I do about it?" It would seem as though God had totally forgotten about the Jews. He certainly did not. There is a perfect time table and that is what God is staying with. There is a right time for everything. God tells Moses that He continually remembers His covenant to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**"Furthermore, say to the sons of Israel, 'I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Therefore, I will bring you forth from under the burdens of Egypt, and will deliver you out of their service, and will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgements"; [Exodus 6:6]**

At the end of this verse we have the word sh<sup>e</sup>phâṭîym (שִׁפְטִיִּם) [pronounced *sh<sup>e</sup>-faw-TEEM*] and it means *judgements, judicial decisions, judicial renderings, divine decisions based upon God's judicial requirements; acts of judgment*, whether good or bad. It can refer to a *judgement* or to the actual *act of deciding a case*.

The Israelites must be continually reminded that God is there to take them out of their bondage to Egypt and take them to a land flowing with milk and honey. In this verse we have that marvelous word *redeem*: *gā'al* (גָּאֵל) [pronounced *gaw-AHL*] and it has only been used one time before this in Genesis 48:16. Here it is used in its full and proper sense. This means to purchase something. It is unusual that this word is used here because God is not purchasing anything, per se. With force, He will remove the sons of Israel from Egypt; with a strong hand and great judgements, He will redeem His people. However, this parallels the first advent of our Lord when he paid for our sins. We are sinners on the slave market of sin. There is no way that we can buy ourselves from our master and no way that we can purchase someone else. We are slaves—slaves to our desires, to our sin nature, and to the imputed sin from Adam. A slave cannot purchase himself from the slavery block. He must be purchased by someone outside the slave market of sin. Here, God tells the slaves Israel that he will pay for them to take them out of Egypt. At salvation, God pays for our redemption; He is the one outside the slave market of sin. He is the only one qualified to pay for our sins. Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed, Paul, Joseph Smith—none of them could pay for our sins; all of them were slaves, caught up in the same slave market as we. It requires someone outside the slave market to make this purchase. This verbiage is used because this book is authored by God the Holy Spirit and He desires that everything points toward the future coming of Jesus Christ so that there would be no mistaking His message or His death on the cross.

You have heard the verse, “**You will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free.**” The context of that verse is related to the Doctrine of Redemption (which we studied in the previous lesson) and to the Doctrine of the Slave Market of Sin. This particular doctrine was first presented in **Genesis 14** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### The Illustration of the Slave Market of Sin

- 1) Another way of illustrating the doctrine of redemption, is to picture yourself being sold as a slave in a slave market. You are unable to purchase yourself, as you do not have the wherewithal to purchase yourself. A slave does not have the money to purchase himself (he lacks the coin of the realm, so to speak). Only someone who is not inside of this slave market (a non-slave) can purchase you. No fellow slave can look you over and say, “I’d like to purchase this one.” This is because he is in the same boat that you are in. He cannot purchase himself and he certainly cannot purchase you.
  - i. This is why we cannot be redeemed by Mohammed, Moses, or Buddha. They are men; they are in the same slave market of sin that we find ourselves in.
  - ii. They are unable to purchase themselves and they are unable to purchase us.
- 2) There is a natural barrier between God and us:
  - i. We are born with Adam’s sin imputed to us. **Therefore, one sin led to condemnation of all men** (Romans 5:18a). **In Adam, all die** (1Corinthians 15:22a). **Because of one man's sin, death reigned through that one man** (Romans 5:17a).
    - (1) Paul provides the entire argument for the imputation of sin in Romans 5:12–21: **Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-- for sin indeed was in the world before the Law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation [on all mankind], but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through [or, because of] that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the Law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

## The Illustration of the Slave Market of Sin

- (2) There are reasons why Adam's original sin is imputed to us.
  - (3) We have to be condemned first in order to be saved.
  - (4) Babies are born condemned by God; which makes them eligible for redemption. Therefore, when a child dies, God has already redeemed that child, apart from the child's volition (when a child dies prior to reaching God consciousness) by our Lord's death on the cross. Therefore, that child is saved. 2Samuel 12:22–23
  - (5) This is why the *Book of Life* has every person's name in it. Since we are condemned from birth, we stand potentially purchased from the point of birth. Philip. 4:3 Rev. 3:5
  - (6) Similarly, this allows for the salvation of those who lived prior to the Law of Moses. The Law defined sin, so that, man clearly knew when he had committed a sin. Romans 5:12–14: *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned--for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.* God did not require first having the Law of Moses in order to condemn man. God did not have to define sin in order for us to be sinners.
  - (7) Again, man has to be condemned in order for God to redeem him; man must be in the slave market of sin in order for God to purchase him.
- ii. The second part of our barrier is the sin nature. We inherit Adam's sin nature. The corruption of Adam's sin is genetically ingrained in all of us. *We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind* (Eph. 2:3b). That is, we are prone to sin against God. *By the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners* (Romans 5:19a). *For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin [= the sin nature] that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin [= sin nature] that dwells within me* (Romans 7:14–20). Often, in the Bible, the singular noun *sin* refers to the *sin nature*, which is actually a part of our cell structure (Romans 7:14 1John 1:8). In short, all men are genetically disposed to sin.
- iii. No man, with a sin nature, goes through life apart from personal sin. At some point in our lives, we move out of child-like innocence and intentionally commit sins. *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). *God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8). See also Romans 5:12.
- (1) At some point in time, we will commit a mental attitude sin; we will look at someone else and we will feel superior to them—arrogance. Or, someone rubs us the wrong way, and we hate them. Or, someone has something that we want, and we envy that person.
  - (2) At some point in time, we will commit a verbal sin. We will do something wrong, and when questioned about it by our parents, we lie. We dislike someone, so we gossip behind their back.
  - (3) At some point in time, we will commit an overt act of sin; some child has a toy we like, and we steal it from him. He cries, so we slug him.
  - (4) I still recall one of the first sins which I committed around the age of 4 or 5—stealing toys from a friend, toys which my soul coveted. Obviously, I could not simply have them out in the open to play with them, so I hid them in front of my house behind some bushes. It was entirely illogical, because there was no way that I could actually play with these toys out in the open.
- iv. There are other barriers which stand between God and us. Because of Adam's original sin has been imputed to us and because we have sinned against God, we have a judgment against us, which judgment demands our death. *The wages of sin is death* (Romans 3:23a).
- v. Because we are born with a sin nature, we are born physically alive, but spiritually dead. This is something which we cannot fix on our own. We cannot decide one day to be spiritually alive; we have no way of establishing fellowship with God any more than we can physically ascending into heaven



## The Illustration of the Slave Market of Sin

to be with God. Romans 5:12–21

- vi. We have temporal life, God is eternal life. **In Adam, all die** (1Corinthians 15:22a). Romans 5:17, 21
  - vii. As unbelievers, we are of our father the devil. We are not, by birth, children of God. We do not have, therefore, a familial relationship with God. **Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear My word. You are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."** (John 8:42–45).
  - viii. We do not have a way of appealing to God, no more than a dead man can reach out and appeal to us who are alive on any matter. **And you were dead in the trespasses and sins** (Eph. 2:1).
  - ix. We have relative righteousness (we can usually find someone whom we view as a moral inferior to us); God is perfect righteousness. **All our righteousnesses are as a menstruation cloth** (Isaiah 64:6b). **That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith** [Gentiles, without the Law, believe in Jesus Christ and were saved]; **but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law** [Israel had the Law, but did not achieve righteousness]. **Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works** (Romans 9:30b–32a). Criminals serving life sentences for multiple murders feel morally superior to child molesters. That is relative righteousness as well as self-righteousness (one of the most amoral people I know is also the most self-righteous person I know; he is so incredibly self-righteous and without any reason to be, that it makes me smile). In any case, God has no interest in our own personally developed concepts of righteousness.
  - x. All of this puts us into a slave market, so to speak. We have no means by which we can purchase our freedom; we have no way of removing these barriers which are between us and God.
- 3) We have to be in the slave market of sin in order to be purchased by Jesus Christ. This is why condemnation from birth is important. It is what fundamentally separates us from God, yet, simultaneously qualifies us to be redeemed from the slave market.
- 4) Now let's look at that original passage, and see what Jesus is actually saying: **As Jesus was saying these things, many believed in Him** [therefore, they were born again, as per John 3:16]. **So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you remain in My Word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."** There are two related concepts here: if you know Jesus—i.e., if you have believed in Him—you have been set free from bondage and sin. That is, you have been purchased from the slave market of sin. Secondly, if you continue learning God's Word, you live as a free man (as a mature believer). **They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. So, how is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"** Those who are there, which includes some unbelievers (John 8:13), are confused by what Jesus is saying. They do not get the analogy. Sometimes, these unbelievers asked questions, hoping to catch Jesus in a contradiction or hoping that He would say something contrary to the Mosaic Law. Here, they connect freedom as being the opposite of enslavement. **Jesus answered them, "Point of doctrine; listen: everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin** [committing a sin also places you into the slave market of sin]. **The slave does not remain in the [master's] house forever; [however] the Son remains forever."** The slave does not have fellowship with the master; he is not a part of the family. He can be bought and sold at any time. Therefore, the slave does not necessarily remain in his master's house forever. **[Jesus continues] "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."** Jesus is able to purchase them from the slave market of sin. Jesus is the One who is able to provide them with real freedom. They are enslaved to their trespasses and sins; and Jesus is able to set them free. **I know that you** [the religious types in this crowd] **are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill Me because My Word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have heard from your father [who is Satan]."** They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are



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doing the works that your father [the devil] did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father--even God." [They mistakenly assert that, they are not of their father the devil because they were not born as a result of sexual immorality; Abraham was their forebearer] Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of My Own accord, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you are unable to hear My Word. You are of your father, the devil, and [therefore] your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me." (John 8:30–45). The religious types in this crowd were of their father, the devil, and their intent to kill Jesus proves this. Later, many of these religious types will intentionally lie (or, support this false testimony) in order to send Jesus to the cross.

- 5) Jesus Christ is the truth, and these religious types are filled with lies, like their father, the devil. One example of this is their assertion "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. So, how is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" (John 8:33).
  - i. This is the natural state of man, to be in denial of his (or her) real condition. These Jews are denying their enslavement. They are saying this, even though Jerusalem was under Roman rule at this time.
  - ii. Secondly, they placed themselves under the Mosaic Law as a means of salvation, which is another form of enslavement.
  - iii. Thirdly, they would violate the clear mandate of the Law not to bear false testimony by giving false testimony against Jesus. Those who did not give false testimony will go along with it without objection. They want our Lord to be crucified, no matter what the cost.
  - iv. They were not just trying to keep the Mosaic Law for salvation, but there were a whole host of regulations which the Jews had developed over several centuries, which defined in great specificity how to keep the Mosaic Law. This in itself was enslavement.
  - v. Finally, they were enslaved to their own natural predilection for sin.
  - vi. These religious Jews are essentially being sold as slaves at a slave auction, and they are in denial about their true status as slaves.
- 6) The purchase price for a slave in the slave market of sin is the blood of Jesus: You were purchased [redeemed] from your empty manner of life which you inherited from your forefathers [Judaic religious traditions], not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (1Peter 1:18–19). Peter pulls several things together here:
  - i. First is the concept of redemption, where we are purchased with the blood of Jesus.
  - ii. The empty manner of life is the religious traditions of the Jews, which were meaningless, and tried to establish righteousness through keeping the Law of Moses.
  - iii. Peter notes the purchase price as being the blood of Christ (His spiritual death on the cross).
  - iv. Finally, Peter relates this purchase price to the Old Testament type of the sacrificial lamb—a lamb without spot or blemish, which represents Jesus has having no sin nature and as having committed no sin. Since Jesus is without spot and without blemish—meaning that He was sinless and without a sin nature, and therefore, He is qualified to purchase us—He is both able and willing to purchase us from the slave market of sin.
  - v. Peter was quite the amazing Apostle, able to fit into 2 short verses, 4 different but related fundamental doctrines of the faith.
- 7) Since we are in Adam—born with his imputed sin and with a sin nature—we are born slaves to sin. By birth, we are slaves (which is common in the ancient world). We have no means by which we can counteract this. It is our birthright by being born in Adam (if you we recall an early lesson, we inherit the sin nature from Adam). We can only be purchased by someone who is not in the slave market of sin; we can only be purchased by someone who is not in Adam. Furthermore, this person must have the purchase price. One way a person could find himself in the slave market is being unable to pay his debts. So he would sell himself into slavery in order to pay this debt. This is analogous to our personal sins, which rack up a tremendous debt. Colossians 2:13–14 You were dead in your trespasses [your actual sins] and the uncircumcision of your flesh [that is, being born with a sin nature and with Adam's original sin imputed to

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- us], God made us alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, **by canceling the record of debt** that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. Being indebted beyond your means to pay back, would put you under slavery to your creditor.
- 8) We find this same doctrine and a similar same analogy in Galatians 4. In the ancient world, a rich man or a man in power might look around at his near young relatives (sons and grandsons) and conclude, "These men are not fit to enjoy my fortune or to wield the power that I have." What such a man might do is *adopt* a son—often a family slave. He may observe his own son out drinking all night and chasing women; and his personal servant, on the other hand, is faithful, sober, honorable and intelligent. So, he makes this slave his son. Or, the man might be childless, so he chooses his own heir by a process called adoption (Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus, commonly known as Trajan, the 13<sup>th</sup> Roman emperor, was adopted, and over 40 years old when adopted). Galatians 4:1–8 **Now I say that as long as the heir is a child, he differs in no way from a slave, though he is the owner of everything** [the analogy being drawn here is between those who were natural heirs to the kingdom—Jews; and those who were not natural heirs to the kingdom—gentiles]. **Instead, he [the natural son] is under guardians and stewards** [analogous to the prophets and priests] **until the time set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were in slavery under the elemental forces of the world** [gentiles are not natural heirs to God's kingdom; so they were under slavery]. **But when the fulfillment of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those [born] under the law** [Jesus purchased the Jews with His blood], **so that we might receive adoption as sons** [Jesus purchased the gentiles out of slavery with His blood]. **And because you are [now potentially] sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "my dear Father [addressed to God]!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son** [the Father has adopted one of the slaves as His son and His heir]; **and if a son, then an heir through God. But in the past, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to things that by nature are not gods.**
  - 9) Jesus is outside of the slave market of sin and He has the purchase price with which to purchase us from the slave market of sin.
  - 10) He purchases us from the slave market of sin, which is the Doctrine of Redemption. Also related to this doctrine, is the Doctrine of the Barrier (of the barrier between man and God, which is a sub-point of the doctrine of the slave market of sin).
  - 11) When God redeemed the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt, this was a picture of the slave market of sin. The Jewish people were slaves to the nation of Egypt, and God purchased them, bringing them out of Egypt. Exodus 6:6 15:13 Psalm 74:2 Micah 6:4
    - i. Again, note the tremendous cohesion of the Old and New Testaments.
    - ii. The history recorded by Moses and the commentary written by psalmists and prophets afterward all appear to have been written by Jesus, who gave the illustration of the slave market of sin, or Paul who also uses the same illustration.
  - 12) To sum up: from birth, we are slaves, born into the slave market of sin. We cannot purchase our own freedom and no other slave (person born with a sin nature) can purchase our freedom either. This takes someone from outside the slave market of sin, which would be Jesus Christ, Who was born without a sin nature and without Adam's imputed sin. He paid the penalty for our sins, thus redeeming us out of the slave market. Jesus taught this very doctrine (which is an illustration), Paul used it as a basis for what he wrote in his epistles, and Moses and the children of Israel illustrate this doctrine.

Bear in mind that God adopting us as sons and Jesus purchasing us from the slave market of sins are illustrations; they are analogous situations. The Bible is filled with analogous situations. Much of the history recorded in the Bible is to teach spiritual truth via analogous situations. Jesus taught using analogous situations (called parables). Therefore, do not get bogged down in the details of an illustration and do not attempt to apply these illustrations as the reality of what is occurring. The history of Moses leading the children of Israel out of Egypt is true and accurate history; but it is also illustrative.

See also [http://www.divineviewpoint.com/slave\\_market.pdf](http://www.divineviewpoint.com/slave_market.pdf)

R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Slave Market of Sin*, and *The Barrier*, both of which can be ordered for free through R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries (which is [rbthieme.org](http://rbthieme.org)).

Throughout the book of Genesis, we find the seed for nearly every major doctrine and theme which will be developed later in God's Word. This makes the book of Genesis one of the most fascinating books in the entire Bible. This particular doctrine was first presented in **Genesis 14** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### The Doctrine of Redemption

1. The verb *to redeem* means *to purchase, to buy*.
2. There are several Hebrew verbs related to this concept of purchasing:
  - 1) In this verse, we have the verb *qânâh* (קָנָה) [pronounced *kaw-NAWH*], which means *to get, acquire, obtain; [of God] to redeem [His people]; [of Eve] to acquire; to acquire [knowledge, wisdom]; to buy [purchase, redeem]*. Strong's #7069 BDB #888. The emphasis is more upon *owning or possessing something because you purchased it*.
  - 2) In Genesis 48:16, we will be introduced to the verb *gâ'al* (גָּאֵל) [pronounced *gaw-AHL*], which means *to redeem, to purchase*. Strong's #1350 BDB #145. The Mosaic Law will use this verb many times in Leviticus 25 and 27 as well as Num. 35; and this verb will play a prominent role in the book of Ruth.
3. *Redemption* in the New Testament refers to Jesus dying for our sins and purchasing our souls with His blood (i.e., His spiritual death on the cross). When He took upon Himself our sins and *paid the penalty* for our sins, that is *redemption*. *That is what He paid for us. For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life which you inherited from the fathers, not with perishable things, like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish (1Peter 1:18–19). He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed (1Peter 2:24). In Him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7). See also Colossians 1:14 Galatians 3:13*
4. Jesus Christ paid for us; therefore, we belong to Him. *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, Whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body (1Corinthians 6:19–20). See also 1Corinthians 7:23*
5. Jesus Christ is qualified to purchase us. In the next lesson, we will study the Slave Market of Sin, and Jesus could not be a slave Himself and purchase other slaves.
  - 1) Jesus Christ is born without a sin nature. This is based upon the virgin birth, something which was telegraphed to us as far back as Genesis 3. Isaiah 7:14 Matthew 1:23 1Timothy 3:16 Hebrews 1:3
  - 2) Jesus Christ did not commit any personal sin during His life. Isaiah 53:9 John 8:46 19:4 2Corinthians 5:21 Hebrews 4:15 7:26–28
  - 3) Since Jesus is born without imputed sin, without a sin nature and since He lived without personal sin in His life, He is qualified to redeem us.
6. Redemption puts all men potentially in the Book of Life. Because Jesus has paid the price for us, our names are written in the Book of Life, unless we die without having believed in Jesus Christ. It is like a city registry. There is a registry of all citizens of a city until they die; and then their names are removed. When a person dies an unbeliever, his name is blotted out of the Book of Life. This understanding, by the way, indicates that Jesus provided unlimited atonement (He died for the sins of all mankind; not just for the sins of the elect). Philip. 4:3 Rev. 3:5
7. God the Holy Spirit, as the divine Author of the Old Testament, portrays this act of redemption in the Old Testament as a shadow of what was to come.
  - 1) In the context of our passage, Melchizedek refers to God as **Possessor** [by means of purchase, by means of redemption] **of Heaven and Earth**. In other words, in this verb is more than the idea, *God made the world so it belongs to Him*. This is related to the concept of *redeeming, purchasing*.
  - 2) Jacob, when seeing Joseph again after many years, will speak of God as the **Angel Who has redeemed him from all evil** (Genesis 48:16).
  - 3) The high priest offering up animal sacrifices was a portrait of Jesus offering Himself on the cross for our redemption. *Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then...He entered once for all into the holy places [into the Presence of God the Father after the crucifixion], not by*

## The Doctrine of Redemption

means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11a, 12).

- 4) The blood of the animal sacrifices themselves represent the actual coin of the realm; the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Genesis 22:8 Exodus 12:21 Job 19:25–16 John 1:25 Hebrews 9:22 1Peter 1:19
- 5) In the Law of Moses, there is a provision for the purchase of a relative who has fallen into slavery. One who is related to him may purchase him out of slavery. Although this is a real law which was actually used from time to time, its purpose was to look forward in time when we would be purchased from slavery to sin by our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, our Relative who can purchase us out of slavery. Like many things in the Old Testament, this is a real thing (in this case, a law); and yet, it is also representative of God's plan. Leviticus 25:48–49
- 6) The thrust of the Book of Ruth is the purchase of Ruth by a Kinsman-Redeemer, one who loves her and wants to take care of her, despite the fact that she has been married (this would be equivalent to being sullied by the sin nature and being purchased by God, Who loves us). Ruth 3:9–13 4:1–13 John 3:16
- 7) Job, in all of his suffering, when his friends comfort him little, finally gives his plaintive cry, "I know my Redeemer lives!" (Job 19:25). The God of Job has purchased him and he knew this.
- 8) Palmists call out to God to either redeem them or His people Israel. Psalm 69:18 77:15
- 9) The prophets speak of God as having redeemed Israel. Isaiah 43:1 49:7 51:11 Jeremiah 31:11 Hosea 13:14
- 10) God's redemption is related to the blotting out of our sins in Isaiah 44:22, which reads: "I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you."
- 11) God's people Israel would not be forsaken, they would be redeemed. Isaiah 62:12.
- 12) Jehovah Elohim is called the *Redeemer* or the *Redeemer of Israel* throughout the Old Testament. Psalm 19:14 78:35 Isaiah 43:14 44:6.
8. The Book of Ruth (Ruth 3:9-13 4:1-11) is particularly important in illustrating Who our Redeemer is:
  - 1) The redeemer must be a near kinsman. To fulfill this Christ took on human form.
  - 2) The redeemer must be able to redeem. The price of man's redemption was the blood of Christ. Acts 20:28 1Peter . 1:18–19
  - 3) The redeemer must be willing to redeem (Hebrews 10:4–10). Christ was willing to be our Redeemer.
  - 4) The redeemer must be free from that which caused the need for redemption; that is, the redeemer cannot redeem himself. This was true of Christ, because He needed no redemption.
9. When it comes to Old Testament and New Testament verses on redemption, this doctrine only scratches the surface.
10. Redemption yields the following results:
  - 1) Redemption purchases the forgiveness of our sins. Isaiah 44:22 Eph. 1:7 Colossians 1:14 Hebrews 9:15
  - 2) Because we have been redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God also justifies us. Romans 3:24 5:9
  - 3) Since we have been redeemed by the blood of our Lord, we are therefore sanctified. Hebrews 10:10, 14, 29 13:12
    - (1) There are 3 stages of sanctification. We are sanctified in Him through faith in Him and His death on the cross. This is positional sanctification. Acts 20:32 26:18 1Corinthians 1:2 Hebrews 10:10
    - (2) We grow spiritually in time, by means of grace and the knowledge of God's Word. John 17:17 1Thess. 4:3–7
    - (3) We received ultimate sanctification when we are raised with Him in a resurrection body. Eph. 1:14 5:26–27 1Thess. 5:23
    - (4) All 3 stages of sanctification find their basis in redemption.
  - 4) Because we have been redeemed, we will receive an eternal inheritance. Hebrews 9:15 1Peter 1:2–4
  - 5) The purchase of us by Jesus' death on the cross (redemption) is the basis for the strategical victory of Jesus Christ in the Angelic Conflict. Acts 2:32–35 Colossians 2:13–15 Hebrews 2:14–15 1Peter



## The Doctrine of Redemption

3:18, 22

### 11. Summary points on the doctrine of redemption:

- 1) Being born men, we find ourselves born into the slave market of sin. We were slaves to sin, unable to purchase ourselves from the slave market of sin (no more than a slave can purchase himself). **I am of the flesh, sold [as a slave] under sin** (Romans 7:14b). See also John 8:34, where we are told, it we commit sin, then we are slaves to sin.
- 2) Our Redeemer is Jesus Christ, Who purchased us (redeemed us) with His blood on the cross. Luke 1:68 2Corinthians 5:21 Galatians 3:13 Titus 2:14 1Peter 1:18–19 2:24 Rev. 5:9.
- 3) Under the Law, we were cursed. Jesus purchased us from being under the Law. Galatians 4:4–5
- 4) As believers, we have been purchased (redeemed) with a price; therefore, we are not our own. 1Corinthians 6:20 7:23 1Peter 1:18–19

### 12. Paul, in Colossians, speaks of God cancelling out the debt that we owe: **And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross** (Colossians 2:13–14). Although the word *redeem* is not found here, the concept is summed up quite well in these verses: we are dead in our trespasses and sins, having a considerable debt to God. Jesus Christ, takes this debt and nails it to the cross, so that it has been paid off on our behalf.

Like many of the most fundamental doctrines in the Word of God, we find their origin in Genesis. **Genesis 14:19 And he [Melchizedek] blessed him [Abram] and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, the Possessor [or, Redeemer, Purchaser] of heaven and earth;... 4000 years ago, Abram recorded those words, and today, we fully understand what they mean.**

The points on the Kinsman-Redeemer were taken from the following website:

<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/redemption.html>

Additional places to study this doctrine:

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/redemption.html>

<http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0181.htm>

There are 2 booklets at rbthieme.org: *The Barrier* and *The Slave Market of Sin* (these books are free; there is no cost to order them; in *The Slave Market of Sin*, there is *the Doctrine of Redemption* in the appendix)

Scofield: <http://www.biblestudymanuals.net/redemption.htm>

11 pages on reconciliation: <http://pvccia.org/downloads/written/prep/basic/redemp.pdf>

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

An interesting note on the word *redeem*; it has a homonym in the word *gâ'al* (גָּאֵל); *Gâ'al* means *to reject, to defile* and is found in Ezra 6:6, Neh. 7:64 13:29, etc. Context clearly shows which is being used.

**""And I have taken you to myself for a people and I have become your God and you will know that I Y<sup>e</sup>howah am your God who brought you [or, more accurately, causing you to be brought] forth from under the burdens of Egypt."" [Exodus 6:7]**

Most translations render this verse as: **And I will take you to myself for a people and will become your God and you will know that I Y<sup>e</sup>howah am your God who brought your forth from under the burdens of Egypt.** The words *take* and *become* are both in the Qal perfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, meaning that this is looked upon by God has completed action. He chose the Jews and took them as His people in eternity past; we observed it in time when He came to Abraham and presented the Abrahamic covenant to him.

*Know* is in the Qal perfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural. Moses is to say this to the elders of Israel. This is future from this time, which is why the other verbs are translated in the future by other translators. The Hebrew does not have a past present or future tense as we know it; time must be inferred by the passage. As far as God is



concerned, He took the Jews as His people from eternity past and this is a completed action. The Jews know that there was a God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (previous generations have grown and prospered under slavery, meaning they had both doctrine and their right woman). By this generation, that God seems remote and distant—it will appear to them as though God has returned to them and *will* take them to Himself as His people. This is a language where the past perfect and the future tense can both be expressed by the same verbs and in this situation, depending upon whether you see this verse from the God-ward side or the man-ward side, can mean either.

**"And I will bring you into the land which I lifted up my hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob and I will give it to you as an inheritance; I [am] Y<sup>e</sup>howah."** [Ex. 6:8]

*Will bring* again is in the Qal perfect; from God's point of view, this is a completed action and from man's, it is still to come. Then we have an odd phrase which begins with the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect of *nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*] and it means *to lift up*. The KJV translates this **which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob**. However, this phrase here has a double meaning: (1) God will raise up his hand in power and force and give it to the Israelites; and (2) the lifting of the hand is often seen as the swearing of an oath (see Genesis 14:22 Psalm 106:26 Isaiah 3:7). There is no verb in the last phrase, drawing great attention to what is said.

Even though Aaron is supposed to be the spokesman and even though God has already spoken to Aaron, Moses is God's man and God speaks directly to Moses. Most of what is said here is repetitive. God has told Moses these things already. However, God is not against repetition. Under most conditions, we need to have things repeated. We have indication of this in Deuteronomy 6:6-9: **"And these words which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart, and you will teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you will bind them as a sign on your hand and they will be as frontals on your forehead. And you will write them down on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."** And this is repeated in Deuteronomy 11:18-20.

**And Moses spoke this unto the sons of Israel but they hearkened not to Moses through shortness of spirit and through hard service.** [Exodus 6:9]

*Shortness of spirit* means that the people would not listen to Moses because they were discouraged, disillusioned, and despondent; also, they were short-sighted. Their spiritual growth—which may have been nonexistent—was not enough to recognize that God had chosen Moses to lead them out of Israel and that such guidance would not be easy. All in all, the people of Israel considered Moses and his claims of speaking with God; and they considered the Pharaoh, and they considered Pharaoh greater in power.

Moses himself has to learn from the start that this will not be easy. The Jews, whom he is going to deliver, will not listen to him; not just now, but throughout 40 years of wandering in the desert. Even though God is demonstrably with him throughout this entire ordeal, this does not mean that it will be a cakewalk. The Egyptians are only a part of the problem; the sons of Israel will be nearly as difficult to guide and to deal with.

It will be much easier if Moses chooses to believe God and to do exactly as He says; but there will be continual headaches and pressures. Despite being guided by God, this does not mean that everything will be easier for Moses or for the people of Israel. Now, clearly, their escape from slavery into freedom, despite their continual complaints for 40 years, is the preferred move.

We face the same things in our lives; even though we believe in Jesus Christ and grow in His grace and in His Word, this does not mean that all of life will be easy. There will be difficult times and it will not always appear to us as though things are falling right into line as they should. Moses is finding this out. God has a plan for his life and Moses is to follow this plan. God gives him simple, step-by-step directions and Moses needs to merely follow those directions.

Our own lives are not much more difficult when it comes to divine guidance. If we spend one or more hours in the Word each and every day, rebound regularly, divine guidance will be automatic rather than esoteric. When it is time for Bible class, we know that we will be in God's geographical will if we are in Bible class. While we are there, we know that we are in His directive will as long as we are in fellowship. Throughout the day, if we avoid sins, and rebound when we do sin; and plan our schedule around Bible class, divine guidance will be a cakewalk. Life, on the other hand, is not always as easy as determining God's will.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying, "Go in, speak to Pharaoh, king of Egypt; that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land." [Exodus 6:10–11]**

God knew from eternity past that the sons of Israel would not always listen to Moses. This generation in particular happened to be an extremely obstinate generation. God had to exert a great deal of pressure upon them to get them to follow Moses. God already knows that the elders of Israel did not listen to Moses (obviously, God knew this in eternity past).

**And Moses spoke before Y<sup>e</sup>howah saying, "Look, the sons of Israel have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen, I also being of uncircumcised lips?" [Ex. 6:12]**

Moses certainly went to the elders of Israel and what he said seemed to unreal to them. *Shortness of spirit* means *discouragement, despondency and/or disheartenment*. They had been exhausted and beaten down by years of slavery; slavery which had become totally unreasonable and completely tyrannical (not all slavery has to be that way<sup>15</sup>).

Here, Moses does have a logical point. If the sons of Israel will not listen to him, how can he expect Pharaoh to listen to him? The word *hearken* means *to listen and believe*. I have translated it *listen* to move away from the King James English (similarly, I translated *lo* as *look*). Then Moses makes a remark about having *uncircumcised lips*. We are all thinking "well, I should hope so." The NASB gives the idiomatic translation to this: "**How then will Pharaoh listen to me, seeing that I am unskilled in speech?**" The New English Bible reads: "**...how will Pharaoh listen to such a halting speaker as I am?**" The Amplified Bible calls it "**...deficient and impeded speech.**" That is certainly the problem when translating an idiom: do you translate what it actually says and depend upon someone to dig through the similar uses in this and other literature to arrive at what it means, or do you translate it idiomatically? We are blessed to live in an age where we can find an abundance of both kinds of translations. So you see the literal translation above and the meaning(s) below that.

**Thus then did Y<sup>e</sup>howah speak to Moses and to Aaron, in fact, he gave them a mandate with regards to the sons of Israel and with regards to the Pharaoh of Egypt: to bring the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt. [Ex. 6:13]**

God has told Moses and Aaron that their path in life is simple: they are to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. That is the responsibility that God has given them. God does not give responsibility without giving the means to achieve it.

This is a summary verse. So far there is no mention of God speaking to Aaron except to go and meet Moses in the desert. However, God speaks to Aaron through Moses. This summary verse is essentially a period at the end of this paragraph and this would have been a good place to begin a new chapter, since the topic changes.

## **A Rather Incomplete Genealogy Is Inserted**

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<sup>15</sup> Because of the dishonest education system in the United States, we have come to believe that there is only one kind of slavery, and that slavery is always evil. Slavery is not always evil; and it is clear that the Mosaic Law did not seek to eliminate it, but to regulate it.

**These are the heads of the ancestral house: The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. These are the families of Reuben.** [Exodus 6:14]

In order for Moses to be a deliverer for the house of Israel, he must be from the house of Israel. Recall that Moses was raised up to become an Egyptian Pharaoh—so much of the early part of Exodus verifies that Moses is a son of Jacob. Here, Moses demonstrates his birthright as a true Jew. He lists the firstborn of Jacob (Reuben and Simeon) so that we know that this is the same family line; then he lists his own personal lineage.

The Jews, for centuries, were very careful about their genealogies. There are people who study their own genealogies today, but this was a national pastime for the Jews. Their race was separated from all of mankind. They are the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Each one of them should be able to trace their line back to one of the twelve tribes (or twelve sons) of Jacob (Israel). Why is this in the Bible? God also remembers these whose names are recorded in His Word forever. There are great kings whose names we do not know; reigns concerning which we know practically nothing. They had their day in the sun. But the people named in the Bible will be honored forever, as the Word of God is forever.

Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi are found in several genealogy lists: They are mentioned in Genesis 46:9, in our present passage, in Num. 26 and 1Chronicles 5:3. In the second generation out in the desert, the tribe of Reuben numbered 43,730. This census probably was probably composed of adult males only. Therefore, this is quite a bit less than half of the population to come from Reuben. Num. 26:8-10 singles out Pallu and mentions only one of his ancestors, Eliah, who is the father (or possibly grandfather) of Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram, the latter two being the ones who opposed Aaron and Moses in the desert.

**And the sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul, the son of a Canaanitess. These are the families of Simeon.** [Ex. 6:15]

Simeon's line is mentioned in basically the same passages. There seem to be the most variations in the names of Simeon's six sons. Most of the variations can be attributed to vowel points (recall that the original Hebrew was consonants only without any vowels). Simeon's last son, Shaul, is followed more carefully than the rest. Simeon obviously had a wife and a mistress (or a second wife) at least and his last son, Shaul, was born of that woman, who was a Canaanite.

The Canaanites were descended, of course, from Canaan, who was one of the sons of Ham (one of Noah's three sons). The Canaanites probably ventured the furthest from Noah (Genesis 10:18). They were a degenerate group which God had to drive out of the land (Ex. 23:28). Simeon took a Canaanite woman as a wife or a mistress and she bore him Shaul. We follow Shaul's line in 1Chronicles 4:24-27. Six generations of Shaul are mentioned in this passage until we come to his descendent Shimei, who is mentioned probably because he is one of the most notable of this tribe who found and married his right woman and, unlike most of those in Simeon's line, had a lot of children. He had sixteen sons and six daughters. His unnamed brothers did not have any sons listed. This is an illustration of grace, that a woman from the cursed race could become a Jew and end up being the mother of one of the more significant lines of the Simeon tribe.

The number of males in Simeon's line in the desert was only 22,200, half that of Reuben's family.

**And these are the names of the sons of Levites by their generations:** [Exodus 6:16]

When Moses adds the words *by their generations*, we know that this line will be followed in greater detail than the previous two lines. The Levites were the priestly tribe and the tribe from which Aaron and Moses came. This line is followed in more detail in Scripture. Whereas we followed Reuben and Simeon's line for but one generation in this passage (and followed only through a few generations in other passages), the Levites are more carefully followed. They are the priestly tribe; those who represent man to God. If one is to function as a priest, he must show his ancestors to be Levites.

"By their generations" indicates that there will be more detail forthcoming about this generation. Why mention Reuben and Simeon in the first place? It is proper protocol. Moses is showing respect toward them in writing this. Furthermore, it identifies him as a true Jew; he traces his heritage back to *the* Levi, of Israel.

**Gershon and Kohath and Merari; and the years of the life of Levi were 137 years. The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their families. And the sons of Kohath: Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath were 133<sup>16</sup> years. And the sons of Morari: Hahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites by their generations. And the sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites by their generations. [Ex. 6:17-19]**

Note first of all, the ages. I know that some people are confused by the ages of people mentioned in the Old Testament. Those listed prior to the flood lived for centuries. After the flood, there were several changes. Rain became a normal event upon the earth (prior to that, water for vegetation was but a mist from out of the ground—or, more correctly, from springs, rivers and lakes). A major change, which affected the aging process was the reduced gene pool and the infestation of bacteria. Whether bacteria existed prior to the flood, we do not know; but it became more commonplace after the flood (we know this because of Noah drinking fermented grape juice; an unprecedented occurrence in the Bible). What we have seen is reduction in the age of man over the centuries (to a low of age 30 and 40 for men in the dark ages). We think that we have extended life today, but in David and Solomon's day, the common length of life was 70 (2Samuel 5:4–5 Psalm 90:10). Today, although we might have people live into their first century, they are not as vigorous as Moses. Moses, in his eighties and nineties, led the children of Israel through the desert and occasionally had to knock heads together. How many eighty year old's today could do that to a generation of degenerate thirty and forty-year-old's?

Levi is mentioned as having three sons. This does not mean that this was the entire line; it is very possible that he had many daughters; these lines generally do not mention women. Gershon is mentioned many times in Numbers. There are not a lot of details about him but of his progeny. Kohath and Merari are also mentioned quite a number of times, primarily in genealogies. The genealogies also make several mentions of the Gershonites and the Kohathites, but rarely do we find the term Merarites (in fact, it is found only once). Numbers would be a better time to examine these lines, as this is where they are mentioned primarily.

In v. 20, we jump from the beginning of this family to the end of it (the end of it relative to the time of writing) and then we go back to the beginning of the line but instead of examining every sons of Levi, we hone in on Kohath's line (the second-born) and mention two of his sons, yet skip his middle born son, Hebron.

Hebron would be an interesting study. It is mentioned as a place much more often than as a person. We find it early in Genesis (chapters 13, 23, 35 and 37) long before we have a person named Hebron our context. It is certainly possible that the same name is a coincidence or that the child was named after the city (or the founder of the city; we have women today named *Paris*).

Even though these early chapters of Genesis precede the birth of Hebron (and precede his mention by centuries), but the city may have been known and the book of Genesis may have been known by the father of Hebron (and he took his son's name from the name of the city).

Hebron's family is mentioned only once in 1Chronicles 23:19 (there is another Hebron mentioned in 1Chronicles 2). Why this is, I do not know exactly, but my guess is that his family were too tied to the world and were a family of failures. Many times, people's names are left out when they have not believed in the Revealed God.

**So, then, Amram took Jochebed, the daughter of his father's brother, to himself to wife, and she bore to him Aaron and Moses<sup>17</sup>. And the years of the life of Amram were 137<sup>18</sup>. [Ex. 6:20]**

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<sup>16</sup> 130 years in the Alexandrian

<sup>17</sup> The Septuagint adds *and Miriam, their sister*

<sup>18</sup> 132 years in the Septuagint and 136 years in the Alexandrian

This is a sudden jump from the beginning of the line to the end of the line. We already know that Moses has an older sister, Miriam, who watched as he was taken from the Nile. We were told earlier that two Levites married and bore Moses. This causes me to think that possibly Moses wrote down Exodus 1:1 through 2:22 when he was younger; before he knew any details concerning his Jewish family. At this point in time, he has met Aaron and certainly the rest of his family and now he knows them by name.

Certainly what catches everyone's eye (for those who actually read the genealogies) in the translations based upon *Textus Receptus* is that is that Amram marries his aunt. It is actually his paternal cousin or second cousin as per the Septuagint, Syriac and the Latin Vulgate (which may not represent a more accurate understanding but an intentional change). In Num. 26:39 we find that she is simply a daughter of Levi, making her a Levite. This is not a problem because of the differences in the genetic pool then and now. Seth and Cain both married their sisters. Today, this would ruin the children but then there was no choice. Our genes have degenerated throughout the years, and marrying one's relatives tends to bring out the worst in the genetic pools. This would be an incredible area of study for a Christian geneticist.

Moses and Aaron are descended through the line of Kohath (Num. 26:58-59). Jochebed is mentioned again in this reference in Numbers, and we know more about her than we do about Moses' father. There are times when the woman has the dominating influence in a family (and this is not a reference to a change of authority) and the Bible mentions this. The Numbers passage also confirms, as we know, that the Bible does not include every generation in every genealogy. There are possibly several generations which fall between Kohath and Amram. However, I believe what Moses did was give the names of those three in his direct line whose lives bridged the gap between entrance into Israel and that day he first spoke to Pharaoh. Notice that by any version, the years of these three add up to approximately 400 years. Although it appears that this fulfills Genesis 15:16, it does not. We will examine all of this in more detail in Exodus 12:40.

As we see in such passages as Num. 26:28–34, it is common in the Bible to list one's genealogy by naming the tribe (Levi), the clan (Kohath) and the family group (Amram). In Num. 3:27–28, the total of the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites and Uzzielites was 8600. This would mean that the immediate family of Moses of those his age and younger would be about 2000+. This is highly unlikely (if not impossible). Even if Moses' actual father had the name Amram, this is a different Amram here. In 1Chronicles we will see that the generations of slavery was at least nine or ten and not three. 1Chronicles 7:25 gives us at least ten linking generations between Ephraim and Joshua; Bezalel, who designed the tabernacle, was at least seven generations from Jacob (Exodus 31:2–11 1Chronicles 2:1, 4–5, 9, 18–20); and Elishama, who is found in Num. 1:10 is at least nine generations removed from Jacob (1Chronicles 7:22–27). This fits in rather well with the 400–430 years that the Jews spent in Egypt. It yields generations which are 43 years in length (which is about right for those times; notice that Moses married at age 40); and it squares with the population of Israel at the Exodus. There is another theory which gives us 215 years in slavery to Egypt, which follows the Septuagint reading of Exodus 12:40, but that would give us about 21 years per generation, which is too short, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to squeeze out 2,000,000 adult male Jews in 215 years from 70–75 original Jews.

**And the sons of Izhar: Korah and Nepheg and Zichri. And the sons of Uzziel: Mishael and Elisheba<sup>19</sup> and Sithri.** [Ex. 6:21-22]

The writer of Chronicles slipped a couple of completely different generations together in 1Chronicles 6:1-2. He adds Amram to the sons of Kohath (as we have just seen, his sons were Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel). Moses did the same thing in Num. 3:19.

Now, Moses the writer, turns to more contemporary matters:

**And Aaron took Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Nahshon to himself to wife; and she bore to him Hadaab and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.** [Ex. 6:23]

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<sup>19</sup> Elzaphan in NASB and Elizaphan in Num. 3:30



Again, we have a rare situation; a woman is mentioned, as well as the sons of Aaron. Aaron was the head of the Jewish priesthood and priest in the Old Testament had wives. Priests in the New Testament (which is every believer) had wives. So many groups of believers and church groups are completely mixed up. They cannot distinguish Israel from the church; they presume when Paul states that celibacy is the preferred state of life (because you can dedicate more of your life and time to God) that this should refer to anyone who is high up in the church or high up in spiritual things; they are confused as to what a priest is. **The priesthood in the Old Testament was based upon ancestry and that requires marriage and cohabitation.** There is no way to mistake this. In the New Testament, priesthood is based upon believing in Jesus Christ; we are all priests, and since the New Testament is filled with mandates concerning wives and children, that means that many of us are getting married and are going to have families.

**And the sons of Korah: Assir and Elkanhan and Abiasaph<sup>20</sup>; these are the families of the Korahites.** [Exodus 6:24]

This is logically related to v. 21 but I do not know why Moses, in this writing, checkerboards the old and the new. And Moses will return to his present again:

**And Eleazar, son of Aaron, took to himself one of the daughters of Putiel to himself to marry and she bore to him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers of the Levites by their families.** [Exodus 6:25]

The last statement in v. 25 sums up vv. 23–25; mostly Aaron's line is examined. We will hear much more about Phinehas in Num. 25.

Surprisingly, we hear nothing of Gershom, Moses' son, or of his wife. However, if Moses is having this much trouble with following God's simple commands, then it is very likely that he has lost all support of his wife and women do have the ability to turn children against their fathers. We find out later in Exodus 18 that apparently Moses' wife and children deserted him and returned to her father in Midian. The detail with which the next few chapters of Exodus are written indicates to me that Moses, at some point in time, began to keep a running diary (whether written out or whether he carried it in his head, we do not know). Part of the reason I would take this viewpoint is the lack of the mention of his wife or children here. They are out of the picture insofar as Moses is concerned and with his wife's attitude, that is just as well.

We know, not by this short genealogy, but from others, how the Levites related to Amram, Moses' father, but we do not know that from this context. At this point in time of the narrative, not of the writing of the narrative, it is very possible that all Moses knew of his progeny was written here. However, by the listing of the ages of certain of those in his line, those who likely bridge the time between Jacob entering the land and this point in time, Moses is setting up bookends which extend throughout the 400 years of captivity of the Jews.

**This [is] Aaron and Moses to whom Y<sup>e</sup>howah said, "Bring forth the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, according to their armies."** [Exodus 6:26]

This is an unusual choice of words here, because the Jews are slaves. They have no armies. God can see into their future and when they leave Egypt, they will begin to organize themselves into fighting units. God will cause them to be grouped and organized into these military divisions because once they leave Egypt, they still have a part in God's plan which involves the destruction of the Canaanites who now occupy the promised land.

An effective military requires authority and discipline and order. In order for Moses to guide the people out of Egypt and up to southern Judah, they needed to have authorities over them, as well as discipline and order.

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<sup>20</sup> Ebiasaph in 1Chronicles 6:23 9:19

## The Resumption of the Conversation Between God and Moses

This appears to be a continuation of the conversation which was begun in Exodus 5:22 and continued through 6:13. Some place vv. 26–27 at the end of the genealogy.

**They who were speaking to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to bring forth the sons of Israel out of Egypt—this same Moses and Aaron. [Ex. 6:27]**

In v. 26, this is the line of Aaron and Moses; however, in v. 27 this is the line of Moses and Aaron. Very similar to the change from *Barnabas and Paul* to *Paul and Barnabas* in Acts 13.

Moses is pointing out from his very abbreviated and scattered genealogy that the Moses and Aaron descended from the tribe of Levi—this is definitely who this book speaks about. That is, there is no novel or story here that is made up; Moses and Aaron are real people with a real heritage. The latter conclusion is what God the Holy Spirit would expect us to draw.

**So it came to pass that on a certain day, Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt. And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying, "I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah; Speak to the Pharaoh, king of Egypt, all that I am saying to you." And Moses said before [lit. to the face of] Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Listen, I am unskilled in public speaking [lit., of uncircumcised lips]; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?" [Ex. 6:28-30]**

It was always God's plan for Moses to speak directly to Pharaoh; otherwise, He would have appeared to Aaron continually and given him orders. However, Moses, although he had a royal training forty years ago, has since lived out in the desert as a shepherd and a recluse, as it were, and lacks confidence. Who does he lack confidence in? God.

It is difficult to discern whether this is a summary of what has occurred or whether this is a new meeting between God and Moses. Moses seemed to have the same complaints again and again. This seems to pick up where v. 12 (and 13) left off. The chronology was inserted because Moses is about to deliver his country Israel. He must show that he is genetically a Jew. In the books of Matthew and Luke, a very similar genealogy is followed to show that Jesus Christ also has legal and genetic claim to the throne of David.

Whoever designed the chapter breaks in Exodus was the most confused person on this earth. This is again a time when the chapter breaks right in the middle of a conversation. Exodus 7:1 occurs immediately after 6:30; it is God's response to what Moses said. There are also verse breaks which are illogical (between vv. 10 & 11).

**Exodus 7** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

# EXODUS 7

## Exodus 7:1–25

### Outline of Chapter 7:

- Vv. 1–9      **God tells Moses and Aaron to return to Pharaoh**
- Vv. 10–13    **Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh a second time/staff turned into a serpent**
- Vv. 14–19    **God commands Moses and Aaron to appear before Pharaoh a third time**
- Vv. 20–25    **Moses and Aaron meet Pharaoh by the Nile/water is turned to blood**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**The Doctrine of Magicians**  
**The Secret Arts/Enchantments**

**Introduction:** Moses and Aaron have been to see Pharaoh once before. No signs or wonders were worked before him; they made a simple request which elicited Pharaoh's wrath and Pharaoh increased the workload of the Israelites significantly. In chapter 7, they will return to Pharaoh, already having been warned by God that Pharaoh would not listen to them. They speak to Pharaoh and he is stubborn, as God had promised them. The next time they confront Pharaoh, they wait for him by the bank of the Nile and turn the river to blood; still, Pharaoh will remain hardened.

### God Tells Moses and Aaron to Return to Pharaoh

It is rather peculiar where these chapter divisions occur. Obviously less than inspired. A new chapter should have begun at the end of the genealogy or after this conversation with God; but not in the middle of it. Exodus 7 should have begun with: **On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, the LORD said to Moses, "I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you." But Moses said to the LORD, "Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?"** (Exodus 6:28–30; ESV; capitalized). Along the same lines, Exodus 7 goes one for exactly one verse too many. Exodus 7:25 ought to have been the first verse of Exodus 8.

**Then Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to Moses, "Observe, I have appointed you to be God unto Pharaoh; and Aaron, your brother, shall be your prophet." [Ex. 7:1]**

God has always worked through intermediate sources. He has always worked through man to deal with man. This is the relationship of the prophet and the priest; the priest represents man to God and the prophet represents God to man. God does not work in any other way. Certainly, He could have gone directly to the Pharaoh and caused the Pharaoh to let His people go. However, that just is not the way that God functions in His relationship to us. In our generation, he speaks to none of us directly as He did in the Old Testament, but He speaks to us through His Word and we have intermediate agencies involved. For instance, the pastor-teacher today is the one

that we look to for instruction and he looks directly to the Word. We both do so under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

So there is no misunderstanding, God does speak directly with some men. As we have studied in the book of Genesis, that does not always result with perfect results. God spoke to Abraham and Abraham, for the most part, agreed with God's program. God spoke to Jacob, his grandson, on many occasions, and still, Jacob fought against God and God's plan on many occasions (in fact, God immortalized Jacob's actions with a wrestling match where God permanently injured Jacob's leg).

I need to cover the meaning of the word *prophet* in the Hebrew right here. We will cover the doctrine in Deuteronomy 18:15. Throughout the Old Testament, God has consistently set up types; that is, a person, a series of events, something which is analogous to the person and work of Jesus Christ; something which foreshadows the first advent of our Lord. We have seen that with Abraham taking his only-begotten son to sacrifice to God—the only time God has ever required anyone to present their son to Him as a sacrificial lamb; and then, before Abraham could slit the throat of his young son Isaac, God provided for him a substitute; a scapegoat, to be sacrificed in his stead. God's preference here is to have one man between Himself and Pharaoh—that man Moses to act as a mediator; to act as a prophet. However, since Moses has weened out on speaking directly to Pharaoh, Aaron has stepped in to speak for Moses, confusing the type. God immediately sets up a type of mediatorship, a position that our Lord Jesus Christ occupies on our behalf; the God-man Who stands between us and God. God sets up the type by appointing Moses to be God **unto Pharaoh**; and Aaron would act as a prophet—the man who would related God's Will to man, represented by Pharaoh. Aaron would be the Christ figure, the mediator between God and man.

What God has actually said to Moses is a bit tongue-in-cheek. Moses is God's preferred spokesman to Pharaoh and Moses is hemming and hawing about it. So, instead of God speaking to Moses and sending Moses to the Pharaoh and Moses speaking God's words to the Pharaoh; Moses will speak to Aaron, send Aaron to the Pharaoh, and Aaron will speak to Pharaoh. Moses will be there, just as God will be there; silently. It is actually a fairly humorous thing which God has said to Moses. God will speak to Moses and tell Moses what to tell Aaron to say; then Moses will speak to Aaron. There will become a point where Moses just starts doing all of the talking (it happens without any fanfare, if memory serves).

One thing which is extremely important in this verse (but not to the immediate context) is the use of the word *prophet*. We continually look back on prophets as being rather unusual men who tell their contemporaries about the future. That is not their primary function. Their primary function is that of a mouthpiece for God. God speaks to man through the prophets. Aaron will speak the words of Moses to Pharaoh. Some of the things which he informs Pharaoh of will come to pass shortly—however, he is a prophet because he is speaking on behalf of Moses.

Interestingly enough, Aaron will become the father of the priesthood—a priest is a man who represents his fellow men to God. A prophet represents God to man. When you put these two functions together, you get a mediator between man and God—someone equal to both parties and speaking to one on behalf of the other. This very much describes the function of Jesus Christ, Who is fully man and fully God—equal to both parties—and therefore is able to mediate between the two parties.

**"You will speak all that I command you and Aaron, your brother, will speak to Pharaoh and he will send the sons of Israel out of his land." [Exodus 7:2]**

God specifies exactly what the duties of Moses and Aaron are. Moses is to tell Aaron each and everything that God tells Moses; then Aaron will speak to Pharaoh. Furthermore, Pharaoh will send Israel depart from Egypt. The verb used here is the Piel perfect of *shâlach* (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHK*] and it means *to send, to send away*. In the Piel (intensive) stem we have more of the concept of sending away. Throughout much of Exodus, this has been translated *to let go*. However, the Pharaoh is in command in his country and what occurs must be as a result of a mandate from Pharaoh. He will order the people to leave the land; the intensive stem carries with it the

concept of a royal command or mandate. The perfect tense means completed action; Pharaoh will eventually send the people away for good; not for just a three day feast and worship service out in the desert. However, due to the perfect tense, God has to make it clear to Moses that even though Pharaoh will do this, he will not do it immediately after the next confrontation.

**"But I will allow the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and [thereby] I will [cause] to multiply the signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." [Ex. 7:3]**

*The Emphasized Bible* is an excellent old English translation of the Bible; and Rotherham is quite a literalist. However, there seems to be a weak point here. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is a difficult topic to grasp, so Rotherham side-steps this issue by inserting the words "I will permit" (actually, "I will suffer..."). What he is doing is providing some interpretation here in the context of the Word, which is acceptable if the interpretation is accurate; but it is disastrous when the interpretation is inaccurate (such as the Jehovah Witnesses' translation of John 1:1-3, where they believe that Jesus ought to be called a *god*). God says, "I will harden his heart" in the autographs; which means that we had better examine **the Doctrine of the Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart**. What we have here is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil imperfect of *harden*; the Hiphil is often the causative stem and the stem where the object participates in the action of the verb. In the Hebrew, the causative Hiphil does not necessarily behave like our English causative. It can include the permission to do something.<sup>21</sup> Here, God has granted Pharaoh the power, the ability to harden his heart continually. My understanding of this hardening process is this: *there will be times when Pharaoh is beaten down so much, that he is ready to just roll up into a ball and give up; but God gives him the strength to express his negative volition, despite his own personal feelings of helplessness.*

My exegesis of this book goes back to 1996, when I was first beginning to work out my strategy and approach. What I have done over the past 5 years is far superior to this particular work. I have covered a great many things with more depth as I have moved forward in examining the Word of God. So, in the next few chapters, we have an exegetical study of the plagues which God brought against Egypt. I did a fair but incomplete job here. What I highly recommend is, sometime during your study of these chapters that you also take a look at **Psalm 105** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) (I did a lot of work on Psalm 105 in 2007), where I take another stab at the history of Israel, which includes a more in depth analysis of these plagues and of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

The *multiplication* of the signs and wonders is also in the Hiphil stem, meaning that God will cause these signs and wonders through Moses and Aaron. The perfect tense means that God is seeing this as a whole; I have inserted *thereby* because God is explaining to Moses that (1) Pharaoh will send the people out of Egypt; (2) Pharaoh will not do that immediately; and (3) this is the reason why—so that God can multiply His signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.

**"And Pharaoh will not listen to you, so I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring forth my armies, my people, the sons of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, with great judgements." [Exodus 7:4]**

God is giving Moses and Aaron a careful run through of just exactly what will happen. They will have no reason to suddenly act surprised and be perturbed because Pharaoh does not immediately acquiesce to their wishes. God warns them that, they will speak to Pharaoh, and he will respond with negative volition.

**And the Egyptians shall know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah, when I have stretched forth my hand over Egypt and brought forth the sons of Israel out of their midst." [Ex. 7:5]**

This is at least the sixth time that God has told Moses that He would bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt; God has told Moses almost as many times that Pharaoh would not let the people go at first. This would indicate that repetition is called for at times. In this context alone, Y<sup>e</sup>howah has told Moses that He will bring the sons of Israel

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<sup>21</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, p. 2274.



out of Egypt three times. Moses was also all upset because he went to the Pharaoh and things just got worse. God has already made it clear to Moses that the Pharaoh would not listen to him. God tells Moses this again in this passage. It is a passage like this that makes me think about divine guidance. People with the least need for divine guidance, those who lack God's Word in their soul, who are immature and whose production falls somewhere between very small and nonexistent, are often concerned with divine guidance. It is a mystical experience to them or they want someone else to tell them what to do so they can pick and chose from those directives so that they can do the things that they would most like to do. If you know God's Word, you will get enough specifics to handle 90-100% of the things in your life. What Moses had to do here was clear. God spoke to him directly and repeated it three times and told him what would happen as a result of him speaking to Pharaoh. There were no surprises; no glitches.

So, what about divine guidance when God is not right there telling you exactly what to do? For the young or immature believer, the beginning is simple: (1) you rebound (silently name your sins to God) when you sin; (2) you attend Bible class whenever the doors are open (preferably 7 days a week) and you study your notes for an hour on the off days; and (3) you do not make any drastic changes in your life (i.e., quit your job because you don't like it there, leave your mate because he/she is an unbeliever, get married, get divorced, etc.) These are not tough directions. The worst people to explain these things to are those who have been saved for one year or ten years and they haven't grown at all. They have been out of fellowship all that time because they never knew how to regain the filling of the Spirit; or those who have been involved in self-study, most of it out of fellowship, for the past several years, and are experts in all things theological. Furthermore, they want this justified to them; particularly the last point. "Where does my Bible say that?" Paul, in writing to the carnal and immature Corinthians (1Corinthians 7:26-29), told them to stay wherever they were because that would spare them a lot of trouble. Too many of us make major decisions as immature believers, the consequences of which we have to live with for the rest of our lives. Our lives would be simplified and eased greatly if we postponed all major decisions until we experienced some growth and our course of action is crystal clear. Moses and Aaron's course in life is crystal clear.

**And Moses and Aaron did as Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded them; thus they did. Now Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh. [Ex. 7:6]**

This gives us part of the time table in Moses' life. Of all places, we find the timetable for Moses' life in Acts 5:19-53 spoken by Stephen, immediately prior to his death. In fact, Stephen gives us more detail about Moses's early life than Moses does. He was nursed for three months by his birth mother, raised in the palace of the Pharaoh by the Pharaoh's daughter for his youth, receiving his education there. He, up until the age of forty, had been educated in all things and he had, during this time period, accomplished a great deal as a prince ("**he was mighty in word and deed**"). It was at age forty, possibly because his mother, the queen, had told him of his origins, that he went out among the Jews to see the people from whence he came. Because of the genetic differences, a man of eighty in those days was as powerful as a man of thirty today (particularly when we are speaking of Moses). Moses, if anything, was in his prime at this age. He had received invaluable training in the palace for forty years, some spiritual training for forty years in the desert at the hand of his father-in-law, and now it was time for him to act.

What a refreshing change from those who are saved one day and two days later giving their testimony and doing great things for God. There is nothing wrong with Christian service at an early age; just herein note that our examples from the Bible all had a great deal of training before they did anything of any true spiritual consequence. Moses is eighty and he is now, for the first time, actually beginning to do "great things for God." Immature Christians do not understand this. They are excited, pumped up, and everyone around them is telling them to get out there and witness; pray your brains out; and study your Bible at home when you have a chance. This is the prevailing wisdom and it is wrong. If you are going to witness, make certain that you are accurate. People are saved by believing in Jesus Christ, not by asking Him into their hearts and lives. This act of praying for Jesus to come into your life or heart MIGHT indicate positive volition, but it is not salvation; it is not saving grace. Enjoining others to do so does not necessarily bring them any closer to God. And then when you tell them to repent of their sins in order to be saved, you are giving them a list of works to do. How many new Christians think that this is the gospel (and perhaps the spiritual life): (1) ask Jesus into their hearts and (2) repent of their sins, and (3) promise

God not to sin anymore. How many young Christians think that this is the spiritual life: (1) repent of the sins that they do; (2) promise God not to sin anymore; (3) try not to sin; (4) read their Bible; and (5) go to church. For how many new Christians is this their concept of salvation and the spiritual life? We don't need them out there confusing everyone else in their enthusiasm. People think that by telling someone to do these things that they are witnessing and doing great things for Jesus. And just in case there is any confusion to you: you could do each and every one of those things every day for the rest of your life on list #1 and spend eternity in the lake of fire; and, as a Christian you do each and everyone of the things on the second list and spend eternity in heaven picking cotton on my plantation. However, this is what happens when people who do not know God's Word get out and witness. Many of them are out there witnessing as unbelievers because that is all they have ever done. Many have never believed in Jesus Christ; they have never depended upon Him alone for their salvation and their relationship with God. Maybe if you could understand that there are a lot of wonderful and very religious Catholics and Mormons who lead good and moral lives, attend church regularly and believe that Jesus is an important person in their lives. They aren't necessarily saved (or unsaved, for that matter). No one has ever bothered to tell them how to become saved and they have become too religious to listen to God speaking to them in His Word. Moses was eighty years old when he spoke before Pharaoh (and he didn't even think that he was ready then). Would that we could wait on God's plan and purpose for our lives and spend some time in preparation for it.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, "When Pharaoh shall speak to you saying, 'Show for yourselves a wonder,' then you will say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh; let it become a sea-serpent.'" [Ex. 7:8-9]**

What the Pharaoh will say is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, Qal imperative of our old friend *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAN*], which means *to give, put, set, grant*. This is followed by a preposition לְ [pronounced *LAW-med*] and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine plural suffix; meaning *to, for, in regard to, with reference to yourselves*.

There are some who maintain, with good reason, that the "sea-serpent" is a crocodile. The words in the book of Moses are so ancient, that certain of them are translated by reasonable, educated guesses. The crocodile was common in Egypt, a deadly symbol of power and strength and was very likely worshipped as a deity of sorts. Since there is no indication that the kind of animal that they saw was unusual, we should assume that it would be an animal common to that area; something which is reptilian (serpentine) from the sea would likely be a crocodile.

What God is doing is slowly getting Moses involved in speaking before the Pharaoh. Furthermore, God wants Pharaoh to see who has the authority. Even though it is Aaron speaking to Pharaoh, God wants Pharaoh to see that Moses is telling Aaron what to do. Moses is refusing to speak before the Pharaoh because he feels as though he does not have the power and ability. In reality, Moses has more public speaking ability Aaron; in fact, more than almost anyone in the land of Egypt.

We have often seen role reversals in Scripture. The younger brother Moses will be telling older brother Aaron what to do. It is possible that Moses and Aaron understood this; but it is also possible that they were just so dumbfounded by the entire scenario that they did not fully appreciate what God was doing with them.

### **Moses and Aaron Appear Before Pharaoh a Second Time/Staff Turned into a Serpent**

**So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and did just as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded; and Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a sea-serpent. [Exodus 7:10]**

The literal Hebrew reads *before the faces of Pharaoh*. *Face* is in the plural, referring to the various features of the face (similar to using *eyes* in the plural). To us, the use here seems to be redundant, but this use is a matter of emphasis. It is similar to a magician stating *I'm going to perform this illusion right before your very eyes*. The sentence stands without the addition of the extra words, but it loses the great emphasis upon the fact that Pharaoh was right there, with a ring-side seat, and he observed exactly what occurred.

Notice that Aaron is performing the signs and wonders. Shy and retiring Moses wasn't quite ready for the spotlight. What is being done here at their second meeting is just to warm Pharaoh up to God's power. God moves in small steps with us prior to salvation and in spiritual growth. Prior to our believing in Jesus Christ, if we happen to be the kind of hard-heads who require a bit of encouragement, we will notice in our previous lives as unbelievers that we faced a little pressure, then we heard the gospel; we faced a little more pressure, and we heard (or thought about) the gospel again; and God would continue to raise the stakes. Being the kind of person that I was, I had to come to a point of great emotional pain before I turned toward God. I wasn't saved right at that point in time, but God got my attention. Here, God gets Pharaoh's attention. However, Pharaoh is negative toward God.

When raising our children, we often do the same thing. When they do something wrong, we sometimes only counsel with them; explain what they did was wrong and why and enjoin them not to do it again. The second time might bring another lecture and a scolding. The third and forth times might result in discipline, which would intensify on the fifth or sixth offense. If we can achieve favorable results in our children without beating the daylight out of them; that is certainly the preferred method.

**The Pharaoh called for the wise men and for the sorcerer-magicians. Now they too, the sacred scribes [the religious illusionists] of Egypt, with their flash [of fire], did in like manner; in fact, they cast down each man his staff and they became sea-serpents; but Aaron's staff swallowed up their staves.** [Ex. 7:11-12]

The wise men are those in the Pharaoh's kingdom whose opinion he respects; who he calls upon when he runs into a problem that he is struggling with. The word translated *secret arts* in *The Emphasized Bible* and *enchantments* in the KJV in this passage is the Hebrew word *lahaṭ* (לָהַט) [pronounced LAH-haṭ]<sup>22</sup> and it actually means *a flash or a bit of fire*. This word is found in only one other place in the Bible: Genesis 3:24, where the angels guard the garden of Eden with *lahaṭ*. See **the Doctrine of Magicians** for more information on this.

The term magicians is used in three passages in the Bible. When Joseph is in Egypt interpreting the dreams of the Pharaoh; when Moses is bring the plagues upon Egypt, and in Daniel, again where dreams are being interpreted.

### The Doctrine of Magicians

1. The Hebrew word is *chartôm* (חֲרֹטֶם) and the Chaldean word used in Daniel is the same.
2. Strong points out that this has the same root word as *cheret*, which means "engraving tool or writing instrument." The root word means "to engrave or to write."
3. Strong translates this as a "horoscopist;" one who draws magical lines or circles.
4. Wilson tells us that these were mean in the early ages who pretended to be of profound learning. He also mentions the possible same root as does Strong, but only as a possibility and not as a fact engraved in stone.
5. The word is translated variously: *magicians* (KJV, RSV, ASV, NEB), *sacred scribes* (*The Emphasized Bible*), *magicians* or *soothsayer priests* (*The New American Standard Bible*).
6. The best place to go to understand the meaning of this term is the Bible. It is found in Genesis 41 where the Pharaoh has some disturbing dreams and he calls upon his "magicians" and his wise men to interpret the dreams (Genesis 41:8). This indicates that they were learned in interpreting dreams. They were not always able to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh (Genesis 41:8, 24).
7. We again see these "magicians" in Pharaoh's court when Moses and Aaron bring plagues upon Egypt. They attempt to duplicate the miracles of God and come close on three occasions; however, they will fail the fourth time (Ex. 7:9-12, 19-22 8:5-7, 16-18).

<sup>22</sup> Which is very similar to the word *lâṭ* (לָט) [pronounced lawṭ], and this does mean *secrecy*, *mystery* and possibly *enchantments*

## The Doctrine of Magicians

8. They appear to be a subset of the "wise men and sorcerers" which the Pharaoh calls to his side when first speaking to Moses and Aaron. They stepped forward out of this group and performed a miracle similar to what Moses and Aaron did (Ex. 7:9-12). Subsequently, they were the only ones called in when Moses brought on a new plague to Egypt.
9. In order to perform these miracles, they employ their "secret arts or enchantments" (Ex. 7:11, 22 8:7, 18—see below). Very likely, these are not a set of powers, but sleight of hand and various kinds of magic tricks.
10. They finally give up and admit that the miracles done by Moses and Aaron were the work of God (Exodus 8:19).
11. The magicians were hit by a plague which kept them from appearing before Pharaoh (Ex. 9:11) which likely indicates that they did not believe in Y<sup>e</sup>howah, although they recognized that the miracles done were the handiwork of God.
12. The magicians of Daniel's time gave their advice on matters of wisdom and understanding (and Daniel's advice was ten times better). Dan. 1:20
13. The magicians are grouped with the conjurers, sorcerers and master astrologers in Dan. 2:2. This means that they do not have equivalent functions or equivalent meanings.
  - (a) The conjurers (or, in the KJV, astrologers) should be translated "conjurers or a magicians." The unused root from which the word comes most likely means "to lisp or to practice enchantment." We might consider these to be practitioners of black magic today. They might cast spells or put curses upon people or perform acts of magic.
  - (b) The sorcerers are those who practice magic arts, sorcery and charms with the intent to do mischief to man (as Wilson puts it). The root word means "to whisper or mumble a spell." They do not appear to be radically different from the conjurers, except that they speak in tongues (or in a language which is not understood by the hearers).
  - (c) The "Chaldeans" actually means "someone from Chaldea." The meaning behind this word in this context is variously given as "wise men, master astrologer, astrologer or magician." In the context of Daniel, I would not necessarily group them with the practitioners of the Satanic arts as we know them, but would consider them likely the wise men of the kingdom; the philosophers or even the religious types.
  - (d) The contrast here is simple based upon the difference of the root words. The magicians are more closely associated with writing or engraving and the others are more closely associated with speaking. We might associate them today with the authors of Satanic religion. All of these people were thought to be wise and associated with predicting the future, reading dreams and interpreting dreams, and with magic spells and incantations.
  - (e) It is not clear if they are able to verbally communicate with the demons. I once thought yes; and now I doubt it.
14. Daniel was able to answer questions and interpret the king's dreams that all these others could not (Dan. 2:28 4:6-8 5:11).
15. In the context of the Exodus, a reasonable translation would be "religious illusionists" or "religious miracle-workers." This takes into account what they did in the presence of Pharaoh more than what the root meaning of the original word is (which meaning is not clear-cut, anyway).
16. Unregenerate man turns to a lot of different kinds of people today for advice: friends, psychologists, palm readers, self-help authors, and basically anyone who has their hand out for money claiming to know more about life than the seeker does. Certainly, some believers in the ministry imitate this. These were the people who kings turned to for questions which they themselves could not answer. The magicians were a part of this group. In the time of Moses, we do not have the Pharaoh bringing in several types of advisors but just the magicians. By Daniel's time, there had developed a larger group of religious advisors. In our time, this field has expanded a great deal. There is but one way to truth and the many deviations away from that truth are Satanically inspired. Jesus Christ told us **"Narrow is the way and few that are that find it"** and **"I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but by me."**

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The magicians (or sacred scribes or religious illusionists) were said to have practiced secret arts or incantations. Very likely this was simply some magic done to impress the king "to prove" that they were of God. Therefore, we should also examine:

### The Secret Arts/Enchantments

1. The magicians of Pharaoh's court used enchantments or secret arts to duplicate the miracles of Moses. There are two words used in Exodus which are translated "enchantments" in the KJV.
2. Lahat (לָהַט) is used only once in this context (Ex. 7:11). Its root word is flaming. If you have ever seen a magician cause a sudden blaze or flash of fire or a spark, this is the root meaning. At first, when the magicians learned that they had a little competition from Moses in the realm of magic arts, they brought a little flash or a visual display in order to impress Pharaoh. When they realized that this was less theatrical and more difficult to imitate, they dispensed with the flash and tried just to duplicate Moses' miracles (after all, Moses did not use any props other than the staff of Aaron). The same word is found in Genesis 3:24, where the *flaming* sword to the entrance to the garden of Eden is turning every way to guard the garden.
3. The second word used is lâṭ (לָט) and it means secret or covered. By implication, it is a secret enchantment used by the magicians prior to performing some act of magic. It is the magician mumbo-jumbo which is a prelude to the act, not unlike a drum roll. It is a set of words, or a spell, which sounds good and mysterious to the hearer, which sounds as though it is part of what makes the wonder come to pass. Elsewhere in the KJV, this is translated "softly, secretly and privily."
4. The words are obviously very different and, unfortunately, translated exactly the same. Exodus seems to have the problem throughout. People have been stumped by the "hardening" of Pharaoh's heart due to three different words being all translated exactly the same in the KJV.

I originally presented these as separate doctrines; however, they are so short, I decided to include them in the text of Exodus.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The use of the word *staff* in v. 12 is called an *ampliatio* [pronounced *AM-pli-A-ti-o*] which means it is an old name given to a new thing. It is a rare figure of speech found less than a half-dozen times in the Old Testament and slightly more often in the New. Aaron's staff is no longer a staff, but it is a serpent; however, God the Holy Spirit still refers to it as a staff. We have seen this one time before in Genesis 2:23 where the woman is called *bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh*, although she had been transformed into a woman.

The religious people in Pharaoh's court were either demon-possessed or had demonic affiliations. It has been suggested that these were small, rigid crocodiles (or other serpentine creatures), which, when cast to the ground, came to life. Others have suggested that the Egyptian cobra can be rendered immobile by applying pressure to its muscles at the nape of the neck, after it has been charmed. That has been done in Egypt in 1954 and pictures were taken of the event, according to the *New Bible Dictionary*. Both are reasonable possibilities, the latter more so than the former. God gave demons a certain amount of latitude in their dealings with men; at one time, enough latitude to where the demons actually cohabited with human females, forming the basis for all mythology and causing God to send a storm upon the earth and floods to wipe out this half-human, half-angelic race. It is also clear that God allowed more demon possessions during the time of our Lord walking the earth than we appear to have now (and it is possible that they were less inhibited and demonstrative in this possession). But what we have here is very likely a divine miracle followed by a magic trick. Compared to what will occur, this is small potatoes.

Even if there is demonic power involved—and I don't think that there is—God's power is still greater. What we should understand from all this is that God's power is greater than demonic power (if that is what is found here).



As it is expressed in the New Testament, "**Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.**" Again, based upon what I have read, I do not doubt that Penn and Teller could duplicate these tricks of the Egyptian *magicians*.

**Yet Pharaoh's heart was strengthened and he did not listen to them; [just] as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had said.**  
[Ex. 7:13]

In this part of Moses' life, there are no surprises. God has told him what to expect and Pharaoh has done exactly what God told Moses that he would do. The Pharaoh saw a miracle and then saw his own religious scribes perform a similar miracle. The fact that the serpent of Moses ate the serpents of the scribes was unimportant to Pharaoh. He made his heart strong; obstinate against God. He took courage in what he was doing and in saying "no" to Moses and Aaron.

### **God Commands Moses and Aaron to Appear Before Pharaoh a Third Time**

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Heavy and stubborn is the heart of Pharaoh; he has refused to let the people go." [Ex. 7:14]**

God does not even wait for Moses this time to give him a report as to what is going on. God tells Moses what is going on and then tells Moses what he is going to do about it. As you have seen the doctrine of the hardness of Pharaoh's heart, the words usually translated *harden* are different words in vv. 13 and 14.

**"Get yourself [back] to Pharaoh in the morning; in fact [lit., behold], he is coming out to the waters; therefore, you will be standing to meet him on the bank [lit. "lip"] of the river, and the staff which was turned into a serpent you will take in your hand." [Exodus 7:15]**

We do not hear Moses' opinion on his previous meeting with Pharaoh, whether this concerned him or not. We don't hear from Moses. His take on things is not as important as God's viewpoint. God knew in eternity past just exactly what Pharaoh's reaction would be.

Pharaoh is not so quickly going to be interesting in meeting Moses and Aaron again (although this appears to just be Moses this time). This talk between God and Moses takes place shortly before Moses goes to meet Pharaoh, as Pharaoh is just now heading toward the Nile River. God tells Moses to *nâtsab* (נָצַב) [pronounced *naw-TSAB*<sup>y</sup>] and it means *to stand, to take one's stand*. It is in the Niphal perfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular. This is a command not put in the imperative mood; the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular does that for us. The Niphal perfect is the passive stem of the Qal. Moses is to walk to the Nile and God will placate them both at the right place at the right time. God has the ability to do that. This has been translated *station yourself*; which is a reasonable translation; it just is not literal. Although this is originally Moses's staff, it will appear that Aaron will wield it before Pharaoh.

**"You will say to him, 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you saying "Let My people go that they may serve me in the desert; and, point in fact [lit., behold], you have not listened [to me] up until now.'"" [Exodus 7:16]**

Moses is God's point man and God's authority. Most of this should have been done by Moses alone, but God knew that Moses would object and He chose Aaron to help guide Moses to his place of leadership. Luckily (as if there were any luck in God's plan), Aaron is not the kind to try to steal the spotlight or to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. And God does have a part for Aaron in this visit to the Pharaoh; and, in general, the line of Aaron will be very important to the people of God.

**"Now says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, 'Hereby you will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah: Observe! I am smiting with the staff that is in my hand upon the waters that are in the river and they shall be turned to blood;'" [Exodus 7:17]**

One word which is likely an Egyptian loan word to the Hebrew is  $y^{\text{e}}\text{ôr}$  (יָרֵךְ) [pronounced *yeh-ORE*] and it means *river, channel, water*, and is specifically used for the *Nile* and any of its trenches. It is also used for the Tigris River in Assyria. When I lived in Sacramento, we often spoke of San Francisco as *the city*; here, the Egyptians speak of the Nile as *the river*. In this, the second miracle, the ante has been upped a little.

There is a marvelous figure of speech in vv. 16 & 17 lost in most English translations. The word *kôh* (כֹּה) [pronounced *ko*] means *thus, here*. Its meaning is slightly modified when it is found twice in the same passage, as it is here. It is found twice in Exodus 2:12 (and translated and he turned *this way and that way*), Num. 11:31 (...*on this side...on that side*), Joshua 17:14 (...*till now and till then*); and in this passage: "Look, you have not listened *until now*"; *now* says the Lord, "By this you will know that I [am] the Lord..."

**"Furthermore, the fish that is in the river will die and the river shall be loathsome and the Egyptians will disdain to drink water out of the river."** [Exodus 7:18]

This is to be the first plague, but the second wonder that Moses performs before Pharaoh. What God knows will happen is that this showdown between Moses and Pharaoh will be broadcast all over the earth and people from every land on the earth will believe in Jesus Christ because of this confrontation.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch forth your hand over the waters of Egypt; over their streams, over their rivers and over their pools, and over all the collections of water—that they might become blood—so shall there be blood in all the land or Egypt, both in [storage areas of] wood and in [storage areas of] stone.'" [Ex. 7:19]**

The term *collections of water* is possibly a description of the Egyptian irrigation system. The Egyptians receive precious little rain each year and when even an inch of rain occurs, it can create havoc in Egypt. In fact, it would overflow almost annually during the rainy season. What the Egyptians did was to dig a large number of canals out from the Nile to (1) irrigate their crops and (2) lead to various man-made ponds and low areas to handle the run off when the Nile overflows.

We find the word *vessel* in the KJV, the NASB, the NRSV, and in Owen's translation; the word *containers* is found in *the Amplified Bible*; the translation *wooden bowls and jars of stone* is found in the NEB. A vessel is a container, which includes but is not limited to pottery containers. For instance, the poor were provided water in stone reservoirs found at the corners of the streets and elsewhere. In an area where I once lived, a neighboring community did not have a sewage system or plumbing provided for them by the city; their water for decades was delivered to these large barrels. They received such substandard services due to their poverty. This is a similar situation here. Because the Egyptians did survive seven days, I believe that the vessels (or containers) spoken of were those which received their water directly from the Nile and that everything in direct contact with the Nile water turned to blood. This would exclude the carton of water sitting in the Pharaoh's refrigerator, as well as the water gotten from deep wells. Furthermore, the word for vessel *k'elîy* (כֵּלִי) [pronounced *kel-EE*] is not even found in this passage. There is no word for vessel in this passage; this is why it is in italics in the KJV. It is at best implied here; and storage areas for water would be a better implication.

Not only are all the bodies of water to be turned to blood, but water which is stored anywhere which was connected to the Nile was to be turned to blood. Water is the most necessary ingredient for our survival, besides air. Remove that, and we are in a countdown to death. Water, as a liquid, is one of the rarest forms of H<sub>2</sub>O in the universe and yet we have it in terrific abundance on this planet. How any evolutionist could realize what a rarity water is and then think that this all just happened by chance is an act of faith much greater than I have ever been able to conjure up. The command of Moses to Aaron to perform this miracle means that Moses is actively involved; just as God's command to Moses means that God is actively involved in this miracle. This is why is acceptable for God to speak of Moses in terms of performing this miracle, as He did in v. 17.

## Moses and Aaron Meet Pharaoh by the Nile/Water Is Turned to Blood

**And Moses and Aaron did so as Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded and he lifted high the staff and smote the waters which were in the river, before the eyes of Pharaoh, and before the eyes of his servants, and all the waters which were in river were turned to blood; [Exodus 7:20]**

The Egyptians, ever dependant upon the Nile river, had great reverence for it and even worshipped and deified it. It was called *the father of life* and *the father of the gods*. The Egyptians were also a very clean people who likely bathed more often than other groups in the ancient world. Their temple sacrifices were generally bloodless, so that the sight of the river being turned to blood and the various containers throughout the land being filled with blood was a very disgusting and unpleasant sight. However, for our God, the God of the Universe, there is no redemption without the shedding of blood.

Moses and Aaron must appear before Pharaoh. Do these miracles in his sight to reveal to him the wrath of God for not agreeing to allow the people of Israel to go into the desert to worship God for three days? I know that someone is thinking that Israel left Egypt altogether; yet in this context and previous passages, the request is to go out to the desert for a few days and worship God. What if Pharaoh would have let the people do that at the very beginning? What God required from Pharaoh was entirely reasonable; knowing full well that Pharaoh would refuse.

Things will be taken to a point where the Jews become odious in the sight of the Egyptians and there would be no way that they could leave for a few days and then return to Egypt. God is forcing Pharaoh's hand, so to speak, to achieve His ultimate purpose: returning the Jews back to the land of Canaan. *Wondering what would have happened if* is not really an important point here. The Bible gives us enough of what really happened for us to study to not take too much time being concerned about all of the alternative reality which theoretically could have occurred, but didn't.

**And the fish that were in the river died and the river became loathsome so that they Egyptians could not drink water out of the river. Thus it came to pass that blood was in all the land of Egypt. [Exodus 7:21]**

According to my sources, the Egyptians do not collect rain water because it rains so infrequently; their spring water is hard and distasteful and wells were generally rare (why dig a well when the water is right there?). However, the Nile river is said to contain some of the sweetest water in the world. Although it is at first muddy and thick, it can be easily filtered (the Egyptians had filtering pots of white earth designed for this purpose) to yield a water as *sweet as honey and sugar*, as the Egyptians put it.<sup>23</sup>

*Blood* is the word given to us because we do not know exactly what happened to the river; the water either did turn to blood, or to something which appeared to be blood. We do not know the exact composition of the water after God changed it (and we are not told *how* God changed it. Certainly, "It says *blood* right here" and it does; however, the Jewish language uses several words pertaining to the body which actually stand for other things; the most notably in v. 22 *heart*, which stands for the will and emotions and the thinking abilities of Pharaoh.

Similarly, the blood need not be literal; but its smell and foul character are certain. Furthermore, because it was found in all the vessels of wood and stone, which suggests either it was a miracle or there was possibly an airborne contaminate involved.

The Nile river was the lifeblood of Egypt; without it, all of Egypt would die; similarly, water to the human race is our lifeblood; not only do we require it, we require it in very large amounts as a race and as individuals. One of the greatest problems that we will face when we attempt to colonize the moon or Mars (if such a thing is ever

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<sup>23</sup> *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, p. 64

attempted) will be the lack of water and the human body's absolute need for water). Hopefully, our scientists will realize, before this is attempted, that sending people anywhere else in the universe is going to be a suicide mission which everyone will regret at some point.

**And the religious illusionists of Egypt did in like manner with their incantations, so the heart of Pharaoh was strengthened and he did not listen to them, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke. [Exodus 7:22]**

Both Moses and God the Holy Spirit are emphasizing that everytime that Pharaoh exhibits negative volition, God has already told us that would happen in advance. God's Word is fulfilled. Moses, either at this time or at least by the time he wrote this down, began to realize that God would perform what he has told us He would do and what He predicts will come to pass. What the court magicians did is not explained completely, except that their "miracle" was similar.

I recall in my chemistry class in high school that the teacher took a several beakers of clear liquids, mixed them, and by the adding of additional liquids, the clear liquids would turn different colors. I specifically recall a white fluid; one which began to turn white and immediately returned to clear, during the pouring of one solution into another; and one which was very blue. This was a matter of various precipitates forming due to chemically bonding; and these precipitates remaining suspended in the fluid. My guess is that these magicians did something in a similar vein to show Pharaoh that this could be done by their own power. Even though it sounds like they imitated Moses' miracle immediately (since this is the next verse) that is not necessarily the case.

To help you see what is going on in the palace of the king. For some of these plagues, the priest-magicians of the court were able to duplicate, to some degree, what Moses did. That gave the Pharaoh of Egypt a reason to doubt the power of the God of Moses (because Pharaoh *chose* to doubt God).

Now, what God did on a large scale, these magicians were able to duplicate on a small scale. Now, I have seen some magic tricks and I can occasionally make some guesses as to how this or that is done; however, most of it baffles me completely. What appears to be the case is, these court magicians were able to score a gig in the palace of the pharaoh by being religious and performing magic tricks. Now, it really did not matter if they were religious or not; this gig got them great living conditions, as Pharaoh apparently believed their powers to be from God, even though they were simple parlor tricks (or, maybe they were complex parlor tricks). This was actually a very clever approach, as they did more than entertain the King of Egypt; they dispensed with whatever religious norms and standards fit with their culture or they made up some of their own. The reason this was clever is, they did more than entertain Pharaoh. If they were simply entertainers and nothing else, then they could be booted out of the palace by Pharaoh at any time on a whim. If they presented themselves as men of God, that was a whole different story. It is much more difficult for Pharaoh to dismiss them if they are men of God.

**Pharaoh turned and went into his house and did not lay to heart even this. [Exodus 7:23]**

We do not know the exact sequence of events here. It sounds as though the religious illusionists did this immediately after Moses and Aaron turned the water to blood, but that would have meant rounding up some water first. My guess is that Pharaoh, his heart still hardened, returned to the palace and soon thereafter, the magicians performed for him a similar miracle.

When this verse speaks of Pharaoh *not laying his heart to even this*; we have the negative plus the Qal perfect of shîyth (שׂיַת) [pronounced *sheeth*], which means *to set, to place, to put*. This use is obviously an idiom, as are all the places in the Hebrew where some type of action involves one's interior body parts. Pharaoh strengthened his heart and did not listen to them (v. 22).

Water was found by digging wells near the river. Some people, when a situation occurs, think and over-think the situation; Pharaoh was just the opposite. He did not give this situation the thought that it deserved. Furthermore, his servants saw to it that water was provided for him from these wells; so he did not need to become

introspective. Pharaoh did not seem to wonder if this was really God speaking to him; he did not consider that he perhaps had made a mistake in this judgement.

So even to this [great miracle], he did not place his heart. Most Bibles translate this idiomatically. NASB: **Then Pharaoh turned and went into his house with no concern even for this.** *The Emphasized Bible* is close with **Neither applied he his heart even to this.** The Amplified Bible reads: **neither did he take even this to heart.** One of the very best translations which is partially idiomatic and translates it into a modern idiom is the NRSV: **and he did not even take this to heart.** Although we find this verb used in a number of different ways, this particular idiom is only found a couple of times in the Bible: 1Samuel 4:20 2Samuel 13:20 Psalm 48:13 62:10 Proverbs 22:17 27:23. Only the first reference is in the Qal perfect; the first Psalm and second Proverb references are in the Qal imperative, and the others are in the Qal imperfect.

**And all the Egyptians digged all around the Nile for water to drink; for they could not drink the water in the river. And seven days were fulfilled, after Y<sup>e</sup>howah had struck the river.** [Exodus 7:24–25]

On the symbolic level—which should be examined because this is a showdown between the Pharaoh and his gods and between Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the true God, not only of the Jews, but of the universe—the Nile was the lifeblood of Egypt. Egypt would not even exist if there were not the Nile running through it. It provided transportation for goods and people; it provided water for the country and crops and people. It was a life force that if removed, the country of Egypt would shrivel and die.

The end of v. 24 indicates that there was probably some water somewhere; the people had to dig wells, or some distance into the ground to locate some unpolluted water. God is not killing the Egyptians but He is making it as unpleasant as possible for them to live out their daily lives. God gave Pharaoh a lot of time to think over this crisis and then presented him with a plague which was even worse.

Here is where the English Bible ends chapter 7. In the Hebrew, the chapter goes along for another two verses. Whoever split the chapters up in the Hebrew had even a poorer concept of chapter division than did those who did that in the English—if that were possible.



**Exodus 8** has been completely reworked and expanded, including the entire word-by-word Hebrew exegesis. It is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). It is highly recommended that you go to that study instead of this one. All of the material found here is included in that study. These chapters are being completed one-by-one and will eventually supplant this very incomplete study of Exodus.

## EXODUS 8

### Exodus 8:1–32

#### Outline of Chapter 8:

- Vv. 1–15     **The plague of the frogs**
- Vv. 16–18   **The plague of the gnats**
- Vv. 19–32   **Plague of the [blood-sucking] gadfly**

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** Exodus 8 is the narrative of 3 plagues: (1) the plague of the frogs; (2) the plague of the gnats; and (3) the plague of the warming insects (often called, *the plague of the flies*).

#### The Plague of the Frogs

What should have happened is that chapter 7 should have concluded with v. 24; between vv. 24 and 25, seven days pass; a wonderful opportunity to insert a chapter break. Seven days pass, God comes to Moses and speaks. It seems simple to know when to stop and to pick up again, but then the chapter divisions are not divinely inspired but come from the hand of man (most of the time, they are fairly well done).

These chapter divisions have been at once a blessing and a cursing. It is easy for us to refer back to particular verses and passages because the parameters for these have been set; this allows us to look up things quickly, to identify particular verses in lexicons, concordances, etc. On the negative side, we have hundreds of cults and thousands of misconceptions which have cropped up because verse are more commonly quoted out of context. Pastors and evangelists who have come from marvelous seminaries and Bible colleges hold to the party line, having had Biblical theology laid out for them as a series of verses. This means that they often do not take the time to evaluate these issues for themselves, which would give them a much better overall view of God's Word. Furthermore, there tends to be less verse by verse teaching from entire books in favor of topical teaching which either jumps from verse to verse or springs out (sometimes rather unnaturally) from a particular verse or passage.

**The Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus speaks Y<sup>h</sup>owah, "Release my people that they may serve me."'" [Exodus 8:1 (7:26 in the Hebrew)]**

God gives Pharaoh an unconditional demand. He used the Piel imperative of *shālach* (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHK*] and it means *to send, to send forth, to drive, to send a messenger*, etc. Here, it means *to release*. God has not yet required Pharaoh to let the Jews go permanently, which we see in Exodus 8:27.

**""But if you refuse to release [them], [then] watch [lit., behold], and I will strike all your country with frogs."'" [Exodus 8:2 (7:27 in the Hebrew)]**

The word often translated *plague* is the Hebrew word *nâgaph* (נָגַף) [pronounced *naw-GAF*] and it means *to strike, to hit, to smite, to gore, to defeat*. This verb is in the Qal active participle, meaning that God is, or will be, striking their country.

The plagues which were to come upon Egypt were a direct attack upon the country and religion of Egypt. Each plague would pit the God of the Israelites against the gods of Egypt. This would be a battle which would increase in intensity and all the surrounding countries would know that the gods of Egypt were being attacked by the God of the Jews. This battle would be so one-sided and devastating, that news about it would travel throughout the entire world. The second plague is that of the frogs.

**""The Nile will be swarmed with frogs and they shall come up and enter into your house and into your bedroom [lit., your room of lying down] and upon your bed ; and into the homes of your servants and among your people, and into your ovens and into your kneading bowls""** [Exodus 8:3 (7:28)]

When God restored the earth, he chose for the waters to swarm with fish; the same verb is used here when it comes to frogs. The proper subject of this sentence is the Nile, as it is in the masculine singular, as is the verb (*frogs* is in the feminine plural). The verb, also in the Qal perfect, indicates a completed action. Here, although it has not yet occurred, it is something which is so certain of fulfillment that it is expressed in the perfect (completed) tense.

Some translations go further to say that these frogs will be found in their couches; however, the word is *miṭṭâh* (מִטָּה) [pronounced *mit-TAW*] and this is a place of reclining, meaning it can be translated *bed* or *couch*. Contextually speaking, it should be *bed*. Notice there is a parallelism here: the frogs come into their houses, into their bedrooms, into their beds; the frogs also go into the houses of their servants, and swarm among the servants and into their ovens and kneading bowls (in the Hebrew, *your* is used because all of this belongs to the aristocracy—to Pharaoh—who is being addressed here).

**""And against you and against your people and against all your servants shall climb up the frogs.""** [Exodus 8:4 (7:29)]

As in the previous verse, *frogs* are not the subject of this sentence; the Pharaoh and the land of Egypt are being attacked and they are the subject of both verses. The Egyptians worshipped several kinds of deities, which are found in the heavens, on the earth and in the earth. Almost any judgement at all can be connected with an attack on one or more of these deities. Among these gods is a frog-headed goddess named Heka. It was offensive to her to kill frogs, putting the Egyptians in a bad spot here. They cannot walk without killing frogs; and they certainly want to be rid of these frogs.

This invasion of frogs is going to be not unlike a horrible invasion of cockroaches. I owned a two-bedroom, one bath apartment which was occupied by six males (I purchased this apartment intact with these tenants). After they moved out, I went over to clean up the place and to assess the damage. In the kitchen was probably the most horrible sight that I had ever seen. Not only was it filthy beyond belief, but it was covered in cockroaches. I could bring my hand down in any one area and kill 5-20 cockroaches. In any direction that I looked, I saw hundreds upon hundreds of cockroaches, in the oven and in the mixing bowls. Put anything down that appeared to be food, and cockroaches would swarm by the hundreds. It was one of the most grotesque things which I have ever seen in my life.

This is what the Egyptians would be faced with, except this would be with frogs. A few is not so bad; and frogs are not quite as gruesome as cockroaches. However, these frogs will be everywhere they look, swarming, to where the inhabitants will not be able to so much as move without killing several frogs with each step.

Some authors, particularly those who despise a God of miracles and supernatural powers, try to rationalize that this is a natural phenomenon (the frogs were unable to live in the Nile anymore, so they invaded the land).

Whereas, this does have some merit; and it is possible that God prepared the frogs prior to the plague of the water being turned to blood; the narrative makes it clear that there were a greater preponderance of frogs than a natural occurrence would precipitate. The population of frogs that the Egyptians will face will be beyond imagination.

Notice that God is very clear in speaking with Pharaoh to explain what He wants and what the consequences are if Pharaoh does not comply. We face the same thing in our life all the time. I have mentioned divine guidance; it is very clear in the Bible what is right and wrong and what the consequences are. We often conveniently ignore these directives and pay the price; then ask why did God let this happen to me.

Two phenomena which saw their origins in the sixties in the United States and their growth over the next several decades are premarital sex and living together. Certainly, these things occurred prior to sixties but, by the eighties and nineties, it became almost a given that people who became romantically involved also had sex prior to marriage. In fact, it was not unusual to have sex before becoming romantically involved. This is entirely outside of God's plan. When it comes to living together, I cannot tell you how many Christians that I know of who are living with their lovers, often not a Christian, without being married. The Bible is crystal clear on this topic: marriage is sacred and, as it reads, **"Let the marriage bed be undefiled."** If Christians totally ignore this, why should God provide them with additional divine guidance. They have ignored perhaps the most important directives in their lives; apart from salvation, rebound and doctrine; why should God give them any more direction than that? If you are living in sin right now; this is akin to marriage. Follow what it says in 1Corinthians **"Do not seek to get married and do not seek to get divorced."** Don't make any major decisions until you have got the a great deal of doctrine under your belt.

To digress even further; it is these two things, along with the parental neglect of our children, which has destroyed our stability in the United States. We depend upon the stable family unit in a client nation and that we do not have. That is why our children are totally out of control and why marriages cannot remain solvent—including Christian marriages.

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch forth you hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals, and over the pools and [cause to] bring up the frogs upon the land of Egypt.'" [Ex. 8:5 (8:1)]**

There is an interesting literary quirk here: we go directly from God speaking to Moses and God telling Moses what to tell Aaron to do, to Aaron doing that before the Pharaoh. Many movies are spliced this way to avoid repetition of dialogue. This means that Moses did exactly as God told him and...

**So Aaron stretched forth his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs [lit., frog] came up and covered [or, inundated] the land of Egypt. [Exodus 8:6 (8:2)]**

The water was turned to blood seven days ago. The frogs, had they teemed the waters before, would have covered the land of Egypt also seven days ago if this were a natural phenomena. Also, what is implied, but never actually stated is that the plague of the water being turned to blood very likely lasted but seven days (see Exodus 7:25). Therefore, these frogs would not have left a Nile whose waters had been restored.

The word for covered is the Piel imperfect of *kâçâh* (כָּסָה) [pronounced *kaw-SAW*] and it properly means *to plump, to fill up* as well as *to cover*. It is used in one passage to mean *conceal* (Psalm 12:16) or *to cover* or *to clothe* in Judges 4:19 and Ezekiel 16:10. The Piel stem is intensive and the imperfect tense means that they kept coming up and coming up. The sense here is *to cover, to overwhelm, to inundate*.

**And the religious illusionists did in like manner with their incantations and brought up frogs over the land of Egypt. [Exodus 8:7 (8:3)]**

Again, God has left it to our speculations as to the means by which the religious magicians accomplished this miracle. They certainly had the frogs at their disposal so they had a great deal to work with. However, as with

the water being turned into blood; Pharaoh was less interested in seeing the miracles of Moses and Aaron being duplicated than he was with the removal of the effects of that miracle. In other words, Pharaoh would have been a damn sight happier had these religious magicians magically caused the frogs to disappear as opposed to causing more frogs to appear.

**Then called Pharaoh for Moses and for Aaron and said, "Appeal to [or, intercede with] Y<sup>e</sup>howah, that He take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go that they may sacrifice [lit., and they will sacrifice] to Y<sup>e</sup>howah." [Ex. 8:8 (8:4)]**

The Hiphil imperative of 'âthar (אָתַר) comes from a primitive root *to burn incense in worship* (which helps to explain some of the translation choices which have been made); this word means *to pray, to intercede, to entreat*. It is the causative stem; they are to be caused to speak to Y<sup>e</sup>howah because they have been ordered to by Pharaoh (imperative mood).

There are a couple of things to notice here. First, this time Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron. They do not have to go to him. He knows that, even though his court magicians/scribes can do a similar feat, that they cannot take it away and what they can do is in no way along the same magnitude as what Moses and Aaron did. He also refers to the Lord as Y<sup>e</sup>howah—God's name is glorified here by the Pharaoh. Furthermore, he has not sought to kill Moses or Aaron yet. The Pharaoh seems to recognize that they are spokesmen for our Lord and not the true cause of these plagues. Finally, this is the first time the Pharaoh gives in to Moses and Aaron. It is important to remind ourselves that Pharaoh does not want to let the Jews go nor does he respect Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He is a beaten man. He has no further inner resources and he has been backed into a corner. He wants to say "no" and defy the living God, but he no longer has the strength to do so. He is at his wit's end.

**And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Please place upon me [or, give to me] the honor: at what time [lit, at when] should I intercede (or, make supplication) for you and for your servants and for your people, to cause the removal of the frogs from you and from your houses; [so that] only in the river shall they remain?" [Exodus 8:9 (8:5)]**

In v. 9, we have quite a difference of opinions when it comes to the translation, so I will cover the Hebrew first and then give a final translation. This will be the first thing that Moses says to Pharaoh, and since that would be important, we will spend a little time with the translation. NASB: "The honor is yours to tell me; when shall I entreat for you...?" (in the margin it reads: "Glory over me; when shall I entreat for you...?") Owen reads: "Be pleased to command me when I am to entreat for you..." *The Emphasized Bible*: "Explain thyself to me; for what time shall I make entreat for thee...?" *The Amplified Bible*: "Glory over me in this; dictate when I shall pray [to the Lord] for you..." NRSV: "Kindly tell me when I am to pray for you..." The Septuagint: "Appoint me a time when I shall pray for you..." (the words *a time* were supplied by the English translators of the Septuagint). Without even looking at the Hebrew, I can tell this is going to be tough. The word in question is the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular, Hithpael imperative of pā'ar (פָּאַר) [pronounced *paw-AR*] and in the Qal it means *to beautify, to glorify, to gleam, to boast, to embellish*. The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel (intensive) stem. The 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular means that the subject of this verb is Pharaoh and the imperative means that this is a command. BDB points out that this is a polite address to the king, as in *assume the honor*. Since Moses has not spoken yet directly to Pharaoh, it would be reasonable to assume that he would not be overbearing but solicitous.

This is followed by the preposition 'al (עַל) [pronounced *a*] which means *upon*, and, by application, *on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, on, to (towards), to (against)*. With the 1st person singular suffix, we will translate this, *please give to (or place upon) me the honor*. You see, Moses has not yet spoken to Pharaoh, so he has asked for the honor of praying to God on Pharaoh's behalf.

This is followed by the interrogative adverb of time, mâtay (מָתַי) [pronounced *maw-THAH-ee*], which means *when* and it is affixed to the preposition le (לֵ) which is ignored by Strong's concordance, and only alluded to without a reference in Owen's. However, BDB takes up the slack providing us with almost ten pages of explanation. This preposition denotes direction, but not motion and with verbs it is often translated *to, for, towards*. It can denote

*locality*; i.e., *at, near*. In relation to time (which is what we find here), it expresses *concurrence (at)* and not *duration (in)*. Together, they mean *at when*, which explains how the translator of the Septuagint came up with the translation *appoint for me a time*. Sparingly, we would write, *Place upon me (or give to me) the honor at when*. Since Moses is being tactful and deferential, we will insert the word *please*. Had this been inserted by Moses, it would have been too much; it would have sounded more like sarcasm than genuine honor. However, this is a rhetorical question as Moses will answer it himself in the next verse.

In relation to the frogs, we have the preposition ל<sup>e</sup> (ל) and the Hiphil infinitive construct of kârath (תִּרְצֹחַ) [pronounced *kaw-RATH*], which means *to cut off, to cut down*. This word has been apocopated, which is somewhat humorous—apocopated means *to be cut off*. That is, this is an abbreviated form of this word. The Hiphil infinitive construct is similar to out infinitive or gerund. It is a causative verbal noun. The preposition *from* is found twice, allowing us to translate this *the causing of the cutting off of the frogs from you and from your homes*. The easier route is the English word *removal*. Although this verb can mean *to destroy* and *to kill* and even though that will be the outcome of all this, Moses is not using this verb in that sense, because he includes the phrases *from you and from your houses*. We should not confuse results with what is said. Sometimes the results better inform us of what is being said; but we rely on them only when the immediate context is unclear. Here, it is clear.

Notice what else has happened here. Moses is no longer speaking through Aaron; Moses has had direct contact with God. God has told him what to tell Aaron to do before the Pharaoh; and now Moses is speaking directly to the Pharaoh giving him directives. Moses is the dynamic speaker and he can no longer bear to speak through Aaron. Aaron still has a part to play in God's plan; and it is a place of leadership, it just is not as a spokesman for God to Pharaoh. We will later see the weakness of Aaron in the desert when Moses is on Mount Sinai. God has chosen certain people to do certain things. It was best for Moses just to go along with it from the beginning., but God foreknew what would occur and made provision for it, as He does in all of our lives.

Moses is suddenly excited by this turn of events. We do not know his actual level of faith; we do not know how much Moses had the confidence that God would bring to pass what He had promised; it is likely that his confidence was boosted by what he observed come to pass. He did not go to God in prayer prior to this meeting—when Pharaoh called, they both rushed on over. Moses is so excited by all of this, possibly not having complete confidence in God's power and prophecy. Moses thought about this on the way over to Pharaoh's palace. Some people just go and do things without much thought; Moses is a genius and he certainly had been ruminating about these event as they continue. I don't think that he gave as much thought to Pharaoh caving in like this, but when Pharaoh called for him, he certainly thought things through on the way there. This causes me to believe that his first question was given in sincere earnestness and that he already had the answer to to answer of Pharaoh prepared. This is not a rhetorical question, per se, but it is a question to which Moses already has an answer ready for whatever Pharaoh will say; but it is phrased in such a way that it does not sound to Pharaoh like Moses already has an answer, but it sounds to Pharaoh like a simple, polite entreaty. This reveals Moses' genius in the field of public speaking. It is almost second nature to him. Perhaps translators have a difficult time with this passage because it is so steeped in innuendo and verbal parlance.

Can it be a coincidence that two of the greatest men of the Bible, Paul and Moses, were both absolute geniuses in the field of language and discourse?

**And he said, "By [lit., at] tomorrow." And he (Moses) said, "According to your word! That you may know that there is no one like Y<sup>e</sup>howah, our God." [Exodus 8:10 (8:6)]**

At this point in man's history, each and every nation that was religious had a god or, more often than not, a pantheon of gods that they worshipped. There is only one God of the universe Who exists in three persons. God, for His own reasons, chose Israel as the nation through which He would work. Therefore, it was not enough to be sincere, to worship the god that you had been brought up with. There is one true God and that is Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of Israel. So that Pharaoh could learn to appreciate this exclusivity, Moses will have the mess of frogs cleaned up precisely on the day that Pharaoh requested.



**"So the frogs shall depart from [or, cease to obstruct or get out of the way of] you and from your houses and from your servants and from your people; only in the river shall they remain." [Ex. 8:11 (8:7)]**

What the frogs will do is the Qal perfect of *ṣûwr* (סוּר/סוּר) [pronounced *soor*] and it has three basic meanings in the Qal stem: (1) *to turn aside, to revolt, to degenerate*; (2) *to depart, to cease to obstruct, to get out of the way*; (3) *to be removed* (used of lifeless things). Our second definition is the one which applies here. The perfect tense means that come tomorrow, this will be a completed action and the frogs will no longer be an issue to the Egyptians. All three substantives are prefixed with the preposition *min* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and this preposition carries with it the concept of separation here and is variously translated as *out of, from, on account of, off, on the side of since, about, than, so that not* (this is obviously the highly edited version from over 6 pages of explanation in BDB).

This is the trick that the court magicians were unable to perform; they could get a few frogs to wander out of the river onto the banks of the river, but they could not get them to advance in the great numbers as Moses did. And, more importantly, they could not get the frogs to retreat.

**Then Moses and Aaron went forth from Pharaoh, and Moses called out to Y<sup>e</sup>howah concerning the matter [or, the sentence] of the frogs, those which He had decreed for [lit., on or upon] Pharaoh. [Exodus 8:12 (8:8)]**

V. 12: Too many translations have the prophets crying. Moses did not cry to God; what he did was the Qal imperfect of the verb *tsâ'aq* (צָעַק) [pronounced *tsaw-AK*] and it means, in the King James English, *to cry out, to make an outcry*; however, in modern English, it means *to call out*; and since it means *to be summoned* in the Niphal (Judges 7:23–24 10:17 12:1 2Kings 3:21), this would indicate that it could mean *to summon* in the Qal. The imperfect tense means that Moses prayed for a period of time and then God spoke to him.

The substantive preceding the word *frogs* is the often used word *dâbâr* (דְּבַר) [pronounced *daw-BAWR*] and it simply means *speech, word, sentence, matter, decision*. Then we have quite the interesting Hebrew concept: the word *'âsher* (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*] and it is a particle of relation or a connecting link. It is similar to, but not synonymous with our words *which, whom, wherever*, but it is better translated as *him who, those who, like him, to that which, you whom, we whose, from the place, that belonging to*. It is similar to a relative pronoun in our English, but it is not quite the same thing.

The final verb is the Qal perfect of *sûwm* (סוּם) [pronounced *soom*] and it has a variety of meanings which include *to set, to place, to appoint*; when God is the subject, it is a part of God's perfect plan, a part of His divine decrees made in eternity past. I prefer the translation *decreed*, particularly when this is in the perfect tense—this is something which God had decided to do in eternity past as a part of His perfect immutable decrees.

Notice that both Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, but Moses does all of the talking. When they leave, it is Moses who calls upon God. This does not mean that Aaron didn't think to do that; it is just that God had called upon Moses and not upon Aaron for this job—Aaron was only there on Moses' request. God will continue to use Aaron and the specialized Hebrew priesthood is more properly known as the Aaronic Priesthood rather than the Levitical Priesthood.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died, out of the houses and out of the courtyards and out of the fields; [Exodus 8:13 (8:9)]**

One of the places where the frogs died was in the *châtsêr* (חֵצֵר) [pronounced *khaw-TSARE*] and it means *courtyard, enclosure*, which is the area surrounding the house. Therefore, I have translated this with the word *courtyard* rather than with the word *yard*.

Prayer is sometimes a difficult concept; most people only know the prayer, *God help, I am in a James* (usually one entirely of their own making), followed by a vow or a promise to do something for God or to do something they view as painful, but spiritual (like attend church for a month). Of the prayers in the Bible, few of them are *God help me* variety. On a few occasions, there are prayers which offer God some kind of a deal are usually uttered by those in apostasy. Here Moses calls out to God and God does what He had planned in eternity past—he destroys the frogs. But notice how the Bible puts it: **And Y<sup>e</sup>howah did according to the word of Moses.** This is real praying; this is effective prayer. This is prayer which reveals knowledge of God's will and purpose; this is prayer which reveals orientation to the plan of God. This is the kind of prayer that glorifies God; not some sniveling *help me; please make it stop hurting* because you got yourself into a jam. Here we have answered prayer.

To get a feel for the Hebrew and the nuances in this language, we have the substantive *dâbâr* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw-BAWR*] again, and it reveals that God has answered Moses prayer and He has done what Moses promised to Pharaoh. *Dâbâr* refers both to what Mose said in prayer to God but also what he said to Pharaoh. He told Pharaoh when the frogs would cease to over-populate the land of Egypt and God did according to that word.

**And they piled them up [in] heaps heaps [or, large heaps]; and the land had become loathsome [stank].** [Ex. 8:14 (8:9)]

God did not have the frogs retreat nor did they simply return to the river. Those which were underfoot in numbers unimaginable all died. God's purpose here is that all the people of Egypt, including Pharaoh, would have an aromatic reminder of God's power. Pharaoh, as he refuses to stand by his word to Moses, can smell the horrible stench of millions of dead frogs.

We have two analogous situations here (1) The Egyptians are under God's wrath because of the the Pharaoh's decision not to let the Jews go. The Pharaoh as leader is under discipline for not allowing the Jews to go. His decision is very similar to the one that Adam made as the federal head of the human race. Adam's decision to sin filled the entire world with sin and we bear an old sin nature because of his choice to sin. Pharaoh, as the federal head of Egypt, due to his choices, subjected his entire country to plagues and discomfort. His decisions affected the entire nation of Egypt, from the least to the greatest. (2) The second analogy which may be drawn here is the act of sinning, remaining out of fellowship, receiving discipline and getting back into fellowship. There are times that we commit a sin or a series of sins and rebound, but there is still a mess there to clean up. While we are out of fellowship, we are under discipline. So long as the Pharaoh chose not to let the Jews leave, he subjected his nation and himself to discipline; so far in the form of the water being turned to blood and the invasion of the frogs. When we rebound, or name our sins, we are restored to fellowship and the discipline is removed. When the Pharaoh said that he would allow the Jews to leave, is was analogous to rebound and being restored to fellowship. The discipline was removed. However, there was still a mess to clean up. This is often the case in our lives following rebound. Depending upon the circumstances, we can make utter ruin of our lives through being out of fellowship. Some of what we face is discipline and some of it is natural consequences. However, once we rebound, the discipline is removed. What remains is natural consequences and blessing from God. This blessing from God and the natural consequences serves as a constant reminder of the the repercussions of our sins. This is not discipline but it helps us to realize how serious the effect of sin is in our lives. God has removed the plague of the frogs from the Egyptians, but the effects of that plague will remain with them for a few days in the form of huge heaps of frogs (literally, "heaps heaps," which is an Hebrewistic way of emphasizing a word; they repeat it, rather than use an adjective to describe it).

**But, when the Pharaoh saw that there had come a respite then he caused his heart to be heavy and he would not listen to them [Moses and Aaron]—as God had said.** [Exodus 8:15 (8:11)]

Here, *to harden* or, more properly, *to make his heart heavy* is in the infinitive but it is, in most translations, rendered as an indicative. There are a number of times when one mood is used when another is implied. This

is the Hiphil infinitive absolute, which, as Zodhiates puts it, *presents in the active voice, causative action in the form of a verbal noun, usually as a complement of affirmation.*<sup>24</sup>

God's word (or guarantee) is good and God stands by His word. Even though God knew in eternity past that Pharaoh would go back on his word, God did not go back on His, nor did He leave Moses there holding the bag, having given Pharaoh a promise. Moses promised Pharaoh that the frogs would no longer harass them and God fulfilled that promise. We learn about character here. Someone who can give you his word and then will stand by his word is a man of honor; a man whose character imitates the character of God. Too often, a man will give his word concerning a business deal, but then something more advantageous to him comes along and he goes back on his word and does *the smart thing* insofar as his business is concerned. This is why we have contracts because man is not as good as his word. This is like the woman who agrees to go out on a date, but then someone better comes along and she stands up the first guy; or the man or the woman who profess love one day, but then someone better comes along and the love they professed means nothing. This is Pharaoh—he promised to let the people go, but then reneged. The southern expression I learned is *he never said nothing he couldn't take back*. It does not matter that these things occurred over three millennia ago a half a world away; the Bible is applicable to today. However, you do not get this out of reading your Bible. You get this from a pastor-teacher who might spend one hour just translating a verse, picking up a few of its nuances and implications, and then giving it to you in ten minutes. This is God's plan for this dispensation.

### Summary of the Plague of the Gnats

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch forth your staff and smite the dust of the land; so shall it become gnats to al the land of Egypt.'" [Exodus 8:16 (8:12)]**

This is somewhat humorous. Moses begged God in every way that he knew how to be dismissed from this project; and, if he couldn't get out of it, could he stand behind Aaron. However, with the last plague and with Pharaoh's temporary capitulation, Moses was so excited, he went right to Pharaoh and spoke to him directly; he probably got Aaron to go with him as almost an afterthought. God tells Moses what he is to have Aaron do. Moses is ready to take over; he is beginning to believe and to appreciate the power of God. God still has Moses work through Aaron.

We are not certain whether these are lice or gnats—and it could be two stages of the same insect. These were very small, irritating insects in huge numbers.

**And they did so, and Aaron stretched forth his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the land, and there came to be gnats, among men and among beasts, all the dust of the land had become gnats in all the land of Egypt. [Ex. 8:17 (8:13)]**

The end of v. 17 is both written and read *and all the dust of the land became gnats*; although the Septuagint gives it a slightly different slant with the rendering *and in all the dust of the land there came to be gnats*. This is called an hyperbole (or exaggeration). The number of gnats was so unbelievable that they are compared to the dust in Egypt. This does not mean there is a one-to-one relationship between the dust and the gnats. We have studied similar hyperboles in Genesis 2:24 41:47 and will find several more to come (Judges 20:16 is a good example).

There is some confusion as to exactly what this particular plague was. Some translators use the term *lice*, and others *gnats*. The *New American Standard Bible* uses both. BDB mentions that this could likely include maggots. *The Amplified Bible* uses *biting gnats or mosquitos*, which I like because it conveys the horrible intrusion of these insects upon the lives of the Egyptians.

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<sup>24</sup> See Bullinger, p. 515 and Zodhiates, p. 2275 for more information

Can you imagine not being able to even lay down to sleep without being swarmed by hundreds of small, crawling, flying, biting insects? The gnats were so thick that it was as if the dust had turned into gnats. Here is where I must admit that it seems as though this could be a natural phenomena. With the polluted water and the huge piles of dead frogs, it is very possible that we have an incredible invasion of very small insects which feed off these dead frogs. However, the numbers of insects implied by this passage and the short amount of time that it takes for them to make their appearance in the land of Egypt still indicates that this takes on the appearance of a miracle.

**And the religious illusionists did in like manner, with their incantations, to bring forth the gnats, but they could not. So there came to be gnats among men and among beasts. [Exodus 8:18 (8:14)]**

What the religious illusionists attempted to do was to strike the ground with their rods and staffs to make the dust rise as gnats, but this particular plague was one that they could not imitate (the word *duplicate* would not be apropos because they never *duplicated* a miracle of God; they only *imitated* God's power). The active voice of the Hebrew reads that *the religious illusionists did in like manner*, but this is an idiom where an agent's attempt or design to do something is what is meant, although the thing was not actually done. This is not a common idiom, found only here, Deuteronomy 28:68 and Ezekiel 24:13 in the Old Testament. It is possible here that Pharaoh did not want them to put too much effort into this endeavor.

**Then the sacred scribes said to Pharaoh, "It is the finger of God." But the heart of Pharaoh became stronger and he did not listen to them, as God had said. [Ex. 8:19 (8:15)]**

The *finger* of God is obviously an anthropopathism standing for God's formative power and an immediate and direct act of God. That is, this is not God's causative will involved here where what He chooses to happen does occur because it falls within His plan—God Himself is acknowledged by the scribes to have directly intervened with human history at this point. Here they have judged rightly.

The religious illusionists finally could not duplicate one of the miracles and they realized that this was God's work. They realized before that what Moses did was superior to their "magic." They could do miracles similar to what Moses did, but they could not match the scope and intensity of what Moses did. When they told Pharaoh that this was truly of God, the Pharaoh no longer called for them. He was negative against this entire situation and very negative toward God. Most people can be beaten down when facing these kinds of pressures; but not Pharaoh. He fought against God's will with every bit of human strength that he had. And when he came to the end of his own human strength, God provided him with more. Several leaders who have come to the end of their rope and abilities have committed suicide, have gone insane, have left office, etc. Pharaoh of Egypt was in that situation. He was fully negative toward God but he was running out of his own human resources and strength to resist Him. When it says that God strengthened Pharaoh's heart; God simply gave Pharaoh the will, the persistence and the fortitude to go on. This is not a doctrine to worry about. In a similar fashion, when we as Christians are at the end of our rope and beaten down, God often gives us strength to go on. God, by giving Pharaoh the will and strength to go on, used Pharaoh's negative volition to evangelize the world.

The previous plague was covered in a very short amount of space. We do not know when Moses wrote this down and it is possible that the plague of the gnats (or lice) either did not stand out in his mind or, if he were writing this as a journal, then he may have recorded both of these plagues at the same time, his memory being fresher for this following plague.

### **Plague of the [blood-sucking] Gadflies**

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and station yourself before Pharaoh; behold, his coming forth to the waters; there you will say to him, 'Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah; "Let my people go that they may serve me."'" [Exodus 8:20 (8:16)]**

In this verse, as often has been the case, God has told Moses what to say to Aaron and they are now stationing themselves as Pharaoh goes out presumably to bathe.

**""But if you do not let my people go, notice [what I will do]; I am sending forth against you and against your servants and against your people and against your houses swarms of the [blood-sucking] gad-fly. And the houses of the Egyptians will be filled with swarms of the [blood-sucking] gad-fly; moreover, also the ground whereon they [are] [or, concerning the area where they are found]; [Exodus 8:21 (8:17)]**

We do not know the exact nature of this insect of this insect either. Thieme interprets these as golden scarabs; beetles which are often found in the tombs of the Egyptians. They would go through several disgusting stages, as most insects do. Wilson pictures these insects as the dog-fly, which penetrates the skin and draws blood. I personally would not be surprised if this turned out to be a generic term and Egypt was invaded by several types of insects. The term gnat itself is a very imprecise term, which takes under its wing, so to speak, several species of insects. It could have been a hoard of insects. This one is obviously capable of flying and some dwell on the ground (meaning either a different species or the same species at a different stage of growth).

**"Then I will make to differ [lit., set apart] on that day, the land of Goshen, wherein my people do dwell [lit., are standing or are taking a stand]; so that there will not be a gadfly there in order that you will know that I, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, am in the midst of the land [this could also be read: I, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, am in the midst of the earth];" [Exodus 8:22 (8:18)]**

In the first, sentence, the verb is not the verb for *live* or *dwell* as we find in most translations, but it is the Qal active participle of 'āmad (עָמַד) [pronounced *aw-MAD*], which means *to stand, to take a stand*. In the Qal active participle, it can act as a verbal noun, modifying *people* with the word *standing*.

Suddenly we have a break in routine. This time, the Jews are not subjected to the plague. God, in showing His power and control, did not inflict the land of Goshen with this insect. Whereas one could think that the advent of this insect is a purely natural consequence of having a great many great stinking piles of dead frogs, it is unquestionably miraculous that the Jews, living almost side-by-side the Egyptians, were not inflicted with this plague. They enjoyed a wall of fire; an invisible wall of protection which all Christians have. We have no clue as to how many are the ills that God protects us from. Also, such speculations must take into consideration our spiritual worth and spiritual growth—Satan desired to sift Peter like wheat and he would have, had God allowed it. However, God provided Peter with protection that, apart from that particular quote of our Lord's, he (and we) may not have been cognizant. We are God's children as believers and God, when He is not forced by our actions and deeds to discipline us, does what every loving parent would do—He protects us; He isolates us from those who would do us harm. This is why a believer can exist in the midst of an economic depression and be rich; he can live during severe oppression, and be spiritually provided for; he can exist during severe natural disasters and receive God's personal protection. We saw this kind of protection in Noah in the ark and we see it here with God's people, the Jews.

**"So I will put a separation between my people and your people. By tomorrow, these things shall come to pass." [Ex. 8:23 (8:19)]**

Most Bibles read "I will place a separation between My people and your people" (or words to that effect) in this verse. However, this is not how it reads in the Hebrew. The word found there is *ransom*, פְּדוּתָם (תּוֹדָף) [pronounced *ped-OOth*] but, according to BDB, p. 804, this text is probably dubious. In this passage, it is actually written as תִּדְּפֶם and the word for *divide* can be written דִּפֶּם (Strong's #6565), דִּפֶּם (Strong's #6504), or סִפֶּם (Strong's #6536). Since the vowel points are not found in the original, a slip of the pen can turn a *d* (ד) or *r* (ר) into a *th*



(n). The Septuagint uses the word for *separation* in this passage rather than the word for ransom, so we are likely safe in going with majority of the translations.<sup>25</sup>

On the other hand, Bullinger asserts the opinion that this is a simple metonymy, where one word stands for another. Here, what is signified (redemption) is used instead of the sign of the redemption (which would be the act of *judgement*). That is, instead of saying that "*I will place a judgement* (which is the sign of redemption) *between My people and your people*", Y<sup>e</sup>howah says, "*I will place a redemption* (the judgement signifies that God has redeemed His people or is a sign that He has redeemed His people) *between My people and your people.*" He also cites similar metonymies in Num. 6:7 Deuteronomy 16:3 22:15, 17 2Kings 13:17, etc. These examples do not use the word redemption but they do use various words which stand in for the sign of their existence, as was done here. Since there are not an overwhelming number of manuscripts which support a textual error, Bullinger's opinion here seems to me to be the most likely.

There are actually two major changes with these plagues: (1) not only is this the first time the notion of separation is mentioned; and (2) whereas the first three plagues were extreme inconveniences and quite offensive to all the senses, this begins a series of plagues which are painful as well (I am making the assumption that these were insects with a bite).

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah did so and brought a grievous [blood-sucking] gad fly into the house of Pharaoh and the house of his servants and in all the land of Egypt; and<sup>26</sup> the land was laid waste by reason of the gad fly. [Exodus 8:24 (8:20)]**

This was far more than an inconvenience. Shâchath (שָׁחַת) [pronounced *shaw-KHATH*] means *to go to ruin, to destroy, to corrupt*. We saw this verb used in Genesis 6 when it spoke of all flesh becoming corrupted. This verb is in the Niphal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular; meaning the subject is the word *land* and the Niphal stem is the passive stem, meaning that this corruption was done to the land. The imperfect tense means that this destruction is viewed as an ongoing process. When it says that the land was laid waste by this gad fly, this means that this totally disrupted all production of any kind. They could not farm, build, sell, buy. Egypt was shut down as a thriving nation in one day due to the vicious attack of this blood sucking insect.

**Then Pharaoh cried out to Moses and to Aaron, and said, "Go your way; sacrifice to your God within the land." [Ex. 8:25 (8:21)]**

When Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and submitted to God, this does not mean that Pharaoh has recognized God as the God of the universe; he still calls Y<sup>e</sup>howah "your God." He does not realize that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is his God also; the God who could damn him to an eternal, living hell. Furthermore, what Pharaoh is not offering total capitulation. He will allow the Jews to make sacrifices to God in the land of Egypt. God is expecting the Jews to separate themselves from Egypt and the Pharaoh will not allow that. Scofield points out that this is a position of compromise. He is not allowing the Jews to separate from Egypt. God has told them to break this bond with Egypt and Pharaoh is maintaining this bond. God has told Moses to lead the Jews out of the land and Pharaoh is trying to modify this command. Our two basic problems are compromise and separation. The first is illustrated in 1Samuel 15:3,9,13-15,19-23, the second by 2Corinthians 6:14-18.

**And Moses said "It is not right to do this, for [it is] an abomination to the Egyptians that we should sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God. If we sacrifice that which is an abomination to the Egyptians [literally, the abomination of Egypt] before their eyes, will they then not stone us?" [Exodus 8:26 (8:22)]**

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<sup>25</sup> This little paragraph, because I have so many resources, only took 45 minutes to write

<sup>26</sup> This *and* is not found in the Massoretic text, but it is found in the western Samaritan and in the Septuagint

Notice again who is doing the talking. Moses knows some doctrine. He sees clearly that the issue is one of separation. The Jews must be completely removed from Egyptians. The Egyptians look upon the sacrificial system demanded by God—the blood sacrifices—as pagan and an abomination. If the Jews communed with God and offered animal sacrifices, it would totally offend the sensibilities of the Egyptians.

**We must go [for] a journey of three days into the desert; then we will sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God as He has said to us." [Ex. 8:27 (8:23)]**

Moses has learned from the short experience in the desert with the circumcision of his son that there is to be no compromise. It is either God's way or it is not done. He does not jump on the chance to do what is similar to God's command. Moses tries to explain on the Pharaoh's level why this would not work. This is not an explanation given Moses by God. The Egyptians had a lot of deities and there were a lot of animals that they would not sacrifice. Seeing the Hebrews making all these animal sacrifices would have disturbed them. However, this is not why God told Moses to take a three day journey into the desert with the Israelites. Pharaoh mistakenly thinks that there may be some room in here to arbitrate. He thinks that he and Moses are now negotiating the terms. He is unaware that there is no give and take here. The Jews have been mandated by God to go into the desert and worship and there is no half-way ground whereupon Moses can settle.

**Then said Pharaoh, "I will let you go; that you may sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God in the desert, only you will not go a very long journey. [Also,] make an appeal for me." [Exodus 8:28 (8:24)]**

Pharaoh doesn't quite get it; he thinks that Y<sup>e</sup>howah is a localized God out in the desert. Moses has given him correct information but it cannot penetrate his negative volition. This is how some people can hear the gospel many times and it never quite sinks in; or they forget it easily. Their negative volition blocks their minds from receiving spiritual information.

Pharaoh recognizes that he is in a tight spot. His country is being destroyed by these plagues. On the other hand, he cannot let the two million slaves just walk out of Egypt. They have made Egypt what it is that day due to the massive production of slave labor. Pharaoh does not know God and does not realize that God's demands to him are non-negotiable. He is trying to set up some sort of middle ground. Moses implied that was a possibility when he gave Pharaoh his explanation as to why the Jews had to sacrifice away from the Egyptians. Therefore, Pharaoh offers the compromise: if the Jews cannot sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah out in front of the Egyptians, then they can do it in private; but not too far away. This certainly sounds very reasonable, but God does not allow separation to be halfway. Years later, in the desert, the degenerate Jews will cry for the leeks and onions of Egypt. Had they not been fully separate, many Jews might have returned to Egypt, resuming a life of oppressive slavery.

Pharaoh does recognize God's power and Moses' ties to the living God and does ask, before what he assumes is the end of this conversation, for Moses to make entreaty on his behalf. That is, he is requesting Moses to ask God to remove these plagues. He certainly does not want these Jews and Moses to go into the desert and leave him hanging with the plague of the gnats still in full effect.

**And Moses said, "Behold, I am going out from here [lit., you] and will make a request to Y<sup>e</sup>howah so will He remove the [blood-sucking] gad fly from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people tomorrow; only, only let not Pharaoh again deceive in not letting the people go, to sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah." [Ex. 8:29 (8:25)]**

Moses fully understands why Pharaoh wants him to pray to God. This is not someone who leads a mediocre life and, in spotting someone they think might be spiritual, suddenly request that they say a little prayer for them. Pharaoh wants to be rid of the insects and Moses acknowledges that. Moses does not address the compromise suggested by Pharaoh. He will go to God in prayer and request the removal of the gad fly. He warns Pharaoh not to change his mind again as he did with the frogs (Ex. 8:8-15). It is just possible that Moses knows, because of what God has told him, that the Pharaoh will resist God when the plague is withdrawn. After all, God has told

Moses this time and time again. Moses is a genius so it is possible that he now understands and believes what God has told him.

There is another application that we can receive out of all this. I have seen parents and adults throw up their hands when dealing with kids. They give up on showing them the right direction because they say that kids are going to do what they are going to do anyway. Moses doesn't treat Pharaoh this way. He already knows that Pharaoh will go back on his word. Still, he warns Pharaoh not to. When dealing with children and matters of right and wrong, regardless of how negative they might be; if their guidance is your responsibility, then they must be continually pointed in the right direction, even if we are certain that they will turn around and go the other way. Children learn by repetition and by having their hands burned every time that they touch the hot stove. Even if we know they will touch the stove anyway, we still tell them that it's hot and not to. Even though Moses knows that Pharaoh will go back on his word; he still warns Pharaoh not to.

**So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. And Y<sup>e</sup>howah did according to the word of Moses and took away the gad fly from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one.** [Exodus 8:30–31 (8:26–27)]

Again, Moses goes to God in prayer and God answers this prayer. God answered it in eternity past but God is glorified because Moses asked God to do what was His will. The removal of this blood-sucking gad fly was no less than miraculous. Every area of Egypt, other than the land of Goshen was heavily infested with this insect and suddenly there remains not even one fly. This is not a natural phenomenon.

**And Pharaoh made his heart dull [and heavy] and he did not let the people go.** [Ex. 8:32 (8:28)]

God knew that Pharaoh would renege on his vow, yet God keeps His word even when man does not keep his. There is no compromising perfect integrity. We should emulate that (we are commanded to be imitators of Christ and of God). Our word should be our bond; what we say should be enough to commit us. It does not matter if those around us are dishonest or do not keep their word; we are to maintain our integrity. The failures of people around us should not affect our reflection of Jesus Christ in our lives. The Pharaoh's word to Moses and to God, as the ruler of his country, means nothing.

Pharaoh, degenerate as he is, finds the strength when the pressure is off and changes his own mind. With the removal of the insect, he feels empowered and strengthened.

# EXODUS 9

## Exodus 9:1–35

### Outline of Chapter 9:

- Vv. 1–7      **The plague of the dying livestock**
- Vv. 8–12    **The plague of the boils**
- Vv. 13–35   **The plague of the hail**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 26      **An Example of How the Plagues Overlap**
- v. 34      **The Heart**

A Review of Exodus 9, using the Urim Thummim Version, and subheadings from the Niobi Study Bible:

**Introduction:** Chapter 9 continues the plagues brought upon Egypt by God. Herein we have the plague of the livestock, of the boils and of the hail.

## The Plague of the Dying Livestock

### The Fifth Plague: Livestock Diseased

Exodus 9:1 **Then YHWH spoke to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, This is what YHWH Elohim of the Hebrews declares, Let My people go that they may serve Me.**

Each plague scenario is presented is separate from the others, but there was likely an overlap not ever noted in the text. When Pharaoh refused to send the people of God out after the 4<sup>th</sup> plague (Exodus 8:32), it is highly unlikely the Moses and Aaron stood there before Pharaoh, dumbfounded, and exited quickly saying, “Well, then, we have to speak to our God to find out what to do next.” I believe that, most of the time, Moses and Aaron walked into the refusal of Pharaoh with a loaded gun (I am speaking metaphorically). When Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrew people go, then Moses let fly with the next judgment. I don’t believe that he needed to regroup, go back to God and then ask God what to do next.

We do not know what interaction exactly takes place between Pharaoh and Moses when Pharaoh refuses to let the people go, but Moses appears to be ready with God’s next judgment.

The narrative is abbreviated. We will go from God speaking to Moses to God taking action against Egypt. The transitions are almost seamless.

Exodus 9:2–3 **For if you refuse to let them go, and will continue to hold them, the hand of YHWH is on your livestock that is in the field, on the horses, donkeys, camels, oxen, and upon the sheep, there will be a very grievous plague of disease.**

In our narrative, God is speaking to Moses and Aaron, telling them what to do next. However, we may reasonably assume that Moses and Aaron stand before Pharaoh, and Moses speaks these words.

Pharaoh is warned that all of the animals in the field will succumb to a great plague.

Exodus 9:4 But YHWH will make a division between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, and there will nothing die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.

This same plague would not kill off the livestock belonging to the people of Israel. However, any animal belonging to an Egyptian out in the field would die of this plague.

Exodus 9:5 YHWH appointed a set time declaring, Tomorrow YHWH will perform this thing in the land.

As was often the case, God would give Pharaoh some time to consider his actions. For a period of approximately 24 hours, Pharaoh could call Moses back and say, "Listen, there is no reason for this next plague. Start packing and move out." But he did not.

Exodus 9:6 And YHWH took this action the following day and all the livestock of Egypt died, but of the livestock belonging to the children of Israel, not one perished.

You will take note of how we seamlessly moved from God speaking to Moses (vv. 1–5) to God taking action (which means Moses spoke the words of God to Pharaoh and Pharaoh was unmoved).

**Plague of Diseased Livestock - Patagonia** (a graphic) from **Fox Studios India**; accessed May 20, 2020. This brief trailer appears to feature diseased livestock from Patagonia, South America. The 20 second trailer features what appears to be real footage of livestock succumbing to a plague.



Exodus 9:7 And Pharaoh sent, and found there was not one of the livestock of the Israelites dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened and he did not let the people go.

When it happened, Pharaoh sent his servants to make sure that the livestock in Goshen was unharmed, just as Moses said—and that turned out to be true. Nevertheless, he chose not to let the people of God go.

## The Plague of the Boils

### The Sixth Plague: Boils

Exodus 9:8 Then YHWH spoke to Moses and to Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes from the kiln and let Moses sprinkle it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh.

Throughout these confrontations, Moses and Aaron were always quite theatric in what they did, which was at the direction of God. We do not know if Pharaoh refused Moses and Aaron face to face and they already had ashes in their hands. Or perhaps they had set those ashes in a small heap outside of the palace. Or, they may have exited the palace, gone to a nearby kiln, and then did this. Whatever the events were, I believe that Moses and Aaron knew that Pharaoh would refuse them; and they knew what the next step was. I believe that in most cases (perhaps every time), Moses and Aaron were ready with the next plague. I believe that Moses was ready to



pronounce the next judgment of God as soon as Pharaoh said, “No, I have changed my mind; your people cannot go!”

So Moses and Aaron take these ashes and throw them up into the air:

Exodus 9:9 Then it will become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and will be an inflammation breaking forth with blisters upon man and upon beast throughout all the land of Egypt.

Like the narrative of the last plague, it begins with God speaking to Moses and Aaron (vv. 8–9) and immediately transitions into Moses and Aaron going into action (v. 10).

Exodus 9:10 Then they took ashes from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh and Moses sprinkled it up toward the sky, and it became an inflammation breaking forth with blisters upon man and upon beast.

The theatrics before the plague and the plague itself all take place out of doors. Although nothing is said about who is there (besides Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh), we may reasonably assume that there was a crowd of Egyptians of an undetermined size, which likely included Pharaoh’s cabinet.

Unwittingly, they all became the first ones infected. Both the breaking out of the blisters and the communication of what took place probably spread throughout Egypt, the explanation following close behind the outbreak itself.



**The Plague of Boils** (a graphic); from **The Exodus Story**; accessed May 20, 2020.

Exodus 9:11 But the diviners could not stand before Moses because of the inflammation, for the inflammation was on all the diviners, and on all the Egyptians as well.

The religious illusionists have not been mentioned for quite awhile, but they are mentioned here (suggesting that they were a part of the regular palace crowd with Pharaoh). However, at this point, they cannot stand before Pharaoh. Whether this means that they did not go into the palace,

or they went in, but could not stand up in respect, we don’t know. But, they could not stand.

As a young child, I accidentally stepped into a hole where a recent fire had been, and my entire foot was suddenly encased in burning hot coals. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns suddenly appeared all over my foot. I had blisters on that foot—perhaps a dozen or two dozen—which were very large boils filled with pus. There was no way that I could walk on that foot. Although the religious illusionists had boils all over their body for a different reason, the end result was the same. Their religious authority was inferior to the power of God.

Despite these boils, rendering most of Egypt immobile for a time, Pharaoh’s heart was still filled with negative volition towards God. Did Pharaoh plead with Moses to take these boils away? Were they removed by God? I would assume so. However, that is not a part of the written narrative. We close out this judgment with the following words:

Exodus 9:12 YHWH hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he would not listen to them as YHWH had spoken to Moses.

In all of this, God gave Pharaoh strength to resist, and Pharaoh resisted. The negative volition was there; but Pharaoh’s inner resolve was waning.

## The Plague of the Hail

## The Seventh Plague: Hail

Exodus 9:13 YHWH spoke to Moses, Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, This is what YHWH Elohim of the Hebrews declares, Let My people go that they may serve Me.

For each plague, Moses and Aaron and sent to stand before Pharaoh and give him the two alternatives—let the people of God go or face the next plague.

Exodus 9:14 For this time I am sending all my plagues onto you and on your slaves, and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the land.

Had Moses come before Pharaoh and only a single plague occurred, this would have been amazing, but easily forgotten. However, God will bring 10 judgments upon Egypt, so that His power is clearly unrivaled. There is no god of Egypt that can stand against the God of Moses. Furthermore, all of Egypt is exposed to this narrative and to these judgments.

Exodus 9:15 For now I will stretch out My hand that I may strike you and your people with pestilence; and you will be cut off from the land.

Moses and Aaron tell Pharaoh that God could have brought a single plague of pestilence against the Egyptians, killing almost all of them; and Moses could have easily led the people out. Them being cut off from the land indicates that God could have killed them all, in one single act. However, God was looking to accomplish more than the simple extrication of Israel from Egypt.

Exodus 9:16 But indeed for this I have caused you to stand, so as to show you my power, and for the sake of declaring my Name in all the land.

God has allowed Pharaoh to continue to stand—to show his continued negative volition towards God; and that nations all around Egypt would be aware that this is taking place. Now, we may wonder, *how do they know?* *There are no television cameras, no on-the-spot live coverage of these events.* Egypt was the most powerful country in the world at this time (or one of them); and they likely had an army which collected tribute (or destroyed those who refused). They would have traded goods. But if any of this was going on, it was on a greatly reduced scale. Traders may be aware of these things and have a great desire to get out of Egypt at this time.

Just as word got around Egypt, so that all of the people of Egypt knew what was going on; so word got out about Egypt to all of the countries in their periphery.

Egypt was seen in that era as the strongest country in the region, and all of the neighboring countries would know that Egypt was being destroyed by the God of the Israelites.

Exodus 9:17 Are you not still exalting yourself against My people so that you will not let them go?

God, through Moses, asks, “Are you still standing against Me?”

Now, how is Pharaoh able to still stand against God? God continues to give him strength and Pharaoh continues to build up more scar tissue on his soul. Rejecting God’s demands has become habitual for Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:18 Mark tomorrow about this time, for I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail such as has never been in Egypt, even from the day of its being founded even until now.

Again, 24 hours is given for the Pharaoh and his people to think about what is going to happen and to reconsider their negative volition. I believe that information regarding Moses’ words also were circulated during this 24 hour period of time.

Exodus 9:19 Dispatch instructions now and gather your livestock, and all that you have in the field, for upon every man and beast that will be found in the field that will not be brought home, this hail will fall on them and they will die.

God allows the people—despite the negative volition of Pharaoh—to save their own livestock. “Tell everyone to bring their people and animals inside; otherwise, they will die in this hail storm.”

Exodus 9:20 Then he that feared the Word of YHWH among the slaves of Pharaoh made his slaves and his livestock take refuge into the shelters.

At this point, there is some scattered positive volition in Egypt; and some Egyptians protectively bring their slaves inside. They have heard of Moses’ warnings, followed by the judgments of God and this has occurred six times already.

We have somewhat of a play on words here—the *slaves of Pharaoh* are to make *their slaves* (and livestock) come under shelter.

It is my assumption that, because God is just, every person who potentially would heed this warning received the information needed to act during the 24 hours before the plague was enacted.

Exodus 9:21 But he that regarded not the Word of YHWH left his slaves and his livestock in the open field.

I would think that most people ignored this warning.

Exodus 9:22 YHWH spoke to Moses, Stretch out your hand toward the skies that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt upon man and beast, and upon every green plant of the field throughout the land of Egypt.

There was more to this plague than Moses and Aaron going into Pharaoh and warning him, “24 hours from now, that hail is coming down!”

Moses was going to act, stretching out his hand towards the heavens (while holding his staff). It is likely that this took place in a very public area.

Again, we seamlessly move from God speaking to Moses (vv. 13–22) to Moses acting as per God’s directives (v. 23).

Exodus 9:23 Then Moses stretched out his staff toward the skies and YHWH sent thunder and hail, and ball lightning ran along the ground, and YHWH rained hail upon the land of Egypt.



There appear to be theatrics associated with nearly every plague. Moses lifted up his staff towards the heavens, and God rained down a great hailstorm on the land.

Exodus 9:24 And there was hail and fire catching itself in the midst of the hail, very grievous, such as has never been in all the land of Egypt since it has become a nation.

The hail storm was the most horrendous storm in all Egyptian history. I suspect that no hail storm has been this strong.

**The Seventh Plague—A Hailstorm** (a graphic); from **Reformed Fellowship**; accessed May 20, 2020.

Exodus 9:25 The hail struck throughout all the land of Egypt, all that was in the field of both man and beast, and the hail beat down every green plant of the field, and broke every tree in the open field.

Everything out in the field—man, beast or crops—were destroyed.

Exodus 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen where the children of Israel lived, was there no hail.

Like many of the previous plagues, the people of Israel, who live in Goshen, are unaffected.

I have written about how these plagues *overlap*. Let me try to put a portion of this chapter into a very strict chronological order (starting with the plague of boils and moving into the judgment of hail). What has likely taken place is this:

### An Example of How the Plagues Overlap

1. Moses and Aaron throw the ashes into the air. These ashes come down and boils break out all over the epidermises of the Egyptians. Vv. 8–11
2. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and asks for these boils to be removed. He agrees to send the children of Israel out. (Not a part of the narrative.)
3. Moses speaks to God about removing the boils, relaying the promise of Pharaoh to let the people go. (Not a part of the narrative.)
4. God then speaks to Moses and tells him to rise up early the next day and speak to Pharaoh. V. 13
5. God tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh about how He could have brought a deadly judgment upon Egypt. Vv. 14–16
6. God tells Moses that the next plague would be a massive hail storm. Vv. 18–19
7. God tells Moses exactly what he should do and say prior to the hail storm. V. 22
8. Bear in mind, 6<sup>th</sup> judgment has not actually been closed out yet. The boils are removed (not a part of the narrative) and Pharaoh turns negative towards God again. V. 12
9. Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh—after the boils have been removed and perhaps Pharaoh then expresses his negative volition. Then Moses speaks the words of God to Pharaoh and his inner circle, regarding what God could have done and the great hail storm to come. (Not a part of the narrative.)
10. God through Moses addresses Pharaoh's negative volition. V. 17 (this verse is actually God speaking to Moses telling him what he is to say to Pharaoh.)
11. Some Egyptians bring their livestock under cover and some ignore this warning from Moses. Vv. 20–21
12. Moses stretches out his staff toward the heavens and what follows is thunder, lightning, hail and rain. Vv. 23–24
13. The hail is extremely destructive (v. 25) but it does not strike Israel (v. 26).
14. Pharaoh sends for Moses. V. 27

For the purposes of narration, the way that Moses presents this material—keeping each plague separate from the previous one and seamlessly moving from God speaking to Moses to placing us right into the midst of the action—is much easier to follow than the chronology which I offer above (and much less repetitive).

Being in the midst of the action and recalling events after the fact can be two very different things, even without distorting any of the events in question.

Exodus 9:27 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron and confessed to them, I have sinned this time, YHWH is righteous and I and my people are wicked.

Pharaoh—apparently in the midst of the storm—called for Moses and Aaron, confessing his sins to God.

It is possible that Pharaoh's confession of sin was what he believed Moses wanted to hear.

There was apparently enough break in the storm, in a very specific area, so that Pharaoh could reach Moses by messenger. Likely, Moses would have been in Goshen, where the storm was not. Somehow, a messenger from Pharaoh was able to reach Moses.

Exodus 9:28 *Make supplication to YHWH and it will be enough so there will not be anymore thunderings of Elohim with the hail, I must let you go and you will not be delayed again.*

Pharaoh decides that he has had enough. He asks Moses to petition his God to end the storm. He promises that he will not delay the people of God from going out to worship their God.

Exodus 9:29 *Then Moses replied to him, As soon as I am gone out of the city I will raise my hands to YHWH and the thunder and hail shall stop, then you will know that the land belongs to YHWH.*

Moses tells Pharaoh exactly what he is going to do. There was a problem with the translation here; I believe that Moses went forth *towards* the city (most translations did not translate it this way).

Exodus 9:30 *But as for you and your slaves I know that you will still not fear YHWH Elohim.*

Moses tells Pharaoh, "I know that you still do not fear God." I don't think that Moses simply said this, but that God, on many occasions, told Moses that Pharaoh would change his mind again. Moses believes God; he does not believe Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:31–32 *So the flax and the barley were destroyed, for the barley was budding and the flax had already bloomed. But the wheat and the spelt were not destroyed for they were late crops.*

The knowledge that Moses reveals here indicates that he was a man of many disciplines.

Exodus 9:33 *Then Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and he raised up his hands to YHWH, and the thunders and hail stopped and the rain ceased pouring on the land.*

Moses did exit the palace, going out from Pharaoh (literally, *Moses goes out from with Pharaoh towards the city*). However, I should note I might be the only person who sees it this way. Nevertheless, in many good translation, I find the addition of a few words necessary to give this sense. For instance, Young, who provides a very literal translation, has this: *And Moses goes out from Pharaoh, from the city,...* The second *from* is not there, which Young himself indicates by italicizing it. What is there, before the word city, is the direct object, which can also be translated *to, towards*. This slight disagreement does not appear to change anything overall, apart from where Moses is when he petitions God to stop the hail storm. I rather like the visual of Moses, at the edge of the big city, calling upon God to end the storm, and then the storm ends. I can see many people peering out of their homes to this familiar figure, watching his every move.

Exodus 9:34 *When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail and the thunders had stopped, he sinned still more by hardening his heart, both he and his slaves.*

Even though God, through Moses, held up His end of the bargain, Pharaoh did not. What he said and what he promised meant nothing. His personal entourage was with him on this.

Let's just take a moment and examine the heart:

This is a brief doctrine of the heart in order to ready ourselves to study the Hardness of Pharaoh's heart prior to the Exodus.



# The Heart

1. The Greek word is καρδιά and the Hebrew word is lêb בל or lêbâb בבל. They both literally mean heart, the organ inside of us; however, they are never used that way.
2. The heart can have a negative attitude toward God. Psalm 101:5 uses the phrase "...arrogant heart."
3. The heart can feel emotion. "My heart has become smitten like grass (or, herbage) and has withered away." (Psalm 102:4a) "Wine, which makes my heart glad." (Psalm 104:15). In Acts 14:17b, we have the phrase, "...satisfy your heart with food and gladness." Therefore, our hearts can be satisfied with food and emotional stimulation.
4. God knows our hearts (Psalm 44:21 Luke 16:15); examines our hearts (1Thess. 2:4 Jeremiah 12:3); tries or tests our hearts (1Chronicles 29:17); He prepares our heart (1Chronicles 29:18), opens our heart (Acts 16:14), enlightens (???) and finally creates a new heart within us (Psalm 51:10 Ezekiel 36:26).
5. Our hearts are capable of thinking or of thoughts (Hebrews 4:12).
6. Our hearts can be strengthened and we can take courage in our hearts (this is a command, in fact—Psalm 27:14).
7. We are fools to trust our own heart (Proverbs 28:26).
8. Without going into a full blown examination of the doctrine of the heart, suffice it to say that the heart is immaterial; it does our thinking, it emotes, it has a relationship to God (that is, God is most interested in what occurs in our hearts and has a direct affect upon our heart); it has volition or will; it can operate in a moral sphere (positive or negative); it can grieve and it can be broken. It appears to be the entire unseen function of our lives, directly related to our body and physical needs, but outside the realm of the physical.

**And Pharaoh's heart was strengthened; [so] neither would he let the children of Israel go, as Yahweh spoke by the hand of Moses.** [Ex. 9:35]

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

Exodus 9:35 Then the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the children of Israel go as YHWH had spoken by Moses.

At this point, we noted that there are two very different words translated *to harden* in vv. 34 & 35. In v. 34, Pharaoh makes his own heart *heavy and dull*. In v. 35, his heart is strengthened.

With chapter 10—next lesson—we will begin the plague of the locusts, which is the 8<sup>th</sup> plague, followed by the 9<sup>th</sup> plague, the plague of thick darkness. There are 10 plagues in all.

# EXODUS 10

## Exodus 10:1–29

**Introduction:** Chapter 10 contains the eighth and ninth plagues: the plague of the locusts, which receives a great deal of space; and the far more interesting darkness covering the land, which received less attention in terms of number of verses.

### Outline of Chapter 10:

- Vv. 1–20     **The plague of the locusts**
- Vv. 21–29   **Darkness covers the land**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### **God and the Negative Volition of Pharaoh** **Did God Lie to Pharaoh About the Permanence of the Exodus**

#### **The Plague of the Locusts**

Chapter 10 begins with what could have been a problem for some. However, we have covered the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, so we can breeze through this translation. It begins by God saying that "I have hardened [made heavy or dull] Pharaoh's heart." and this corresponds to our concept of scar tissue. However, what has occurred is that God has given Pharaoh the opportunity to express his negative volition, the strength to do so, and God has allowed Pharaoh to do so. Therefore, it appears that God has caused Pharaoh to be negative toward His plan; that Pharaoh is nothing but a pawn which God will sacrifice for the benefit of many others who would believe in Him. However, we know that God is not the author of sin; He is **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to the point of a changed mental attitude** (2Peter 3:9b). So we cannot misinterpret what is being said here. Let's take this in points, because this cannot be overemphasized:

#### **God and the Negative Volition of Pharaoh**

1. God is not the author of sin ( Romans 6:1,15 7:7 1Corinthians 6:18-20 Galatians 2:17).
2. God is not the author of negative volition, nor will He change our positive volition into negative volition under any circumstance (2Peter 3:9).
3. God has continually given Pharaoh the opportunity to change his mind (Ex. 8:10,29 9:5,18).
4. Pharaoh has, at best, tried to act as though he had changed his mind about God's plan; or he sincerely was upset over what transpired (Ex. 9:27, 28); however, as the characterizing proverb goes, *he never said anything that he couldn't take back*. I once knew a woman like that, but I digress.
5. Pharaoh's attitude did not change and Moses recognized that (Ex. 9:29,30).
6. God gave Pharaoh the opportunity to express his negative volition (Ex. 9:15-16).
7. God gave Pharaoh the strength to express his negative volition (Ex. 9:12 10:20, 27).
8. God permitted Pharaoh to express his negative volition (Ex. 9:29-30).

Let me suggest that the pharaoh was ready to shut down; on several occasions, he had gotten to a point where he could not make a decision. We have a president like that—Barack Obama—who had a very difficult time making decisions about foreign policy and would spend months pondering decisions which should have been made in hours. So, on several occasions, pharaoh had reached a point where he could not render a decision; he was just not strong enough to go out there and tell Moses *no*. God strengthened him enough to be able to do this.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have allowed his heart to become dull [lit., I have caused his heart to become hardened (or made dull and heavy)], and the heart of his servants, that My signs might be placed in their midst. [Exodus 10:1]**

The Hebrew word used here is the Hiphil perfect of *kâbad* (כָּבַד) [pronounced *kaw-BAD*] and it means *to make heavy, to burden, to weigh down*. The Hiphil is the causative stem; however, in the Hebrew, the Hiphil does not necessarily refer to compulsion but also is a permissive stem<sup>27</sup>. The perfect tense refers to God's decrees from eternity past to allow Pharaoh to make these choices against Himself; and to bolster Pharaoh up when his strength begins to wain. God also gave a similar strength of conviction to those under Pharaoh. What Pharaoh needs in his time of trouble to give him the strength to continue to defy God is some *yes-men* who will agree with Pharaoh's opposition to the Lord. In eternity past, so that the lands throughout the mid-eastern and eastern world could be evangelized, God saw to it that Pharaoh would surround himself with loyal yes-men, who would agree heartily with his every decision and applaud, when necessary, these decisions.

This verb is followed by *l<sup>e</sup>ma'an* (לְמַעַן) [pronounced *l<sup>e</sup>-MAH-gahn*], a word denoting purpose or intent. This could be translated *for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, or in order that*. It is also quite reasonable to render this word and its preposition with a simple *that*. The following verb reveals God's purpose here: the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, Qal passive participle of *shîyth* (שִׁיחַ) [pronounced *sheeth*] which normally means *to set, to place, to put*. God is not the subject of this verb, although it is often translated this way. *Signs* is the subject of this verb, and God, spoken of in the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, is the cause of these signs, which is why the verb is in the passive.

In eternity past, God did a vast number of things in order to evangelize the earth. He saw to it that a Pharaoh would ascend to the throne of Egypt who was particularly negative toward God's plan. He surrounded that Pharaoh with yes-men (most of the time). When Pharaoh became weak from opposing God, God gave him more strength to continue in his opposition to God.

An important point often left out of a study of these chapters of Exodus: any time that God drastically changes his program (that is, a new dispensation is begun or a new portion of a dispensation is begun); God accompanies this change with a great many signs and wonders. Because our knowledge of things Biblical is sorely lacking, many people think that there are great and tremendous miracles found on every page of God's Word because they know a few stories about Moses, David and the first advent of our Lord. When it comes to great signs and wonders and miracles, there have actually been very few of them in the past several thousand years; most of them came to introduce a new wrinkle in God's plan. Here, God was beginning nation Israel and was identifying the Hebrews as His people. Therefore, He needed to do something spectacular to the entire world would know that God's hand was with the Hebrews. As a result of this, men from all over the world realized that God was with the Hebrews, that God had given them the land of Palestine, and that anyone who opposed the Hebrews would find themselves up against unsurmountable odds.

As we read the translation of v. 2, keep in mind that God is speaking to Moses here:

**And that you may recount in the ears of your son and your son's son what I did in derision of the Egyptians; and my signs which I placed among them, so you will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah." [Exodus 10:2]**

V.2 continues with the prepositional purpose clause from v. 1 (*lamed* + *ma'an*). And I was expecting the same construction and the same verb used in v. 1 repeated here, but there is another word which means *to place, to*

<sup>27</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study of the Old Testament* p. 2274

*set* and it is the word *sûwm* (שׁוּם) [pronounced *soom*]. This time the verb is in the Qal perfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, meaning that God is the subject of this verb.

This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, Qal perfect of *yâda'* (יָדַעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*], a verb which means *to know, to see*.

God clearly points out His purpose here, as He did previously in 9:15–16; these signs will evangelize the world and they evangelize Israel. They are to be told to the next generation and the generation after that. At that point in time, there was no widely distributed Bible; at best, Moses had documents which had been added to over the years at the writing of Exodus, which could have occurred at this time and could have occurred during the 40 years wandering in the desert. Moses wrote the first books of the Bible (the books of Job and Genesis probably predated Moses; and we do not know if these books were in written form at this time; if they were, there would have been very few copies). The primary method of passing on spiritual information is the oral tradition of a father teaching his son about Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel and he in turn will teach his son. There were various events which took place to act as training aids, such as the bones of Joseph, to give parents the opportunity to express to their children what has occurred up until their slavery in Egypt. We as parents should do the same; we should teach our children about Who Jesus Christ is and why He came to earth in the form of a man. There is no substitute for parental training.

One of the few advantages of the KJV, besides being an excellent but dated translation, is that they distinguish between the singular and plural second person. We simply use the word *you* to represent the singular or the plural. The south has tried to clear up this little problem, adding the descriptor *all* to the plural sense of *you*, however, this has never caught on outside of the south. V. 2 begins with *you* in the singular. Each individual Jew (represented here by Moses, as God is speaking directly to Moses) will tell his son in the future about the exodus and the great signs and wonders which God performed. However, at the end of v. 2, when God says "...*that you may know...*", *you* is in the plural—speaking to all of Israel. The significance of this is emphasis. When we move from the singular to the plural, it is a way of the speaker, in this case our Lord, grabbing us by the collar and shaking us. It is a way to grab one's attention linguistically.

**And Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of the Hebrews, 'How long have you refused to humble yourself before Me? Release my people that they may serve Me.'" [Exodus 10:3]**

In the midst of all these signs, God is very careful to let Pharaoh know that He is the God of the Hebrews. Since so many countries had their own pantheon of gods, God has to distinguish Himself from them and show that He is the true God of the Universe.

**But if you are refusing to let them go, watch [lit. behold]! I will bring in tomorrow a locust within your boundaries; [Exodus 10:4]**

The locust was known to Egypt, however, never in such huge numbers have they been seen.

In v. 5, there is some figurative language which is rarely translated literally yet the figure of speech is easily understood. The locust will cover the 'ayin (עַיִן) [pronounced *GAH-yim*] of the land. 'Ayim means eyes. Too often this is ignored or translated *face*. At the end of the verse, some translations have the locust eating up the trees which *grow* in the field. This leaves us with some confusion—locusts do not generally eat entire trees, to the best of my knowledge (which is limited in the locust realm); plus we have just seen a devastating hail storm which likely destroyed the trees of the field. The word we find here is *tsâmach* (צָמַח) [pronounced *tsaw-MAKH*], and this means *to sprout up*. So, anything sprouting up after the hail was eaten by the locusts.

**Furthermore, it [the locust] shall cover the eye of the land so that one shall not be able to see the land.; and it shall eat the remainder that has escaped, that is left you from the hail, and it shall eat up all the trees that sprout for you out of the field. [Exodus 10:5]**

God treats the locust as though they were in the singular. It is one miracle and they act in one accord; to ravage the land of Egypt. The language is beautiful; the eye of the land is covered so that the one in the land cannot see out and those out of the land cannot see in; the locusts will be this thick.

What remains in the land after the hail is sprouts of plants returning from the ground; some of them seedlings, some of them the same plants which had been beaten down by the hail. And the locusts will devour these plants.

**And they will fill your house and the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians, such as your fathers and your father's fathers have never seen, from the day they came to be on this land, until this day." And he turned away and came out from the presence of Pharaoh. [Ex. 10:6]**

We are now using the plural of *locust*. Out in the field, as they observe, it will look as one great locust; eating the entire field. However, when these locusts move indoors, there will be thousands upon thousands of locusts, everywhere the inhabitants look.

Note that this is Moses, again, who is speaking to Pharaoh, and Aaron is there almost as nothing but window dressing. Although we began with Moses and Aaron in v. 3, here, God does not say that they both walked out; but that Moses walked out. Aaron did not remain there—he didn't stick around to have coffee and donuts with Pharaoh—it is just that his presence was superfluous. He was not God's chosen man for the job of going to speak to Pharaoh and he never was. He just happened to be there to hold Moses' hand throughout the proceedings, which was not God's original intention. God has a plan for Aaron's life; but speaking to Pharaoh in His behalf was not it; that is God's plan for Moses. This is analogous to our spiritual gifts in the church age; we all have spiritual gifts and we cannot behave as though our spiritual gifts are different than those which we have received. There are some people who are pastor-teachers who ought not be (I sound like J. Vernon McGee). Thieme once related the story of Billy Graham who originally pastored a church and in a meeting with the deacons said that his gift was one of evangelism, not pastoring a church and they agreed and that was the direction that he took. In retrospect, it is obvious that is his place in God's plan. Isn't it amazing the various types of application that we can get from the Old Testament? Just the use of a singular here instead of a plural introduces a New Testament concept.

**Then said the servants of Pharaoh to him, "How long shall this man become a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah, their God. Don't you realize even yet that Egypt is ruined?" [Ex. 10:7]**

All of a sudden there is some dissension among Pharaoh's *yes-men*. This does not mean that Pharaoh's entire court was in favor of letting the Hebrews go; however, it is more than just one man's opinion. The speaker obviously believes God because the plague has not yet come; the plague of the locusts is not until the next day. But they have come to realize that what Moses says God will do, He does. Whether they have believed in Y<sup>e</sup>howah or not is another matter; but they have come to accept the power and Word of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. There is no doubt in their minds that this plague will occur as Moses has told them and that Egypt is in veritable economic ruin already. Furthermore, after suffering the lice and the frogs and the stinging flies, these men do not want their households invaded by locusts.

**So Moses and Aaron were brought back into Pharaoh and he said to them, "Go, serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah, your God. Just exactly who [lit., "who and who"] are going?" [Exodus 10:8]**

This is the first time that Pharaoh has capitulated prior to the occurrence of the plague. He is weakening. His court of yes-men has begun to hold a variety of opinions, the majority this time favoring to skip this plague and to let the children of Israel go. After an hour's conference, Moses and Aaron are sent for and are brought back before Pharaoh. They were not originally placed in the waiting room to allow for discussion—the discussion was spontaneous, beginning immediately at their leaving. The servants of Pharaoh are no longer interested in bolstering up Pharaoh's opinion and standing by him; they are sick of the destruction and personal pain and discomfort that they have had to endure.



None of Pharaoh's servants have gone so far as to realize that if the God of the Hebrews can do what He has done, then He is the true God of the Universe and that they ought to believe in Him and to join the Hebrews in this trek into the desert to worship God. We have the exact same thing occurring today. We have unbelievers refusing to believe in Jesus Christ because they are worried that it might disrupt their relatively insignificant lives; in their frantic search for happiness, they are worried that they might not eek as much of it out if they turn toward God. Believers have a similar problem. Believers tend to attend church once or twice a week and never lead a life the rest of the time which is honoring to God. To be fair, this is sometimes not their fault; if their church does not teach them how to rebound (confess their sins to God), then they are out of fellowship from ten minutes after they were first saved to the end of their lives. Once and awhile, during a *re-dedication* service (which is bogus), they, among other things, confess their sins. They have been outside of the power of the Holy Spirit for so long that it is an emotional uplifting and for sometimes as long as 30 minutes, they stay in fellowship. However, when they fall out of it, they behave, at best, like self-righteous, religious unbelievers now. Pharaoh's servants needed to follow through; they needed to gather their families and join with the Hebrews. We need to lead our lives as though God has a true impact on them. We are not going to miss anything worthwhile by doing so.

**And Moses said, "With our young and with our old will we go; with our sons and with our daughters; with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for the festival of Y<sup>e</sup>howah is ours [lit., to us]." [Exodus 10:9]**

Moses lays down the law; he tells Pharaoh exactly who will go and how they will travel. As of this point in time, they are still only to go out to the desert and have a feast to God. Nothing is said about them leaving Egypt for good. That is on the agenda, but not yet. Pharaoh had earlier expressed his opinions as to these matters (Exodus 8:25–29) but his conditions were not acceptable. Moses will tell him what is acceptable.

**Then he said to them, "Let Y<sup>e</sup>howah so be with you when I release you and your little ones. Look [out], for harm [is] before you faces." [Exodus 10:10]**

V. 10 is not easily understood. I've given a literal translation. *Look* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural, Qal imperative of the simple verb *to see*. As we have seen, there is the masculine and the feminine of the word *evil*; the feminine is not as intense and often means *harm*. So just exactly what is Pharaoh saying? Let's see if I can paraphrase this: *God better be with you if I think that I will release you **and** your little ones. You are in serious trouble to even suggest these things.* The NASB gives a better idea of what Pharaoh has said: "**Thus may the Lord be with you if I ever let you and your little ones go. Take heed, for evil is in your mind [lit., before your face].**" It is idiomatic. Today, we might say, *It will be a cold day in hell before I let you and your little ones go. You had better be careful with foolish thoughts like that.* As you see, translators have a very difficult time of it. If translated word for word, this verse makes little sense (apart from context, which helps to guide us here); yet when the idiom is translated freely, then it is not a translation, per se, but an interpretation. We are fortunate to live in a time when God's Word has been translated by 100+ different individuals and groups. We learn which translations are literal and which interpret the idioms and can guide ourselves and our studies accordingly.

Pharaoh already had it in his mind that the men only would go out to make this feast (or whatever they were going to do); and it would be nearby; and the children and wives would remain to guarantee the return of the Hebrews. Pharaoh feels that he is like the company president who has been beaten down by a strike, is prepared to listen to some reasonable demands, and is faced with a dozen totally unreasonable demands. The main difference here is that Pharaoh is in the wrong.

**"This is not going to happen [or, no way is this going to happen; lit., not so]! Go, I pray you, you grown men, and serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah, for that is what you were seeking." And they were driven from the presence of Pharaoh. [Ex. 10:11]**

Pharaoh cannot let the Hebrews go. He has to hold the children hostage. Moses anticipated Pharaoh's objections and began by saying "With our young..."

What Pharaoh does not want to do is (1) lose the upper hand and (2) lose the Hebrews as slaves. He is the ruler of Egypt and he is willing to make certain allowances for Moses and Aaron; but these allowances are going to be temporary. I do have a question which bothered me for some time: why did God originally tell Moses to take the people out temporarily, when this was to be a permanent status? God would not lie and He would not act as though He was going to do one thing and then do another. He didn't need to do that. So let's take this in points:

### Did God Lie to Pharaoh About the Permanence of the Exodus

1. God offers us reasonable demands
2. When it comes to eternal salvation, we may at any time in our lives simply believe in Jesus Christ and we are saved forever
3. Sometimes God has to make our lives difficult so that we will turn to him
4. What God offered Pharaoh at first was a reasonable demand—allow the Hebrews to go out to the desert and worship Him for a period of three days
5. Had Pharaoh at any time during the first eight plagues, allowed the Hebrews to go to the desert without any conditions, then God would have only required the Hebrews to go out to the desert to worship Him and then they would have voluntarily returned to slavery
6. Just because God knows the outcome, does not mean that His early offers are not valid
7. Sometimes the police will pull a sting operation on someone they know to be a felon, but cannot prove. This alleged felon can at any time get out easy by walking away from the criminal activity. The police generally know in advance that he will react to the sting by joining into criminal activity, but the ability to walk away from the crime in the first place is there.
8. There was (and probably still is) an investigative service for husbands and wives—they would set up one of the two with an opportunity for infidelity and photographically record the results. The husband is subjected to this because the wife believes that he will fail a test of fidelity; however, he can walk away from this at any time and he has passed the test.
9. God has offered Pharaoh a simple demand, that, had he accepted Y<sup>e</sup>howah's conditions, then he would have been able to retain his slave population
10. Since he did not allow the Hebrews to leave temporarily to worship God, he will place himself in a position where they will have no choice but to exodus from the country—he will personally see to that.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses; stretch forth your hand over the land of Egypt for the locust that it may come up over the land of Egypt; and may eat up every plant of the land; all that the hail has left." [Exodus 10:12]**

Notice that no longer is God having Moses to tell Aaron to stretch his staff over the land but now Moses is doing that. This was God's original plan; Moses just wasn't ready for it; so they went to plan B. However, Moses just slowly assumed a position of complete leadership and Aaron tagged along.

I've noticed a slight variation in renditions of v. 13. The verb attached to Y<sup>e</sup>howah is the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Piel perfect of *nāhag* (נָהַג) [pronounced *naw-HAG*] and it means *to lead, to guide*. The Piel is the intensive stem because this was a strong, concentrated wind—a very particular wind in fact; driven with a purpose. The perfect voice indicates completed action. God gathered up all of the locusts and, in the space of a few hours, deposited them all upon the land of Egypt.

**And Moses stretched forth his staff over the land of Egypt and Y<sup>e</sup>howah led an east wind upon the land, all that day and all the night; when the morning had come to pass, the east wind had brought the locusts. [Ex. 10:13]**

The second sentence is interesting. *Wind* is in the construct, so it is more of a modifier of *east* than the other way around. However, I don't know of a way to translate that. *East* is the subject of the second sentence and the verb is the Qal perfect of *nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*]. *Nâsâ'* means *to lift, to carry, to take*. The perfect tense is that of completed action, so I have translated this *had brought*.

It is interesting how God performs these miracles. He did not create these locusts out of nothing; otherwise, He would not have picked them up with a wind. They were all elsewhere at this time, possibly scattered, possibly altogether. God picks them all up from wherever they happen to be in the orient and captures them in the wind and blows them all over into Egypt. There is no doubt that this is somewhat supernatural and there is no doubt that God could have, in an instant, created the locusts, but He chose not to. He obviously prepared the locusts elsewhere and brought them to Egypt when the time was right.

**And the locust came up over all the land of Egypt and settled within all the territory [or, boundaries] of Egypt; [They were] extremely numerous! Before this had not been such a locust as that and neither after this should there be one like it. [Exodus 10:14]**

An adjective and a pronoun are used to describe the locusts in v. 14. The adverb is actually the masculine noun *m'ôd* (מְּוֹד) [pronounced *meh-ODE*] and it means *muchness, force, abundance*. However, it can act as a superlative, acting as an adverb meaning *exceedingly, very*. I would not be surprised if these were not different words with similar meanings, both pronounced and written alike, but context determines whether the word is the noun or the adverb. The adjective it modifies is *kâbêd* (כָּבֵד) [pronounced *kaw-BADE*] and it generally means *heavy*, but it can also mean *numerous*, which is the sense in which it is used here. There is no noun or a verb to go with this, meaning that there is great emphasis placed upon these two words. They are standing out in the middle of two sentences screaming at us.

Throughout this verse, *locust* is in the singular. If you have a difficult time with that, then translate this *swarm [of locusts]*, and you have an English equivalent when it comes to number.

When describing that this has never occurred before and would never occur again, we have two negatives and the same verb, modified by the same adverb. The verb is *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] which is likely the most commonly used verb in the Old Testament. *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* only lists a few of the passages in which it occurs, by way of illustration. It means *to be, to come to pass*. *Hâyâh* first occurs in the Qal perfect and then in the Qal imperfect. The modifying adverb is the very commonly used *kên* (כֵּן) [pronounced *ken*] and its basic meaning is *so*. However, that meaning is somewhat amplified by nearly four columns in BDB. It can mean *rightly, just, afterwards*, depending upon its context. It refers mostly to manner, but it also refers to degree, quantity, or quality.

Literally, this verse is: **Before it [the locust swarm] so there has never been a swarm [of locusts] like it and after it, so [such a swarm] will never come to pass.** In throwing in those bracketed words, obviously, they are not a part of the literal translation, but thrown in to smooth out and convey the meaning of the literal translation.

**So it covered the eye of all the land and the land was darkened and it did eat every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left; not a green thing, nor a tree, nor a plant of the field remained in all the land of Egypt. [Exodus 10:15]**

Again, the locusts are treated as one as they act with one accord, ravaging the land of Egypt. Only a very small portion of Egypt is fertile; that which receives its water from the Nile, Egypt's lifeblood, and this is where the locusts settled and decimated the land. Here is where all their farms were and every bit of shrubery was eaten; at least all the new growth (the green portions). What is left is barren land and barren trees. Every bit of new growth has been stripped off of it. The way Moses speaks of this in retrospect indicates that the concentration of these locusts was far greater than the concentration of the gnats or the blood-sucking gad flies.

**Then hastened Pharaoh to call for Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against Y<sup>e</sup>howah, your God, and against you." [Exodus 10:16]**

I do not doubt that the Pharaoh is very sincere with this plea. A criminal, when faced with a great deal of time in jail or with the death sentence can become very sincerely sorry that they have done what they've done. I heard a news show where a drug dealer found that he was going into jail for a mandatory 15 years and he said he learned his lesson and really thought that he could have learned it in 5 years. This was prior to going into jail. You could tell by his voice that he was very sorry that he did what he did. He did not feel that what he did was all that wrong, but he was certainly unhappy about the consequences, and he was very sorry about that. People who are wrong, when faced with the consequences are suddenly very sorry for what has happened; but they are mostly sorry about the consequences.

**"Now, therefore, forgive, I pray you, my sin only this one time, and make supplication to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, your God, that He may take away from me at least this death." [Ex. 10:17]**

The word for "forgive" in this verse is *nâsâ'* (נָסָה) [pronounced *naw-SAW*], in the Kal imperative. The root meaning is "to lift up." and it means "to bear, to take, to take away guilt." "Take" if the Hiphil future (causative future) of *çûwr* (סָוַר) (pronounced *soor*), and it means *to depart, turn aside or away*. The causative means that Pharaoh wants God to cause his sin to depart from him.

Pharaoh is not as concerned with the guilt or the wrongness of what he has done, as he is with the result. Often, this is the only way to control criminals. They may be beyond the point at which they realize their crime is morally wrong; but they do understand negative consequences applied to their life. Pharaoh understands not so much that he is wrong, but that there are some very unpleasant results; he wants God to lift away his sin or remove the guilt (or in this case, the judgement) for his sin, and then God is to cause to depart from Pharaoh, *this death*, referring to the wholesale destruction of the land. This is a metonymy where the word *death* stands for *plague*; *death* is the result of the plague of the locust. This is not the result of the pangs of conscience but it is the result of the discipline under which the Pharaoh finds himself.

This is why we discipline children. They do not come to us with a blank slate, as some maintain, but they have genetic predispositions, they have learned behavior and they have an old sin nature which is full blown at birth. Discipline connects pain and discomfort with incorrect behavior. This helps to develop a conscience. Actually, so there is no misunderstanding, the discipline coupled with an explanation as to why they are being disciplined develops a conscience. A child needs to know what is right and wrong and needs to have this taught to him, even if it requires spanking (which is different from physical and emotional abuse). It is a parent's duty to discipline a child and if you are unable to discipline a child or would want to spank them for every infraction that they commit, then you have no business bringing a child into the world. A child will develop true self esteem and have the best possible peer interaction if he is brought up to be polite, considerate and well-behaved. A child needs to learn respect for his elders, his peers, for the property of others; a child needs to know the value of hard work and achievement. Self-esteem for its own sake is worthless and does nothing but spoil the child.

**So he [Moses] came out from Pharaoh and made supplication to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and Y<sup>e</sup>howah turned back an exceedingly strong west wind and carried away the locust [swarm] and cast it into the Red Sea; so that there was not left a single locust in all the boundaries of Egypt. [Exodus 10:18–19]**

God directed the movement of millions upon millions of locusts as if they were one, therefore we have the use of the singular when referring to the locusts. This is an unusual result; usually when God removed a plague, there were some residual effects. Here, although all of the greenery had been eaten, there are no dead locusts to deal with. God picked them up with the wind, the same way that He brought them, and deposited them this time into the Red Sea.

**But Y<sup>e</sup>howah strengthened the Pharaoh's heart and he did not let the sons of Israel go. [Exodus 10:20]**

Only Moses is mentioned when it comes to leaving Pharaoh and making supplication to God, but certainly Aaron was there. Finally, even though he was devastated because God just economically destroyed Egypt for several more decades, God gives Pharaoh the strength to express the contents of his soul. Pharaoh is not a man who recognizes his sin and desires that God forgive him; he recognizes the consequences or the discipline because he has sinned and that is the only thing which bothers him. Having sinned once or twice myself in the past and then getting tremendous deserved discipline for it, I can assure you that I also have been very interested in the removal of the discipline. In some areas, it is the discipline which has helped me to recognize the depravity of my actions. However, Pharaoh only sees the discipline and has not moved from there to the correction of his behavior. God has given him enough strength to express that which is in his soul, and he does.

### **Darkness Covers the Land**

**Then said Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Moses, "Stretch forth your hand over the heavens that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt; and that one may feel the darknesss." [Exodus 10:21]**

Egypt was under severe judgement for their attitude toward the Hebrews. Darkness is often associated with judgement. When our Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree, a thick darkness covered the land so that we could not see Him bearing our sins. With darkness, there would be some who would just sleep in and they might sleep in an extra hour; and, in some unusual cases, an extra five hours. But at some point in time, it would be obvious that the night went on too long.

**So Moses stretched forth his hand over the heavens and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. [Exodus 10:22]**

We do not know when this occurred. The implication is that Moses, when he stretched his hand out over the land, then the darkness covered the land. The notion of being in darkness for three days must have some kind of significance. Jonah was inside the whale (actually, the great fish) for three days and nights; our Lord was in the heart of the earth for three days and nights, and here Egypt is plunged into darkness for the same amount of time. I don't know what the connection is exactly yet, other than all of them involve God's judgment.

I believe that this looks forward to the cross and the thick darkness which will be over Jerusalem for 3 hours when Jesus is paying for our sins. The plague which follows this, the death of the firstborn, continues to look forward to the redemption of the lost by means of Jesus Christ.

**They saw not one another, neither did they arise from his place in which he stood for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings. [Exodus 10:23]**

Certainly the same scenario as has occurred in the past was repeated. Moses went to Pharaoh, gave him a warning, and, when Pharaoh did not heed the warning, Moses brought on the plague. This darkness is a thick darkness which you can feel; a darkness which cannot be penetrated by light; just like the darkness which hung over the cross. This gave each and every Egyptian, living in a land which has been economically ruined, having suffered pain and misery due to the plagues brought on by Jesus Christ by the hand of Moses, the time to reflect upon their lives. The darkness was thick and eerie, not allowing any kind of normal function in life. Most Egyptians just cowered in their homes, steeped in their negative volition, refusing to rise above it.

A portion of v. 23 is difficult to understand, making it difficult to interpret. We begin with the negative and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect of qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced *koom*] and this means *to stand, to rise up, to take a stand*. This is followed by the preposition min (מִן) [pronounced *min*] which means *from*. Then we have the word tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced *TAH-khahth*], which means, as a substantive, *the under part, beneath, the place in*



*which one stands, in one's place.* We are not talking about a physical movement. The Egyptians, as well as Pharaoh, have taken a stand and they are not rising above that stand. Because of the plagues and their negative volition, the Egyptians occupy a very low place. They have chosen that which is against God, which is their stand and they will not arise from that stand.

Therefore, this is not simply Hebrew phrase saying that they did not leave their homes nor do we have the simple phrase saying that they did not arise from their beds (the Hebrew words are very different). This is idiomatic; it can refer to not getting up from the under part, but it really means that they had all this time to contemplate in the dark where they stood, what their values were, Who and What God is and they would not arise from this lowly place where their negative volition had put them. Even though the verb is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural, indicating that the population of Egypt in general did not arise, *place* (or, *place in which he stood*) has a 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular suffix, indicating individual volition.

The Egyptians did have a god; their sun-god, Ra. However, he was not able to do much on their behalf. God here is giving the entire population of Egypt time to reconsider the thoughts of their hearts, the prejudices that they might carry; and, particularly, their negative volition toward God. Some already had made a choice to stand with the sons of Israel and this allowed them to firm up this decision; others could go in either direction and this gave them time to make their choice. This is their last chance before God places over Egypt the most terrible plague.

This passage gives us two analogies. The unbelievers, the Egyptians, are walking and living in darkness. Believers, the sons of Israel, are walking in light. The Israelites have light in their dwellings. The Egyptians cannot penetrate this darkness with light. They should go to the light, to the Israelites, and ultimately to God, Who is judging them. They have three days to reconsider their position. A few did, which we will see later. However, most did not.

Man sometimes comes close to apprehending the truth as an unbeliever. Plato once gave us the analogy of the cave; he pointed out that there is a great unseen world—which is, in fact, the real world that we live in. He deduced this simply because his soul was far greater than his body and he recognized this invisible existence. He deduced that what was invisible was far more important and far more real than the physical plane that we live in. Plato set up his analogy of the cave; that we live on this earth in a cave and the real world is outside the cave. All that we see are the shadows on the cave wall; shadows of reality, and we attempt to deduce from the shadows what reality is.

For the unbeliever living in darkness, this is very close to reality. The unbeliever leads a life in darkness; God must be revealed to him. The, if he's interested, Jesus Christ must be revealed to him. Until that time, there is no light, no reality for the unbeliever, just the shadows on the cave wall; the shadows which are a representation of reality (for instance, a person's father is like God; analogous to God). So Plato comes close in his analogy to the truth and much of his philosophy comes close, considering that he is an unbeliever. However, since he did come so close to the truth, the Catholic church absorbed much of his thinking and it is reflected in their early doctrine.

The second analogy is even more solemn: Jesus Christ, when He was judged for our sins, was given the privacy of darkness as he took each and every one of our sins on Himself and suffered the pain and discipline for these sins. As God's "firstborn," He would die on our behalf, for our deliverance, just as the deaths of the firstborn of Egypt would allow for the deliverance of the Hebrews out from the land of Egypt and the hand of Pharaoh.

**Then Pharaoh called out to Moses and said, "Go serve Y<sup>h</sup>owah; only your flocks and your herds shall be left; even your little ones will go with you." [Ex. 10:24]**

Pharaoh has not changed his tact nor is he concerned that he has sinned against the living God. He still expects to keep these Hebrews as slaves. You must realize that his country is in terrific economic chaos and Egypt will suffer for many decades after this; and Pharaoh realizes that he will require labor to clean up the mess and to begin anew. This will be the function of his Hebrew slaves. Therefore, he is not going to let them go entirely. He must hold something for ransom. And if they do go, then he will need food stuffs for his own people.

Pharaoh does not yet recognize that there is only one way that this will be done; it will be done in God's way in God's time. He can fight Y<sup>e</sup>howah as much as he wants, but God will prevail. Greater is He Who is in us and he who is in the world.

**And Moses said, "Even you yourself will give into our hands sacrifices and ascending offerings; so shall we present offerings to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, our God. [Exodus 10:25]**

The Hebrews will require animals to sacrifice to God and the Egyptians will give these animals to them.

**Furthermore, our own cattle will also go with us; there shall not be a hoof left behind for that we must take to serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God; even we ourselves cannot know exactly what we will serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah until we actually arrive there." [Exodus 10:26]**

Moses must take the cattle because there will be blood sacrifices to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. At that point in time, there were no set sacrifices delineated as they will be in the Law. The Hebrews have not sacrificed to God for perhaps a couple or more centuries (presumably), so Moses knows that they must take a lot of cattle and a lot of animals to sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah when it is necessary; he just does not know how many cattle will be sacrificed.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah strengthened Pharaoh's heart and he was not willing to let them go. [Exodus 10:27]**

There is not a lot of detail concerning the darkness; not the original confrontation between Pharaoh and Moses nor the promise to remove the darkness, nor the prayer to God to remove this darkness. All of these things occurred and once the darkness had lifted, Pharaoh went back on his promise, as God gave him enough strength to be negative. God did not cause Pharaoh to be negative; God gave Pharaoh enough strength to take his stand against God. This is not unusual.

Madelyn Murray O'Hair, the famous atheist, fought God all of her life; God still gave her the ability to breath, to walk, to take a stand against Him. Her very existence required that God provide for her needs and He did. God allows for those who oppose Him the strength to do so—he does not strike them down. In the case of Ms. O'Hair, her son came to the Lord out of darkness. We will see that some, not many, of these Egyptians will come to God out of Darkness.

**So Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; and listen to this warning: do not appear before my face anymore because the day that you see my face, [in that day] you will die." [Ex. 10:28]**

So Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; and listen to this warning: do not appear before my face anymore because the day that you see my face, [in that day] you will die." I have given v. 28 a freer translation to clarify its meaning. Threats do not translate well, if they involve the use of idiom or convoluted sentence structure. It is a threat. A more literal translation would be less literal. That is, a strong threat such as this can get lost in the language. Word-for-word, this might be translated then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me. Take heed to yourself—never again see my face for in the day you see my face, [in that day] you will die."

Pharaoh is constantly running into Moses and Moses is constantly giving him warnings and promises of plagues. Pharaoh could have attempted to kill Moses right then and there. What he is doing is making a threat which he may or may not intend to keep. It is made in the heat of his discussion with Moses. Pharaoh is looking to make a compromise and does not fully realize that there is no compromise to be made with God. The Pharaoh does not have a choice one way or the other. He either rides the wave of God's plan or he is drown by it. Pharaoh only feigns positive volition, but that is, at best, a weak moment in his life.

**And Moses said, "You have spoken well; for I will never again see your face." [Ex. 10:29]**

Instead of saying, *you have spoken well*, today we might say *this is true*.

# EXODUS 11

## Exodus 11:1–10

### Outline of Chapter 11:

vv. 1–10      **The Final Plague**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| v. 2  | <b>The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ</b> |
| v. 6  | <b>Was God's Treatment of Egypt too Harsh?</b>                        |
| v. 7  | <b>The Events of the Plague of Darkness Presented Chronologically</b> |
| v. 10 | <b>The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt</b>                          |

Introduction: Chapter 11 presents the warnings for the final and most devastating plague. God will kill the firstborn of all the Egyptians.

## The Final Plague

God by taking the lives of the firstborn actually provides a large number of Egyptian infants with the equivalence of eternal salvation in heaven. These are children who would otherwise be raised as heathen, anti-God and anti-Jew, and then spend eternity burning in hell. God will be saving those of this group who are very young, because when a child is unable to make a choice for or against God in the angelic conflict due to age, and dies, there is no issue here to be resolved and God keeps him. When an unbelieving couple loses a child, we generally see this as a devastating tragedy—however, that child will spend eternity with God because his volition is not an issue. This is not to say that Christians should have to do to anything to harm the children of unbelievers. Some unbelievers have children who grow up to be phenomenal Christians. Paul's parents were very probably unbelievers.

**And Y<sup>h</sup>owah had said to Moses [literally, then said Y<sup>h</sup>owah to Moses], "Yet one plague will I bring in upon Pharaoh and to Egypt; after that, he will let you go from here. When he does let you go, he will altogether drive you out from there. [Exodus 11:1]**

The firstborn of the Egyptians were dedicated to their gods. This plague, like the previous plagues, will be directed against Pharaoh and against the gods (demons) of Egypt (Exodus 12:12)

**Speak, I ask you, in the ears of the people and let them ask every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold." [Ex. 11:2]**

God again tells Moses exactly what will occur. There have been no surprises in God's plan for Moses, once he has accepted his place in it. Moses will eventually adapt to the fact that God is always right and that he will have to trust Him. This is an important step in Moses' spiritual development because he is going to lead the most whiny, reversionistic group of people for forty years; people who will malign him and rebel against him; who will express remorse because they are no longer under tyrannical slavery; and Moses has to keep his bearings under these pressures. A lesser man (almost anyone else) would have left the people to die in the desert.

God will essentially offer Moses that opportunity and Moses will, as a result of trusting God and His long-term plan, pray on behalf of the degenerate Hebrews and preserve them. That is a preview of coming attractions. The point is that Moses has found his place in God's plan and he is learning, step by step, to trust God in this decision. As

one of the most important Old Testament saints with responsibilities almost unheard of, this is absolutely necessary.

The Hebrews have been slaves for 200 years (or more) in the land of Egypt. Although, even under slavery, their original life was good and they prospered and multiplied and were even allowed their own homes, cattle and places to live in most instances. However, they were still slaves, which meant that they were not properly recompensed for their work nor did they have any true freedom.

Later, the Hebrew people will ask for some recompense for their services, and they will receive such payments from their Egyptian masters. However, what is asked for here are much less than reasonable wages for two hundred+ years of servitude.

You might wonder why all the Egyptians do not despise Moses because of all the plagues and pain he has brought them. Many of them recognize his power under God's hand and, if they do not believe in Y<sup>h</sup>owah is the only God of the universe, they have come to respect Him as the most powerful God of the universe. To some limited extent, some of the Egyptians have come to respect Moses as a servant of the Hebrew God.

They know what is occurring. God threatens to bring a plague on Egypt and the Pharaoh is given the chance to submit to God's will, but he does not. The Egyptians in part must recognize that if Pharaoh allows the Hebrews to leave Egypt, then they will no longer suffer these plagues. So it is possible that some of them see Pharaoh as being the source of these plagues. However, many more Egyptians probably sided with their king.

Certainly, the Egyptians were strongly divided as to how they felt concerning Moses, Pharaoh and these horrible plagues. Certainly, it would set family member at odds with family member, neighbor against neighbor. However, God has a plan for the Hebrews and they have some cognizance of who is sympathetic and who is not. They know who to go to. To ask for proper remuneration. They are not begging for money nor is their hand out like a man on the street alleging that he will work for food. They are asking for far less than what is rightfully theirs.

The analogy drawn here to the cross is incredible.

### **The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ**

| <b>Moses, the Hebrews and Egypt</b>  | <b>Jesus Christ, Believers and the World</b>  |
|--|---|
| God's people, the Hebrews, are trapped in the Egypt (Exodus 1:8-14).                                       | Mankind is trapped in the world as unbelievers (John 18:36)   |
| God called the Hebrews out of Egypt (Exodus 3:15-17).  | God calls believers out of the world (John 15:19).  |
| The Hebrews had an identity separate from the Egyptians, even though they lived in Egypt (Exodus 1:7).     | We have an identity which is separate from the world, even though we live in the world (Acts 13:17 John 15:19 Romans 12:2).         |
| The Egyptians hated the Hebrews (Exodus 1:8-14).   | The world hates the believer (John 17:14).  |
| Moses, a savior, is sent by God to deliver His people (Exodus 3:9-10).                                     | Jesus Christ, our Savior, is sent by God to deliver us (Hebrews 3:16 John 4:42 1Timothy 1:15).                                      |
| Moses was not a slave and qualified to deliver His people and to lead them out of Egypt (7:22-23, 25, 34). | Jesus Christ is not a slave to sin, He is not of this world, and He has come to deliver us out of this world (John 8:23 17:11, 14). |
| Moses performed signs and miracles to show that he was from God (Acts 7:36).                               | Jesus Christ performed signs and miracles to show that He was from God (John 7:36).   |

| The Judgment of Egypt is a Shadow of Salvation by Jesus Christ  |  |
|---|--|
| Moses, the Hebrews and Egypt  | Jesus Christ, Believers and the World  |
| Moses was a servant of God (2Kings 18:12 2Chronicles 24:6 Neh. 9:14).   | Jesus Christ is a servant of God (Matt. 12:18).  |
| The only way that the Hebrews (and the Egyptians who joined them) could be delivered was to trust in Jehovah Elohim (Exodus 1:17–21). | The only way that we can be delivered is to trust in Jesus Christ (John 8:24).                     |
| Moses, because of the notoriety of the exodus, became a light to the world (Exodus 9:16).   | Jesus Christ, due to His own notoriety, is a light to the world (John 8:12 9:5).                   |
| The Hebrews, because of this, are also a light to the world (Exodus 10:23 Isaiah 10:17).  | We are a light to the world ourselves (John 9:5 Philip. 2:15).                                     |
| Egypt was judged for her sins (Exodus 11:1 12:12).  | The world is judge for its works (John 12:31 16:8).  |
| Egypt was covered with a thick, eerie darkness in one of its judgments (Exodus 10:21–22).   | Golgotha was covered with a thick, impenetrable darkness when Jesus was on the cross. Mark 15:33   |
| The Hebrews were called by God out of slavery. Exodus 13:3, 14  | We are slaves of sin, called out of that slavery by God. John 8:34, 36 Romans 6:6                  |
| The Hebrews would be delivered from the bondage of slavery after the death of the firstborn. Exodus 11:5 12:12                        | We are delivered from the bondage of slavery by the death of God's firstborn. Hebrews 1:6 Rev. 1:5 |

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

For hundreds of years, there will be no cross, no death on our behalf to deliver us from our bondage to sin. In order for man to recognize this and apprehend it, God has directed many events in history to illustrate what would occur. Noah's ark illustrates God's provision and deliverance. The exodus from Egypt illustrates Jesus Christ's suffering on the cross on our behalf. The animal sacrifices illustrate the death of the innocent and unblemished to take away our sins. God allowed certain events in history to occur so that those who lived prior to the cross would be allowed to see the power of God and to believe in the Revealed God for their eternal salvation.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah gave grace to the people in the eyes of the Egyptians—even the man Moses, himself was highly esteemed [or, exceedingly great] in the land of Egypt—both in the eyes of Pharaoh's servants and in the eyes of the people. [Ex. 11:3]**

The word describing Moses in v. 3 is the adjective gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced *gaw-DOHL*] and it means *great*. It is used for *great in number, great in wealth or magnitude*, obviously not applicable, here; and it is used of particular men, such as David, Mordecai and Moses, to indicate greatness. This means that the people recognized their greatness, their power, and their position. A modern equivalent would be *esteemed*. Note this is Moses and not Aaron who we are talking about. The adverb m<sup>e</sup>'ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced *meh-ODE*] acts as an intensifier; in the old English, we would use the word *exceedingly* and today we might simply use the word *very*. The two together in modern English are best rendered *highly esteemed* or *highly respected*.

For those who have been reading ahead, or know the story of the Exodus, you realize that Pharaoh will pursue Moses with his army. There were certainly Egyptians who respected Moses and were gracious to the Hebrews. There were also those who despised and even feared the Hebrews as Pharaoh did. God had already told Moses



that the Hebrews would ask for various necessities and provisions and they would be provided for them by the Egyptians.

**And Moses said, "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah; about midnight I am going forth in the midst of Egypt and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die—from the firstborn of Pharaoh who is sitting on his throne even to the firstborn of the female slave who is behind the two millstones, and all the firstborn of the livestock. [Exodus 11:4–5]**

This is a serious judgement to an unbeliever; however, God will give them a way out. It will be a simple, nonmeritorious way for them to save their children. All they have to do is to believe Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

**Then shall there be a great outcry in all the land of Egypt such as never was and such as never shall be again. [Exodus 11:6]**

For believers and unbelievers alike, regardless of doctrinal truth, the loss of a child is one of the most tragic things which could ever occur on a personal level.

We might feel that considering all that has been done to Egypt thus far, that this might be too harsh. Therefore, we should cover this in points:

### Was God's Treatment of Egypt too Harsh?

1. Pharaoh has been given many chances to allow the Hebrews to go into the desert for a feast to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and he still refuses to allow them to go (Exodus 10:27)
2. Both Pharaoh and the people of Egypt have been subject to many plagues, the last being three days of darkness during which they could contemplate what has happened to them (Exodus 10:21–23)
3. There were some of Pharaoh's cabinet who were strongly in favor of letting the Hebrews go (Exodus 10:7)
4. There were Egyptians who respected Moses (Exodus 11:3)
5. There were Egyptians who feared the Word of the Lord and there were those who did not; they conducted their lives accordingly, the unbelievers in spite of the mighty signs that they had witnessed (Exodus 9:20–21)
6. Pharaoh will be able to muster an entire army to attack the Hebrews, made up of his servants, the armed forces and angry Egyptians (Exodus 14:5–9)
7. A simple ritual was all that was required to cause the Lord to pass over a home and not kill the firstborn inside (Exodus 12:22–23)
8. Those who were so negative, despite seeing all of these plagues and signs close up and personal, to not take steps to protect their firstborn would have caused their firstborn to remain unbelievers all of their lives, embittering them toward the Jew, and causing their eternal damnation. In this way, those who are killed prior to reaching the age of accountability will spend eternity with God (2Samuel 12:23).
9. It is no different than salvation—all you have to do is to believe in Jesus Christ. Those who don't will spend eternity apart from God; those who believe, will spend eternity with God.

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On the one hand, we might present the argument, *was God too harsh?* However, the flip side of that argument is, *why didn't God just destroy all of the Egyptians and be done with it?* It is quite simple: there were some hearts and minds among the Egyptians who could be swayed—a *mixed multitude* will go out of Egypt with the Hebrews. This *mixed multitude* are non-Hebrews out from the land of Egypt who believed in the God of the Hebrews. Furthermore, the Egyptians had not reached a point of degeneracy to where God called for them to be destroyed in total (unlike some of the peoples of Canaan). How do we know this? God called upon the Hebrews to destroy degenerates in the land of Canaan because they would, among other things, offer up their own children to be sacrificed. My understanding is, there was this statue of Molech with its arms stretched out. These arms would

be heated by fire, and then a baby would be placed upon these arms to die by scorching heat—this is the degeneracy that we know about. There is no telling what the extent was of their degeneracy. On the other hand, here we have the Egyptians, and when their firstborn die, it is the worst tragedy which could befall them; so there is some remaining humanity within them.

**Application:** God knows just exactly what to do and how much pressure to apply. God does not condemn every degenerate group of people to immediate death. Therefore, when we see tragedy play out in the world, regardless of its depth, we need to realize that God knows exactly what He is doing and that He applies the perfect amount of pressure.<sup>28</sup>

There was another reason that God applied consistent, but restrained pressure on Egypt, apart from the salvation of some of them: God needed to make a statement which would be understood worldwide. He needed all of the nations to know of His power and strength, so that, through this knowledge, some might be saved.

**But against the sons of Israel shall a dog sharpen his tongue<sup>29</sup>; neither against man nor beast that you may know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah has established a difference between Egypt and Israel."** [Exodus 11:7]

For some of you who are having this exegeted for you, there is a logistical problem. In the past, Moses has always given Pharaoh fair warning concerning the plagues which God would subject Egypt to. Moses would go to Pharaoh, even if it was to catch him before his morning *shower* and declare "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah..." However, Moses just told Pharaoh that they would not see each other face to face again, so just exactly what is going on? In Exodus 10:29, Moses makes a pretty stern statement and then nothing is said really about Moses and Pharaoh speaking to one another again. However, in Exodus 11:8, all of a sudden, Moses stormed out of Pharaoh's palace in a heat of anger. This indicates that chapter 11 just continues this same meeting which was *concluded* in Exodus 10:29. Exodus 11: 1–3 are parenthetical to set us up for the rest of the chapter. Both plagues and their results were already given to Moses. However, these events are presented separately—but not necessarily chronologically—as that is easier to comprehend.

However, just in case this is still confusing, let me give this to you in points, chronologically:

### The Events of the Plague of Darkness Presented Chronologically

1. God speaks to Moses concerning the plague of darkness (Exodus 10:21)
2. **Then** God speaks to Moses concerning the last plague (Exodus 11:1)
3. Moses probably speaks to Pharaoh of the first plague (not recorded)
4. Moses stretches out his hand toward the heavens and darkness falls upon the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:22), possibly in the sight of Pharaoh, the Egyptians and/or the Israelites (Exodus 10:22)
5. Pharaoh calls for Moses to tell him to go and serve God; only they are to leave their livestock behind (Exodus 10:24)
6. Moses tells him that will not fly (Exodus 10:25)
7. Pharaoh is given the strength to say *no* one more time (Exodus 10:27)
8. Moses pronounces the judgement of the last plague upon Pharaoh and all of Egypt (Exodus 11:4–7)
9. Pharaoh angrily tells Moses to get out of the palace (Exodus 10:28)
10. Moses responds (Exodus 10:29 11:8a) and then storms out of the palace (Exodus 11:8b)
11. When the firstborn have died, Pharaoh sends his servants to Moses and tells him through his servants to leave Egypt unconditionally (Exodus 8:8 12:31–32)

<sup>28</sup> This does not mean that we ought to be insensitive to such tragedies.

<sup>29</sup> An idiom meaning, very likely, "to bark"

## Chapter Outline

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Vv. 3–7 present an interesting juxtaposition. In v. 3 we see the Egyptians as sympathetic and possibly even affectionate toward the Hebrews and in the following verse we have God's judgment against them. In case some of you are worried about that, God will provide an option to those who are positive toward His Word.

**"So shall all these, your servants, come down to me and bow themselves down to me, saying, 'Go forth, you and all the people who are at your feet,' and after that I will go forth." And he went forth from Pharaoh in a heat of anger. [Ex. 11:8]**

Moses is quite upset that Pharaoh has threatened his life and he is reacting to that threat. It is possible that Moses is out of fellowship at this time; we do not know. However, what he points out is true and would certainly upset Pharaoh; after the next plague, Pharaoh's own men will bow down to Moses and request that he leave with Israel and there will be no conditions upon their departure. This was likely the man that Moses was raised with; a man who possibly was intensely jealous of Moses when they were growing up together. As siblings, they could have had a relationship which was good or not; however, seeing that Moses is a genius in many fields and seeing how negative this Pharaoh is toward God, it is likely that their relationship was strained and competitive at best. After all, being raised at the same time in the royal family would give them equal opportunity of ascension to the throne. Moses, with all of his natural abilities and drive would have been the odds-on favorite and this would have caused an incredible amount of jealousy in the Pharaoh, the natural son, and biological heir to the throne. He would consider it his birthright and be quite upset with an adopted son, a Jew<sup>30</sup>, no less, as competition to the throne. What would further upset him, is that he would recognize that Moses was better in all respects and deserved to rule Egypt; that would cause a deep bitterness and resentment. This remark of Moses was not very well received.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah had kept saying to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen [and give heed] to you; [the purpose being] that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." [Exodus 11:9]**

Vv. 9–10 are summary verses to these plagues. Pharaoh has said *no* for the last time. *Saying* and *listen* are imperfect tenses, meaning continuous action.

**So then Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; however, Y<sup>e</sup>howah strengthened the heart of Pharaoh and he did not let the sons of Israel go, out of his land. [Exodus 11:10]**

There is a great Old English word which I would use, if it didn't sound so archaic: "hearken." Most older translations use this word in v. 9. It conveys more than to just "listen" (which is the more modern translation). It means to listen, consider and obey. I wish we had an equivalent English word which didn't sound that archaic. There is a false theory of translation that every language can be translated word-for-word into any other language because all language is the product of man; and all men are the same, and therefore will develop the same language concepts and the same vocabulary for the universal experience of mankind. This is false, and the more you know about two languages, the more you realize that man with all his similarities, still can have fundamental differences in language structure and vocabulary (although there is certainly a lot of similarities). My personal view is that God gave man his first language (at the tower of Babel) and man took it from there and modified what God had given him.

This passage represents a pause in this narrative. Moses is summing up to that point in time what has transpired. From Exodus 5:1 to 11:8, we have had a relatively seamless narrative of the interaction of God, Moses and Pharaoh (although we do have the involvement of Aaron and the Jewish elders). These two verses indicate that we are at a temporary stopping point. What has transpired has been summed up in a couple of sentences. It is all nicely sandwiched between Exodus 4:21–22 and 11:9–10.

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<sup>30</sup> We do not know whether Moses heritage was known early on or whether Moses found it out for the first time prior to his first departure from Egypt

What I need at this point is a chart which covers the miracles/plagues of God upon Egypt:

| The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt                         |  |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Scripture   | The Request and/or the Plague  | Who did the talking and the miracles   | What happened  | Possible Significance   | Pharaoh's Reaction  |
| Exodus 5  | No plague but a request for Israel to celebrate a feast to God in the desert-wilderness.   | Although it reads <i>they</i> said, what we find in Exodus 4:10–17 6:28–30 seems to indicate that Aaron did all the talking this time. | The Pharaoh asks “Who is Jehovah that I should obey His voice?” Pharaoh then does not allow the Hebrews to use straw when making bricks without reducing their work quota. | God gives the Pharaoh a chance to obey without threats of a negative consequence.   | The Pharaoh is negative of his own volition.                            |
| E x o d u s<br>6:1–7:13                                       | A request for Israel to go out of the land and no plague against Egypt was levied  | Aaron did the talking and he threw down the staff which became a snake.  | Pharaoh's magicians also came in with staffs and they threw them down and the staffs became serpents as well.  |   | Pharaoh's heart is hardened (whether by himself or by God is not clear) |
| It is possible that these are two views of the same incident. |  |  |  |   |   |
| Exodus 7:14–25  | Pharaoh is asked to let the Hebrews go so that they may serve God in the desert-wilderness. The Nile water is turned to blood—the <b>first</b> plague. | Aaron strikes the bank of the Nile with his staff and the water turns to blood. Aaron probably did the talking.                        | The fish in the Nile die and the water becomes putrid. The water could not be drunk. The Egyptians apparently dug wells in order to fetch water to drink.                  | God first must judge and blood speaks of judgement. This is why Jesus' first public miracle was turning water into wine. That speaks of blessing. | Pharaoh's heart is hardened, but it is not clear by whom.               |

| The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt   |  |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Scripture   | The Request and/or the Plague  | Who did the talking and the miracles   | What happened   | Possible Significance  | Pharaoh's Reaction  |
| Exodus 8:1–15   | Same request; the smiting of frogs—the <b>second</b> plague.   | Aaron stretches his hand over the waters of Egypt and frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. Moses, however, speaks directly to Pharaoh. | Moses tells Pharaoh that the timing is up to him; whenever he wants the frogs to be destroyed who are among the people, God would do that. Moses called upon God, and the frogs died. The dead frogs were piled into great heaps all over Egypt and became foul.  |  | Pharaoh hardens his heart. He does not listen to Moses and Aaron.                   |
| Exodus 8:16–19  | The plague of the gnats (or, lice)—the <b>third</b> plague.  | God tells Moses to tell Aaron to strike the ground.  | The dust of the earth becomes gnats (or, lice); gnats are on every man and beast.   | Magicians of Pharaoh admit they cannot duplicate this miracle and say it is from God.    | Pharaoh's heart is hardened.  |
| Exodus 8:16–32  | Moses requests a 3-day journey into the desert-wilderness; the plague of the insects—the <b>fourth</b> plague. | God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh, <b>"Thus said Jehovah: 'Let My people go...or I will send...swarms of insects.'"</b>                          | God sent swarms of insects to the Egyptians, but He did not so inflict the Hebrews. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and tells them to sacrifice to God within the land; Moses says, "No, we must go a 3-day journey away from Egypt." Pharaoh initially agrees and asks Moses to make supplication for him. | These are possibly the gold scarabs (or beetles) that are often found in Egyptian tombs. | God removed the insects as per Moses' request and Pharaoh hardened his heart again. |
| Note two things: Moses does the talking this time and God differentiates between the Hebrews and the Egyptians. |  |  |   |  |   |
| Exodus 9:1–7  | The <b>fifth</b> plague: The Egyptian livestock die.   | God tells Moses to speak to Pharaoh.   | All of the Egyptian livestock in the field died; none of Israel's livestock died.   |  | Pharaoh's heart was hardened.   |



| The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt |  |   |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Scripture                             | The Request and/or the Plague          | Who did the talking and the miracles  | What happened  | Possible Significance  | Pharaoh's Reaction   |
| Exodus 9:8–12                         | The <b>sixth</b> plague: boils.        | God speaks to Moses and Aaron and tells Moses to throw handfuls of soot into the air.                             | This soot becomes boils which break out on man and beast.  | The magician could not even stand before Pharaoh because of the boils.                 | Y <sup>e</sup> howah strengthens Pharaoh's heart this time.                                    |
| Exodus 9:13–35                        | The <b>seventh</b> plague: hail.       | God tells Moses to speak to pharaoh and warns them to keep all men and cattle inside, or the hail will kill them. | Hail struck down everything in the field—men, animals and plants. No hail fell upon Goshen, the land of the Hebrews. Moses, at the request of Pharaoh, went out of the city, spread his hands, and the severe weather stopped  | Egypt is a land of very little precipitation. A storm as described here is unheard of. | Pharaoh's heart is hardened and he does not let the Hebrews go, despite his promises to Moses. |
| Exodus 10:1–20                        | The <b>eighth</b> plague: the locusts. | Jehovah tells Moses to speak to Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron go together.   | Pharaoh is warned to let the Hebrews go, or the next day his land would be hit by locusts, which would eat everything the hail missed. Moses says that all of the Hebrews, children and cattle included, would go to a feast out in the wilderness. Pharaoh refuses (he won't let the children go). Locusts come over the land and eat all of the plants. Pharaoh repents, the locusts are removed, and he changes his mind. |  | God hardens the heart of Pharaoh.  |

| The Plagues God Brought Against Egypt |  |   |  |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| Scripture                             | The Request and/or the Plague                    | Who did the talking and the miracles                | What happened  | Possible Significance   | Pharaoh's Reaction  |
| E x o d u s<br>10:21–29               | Darkness over the land—the <b>ninth</b> plague.  | God tells Moses to stretch his hand toward the sky. | A thick darkness is over the land for three days. However, the Israelites had light in their dwellings.  | God is the light of the world.                                | Jehovah hardens Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh warns Moses not to come back                 |
| Exodus 11<br>:1–12:33                 | The <b>tenth</b> plague: death of the firstborn. | God tells Moses what to do.                         | Silver and gold is asked for from the Egyptian people by the Hebrews and they show favor to the Hebrews. The Passover is instituted and all those who observe the Passover are passed over for judgment. | Those who are under the blood of Jesus Christ are not killed. | The Pharaoh calls for Aaron and Moses and tells them to take the people out of Egypt. |

It is very possible that each plague was identical in pattern; God speaks to Moses and Aaron; Moses and/or Aaron warn Pharaoh of what is to come. Pharaoh refuses to let Israel go. God brings the plague upon Egypt through the hand of Moses (or Aaron). Pharaoh agrees to let Israel go if God removes the plague. God removes the plague and Pharaoh's heart is hardened once more against God. Some of these plagues have few details (e.g., the plague of the lice); however, the lack of detail does not mean that historically the pattern of events suggested are those which came to pass.

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# EXODUS 12

## Exodus 12:1–51

### Outline of Chapter 12:

- Vv. 1–13    **God tells Israel how to prepare for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague**
- Vv. 14–20    **Passover regulations for future Passovers (which will memorialize this event)**
- Vv. 21–23    **Moses gives the immediate requirements to the elders of Israel**
- Vv. 24–27    **Moses speaks of future Passovers to the elders**
- V. 28    **The people of Israel follow God's instructions for the first Passover**
- Vv. 29–30    **The 10<sup>th</sup> plague—the death of the firstborn**
- Vv. 31–32    **Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to take the people of Israel out of Egypt**
- Vv. 33–39    **The people of Israel pack up and leave hurriedly**
- Vv. 40–41    **The people of Israel were in Egypt for 430 years**
- V. 42    **This night is to be memorialized by Israel**
- Vv. 43–49    **Foreigners and hired help were not to celebrate the Passover with Israel**
- Vv. 50–51    **Israel obeys God; God leads Israel out of Egypt**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- Introduction    **Abstract representation of the Passover** (a graphic)
- v. 4    **Links to the Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement**
- v. 7    **Christ, Our Passover—Blood on the Door Frame** (a graphic)
- v. 11    **Christ is our Passover Lamb**
- v. 11    **The Jews' Passover, by James Tissot** (before 1902) (a graphic)
- v. 15    **The Doctrine of Leaven**
- v. 22    **HYSSOP**

**Abstract representation of the Passover** (a graphic); from **Full of Eyes**; accessed March 10, 2021. He titles it *Exodus 12:46 + John 19:36*.

Exodus 12 was quite a chapter! I think that it is best for us to take a look at this entire chapter once again, but to try to summarize all that we have studied. I will use the World English Bible (WEB) throughout this chapter analysis.

The first thing that we need to do is to establish time and place. The people of Israel are in Goshen, which is a large subsection of Egypt. The Hebrew people appear to be intentionally isolated from Egypt.

When Joseph was prime minister of Egypt, and he brought his family there, he worked things out to keep Israel separate from the rest of Egypt. They lived as a nation within a nation.

God has, to this point in time (Exodus 7–11),



inflicted 9 judgments against Egypt (most often referred to as plagues). Some of the first judgments affected Israel, but, for the most part, these judgments were put on Egypt alone. This physical separation between the people of Israel and the people of Egypt from the very beginning, has allowed for God to target the Egyptians and to spare the Israelites.

In Exodus 11, a very short chapter, Moses speaks directly to Pharaoh, giving him one final warning about the 10<sup>th</sup> plague. The chapter begins with God speaking to Moses, but it quickly segues into Moses speaking to Pharaoh. There was great anger in this final meeting when Moses finally went out from a recalcitrant Pharaoh.

As we discussed on several occasions, all of these conversations and events were not neatly divided into disjoint segments of time. Nor is everything in perfect chronological order (although, generally speaking, the book of Exodus moves forward in time). Moses, as he recounts these events, completely separates these judgments from one another.

Most of the time, it *appears* as if God calls Moses in, tells him about the next plague; then Moses goes before Pharaoh and tells him about that plague. Often, Moses says, “This is what God requires, and there will be no plague.” Pharaoh says, “No way.” Moses leaves, the plague happens. Pharaoh calls upon Moses to stop the plague and often makes promises to Moses. Moses goes back and the plague is stopped. Pharaoh says, “I know I promised you X, Y and Z, but now I am only offering you X.” Moses then says, “Not good enough.” Moses storms out and the process begins again. That *appears* to be the process of events for each plague, but that is actually Moses’ editing style. He records each plague as disjoint from the others.

What actually takes place is more complex than this, and when Pharaoh balks at giving the people of Israel what God demands, Moses often is *locked and loaded* with the next plague (or with the warning for the next plague). That is, once a plague is over, but Pharaoh refuses to accede to God’s demands, Moses does not need to quickly run to God to find out what to do next. He is ready with the warning of the next plague. This is my opinion; but which is not specifically expressed this way in the text. Having this sort of overlap would have made for a very confusing narrative, but it would have been the natural progression of events.

The other remarkable aspect to this section of Exodus is, there is very little repetition. God tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh and then Moses goes to Pharaoh and says exactly that. However, in almost every case, we segue from what God is telling Moses to what Moses says to Pharaoh, without any repetition.

### **God's Protection of Israel in the First Passover**

In Exodus 11, the 9<sup>th</sup> plague has happened, but Pharaoh remains Incaltrant. Therefore, God conveys, through Moses, the 10<sup>th</sup> judgment:

Exodus 11:1 Yahweh said to Moses, “I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh, and on Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. When he lets you go, he will surely thrust you out altogether.”

Exodus 11:4–6 Moses said [to Pharaoh], “This is what Yahweh says: ‘About midnight I will go out into the middle of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of livestock. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been, nor shall be any more.’”

This was the warning delivered by Moses to Pharaoh. After which, Moses *went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.* (Exodus 11:8e)

The final two verses of Exodus 11 are:

Exodus 11:9 Yahweh said to Moses, “Pharaoh won’t listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”

Exodus 11:10 [Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and Yahweh hardened \[or, strengthened\] Pharaoh's heart, and he didn't let the children of Israel go out of his land.](#)

What is being spoken of are judgments 1–9. Despite these great judgments, Pharaoh continued to refuse to send the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Interestingly enough, Exodus 12 will begin and end with Passover regulations.

It is remarkable as to just how little time is given over to 10<sup>th</sup> plague in this very lengthy chapter.

## The Passover

Exodus 12:1–2 [Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be to you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you.](#)

There are no chapter breaks in the original text. However, this is an abrupt change of pace. In chapter 11, Moses has left Pharaoh in anger; and then there is somewhat of a summarization of the plagues in the final verses of Exodus 11.

Exodus 12 begins with God giving Moses instructions for the first Passover, which instructions will prevent Israel from enduring the same judgment that Egypt faces.

God not only looks to the events of the near future, but He prepares Moses for future celebrations of the Passover. The night of the first Passover is going to be a very solemn event; but future Passovers will be celebrations.

Exodus 12:3–4 [Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household; and if the household is too little for a lamb, then he and his neighbor next to his house shall take one according to the number of the souls; according to what everyone can eat you shall make your count for the lamb.](#)

God describes to Moses what the Passover is, how and when it will take place, and how it will be observed in the future.

This conversation pretty much had to take place *before* the 3 days of darkness (plague #9). There are specific dates and times given. They were likely adhered to by Israel, in part, during the plague of darkness (it was not light in Goshen, but the lamps of the Israelites worked).

These 3 days of darkness in the land parallel the thick darkness over the Golgotha for the 3 hours during which Jesus endured the punishment for our sins. The lamb slaughtered for the 10<sup>th</sup> plague also speaks of Jesus dying for our sins.

It appears that this doctrine has been fully covered by others.

### Links to the Doctrine of Unlimited Atonement

A Defense of Unlimited Atonement ([Middletown Bible Church](#))

Unlimited Atonement ([Wenstrom](#))

Unlimited Atonement ([Rev. Thomas Tyree, Jr.](#))

Doctrines of Propitiation; Unlimited Atonement ([Divine Viewpoint](#))

For Whom Did Christ Die? ([Doctrine.org](#))

Scripture Teaches Unlimited Atonement (mostly [L.S. Chafer](#))

A Critique of Limited Atonement and the Problem of Double Jeopardy ([Timothy Ministry](#))



Not being a part of the Christian debate world, I did not realize that this was such a controversial doctrine.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Exodus 12:5–6 Your lamb shall be without defect, a male a year old. You shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats: and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at evening.

The Passover lamb, as described, is a picture of Jesus Christ, Who will be our Passover Lamb. The lamb must be without defect, just as Jesus would be without sin.

The people of Israel did not make that connection between this lamb which they slaughtered (in each household) and their Messiah (which concept has already been revealed to the people of God, but with little detail).

God has designed the history of Israel, the events recalled in Scripture, as a map, as a guide, to make it possible for the man who knows Scripture to recognize their Messiah when He comes and presents Himself to Israel. The idea is, when Jesus presents Himself to Israel, everyone in Israel should be able to recognize Him. Their history and their rituals are intertwined with the promise of a future Savior.

Let me carefully explain something here: no one in Israel fully understood the few things which I have explained to you about vv. 5–6. They did not know that the lamb represents the Savior to come; they did not know that the lack of defect in the lamb foretold the lack of defect in their Savior. Everything that Israel did as a nation looked forward to and describe in shadow form their Savior. Yet Israelites were still able to be saved. Before Jesus came to Israel and offered Himself to them as their Light and Savior, God revealed Himself to Israel. At some point in a person's life, an Israelite would believe in God as He revealed Himself, and he would be saved. As a result, he would continue to follow the guidance given to him in the Scriptures and continue to learn more and more about this God Who saved him. The Revealed God is Jesus; but, prior to the incarnation, that was just a common Hebrew name (the Greek name *Jesus* corresponds to the Hebrew name *Joshua*).

A person may place his trust in the Revealed God at age 4 or 5; and he may not until age 20; and some might not trust in the God of the Hebrews until they are on their deathbed. Nevertheless, every son of Israel was saved like his father Abraham. He believed God and that faith was credited to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6).

Back to our narrative. A lamb without defect has been selected for each house and all Israel has risen up to kill it.

Exodus 12:7 They shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two door posts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they shall eat it.

The blood speaks of both death and judgment, which are necessary in order for us to be saved. Our sins must be judged and the sentence of death must be passed in order for us to be saved.

The blood is to be painted onto the doorsill in such a way as to suggest a Roman cross. The blood would have also dripped down upon the doorsill. These four places where the blood would be seen represent the four places from which the Lord bled (from His head, His hands and His feet).

So that there is no confusion, the blood is representative, tying the sacrifices of these animals to the sacrifice of Jesus. Obviously, the blood of the lamb being sacrificed



and the blood emanating from the wounds of Jesus was real. However, the blood itself is not efficacious. Jesus did not bleed to death; nor is His physical blood tied to our salvation in some mystical way. His blood was not carried into heaven in some ancient bowl. There is no fountain anywhere filled with Immanuel's blood. The grape juice that we drink at Passover (and, in some cases, the wine<sup>31</sup>) is not somehow the real blood of Christ.

The punishment for our sins was poured out upon Jesus, which is something that no one was able to see (as God covered the region of Golgotha with a thick darkness when He put upon Jesus our sins). God the Father judged God the Son for all sins committed, past, present and future, for all mankind, those who will believe and those who will not.

Every person who believes in Jesus—even if they were at the foot of the cross—has to take God's judgment of His Son by faith. God did not allow anyone on Golgotha to see Jesus take upon Himself our sins on His Own body on the wood.

**Christ, Our Passover—Blood on the Door Frame** (a graphic); from **In God's Image**; accessed July 28, 2021.

Exodus 12:8 **They shall eat the meat in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs.**

The meat here is the meat of the lamb. The lamb, of course, represents Jesus Christ. Eating the meat represents exercising faith in Jesus Christ. The fire represents judgment. The unleavened bread is all about there being no distortion of the truth. The bitter herbs are our sins being placed upon the Lord. Jesus being associated with our sins is a bitter association. God the Father having to judge His Son was a bitter experience.

Exodus 12:9 **Don't eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire; with its head, its legs and its inner parts.**

The meat was not to be eaten raw. The Lord must be judged in order for us to have a relationship with God. Therefore, there must be fire applied to the sacrifice. The fire represents (God's) judgment; boiling water does not.

Jesus was judged in His body on the tree; His body parts were not separated.

Exodus 12:10 **You shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; but that which remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire.**

Everyone in the family was to partake of the lamb. None of it was to remain the next day. Jesus fully offered Himself at one time for all mankind for all time.

Exodus 12:11 **This is how you shall eat it: with your belt on your waist, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is Yahweh's Passover.**

For the first Passover, Israel was to be ready to go. Their actions were indicative of their faith in the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

Furthermore, accepting the Passover was a sign of salvation, and the saved Israelite was to be ready to represent Y<sup>e</sup>howah at that point.

**The Passover, or the Passover lamb, is called a type of Christ.**

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<sup>31</sup> It is not supposed to be, but sometimes it is.

1. John the Baptizer saw Jesus coming to him and exclaimed, "**Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!**" (John 1:29).
2. Paul called Christ our Passover in 1Corinthians 5:7.
3. The lamb as with the family for a few days in part to scrutinize the lamb for any blemishes and also so that they might grow some attachment for the lamb. Jesus Christ, as Scofield points out, was under hostile public scrutiny for a period of three years during His earthly ministry and was found to be blameless in all things. Read Luke 11:53–54 John 8:46 18:38 1Peter 1:18–19 2:22 3:18.
4. The lamb, having been tested (inspected for defects), must be slain (Ex. 12:6 Matthew 16:21 John 12:24 Hebrews 9:22). The blood of the lamb must be used in order for God to Passover; there is no other way for any family of Hebrews (or Egyptians) to be passed over; including invoking a deity of Egypt. God sees the blood of the lamb, representing the blood of Jesus Christ, and He does not take the life of their firstborn. The only tragedy to the unbeliever which is as horrible as this is to spend eternity in hell, burning in judgment, separated from God.
5. As Scofield put it, this "refutes universalism" (Ex. 12:7, 12b John 3:36 Acts 4:12). For the Jew (and any Egyptians who followed suit), applying the blood indicated their faith in Y<sup>e</sup>howah and God's Word. It was a sign of their faith but not the means of their salvation (Ex. 12:13 Hebrews 9:11-14, 22, 28).
6. Salvation by faith alone in Christ alone (thus bypassing judgement for us) is illustrated by the application of the blood only caused Y<sup>e</sup>howah to Passover their household and to refrain from executing judgement upon them (Ex. 12:13 Hebrews 9:14 10:10 1John 1:7).
7. I want you to notice where the blood is: for the first Passover, the blood was put on the top of the door sill (which would drip to the threshold) and on both sides of the door. This is like a cross, where we would find the feet, the hands and the bleeding head of Jesus—it is at these four points where Jesus would bleed, and this is foreshadowed in the first Passover. Exodus 12:22
8. The feast afterwards was a foreshadowing of our memorial supper, the Eucharist. The eating of the flesh of the slain lamb is analogous to believing in Jesus Christ, as eating is the non-meritorious function which all humans are able to do. Today, we eat the bread as Christ's body, to illustrate our faith in Jesus Christ, Who is the bread of life (Matt. 26:26-28 John 6:31-35, 46–58, 19:18 1Corinthians 11:23–26).
9. To quote Scofield again, "To observe the feast was a duty and a privilege but not of condition of safety" or of salvation (1Corinthians 10:16 11:25 Rev. 13:8).
10. I think one of the most chilling phrases found in Exodus is Exodus 12:6b, when speaking of the Passover lamb: **Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it.** Can't you just hear the Hebrews calling for Jesus to be crucified?

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Prior to this point in time, there were animal sacrificers, but they do not appear to have been as common or as systematic as they will become from this point on (after the full giving of the Law<sup>0</sup>). Animal sacrifices date back to when Adam and Eve first sinned. The animal skins that they wore were a covering which came from a slain animal. The animal skins gave them a temporary covering. These sacrifices spoke of Jesus Christ coming and dying on the cross and in this way conveyed the gospel to people who lived historically prior to the cross. God passed over these people who believed in Jesus Christ through the animal sacrifices. However, the blood of bulls and goats did not remove sin; it was a temporary measure, a sign and a promise of things to come. See **The Levitical Offerings** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

**The Jews' Passover, by James Tissot** (before 1902) (a graphic); from [Wikipedia](#); accessed July 28, 2021. I have no explanation for those hats that Tissot designed for them.

Exodus 12:12 **For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and animal. Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Yahweh.**

God would exercise judgment against Egypt, killing the firstborn of man and animal (so that every household in Egypt suffered loss).

The key to the killing of the firstborn is this: God would offer up His firstborn (Jesus) on our behalf; therefore, our firstborn belong to Him.

Exodus 12:13 **The blood shall be to you for a token on the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be on you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.**

The blood on the doorsill was a reminder to God not to enter that house. That house was covered/protected by the blood.

Bear in mind that Jesus did not bleed to death for our sins. Nor were the beatings that He received prior to the cross in some way efficacious for our sins. Nor did the physical punishment which He endured on the cross provide a partial or full payment for our sins. Nor was the Lord's physical death the payment for our sins.

When Jesus was on the cross, there were 3 hours during which God the Father poured out on Him our sins and then God the Father judged those sins in the Lord's body on the tree. That is where our sins were paid for and that is why we have access to God.

The blood *represents* this spiritual death, which was far more painful than anything that we could ever imagine in this life.

I had a wonderful friend of mine who went through excruciating pain during the final years of her life. She even remarked to me that she found out that, "You can't die from pain." The pain she felt was, I have no doubt, far greater than most of us will experience in our lives. The pain that the Lord endured was unimaginable to any person. The physical pain which He endured on the cross was representative of the intense judgment which the Lord received. The judgment of God upon Him is what redeems us.

Jesus could have endured the judgment for our sins at any point in time. God used the Roman crucifixion as illustrative of what was to take place. We have, through various descriptions, have some concept of the physical pain that Jesus endured. However, all of this physical pain was nothing compared to bearing the punishment for our sins. God did it that way, so that we might better understand what was done in order for God to provide us with salvation.



## **Feast of the Unleavened Bread: a Memorial to the Passover**

Exodus 12:14 **This day shall be to you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast to Yahweh: throughout your generations you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.**

The Passover was to be celebrated throughout the rest of Israel's history. Although some Jews celebrate it today (it is called the Seder), it bears only a thin resemblance to what God herein requires. And, it is not as if the Jews of today lost the requirements for the Passover. They are right here. They are what we are studying right now. Those Jews who consider themselves to be fundamentalists—they need to be following the dictates of the Scriptures. Even the most orthodox Jews are not keeping the Passover as described in this chapter.<sup>32</sup> As you will find out, as we go through the books of Moses, that Judaism today bears little resemblance to Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship as presented by God through Moses.

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<sup>32</sup> There may be a handful who do; but orthodox Jews today do not follow the dictates of Scripture.



Exodus 12:15 “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; even the first day you shall put away yeast out of your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

The Passover began a 7-day feast, known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The unleavened bread looked back to the people leaving Egypt suddenly, without time to let their bread rise. Symbolically, the lack of leaven was indicative of pure doctrine without mixture of false systems of thinking.

Leaven speaks of a corruption in the Scripture. Jesus Christ, when He came to us in human form, was uncorrupted by an old sin nature and by personal sin. It would be best to go over the **doctrine of leaven** at this time to see how it is actually used in the Bible. The most vicious attack on God's Word is the attack from corruption from within. The most evil of the religions often imitate Christianity and many so-called Christian religions (such as Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses) are merely Satanic fronts.

### The Doctrine of Leaven

1. Surprisingly enough, there are three or four words in the Old Testament which are rendered by "leaven" in the English. However there is but one equivalent OT word for "unleavened." To most people, I would think that "leaven" has very little meaning; however, the Hebrew word
  - a) Châmêts (חָמֵץ) [pronounced *khaw-MATES*] (Strong's #2557), means *to ferment, to be sharp or sour*. Strong points out that it figuratively means "extortion," but it is not ever translated that way.
  - b) Matstsâh (מַצָּה) [pronounced *mahts-TSAWH*], (Strong's #4682), means *sweet or sweetness, not made bitter with yeast*.
2. We find "unleavened" occurring only one time prior to Exodus, and that is in Genesis 19:3. When two angels visit Lot, he serves them unleavened bread.
3. It would help if we had a clue as to why leaven is forbidden during certain religious feasts and unleavened bread is required. The majority of the passages in the Old Testament deal with the prohibitions but not the rationale behind them. We can certainly get a better understanding from the New Testament as to the meaning of leaven and unleavened, figuratively speaking, but how were the Hebrews to grasp their meaning? Prior to the flood, there was no active bacteria found in close proximity to man. Whether it was deeply buried or how it came into being after the flood, we do not know, but there was no wine or leavened bread prior to the flood. Sometime after the flood, Noah planted a vineyard, harvested a few grapes and drank the wine which fermented from it (some things just happen by accident; Noah certainly did not know what he was making the first time). During one binge, he was so drunk that he ran around naked in his tent. Where his wife was, we don't know, but most women do not find a drunken husband to be too entertaining, so she probably stepped out. This could have been after Noah made some amorous moves on his wife which repulsed her. Ham, his son, walked in afterwards; very possibly he was listening or saw the commotion and found his father naked (there is likely more to it than that). Rather than give him the respect he should have as a son and covered him up and walk out, he made light of the situation and told his brothers about it. As a result, Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan. So fermentation was associated with drunkenness and cursing. Genesis 9:20-26. Later, Lot, Abraham's nephew, was given enough wine to be seduced by his own daughters at the end of Genesis 19. Lot, although a believer in Jesus Christ, led pretty much a worthless life as a Christian and spent the last few years of his life hiding in a cave with his two daughters. When they seduced him, they produced two sons, Moab and Ben-ammin, both of whom fathered tribes which gave Israel trouble for centuries. It was God's will for his seed to die out. So here we find fermentation, or leavening, associated with incest and drunkenness. These are the only two recorded incidents of fermentation, but this, in addition to what we have come to associate with drinking, gave a strong negative connotation to fermentation. It was a corruption of the grape juice which led to poor judgement, lack of self-control and errant behavior.
4. For our own understanding, we should turn to the New Testament, where many Old Testament symbols are properly interpreted.
  - a) Jesus warned several times of the *leaven* of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6,12 Mark 8:15 Luke 12:1). The Pharisees were the religious establishment of that time. They were the conservative theologians.



## The Doctrine of Leaven

They believed in the Holy Scriptures; or at least gave lip service to them. However, they did not understand God's Word and they were at best, actors (hypocrites) when it came to following God's direction (Matt. 23). They were whitewashed tombstones; a clean appearance from the outside but filled with dead men's bones (they were unregenerate). Jesus associated leaven with the corruption of the Scriptures by and the false teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

- b) The second area where we find leaven mentioned in the New Testament is in 1 Corinthians 5. Here, a Christian is living in incest with his mother (or step-mother). The Corinthians, living in a city of debauchery, boasted about this. We may not understand this, but it was a source of pride to them to be associated with such a person; to be able to say so-and-so was a Christian. Paul corrects them on their false concept of separation (you separate from believers who are involved in overt, immoral behavior; not unbelievers). Paul points out that this kind of overt immoral behavior would corrupt, or *leaven*, the entire church if left unchecked and this person must be excommunicated. Paul lists the kinds of believers with whom we are not to associate: immoral, covetous, swindlers, idolaters, revilers and drunkards.
  - c) The problem with the Galatians is that after salvation, they were infiltrated with the legalists who enjoined them to keep the law for spirituality. All the Judaizers had to do was to get the Galatians to concede to them in one point; to follow the Sabbath or to get circumcised in order to maintain their salvation or to further their spirituality, and this would corrupt the Galatian church. Paul points out in Galatians 5:9, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." To make this simple for someone who does not cook; it only takes a small amount of yeast to cause a large loaf of bread to rise. In this situation, it only takes a small amount of legalism to corrupt the entire church.
5. In Leviticus 7:13, we have the introduction of leaven into one of the offerings. This instance of leaven (or yeast) in the bread did not violate the prohibitions found in Exodus 23:18 or Leviticus 2:11 because this was not an offering which was burned at the brazen altar; in other words, it did not represent Christ's death upon the cross. Jesus Christ had no old sin nature, so anything offered in conjunction with the brazen altar had to be without leaven. However, when the offering speaks of us and our fellowship with God, we do carry an old sin nature within us and therefore should be offering up bread with leaven.
  6. Our conclusion is simple: leaven is associated with corruption of true doctrine with false; of proper behavior with immorality; of a congregation dedicated to God by those who are not; or leaven is associated with the old sin nature, which is why it is never found in burnt offerings (signifying the death of our Lord) but it is found in other offerings.

This doctrine was short enough to include it within the text of Exodus.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

Exodus 12:16 In the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no kind of work shall be done in them, except that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.

The 7<sup>th</sup> day was a Sabbath and a time of gathering. There was some food preparation which had to be done, and God allowed for that.

Exodus 12:17 You shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this same day I have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations by an ordinance forever.

Israel is to remember God taking them out of Egypt by observing the Feast of the Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 12:18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty first day of the month at evening.

The time frame for eating unleavened bread is specified, from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Abib (the first month of the Hebrew calendar). The evening marked the end of the day.

Exodus 12:19 *There shall be no yeast found in your houses for seven days, for whoever eats that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a foreigner, or one who is born in the land.*

Yeast would not be allowed in any of the houses. Whether this meant that it was well-hidden and not used, or taken outside, I don't know. In any case, it was not to be seen.

## **Moses Speaks to the Elders of Israel Concerning These New Rituals**

Exodus 12:20 *You shall eat nothing leavened. In all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread."*

For a week, only unleavened bread would be allowed.

Vv. 21–23 is strictly concerns itself with what is about to take place right then. These are the instructions for the Passover, which takes place during the final evening that the Jews are in Egypt.

In the narrative, we are in the beginning of the first Passover.

Exodus 12:21 *Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, "Draw out, and take lambs according to your families, and kill the Passover.*

What Moses requires here appears to be specifically for this Passover (see v. 23).

The Passover is a masculine singular noun with a definite article. It refers to the various lambs, one per household. However, these instructions treat the Passover as if it is one lamb.

The people of Israel would kill these lambs just as they would kill the Lord of Glory on the cross. Once the lamb for each household has been killed, the Israelites then do this:

Exodus 12:22 *You shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two door posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.*

On this Passover, the blood of the lamb would be painted onto the doorframe in 3 places: on both sides and at the very top of the doorframe.

Although Hyssop is found several times throughout the Old and New Testaments, we do not know exactly which plant from the ancient world is referred to by hyssop. However, the type of plant is not as important as its significance. It is used here at the first Passover and in several other places (the purification rites for lepers and the red heifer sacrifice).

### **HYSSOP**

1. Sources disagree as to what the hyssop is and some claim that the NT hyssop and the OT hyssop are different plants. Some claim to know what the New Testament plant was but not the Old Testament plant. Some believe that a different plant is used throughout the OT, even though it is called by the same name.
2. When the Bible was translated into the KJV, they certainly did not know what the hyssop was, so they transliterated the word out of the Greek. The Greek word is ὕσσοπος (hus'-sō-pos) and it is found in only two New Testament passages, John 19:29 and Hebrews 9:19, and it is found in the Septuagint. This would indicate that the translators of the Septuagint in 300 B.C knew what the hyssop was. It was, after all, used in the various purification rites as set down by the OT during that period of time. It is possible that over the

## HYSSOP

- centuries, because God's Word had been misplaced and because the Hebrews were in reversionism many times, that a different plant could have come to be used by the Hebrews and that would account for the NT hyssop and the OT hyssop being different. Therefore, this change, if it occurred, would have taken place prior to the translation of the Septuagint.
3. The opinions: Dr. William Smith in *Smith's Bible Dictionary* defers Dr. Royle, who claims that the hyssop is not marjoram or some similar aromatic plant, but, after considerable research, claims that it is the caper-plant of Linnæus. He also points out that the Arabic word is quite similar to the Hebrew word translated *hyssop*. *The New Bible Dictionary* asserts that the hyssop is not the plant presently called *Hyssopus officinalis* L., which is found growing in Southern Europe but is not native to Palestine, but very likely the marjoram in the Old Testament and the *Sorghum vulgare* in the New Testament (at least at the crucifixion). Other possibilities are listed there. Although what the plant was exactly is unimportant, it is reasonable to expect that the two references in the New Testament are the same plant and very likely refer to the same plant in the OT (since the Septuagint uses the same word—however, it is found therein in both the male and female gender, which is why, I suspect, that *The New Bible Dictionary* said that the OT references did not always seem to be for the same species). Zodhiates groups the hyssop to a group of plants such as the Egyptian marjoram and thyme. *Their hairy stems would serve well as a brush*, he points out.<sup>1</sup>
  4. Whatever the plant, no previous non-ceremonial, Biblical references exist and it is closely associated with various purification rites in the Old Testament:
    - a) It is used in Exodus 12:22 in conjunction with the first Passover. It was dipped into the blood of the lamb (or goat) and the blood was brushed on the top and sides of the doorposts throughout the houses of the Jewish believers. This also helps to explain why God brought so many plagues upon Egypt prior to this plague. We have seen that the Hebrews did not receive Moses warmly; especially after his first meeting with Pharaoh (which caused the increased workload of the Jewish slaves). They had to see continual signs and wonders to become (1) believers and to (2) have the sense to follow Moses. Had God given only one or two plagues, then many Hebrews would not have participated in the Passover and their firstborn would have died. It will be their sons and daughters who will enter the land; not the Jewish slaves of that time period.
    - b) We do not find hyssop mentioned again until Leviticus 14:4, 6, 49, 51 and 52. Here, it is used in the purification rites of a leper (and the house where leprosy was). A leper on the outside has the same appearance as we do on the inside. A leper being cured of leprosy is analogous to an unbeliever believing in Jesus Christ and being cleansed and purified. A leper is considered to be unclean and only the healed lepers were a part of this ritual. This ritual made them ceremonially clean. This ceremony, like most of the OT rites, speaks of Christ dying for our sins on the cross, the just for the unjust and His blood (spiritual death) cleansing us from all unrighteousness.
    - c) The hyssop is used in the red heifer sacrifice in Num. 19:6, 18
    - d) 1 Kings 4:33 tells us that the hyssop plant grows on the wall (the context is Solomon's wisdom and academic excellence in all areas).
    - e) David alludes to the hyssop in one of his Psalms (51:7) and relates it to purification.
  5. What is interesting is that Hebrews adds information to what the OT tells us about what occurred in the OT. Since God's Word is accurate, we must accept this additional information as true. In Exodus 24, Moses has just finished reading the Words of the Law to the people in the desert and vv. 6–7—read *And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient!" So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said, "Behold, the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."* Hebrews 9:19 tells us *For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.* That is, Hebrews tells us that the blood was also sprinkled on the book of the Law and that water, scarlet wool and hyssop was involved.
  6. John 19:29 is the final reference to hyssop in the Bible. Jesus, after He had died spiritually for our sins, was given a small amount of sour wine on a hyssop. How appropriate that the lamb without spot and blemish would be associated with this plant after our sins had been paid for and that God the Holy Spirit

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could see down the centuries of time to this when He included the use of the hyssop in the various OT purification rituals.

<sup>1</sup> p. 178

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Exodus 12:23 [For Yahweh will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel, and on the two door posts, Yahweh will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to strike you.](#)

The Egyptians who did not have a Passover lamb (all or most of them) would be struck by God. The Israelites, who did have the Passover lamb and the blood on the doorframe, would not be harmed by the Lord.

Exodus 12:24 [You shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever.](#)

The Israelites were to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which would be preceded by the Passover, for the rest of their lives; and for generations into the future.

Exodus 12:25 [It shall happen when you have come to the land which Yahweh will give you, according as he has promised, that you shall keep this service.](#)

God promises to Israel to give them the land of promise. While in the land, they are to keep this feast exactly as described.

God is careful to associated this exact moment in time with a celebration of this day in the future when the Hebrew people are in the land.

Exodus 12:26 [It will happen, when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this service?'...](#)

The children will ask, "Why are we celebrating these days as we do?"

Exodus 12:27 [...that you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of Yahweh's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He struck the Egyptians, and spared our houses.'"](#) The people bowed their heads and worshiped.

The people of Israel are to explain to them the historical events which led to their leaving Egypt.

Having taken in all of these instructions from Moses, the people bowed their heads in worship.

Exodus 12:28 [The children of Israel went and did so; as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.](#)

The people of Israel did just as Moses asked. In the immediate future, the people, household by household, collected a lamb (or young goat) and watched it for several days; and then killed it, applying the blood around the door frame as instructed by God.

## The Final Plague Is Executed

### The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn

Vv. 29–32 is the historical record of the actual plague.

Exodus 12:29 At midnight, Yahweh struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of livestock.

Those in Egypt who did not protect themselves with the blood (apparently all or nearly all of them) suffered loss in their homes. This was true of all economic stations.

I have assumed that the killing of the firstborn of livestock was done so that every household suffered some sort of loss. What happened needed to affect all Egypt. No household which rejected God's protection (via the sacrificed lamb) would go without loss.

When God gave a sign, it was something that needed to impact all those it was intended to impact. If only a firstborn son was taken, then not every household would be impacted by this judgment.

Exodus 12:30 Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Even Pharaoh's firstborn was killed. This is what was required for Pharaoh to submit completely to the requirements of God.

### **Israel Is Ordered to Exodus**

Exodus 12:31 He called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve Yahweh, as you have said!

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and told them to leave and serve their God.

Exodus 12:32 Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!"

Pharaoh tells them to lead all of the people out of Egypt. There is no expectation at this time that they will return.

Pharaoh, interestingly enough, calls upon Moses to bless him as well.

### **The Exodus**

The people of God pack up some of their belongings and leave Egypt.

Despite the glorious name of the book that we are studying, the actual exodus from Egypt takes place in vv. 33–39.

Exodus 12:33 The Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We are all dead men."

The Egyptian people also went to the Israelites and requested that they leave urgently. There had been a death in every single household. The Egyptians came to Goshen directly, and asked the Hebrew people to leave. It is likely that some of these Egyptians brought with them valuables, which they gave to the Israelites.

### **Preparation to Leave and Exodus from Egypt**

Exodus 12:34 The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.

There was no time for them to even allow their bread to rise. The Israelites left Egypt right then and there. They gathered all that they needed and were ready to move out.



Exodus 12:35 The children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing.

At some point, the people of Israel asked for jewelry and clothing. I think that this occurred on several occasions; and that they received delivery of these items on several occasions.

What is suggested here is, when the Egyptians came to them and asked them to leave, many of those Egyptians brought gold, silver and clothing. The idea was, to encourage the people to leave as quickly as possible.

Exodus 12:36 Yahweh gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. They plundered the Egyptians.

Due to all that happened, the Egyptians brought to the Israelites great wealth to take with them. There would have been a variety of motivations. Some might bring wealth to the Israelites out of guilt; some may have brought it as an incentive for them to leave Egypt.

Exodus 12:37 The children of Israel traveled from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot who were men, in addition to children.

600,000 men left Egypt, traveling to Succoth. There were women and children besides, which is where we get our figure of approximately 2 million.

Today, based upon what we read in Exodus (and Numbers), we can only guess the route that Israel took. Even until today, there are fundamental disagreements about this route.

Exodus 12:38 A mixed multitude went up also with them, with flocks, herds, and even very much livestock.

Non-Israelites also went with them. Some of those would have likely been Egyptians. It would be logical that some non-Hebrew slaves took this as their escape from slavery and went with them.

A number of commentators blame this mixed multitude for rebellions which take place later on. However, there is no indication that these additional people specifically caused any problems. In fact, in some of the rebellions, the perpetrators are specifically identified and none of them come from this mixed multitude.

Exodus 12:39 They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought out of Egypt; for it wasn't leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt, and couldn't wait, and they had not prepared any food for themselves.

There was no time to bake their normal breads and cakes, so they were made without leavening, which cut the length of this process down considerably.

Exodus 12:40 Now the time that the children of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years.

Israel's entire time in Egypt was 430 years.

Exodus 12:41 At the end of four hundred thirty years, to the day, all of Yahweh's armies went out from the land of Egypt.

Israel left Egypt on the 430<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the time that they entered into this country. I would understand this to be the time that Jacob entered the country, as he was the named heir to the promises of God. All Israel came from Jacob (the mixed multitude would have intermarried with the people of Israel and be subsumed into Israel in that way).

## The Passover and Non-Hebrews

Exodus 12:42 It is a night to be much observed to Yahweh for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of Yahweh, to be much observed of all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Based upon all that happened, Israel continued to observe the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread throughout all of its history in the land. Essentially, these observances continued up until A.D. 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and killed nearly 1 million Jews.

The Jewish holidays which were observed subsequent from this moved further and further away from their descriptions in the Scriptures.

### **Institution of the Passover**

Exodus 12:43–44 Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover. No foreigner shall eat of it, but every man’s servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat of it.

There were some additional constraints put on this celebration.

Foreign people were not to be forced to partake of this ceremony. In fact, any non-Israelites would have to be circumcised before taking part.

Exodus 12:45 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat of it.

Foreigners and hired servants were treated the same way. No one was ever forced to observe the feasts of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 12:46 It must be eaten in one house. You shall not carry any of the meat outside of the house. Do not break any of its bones.

Each home celebrated as a unit. They did not take any of the meat of the lamb outside. They did not break the bones of the animal.

Exodus 12:47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

All Israel was to observe this ceremony.

Exodus 12:48 When a stranger shall live as a foreigner with you, and will keep the Passover to Yahweh, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one who is born in the land: but no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Those outside of Israel could observe these days, but they had to become circumcised in order to do so.

Exodus 12:49 One law shall be to him who is born at home, and to the stranger who lives as a foreigner among you.”

The same ceremonies would be followed, whether a family of Israelites or a family or hired workers, temporary residents or slaves.

### **Conclusion**

Exodus 12:50 All the children of Israel did so. As Yahweh commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

These Israelites did just as Moses and Aaron and required.

*Exodus 12*

Exodus 12:51 *That same day, Yahweh brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.*  
(WEB, used throughout this entire summary; I capitalized at least one pronoun in their translation)

All of Israel was thus brought out of the land of Egypt by God, at the hand of Moses.

# EXODUS 13

## Exodus 13:1–22

### Outline of Chapter 13:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Exodus 13:1–2   | <b>Consecration of the Firstborn</b>                       |
| Exodus 13:3–7   | <b>The Feast of Unleavened Bread</b>                       |
| Exodus 13:8–10  | <b>Continuing the Traditions</b>                           |
| Exodus 13:11–15 | <b>Consecration of the Firstborn Part II</b>               |
| Exodus 13:16    | <b>These Things are for a Sign</b>                         |
| Exodus 13:17–22 | <b>Moses Continues Leading the People on Their Journey</b> |

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| v. 2  | <b>A Brief Look at Sanctification in the Old Testament</b>          |
| v. 18 | <b>Route of the Exodus</b> (a map)                                  |
| v. 19 | <b>A Casket of Bones Representing Joseph's Bones</b> (a photograph) |
| v. 20 | <b>The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire</b> (two graphics)               |

I have found it helpful to go back and review each chapter in 1–3 lessons. Below, I will use the Urim-Thummim Version (UTV). In vv. 9 & 16 I inserted information to help explain what these two verses are actually saying, as they have been distorted by certain Hebrew groups over the centuries.

There are times when I am going through these passages, and information which we have not covered before comes to mind. I say this because, it is important for you to read these reviews. Not only does it help you to nail down this chapter more in your own mind, but there may be some lessons and applications not covered before.

Most of this chapter is Moses speaking to the people, telling them about the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 3–10). Moses tells the people to connect what they are experiencing—their deliverance by Y<sup>e</sup>howah—and to relate that to the feast. During the feast, they are to tell their children what took place here in Egypt and how God brought them out with a strong hand. This was to be a part of Israel's consciousness throughout its time in the land of promise.

There is a very short section at the beginning (vv. 1–2), where God speaks to Moses about the redemption of the firstborn, which Moses explains to the people in vv. 11–15.

The final third of this chapter is about God leading the people out of Egypt, using physical manifestations to guide them.

### Consecration of the Firstborn

Exodus 13:1–2 YHWH spoke to Moses saying, **Set apart (consecrate) for Me all the firstborn of the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of animal, for they are Mine.** (Urim-Thummim Version will be used throughout this chapter summary; in some instances, I will capitalize pronouns which refer to God<sup>33</sup>)

The firstborn belong to God. All of the firstborn were going to be killed on the night of the Passover, but God passed over the homes where He saw the blood applied to the door frame as God required. He did not kill the firstborn from that household. Therefore, those firstborn, and all subsequent firstborn, in principle, belong to Him.

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<sup>33</sup> The Urim-Thummim Version is not always consistent in this regard. Here, they capitalized *Me*, but they do not capitalize *mine* (in this verse) or *he* in v. 5.

What is being taught here is, God has purchased every person in the world (although, at this point in time, the Israelites would not necessarily recognize that).

See (the short) **Doctrine of Sanctification** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) (containing links to longer doctrines on this subject).  
The abbreviated version is below:

### A Brief Look at Sanctification in the Old Testament

1. Sanctification from the standpoint of man:
  - a. Eternal Sanctification: When we believe in Jesus Christ (or Jehovah of the Old Testament), we are eternally set apart to God.
  - b. Temporal Sanctification: After salvation, when we fall out of fellowship, we get back into fellowship by naming our sins to God. As we grow spiritually, we are sanctified in our spiritual growth.
  - c. Ultimate Sanctification: When we receive our resurrection body in the end time.
2. Sanctification from the standpoint of God:
  - a. God sets something aside for Himself. We might reasonably say, God sets something aside to be in service to Him or to glorify Him.
3. The primary Hebrew word rendered sanctification is qâdash (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DAHSH*], which means *consecrate, sanctify, dedicate, hallow, set apart*. These are its Qal meanings. It is also spelled qâdêsh (קָדֵשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DAYSH*]. Strong's #6942 BDB #872.
4. *To consecrate* is the opposite of *to make unclean, to defile*. The word for *making unclean* is tāmê' (טָמֵא) [pronounced *taw-MAY*], which means *to make unclean, to be unclean, to defile*. In the Piel, it generally means *to declare or to pronounce unclean*. Strong's #2930 BDB #379.
5. Sanctification (or consecration) is the opposite of defilement and profaning. Leviticus 21:1–15 Genesis 2:3–4 is the first occurrence of qâdash. Here, God sets the Sabbath (Saturday) apart as something special, something different; it will stand as a memorial for all time as a testimony to God's creation. Even the most resolute heathen follow a seven-day work week pattern. Nothing is said about man resting from his work at this point in time, as Adam doesn't require a rest. God provided everything necessary for Adam in six days. In any case, it is interesting to note that, even under perfect environment, apart from sin, the Sabbath was established as *set apart* (or *sanctified*) to God. It might be interesting to determine exactly what the sanctification of the 7<sup>th</sup> day meant during a time of sinlessness.
6. In Israel, God took the Levites as His own, instead of to the firstborn of Israel. This taught the Israelites that there is substitution involved in sanctification. Num. 3:12–13 8:17
7. Things which were sanctified in the Old Testament:
  - a. The people of Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai; their clothes were to be clean and they were not to have intimate relations with women. Exodus 19:14–15
  - b. Apparently Mount Sinai was consecrated, which means that the Israelites could not go up onto the mountain (Exodus 19:23). This is because this is where Moses communed with God. Even though the people were ceremonially clean, they were not truly clean, and could not have direct contact with God (this also foreshadows Jesus Christ, as the only man Who could have direct contact with God the Father).
  - c. The Sabbath Day and the Sabbath year were to be consecrated or sanctified. Exodus 20:8–11 31:13–17 Leviticus 25:10
  - d. The priests, the Tabernacle and the furniture of the Tabernacle were all sanctified.
  - e. The people of God were sanctified.
8. The biggest mistake of Moses was striking the rock twice rather than speaking to it, in order to produce water (Num. 20:2–11). God would not allow Moses to go into the land because he did not treat God as sanctified. God told Moses exactly what to do: he was to *speak* to the rock; and Moses, in a fit of anger, struck the rock instead. Num. 20:12 27:14 Deuteronomy 32:51
  - a. The first time that Moses struck the rock, at the first no-water crisis, that represented Jesus Christ being struck (judged) for our sins. That only needed to be done one time.
  - b. The second time that there was a no-water crisis, Moses only needed to speak to the rock, which would have been the act of rebound (confessing their sins). The rock would not be struck a second time because Jesus Christ only dies for our sins once.



## A Brief Look at Sanctification in the Old Testament

9. When Israel was about to cross the Jordan, Joshua told the people to sanctify themselves the day before. Joshua 3:5
10. In conclusion, sanctification, in the Old Testament, is presented as something which is set apart; something which is different from all else; something which is different from this natural life. Our sanctification identifies us with God, who is separate from this world.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

#### The Feast of Unleavened Bread

Exodus 13:3 [And Moses said to the people, Remember this day that you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by strength of hand YHWH brought you out from this place, there will no leavened bread be eaten.](#)

The people to whom Moses is speaking is known as the Exodus generation (as we progress further in Moses' writings, I will break them down into two groups). He is telling them to keep in mind the events of this day; and to remember that their bread was not leavened (as there was not enough time for the leavening process to take place).

The unleavened bread was a look backward to the Exodus, when the sons of Israel did not have enough time to let their bread rise. Therefore, they initially made and ate what we might call flatbread.

Exodus 13:4 [You came out this day in the month Abib.](#)

Abib is the first month to the Hebrew people; and this event was to be celebrated by all the Hebrew people.

Exodus 13:5 [And it will come about when YHWH will bring you to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and the Jebusites, which He affirmed to your forefathers to bestow on you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you will observe this service in this month.](#)

God is bringing the Hebrew people out of the land of Egypt and, eventually, into the land of Canaan. They are to observe this event in this *new* land—the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover—every year. The things which they do serve as reminders of when Israel exited Egypt.

At this time, there were at least 5 major groups of people who occupied the land (this list changes from time to time in the Mosaic writings).

At this point, the people would be taking this on faith. The land of promise is like another world to them, because they have been living in Egypt for 400 years.

Exodus 13:6 [Seven days you will eat unleavened bread, and on the 7th day it will be a festival to YHWH.](#)

The people are to eat unleavened bread for 7 days, and the 7<sup>th</sup> day would be a special feast day.

Exodus 13:7 [Unleavened bread will be eaten 7 days, and anything fermented is not to be seen with you, leaven will not be seen with you in all your regions.](#)

All that is leavened or fermented was not to be seen among the people.

#### Continuing the Traditions

Exodus 13:8 And you will tell your son in that day saying, this is done because of what YHWH did to me when I came out of Egypt.

When these days are celebrated, the father is supposed to explain to his son what had taken place on the day of the Exodus. The father is to connect the tradition of celebration with the actual historical events that it represents. The father passes this along to the next generation.

Exodus 13:9 This [Feast of Unleavened Bread] will be for a sign to you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that YHWH's Law may be in your mouth for with a strong hand has YHWH brought you out of Egypt.

Notice the insertion of the additional text. Moses is *not* saying, "Here is a great idea for some new religious accessories that you might wear." God is not designing new types of clothing to be worn on the hand and foreheads of the people. The people are to know all about this event—all the things which took place (the things which we are studying). This knowledge and understanding is to be as perspicuous to them as something on their hand or on their forehead.

We know that these two things are symbols and not actual articles of special clothing because, even though God goes into great detail about the type of clothing to be worn by the priests and by the High Priest, there is no such detail provided for some kind of special accessory ensemble that goes upon the hand and forehead.

Several translations try to fill in the missing subject here:

Exodus 13:9 **This celebration** will be like wearing a sign on your hand or on your forehead, because then you will pass on to others the teaching of the LORD, whose mighty power brought you out of Egypt. (CEV)

Exodus 13:9 **This festival** will be like a mark on your hand or a reminder on your forehead that the teachings of the LORD are always to be a part of your conversation. Because the LORD used his mighty hand to bring you out of Egypt, (God's Word™)

See also the Easy to Read Version and the Unfolding Word Simplified Text.

A number of translations express this as a simile (using the words *like* and *as*) rather than as a metaphor (using the word *to be*), even though this is a metaphor in the Greek text. This is probably due to English readers not fully understanding of how to read and understand English. The most common example of a metaphor which is not being understood is found in these words of Jesus: "**This is My blood and this is My body,**" when He was referring to the grape juice and unleavened bread. As a result, there is a cult-like devotion to the idea that communion grape juice magically (they would prefer the word *mystically*) turns into the literal blood of Christ, and the bread magically/mystically turns into His literal body. No, that does not happen—this is a metaphor. It is very much like a simile, except the words *like* and *as* are not used. How do we know this? No one has ever coughed up the grape juice (or wine, if that is what is drunk) and it has been mystically turned into blood.

You may ask the obvious question, if something is expressed in the Bible as a metaphor, how do we know? How do we know that one paragraph is telling us what is real, but the next paragraph tells us something which is metaphorical? How do we really know? Let me suggest this amazing way of differentiating between reality and metaphors: common sense. This is like you distinguish such things in real life, outside of the Bible. Let's say that Charley Brown tells you that his new truck is a monster, do you think that it is supernatural with scary eyes, or that it is just really large? If Lucy Van Pelt describes her own life as a *train wreck*, do you think that she just got hit by a train? If you were able to read and figure out the logical option, then you understood what both people meant by using common sense.

Throughout my commentary on the Bible, you have noticed that, once and awhile, I examine what is happening, but is not fully explained. On occasion, I will present a few options. Then we consider each option logically.

Sometimes we can come to a number of solid conclusions simply based upon the meaning of the Scriptures by simply applying some logic and common sense.

Back to the text:

Exodus 13:10 *You will therefore observe this statute seasonally from year to year.* (Now returning to the Urim-Thummim Version)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be observed every year.

### **Consecration of the Firstborn Part II**

Exodus 13:11–12 *And after YHWH brings you into the land of the Canaanites as he affirmed to you and your forefathers and bestows it to you, then you will set apart to YHWH all the firstborn of the womb, and every firstborn that comes from your animals, the males will belong to YHWH.*

God would bring the people into the land of Canaan; but they were to set aside the firstborn of men and animals to God. Because God did not kill the firstborn of Israel, these therefore belonged to Him.

By doing this, something is being taught here. Maybe the reader/doer understands and maybe they do not.

Exodus 13:13 *And every firstborn of a donkey you will ransom with a lamb and if you will not ransom it, then you will break its neck and all the firstborn of Adam among your children will you ransom.*

God describes exactly what the ransom would be for the firstborn.

This all looks forward to the ultimate ransom of Jesus Christ for our souls.

Much of the Mosaic Law, given to us in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, is related to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Putting the narrative aside, the law is often broken down into 3 sections, one of those sections being called a complete **Christology** (all of the rituals, holy days, the design of the Tabernacle and its furniture, and the animal sacrifices). This does not mean that the participants in these various rituals understood that this looked forward to Jesus. However, ideally speaking, they were to make the connection when the True Lamb of God came onto the scene (John 1:29). The so-called religious Jew, after the crucifixion, should have been able to make the connection between these animal sacrifices which they have been offering so long to Jesus, Who died for our sins.

Subsequent generations will study the Old Testament, and line it up with Jesus in the New and some of them will recognize the many parallels between ceremonial portion of the Law and the life and work of Christ Jesus.

Let me suggest that, over time, millions of Jews have read these various passages on these rituals (which rituals they no longer practice), and God reveals the gospel of Jesus Christ to them through those rituals. It all fits together; they get it; and they believe in Jesus. Obviously, this is not every Jew—but many have believed in Jesus over the years. There are many Jews, throughout the past 2000 years who make these connections and believe in the True Messiah as a result.

Exodus 13:14 *In future times when your son asks you saying, what is this? Then you will say to him, by strength of hand YHWH brought us out from Egypt from the house of slavery.*

On many occasions, sons will ask their fathers, “Why exactly are we doing this?” And the father is to have a ready answer for his son. Both the traditions and the meaning of the traditions were to be passed on from generation to generation.

Exodus 13:15 And it came about when Pharaoh would hardly let us go that YHWH killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. That is why I sacrifice to YHWH all the firstborn of the womb that are males, but all the firstborn of My children I ransom.

God killed the firstborn of men and animals on the night of the Passover (apart from those *covered* by the blood<sup>34</sup>). All of the firstborn belong to God; so a sacrifice must be made to God in order to preserve the lives of all future firstborn.

### These Things are for a Sign

Exodus 13:16 This [act of redeeming the firstborn of man and animals] will be for a sign upon your hand, and for bindings between your eyes, for by strength of hand YHWH brought us out of Egypt.

Note the inserted words at the beginning of v. 16 (again, specific translations of this verse also make clear what *this* refers to).

The hand is used for what a person does; the eyes are a means of perception (the people to whom Moses is speaking will observe with their own eyes all that is taking place). By what they do and by what they have seen, this generation is to celebrate the great feasts of the Hebrew people, and, more importantly, they are to know exactly what these feasts mean.

### Moses Continues Leading the People on Their Journey

Exodus 13:17 Then when Pharaoh sent the people away, Elohim did not lead them by the route to the land of the Philistines even though that was shorter, for Elohim said, Unless the people regret leaving when they see war and then turn back towards Egypt.

The route between Egypt and Canaan is not that far. Moses did not get lost leading his people through the desert-wilderness. Moses, by his training to become king of Egypt, had an excellent knowledge of geography. He knew exactly where he and the people were at any given time. There is no confusion on the part of Moses (as we will see, God is doing the actual leading). As we study this, do not think that the Jews are *wandering* because Moses has lost his way or is confused about where he is. Their wandering is going to mirror their souls, which souls are wandering from God.

God could have led the people directly to Canaan, but they would have retreated when coming face to face with the Philistines. The Philistines and the Jebusites were probably the most fearsome warriors in the land of Canaan. It will take Israel a very long time to expel them from their borders. Judges 1 tells us why these various peoples remained in the land of Canaan, given to Israel from God.

Exodus 13:18 But Elohim led the people by the desert route of the Red Sea, and the children of Israel went up arrayed for battle out of the land of Egypt.

The translation used here has *arrayed for battle* as a description of the people of Israel. This simply describes how they look when moving out of Egypt. They looked like organized regiments going out to battle.

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<sup>34</sup> When I used this phrase *covered by the blood*, did you think that I meant that the survivors literally had blood covering them? Or did you understand this to mean, there was blood on the door sill for the house where they lived? Common sense.



God took the people along a south-easterly route (if the people were going to Canaan, they would be traveling northeast).



**Route of the Exodus** (a map), from [Bible News1](#); accessed November 24, 2021. Some of these maps will have a single route; other maps will show multiple possible routes. The green route above is what we are currently studying.

The Israelites are moving as an organized army would. They are not a mob running for their lives.

Exodus 13:19 Moses also took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the children of Israel pledge saying, Elohim will certainly visit you and you will carry up my bones out of this place with you.

The Hebrew people were very big on having visuals (more accurately, God often communicated to the Hebrew people by visuals). Joseph, of the patriarchs, spent more time in Egypt (a greater percentage of his life) than did any of his brothers (Joseph and all of his brothers lived out the end of their lives in Egypt). Joseph's father, Jacob, although he died in Egypt, was buried in Canaan. There was a great procession from Egypt to Canaan to bury his body there (this was attended by his own family and by many Egyptians).



Joseph, on the other hand, had become the prime minister of Egypt. It may have been somewhat of a slap in the face for him to require burial in Canaan as his father had. However, he did request that he not be buried and that his body would be taken up when the people left Egypt for Canaan. Moses is fulfilling this request (this verse is another indication that Moses and the Hebrew people knew the book of Genesis).

**A Casket of Bones Representing Joseph's Bones** (a photograph); from **Clergy Stuff**; accessed December 1, 2021. I have seen a number of artistic representations of the bones of Joseph; however, this may be closer to what was carried along with Israel when they left Egypt.

Exodus 13:20 **Then they took their journey from Succoth and encamped in Etham, by the edge of the desert.**

Some of the places where the Hebrew people camped were not actual cities or villages. The place either had a name already given it; or the Hebrew people gave it some sort of name.

There are at least two places named Succoth in the Bible. One is in Canaan (Genesis 33:17) and this one is in Egypt, not far from Rameses (Exodus 12:37 13:20, Num. 33:5–6).

Etham is only mentioned here and in Numbers 33:6. It is not an Egyptian name.



Moses, the writer of these words, would have known where they were (and therefore, he would have known if a stopping place had a name). If they stopped in a region which lacked a specific name, then Moses (or the people) may have given it a name.

Exodus 13:21 **YHWH went before them by day in a Pillar of Cloud-mass to lead them on the journey, and by night in a Pillar of Supernatural Fire, to give them light to go by day and night.**

God led the people out of Egypt and put them on a route. The route would be mapped out by supernatural means. When the people traveled in the day, there would be a cloud mass guiding them. At night, there would be a pillar of fire. Both of these pillars would have been very unusual.

Exodus 13:22 **He did not take away the Pillar of Cloud-mass by day, nor the Pillar of Supernatural Fire by night from in front of the people.** (Urim-Thummim Version used throughout this chapter summary)

Despite the many failures of this people, God continued to provide them with this supernatural guidance (we have not yet begun to examine their many failures).

Many believers today, when they read the Bible, begin to look around and try to find supernatural stuff in our lives, because they believe in Jesus. Although God is fully capable of providing us with a miracle every hour on the

hour, He does not do that. We have the complete Word of God. This is far, far more powerful than any set of miracles.

**The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire** (two graphics); both from [www.johnsanidopoulos.com](http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com) ; accessed December 1, 2021.



This exodus generation (actually two generations of Israelites) saw a great many signs and wonders in their lives. The reason for this was, God was changing programs. Previous to this, there was no nation Israel. There was just a small extended family of men descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, now they number as many as 2 million. God will now establish the great nation of Israel (over the next 40 years), which nation will represent God for the next 1500 years. When such a big change of program takes place, God brings in signs and miracles to confirm that this is of Him.

# EXODUS 14

## Exodus 14:1–31

### Outline of Chapter 14:

- vv. 1–18 **The Egyptian Army Pursues Israel (once again)**
- vv. 19–20 **The Angel of God Protects the Israelite Encampment**
- vv. 21–22 **The Israeli People Cross the Red Sea on Dry Land**
- vv. 23–29 **The Egyptian Army Follows Israel and Is Drowned**
- vv. 30–31 **The Deliverance of Israel by God Is Recognized**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- Introduction **Equivalent Proper Nouns in the Scriptures 2009**
- v. 22 **Israel's Escape from Egypt** (a graphic)
- v. 31 **The Exodus and Salvation**
- v. 31 **Karl Lohman's Like Unto Me: Moses as a Type of Christ**
- v. 31 **Typology of Moses and Jesus** (from Agape Bible Study)
- v. 31 **Similarities between Moses and Christ** (A. W. Pink—edited)

The translation which I used below is called *The Scriptures 2009*.

Regarding the Scriptures 2009:

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The translation used throughout this review is known as *the Scriptures 2009*. Here is a table so that you will understand some of the unique features of this translation:

| Equivalent Proper Nouns in the Scriptures 2009 |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Scriptures 2009                                | More common                                       | Explanation for the Scriptures 2009:  |
| הוהי   | YHWH, JHWH, Jehovah, Yahweh, Y <sup>e</sup> howah | The is the actual name of God as it is found in the Hebrew. It is a reference to Y <sup>e</sup> howah, the God of Israel. The Hebrew letters are written right to left. |
| <i>Mitsrayim</i>                               | Egypt   | <i>Mitsrayim</i> is a transliteration from the Hebrew.  |
| <i>Yisra'el</i>                                | Israel  | A better transliteration from the Hebrew.   |
| Mosheh   | Moses   | A better transliteration from the Hebrew.   |

**Crossing the Red Sea** (I have kept the e-sword titles and subtitles)

**The Egyptian Army Pursues Israel (once again)**



It is God who speaks to Moses and tells him exactly what is taking place in Egypt.

Exodus 14:1–2 And הוהי [= *JHWH, Jehovah*] spoke to Moshe [= *Moses*], saying, “Speak to the children of Yisra’el [Israel], that they turn and camp before Pi Haḥiroth, between Miḡdol and the sea, opposite Ba’al Tsephon – camp before it by the sea.

God speaks to Moses in vv. 1–4, telling him what is going on (God is able to see the big picture, and Moses is not).

Although it is hard to understand by these first two verses, God has guided Israel into what appears to be a dead end. If Pharaoh struck them now, the Hebrew people would be in the worst possible position to defend themselves. They would have nowhere to run to, nowhere to hide. Furthermore, they are not soldiers—they have no training and they have no weapons. Even though the Egyptian army is numerically much smaller, they have the weapons, the chariots, the training and the killer instinct.

Exodus 14:3 “For Pharaoh shall say of the children of Yisra’el, ‘They are entangled in the land, the wilderness has closed them in.’

It sounds as if Pharaoh is right there with a pair of binoculars watching them. What this indicates is, there are eyes on Israel even at this time. These are Egyptians at lookout stations all along the outskirts of Egypt. They are able to communicate what they see to Pharaoh.

Exodus 14:4 “And I shall strengthen the heart of Pharaoh, and he shall pursue them. But I am to be esteemed through Pharaoh and over all his army, and the Mitsrites [= *Egyptians*] shall know that I am הוהי.” And they did so.

God is still speaking, so He is promising to strengthen Pharaoh’s heart (I chose this translation because it accurately translates the word *châzaq* (חָזַק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*] (translated here, *strengthen*). Although Pharaoh had been beaten down by the judgments of God, God has given him strength enough to continue to resist Him.

With v. 5, the narrative shifts from God speaking to Moses to 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient.

Exodus 14:5 And it was reported to the sovereign of Mitsrayim that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people. And they said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Yisra’el go from serving us?”

The people that Pharaoh and his servants turns against are the people of Israel.

Because Pharaoh now has a feeling of additional strength, he begins to question his decision to let Israel go (this decision was made by the entire country). His negative volition toward the Hebrew people and toward their God has always been there; but he has not had the inner strength to access it for awhile.

You will note inconsistent argument being made here. “We should have never let the sons of Israel leave.” Yet, despite these words, the Egyptian army is not going out to regather the Hebrew people and bring them back. Egypt is going out to destroy the Hebrews. Having enough inner strength to act on the content of one’s soul does not make a person more rational.

Exodus 14:6 So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him.

Pharaoh gathered together an army to go and destroy Israel. Leading the army would be a regiment of chariots. Pharaoh himself would be a part of the chariot force.

Exodus 14:7 [And he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Mitsrayim with officers over all of them.](#)

Pharaoh puts together 600 chariots; they would make the first strike against his enemies. It appears that there will be an additional number of chariots behind them.

Exodus 14:8 [And הוה strengthened the heart of Pharaoh sovereign of Mitsrayim, and he pursued the children of Yisra'el, but the children of Yisra'el went out defiantly.](#)

God is not inserting hatred or anger into Pharaoh's heart. God is giving Pharaoh the strength to express his anger and hatred towards Israel.

Pharaoh's resistance to God is strong. He has clearly not learned his lesson, even to this time.

Exodus 14:9 [And the Mitsrites pursued them, and all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Haĥiroth, before Ba'al Tsephon.](#)

Pharaoh knew exactly where to go. He knew the geography and topography of where the Israelites were. The people of Israel were being watched. Pharaoh had the big picture of where the children of Israel were and how they were moving.

Recall that God has the sons of Israel double-back, so they are in an untenable position. They are trapped with Pharaoh's chariots behind them and the sea is in front of them. We do not know what other natural terrain is to be found here. I suspect that there is a mountain range, which helps to hem them in as well. Pharaoh's lookouts were probably watching the people of Israel from an extension of those mountains.

Exodus 14:10 [And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Yisra'el lifted their eyes and saw the Mitsrites coming up after them. And they were greatly afraid, so the children of Yisra'el cried out to הוה.](#)

There will be a period of time during which the Egyptians and the Israelites can see one another. The purpose is to allow Israel the full knowledge of the situation in which they were in.

Having recognized their situation, they first call out to God in this time of trouble.

However, they have Moses right there to blame. And they will do that next.

Exodus 14:11 [And they said to Mosheh, "Did you take us away to die in the wilderness because there are no burial-sites in Mitsrayim? What is this you have done to us, to bring us up out of Mitsrayim?"](#)

This is actually a very clever saying, and I suspect that it was repeated many times among the Israelites, because of its cleverness. Then they said it to Moses (not unlike a clever meme which might be posted and re-posted).



The firstborn of the Egyptians had all just died. There would have been a massive number of burials taking place in Egypt at this time. “There are no more graves in Egypt, so you have brought us out here to die?” It is actually a meaningless statement, albeit clever.

Exodus 14:12 “Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Mitsrayim, saying, ‘Leave us alone and let us serve the Mitsrites?’ For it would have been better for us to serve the Mitsrites than to die in the wilderness.”

The Israelites are guilty of having a very selective memory at this point. They are resorting to, “I told you so.” At the first, when Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, Pharaoh responded by increasing the workload on the Israelites to an impossible standard. They could not meet this standard and their leaders were beaten because they could not meet this standard. Israel then told Moses, “We wish that you never came here.”

However, this new standard of work only lasted for a few days. Given the widespread destruction of Egypt which followed (the plagues or judgments), normal life throughout all Egypt was completely interrupted. Although the Hebrew people faced an impossible workload, they were only subjected to this additional injustice for a few days to perhaps a week at the most.

I said *selective memory*, so what are the Israelites leaving out? At one point, prior to Moses and Aaron showing up, their burden of slavery was so great, that they cried out to the heavens (it is not clear if they were calling to God or not). When Moses and Aaron first arrived and God did a few miracles through them, they were accepted by the elders as having come from God. Because the leaders were initially behind Moses and Aaron; the people were also behind them.

At this point in our narrative, the people have come to Moses and they complain directly to him.

Exodus 14:13 And Mosheh said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the deliverance of הוה, which He does for you today. For the Mitsrites whom you see today, you are never, never to see again.

What is most fascinating is, Moses does not hear the complaint and then run to God with it (remember, the Egyptian army is moving towards them right now). His answer is based upon his understanding of God.

So, Moses let them have their say, pretty much ignored what they said, and then told them how it was going to be.

Moses, based upon his understanding of the plan of God, tells his people to not be afraid, to not do anything, just to observe the deliverance of God.

Bear in mind that, up to this point, God has not told Moses what He is going to do. He did not say, “The Egyptians are going to come at you in their chariots, and then this is what I will do next.” Nevertheless, without being first assured by God of what is going to happen, Moses tries to relieve the anxiety of the people. So Moses gets it. He does not require God to tell him each step of the way, or to reassure him.

Exodus 14:14 “הוה does fight for you, and you keep silent.”

Moses essentially tells the people, “Shut up and watch. God will fight for you.”

Ideally speaking, the people are to see what God is going to do, and they should place this into their memories, so that, the next time they are in a jam, they understand that their God will deal with it. In fact, God has dealt with every problem that they would ever have in eternity past. God knew their every problem of the Exodus generation in eternity past and, at that time, made provision for them.

Between vv. 14 & 15, Moses apparently cries out to God. God will speak to Moses in vv. 15–18:

Exodus 14:15 And יהוה said to Mosheh, “Why do you cry to Me? Speak to the children of Yisra’ël, and let them go forward.

God now gives specific directions to Moses of where to lead the people. Apparently, the children of Israel are poised to walk toward the Sea of Reeds. There does not appear to be anything else in front of them.

Exodus 14:16 “And you, lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and let the children of Yisra’ël go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

The same rod which Moses would lift up and a judgment would come down upon the Egyptians; he is to lift up this rod over the waters in front of them.

Exodus 14:17 “And I, see I am strengthening the hearts of the Mitsrites, and they shall follow them. And I am to be esteemed [or, *glorified, honored*] through Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen.

God tells Moses, “I have given strength to the hearts of the Egyptians.”

*They shall follow them* means that these Egyptians will follow Israel, wherever Israel goes.<sup>35</sup>

The Egyptians feel anger and hatred towards God and God’s people; and God will give them the strength to act upon the hatred in their souls.

By the actions and events that follow, God will be glorified.

Exodus 14:18 “And the Mitsrites shall know that I am יהוה, when I am esteemed through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

“The Egyptians will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah,” God says to Moses.

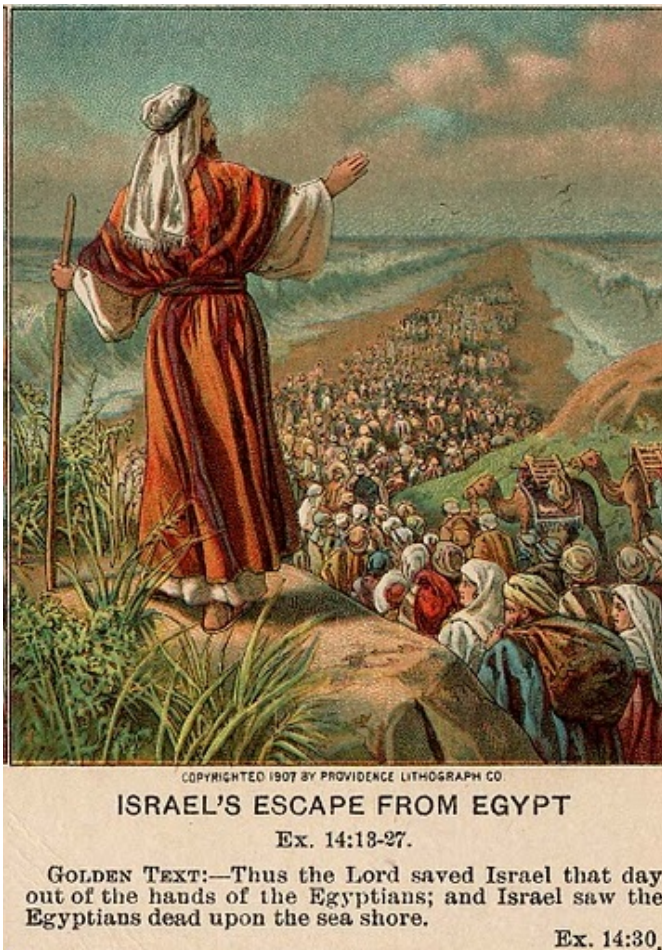
### **The Angel of God Protects the Israelite Encampment**

Exodus 14:19–20 And the Messenger of Elohim, who went before the camp of Yisra’ël, moved and went behind them. And the column of cloud went from before them and stood behind them, and came between the camp of the Mitsrites and the camp of Yisra’ël. And it was the cloud and the darkness, and it gave light by night, and the one did not come near the other all the night.

The *Messenger (Angel) of Elohim* is Jesus Christ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Member of the Trinity. He is the God Who is revealed; He is the God Who has direct contact with man.

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<sup>35</sup> It sounds, by this translation, that the Egyptians will follow *their own hearts*; but *heart* (in the Hebrew) is actually a masculine singular noun; and *them* is a 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix.



The Angel of Elohim manifests Himself as a cloud, and He fills this particular region with an almost impenetrable cloud cover. The Egyptians are unable to break through and find the Israelites. This does not disturb the Egyptians, as they know that the Israelites are trapped between them and the waterfront. A late-night fog near a waterway does not strike them as being unusual. A comfortable rest prior to a day of slaughter would have been well-received by the Egyptian army.

On the other side, the Israelites have light during that same evening. They cannot see the Egyptians, but they can see Moses and they can see the sea of reeds before them.

So, even though the Egyptian army was relatively near to Israel, God made it impossible for them to interact. Neither encampment could see the other.

### **The Israeli People Cross the Red Sea on Dry Land**

Exodus 14:21 [And Mosheh stretched out his hand over the sea. And הוּי caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.](#)

God had told Moses what to do next. For all of the judgments by God against Egypt, Moses would employ his hand or arm and/or staff; and God would work through Moses. Essentially, Moses would point to the place where God would do His work.

Exodus 14:22 [And the children of Yisra'el went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right and on their left.](#)

It is fascinating to me how God works. God did not make the water disappear for a period of time, but He used the wind to push it back and hold it in place. God uses seemingly natural events to work great acts of power.

I have roughly guessed that it was 1 or 2 miles across this waterway; and that God stacked up the waters perhaps 3 or 4 miles apart. We need a region large enough that all Israel can cross over it in a few hours; and it needs to be large enough so that the entire Egyptian army can fit into that same region all at the same time.

**Israel's Escape from Egypt** (a graphic); from [Joshua Cottrell](#); accessed May 25, 2022.

### **The Egyptian Army Follows Israel and Is Drowned**

Exodus 14:23 [And the Mitsrites pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.](#)

Pharaoh and his army continue after the Israelites in hot pursuit. After a night of heavy fog, the Egyptians can apparently see them, and the Israelites have crossed over the sea in the open region caused by God. Their elite chariot brigade went first, followed by Egyptian soldiers on horses and other chariots.

Exodus 14:24 And it came to be, in the morning watch, that הוה looked down upon the army of the Mitsrites through the column of fire and cloud, and He brought the army of the Mitsrites into confusion.

God caused some confusion to the Egyptian army, so they are in the midst of a sea (with the waters pushed back) and suddenly confused, troubled or discomfited.

Exodus 14:25 And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty. And the Mitsrites said, "Let us flee from the face of Yisra'el, for הוה fights for them against the Mitsrites."

When the chariots began to malfunction, the Egyptians became disconcerted. Some of them realized that they were fighting the God of Israel once again.

Under normal circumstances, the chariots would move at a great speed. Catching up to the Israelites would have been a very easy thing for Egypt to do. But they were as if in a dream, where you want to move faster, but are unable to.

Exodus 14:26 Then הוה said to Mosheh, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, and let the waters come back upon the Mitsrites, on their chariots, and on their horsemen."

God again uses Moses to reveal what is going to be done. Moses cannot make the waters come back over the Egyptian army—all he can do is stretch out his hand over the sea. God will bring the waters down upon the Egyptians. Moses, by lifting up his arm simply indicates that God is about to act.

Exodus 14:27–28 And Mosheh stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its usual flow, at the break of day, with the Mitsrites fleeing into it. Thus הוה overthrew the Mitsrites in the midst of the sea, and the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them, and not even one was left of them.

The Egyptian army is in the midst of the sea. And, until Moses stretched out his hand, it was an open valley. But now, the waters return and drown the Egyptians. Every Egyptian in the army in the midst of this waterway is drowned.

Exodus 14:29 And the children of Yisra'el walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right and on their left.

The sons of Israel crossed over this waterway walking upon dry ground. On both sides of them, the waters had been stacked up.

### **The Deliverance of Israel by God Is Recognized**

Exodus 14:30 Thus הוה saved Yisra'el that day out of the hand of the Mitsrites, and Yisra'el saw the Mitsrites dead on the seashore.

God saved Israel and He destroyed the Egyptians. The entire Egyptian army, which had hoped to destroy Israel, were drowned before the Israelites. Their dead bodies began to wash up onto the shore.



Exodus 14:31 And Yisra'el saw the great work which הוה had done in Mitsrayim, and the people feared הוה, and believed הוה and His servant Mosheh.

There was a faith of all Israelites directed toward God; and they believed God's servant, Moses, as well. We will see that this will last only as long as they are not facing any problems.

We will learn an important lesson from this: miracles will not provide a sustaining faith. The faith exercised by a believer towards God has to come from his soul, and, therefore, from the resources in his soul. A verse of Scripture may provide you with more comfort or strength than seeing miracles as great as we have studied. God, through His Word, gives power to our souls.

The ESV (capitalized) is used below.

## The Exodus and Salvation

1. The state of man:
  - 1) The Israelites were in a hopeless situation in Egypt. They had been enslaved, and the Egyptians were working them so hard, that they cried out into the heavens.
  - 2) Man is born as a slave to sin. R. B. Thieme, Jr. called this the slave market of sin.<sup>1</sup> All men are born into this slave market of sin. We have no means by which we may purchase ourselves to be removed from it.
2. God works through a human mediator:
  - 1) God worked through Moses with the Exodus generation.
  - 2) God works through Jesus to save all mankind.
  - 3) The writer of Hebrews speaks of both Moses and Jesus: **Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.** (Hebrews 3:1–6)
3. God reveals Himself to His people:
  - 1) God revealed Himself through Moses. Exodus 34:6–7 **The LORD passed before him [Moses] and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."** What God revealed to Moses, Moses was to tell to the people.
  - 2) God reveals Himself through Jesus Christ. John 1:17–18 **For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, Who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known.**
4. Redemption (which means payment):
  - 1) God promises to purchase the people of Israel. When speaking to Moses, God said: **"Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.'**" (Exodus 6:6–7).



## The Exodus and Salvation

- 2) Jesus redeems us by His spiritual death on the cross. 1Peter 2:24a **He Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.** Titus 2:14 **[Jesus] gave Himself for us to **redeem** us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.**
5. The Passover, which was a part of the Exodus narrative, illustrates the salvation of man:
  - 1) A lamb without spot and without blemish was chosen for each home. This illustrates Jesus Christ. 1Peter 1:18–19 **...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.**
  - 2) The lamb was to be watched for several days; just as Israel watched the Lord in His public ministry.
  - 3) The lamb was slaughtered, and its blood placed on both sides of the doorframe and at the top (so that it would drip down on the threshold). This was a type looking forward to Jesus dying for our sins, having bled from His head, hands and feet.<sup>2</sup>
  - 4) All those in the household were to eat the flesh of this lamb. Eating the flesh of the lamb is analogous to exercising faith in Jesus Christ. John 6:53–56 **So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."** We are certainly not saved by cannibalism; but by exercising faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 36). Again, eating is analogous to exercising faith in the efficacious death of our Lord.
    - (1) The analogy is this: every person has the ability to eat, which is actually quite the complex process when taken as a whole. We take the food into our mouths and masticate it, but what happens after this is a grace function designed by God for our bodies.
    - (2) Every person also has the ability to believe and men believe all kinds of things, both reasonable and unreasonable. However, believing in Jesus is a grace function for our souls. The faith that we exercise in Jesus has no merit, but God the Holy Spirit makes that faith efficacious (that is, effective and successful to provide for us salvation).
  - 5) Wherever God saw the blood smeared on the doorframe, He passed over that house and did not kill anyone in the home. However, where there was no blood, God took the life of the firstborn in that household. 1Corinthians 5:7b **For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**
6. The priesthood and the special nation status:
  - 1) God chose Israel (Psalm 33:12 Isaiah 41:8 44:1). God speaking to Israel through Moses: **"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."** (Exodus 19:5–6)
  - 2) 1Peter 2:9 **But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.** Peter is speaking to believers and all believers in the Church Age are priests. We are also a chosen race, because we are born again. We are God's possession.
7. All of the work is done by God:
  - 1) None of the work to take Israel out of Egypt was done by Israel. God did all of the work (all of the miracles and He provided all of the guidance). When God told Israel to pack up and leave, that is what Israel did.
  - 2) We offer nothing of merit for our salvation. We believe in Jesus, believing being a

## The Exodus and Salvation

nonmeritorious system of perception. Regarding Jesus, every person has some form of faith—they believe that He died for their sins or they believe that He did not.

8. God takes us from slavery into great blessing.
  - 1) God will guide Israel into the land of promise (Canaan). Moses, speaking to the people, said: "And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, then take care lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Deuteronomy 6:10–12)
  - 2) God promises the believer in the Church Age that he will be raised again and given eternal life. 1Corinthians 15:24–26 **Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.** Ephesians 1:3 **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,...**

<sup>1</sup> I don't know if this terminology is original with Bob or not. In the Chafer Theological Seminary Dictionary, the term *slave market of sin* is found, but this seminary was founded after Bob used the term.

<sup>2</sup> We are not saved by the Lord's literal blood. Our sins were poured upon Jesus Christ, and He took upon Himself the penalty for every sin that has been committed and will be committed.

I may need to revise these at a later date. However, I don't know that I could really improve on these works.

I found this set of points in two places on the internet.

Deuteronomy 18:15 **Y<sup>e</sup>howah your Elohim shall raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from among your brothers. You [all] will listen to Him.**

### Karl Lohman's *Like Unto Me: Moses as a Type of Christ*

1. Both were born at a time when Israel was under foreign domination (Moses — Egyptian bondage & Jesus — Roman bondage)
2. Both had rulers that tried to kill them shortly after their births (Exodus 1:15-22; Matthew 2:16-18)
3. Both spent time in the desert wilderness before taking on their callings (Exodus 3; Matthew 4:1-11)
4. Both dealt with wicked kings (Pharaoh — Exodus 5-12; Herod — Luke 13:31-32)
5. Both dealt with folks who hardened their hearts (Exodus 8:15; Mark 6:45-52)
6. Both dealt with lepers (Numbers 12:10-15; Matthew 8:1-4)
7. Both had the world offered to them (Hebrews 11:24-27; Matthew 4:8-9)
8. Both were shepherds (Exodus 3:1; John 10:11)
9. Both fasted for 40 days (Exodus 34:28; Luke 4:2)
10. Both climbed mountains (Exodus 34; Matthew 5:1)
11. Both were meek (Numbers 12:3; Matthew 11:29; Matthew 21:5)
12. Both were envied (Psalm 106:16; Matthew 27:18)
13. Both did some writing (Exodus 34:27; John 8:6-8)
14. Both have a connection to the law - Moses, humanly speaking, wrote the law, but Jesus Christ fulfilled the law (Deuteronomy 31:9; Matthew 5:17)
15. Both kept the Passover (Exodus 12; Hebrews 11:28; Luke 22:11; Matthew 26:17-19)
16. Both had a connection to innocent blood (Deuteronomy 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 21:7-9; Matthew 27:3-4)
17. Both sang (Exodus 15:1; Matthew 26:30)
18. Both had ministries to the nation of Israel (Exodus 3:1-10; Matthew 15:21-28)

### Karl Lohman's *Like Unto Me: Moses as a Type of Christ*

19. Both did miraculous things (no references needed)
20. Both did miraculous things to/on large bodies of water (Exodus 7:20; Exodus 14:16, 27; Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 6:45-51)
21. Both fed hungry people in a wilderness (Exodus 16; Mark 8:1-9)
22. Both provided water for thirsty people (Exodus 15:22-25; John 4:10,14)
23. Both spoke of future tribulation (Deuteronomy 4:30-31; Matthew 24:21-22)
24. Both spoke of eternal fire (Leviticus 6:12-13; Matthew 25:40-41)
25. Both paid tribute (Numbers 31:41; Matthew 17:24-27)
26. Both sent out 12 men (Numbers 13; Luke 9:1-6)
27. Both were called God's servants — "my servant" (Numbers 12:7; Matthew 12:14-21)
28. Both were prophets (Deuteronomy 34:10; John 6:14)
29. Both were priests (Exodus 40; Hebrews 4:14)
30. Both were kings (Deuteronomy 33:4-5; John 18:33-40)
31. Both were judges (Exodus 18:13; John 5:24-30)
32. Both were teachers (Deuteronomy 4:5; John 18:20)
33. Both told wicked men to depart (Numbers 16:26; Matthew 25:41)
34. Both met together on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9)
35. Both are connected through the brazen serpent (Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14)
36. Both had outstretched arms with 2 men beside them, and in both cases there was a war going on (Exodus 17:8-16; Matthew 27:38). In Moses' case, it was a physical war with Amalek. In Christ's case, it was a spiritual war with the devil (Isaiah 50:8 in the context of the crucifixion).
37. Both had people weep when they died (Deuteronomy 34:8; John 20:11)
38. Both died but did not stay in their burial places (Deuteronomy 34:5-6; Jude 9; Matthew 17:1-9; Matthew 28)
39. Both were the subject of controversies concerning their dead bodies (Jude 9; Matthew 28:11-15)
40. Both had important "dignitaries" interested in their dead bodies (Michael & the devil — Jude 9; the Pharisees, the Roman soldiers, and Pilate — Matthew 27:62-65; Mark 15:43-45)

From **Learn the Bible**; and **Cape Road Church**; both accessed June 28, 2017 (slightly edited).

#### Chapter Outline

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

| Typology of Moses and Jesus (from Agape Bible Study)  |   |
|---|---|
| MOSES   | JESUS   |
| An evil king/Pharaoh tried to kill him as a baby:<br><b>Exodus 1:22</b>   | King Herod tried to kill baby Jesus: <b>Matthew 2:16</b>                                  |
| He was hidden from the evil king/Pharaoh: <b>Exodus 2:2</b>   | An angel said to hide the child from the evil King Herod: <b>Matthew 2:13</b>             |
| Moses was sent into Egypt to preserve his life:<br><b>Exodus 2:3-4</b>  | Jesus was taken into Egypt to preserve His life:<br><b>Matthew 2:13-15</b>                |
| He was saved by women: his mother: <b>Exodus 2:3</b> ;<br>Miriam <b>Exodus 2:4</b> ;<br>Pharaoh's daughter <b>Exodus 2:5-10</b> | Saved and helped by His mother, Mary: <b>Matthew 2:14</b>                                 |
| Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses: <b>Exodus 2:10</b>  | Joseph adopted Jesus: <b>Matthew 1:25</b>   |
| Moses became a prince of Egypt: <b>Exodus 2:10</b>  | Jesus is the Prince of Peace: <b>Isaiah 9:5</b> ; <b>Matthew 28:18</b> ; <b>Luke 2:14</b> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Long period of silence from childhood to adulthood  | Long period of silence from childhood to adulthood   |
| Moses had a secret identity—he was a Jew being raised as a prince.  | Messianic secret = Jesus the Son of God  |
| He tried to save a Hebrew kinsman: <b>Exodus 2:11-12</b>  | Jesus came to save His Hebrew kinsman first: <b>Mark 7:26-28</b>   |
| Went from being a prince to a pauper: <b>Exodus 2:15-19</b>   | Went from being God to being man: <b>John 1:1-3 ; Mark 6:3</b>   |
| Saved women at a well: <b>Exodus 2:15-19</b>  | Saved a woman at a well: <b>John 4</b>   |
| Became a shepherd: <b>Exodus 3:1</b>  | He is the Good Shepherd: <b>John 10:11</b>   |
| Moses' mission was to redeem Israel from slavery to Egypt   | Jesus' mission is to redeem mankind from slavery to sin  |
| Moses was loved and supported in his ministry by his sister Miriam [in Hebrew, Miryam]  | Jesus was loved and supported in his ministry by His mother Mary [in Hebrew, Miryam]   |
| He was often rejected by his own people   | Jesus was often rejected by His own people   |
| Moses will give God's law on the mountain of Sinai: <b>Exodus 20:1-31:18 ; 34:1-35</b>  | Jesus will give the new law from the Mt. of Beatitudes: <b>Matthew 5</b>   |
| Moses spent 40 days fasting on the mountain: <b>Exodus 24:18 ; 34:28</b>  | Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert wilderness: <b>Matthew 4:2</b>   |
| Moses performs signs/ miracles  | Jesus performs signs/miracles  |
| Moses offered his life for the salvation of his people after the sin of the Golden Calf: <b>Exodus 32:32-33</b>   | Jesus offered His life for the salvation of the world: <b>Isaiah 53:12 ; Romans 5:12 ; 6:10 ; 2Corinthians 5:15-21 ; Colossians 1:19-20 ; 2:14-15 ; 1John 1:7 ; 2:2 ; etc.</b> |
| Moses is the prophet of the Old Covenant between God and man  | Jesus is the prophet, priest, and King of a New and everlasting Covenant = the universal Church  |
| From <a href="http://www.agapebiblestudy.com/">www.agapebiblestudy.com/</a> accessed June 28, 2017 (slightly edited).<br>Michal Hunt, Copyright © 2003, revised 2005 Agape Bible Study. <b>Permissions</b> All Rights Reserved. |  |

A. W. Pink in his book, *Gleanings in Genesis* lists some similarities between Moses and Christ. ESV (capitalized) used below; substituted for the KJV.

The first phrase actually refers to a parallel between Moses and Jesus.

### Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

1. His nationality. Moses was an Israelite (Ex. 2:1, 2). So, according to the flesh, was Christ.
2. His Birth. This occurred when his nation was under the dominion of a hostile power, when they were groaning under the rule of a Gentile king (Ex. 1). So the Hebrews were in bondage to the Romans when Christ was born (Matthew 2:1 cf. Luke 24: 21).
3. His destiny at birth. When Moses was born, the Pharaoh of Egypt had condemned to death all male children of the Hebrews (Exodus 1:22). Jesus was born into this world with the cross as His purpose and ultimate destination.
4. His innocence. Moses was condemned to die as a Hebrew infant, before he could do anything good or bad (Exodus 1:22). The Lord was condemned to die on the cross, having committed no wrongdoing

## Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

- whatsoever. 1Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ( Isaiah 53:9)  
 2Corinthians 5:21 For our sake He made Him to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. 1Peter 1:18–19 ...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. See also Matthew 27:24 John 8:29 Hebrews 4:15 1John 3:5.
5. His Person. At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God's sight. (Acts 7:20a). How blessedly did he, in this, foreshadow the Beloved of the Father! His estimate of the "fairness" of that Child which lay in Bethlehem's manger, was evidenced by the sending of the angels to say unto the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11).
  6. His Infancy. In infancy his life was endangered, imperiled by the reigning king, for Pharaoh had given orders that, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile" (Ex. 1:22). How this reminds us of Matthew 2:16: Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.
  7. His Adoption. Though, previously, he was the child of another, he yet was made the son of Pharaoh's daughter: When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. (Exodus 2:10a). Thus he had a mother, but no father! What anointed eye can fail to see prefigured here the mystery of the Virgin-birth! Christ was the Son of Another, even the Son of God. But, born into this world, He had a mother, but no human father. Yet was He, as it were, adopted by Joseph: see Matthew 1:19-21.
  8. His Childhood. Moses was raised up in Egypt. So also was Christ's: ...behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." (Matthew 2:13b). Thus was fulfilled God's ancient oracle, " And called My Son out of Egypt." (Hosea 11:1).
  9. His Sympathy for Israel. He was filled with a deep compassion for his suffering kinsmen according to the flesh, and he yearned for their deliverance. Beautifully does this come out in Acts 7:23, 24, "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian." So too Christ was filled with pity toward His enslaved people, and love brought Him here to deliver them. Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"
  10. His early knowledge of his Mission. Long years before he actually entered upon his great work, Moses discerned, "[Moses] supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand." (Acts 7:25). So as a Boy of twelve, Christ said to His perplexed mother, "Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" (Luke 2:49).
  11. His condescending Grace. Though legally the "son of Pharaoh's daughter," yet he regarded the Hebrew slaves as his relatives: One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people (Ex. 2:11). So it is with Christ: He is not ashamed to call them brothers (Hebrews 2:11b).
  12. His great Renunciation. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. (Hebrews 11:24-26). What a foreshadowing was this of Him: Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil. 2:6–7)! Like Moses, Christ too voluntarily relinquished riches, glory, and a kingly palace. Matthew 4:8–10 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve."
  13. His Rejection by his brothers. "And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and



## Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

- tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?' But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' " (Acts 7:26–28). This is very sad; sadder still is it to read of Christ, **He came to His Own, and His Own people did not receive Him.** (John 1:11).
14. This same line in the typical picture was before us when we considered Joseph. But mark this difference: In the case of Joseph, it was his brother's enmity against his person (Genesis 37:4); here with Moses, it was his brother's enmity against his mission. Joseph was personally hated; Moses officially refused - **"Who made you a prince and a judge over us?"** (Exodus 2:14b). So it was with Christ. Israel said, **"We do not want this man to reign over us"** (Luke 19:14b). See also John 1:11 15:18, 23–24.
  15. His Sojourning among the Gentiles. **But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian.** (Exodus 2:15). Following Christ's rejection by the Hebrews, we read, **"God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for His name"** (Acts 15:14a). John 10:16a **"And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice."**
  16. His Seat on the well. Away from his own land, we read of Moses, **But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well.** (Ex. 2:15b). So the only time we read of the Lord Jesus seated by the well, was when He was outside Israel's borders, in Samaria (John 4:4, 6).
  17. His Shepherdhood. **Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro,...** (Ex. 3:1a). This is the character which Christ sustains to His elect among the Gentiles: **"I am the good shepherd. I know My Own and My Own know Me, just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."** (John 10:14–16).
  18. His Season of Seclusion. Before he entered upon his real mission, Moses spent many years in obscurity. Who had supposed that this one, there **the west side of the wilderness**, was destined to such an honorable future? So it was with the incarnate Son of God. Before He began His public ministry, He was hidden away in despised Nazareth. Who that saw Him there in the carpenter's shop, dreamed that He was ordained of God to the work of redemption!
  19. His Commission from God. He was called of God to emancipate His people from the house of bondage: **"And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."** (Ex. 3:9–10). So Christ was sent forth into this world on a mission from God **"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."** (Luke 19:10).
  20. His being sent forth by God. Moses was sent for by God to Israel; **"Now therefore go"** (Ex. 4:12). So Christ was the Sent One of God (John 9:4 etc); yea, in Hebrews 3:1 He is designated the Apostle, which means *the one sent forth*.
  21. His Credentials. Moses' commission from God was confirmed by power to work miracles (Exodus 4:28 7:3–4, 10, 19–21). So also Christ's mission was authenticated by wondrous signs (Matthew 11:4, 5). It should be noted that Moses is the first one mentioned in the O.T. who performed miracles; so is Christ in the N.T. - John the Baptist did not perform any (John 10:41).
  22. His first Miracles. Moses wrought many wonders, but it is most striking to observe that his first two miraculous signs were power over the serpent, and power over leprosy (Ex. 4:6–9). So after Christ began His public ministry, we read first of His power over Satan (Matthew 4:10, 11), and then His power over leprosy (Matthew 8:3).
  23. For his first great sign that could be observed by many people, Moses turned the water into blood (Exodus 7:19–21); Jesus turned water into wine for his first public miracle (John 2:1–11).
  24. His Return to his own land. In Exodus 4:19 we read, **And the LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead."** The antitype of this is found in Matthew 2:19–20: **Mat 2:19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead."**
  25. His Acceptance by his close relatives. This is recorded in Exodus 4:29–31. How different was this from his first appearing before and rejection by the Hebrews (Ex. 2)! How beautifully it prefigured Israel's acceptance of their Messiah at His second appearing!

## Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

26. His powerful Rod. Moses now wielded a rod of mighty power: see Exodus 9:23; 10:13; 14:16. So also it is written of Christ, "You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalm 2:9).
27. His Announcing solemn Judgments. Again and again Moses warned Pharaoh and his people of the sore punishment of God if they continued to defy him (Exodus 7:16–23 8:1–15). So also Christ declared, "No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3).
28. His deliverance of Israel. Moses perfectly fulfilled his God-given commission and led Israel out of the house of bondage: "...this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush" (Acts 7:35b). So Christ affirmed, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36).
29. His Headship. Remarkably is this brought out in 1Corinthians 10:1–2 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,... So obedient Christians are baptized unto Christ Jesus (Romans 6:3).
30. His Leadership of Israel's Praise. Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD,... (Exodus 15:1a) And of Christ, it is written, ...in the midst of the congregation I will praise you... (Psalm 22:22b).
31. His Authority challenged. The type is recorded in Numbers 16:3; the antitype in Matthew 21:23.
32. His person Envied. Type: Psalm 106:16; compare Mark 15:10.
33. His person opposed. Though Israel were so deeply indebted to Moses, yet again and again we find them "murmuring" against him: Exodus 15:24, 16:2, etc. For the N. T. parallel see Luke 15:2, John 6:41.
34. His life Threatened. So fiercely did the ungrateful Hebrews oppose Moses that, on one occasion, they were ready to "stone" him (Ex. 17:4). How this brings to mind what we read of in John 8:59, 10:31!
35. His Sorrows. Moses felt keenly the base ingratitude of the people. Mark his plaintive plea as recorded in Numbers 11:11, 14. So too the Lord Jesus suffered from the reproaches of the people: He was "the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."
36. His unwearied Love. Though misunderstood, envied, and opposed, nothing could alienate the affections of Moses from his people. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (Song 8:7). Beautifully is this seen in Exodus 32. After Israel repudiated Jehovah and had worshipped the golden calf, after the Lord has disowned them as His people (Ex. 32:7), Moses supplicates God on their behalf, saying "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin - ; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (vv. 31:32). How this reminds us of Him who "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1)!
37. His Forgiving spirit. "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses... Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by us?" (Num. 12:1, 2). But he answered not a word. How this pointed to Him who, when He was reviled, reviled not again" (1Peter . 2:23). When Miriam was stricken with leprosy because of her revolt against her brother, we are told, "Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee" (Num. 12:13).
38. His Prayerfulness. An example of this has just been before us, but many other instances are recorded. Moses was, pre-eminently, a man of prayer. At every crisis he sought unto the Lord: see Exodus 5:22, 8:12, 9:33, 14:15, 15:25, 17:4, etc. Note how often in Luke's Gospel Christ is also presented as a Man of prayer.
39. His Meekness. "Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3) cf. Matthew 11:29.
40. His Faithfulness. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house" (Hebrews 3:5). So Christ is "The faithful and true Witness" (Rev. 3:14).
41. His providing Israel with water. See Numbers 20:11 and compare John 4:14, 7:37.
42. His Prophetic office. Deuteronomy 18:18 and compare John 7:16, 8:28.
43. His Priestly activities. "Moses and Aaron among His priests" (Ps. 99:6). Illustrations are found in Leviticus 8: "And Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar... and he took all the fat... and burned it upon the altar" (vv. 15, 16 and see 19:23). So Christ, as Priest, "offered Himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9:14).

## Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

44. His Kingly rule. "Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun" (Deuteronomy 33:4, 5). So Christ is King in Zion, and will yet be over the Hebrews (Luke 1:32, 33).
45. His Judgeship. "Moses sat to judge the people: and they stood by Moses from the morning until the evening" (Ex. 18:13). Compare 2Corinthians 5:10.
46. His Leadership. Moses was the head and director of God's people, as He said to him, "Lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken" (Ex. 32:34). So Christ is called, "The Captain of their salvation" (Hebrews 2:10).
47. His Mediation. What a remarkable word was that of Moses to Israel, "I stood between the Lord and you" (Deuteronomy 5:5): "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
48. His Election. In Psalm 106:23 he is called, "Moses His chosen." So God says of Christ, "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, Mine elect" (Isaiah 42:1).
49. His Covenant-engagement. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (Ex. 34:27): so Christ is denominated, "The Mediator of a better covenant" (Hebrews 8:6).
50. His sending forth of the Twelve. "These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land" (Num. 13:16 see previous verses). So Christ sent forth twelve apostles (Matthew 10:5).
51. His Appointing of the Seventy. "And Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people" (Num. 11:24). So Christ selected seventy (Luke 10:1).
52. His Wisdom. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Compare Colossians 2:3.
53. His Might. "And was mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22). Behold the antitype of this in Matthew 11:34: "They were astonished, and said, Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"
54. His Intercession. "And Moses brought their cause before the Lord" (Num. 27:5). Compare Hebrews 7:25.
55. His Intimate Communion with God. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Ex. 34:10). So, on earth, Christ was "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). It is striking to behold in Exodus 31 to 34 how Moses passed and re-passed between Jehovah in the mount and the camp of the congregation: expressive of his equal access to heaven and earth - compare John 3:13.
56. His Knowledge of God. See Psalm 103:7 and cf. John 5:20.
57. His holy Anger. See Exodus 32:19 and cf. Mark 3:5, etc.
58. His Message. He was the mouthpiece of God: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord" (Ex. 24:3). Compare Hebrews 1:2.
59. His Commandments. See Deuteronomy 4:2 and cf. Matthew 28:20.
60. His Written Revelation. See Exodus 31:13 and cf. Revelation 1:1.
61. His Fasting. See Exodus 34:28 and cf. Matthew 4:2.
62. His Transfiguration on the mount. See Exodus 34:29, 35 and cf. Matthew 17:2.
63. His Place Outside the Camp. See Exodus 33:7 and cf. Hebrews 13:13.
64. His Arraigning of the responsible head. See Exodus 32:21 and cf. Revelation 2:12, 13.
65. His Praying for Israel's Forgiveness. See Numbers 14:19 and cf. Luke 23:34.
66. His Washing his Brethren with Water. "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water" (Lev. 8:6). Who can fail to see in that a foreshadowing of what is recorded in John 13:5: "After that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet!"
67. His Prophecies. See Deuteronomy 28 and 33 and cf. Matthew 24 and Luke 21. 64. His Rewarding God's servants. See Numbers 7:6, 32:33, 40 and cf. Revelation 22:12.
68. His perfect Obedience. "Thus did Moses according to all that the Lord commanded, so did he" (Ex. 40:16). What a lovely foreshadowing was this of Him who could say, "I have kept My Father's commandments" (John 16:10)!
69. His erecting the Tabernacle. See Exodus 40:2, and cf. Zechariah 6:12.
70. His Completing of his Work. "So Moses finished the work" (Ex. 40:33). What a blessed prefiguration was this of Him who declared, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4).

### Similarities between Moses and Christ (A. W. Pink—edited)

71. His Blessing of the People. "And Moses blessed them" (Ex. 39:43). So too we read in Luke 24:50, "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them."
72. His Anointing of God's House. "And Moses took the anointing oil (the O. T. emblem of the Holy Spirit), and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein" (Lev. 8:10). Carefully compare Acts 2:1-3, 33.
73. His Unabated Strength. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deuteronomy 34:7): compare Matthew 27:50, and note the loud voice."
74. His Death was for the benefit of God's people. It went ill with Moses for their sakes" (Ps. 106:32); "But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes" (Deuteronomy 3:26). What marvelous foreshadowings of the Cross were these!
75. His Appointing of another Comforter. Moses did not leave his people comfortless, but gave them a successor: see Deuteronomy 31:23 and cf. John 14:16, 18.
76. His giving an Inheritance. "The land which Moses gave you on this side of Jordan" (Josh. 1:14): in Christ believers "have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:11).
77. His Death necessary before Israel could enter Canaan. "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to thee" (Josh. 1:2). "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).
78. His Second Appearing. Moses was one of the two Old Testament characters which returned to this earth in New Testament times (Matthew 17:3) - type of Christ's second coming to the earth. Our space is already exhausted so we shall leave it with our readers to search the Scriptures for at least twenty-five other points in which Moses foreshadowed our Lord. The subject is well-nigh exhaustless. And a most blessed subject it is, demonstrating anew the Divine authorship of the Bible. May the Lord bless to many this very imperfect attempt to show that "in the volume of the Book" it is written of Christ.

It is extremely important to realize that Moses is not the only *type* of Christ. Throughout the Bible, there are many men who are types: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon all stand out as types.

From <http://thirdmill.org/answers/answer.asp/file/43255> accessed June 28, 2017 (edited and appended). Originally from A. W. Pink's book, *Gleanings in Genesis*. Scripture updated to ESV.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

# EXODUS 15

## Exodus 15:1–27

### Outline of Chapter 15:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| vv. 1–19  | <b>The Song of Moses Commemorating God’s Power</b>          |
| vv. 20–21 | <b>Miriam and the Ladies Sing Counterpoint</b>              |
| vv. 22–26 | <b>God’s Faithfulness: God Sweetens the Bitter Waters</b>   |
| v. 27     | <b>God’s Faithfulness: Twelve Springs and Seventy Palms</b> |

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Introduction | <b>Understanding the Scriptures 2009</b> |
| Introduction | <b>Why Did Moses Record Exodus 15?</b>   |
| v. 2         | <b>Jesus in the Old Testament</b>        |

It is easy to miss the forest through the trees, so I find that a brief summary helps to preserve the flow of the text and narrative.

The translation used below is the Scriptures 2009.

Here is a table so that you might be able to understand some of the unique features of this translation:

| Understanding the Scriptures 2009 |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Scriptures 2009                   | More common                                       | Explaining the Scriptures 2009   |
| הוהי                              | YHWH, JHWH, Yahweh, Jehovah, Y <sup>e</sup> howah | This is the actual name of God as it is found in the Hebrew. It is a reference to Y <sup>e</sup> howah, the God of Israel. |
| <i>Mitsrayim</i>                  | Egypt   | <i>Mitsrayim</i> is a transliteration from the Hebrew.   |
| <i>Yisra’ēl</i>                   | Israel  | A transliteration from the Hebrew.   |
| Mosheh                            | Moses   | A transliteration from the Hebrew.   |

The setup for this chapter is Exodus 14, where God guided the people of Israel into such a place or pattern of movement which caught the attention of Pharaoh’s watchers (spies who had their eyes on Israel all of this time). They saw that Israel was in a place where they appeared to be trapped, and that Pharaoh’s army could suddenly appear and easily wipe them out.

This message that Israel appears to be confused goes to Pharaoh. Therefore, he gathers his army, and they pursue Israel. The night that they catch up, Israel appears to be trapped. The next day would bring a slaughter (so the Egyptian army anticipated). However, that night, neither group could see the other group, yet they appeared to be camped within a mile or so of one another. Also that night, God stopped up the sea in front of Israel—this is the sea which had Israel trapped between it and the Egyptian army—and Israel, guided by God, marched across the dry seabed to the other side. The next day, when it became light, Pharaoh’s army could see the dry seabed and Israel on the other side of where the water used to be. Israel was no longer trapped, as the Egyptian army had anticipated. Regardless of the changed circumstances, the army of Egypt was a far more deadly force than Israel was. Therefore, Pharaoh and his soldiers began to cross the opening in this body of water, in pursuit of Israel.



Once his entire army was in the midst of the sea of reeds, God allowed the waters to run free and all Pharaoh's army was drowned.

The bulk of Exodus 15 is a song about what happened in Exodus 14.

Here is a question which may not have an obvious answer:

### **Why Did Moses Record Exodus 15?**

1. We have studied Exodus 15:1–21 verse-by-verse, and it is very much a repeat of portions of Exodus 14. So, why is this repeat necessary?
2. Exodus 15:1–21 is a song written ostensibly by Moses to celebrate what happened in Exodus 14.
3. This song puts us into the time and place of Exodus 15. We would expect Moses and all Israel to be pumped and excited and happy at the events which they witnessed in Exodus 14. A celebratory song is a natural outgrowth of that.
4. For Moses, this victory is an important event to write about. Recalling the events of Exodus 14 in a song simply seemed apropos to Moses.
5. The children of Israel did not simply observe God's power and move on from there. They observed and then they celebrated God's power.
6. This also indicates to us that all of these events take place close in time to the recording of these events. It would make sense for Moses to compose a song about Exodus 14 and for all Israel to sing it in celebration right after the event. It would make less sense for the singing of this song to take place a few days, weeks or months later.
7. Therefore, without specifically stating it, the chapter implies that these events took place close in time to the writing of them. The song we will study was written within an hour of the destruction of the Egyptian army. That is an important consideration.
8. Further, this song also allows us, as readers, to share in the enthusiasm of Moses and the Israelites, albeit 3600 years later. (Ideally speaking, when reading an historical narrative, you have some sort of personal participation taking place in your own mind, whether you envision some of the events or you imagine yourself being there, or whatever).
9. Much of the Bible allows us to relive, via literature and via our own imaginations, events which transpired long ago.
10. Furthermore, this song glorifies God. Now, many people have some difficulty with the idea that we glorify God, thinking that this is good for God's ego. But that is not what glorification of God is all about. The glorification of God reveals Who God is and what God does. That is important. Ideally speaking, those who witness some aspect of God's glory develop a better understanding of Who God really is.

While these events play out, all angelic creation watches what takes place in this world much as you or I might watch a movie or a play. The angels also learn about God by seeing these historic events play out (since this song glorifies God, both man and angels find out more about Who God is by reading/hearing the song).

The angels know about God's laws and the laws of divine establishment; they are also aware of God's hand in history. These things reveal God's character. They are also aware of the flaw in man (and fallen angel seek to exploit our flaw).

When we watch a movie, we often are given insight into the mind of the script writer for that movie and the director. We understand their character and thinking through watching the sort of movie they produce. In the same way, by studying the Word of God, we are helped to understand God and His essence. In other words, God is glorified when we study Him in His Word.

The great miracle of Exodus 14 is important enough to be sung about in Exodus 15. Furthermore, it is important that there be an association between what Moses writes, God's Word, and the events which all Israel observed. Essentially, Exodus 15 ties all of these things together. Ideally speaking, the Israelite whose faith begins to fail him, should be able to remember these words of Moses—this song which they all sing—and to be reminded of

what happened at the sea of reeds. That Israelite is to think these words and remember these things, and draw comfort and strength from them (ideally speaking).

The words of this song reveal the character of God in His interactions with Israel. Believers should be able to recall the words of this song and they can think about this song. By this, the Hebrew people recognize that God is revealing Himself to Israel in this song.

Unfortunately, there is a problem with the thinking and volition of the Hebrew people. This should help guide them to a place of trust, when under pressure, they do not draw upon this doctrinal information. Israel does not mix these words and doctrines with faith; and that will become their fundamental failure. In fact, their failure as a generation will be so spectacular that this is an important theme of Psalm 95 and Hebrews 1–4.

Although I focused upon the song of Moses, this is only the first three-fourths of this chapter. The end of the chapter records two incidents which follow the song.

A brief review of Exodus 15:

Most of Exodus 15 is a song sung by Moses and the sons of Israel commemorating the events of Exodus 14.

Throughout the book of Exodus we see the faithfulness of God and the flaws of this generation of Israel.

### **The Song of Moses Commemorating God's Power**

Exodus 15:1 **Then Moshe [= Moses] and the children of Yisra'el [= Israel] sang this song to יהוה [= Y<sup>e</sup>howah = Jehovah], and spoke, saying, "I sing to יהוה, for He is highly exalted! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!**

The song commemorates what the Lord has done.

By a heavy wind, the water had stacked up on one side of this water way. When God allowed the water to run freely, it was as if He had thrown the army of Pharaoh—its horse and rider—into the sea. They had ridden into an area which was dry and God brought the waters down upon them.

One of the most important facets of this chapter is, the fact that this song was written right there, on the spot; and that, after enough copies had been made and distributed, all Israel sang this song. It is one of the proofs that Moses wrote much of the book of Exodus soon after each incident occurred. There was no such thing as cut and paste in the time of Moses, so what we read is very likely written in the same order as the events transpire (and in the same order that they were written; that is, the events of Exodus 14 took place and Exodus 15 was a song that commemorated those events).

We have a description of the night before the crossing; then a description of the crossing; then a description of the assault of the Egyptian soldiers (where God destroyed them with the waters). *After all of this*, we have the record of the song which all Israel sang to commemorate this event.

All of this makes perfect sense if Moses was either writing this history down as it happened (or that he dictated it to Joshua, who wrote it all down). It would have made much less sense for Moses to have written this song (Exodus 15), and then, months later, described in writing what took place at the sea of reeds (Exodus 14). Even though that is not impossible that Moses first wrote the song and then wrote about what happened (what the song was about); that is simply less likely to have occurred.

And, no matter what, this chapter makes no sense unless Moses wrote the song immediately after the events of Exodus 14; and then the people all sang it, right there at the water's edge (and as they press forward). Any other perception of the writing would suggest that any or all of these accounts is fictional.

In order for this song to be sung—particularly so close to the events it describes—Moses (or his amanuensis, Joshua) has to physically write the song down on something. Then it has to be copied, distributed and taught. That requires several copies of the song to be written and handed around (to the elders or whomever). This would further suggest that Moses had some sort of writing instrument and medium (such as vellum). This would suggest that, at some point in time, previous to this, either Moses or someone associated with Moses thought that it would be a good idea to record these events (as they were quite spectacular and unprecedented).

Also, there is something which I did not mention earlier and that is, when Egypt was suffering these great judgments, Israel was not. Therefore, Israel had a lot of downtime (which would have also been enjoyed by Moses and Joshua). It would make sense that they spent this time recording the events which took place. What could be more important history to record than this? Logically, Moses made the executive decision to begin to record these events around Exodus 3 or 4.

There will be such details recorded in future chapters of Exodus as to demand their writing close to the events which are written about (the details, for instance, of the construction of the Tabernacle).

All of these things make sense if these things are being written within hours or days of the things written about.

Detail is key when it comes to writing down these events. Moses' first 80 years of life is described in Exodus 2. What we read in Exodus 3–40 takes place in less than two years time. Exodus 2 was written in retrospect; Exodus 3–40 was written as these events took place. It is obvious the Moses wrote an retrospective of his own life; and this was probably all done at one sitting. So he completes the narrative of his early life in the space of a chapter.<sup>36</sup>

Exodus 15 demands that there is writing taking place right then and there (as events unfold), as well as the distribution of writings. How else are the Israelites going to be able to sing this song that Moses wrote?

Exodus 15:1 Then Mosheh and the children of Yisra'el sang this song to הוהי, and spoke, saying, "I sing to הוהי, for He is highly exalted! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!

Moses writes what he has observed, and the sons of Israel sing this song. What was most spectacular was seeing the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the waters which God had opened up for Israel.

Exodus 15:2 "Yah is my strength and song, and He has become my deliverance.<sup>a</sup> He is my Ėl, and I praise Him – Elohim of my father, and I exalt Him.

<sup>a</sup>See Psalm 118:14 and Isaiah 12:2. [Both of these will be quoted in the doctrine which follows.]

God is the strength of Israel and God is who Israel celebrates in song. God delivers Israel. There is no other explanation for what the people observed. They all came to the same body of water and stopped. At night, with the army of Pharaoh not far away, they observe the waters having been stacked up and the sea floor dried up, allowing them to cross over. Only God could have done something like this. Recall the pillar of fire at night would have made it possible for Israel to see and then be led across what was, only a few hours before, a sea bed.

### Jesus in the Old Testament:

The Hebrew word *deliverance* (or, *salvation*) is actually the letter-for-letter equivalent of *Jesus* (this is **lesson #222**). When we replace *deliverance* with *Jesus*, we have this: "Yah is my strength and song, and He has become my Jesus. He is my Ėl [= God], and I praise Him – Elohim of my father, and I exalt Him.

<sup>36</sup> There were no verse or chapters then, but there would be times that Moses would pick up the quill (or whatever) and write; and, at some point, he would lay it down again.

This word *deliverance* (or, *salvation*) occurs nearly 80 times in the Old Testament; and if you read any of these verses, replacing *deliverance* with *Jesus*, the results are quite remarkable.

The Hebrew Roots Bible often does this for us:

Exodus 15:2 My strength and song is Yah, and He was to me salvation [= *Jesus*]; this is my Eli and I will glorify Him; the Elohe of my father, and I will exalt Him.

1Samuel 2:1 And Hannah prayed and said: My heart has exulted in YAHWEH; my horn has been high in YAHWEH. My mouth has been large over my enemies; for I have rejoiced in Your salvation [= *Jesus*].

2Samuel 22:3 My Elohim is my rock; I shall take refuge in Him; my shield, and the horn of my Y'shua\* [= *Jesus*], my high tower, and my refuge! My Savior, You shall save me from violence (Hamas).

Psalms 67:1 May Elohim be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. Selah.

Psalms 67:2 That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation (Y'shua\*) among all nations.

Psalms 69:29 But I am poor and in pain; O Elohim, Your salvation (Y'shua\*) shall set me on high.

Psalms 118:14 Yah is my strength and song, And He has become my deliverance [= y<sup>e</sup>shûw'âh (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ) = *Jesus*].

Isaiah 12:2 Behold, El is Y'shua\* (My salvation)! I will trust and not be afraid, for my strength and song is Yah YAHWEH; yea, He has become to me Y'shua\*. (Y'shua\* is *Jesus*) (Hebrew Roots Bible)

Isaiah 12:2a Behold, God is *Jesus*.

What you have read here occurs nearly 80 times in the Old Testament. So, if someone ever told you, "The name of *Jesus* does not occur in the Old Testament," they are wrong.

Let's return to the narrative:

Exodus 15:2 "Yah is my strength and song, and He has become my deliverance [= *Jesus*]. He is my Ēl, and I praise Him – Elohim of my father, and I exalt Him.

Notice this again: He [God] has become my *Jesus*.

Moses recognizes that this God Whom they are praising is the God of his father and of his father's father.

Exodus 15:3 "הוה is a man of battle, הוה is His Name.

Israel has just been delivered from war; God fought for Israel, making Him a man of war.

Exodus 15:4 "He has cast Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea, and his chosen officers are drowned in the Sea of Reeds.

Even though Pharaoh and his army rode into the seabed of the Sea of Reeds, it is as if God had thrown them in there. This is the combination of the will of man coinciding with the will of God (or better, the *plan of God*).

Exodus 15:5 "The depths covered them, they went down to the bottom like a stone.

The water was let loose by God, and it covered all of Pharaoh's army. They remained at the bottom until drowned, like stones.

In vv. 6–17, Moses, in this song, will address God directly. Our God is a personal God.

Exodus 15:6 “Your right hand, O יהוה, has become great in power. Your right hand, O יהוה, has crushed the enemy.

What God wills and then does is represented by His right hand. God crushes Israel's enemy, Egypt, with His right hand.

Exodus 15:7 “And in the greatness of Your excellence You pulled down those who rose up against You. You sent forth Your wrath, it consumed them like stubble.

By going against Israel, Pharaoh challenged God. God's wrath consumed them as if they were nothing.

Exodus 15:8 “And with the wind of Your nostrils the waters were heaped up, the floods stood like a wall, the depths became stiff in the heart of the sea.

God held back the waters by the wind of His nostrils (an anthropomorphism), which wind pushed the waters back and stacked them up like a wall.

If the water is flowing, then it is only necessary to stop the water at one point (that is, God would only need a single *air dam*).

Exodus 15:9 “The enemy said, ‘I pursue, I overtake, I divide the spoil, my being is satisfied on them. I draw out my sword, my hand destroys them.’

The soldiers of Pharaoh knew what they intended to do. They would pursue Israel, overtake them, divide up their possessions, then draw out the sword and destroy them. It was a simple and devastating plan.

Exodus 15:10 “You did blow with Your wind, the sea covered them, they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

For a time, God's wind held the waters back. The Egyptian army entered into the sea bed, expecting to come out on the other side. However, when God stopped this wind, the sea was let loose and it covered them. The soldiers sunk into the waters and were drowned.

Exodus 15:11 “Who is like You, O יהוה, among the mighty ones? Who is like You, great in set-apartness, awesome in praises, working wonders?

Moses asks, “Who is like You, O Y<sup>e</sup>howah?” There is no god of any people who is anything like the God of Israel. God is magnificent in His *holiness* (which some teachers understand to mean, *integrity*). God is set apart from all else in magnificence. Those who fear and respect Him also praise Him. There is no being who can perform His great works.

Exodus 15:12 “You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them.

God's right hand was stretched His right hand out to act (an anthropomorphism), and the army of Egypt was swallowed up by the waters (the waters are a part of the earth).

Exodus 15:13 “In Your loving-commitment You led the people whom You have redeemed, in Your strength You guided them to Your set-apart dwelling.

God's commitment to Israel is His covenant with them. He has led the people whom He redeemed.



The word *redeemed* is aptly chosen, as the Hebrew people were all slaves, and it is as if God purchased them from the slave market.

They will be guided to Mount Sinai, which is where God will choose to manifest Himself.

Exodus 15:14 “Peoples heard, they trembled, anguish gripped the inhabitants of Philistia.

Peoples throughout the land will hear about what has happened. The people of Philistia will be gripped with anguish because of what has happened.

Exodus 15:15 “Then the chiefs of Edom were troubled, the mighty men of Mo'ab, trembling grips them, all the inhabitants of Kena'an melted.

The chiefs of Edom are troubled by Israel's God's destruction of the Egyptian army. We might consider the Edomites as being the first cousins—as a tribe—to the Israelites. They are descended from Esau, Jacob's twin brother.

Moab is descended from Lot (Abraham's nephew).

The inhabitants of Canaan have melted away, which is a reference to a number of different groups.

Now, bear in mind, all of this is taking place soon after the destruction of Egypt and her army. However, the intensity of this fear is not going to hang on everywhere for the next 40 years.

Exodus 15:16 “Fear and dread fell on them, by the greatness of Your arm they are as silent as a stone, until Your people pass over, O הוה, until the people, whom You have bought, pass over.

If you have ever heard the phrase, *strike while the iron is hot*; it means that there is a limited amount of time for the people of Israel to act. If the Israelites invade Canaan over the next year or two, the people there are going to be afraid of Israel's God. If Israel attacks the people of the land 40 years from now, what happened in Egypt will make no difference to some of the inhabitants of Canaan. Many of them will not even know about it (as a result, many heathen will continue to live in the land of promise after Israel's invasion).

Exodus 15:17 “You bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, in the place, O הוה, which You have made for Your own dwelling, the set-apart place, O הוה, which Your hands have prepared.

God has a place for the people of Israel, a place which God prepared in eternity past.

The mountain of God's inheritance here is Mount Zion (not Mount Sinai). This is the place which God prepared for Israel. However, Israel will have to go to Mount Sinai first.

Exodus 15:18 “הוה reigns forever and ever.”

The God of Israel will reign forever. The people hearing Moses' song do not fully appreciate this line, but it will come to make more sense in Israel's future.

Jesus will reign over Israel (and the world) from Mount Zion.

Exodus 15:19 For the horses of Pharaoh went with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and הוה brought back the waters of the sea upon them. And the children of Yisra'el went on dry ground in the midst of the sea.

We know that Israel's God will reign forever based upon what He did to Pharaoh and his chariots and horsemen. God destroyed them with the waters of the Sea of Reeds, whereas, Israel walked over the exact same ground while it was dry.

Remember that this is a song that Moses is leading the people to sing, commemorating what God has done. This reveals Who God is and, therefore, glorifies God. By glorification, I mean that the song informs the hearer of Who and What God is.

### **Miriam and the Ladies Sing Counterpoint**

Exodus 15:20 And Miryam the prophetess, the sister of Aharon, took the timbrel in her hand. And all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

It is quite interesting that Miriam is called a prophetess here. This means that she is capable of speaking divine truth. She leads the women (whose spiritual growth is just as important as the spiritual growth of the men).

Exodus 15:21 And Miryam answered them, "Sing to הוה, for He is highly exalted! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!"

This verse reads that Miriam answered Moses and the others singing. They sing the woman's counterpoint.

Despite seeing with their eyes the power of God, and then singing about it, the sons of Israel will fall apart at the next crisis.

### **God's Faithfulness: God Sweetens the Bitter Waters**

Exodus 15:22 And Mosheh brought Yisra'el from the Sea of Reeds, and they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

God had a direction for Israel to go in; He was leading them to a specific place. Along this journey, they would be tested.

Today, the region that we are speaking of is mostly sand, but this would not have been the case during the days of Moses. The land is called a wilderness, but that simply means that it was unpopulated.

This was perhaps 2500 years after the flood, which suggests that the water table would still have been fairly high, and there would have been more lakes and rivers in this region (which is extremely dry and barren today).

This Israelites would have carried water with them, but at this point in their journey, their water supplies had become dangerously low.

Exodus 15:23 And they came to Marah, and they were unable to drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. So the name of it was called Marah.

In Numbers, we will have a list of names for every place that the Israelites stopped. In a few cases, the names may have been preexisting. However, most of them were given names by the people of Israel (or by Moses as he wrote). This place is called Marah, which means, *bitterness*.

Exodus 15:24 And the people grumbled against Mosheh, saying, "What are we to drink?"

Since Moses is in charge, the people came to him with every complaint of this journey. They usually held him personally responsible for the inconveniences which they suffered.

Exodus 15:25a Then he cried out to הוה, and הוה showed him a tree. And when he threw it into the waters, the waters were made sweet.

One possible explanation is, the chemicals in the tree interacted with the chemicals in the water, and the resulting in a chemical reaction which precipitated out the unsavory taste of certain ions in the water.

This tree is a type; it looks forward to the cross upon which Jesus would die. His death for our sins would take the bitterness of sin and death and transform it to justification and life, making it sweet and refreshing for us.

**Application:** It is very easy to observe just how crazy the United States has gotten over the past ten years. There is every indication that we, as a nation, may endure great national discipline (we do not know when or where, but it could come from a dozen different directions). As an unbeliever, I know I would be extremely frustrated and worried for this land and for myself and family. However, as a believer, I understand that things could suddenly take a turn for the worst; but I also understand that God is in charge. His plan must play out and prevail. Being upset or worried about it will do no good. Being fearful of the future is also a waste of time for the believer.

Exodus 15:25b *There He made a law and a right-ruling for them, and there He tried them.*

*There* refers to Marah, where the people of Israel have halted.

At this point, Moses will speak and write out a general principle by which all Israel should live:

Exodus 15:26 *And He said, "If you diligently obey the voice of יהוה your Elohim and do what is right in His eyes, and shall listen to His commands and shall guard all His laws, [then God made these specific promises to Israel] 'I shall bring on you none of the diseases I brought on the Mitsrites [= Egyptians], for I am יהוה who heals you.'*

I have inserted the words, *then God made these specific promises to Israel.*

Moses makes a covenant with the people on behalf of God. When God gives Israel a command, they were to learn it, preserve it and obey it. Their morality should conform to His morality, as the Israelites are God's people. They were to listen and study His mandates. As a result, they would be preserved by God. The reason that we have an Old Testament is that Israel wrote it down and preserved it (which is what God is telling them to do).

### **God's Faithfulness: Twelve Springs and Seventy Palms**

Now we have just one more stop for Israel to make (before the end of this chapter):

Exodus 15:27 *And they came to Ėlim, where there were twelve fountains of water and seventy palm trees. And they camped there by the waters.*

Ėlim means *palms*, which is what the Israelites would have seen from a distance as they marched toward this place.

Prophetically, the bitter waters made sweet describe life for Israel, having turned from slavery to God. The oasis of Elim speaks of the Millennium which is to follow.

Clearly, Exodus 15 is one of the most remarkable chapters of Scripture.

# EXODUS 16

## Exodus 16:1–35

Sometimes, we examine a chapter in such detail, that we might spent 100–200 pages on that chapter. What is lost in all of this is the flow of the chapter. Therefore, I have been writing a summary examination of each chapter at the end.

The Bible translation used for the base text below is the Tree of Life Version. It has but a few peculiarities. Mostly, it takes a few important words from the Old Testament and transliterates them instead of translating them.

| Understanding the Tree of Life Version |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Tree of Life                           | More common   | Explaining the Tree of Life Version   |
| <i>Bnei-Yisrael</i>                    | <i>sons of Israel, Israelites, sons and daughters of Israel</i> | The Hebrew reads <i>b<sup>e</sup>nêy Yishrâ'êl</i> (בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>b<sup>e</sup>-NEE yihsh-raw-ale</i> ] (which means, <i>sons of Israel</i> ); so this is a transliteration from the Hebrew.  |
| <i>Adonai</i>                          | <i>Lord, YHWH, Jehovah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>                  | Rather than speak the sacred name of God, the readers of Scripture inserted their word for <i>Lord</i> instead, which is <i>'ădônîy</i> (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NEE</i> ]. However, in the actual Scriptures, <i>YHWH</i> is the word found here. |
| <i>Torah</i>                           | <i>Law (of Moses)</i>   | This is a transliteration of the Hebrew word for <i>Law</i> .   |
| <i>Shabbat</i>                         | <i>Sabbath, Saturday, day of rest</i>                           | Although <i>Sabbath</i> is a common transliteration of the word found here, <i>Shabbat</i> is a more literal transliteration.   |
| <i>Mitzvot</i>                         | <i>Commandment (s)</i>  | Like these other words, <i>mitzvot</i> is just a transliteration taken from the Hebrew.   |

In Exodus 14, the Egyptian army pursued Israel, but God killed them all. In Exodus 15, Israel sang about this incident. In Exodus 16, God provides food (manna and quail) for the Israelites during their trek through the desert.

At this point in our narrative, Egypt is behind the Israelites, but it is not out of their thoughts. They are moving forward as guided by God, although no one really appreciates where they are going. If they were going to head directly into the land given them by God, they should be traveling northeast. However, they have mostly followed the water going south, and after crossing over, they will be going east, deeper into the desert-wilderness. They are traveling through where Saudi Arabia is today. This region would not have looked like a desert but it would have been uninhabited.

Exodus 16:1 They journeyed on from Elim, and the entire community of Bnei-Yisrael [= the sons of Israel] came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving the land of Egypt.

At this point, the sons of Israel are completely separate from Egypt. The Egyptian army lay dead in the Sea of Reeds. If they were traveling along the Nile or any other water way leading south, they have now crossed over

it. Whatever body of water they have been walking along, that now stands between them and nation Egypt. Also, they have moved very far south of Egypt.

The date given tells us that Israel is a month out of Egypt.

Although Sinai is mentioned in this verse, it is not clear that anyone—Moses included—knew that their destination was Mount Sinai. One possible explanation for the inclusion of *Sinai* at this point is, Moses knew the geography and knew the direction in which they were traveling.

Exodus 16:2 But the whole congregation of Bnei-Yisrael murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

The people of Israel now have a new problem, and they immediately turn against Moses and Aaron, which is what they tend to do.

Despite all that they have seen, the sons of Israel have not developed any strong trust in God.

Exodus 16:3 Bnei-Yisrael said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of Adonai [= the Lord, Y<sup>e</sup>howah] in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat, when we ate bread until we were full. But you have brought us into the wilderness, to kill this entire congregation with hunger.”

At this point, the people seem almost delirious. They are saying things which are ridiculous.

It appears that those who complained, built up a little narrative, which included two key elements: (1) Life was pretty great in Egypt and (2) Moses and Aaron have brought them all to the desert to kill them with hunger. Based upon all that has happened, what they are suggesting is absolute nonsense.

I must admit that, for many years I wondered, how could these people be this confused, given all that they had witnessed. However, the key to understanding the Exodus generation is found in the soul. We can understand them because we can understand what takes place in the soul. So, even though every person in the Exodus believed in the Revealed God, they were on negative signals toward the plan of God and toward Bible doctrine and toward God's authority. They are especially negative toward God's delegation of authority to Moses and Aaron. Therefore, they were unable to retain spiritual information in their souls, despite seeing it with their own eyes. Therefore, they would think and say really stupid things. We understand this to be the build up of scar tissue on the soul, which blocks the mind from thinking logically.

**Illustration:** In a period of less than ten years, we in the United States went from a society which clearly differentiated between boys and girls to a society where a considerable percentage (20 or 30%?) think that it is okay for a child or a teen to believe that they belong to the other gender. Many people today even think that steps should be taken to facilitate physical changes in a child, to help them change into the opposite gender. It has gotten so crazy as to be a status symbol in Hollywood and among some liberal groups. This crazy idea appears to be fundamental to the Democrat platform today (I write this in 2023), whereas, ten years previous, such thinking would have been considered absurd to the exact same democrats. In the past few years, at a time when truth is more easily found than ever before, huge numbers of Americans have chosen to believe lies. In fact, we have various media sources which peddle nothing less than government-approved lies and skewed points of view, and yet, people believe what the media propagates.

Pharaoh—presumed to be an unbeliever—built up scar tissue against God. So, even though each plague was worse than the previous plague, Pharaoh had built up scar tissue equal to the intensity of each new plague. Pharaoh could be beaten down to the point of giving up; but when he was allowed to get back up again, he was more anti-God and anti-Moses than before. His brain seemed unable to process the power of God, despite seeing it in every judgment put upon the Egyptian people

Pharaoh never came to a point where he recognized that he ought to be worshiping the God of Moses. The build up of scar tissue on his soul precluded that.



The sons of Israel are believers, but believers are also capable of building up scar tissue on their souls. So, even though they have seen with their own eyes many reasons to trust God, they find themselves giving in to negative volition toward God (and, therefore, becoming antagonistic toward Moses and Aaron, God's emissaries).

All of these people are saved, because they have believed in the God of Moses (the Revealed God), but they are not moving forward in the spiritual life. They continue to retrogress and to build up scar tissue. As you build up scar tissue, it is easier to become irrational and unreasonable. Believers and unbelievers can build up scar tissue on the soul.

**Illustration:** There are a considerable number of people today who hate Donald Trump, and there is virtually nothing that he could do to change their minds. They have scar tissue built up on their souls to the point that, they are unable to give him a fair shot. I write this in 2023, and if Trump was president, and doing everything that Joe Biden is doing, these people would hate him even more. They would still find fault with everything that Donald Trump did. Or, let's say that Joe Biden had come into office and did not change a single policy (which would have been a brilliant strategy), he still would have been supported by those who are anti-Trump. It is not about policy or achievement; it is all about their souls being covered with scar tissue so all they can do is feel anger and disgust and superiority toward Donald Trump (yet, prior to 2015, very few of these people had this sort of negative attitude toward him). Now, even though there are adherents to both major parties who literally hate members of the opposing party, the percentage of Democrats who hate Donald Trump is far higher than usual (I can say this knowing several people who absolutely disdain Donald Trump, whereas, before 2016, they had no real opinion of him one way or the other).

So, this is where the people of Israel are right now—many of them, anyway. They can accept Moses and Aaron for very short periods of time, when things are going well, but given any difficulty that plagues them, and they go right back to feeling a concentrated anger against Moses. Some of them can feel nothing else toward Moses, although they might hide it during the good times.

Exodus 16:4 [Then Adonai said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. The people will go out and gather a day's portion every day, so that I can test them to find out whether they will walk according to My Torah \[that is, My Law\] or not.](#)

Because these people are believers, God must act justly toward them, providing them with logistical grace. However, when their negative volition reaches a crisis state, God will put these folks under the sin unto death, which would include the withdrawal of logistical grace.

God tells Moses that He has this problem handled. Food is going to be provided for the Israelites every single day. Because these are believers, God must feed them (that is a fundamental tenet of logistical grace). Given where God wants them to go (first to Mount Sinai and then to the southern border of Canaan), there is no opportunity for the people to hunt and plant. Therefore, if they are to live, then God must take care of them.

Much of the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to logistical grace. God will provide the Israelites with food from this point forward, as long as they are in the desert-wilderness. In fact, we might see this section of Exodus as fundamental to our understanding of logistical grace.

God gives Israel very specific instructions. Every day, they will go out and gather the proper amount of food to feed every person in the house for that day. No more and no less.

Exodus 16:5 [So on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather day by day."](#)

When it comes to gathering this food on a Friday, there will be very specific directions given. Every Friday, they are to gather twice as much as they need for their daily rations.

This will be the first teaching of the Sabbath day to the sons of Israel.

Exodus 16:6–7 So Moses and Aaron said to all Bnei-Yisrael, “In the evening you will know that Adonai has brought you out from the land of Egypt, and in the morning, then you will see the glory of Adonai. For He heard your complaining against Him. What are we? You complain against us?”

That evening, the people would see the pillar of fire (which they have seen the entire time that they left Egypt) and they will be fed quail (which does not appear to have been given to them every night). The Israelites should be able to look at these two things and conclude that God truly brought them out of Egypt.

The next morning, they would see the glory of God. That morning, they would have manna given to them from that day forward. Also, they would see the pillar of cloud.

When a person sees or perceives the glory of God, this means that they become aware of God’s character or essence to a point where it affects their thinking (this would be analogous to occupation with Christ). All these things which God is doing for Israel *should result* in them being aware of God’s faithfulness and in the focusing their minds on God’s character. They should begin to understand His faithfulness and love. But, as we will continue to see, God’s great acts on their behalf will not change their thinking at all. *Why?* you ask. It is because of scar tissue of the soul. That explains how God could do so much for His people, and yet for them to respond with perverted thinking.

Moses straight out asks the representatives with whom he is speaking, “God has heard you complain about Him. And what are we that you complain to us?”

In other words, “God already knows what your complaints are. However, Aaron and I cannot do anything about your complaints; only God can. Therefore, do not waste your time complaining to us.”

Exodus 16:8 Then Moses said, “Adonai will give you meat to eat in the evening and enough bread to fill you in the morning, since Adonai hears your complaints that you mutter against Him, what are we? Your complaining is not against us, but against Adonai!”

The meat to eat in the evening is the quail (which did not appear to be given them every night). However, they would be given enough bread (food) every morning.

Moses again points out to this people that their complaints should be directed toward God; not toward him or Aaron. They can do nothing for the people of Israel, apart from God.

This understanding of the spiritual life is fundamental in all dispensations.

For some of the people reading this verse, what Moses says does not sit right with them, because they recognize that they should not be complaining to God.

**Application:** No believer can do anything worthwhile apart from God. We need God’s power and His resources in order to act in a way that is worthy before the Lord.

Exodus 16:9 Moses said to Aaron, “Say to all the congregation of Bnei-Yisrael, ‘Come near before Adonai, because He has heard your complaining.’”

All Israel was to come near or approach Y<sup>e</sup>howah, as He has been listening to them complain.

The people do not seem to have a firm grasp on Who God is. When Moses and Aaron are right there in their line of fire, they complain to them. They do not seem to grasp that God hears everything that they have to say.

Exodus 16:10 Then, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of Bnei-Yisrael, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of Adonai appeared in the cloud.

While Aaron was speaking to the sons of Israel, the people looked toward the uninhabited region and there was some sort of manifestation of God in the cloud.

Exodus 16:11–12 Adonai spoke to Moses saying, “I have heard the complaining of Bnei-Yisrael. Speak to them saying, ‘At dusk you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am Adonai your God.’”

God is speaking to Moses again, and we don’t know if this is a continuation of v. 4 or if this represents a new conversation. Since we appear to be dealing with exactly the same subject matter, I would consider it a continuation of this conversation.

“I have heard your complaining,” God says to Moses (referring to the complaints of the people), “and this evening, you will have quail to eat; and tomorrow morning, you will have a special food. As you eat these things, you will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God!”

God is describing what should be taking place in the minds of the Israelites. As they eat what God provides them, their minds should be turned around.

Why does it appear that Israel might be turned around to the will of God; but then, sometimes even just minutes later, they begin to rebel again? These are fair-weather believers. As long as things are going relatively well for them, they are happy with God’s contribution to their lives. However, the moment they come against some problem, they see God, or Moses and Aaron, as being impotent, or worse, evil.

**Application:** Even though believers often receive greater blessings in life than unbelievers, we still face difficulties and problems. Ideally, the spiritual life helps us to navigate these circumstances

**Application:** If we go by our emotions, then our difficulties and challenges will get us down. Emotions are good to have, but they should never lead you in life.

Back to our narrative:

Exodus 16:13 So when evening fell, quails came up and covered the camp. Moreover, in the morning there was a layer of dew all around the camp.

That evening, there were quails which blanketed the ground of the camp. The people were to go out and capture the quail for food. The next morning there was an odd layer of dew all around the camp.

All of this is logistical grace. God is providing for the believers in Israel (which was pretty much everyone).

Exodus 16:14 When the layer of dew was gone, on the surface of the desert was a thin, flake-like frost, as fine as the frost on the ground.

When the dew had evaporated, there remained an odd, flaky sort of covering on the ground. This flaky thing turned out to be edible.

Exodus 16:15 When Bnei-Yisrael saw it, they said one to another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Then Moses said to them, “It is the bread that Adonai has given you to eat.

When the people saw this flaky stuff covering the ground—something that they had never seen before—they kept on saying, “Manna?” Translated, that means, *what is it?* More precisely, what they said was, “Maw-HOO.” (= *what it?*)

When Moses and others in the knew heard this question, they answered, “This is the bread (food) that God has given you all to eat.”

Exodus 16:16 This is the word that Adonai has commanded. Every man is to gather according to his needs, an omer per person, according to the number of people per household. Each man is to take it for those who are in his tent."

Specific instructions were given as to how much should be gathered each day for each household. Even though the manna could be found outside on the ground, it took time and effort for the people of Israel to gather enough for each household.

Exodus 16:17 Bnei-Yisrael did so, and some gathered more, some less.

The sons of Israel sort of followed directions, but some gathered too much and others did not gather enough. There were always those in the Exodus generation who wanted to test God. No matter what Moses told them to do, they were going to do a little bit more or a little bit less.

Exodus 16:18 When they measured it with an omer, those who gathered more had nothing left over, and those that gathered less did not lack at all. Every man gathered according to his appetite.

At first, God simply overruled their initial disobedience. Those who gathered too much, did not have any left over; and those who did not gather enough were nevertheless satiated.

Every man gathered the amount necessary for the household—even those who didn't.

Exodus 16:19 Also Moses said to them, "Let no one save any of it until the morning."

Manna was not to be saved for a few days. God was teaching logistical grace to the Exodus generation, although very few of them seemed to get it. Logistical grace is the grace given by God to allow a new believer to proceed into mature believer status. It is food, shelter and clothing necessary to keep them alive during this time. Sometimes, there are other bonuses in logistical grace (such as, quail).

The Christian life is a day-by-day affair. This does not mean that we don't plan for the future, but every day, that is a day given to us by God; and we need to live in that day. We should stay filled with the Spirit and we should take in Bible teaching. And whatever happens today, we leave it where it is when tomorrow comes.

**Application:** We need to be careful about being too literal. This does not mean that we can only go to the grocery store every day and buy just enough for that day. Those were specific limitations—collecting manna each morning—placed on the sons of Israel at that point in time.

**Application:** We need to be careful about *imitating* things that you read in the historical portions of the Bible. It should be obvious that believers do not need to confine themselves to going outside each morning, looking for food on the ground. Yet, we have a massive subsection of believers who are trying to live in the book of Acts, chapter 2, today. Paul never orders anyone in his epistles to seek after the Holy Spirit. He never tells a church, "Listen, I know what your problem is—your problem is, you don't have the Holy Spirit." In fact, even the most carnal congregation that Paul corresponded with—the Corinthians—he told them that they had all been baptized into Christ (which is the work of the Holy Spirit).

**Application:** My point is, the Christian life is not imitating the narratives that we read in the Bible. We learn from these narratives—which is why God provided them for us—but we do not imitate them.

Back to the narrative:

Exodus 16:20 However, they did not listen to Moses. Some of them preserved it until the [next] morning—but it bred worms and rotted. So Moses was angry with them.

Instead of listening to Moses and doing just what he told them to do, quite a number of families tried to preserve the manna for the next day, just in case. It began to smell and small worms would grow in it.

Exodus 16:21 **So they gathered it morning by morning, each man according to his needs, and as the sun became hot it melted.**

There was a time frame during which the people could go out and collect manna. If they waited too long, it would become too hot outside and the manna would melt.

Exodus 16:22 **On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each individual. So all the leaders of the community came and informed Moses.**

They had been given instructions to gather twice as much manna as they needed, for they were not to go out on the seventh day to gather up the manna (as per v. 5).

The sons of Israel had leaders and elders, and they would come to Moses regularly and tell him what was happening in their community.

Exodus 16:23 **But he said to them, "This is what Adonai has said. Tomorrow is a Shabbat rest [that is, a Sabbath rest, a Sabbath day], a holy Shabbat to Adonai. Bake whatever you would bake, and boil what you would boil. Store up for yourselves everything that remains, to be kept until the morning."**

Although the seventh day was mentioned back in Genesis, the day after God finished restoring the earth; what we read here is the first time that we have come across any sort of Sabbath observance.

Moses worked with the elders who worked with the people during the first five days of this first week of manna, interacting, and trying to help the people get their minds right when it came to instructions from God.

On the sixth day, they were instructed to gather twice as much manna and to plan for a day of rest in God's economy for that era.

Exodus 16:24 **So they set it aside until the morning, just as Moses instructed, and it did not rot nor were there any worms.**

Although on other days, if the manna was kept overnight, it would begin to go bad; the extra manna gathered a day prior to the Sabbath did not go bad.

Exodus 16:25 **Then Moses said, "Eat that today, because today is a Shabbat to Adonai. Today you will not find it in the field."**

Moses warned the people that there would be no manna to find on the seventh day. So they had to gather twice as much on the sixth day, and eat that second amount on the seventh day (Saturday).

Exodus 16:26 **You are to gather it for six days, but the seventh day is the Shabbat, and there will be none."**

God told Moses and then Moses told the people, "Don't bother to try to find any manna on the seventh day; there won't be any to be found."

Exodus 16:27 **Yet on the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather and they found none.**

Of course, some people decided to check on this, and they did go out to gather manna on the seventh day. Many of them were possibly thinking, "This is illogical for the manna to go bad on the second day, and yet be okay the day after the Sabbath." They also must have thought, "It is illogical for us to get fresh manna for six days, but not to collect it fresh for the seventh." Given God's clear directives, that sort of thinking was human viewpoint.



Exodus 16:28 Adonai said to Moses, “How long will you [all] refuse to keep My mitzvot [= commandments] and My Torah [= Law]?”

God has given the Israelites specific commands and it seems that every time, some of them—a considerable number in fact—intentionally disobeyed the commands of God.

We then go from God speaking to Moses to Moses speaking to the people:

Exodus 16:29 [Moses spoke these same words to the people, and he also said:] “See, Adonai has given you [all] the Shabbat, so on the sixth day He gives you [all] the bread of two days. Let every man stay in his place, and let no man go out on the seventh day.”

God repeats these commands to Moses with the intent that He repeat them to the Hebrew people.

Exodus 16:30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

At some point, the people appear to obey God in these directions. After all, there was no percentage in disobeying God. If they did not collect the additional manna for the Sabbath, then they had nothing to eat. If this took place over a couple of Sabbaths, that would be a hard lesson to forget.

The giving of manna is summarized in v. 31, and what would be done in the future regarding manna is presented in vv. 32–36.

Exodus 16:31 The house of Israel named it manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey.

At this point, the food from God is given a name; it is called *manna*. Its look and taste are also described.

The final five verses of this chapter give us a summary of God’s provision of manna all the way to the end of their stay in the desert-wilderness.

Either Moses or Joshua added these verses many years down the road. At this point in time, in our Exodus narrative, no one knows that Israel is going to remain in the desert-wilderness for 40 years (God knows, of course; but no one else does).

Exodus 16:32 Then Moses said, “This is what Adonai has commanded. Let a full omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out from the land of Egypt.”

We have no idea when v. 32 took place. My assumption is, vv. 31–36 (or 32–36) were later appended to this section. Vv. 31–34 were likely added by Moses after the Tabernacle had been built; and vv. 35–36 added by Joshua after the Hebrew people entered into the land of promise. In the final two verses, Joshua (I assume) looks back on what took place regarding manna over a period of 40 or so years.

At some point, God told Moses that an omer of manna be kept for future generations (what is saved aside for this reason will not go bad).

Some of this manna was saved aside. It would be placed with the Ark of God (which had not yet been designed and built). The Tabernacle and furniture will be completed in Exodus 40.

Exodus 16:33 Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar and put a full omer of manna inside. Store it up before Adonai, to be kept throughout your generations.”

A full omer of manna (a day's rations for one person) was put into a container of some sort. This was to be saved as a witness for many generations in the future.

Exodus 16:34 **Just as Adonai commanded Moses, Aaron stored it up in front of the Testimony, to be preserved.**

These actions take place after the construction of the Tabernacle.

There were going to be a few things from their time in the desert which were to be saved aside. The first of these things is this jar of manna.

*The testimony* is the *Ark of Testimony*, which will be built at the end of this book. At this point in the Exodus narrative, no one knows anything about of Ark of Testimony (except God, of course). Vv. 33–34 make sense if the Ark of Testimony is in existence; it would be a difficult order to understand if the Ark of Testimony had not yet been built.

Interestingly enough, this is not kept as some sort of museum piece so that anyone can come by and look at it. It will be kept in or near the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant will be kept inside the Holy of Holies, which is a compartment at the back of the Tabernacle. Only one man will enter into the Holy of Holies and he entered only once a year (the High Priest).

God has not yet—as of Exodus 16—commanded Moses to build the Ark or the Tabernacle (the Holy of Holies will be a part of the Tabernacle). All of this is going to take place in Exodus 25–40.

Exodus 16:35 **Bnei-Yisrael ate the manna for 40 years. They ate the manna until they came to an inhabited land, when they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.**

Given that v. 35 appears to have been tacked onto this chapter after Israel has entered into the land; and given that vv. 32–34 likely took place after the time frame of this chapter; it would makes sense that all of these verses were added together after the fact. This was discussed in too much detail in the overall exegesis.

Exodus 16:36 **Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.**

I am assuming that this defines the measurement used by Israel in order to determine how much manna was to be gathered per person.

# EXODUS 17

Exodus 17 is a relatively short chapter.

I used the Tree of Life Version for the basic text for this section where we review the chapter all at once.

The Bible translation used below is the Tree of Life Version. It has a few peculiarities.

Generally speaking, most English translations which might be called a *Hebrew Names* translation, because there are a number of common words or expressions which they transliterate instead of translate.

In my chapter-by-chapter studies, I have come up with the classification *Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles*. I have given this classification to 10–15 translations and versions of the Bible. Some of these versions/translations may be ultimately translated by Jews who do not believe in Jesus. However, the majority of these versions/translations are from Christian sources (which can be discerned simply by noticing if they have a New Testament or not). Most often, those involved with such translations are former Jews who have believed in Jesus Christ.

I do not mean *former Jews* in the sense of renouncing being Jewish; but by simultaneously affirming their new identity in Christ. In the Church Age, when someone believes in Jesus, they become a part of the church (or royal family). Paul writes in Galatians, **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.** (Galatians 3:28–29; ESV).

If you examine the translations/versions by themselves, comparing verses, you cannot easily determine whether the translators have believed in Jesus or not. Their intent is to translate from the Hebrew into modern English. A Christian does not feel a need to change or massage the Old Testament in order to make it more *Christian*. Translators who are not born again, from their side, feel no need to make the English translation less Christian. There is personal integrity at stake here. That is, if a particular translation was massaged to make it more or less Christian, few would consider that translation reliable. We have a good modern example of this—the Jehovah Witness Bible<sup>37</sup> makes a few changes to suit their own theology. As a result, few people (other than other Witnesses) consider the JW translation to be worthwhile.

When I classify a Bible under the heading *Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles*, I am simply saying that many of the proper names and a few of the words are transliterated from the Hebrew. The one thing which tells you who did the translation is the existence of a New Testament in the final quarter of the Bible.

Generally speaking, regardless of the sentiments or religious persuasion of the translators, the translation is not dramatically different. For instance, if you see the Apocrypha as a part of the translation, the translation is usually approved for Catholics. If you see no New Testament, this is a translation made by Jews for Jews; and if you see a NT, then the translation was made by Christians or Jewish Christians. Nevertheless, when you go to a specific passage, like Exodus 17:1, there is very little difference between them. You won't read a chapter and say, "This was clearly translated in a way that is favorable to the Vatican." Finding a strong slant is rare; most translators do not slant their translation (the JWs are an exception to this).

## Vocabulary from the Tree of Life Version

| Tree of Life        | More common   | Explaining the Tree of Life Version  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| <i>Bnei-Yisrael</i> | <i>sons of Israel, Israelites, sons and daughters of Israel</i> | The Hebrew reads b <sup>e</sup> nêy Yishrâ'êl (בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -NEE yishsh-raw-ale] (which means, <i>sons of Israel</i> ); so this is a transliteration from the Hebrew. |

<sup>37</sup> Yes, such a translation exists.

| Vocabulary from the Tree of Life Version   |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Tree of Life   | More common                                    | Explaining the Tree of Life Version  |
| <i>Adonai</i>  | <i>Lord, YHWH, Jehovah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i> | Rather than speak the sacred name of God, the readers of Scripture inserted their word for <i>Lord</i> instead, which is 'ădônîy (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NEE</i> ]. However, in the actual Scriptures, <i>YHWH</i> is the word found here. |
| Originally, those who read the Jewish Scriptures aloud would see the word <i>YHWH</i> (not the actual English letters, but their Hebrew equivalent), but they would say the word <i>Adonai</i> aloud in the synagogue. This began as a result of Jews thinking that name too sacred to pronounce.  |  |  |
| There have been a number of Jewish and Christian groups who write <i>G-d</i> rather than <i>God</i> , as if this is some spiritual thing. In the original Jewish Scriptures, there were no vowels anywhere. It was not just words for <i>God</i> , but words for <i>house</i> , <i>grain</i> and <i>conscience</i> were all written without vowels. What happened was, when reading these passages aloud, all words would be correctly pronounced from memory <i>except</i> for <i>YHWH</i> , and the reader said <i>Adonai</i> instead. As a result, after a few generations, the actual pronunciation for <i>YHWH</i> was lost. When vowel points were eventually added to the Old Testament (long after the 1 <sup>st</sup> advent of Jesus), they were placed everywhere except in the word <i>YHWH</i> because they did not know what vowel points to insert. |  |  |
| Now, explain these simple facts to anyone who writes <i>G-d</i> instead of <i>God</i> , and tomorrow, they will continue to write <i>G-d</i> instead of <i>God</i> ; and they will continue to think that is the spiritual thing to do.  |  |  |
| <i>Torah</i>   | <i>Law (of Moses)</i>                          | This is a transliteration of the Hebrew word translated <i>Law</i> .   |
| <i>Shabbat</i>   | <i>Sabbath, Saturday, day of rest</i>          | Although <i>Sabbath</i> is a transliteration of the word found here, <i>Shabbat</i> is a more literal transliteration.   |

Exodus 17 is a relatively short chapter with two incidents being recorded: (1) Moses slams his staff against a rock, and water comes from that rock; and (2) Israel and Amalek go to war. That is the entire chapter in a nutshell.

Vv. 1–7 **Water from the Rock**

Vv. 8–16 **Israel Defeats Amalek**

**Water from the Rock** (I simply used the section headings found in E-sword)

Exodus 17:1 *All the congregation of Bnei-Yisrael [= the sons of Israel] journeyed from the wilderness of Sin in stages, according to the command of Adonai [= the Lord], and camped in Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.*

In this chapter, the Jews have been traveling for a day or so and they suddenly realize that they are out of water and there appears to be no water anywhere around.

This is the second no-water incident. You may recall that the first time, there was water, but it was bitter. When a tree was thrown into the lake, it neutralized the bitterness (I believe this to be a simple chemical reaction). The tree represented the cross, which neutralizes the bitterness between God and man.

Like the first incident, this second incident will also be typical (that is, it will also point down the corridors of time to Jesus offering Himself on the cross).

The proper noun *Sin* is unrelated to our word *sin*.

Exodus 17:2 So the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test Adonai?”

The people quarrel with Moses because of this no-water situation, demanding that he somehow get water for them. Obviously, Moses and Aaron have no special abilities to provide water. These men could do nothing. They were the Vanna Whites of their day.<sup>38</sup> They pointed at what God was going to do before God did it.

It should be obvious to this people that God is in charge of their provisions (God supplies them every morning with manna). Therefore, their approach to Moses should have been entirely different. They should have said, “God has made specific promises to His people. If we are dead, God cannot fulfill these promises. We must have water or we will die! Demand that God provide us with water!” That approach would have been entirely legitimate.

Exodus 17:3 But the people thirsted for water there, and they complained against Moses and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt? To kill us with thirst, along with our children and cattle?”

Then the people of Israel complained to Moses, accusing him of bringing them out of Egypt to kill them in the desert-wilderness. This is an amazingly irrational accusation; but one that the Israelites were apparently emotionally invested in.

People often adhere to slogans which they like, relate to, identify with; even when those slogans are false. Many times, in many ways, the Hebrew people made this claim against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt? To kill us with thirst, along with our children and cattle?” Obviously, Moses had no devious plan like this to destroy his own people. However, he was accused of this on many occasions by many people. It was a stupid and inaccurate accusation.

Exodus 17:4 So Moses cried out to Adonai saying, “What am I to do for these people? They are about ready to stone me.”

Moses appears to speak with God in a tent outside the camp of Israel (Exodus 33:7–11). This may be the primary place where Moses has interacted with God throughout. We might understand this to be the pre-Tabernacle.

Moses goes to God, complaining that the people are about to stone him over this lack of water. The fact that he is their leader and that he has brought them to a place of no-water is their reason for blaming him. This is despite the fact that all Israel is following a pillar of fire at night and a pillar of cloud in the day. Moses had no control over the pillar of fire or pillar of cloud. He followed these pillars just as the rest of Israel did.

Exodus 17:5 Adonai said to Moses, “Walk before the people, and take of the elders of Israel with you, along with your staff with which you struck the river. Take it in your hand and go.

God tells Moses to take his staff—the one through which God has been acting. This staff has been primarily used to point out where God would act. Holding that staff in the air would make Moses more visible to a crowd of people.

It would make no sense for all two million Israelites to go for a walk after Moses. After all, he might not travel but for a mile or two mile. Therefore, Moses will only take the elders along with him. Furthermore, what was going to happen would be quite dangerous for families and children.

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<sup>38</sup> Obviously, I have just dated myself.



Exodus 17:6 Behold, I will stand before you, there upon the rock in Horeb. You are to strike the rock, and water will come out of it so that the people can drink.” Then Moses did just so in the eyes of the elders of Israel.

God tells Moses that He will stand before him on the rock and Moses is to strike the rock with his staff. Water would come from the rock for the people to drink.

**Moses Striking Water from the Rock** by Niccolò Possino (1649); from [Wikimedia](#); kept at the [Hermitage Museum](#); accessed May 16, 2019. The problem with most of these paintings and drawings is, the amount of water shown would be good for about a thousand people or so, but not for two million. What takes place at this rock would have to be a large river or lake. In this painting, we appear to have a trickle of water (which is black, for some reason). In reality, the rushing water flow would have been massive.



You will note the economy of words, which is typical of Moses' style when writing narrative. [The LORD said to Moses, "...you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink."](#) And Moses did so... (from Exodus 17:5–6; ESV)

Although this is a very significant incident in the travels of the Israelites, Moses covers it in a scant two verses.

Exodus 17:7 [The name of the place was called Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of Bnei-Yisrael, and because they tested Adonai saying, "Is Adonai among us, or not?"](#)

This place was called *complaining (of the people) and (their) testing (of God)*.

Instead of looking to God for deliverance, the people complained to Moses, as if he himself is to blame for their situation. This is their failure.

**Let God be truthful and every man a liar.**

So ends section 1 of this chapter.

### **Israel Defeats Amalek**

At this point, we have a complete change of topic:

Exodus 17:8 [Then the Amalekites came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.](#)

Although the Amalekites may have come from the Amalek previously mentioned in Scripture (I believe that he is the grandson of Esau), we do not know that for certain. Despite Jacob and Esau seemingly reconciling near the end of their lives, this does not mean that their descendants would get along.

Exodus 17:9 Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men, go out, and fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

Joshua is apparently a military leader under Moses (this is the first time that he is mentioned in Scripture). Joshua is supposed to choose men to go out and fight the Amalekites. Moses will observe this battle off on the top of a hill with the staff of God in his hand.

It is my guess that Moses went to this ideal vantage point to see Joshua's army and the army of the Amalekites, with the intention of making signals to Joshua, to help guide him during the battle. Going with two other men (at least) would allow them all to concentrate on different areas of the battle. This is not specified anywhere in this chapter; but it seems like a very reasonable thing for Moses, Aaron and Hur to do.

Exodus 17:10 So Joshua did as Moses said, and fought the Amalekites, while Moses, Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

Moses went to the top of a hill from which he could observe the battle taking place below him. He went with his brother Aaron and Hur, also mentioned here for the first time.

Exodus 17:11 When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. But when he let down his hand, the Amalekites prevailed.

While giving hand signals using his staff to Joshua on the ground, the three men noticed something odd. When Moses held up the staff, Israel appeared to prevail. When he let down his hands (and staff), the Amalekites began to win.

Why was Moses lifting up the staff and his hands in the first place? Bear in mind that he had to do this several times in order for people to take notice that this affected the outcome of the battle. I would suggest that these were battle signs, in order to help guide Joshua tactically. However, it became clear that, when Moses' arms were in the air, outstretched toward heaven, that Joshua would clearly be gaining an advantage in the battle. So, the approach then became, just to hold his arms and staff up for awhile. As a result, the battle continued to favor Joshua and his army.

So Moses just kept his arms in the air, and the tide continued to go in favor of Israel.

Exodus 17:12 Moses' hands grew heavy, so they took a stone, put it under him, and he sat down. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side. So his hands were steady until the sun went down.

Holding up this staff for a long period of time became difficult for Moses (it would have been difficult for anyone). Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms.

Aaron and Hur provided a stone for Moses to sit upon; and then they stood (or sat) next to Moses, to hold his arms in place.

**Aaron and Hur Holding Up Moses' Hands** (a graphic); a Wood Engraving American 1873 available on [Amazon](#); accessed January 18, 2023.



AARON AND HUR HOLDING UP MOSES' HANDS.

Exodus 17:13 So Joshua overpowered the Amalekites and his army with the edge of the sword.

As a result, Joshua and his army defeated the Amalekites. They were fighting with deadly weapons (swords).

Exodus 17:14 Adonai said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven."

Adonai spoke to Moses, telling him to write this incident down in the book (the very same book that we read and study today). God vows to wipe out the Amalekites entirely.

The words *and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua* is literally, *and place it in the ears of Joshua*. This simply means that Moses will dictate this to Joshua and Joshua will write it down.

Exodus 17:15 Then Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Adonai-Nissi.

Moses builds an altar to commemorate this battle and promise of God. Adonai-Nissi means, *the Lord (is) my banner (flag, standard)*. This might be understood to be a guidon, which is a military standard flag which represents a unit, a squadron or even an entire military branch. Moses might be saying, "This altar to Y<sup>e</sup>howah is the guidon for Israel's army." This is because, in the end, they depended entirely upon God for the military victory. However, this does not mean that, everyone took a seat and God killed off the enemy. The people of Israel actively fought against Amalek and routed them.

Exodus 17:16 Then he said, "By the hand upon the throne of Adonai, Adonai will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Moses also swears, speaking as a prophet, that God would make war with Amalek for many generations.

These final two verses were very difficult to translate. The translation came from the Tree of Life Version; and the explanation was based upon their translation. In this abbreviated view of this chapter, no additional time will be given to discussing the problems with this and other English translations.



# EXODUS 18

## Outline of Chapter 18:

- Vv. 1–6 **Moses' father-in-law and estranged wife travel to visit Moses**
- Vv. 7–12 **Fellowship between Moses and his father-in-law**
- Vv. 13–16 **Jethro observes Moses daily grind**
- Vv. 17–23 **Jethro counsels Moses**
- Vv. 24–27 **Moses follows the advice of his father-in-law**

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

### Moses' Father-in-Law and Estranged Wife Travel to Visit Moses

The basic Bible text for this section will be the Hebraic Roots Bible (any other translation used will be specifically noted). The HRB is an Old and New Testament translation ©Copyright Word of Truth Publications, 2009; Congregation of YHWH, Jerusalem. This background would suggest that these are Jewish Christians. If there is only an Old Testament which uses many Hebraisms, then the translation is the work of Jewish scholars (examples: the Complete Tanach; the Kaplan Translation, the Tanakh—1985). If a translation with Hebraisms has both the Old and New Testament, then, obviously, there are Jewish Christians involved (examples: the Complete Jewish Bible, the Exegesis Companion Bible<sup>39</sup>, the Hebraic Roots Bible, Orthodox Jewish Bible, The Scriptures 2009, Tree of Life Version). The whole idea, of course, is to appeal to the Jewish reader, whether Christian or not (many of our Jewish brothers and sisters are Christians).

There is at least one Jewish Bible which is the New Testament only (the Holy New Covenant Translation).

If you read only the Old Testament translation, then, generally speaking, you cannot tell whether the translators are Christian or not. Most organizations which attempt to translate the Old Testament, the New Testament or both, do not necessarily come with a theological point of view built into the text (even though you would think that there would be).

One of the remarkable things which I have discovered are the many similarities between Catholic approved translations and Jewish translations (whether Christian or not). In the chapter studies that I do, I feature selections from about 90+ translations for my Old Testament work. At some point, many years ago, it seemed like a good idea to group the Catholic-approved translations together and the Jewish-name translations together. I have these two sections placed together, one above the other. Apart from the Hebraisms, one would be hard-pressed to find any remarkable differences between these two sections of translations. If you would like to see this for yourself, the links to Exodus 18: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). You can look at every verse or passage, and read these two sections, and see that the sense of the Catholic Bible is no different from the Hebrew Bible. That is, you will never read a verse in the first group and say, “That sure sounds like a Catholic way of looking at things.” Similarly, when you read from the second group of translations, you will never remark, “It really seems that, theologically speaking, these Jewish translators are trying to make a point.”

With regards to the Hebraic Roots Bible, there are only a few words which may be different from what you are used to:

Although many believers recognize the words on the left, not all do.

### Table for Hebraic Roots Bible

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<sup>39</sup> The ECB provides the closest thing that I have seen to the Hebrew grammatical structure.

| Hebraic Roots Bible | More Common designation           | Additional comments   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| YAHWEH              | Jehovah                           | The HRB is likely more accurate than <i>Jehovah</i> .                                 |
| Elohe               | God                               | This is <i>God</i> in the singular  |
| Elohim              | God                               | This is God in the plural (–im is the mark of the plural in the Hebrew)               |
| Elohim              | gods                              | There should not be an s added to the –im ending in the Hebrew, but they do it anyway |
| Torah               | Law, Mosaic Law, books of the Law | Like the other words, <i>torah</i> is simply a transliteration                        |

Very often, a *Hebrew Names Bible* simply transliterates a number of Hebrew words. In the HRB, there are only a handful; in the Orthodox Jewish Bible, there are a lot.

Key to Exodus 18 is Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who lives in Midian. It turns out that Jethro is not too far from where Moses and the people of Israel are in the desert-wilderness. Therefore, he drops in on Moses, bringing with him Moses' wife and two sons. Most of this chapter is going to be about Moses and Jethro interacting.

Having read and worked on this chapter over a period of several years (not nonstop, mind you), I wonder if there are things that are necessary in this chapter which move us right along to what God has planned for Moses? That is, perhaps Jethro coming up to see Moses was an important step in Moses' spiritual maturation.

Jethro is going to observe Moses on the job, and he is going to say, "Listen, you can't continue to do things this way. Here is what I advise..."

Moses could listen and take Jethro's advice (this would be the grace oriented response), or Moses could say, "Listen, God put me in charge of this nation of two million people, not you; so maybe I have a better idea about what how do do things. You think?" That would have been the response of arrogance.

One of the most important things that a leader can have is grace orientation. Leadership is not, *I'm the toughest, meanest, most stubborn man here, so what I say goes!!* Moses certainly has to be tough; but he also has to be grace oriented. We learn a great deal about leadership dynamics through Moses.

### **Jethro's Advice** (this is the only heading for this chapter)

Exodus 18:1 **And Jethro the priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moses, heard all that which Elohim had done for Moses and for His people Israel, that YAHWEH had caused Israel to go out from Egypt.** (Hebraic Roots Bible)

Moses, when he first left (escaped) Egypt, he went to Midian. Moses knew geography; it was a part of his training. So, in order to cleanly escape, he did not just take off running. He likely knew where he was going, and believed this to be the safest place to go.

In his training to become Pharaoh, Moses would be aware of how to get to any nearby country; and he would have known about the country's interactions with Egypt; and he would have known things about that country's society, customs, language, military force, etc. This information guided Moses in choosing a destination for his escape.

Moses first met Jethro's daughters, and then he met Jethro. He married one of Jethro's daughters (probably the eldest, as that is how things were often done).

I suspect that Moses' marriage was much different than what he was expecting.



Exodus 18:2–4 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, (after Moses had sent her away), and her two sons, one's name was Gershom (for he said, I have become an alien in a foreign land;) and one's name was Eliezer (for the Elohe of my father was my Help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh). (HRB)

Moses married Zipporah (= *flighty*) and they had two sons. Although she began to come back to Egypt with Moses, she had to circumcise her youngest adult son and that apparently soured her on the relationship and this new adventure. At some point, she returned to Midian. Maybe right after the circumcision; maybe a few weeks later.

Although the text of this translation reads *after Moses had sent her away*, we previously studied this in great depth. That is not what the Hebrew text reads. Based upon her reaction to having to circumcise their second son, Zipporah seems to have been quite upset. Therefore, it is more likely that she simply up and left Moses, under the theme, “I don’t need to put up with this.”

A few months transpired, during which Moses was used by God to bring Israel out of Egypt. When this had been accomplished, Jethro began to receive reports of all that had been taking place (probably from trading caravans).

As Moses led the people through the desert-wilderness, he came closer and closer to Midian. This was not by means of Moses, but God. God led the people through the desert-wilderness through a very visible pillar of fire at night and pillar of cloud by day. Moses knew where they were, but he was very much following God’s lead.

Jethro, hearing that Moses was not far from him, gathered up Zipporah and the two sons (who could have been in their 30s by this time<sup>40</sup>) and he brought them to Moses. Apart from a mention of the sons in the Chronicles genealogy, this family will not be mentioned again. Not by their names, anyway.

As an aside, this suggests a very interesting principle: Moses is the greatest Jew of his era (one of the greatest men in Israel’s history). However, his sons are, by the Biblical account, unremarkable. It takes two people of character to raise great children. The influence of the wife cannot be understated. However, this is simply an implied principle. This chapter is not really about the reuniting of Moses and his family.

The rest of this chapter will be about Jethro, a family priest, and his son-in-law Moses.

Exodus 18:5 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and his sons and his wife came to Moses, to the wilderness where he camped, at the mount of Elohim. (HRB)

Jethro knew where Moses and the Israelites were. They were not difficult to find. There are two million people in a desert-wilderness. He and his family camped nearby and Jethro sent a messenger to Moses.

The message sent to Moses is v. 6:

Exodus 18:6 And he said to Moses, I, your father-in-law Jethro, and your wife, and your two sons with her have come to you. (HRB)

What may not be clear by the words used is, Jethro first sent a messenger to Moses to let him know that he was nearby, and he had his wife and two sons with him. This would have been proper protocol. We know that this is a message and not Moses’ father-in-law saying this directly to Moses. Moses has only been out of Midian for a few months so he would recognize his father-in-law and family.

Moses could have sent a messenger back saying, “Listen, too busy now; take the woman back with you. I have got too much on my plate.”

### **Fellowship Between Moses and His Father-in-law**

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<sup>40</sup> Remember that Moses arrived in Midian about 40 years previous.

Sometimes, we lose a sense of time is lost when studying a few chapters. This is Moses' family and he has spent the last 40 years with them (I am including Jethro as a part of his family). Moses has been leading Israel for maybe two or three months (this is going all the way back to when he first returned to Egypt). Despite having actual blood family members there in the desert-wilderness (Aaron and Miriam), Moses has had almost no contact with them over the past 80 years (recall that he was brought up in the Egyptian palace, away from his family). As far as Moses is concerned, his real family has just come to see him. Moses is very happy to meet with them. Moses has the messenger lead him to where Jethro is camped.

Exodus 18:7 **And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and bowed, and kissed him. And they asked each to his neighbor, as to their welfare. And they [Moses and Jethro] entered the tent.** (HRB)

Moses was very glad that his father-in-law had come to him. Moses did not send for them to be brought to him; Moses immediately went out where they were camped. This would indicate that Moses really wanted to see them all (however, Moses will spend most of his time with Jethro and not with his wife and kids).

It is Moses who bows before his father-in-law, not the other way around.

Moses calls himself the most grace oriented man on earth (Numbers 12:3), and we know that is true, as he wrote under the power of the Holy Spirit (2Peter 1:21). There are several things in this chapter which reveal to us just how grace oriented Moses was. Bowing before his father-in-law is clearly an act of grace orientation. Moses does not come into Jethro's field of vision and say, "I am like a king here, so you bow to me!"

**Moses and Jethro Talk in the Tent** (by James Jacques Joseph Tissot) (French artist, 1836-1902); from the **Jewish Museum**; accessed August 9, 2023.

Exodus 18:8 **And Moses told his father-in-law all that YAHWEH had done to Pharaoh and to Egypt on account of Israel, all the trouble which they had found in the way, and YAHWEH had delivered them.** (HRB)

Everything that we have been reading and studying, going back perhaps to Exodus 7 or so and up to the end of Exodus 17, is all that Moses told Jethro. This is the first time that Moses could share this information with someone that he was close to.

Moses had a 40-year relationship with Jethro; and Moses had been leading Israel only for a few months. Being able to see his father-in-law in the midst of all this was a real treat.



Exodus 18:9 **And Jethro rejoiced regarding all the good which YAHWEH had done to Israel whom He had delivered from the hand of Egypt.** (HRB)

Jethro recognizes that this was divine good that was taking place, God delivering Israel from the control of Egypt.

One of the reasons that we know Jethro to be a mature believer is, he is able to see contemporary history through the eyes of God. That is, Jethro has divine viewpoint; and is able to apply this to what he hears and sees.

Contrast this with some of the malcontents in Israel who claim that they were better off in slavery (Exodus 15:24 16:3 17:3). What would have been divine viewpoint? "Blessed You are, O God, for sending Moses to deliver us from slavery in Egypt." But how many times have we heard those sentiments expressed among the Israelites? Never?

Being on the internet and listening to a Christian radio station at times (as well as to National Public Radio), and it is clear that some people can look at the things taking place in the United States and understand why they are happening; and others cannot. NPR almost never understands or correctly interprets current events (many times, this is intentional). However, there are many Christians who do not have a clue either. On the one hand, it is clear that the number of believers is decreasing in the United States; as are the number of mature believers. This would tell us that we are in for strong discipline as a nation (which discipline is taking place already). However, national discipline does not mean that these are signs of a soon-coming rapture.

I recall a Christian radio ministry headed by a very intelligent, knowledgeable man who, at some point, decided to predict the day of the rapture. If memory serves, he predicted this day at least twice. This was a man who should have known better, and his foolishness became fodder for Christian critics. This man became an embarrassment; and because this was on the radio, his foolish predictions were well known. God had given him a very important ministry, and he squandered it in the end.

Returning to our narrative, let's see what Jethro says about the recent events that Moses has just related to him:

Exodus 18:10 **And Jethro said, Blessed be YAHWEH Who has delivered you from the hand of Egypt, and from the hand of Pharaoh; He who delivered the people from under the hand of Egypt.** (HRB; capitalized)

Jethro blesses or celebrates what Y<sup>e</sup>howah has done. He seems to have a better grasp of what has taken place than the Israelites who were delivered by God. They actually saw all that God did with their own eyes, and yet they did not appreciate it. Jethro is hearing about this from Moses, and he fully understands and believes what has taken place.

As a mature believer, Jethro is able to properly interpret the historic events of his era. Because most of Israel had not grown spiritually, they are unable to correctly understand what is taking place.

We have heard the people of Israel and how they have responded to each and every difficulty which they face. Here is how Jethro understands these events:

Exodus 18:11 **Now I know that YAHWEH is greater than all the Elohim [that is, *false gods*]; truly, in the way in which He acted proudly against them.** (HRB)

Before we interpret this verse, we need to clear up some problems. In v. 11, the Hebrew Roots Bible should not have capitalized *elohims*; nor should they have added the *s* at the end. The *-im* ending is plural in the Hebrew. Context determines whether we translate this word *God* or *gods*. Here, we would correctly translate it *gods*; we would correctly transliterate this word as *elohim*. Since the Hebrew Roots Bible transliterates this word, they should have explained this choice in their introduction; and then have done it correctly. I am not saying that the HRB is a bad translation; I am simply correcting this passage.

Jethro had already believed in the Revealed God. He knew a great many things about God; and he taught Moses these things. However, it is at this point that Jethro recognizes that the God that he worships is the specific God of Israel. This would have been a great revelation to him (although it is very likely that Moses recited and taught the book of Genesis<sup>41</sup> to Jethro during those 40 years).

Exodus 18:12 **And Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, took a burnt offering and sacrifices to Elohim. And Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread before Elohim with Moses' father-in-law.** (HRB)

Jethro offers up some animal sacrifices in recognition of the Person of Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and they ate a meal before God with all of the elders of Israel.

### **Jethro Observes Moses' Daily Grind**

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<sup>41</sup> Moses would not have a number of scrolls which he carried; he would have the book memorized and in his head.

Exodus 18:13 And it happened on the next day that Moses sat to judge the people. And the people stood beside Moses from the morning until the evening. (HRB)

The next day was *take your father-in-law to work* day, and that is what Moses did. Jethro observed Moses from morning to night.

This was the earliest recorded version of *The Peoples' Court*.

Exodus 18:14 And Moses' father-in-law saw all which he was doing to the people. And he said, What is this thing which you are doing to the people? Why are you sitting by yourself, and all the people standing beside you from morning until evening? (HRB)

Once this was all over, Jethro says, "What the heck are you doing, Moses? You are going to run yourself ragged handling all of these cases! This does not work for the people either."

Exodus 18:15–16 And Moses said to his father-in-law, Because the people come to me to seek Elohim. When they have a matter, they come to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor. And I make known the statutes of Elohim, and the laws from His Torah. (HRB)

Moses explains, "The people have complaints against one another. They come to me and I give them a ruling, based upon my understanding of God. I make known to them the statutes and laws of God."

Moses is actually acting in accordance with Egyptian law (which he knows) as understood correctly by a believer in the Revealed God. Moses does not, at this time, have a set of statutes which he consults. He has common sense, a thorough understanding of Egyptian law (part of his training as a young man), and divine viewpoint in his soul. These things combined are called here [the statutes of Elohim, and the laws from His Torah](#).

What Moses is saying applies to this point in time. He has learned a great deal about God in the past couple months; and under the teaching that Jethro gave him for 40 years. He was working primarily from divine establishment principles. Moses has an inherent understanding of right and wrong.

But Jethro does not say, "That is great, Moses. I am proud of you, son."

### **Jethro Counsels Moses**

Exodus 18:17 And the father-in-law of Moses said to him, The thing which you do is not good. (HRB)

I would suspect that Moses was quite proud of what he did. Jethro observed Moses fairly judge case after case, and perhaps Moses determined 30 cases this day. For him, that would have been a good day.

Moses may have said, "Father, that was pretty much a typical day. What do you think?"

But Jethro does not praise him. Jethro tells Moses, "This is not good, what you are doing."

That must have surprised Moses. He did not get much praise or appreciation from the Israelites, but surely his own father-in-law could see all that Moses had to deal with. But his father-in-law has a whole different opinion. Because Moses is grace oriented, he is going to hear his father-in-law out.

Exodus 18:18 Surely you will wear out, both you and this people with you. For the thing is heavy for you. You are not able to do it by yourself. (HRB)

Jethro continues: "This is way, way too much work for one man to do. Furthermore, it is inefficient."



Exodus 18:19 **Now listen to my voice. I will advise you, and may Elohim be with you. You be for this people before Elohim, and you bring the matters to Elohim.** (HRB)

Then Jethro says, “Let me tell you what you should be doing.”

I don’t care how impertinent Jethro may sound, he is absolutely right. Moses cannot continue to lead his people in this way and judge their every dispute.

**Jethro Advises Moses** (AI-generated parsha illustration, by B. Spitz); from the **Times of Israel**; accessed August 9, 2023. I had no idea that this was computer-generated except by its description.

Exodus 18:20 **And you warn them as to the statutes and the laws of the Torah, and make known to them the way in which they should walk, and the work which they should do.** (HRB)

“The first thing you need to do,” Jethro tells him, “is give them an idea of what laws and regulations they need to follow.”

At this point, these laws and statutes are going to come from Moses’ training under Jethro and what he knows about God from these past few months.

I don’t believe that Moses or Jethro had any idea what was going to happen next. Neither man thought, “I bet God is going to call for Moses to come up His mountain, and God is going to give all of these laws to him.” That was not on either man’s radar.



Nevertheless, wouldn’t it be great if Moses had an actual set of laws and statutes directly from the Lord to follow?

Exodus 18:21 **And you, you shall look out men of ability out of all the people, who fear Elohim, men of truth, hating unjust gain. And you place these over them as rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.** (HRB)

Occasionally, in these chapter reviews, I use a translation which requires some explanation. Believe it or not, *you shall look out men of ability* is a legitimate translation. Better, *you shall contemplate [or, have a vision of] men of ability*. We discussed this verb earlier in more detail.

“You need to hire some judges,” Jethro tells him, “with these qualifications. They must be honest and not open to bribery. You are going to have intermediary rulers under you.”

Exodus 18:22 **And let them judge the people at all times. And it shall be that every great matter they shall bring to you, and every small matter they shall judge. And you make it easy on yourself, and let them bear with you.** (HRB)

“These men are going to handle the small matters, and anything big needs to be brought to you.”

Exodus 18:23 **If you do this thing, and Elohim command you, you will be able to stand; and also this people will go in peace to their place.** (HRB)



“This is what you need to do in order to outlast this people. Otherwise, they are going to send you to an early grave!” is the essence of what Jethro is saying.

You may notice another oddity of this translation—let’s see this without the transliteration: *If you do this thing, and God commands you...* Do you see the difference between the two? *Elohim* is a plural noun, so it has the matching plural form of verb. *God* is a singular noun, so it has the matching singular form of verb. How does this read in the original Hebrew? *If you do this thing, and Elohim commands you...* Even though *Elohim* is a plural noun, it takes on the singular form of the verb (in the original Hebrew).

### **Moses Follows the Advice of His Father-in-law**

Exodus 18:24 *And Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law, and he did all that he had said.* (HRB)

This is a great example of Moses’ grace orientation. He does not resist the words of his father-in-law, and say, “What the heck do you know? You run a bunch of sheep in Midian and you have too many unmarried daughters. I rule over a nation of two million! What do you get the nerve to tell me what to do?” How many people would have responded in that way? But not Moses. Moses listens to his father-in-law, he evaluates the advice, and he follows it. Moses follows this advice because it is good advice.

Moses’ father-in-law has not praised Moses, saying, “You work so hard! I am impressed!” Instead, he says, “What you are doing is not good.” Then he told Moses how to do it better. Moses does not let his ego get in the way. His feathers are not ruffled. He does not go on the defensive. He listened to his father-in-law (really listened); recognized his advice as being good, and then he followed it.

Exodus 18:25–26 *And Moses chose men of ability from all Israel and made them heads over the people; rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all times; the hard matters they brought to Moses, and every small matter they judged themselves.* (HRB)

Moses does exactly what his father-in-law has suggested.

I believe that this response of grace orientation indicates that God can take Moses to even greater heights of leadership.

**Application:** Now, how do we apply this? I am not the ruler over a nation, nor would I want to be. You are not. Nevertheless, there are people in our lives who are able to view our lives and sometimes make a suggestion that is worth following. For many men, this is often the wife. Even though you have the authority over your wife, does that mean you ignore everything she says and periodically let her know your dictates from Mount Sinai? Of course not! There are times when your wife is going to make a suggestion, and it is a brilliant suggestion (just as Jethro’s suggestion was to Moses). Being the person in charge of anything does not mean you listen to just one voice, and that is your own. God gave you that woman as a help. Do not make the mistake of ignoring this great gift from God.

**Application:** Many companies have had suggestion boxes; and people who contribute their opinion here are often people with their eyes on the ground, knowing at ground-level what is taking place. Such a person can be invaluable to the prosperity of your organization.

**Application:** I was a teacher for about 25 years, and now and again, a very shy student would approach me after class and voice a complaint or a suggestion. I used to hand out evaluation forms at the end of my semester teaching at a community college. I took most of the suggestions seriously. This does not mean I changed everything I did from top to bottom, depending upon the commentary; but there were so many times when outside eyes made it obvious that I was doing X, but I should be doing Y.

**Application:** I have used the illustration of the chapter studies which I do. At one time, I would just start writing, in paragraph form, all about the grammar and vocabulary of the verse at hand. A friend of mine read this and suggested that it was gobbledy gook to him. If the first paragraph of explanation throws a reader for a loop, maybe that was not the best approach. It was because of him that I developed the Greek and Hebrew tables. Anyone who wants to pass over the Greek or the Hebrew of any passage can do so quite easily now. This has completely changed the look of my written work, but it was the right thing to do. See the studies of Exodus here: [www.kukis.org/Exodus](http://www.kukis.org/Exodus) This one change alone revolutionized the written work that I do; but I had to be open to the suggestion. Furthermore, the person making the complaint/observation was a charismatic—so I could easily have set aside what he said.

**Application:** Obviously, every complaint, criticism or suggestion that you will hear will not be valid; but don't simply skip over them because the person suggesting it does not have your full respect. He may actually have the insight which you lack.

Exodus 18:27 [And Moses let depart his father-in-law, and he went to his own land.](#) (HRB)

Jethro departs to return to his own household. He likely left his daughter and grandsons behind; but they will have no impact worth recording, despite their close relationship to the writer of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

To this point in Israel's history, Moses was pretty much the arbiter of right and wrong. He had been schooled in Egyptian law and he had a relationship with God. For these reasons, it made sense that he would judge between the people. However, clearly, as Jethro pointed out, this had become unworkable and impractical. So, together Moses and Jethro hammered out a system of judges and authorities. However, what they clearly lacked was a clear system of law to adhere to (they would have had case law based upon the cases where Moses had already made rulings; which rulings, I assume, were written down).

In Exodus 19, God will prepare the people for the reception of the Law, and, beginning in Exodus 20, God will personally give the people His Law. So, the Law that Israel needs right now—the perfect standard of behavior—is about to be provided for them.

# EXODUS 19

I will use the Legacy Standard Bible translation below. The Legacy Standard Bible (©2021) is the update for the New American Standard Bible (©2020). In working with the LSB as of late, I have noticed that it has slightly fewer footnotes than the NASB. The NASB modernized the language of the ASV considerably. Also, over the years, there is an interesting evolution in the name of God in the Old Testament:

## The Evolution of ASV → NASB → LSB:

And Jehovah said unto him, Go, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto Jehovah, lest he break forth upon them. (Exodus 19:24; American Standard Version, 1901)

Then the LORD said to him, "Go down and come up again, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break out against them." (Exodus 19:24; New American Standard Bible, 2020)

Then Yahweh said to him, "Go down and come up again, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Yahweh, lest He break out against them." (Exodus 19:24; Legacy Standard Bible, 2021)

## Chapter 19 Index

### Introduction

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- vv. 10–15 **God defines the boundaries for the mountain/the people are cleansed**
- vv. 16–25 **Moses goes back up/God sends him back down**

**Introduction:** Exodus 19 is one of the most important chapters in the book of Exodus, but it is rarely thought of as such, seeing that it is in the shadow of Exodus 20 (where the Ten Commandments are given). Everyone knows about the Ten Commandments; few know much about the events which led up to the Ten Commandments.

In this chapter, Moses reminds the people of how God brought them to this place and to Himself. God is infinite and outside the limitations of time and space; however, there are times when He appears to confine Himself to a specific time and place. God will so manifest Himself on Mount Sinai. God brought all Israel to Mount Sinai. Personally, I believe that all of the amazing sights and sounds are possibly very natural and related to Mount Sinai just at that point in time in the earth's history.

What takes place there—the shaking of the ground, the thick black smoke and the sound of trumpets—are all natural phenomenon which occur today; and God brought Israel to that place where all of that was going to be taking place at that exact moment in time. Whether God kicked this set of events off, or whether they just occurred naturally, we do not know, but these things will all be associated with Israel meeting God on this mountain. Obviously, no one is able to see God, but they will be able to feel the earth shake, they will see the thick black smoke coming from the mountain, and they will hear the loud sounds which appear to be horns. All of the primary senses are going to be engaged by these things. All of these things taking place all at once are going to make a lasting impression on the Exodus generation. If any generation of Israelites has a reason to fear God, this generation does—but, surprisingly, they don't. Now they will be fearful, but their fear is emotion that will simply come and go.

Also in this chapter, Israel's place as a nation in the world is explained. They will become a priest-nation to God, a nation which represents all mankind to God. Despite being a relatively small nation, Israel will be pivotal in world history (which modern Israel still is, in many ways, even though it is no longer a priest nation or a client nation to God).

There were many powerful nations at this time (circa 1445 B.C.), but can you name any of their rulers (besides the pharaoh of Egypt)? Do you know what these nations have done? Probably not. So, do you know anything about a shepherd named Abram who moved from Iraq to Canaan? Even today, millions of people know something about Abram (Abraham); whereas, they know nearly nothing about the great and powerful nations that existed at this same time or about any of their rulers (who would have seemed to be great and mighty at the time).

**Application:** The real movers and shakers of any generation are men with a spiritual relationship with God. Kings and various rulers may seem to be powerful at the time, but their influence fades from history; while the influence of men like Abraham and Moses continue even to this day.

God begins in this chapter to define what Israel will be as a nation. At this point in time, properly speaking, Israel is a very large number of people, but they do not occupy the land yet which God has given them. As soon as they go into Canaan and take that land, then they will be considered a national entity. At that point, Israel will have a national relationship with God.

At this point in time, Israel is about to hear the voice of God. They must be prepared for this.

There is a great deal of importance attached to the ceremonial cleansing of the people and the isolation of Moses as being the only intermediary between the people and God. He will go up and down Mount Sinai, but if anyone else gets too close, they will die. Moses is a type of Christ, being the only one who may stand between God and man. At times, Moses will be accompanied by Aaron. As a pair of sanctified men, they represent the Hypostatic Union.

Despite all of the thick clouds, and the thundering and the lightning, God will call Moses up the mountain and he will go. At the end of this chapter, even Aaron, as the high priest of the land, be allowed to come up the mountain.

Let's begin our brief review of this chapter:

### **Israel at Sinai/Moses goes up the mountain/Israel to be a priest nation**

Israel left Egypt on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the first month.

Exodus 19:1 [In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on this day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.](#) (Legacy Standard Bible)

We do not know what part of the third month we are in, but if this is the beginning of the third month, then we are only one month and two weeks from Egypt. We have spent a considerable amount of time on this section. I lean toward this being the case, given that the 15<sup>th</sup> day has been once referenced in Exodus (Exodus 16:1) and once implied (Exodus 12:6).

In any case, the amount of time between Israel leaving Egypt and now is very short.

Exodus 19:2 [Then they set out from Rephidim and came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.](#) (LSB)

Rephidim was quite the remarkable place. The second no-water test occurred at Rephidim; and Israel had to fight against Amalek. See Exodus 17 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

From Rephidim, Israel traveled to the desert-wilderness of Sinai. This would indicate that they are close to where God wants them to be. They are camped in front of Mount Sinai.

Exodus 19:3 [Now Moses went up to God, and Yahweh called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:](#) (LSB)

You may recall that Jacob and Israel is the same person. On occasion, *Jacob* represents the carnal side of his descendants and *Israel* represents their spiritual side. The *house of Jacob* refers to those who are spiritually separated from God (even though these people are all believers); and the *sons of Israel* represents those who are in fellowship with God.

God spoke to Moses from the mountain and He was given instructions for Israel. God will remind the people of Israel of how they got here; and then God will tell them what they will be to Him as a nation.

Exodus 19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I lifted you up on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. (LSB)

God reminds Moses (who will remind the people) that God destroyed Egypt and the Egyptian army. God also brought Israel to this place, as if they had flown there on eagles' wings. The fact that all Israel is now before Mount Sinai is an amazing set of circumstances.

I believe that the reason God brought them there to Mount Sinai at this point in time is, there would be a number of natural things occur on Mount Sinai that every Israelite will experience. Israel would feel tremors beneath their feet, they would see the dark clouds over Mount Sinai (which will exhibit signs of volcanic and/or storm activity); and they would hear the horns (a strange but natural phenomenon which occurs even today).

Exodus 19:5 'So now then, if you will indeed listen to My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My treasured possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;... (LSB)

God warns the people to listen to His voice and to keep His covenant. God would see His covenant with Israel as a single document; while we understand it to be a series of covenants that began with Abraham.

God promises Israel that they will be His treasured possession among all the people of the earth. That is, God would make Israel into a treasured possession, something not true of any other country to this point in time. God can make a promise like this, because all the earth is His.

Nation Israel and the people of Israel will be God's people on this earth.

The relationship between ourselves (as gentiles) and Israel is clearly laid out back in Genesis 12:3 (God is speaking to Abraham): "I will bless those who bless you [Abraham and his descendants of the promise], and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (ESV) This is why no nation should tolerate antisemitism. This is the key to why the United States is so blessed and protected today (despite our many shortcomings). Nations like the Soviet Union (now Russia) and Communist China have had various plans of attack against the United States for decades now. It is only God's grace which has preserved us. We are a nation with close ties to nation Israel and to the people of Abraham. It is this attitude which has saved the United States over and over again.

Back to the narrative in Exodus 19:

God continues to speak to Moses about nation Israel:

Exodus 19:6 ...and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (LSB)

At this point in time, Israel is essentially two million people wandering about in the desert-wilderness. However, this nation is known to God and God has a place where He will plant them (which place He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

God is telling Moses what he is to tell the elders, and the elders will teach these things to the people.



Israel is to be to God a kingdom of priests and a nation set apart from all other nations. God is calling upon Israel to be His priest nation.

A priest acts as an intermediary between man and God. God can have no direct contact with man because man is a fallen creature. However, God allows man to have representation before Him, and that representation is a priest (this is no longer the case). Obviously, any priesthood of men will be imperfect. At some point in the far future, Jesus would become the true High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16 5:1–10 7:17<sup>42</sup> Psalm 110:4).

As a nation, Israel will act as a priest for all other nations on this earth. The way to God is through nation Israel. It is not specifically through nation Israel, but through the truth that nation Israel preserves, which is the truth about the Revealed God (by the *Revealed God*, I mean an understanding of God in the way that He specifically reveals Himself to man).

From Israel will come the Scriptures, which Scriptures will preserve and protect all of their years on this earth as a priest nation. Israel will reach out to other nations and tell them of their God, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who is a God of righteousness and forgiveness (however, God cannot forgive if that forgiveness compromises His righteousness).

Because Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, will take upon Himself our sins, God can forgive us without compromising His essence.

### **The people agree to what God says/Moses goes back up the mountain**

Exodus 19:7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words which Yahweh had commanded him. (LSB)

Moses called together the elders of the people, and he spoke these words to them. They were to listen carefully to God's words and then to teach these things to their various tribes.

Exodus 19:8 And all the people answered together and said, "All that Yahweh has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to Yahweh. (LSB)

When the elders gathered before Moses and heard these words they said, "All the Y<sup>e</sup>howah has said, we will do!" And apparently all of the various subgroups who were taught these things had the same response.

Moses, continuing to act as an intermediary, brings back this response to God.

Exodus 19:9 Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to Yahweh. (LSB)

It appears that this is a second time on or near the mountain when God spoke to Moses. He promises to come to Moses in a thick cloud.

When God speaks to Moses in Exodus 20, it will be loud enough for all the people to hear. God is going to give Moses the Ten Commandments and the people of God will hear God speak.

It is fascinating that God calls for the people to believe in Moses forever. Moses is the person recording these words (or he is directing Joshua to record these words), so believing Moses forever means, to believe these words which have been recorded. We are able to study these words written down 3500 years ago, because nation Israel preserved them.

Christians today still value these words recorded by Moses.

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<sup>42</sup> A very large portion of Hebrews is given over to explaining the priesthood of Jesus.

## **God defines the boundaries for the mountain/the people are cleansed**

Moses again speaks to the elders and they break the people up into groups and tell them what God has said to Moses.

Exodus 19:10–11 Yahweh also said to Moses, “Go to the people and set them apart as holy today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day Yahweh will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. (LSB)

God is going to speak to Moses and He will allow all Israel to hear His words. Therefore, they must be ceremonially purified before Him. Even though the people are not going too close to the mountain, they will hear God’s voice, so they must be cleansed for that.

The people will not actually see God, but they will see how God manifests Himself upon Sinai.

Exodus 19:12 “And you shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. (LSB)

There is to be no access to the mountain for the people. If anyone even touches the mountain, God requires that they be executed.

Exodus 19:13 ‘No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or surely shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.’ When the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.” (LSB)

God calls for anyone violating this command to be stoned or shot through (with an arrow). Even an animal which touches the mountain was to die. So, if a person gets too close to the mountain and touches it, he is to be executed by the Hebrew people. However, they are to be executed from afar (the people are not to touch such a person, as he is unclean).

When God gives the signal, which is the sound of a ram’s horn with a very long blast, the people are to approach the mountain, yet remain outside the boundary the Moses has defined for them.

Exodus 19:14 So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and set the people apart as holy, and they washed their garments. (LSB)

Moses is receiving these instructions on the mountain itself. He comes down from the mountain and is going to prepare the people to be ceremonially clean before God.

First thing that they will do is wash their garments. This is a ceremonial cleansing.

Exodus 19:15 And he said to the people, “Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman.” (LSB)

This was to take place on the third day after Moses tells them what is going to happen.

The men were not to even have relations with their wives. That even is considered to make a man unclean (at least, under these solemn circumstances).

## **Moses goes back up/God sends him back down**

Exodus 19:16 So it happened on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. (LSB)

On the third day in the morning, there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud all on the mountain; and the people heard the very loud trumpet sound. They had never heard a blast as loud and as long as this one before.

I would submit to you that all of these are natural processes related to tectonic plates being moved about, and molten rock moving closer to the surface. This also appear to take place underneath an ominous set of storm clouds. God timed their trip so that they would arrive to Mount Sinai just as all of this natural phenomena is taking place.

Exodus 19:17 [And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.](#) (LSB)

Moses brings the people out of their camps to the foot of Mount Sinai for the purpose of meeting God. Obviously, no one will actually see God; but they will see manifestations of God's Presence.

Up to this point in time, Moses has always acted as a go-between them and God. Today, this was going to change. No one would have the close contact that Moses would have, but it will be close enough for the people. It will be too close, in fact. As we will find out, the people will not like this.

### **Yahweh Descends on Mount Sinai**

Exodus 19:18 [Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because Yahweh descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently.](#) (LSB)

All of this smoke and fire speak of judgment. The relationship between man and God is always based upon justice. God's righteousness and justice must always be preserved, even in His interaction with man. Even though we often hear about God's love, that is an anthropopathism, because there is nothing lovely about us.

As the people move closer to God and God moves closer to them, judgment is key. No one is blissing out saying, "I can feel God's love because we are so close to Him!" The people are filled with fear. God's justice can either approve or condemn. No matter how many cleansing ceremonies have taken place, each individual man knows of his own shortcomings and why God should curse him.

Exodus 19:19 [And the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder; then Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder.](#) (LSB)

The sound of the trumpet continues and it keeps getting louder. Moses apparently tries to speak, but God replies with thunder.

Exodus 19:20 [And Yahweh came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and Yahweh called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.](#) (LSB)

What appears to be the case is, Moses is high on the mountain, and he comes down to a summit; and then God calls him back up.

Exodus 19:21 [Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, lest they break through to Yahweh to see, and many of them perish.](#) (LSB)

God warns Moses about the people, that they may come too close to the mountain. Moses is to go down and warn them—again.

Basically, the idea is this: God is a God of justice, and no one standing before Him is clean.

Exodus 19:22 “Also let the priests who come near to Yahweh set themselves apart as holy, lest Yahweh break out against them.” (LSB)

Apparently, Israel had some sort of a priest system which was probably organized, but it is not a system that we know much about. The concept of the priesthood is similar to what will become the Levitical priesthood: priests stand between man and God.

Exodus 19:23 And Moses said to Yahweh, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, ‘Set bounds about the mountain, and set it apart as holy.’” (LSB)

Moses apparently tells God, “You already told us about this and how the mountain was to be set apart from Israel. The people already know this. I told them all about it.”

God is fully aware of what Moses has already done. However, let me suggest that there were some people from among the Israelites who were ready to violate this prohibition of God’s. God could not have any distractions during the giving of the Ten Commandments (next chapter).

Exodus 19:24 Then Yahweh said to him, “Go down and come up again, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Yahweh, lest He break out against them.” (LSB)

God tells Moses to go down and come back up with Aaron. Apparently, Moses was to again warn the people again not to come too close to the mountain.

Exodus 19:25 So Moses went down to the people and told them. (Legacy Standard Bible)

Moses goes down the mountain and warns the people again.

**Parallels Between Exodus and Acts** (a graphic); from **Slide Player**; accessed August 11, 2017.

These are some interesting parallels. Don't know if these parallels are intentional on the part of God the Holy Spirit or not.

| <b>Giving of the Law at Sinai<br/>(Exodus 19)</b>              | <b>Filling of the Spirit at Pentecost<br/>(Acts 2)</b>     |
|--|--|
| <b>Sons of Israel came together at Mount Sinai</b>             | <b>Believers were gathered in an upper room</b>            |
| <b>Loud trumpet sound (19:16)</b>                              | <b>Noise like a violent, rushing wind</b>                  |
| <b>Smoke of a furnace</b>                                      | <b>Tongues of fire</b>                                     |
| <b>3000 killed by Levites for engaging in idolatry (32:28)</b> | <b>3000 made spiritually alive through faith in Christ</b> |



# EXODUS 20

## A Brief Review of Exodus 20:

We have completed Exodus 20, which contained the giving of the Ten Commandments, the immediate response of the people to hearing God's voice, and some additional laws were added at the end (which laws should have been placed with Exodus 21).

I believe that the best approach to this chapter is a verse-by-verse review, where the entire chapter is seen as a whole.

The Bible translation which I used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other primary name for God is *YHWH* (also given as, *Jehovah*, *Yahweh*, *Adonai*, *Lord*, *JHWH*, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*). In the Hebrew, this name is represented with the actual four Hebrew consonants יהוה (often referred to as the Tetragrammaton). The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word was recorded without any vowels. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message, uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation, both translating the same Hebrew consonants (יהוה).

## The Ten Commandments

At this point, God speaks directly to the people of Israel. This is not actually made clear until we get to Exodus 20:22, which reads, *And Yahweh said to Moses, "Thus you will say to the sons of Israel, 'You+ yourselves have seen that I have talked with you+ from heaven.'"* (Updated Bible Version 2.17; I added in quotation marks). *You +* means *you all, you (plural)*. When did Israel see and hear all of this? In Exodus 20:2–17.

Exodus 20:22 helps us to frame this entire chapter. Moses is *not* telling the people what God said to him in Exodus 20 (which could be one understanding of Exodus 19:25). Moses did come down and he did speak to the people, and he told them what God told him in Exodus 19:21–24 (warning the people not to approach the mountain).

So Moses comes down from Mount Sinai and speaks to the people and tells them, "Do not rush the mountain; do not come close to this mountain." At that point, God speaks aloud to all the people. He does not use Moses as His intermediary for these commandments.

In the text of Exodus, what we read here is very abrupt. Moses does not give us an introduction, so that we know that God is speaking to the people directly. Let me suggest that the recording of this information is abrupt because, in fact, it was abrupt in the experience as well. It was abrupt to Moses as well.

This is how this all took place:

Exodus 19:21 And הוהי [= YHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah] said to Moshe [= Moses], “Go down, and warn the people, lest they break through unto הוהי to see, and many of them fall.

At this point, Moses is on Mount Sinai speaking directly to God. God tells Moses to go back down the mountain and tell the people to get back and not to come any closer to the holy mountain. Obviously, some of them were inching closer and close to the mountain.

Exodus 19:22 “And let the priests who come near הוהי set themselves apart too, lest הוהי break out against them.”

“Listen,” God says, “do not even allow the priests to come closer to the mountain, or Y<sup>e</sup>howah will break out against them!”

Exodus 19:23 And Mosheh said to הוהי, “The people are not able to come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, ‘Make a border around the mountain and set it apart.’ ”

Moses speaks to God telling Him, essentially, “I have already taken care of this. I already told the people not to come close to the mountain. This has been done.”

Exodus 19:24 And הוהי said to him, “Come, go down and then come up, you and Aharon with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to הוהי, lest He break out against them.”

God tells Moses again. “You are going to go back down the mountain and you can afterward return with Aaron. But, do not let the priests try to come up with you.”

Exodus 19:25 And Mosheh went down to the people and spoke to them.

So Moses goes back down the mountain and he speaks to the people.

Let me add one more thing. Not everything that takes place is spelled out for us. That is, when it says that God spoke to Moses; then Moses comes down from the mountain and speaks to the people, that is not exactly what happens. Moses does not come down and speak to one million adult males. He would speak to elders or leaders of the people, and then they would disseminate this message to all the tribes (probably the men speak to the men). The exact mechanics are not given to us. That is what I have logically presumed to be taking place.

While Moses is down among the people, telling them not to come forward toward the mountain and warning the priests not to come near. Then, at that point, God speaks.

So, no one is on the mountain. Moses is down below with the people, warning them not to come closer to the mountain, and then suddenly, God begins speaking so that everyone could hear Him.

Exodus 20:1–2 And Elohim [= God] spoke all these Words, saying, “I am הוהי [= YHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah] your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim [= Egypt], out of the house of slavery.

For the most part, the commandments are given to the people using the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. If we wanted to lay particular emphasis to this, we might modify this verse as follows:

Exodus 20:1–2 And Elohim [= God] spoke all these Words, saying, “I am הוהי [= YHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah] the Elohim of each one of you, who brought each one of you out of the land of Mitsrayim [= Egypt], out of the house of slavery. (The Scriptures 2009 slightly modified)

Throughout this chapter, God addresses the people in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. This emphasizes the individual responsibility of each and every person with regards to the commandments.

Throughout the giving of the Law (the Torah), God identifies Himself as *the Elohim Who brought you (the people of Israel) out of Egypt*. Exodus 22:21 23:9 29:46 Leviticus 11:45 19:36 23:43 Numbers 15:41 etc.

Exodus 20:3 “You have no other mighty ones against My face.

*Mighty ones* is actually the word *’ēlōhîm* (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*], a masculine plural noun; and it means, *gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels*; transliterated *elohim, Elohim*. Strong's #430 BDB #43. This is modified by the word *other, another*.

Then *against My face* is a very literal translation. That is exactly what the text says (I say exactly, with the caveat that *face* is always plural in the Hebrew—this does not mean that God manifests many faces at the same time; it simply means that every face is a collage of various and even disparate elements).

A very literal translation would be: “There is not to be to you other gods before Me.” When combining the verb *to be* with *to you*, this can be understood to mean, *you will not have*. So, also a literal translation, “You will not have [any] other gods before Me [or, against My face (s)].”

That is commandment #1: You will have no other gods before Me. (MLV 2020; capitalized)

Exodus 20:4 “You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth,...

God goes into detail. The early Hebrew people were very demonstrative. So, even though they clearly had the mental capacity to have various gods in their thinking; God spoke specifically against physical idols (even though, these are not the only kind of idols which a person can have).

Exodus 20:5 ...you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, הוהי your Elohim am a jealous Ėl [= God], visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,...

God warns the Israelites not to bow down and serve these other idols, or they will be punished, and their children and grandchildren and great grandchildren will be punished.

We understand that the way this works is, God punishes the later generations *if* they are guilty of committing the same sins. The influence of their parents often results in their children committing the same type of sins. When they commit the same category of sins, then they are disciplined as well.

In other words, “You will set up a very dangerous and harmful precedent, which precedent your children will follow, which precedent your grandchildren will follow. And when they do this, I will discipline them!”

Exodus 20:6 ...but showing loving-commitment to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.

Putting one group of people under strict punishment is not contradicted by God showing a loving commitment to those who love Him and guard His commandments. God desires for everyone to be in this second category. However, we all have free will.

Commandment #2:

Exodus 20:4–6 YOU WILL NOT MAKE TO YOURSELVES ANY IDOL OR ANY IMAGE OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN COSMOS ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE LAND, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER. You will not bow down yourself to them nor serve them, for I (YHWH your Elohim) am a jealous Elohim, punishing the depravity of the

fathers upon the children to the 3rd and 4th generation of those that hate Me. And showing goodness to thousands of them that love me, and observe my commandments. (Urim-Thummin Version)

Physical representations of any god, including the God, are forbidden.

Exodus 20:7 “You do not bring<sup>a</sup> the Name of יהוה your Elohim to naught, for יהוה does not leave the one unpunished who brings His Name to naught.

<sup>a</sup>Or lift up, or take.

Lifting up the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God indicates a use of the names or designations for God. However, the name or names are being lifted up for naught, for emptiness, for man’s vanity. God’s name/names is/are being treated trivially, casually, or irreverently. For example, this is the way that these names are used in nearly every HBO and Showtime series. I would suggest that the proper names most used in any ten or more series from HBO and Showtime are *Jesus*, *Christ* and *Jesus Christ*. You will find the Lord’s name used on these shows far more than the names *Bob*, *Jason*, *Noah* etc.

The empty or trivial use of God’s name would include phrases like, *I swear to God*, *thank God it’s Friday*, *oh my God*, *God spoke to me*, etc. Obviously, swearing using God’s name is disallowed.

Commandment #3:

Exodus 20:7 You do not take up the Name of your God YHWH for a vain thing, for YHWH does not acquit him who takes up His Name for a vain thing. (Literal Standard Version)

Exodus 20:7 “Never use the name of the LORD your God carelessly. The LORD will make sure that anyone who carelessly uses his name will be punished.” (God’s Word™)

Exodus 20:7 “You shall not misuse the name of Yahweh your God, [Literally “take up/bear/carry the name of Yahweh your God for what is worthless/false/empty”] because Yahweh will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name.” [Literally “bears his name for what is false”] (Lexham English Bible)

Many times, it is helpful to see several translations of the same verse.

Those were the three commandments related to the Hebrew people and God. But then there is the fourth commandment, which also relates the Hebrew people to their God:

Exodus 20:8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart.

Some mentions of the Sabbath day have been made before, but here, it is clearly set apart as a day specifically designated for God.

Exodus 20:9 “Six days you labour, and shall do all your work,...

Six days for the Hebrew people is to be devoted to work. Work is the 2<sup>nd</sup> divine institution. Work was given to man before the fall as a blessing and after the fall as a part of the curse.

Exodus 20:10 ...but the seventh day is a Sabbath<sup>b</sup> of יהוה your Elohim. You do not do any work – you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

<sup>b</sup>There are other Sabbaths, but this is the weekly Sabbath.

Just as God restored the earth in six days, so man would be given six days each week to work.

The Sabbath is a day set apart specifically to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 20:11 “For in six days הוהי made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore הוהי blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.

The verb used here is the Qal perfect of ‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*], which means, *to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. We also have the dual noun shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced *shaw-MAH-yim*], which means, *heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)*. Strong's #8064 BDB #1029.

During these six days, God did not *create* the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but He *made* them—that is, *He prepared them*. Over a period of six days, God prepared the atmosphere and the earth for a population of animals and human beings.

God prepared the environment to be populated; and then God created the animals and humans to live in this environment.

All of this was done over a period of six days because angels were watching and learning from what God did (original creation, which took place in Genesis 1:1, was instantaneous, because there were no creatures around at that time to watch and learn).

When God completed His work, everything was done. He was not tired; He was finished. God did not go back on the 7<sup>th</sup> day and say, “Hmmm, I think that I could tweak this a bit more and make it better.” God did not do that because everything that He did, He pronounced as *good*. The earth was ready to be populated and God allowed for its population (days 5 and 6).

Working for six days and then resting for one day is a recognition of what God has done; and acknowledgment of what God has done.

Throughout the world, we have seven-day work weeks—not six-day weeks, not ten-day weeks, but seven-day weeks.

The fourth commandment:

Exodus 20:8–11 **REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY AS CONSECRATED.** Six days will you labor, and do all your work. But the 7<sup>th</sup> day is the Sabbath of YHWH your Elohim, in it you will not do any work, you, your son, daughter, male and female slave, livestock, nor the foreigner that resides within your gates. For in 6 days YHWH made the visible universe and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, then YHWH blessed the Sabbath day, and consecrated it. (Urim Thummim Version)

The Sabbath day observance was extended to all members of the family and to their servants and to their livestock.

The final six commandments deal with man's relationship to man. Each commandment is contained in one verse. The first of these is:

Exodus 20:12 “Respect your father and your mother, so that your days are prolonged upon the soil which הוהי your Elohim is giving you.

The Ten Commandments were given specifically to the Hebrew people, as the rationale for the fifth commandment is related directly to the land where God would plant them. The translation *soil* above is unfortunate. The Hebrew word here means *land*.

You will note how these commandments which regulate the interactions between men are closely related to the divine institutions.



The concept of volition is presupposed in the concept of Ten Commandments. The concept of work is found in the fourth commandment. The concept of marriage and family is found in the fifth commandment (so far, this is a recognition of the first four divine institutions).

Commandment #5:

Exodus 20:12 **"Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long** [Lit. so your days may increase] **in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.** (International Standard Version)

Giving respect to one's own parents increases the stability of society. When a society is stable, it continues for a longer period of time as a nation. This would be true for Israel in the land of Canaan; and it is certainly true of any national entity.

Exodus 20:13 **"You do not murder.**

Murder, which was prohibited immediately after the flood (Genesis 9:6), is also prohibited here in the Ten Commandments. Later in the book of Exodus, violations of these laws would be given specific assigned penalties (for instance, a man who murders will be put to death—the violation is murder and the penalty is death).

Man and the exercise of his free will is integral to the Angelic Conflict. When one man kills another, he removes that man's ability to exercise his free will. The criminal is to be executed as a result.

As an aside here, executing the criminal is *not* the responsibility of the friends and relatives of the murdered victim; executing the criminal is a matter of state action, which give us the fifth divine institution, *government (or nation)*.

Commandment #6:

Exodus 20:13 **YOU WILL NOT MURDER.** (Urim Thummim Version)

There are several words in the Hebrew for killing. This is specifically used of murdering another human being.

Exodus 20:14 **"You do not commit adultery.**

Adultery was forbidden because this violates one or two of the fundamental divine institutions, which are marriage and family.

The divine institutions include man and the function of his volition along with marriage and family. Work and the national entity are the other two divine institutions.

Exodus 20:15 **"You do not steal.**

Stealing is forbidden because people are allowed to accumulate private property and that private property belongs to them during their lives.

The accumulation of things comes as a result of the divine institution of work. When we work beyond the minimum which provides food and shelter for the family, work over and above that may provide some additional things for the family. These things were not to be stolen from them.

Exodus 20:16 **"You do not bear false witness against your neighbour.**

False witness against a neighbor is forbidden, whether this takes place in a courtroom or is done simply among others in the form of gossip.

Exodus 20:17 “You do not covet your neighbour’s house, you do not covet your neighbour’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbour.”

Interestingly enough, after four very overt sins are forbidden, the tenth commandment forbids a mental attitude sin. This commandment deals with the lust pattern of the soul.

What our neighbor has in comparison to what we have is only a problem if we allow it to be a problem. If we allow our mental attitude to be consumed with lust for what our neighbor has, then that is a problem. However, it is not a problem your neighbor can solve; it is a problem that only you can solve in your soul.

Now the Ten Commandments, taken as a whole, are unique in human history. We have no evidence of any previous society or nation which put together a concise set of basic prohibitions and requirements of a people. This event is unique in human history; and this set of commands in such a concise format are also unique.

Certainly, other societies and nations forbade murder and stealing, but we do not have a foundational list of God’s basic commands. I have heard over and over again that the Hebrew people stole their laws from other nations, but we have yet to uncover any evidence that is true; and we have yet to find any example of such a concise listing of prohibitions anywhere else.

Because of the Ten Commandments, such a list has become iconic, but it is because all of the world is attempting to copy God’s fundamental laws, but with putting their own spin on them. Google “The ten commandments of...” and you will get thousands of examples of such attempts by individuals attempting to set up their own list of ten commandments.

If a person needed to have a shorthand explanation of the laws of divine establishment, he could simply take the five divine institutions (volition, work, marriage, family, nation) and combine them with the Ten Commandments, and that would give us God’s basic requirements for any people or nation. This does not mean that God requires every nation on earth to observe the Sabbath, but the concept of a work week and a day of rest has become almost universally observed in our world. If no day off is given, such a society is understood to be oppressive and inhuman.

Although it is not clear whether the next verse describes the sensory perception during the giving of the Ten Commandments or what suddenly happened after. I would suggest that once the final commandment was given, these other things became suddenly very apparent to all of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 20:18a *And all the people saw the thunders, the lightning flashes, the voice [or, sound] of the shophar [horn], and the mountain smoking.*

The people, hearing the voice of God, were frozen in their tracks. They could not say anything. They made no comments. However, while God spoke, there was thundering and lightning. Perhaps these things increased in intensity when God came to the end of the Ten Commandments.

There was the sound of a horn, which is likely the sound of the wind. This sound is not unique to this particular event. People have claimed to have heard something similar to this and such events have actually been recorded and placed on YouTube.

All of these things occurring at the same time—the thunder, lightning, sound of the horns and mountains smoking—is a rarer experience. This was devastating to the psyche of the people of Jacob.

Exodus 20:18b–19 *And the people saw it, and they trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Mosheh, “You speak with us and we hear, but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die.”*

The people have just heard the Ten Commandments given from the mouth of God. They heard God’s voice. Then they observe everything else, and this causes them to feel great fear and uneasiness.

Maybe they speak among themselves, and finally come forward to Moses and express their concern for all that they have just seen and heard.

Recall that Moses came back down the mountain and spoke to the people, so he is right in front of them now. God has spoke the Ten Commandments, and everyone is certainly cognizant of the dramatic sounds and visuals coming from Mount Sinai.

Now, apparently during the time of the giving of the Ten Commandments—which would not have taken very long—these sights and sounds may have been occurring. Even if God stopped for a dramatic pause between each commandment, the entirety of this experience was probably ten minutes at most. This was probably closer to five minutes. However, I would submit to you that, apart from the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, this is the second-best known event from the Bible (despite its relatively short duration).

If there were considerable weather events taking place at the same time—occurring before, after and during the giving of the Ten Commandments—then maybe this event was stretched out for a slightly longer in time, with God allowing some time to pass when the visual and auditory events became more intense.

While this is all taking place, Moses is right there with the people. He is in front of the people as God speaks to Israel.

Finally, someone approaches Moses and makes this very strong request: “Listen, Moses, you speak to us. Whatever God has to say, you listen to it and then tell us what He said. Please do not allow God to speak directly to us anymore.” This was likely the informal request of many leaders and elders.

Exodus 20:20 *And Mosheh said to the people, “Do not fear, for Elohim has come to prove you, and in order that His fear be before you, so that you do not sin.”*

Moses tells the people not to be afraid. God will test these people, and God has given them what they are to be tested with—His commandments.

V. 20 or v. 21 should have ended this chapter. Ideally speaking, v. 21 should have been the beginning of the next chapter.

Exodus 20:21 *So the people stood at a distance, but Mosheh drew near the thick darkness where Elohim was.*

The people are no longer pushing and shoving, trying to get closer to the mountain. Nevertheless, Moses draws near to the thick darkness which is hanging over the mountain. He draws near to receive additional instructions from God for the people of Israel.

From this point forward in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, God will speak to Moses and Moses will speak to the people. This will be interspersed with some narrative. In the book of Leviticus, for instance, almost every chapter begins with the words, *And so God spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel, and say...”*

Although Moses and the people do not realize this at this point in time, the people of Israel will live in this desert-wilderness for 39 more years. They are not to settle here because God has not given them this land—God has given them Canaan. God will lead them right up to the border of Canaan in the book of Numbers, but the first generation of adult Israelites will fail. Therefore, God will keep them in the desert-wilderness until this generation of reversionists (apostate believers) dies out.

There are two generations of Israel which make up the Exodus generation. There are those who were adults when they left Egypt and I will occasionally call them Gen X. They are the generation about whom God said, *“I loathed that generation.”* (This is found several times in the Old and New Testaments. Because of their rebellion against God, everyone from this generation will die out before God leads Israel into the land of promise (which will take place in the book of Joshua). Their children and those born to them while in the desert-wilderness will

make up the next generation, whom I have designed as the GOP (the generation of promise). It is this next generation of Israelites who will actually take the land given them by God.

From this point forward to the end of Deuteronomy, about 40 years will pass. During that time, God will remove those of Gen X until only the generation of promise remains. That second generation of Israelites will go into the land to take it, being led by men like Joshua and Caleb and a handful of others who will remain alive from Gen X.

One of the reasons I like to review a chapter like this is, it allows us to get the big picture, to see where we are and where we are going. I recently talked with a couple of Christians about the book of Acts, the events which transpire in that book, and how far it goes. They did not have a full appreciation for the time factor. Time and geography and human history are fundamental to our understanding of the Word of God. When we integrate these things with the Word of God, we develop a much better understanding of the Word of God. For this reason, I believe that it is imperative that we stop at the end of each chapter to review in order to apprehend the big picture.

What follows next in Exodus 20 should have been placed with chapter 21. From this point through Exodus 24, we will have a series of laws. These will have similarities to laws which preceded them and laws which were written afterwards. This is because many different nations attempted to put together a system of laws which would work for them.

#### Laws About Altars

Exodus 20:22 **And יהוה said to Mosheh, "Say this to the children of Yisra'el: 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you [lit., you all, you+, you (pl)] from the heavens.**

The Ten Commandments were given to the people using the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular. However, in this section of Exodus 20, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural will be used.

From this point forward, God will speak to Moses and He will tell Moses what to say to the people.

Exodus 20:23 **'You do not make besides Me mighty ones [lit., *elohim*] of silver, and you do not make mighty ones of gold for yourselves.**

Here, God forbids the people of Israel from making idols that represent various gods. Such idols were often fashioned from gold or silver to emphasize their divine nature (not a true divine nature, but one given to them by their people).

Exodus 20:24 **'Make a slaughter-place of earth for Me, and you shall slaughter on it your ascending offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I cause My Name to be remembered I shall come to you and bless you.**

Just as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had stopped from time to time to make burnt offerings to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the people of Israel will be required to do the same.

Exodus 20:25 **'And if you make Me a slaughter-place of stone, do not build it of cut stone, for if you use your chisel on it, you have profaned it.**

When an offering place was to be made, it should not involve human ingenuity, design or craftsmanship. "You can pile up some existing stones for such an altar but you cannot chisel these stones in any way."

Exodus 20:26 **'Nor do you go up by steps to My slaughter-place, lest your nakedness be exposed on it.'**

It was common for societies to make the slaughter places high up (remember, they are called *high places* throughout the Old Testament). The Hebrew people were not to do this. The implication is, there is an ascension process to get to God. Not true. God revealed Himself to man, and we believe in Him or we don't.

Although God will have a very specifically-designed place for animals to be offered up as sacrifices (the brazen altar outside of the Tabernacle), God apparently will still allow groups, families and even individuals to offer up animal sacrifices; however, they would be limited to altars made up only of the natural rocks found where an offering is to be made. No one is to design and construct some ornate, well-crafted altar to be used elsewhere in the land of Canaan.



# EXODUS 21

I believe that the best approach to this chapter is a verse-by-verse review, where the entire chapter is seen as a whole.

The Bible translation which I used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other primary name for God is *YHWH* (also given as, *Jehovah*, *Yahweh*, *Adonai*, *Lord*, *JHWH*, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*). In the Hebrew, this name is represented with the actual four Hebrew consonants יהוה (often referred to as the Tetragrammaton). The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word was recorded without any vowels. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message, uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation, both translating the same Hebrew consonants (יהוה).

The Ten Commandments are the most fundamental laws/prohibitions for man. They defined the proper relationship between man and God and between man and man. R. B. Thieme, Jr. referred to the Ten Commandments as the freedom code, as following them provided the greatest amount of freedom for any society. That is, two men could live next door to one another, and if they followed the Ten Commandments, then both men could live in complete freedom without encroaching on the life of the other.

The three *chapters* which follow the giving of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:23–23:9) detail how exactly these principles should be applied and enforced in day-to-day life. We have already looked at various ways that those chapters might be divided up in Exodus 20:22 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

## Sections of Exodus 21:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| vv. 1–11  | <b>Laws Related to Slaves</b>                       |
| vv. 12–27 | <b>Laws Related to Homicide and Personal Injury</b> |
| vv. 28–36 | <b>Laws Concerning Liability and Restitution</b>    |

Essentially what is found in Exodus 20:22–23:19 is the application of the law to society. These various applications include both legal and civil consequences.

## Laws Related to Slaves

Exodus 21:1 “[These are the right-rulings which you are to set before them:](#)”

God continues speaking to Moses. The context goes back to the final section of Exodus 20, which should have been started as a new chapter.

Most other translations have *ordinances* or *judgments* rather than *right-rulings*. I believe that *judgments* is a better translation.

Interestingly enough, vv. 2–11 deal with slavery. Generally speaking, the Bible allows for two types of slavery: (1) voluntary slavery (where a person without many life options tries to get ahead by becoming someone's slave; and (2) wartime slavery. When a country or city is defeated in battle, there is the problem of what to do with the defeated peoples. Apart from taking the land of Canaan, the Hebrew people were not a warlike, conquering people, who sought again and again to expand their borders. However, they faced outside aggression on many occasions. In David's time, this was almost non-stop.

The Hebrew people were allowed to make slaves of the people whom they defeated but did not kill in war (again, Israel principally engaged in defensive wars). If this or that Philistine city decided to attack Israel, they potentially paid the price of being made slaves to Israel. If you understand Israel's enslavement of people is based upon the aggressive actions of those people, the concept of slavery is not harsh-sounding. If a nearby nation did not want to be forced into slavery, this was accomplished by not attacking Israel.

Exodus 21:2 "When you buy a Hebrew servant, he serves six years, and in the seventh he goes out free, for naught.

*For naught* is better translated *for nothing* or *without paying anything*.

Hebrew slaves were generally voluntary. However, it would not seem too out of the ordinary for a person to be required to pay a judgment, not to have the funds necessary, and then place himself into slavery in order to pay the judgment. By this, a person (and his family) would not remain in debt for generations. They could work off most debt by becoming slaves to the person who owned their paper (that is, to whomever they owed the debt to).

No matter why a Hebrew became a slave to another Hebrew, the term of slavery continued for a maximum of six years. Every seventh year was considered a Sabbath year, and all Hebrew slaves were to be cut loose. At least, this is what the Law of Moses required. The people of Israel did not always follow the Law as they should have. One of their greatest areas of disobedience is the Sabbath year (the seventh year). They made up for this by *over-obeying* the Sabbath commandment (they wrote an additional 600 or so regulations to define how to follow the Sabbath). However, we are studying the Law as God gave it, not the Law as the Hebrew people sometimes incorrectly applied it.

Exodus 21:3 "If he comes in by himself, he goes out by himself; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him.

Slaves may enter into slavery married or single; but they can only leave the way that they came into slavery. A male slave could not marry a female slave, and take her with him when he left (this example would be a Hebrew male slave and a female Canaanite).

Exodus 21:4 "If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children are her master's, and he goes out by himself.

If it is the master who provided the slave with a wife, the wife and children belong to the slave owner, not to the slave. There are three logical options. (1) The slave can leave when it is legitimate for him to leave and leave his wife and children behind. (2) The slave can leave and then purchase his wife and children out of slavery (highly unlikely). Or (3) the slave can choose to remain a slave to his master, thereby retaining his wife and children.

Exodus 21:5–6 "And if the servant truly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children, let me not go out free,' then his master shall bring him before Elohim, and shall bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl. And he shall serve him forever.

This is the option where the slave chooses to remain with his wife, children and his master. The slave makes a public declaration of this and then his ear is pierced with an awl, which is done at the door of the home. This hole, punched in the door, at exactly the height of the slave's earlobes, is a constant reminder that this slave has chosen

to stay with his master for the rest of his life. It would seem likely that the master would also affix an earring at this point, but that is not a part of the text. Otherwise, the hole in the ear would naturally fill in.

Exodus 21:7 “And when a man sells his daughter to be a female servant, she does not go out as the male servants do.

Part of the early traditions was, a family would continue saving up a dowry for their daughter (s) which would be offered to the groom's family at marriage. However, there was a problem if they were unable to put such a dowry together. So, under difficult circumstances, a family might simply sell their daughter to another family. This does not preclude a marriage between the daughter and a male member of that family. That appears to be one of the options at this point.

In this passage, God makes it clear that a woman is not to be treated as the male servants are treated. She is not simply another servant in their home like the male servants are, regardless of his exact future with this new family.

Exodus 21:8 “If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who has engaged her to himself, then he shall let her be ransomed. He shall have no authority to sell her to a foreign people, because of him deceiving her.

The master may have purchased this woman with the idea of marrying her himself. However, if he later chooses not to marry her, then he is given limited options under the law. He must allow her to be bought by a family relative; and he may not sell her to a foreign people.

*Deceiving her* means, he takes her as a slave with the intent to later allow her to become his wife. If he changes his mind, that is considered deceit. This change of mind is what limits his options.

Exodus 21:9 “And if he has engaged her to his son, he is to do to her as is the right of daughters.

The master may have taken the woman in with the intent of marrying her to one of his sons (this is likely a part of the agreement made between the two families). If he does this, he must then treat her as a daughter-in-law and not as a female slave.

Exodus 21:10 “If he takes another wife, her food, her covering, and her marriage rights are not to be diminished.

If the woman is married—and I would assume to the master or to one of his sons—if another wife is taken, the first wife must not have her marriage rights taken from her. I believe that the third right is not a catch-all, but her conjugal rights. There may be some disagreement whether that includes more than just shelter, but shelter at the very least.

Exodus 21:11 “And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out for naught, without silver.

The woman has a right to food, clothing and conjugal rights. If the man does not provide those things for her, she can leave without any cost (remember, the master did pay for her to become his slave; and possibly a wife).

### **Laws Related to Homicide and Personal Injury**

Exodus 21:12 “He who strikes a man so that he dies shall certainly be put to death.

Given what follows, this sounds as if a man may have even waited for his victim and killed him.

Exodus 21:13 “But if he did not lie in wait, but Elohim delivered him into his hand, then I shall appoint for you a place where he is to flee.

When a person lies in wait to kill a man, that is pre-meditated murder. However, this second circumstance is when a killing is done in self-defense.

Exodus 21:14 “But when a man acts presumptuously against his neighbour, to kill him by treachery, you are to take him even from My slaughter-place to die.

In the third case, the killer devised a plot by which he would kill his neighbor. Even if he runs to a city of refuge, that will not be enough.

In any case, premeditation (or not) and self-defense are built into the law and affect the final punishment.

Exodus 21:15 “And he who strikes his father or his mother shall certainly be put to death.

A child who strikes either parent will be executed. Bear in mind, a parent may not be willing to turn his own child in for this act of disrespect. Let me suggest that, if a son became uncontrollable and the parents could not handle him, then some parents might be willing to turn in their own son to the courts.

If a child strikes either parent in public, then that child is very likely to be executed. If this is done in public, it is no longer up to the discretion of the parents.

Exodus 21:16 “And he who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall certainly be put to death.

Kidnaping here is also known as *man-stealing*. We have a different understanding of kidnaping today, when someone is snatched up to keep (such as a child); or someone is snatched up in order to ask for a ransom. In the time of this law, kidnaping was done in order to sell the victim into slavery. That was flat-out outlawed, with the death penalty being the end result.

Nearly all of the slaves brought to America—and certainly those who came here on slave ships—had been *kidnaped* (to use the word used here). What I am saying is, slavery as practiced in the United States was illegitimate from the view of the Bible.

The Bible recognizes two types of legitimate slavery: (1) a man sells himself into slavery or (2) people defeated in war could be made into slaves. However, what is outlawed by the Bible is capturing a man and selling him into slavery.

Critics of the Bible rarely understand the distinctions which are made, but so many of them claim that the Bible does not have any laws forbidding slavery. The slavery most often practiced in the United States (and elsewhere) was forbidden by the Bible. Exodus 21:16 forbids that sort of slavery, and it is a capital offense.

Exodus 21:17 “And he who curses his father or his mother shall certainly be put to death.

A person who curses his mother or father was subject to execution. If this occurred in public, witnesses may call for the execution. If it was done in private, children could be executed, but how many parents would be willing to turn their own children in?

Exodus 21:18–19 “And when men strive together, and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist, and he does not die but is confined to his bed, if he rises again and walks about outside with his staff, then he who struck him shall be innocent. He only pays for lost time and sees to it that he is completely healed.

If two men are fighting and one strikes the other with a stone or a fist and puts him out (he is off his feet for a few days), then the person who put him there must pay for his lost time and see that he is taken care of until he is completely healed.

Interestingly enough, the person who inflicted the injury is in charge of overseeing that injured man be nursed back to health. Do you see how such a *punishment* may result in eliminating the antagonism between the two men?

Exodus 21:20 “And when a man strikes his male or female servant with a rod, so that he dies under his hand, he shall certainly be punished.

The man who kills one of his servants would be punished (which could mean death). I don’t know that this law has any parallels from other cultures.

There are a number of laws about slavery in the Bible which I do not believe have parallels in other cultures (that is, similar laws are not found in other sets of ancient national laws).

Exodus 21:21 “But if he remains alive a day or two, he is not punished; for he is his property.

The text here is somewhat confusing. The master strikes a slave, and he survives a day or two and then dies, is he not punished? A more accurate translation fixes this problem:

Exodus 21:21 But if [the servant] stands in a day or two, the master [lit., he] will not be punished, for the slave [lit., he] [is] his silver. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

So the slave is pretty much back to normal after a day or two.

There will be some circumstances where a slave-owner permanently harms a slave, and that slave-owner will have to free his slave. That law is coming up in this chapter.

Exodus 21:22 “And when men strive and they shall smite a pregnant woman, and her children come out, yet there is no injury, he shall certainly be punished accordingly as the woman’s husband lays upon him. And he shall give through the judges.

Vv. 22–25 are often cited with regards to abortion, and I have seen this quoted by both sides of the abortion issue (by theologians who believe that abortion is allowed and by those who believe that abortion is absolutely wrong). Two men are in a fight, and a pregnant woman on the sidelines is jostled and she gives birth (it might take place right then and there; and it may happen a few hours or days later). If there is no injury (mother and child are fine), then there would be a fine. A judicial verdict would determine the amount and from whom it should be paid. The husband might say, “He needs to give us \$20,000” and the courts might reduce that amount. The man responsible for harming the woman (causing her to prematurely give birth) will pay what the courts decide.

In case you have any doubts about the translation, here is a more literal rendering:

Exodus 21:22 And when [two] men struggle and they strike a pregnant woman so that her children go out of her [that is, she gives birth prematurely], but [there] is no harm, [the man causing this] will certainly be fined, as the husband of the wife determines; and he will pay [lit., give] as the judges [determine]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Key to understanding this verse is the fact that there is no harm as a result. This means that mother and baby (babies) are fine. Obviously, if the wife has early induced labor, then it would make no sense to think that there is no harm if her child dies. It would be a mistake to interpret v. 22 to mean, the mother is fine but her child (children) died when she gave birth prematurely.

Even though mother and child are fine, there is still a fine imposed. It says that the husband and wife determine the fine, but that the man who caused this will pay as the judges determine. So, the parents have in mind an amount that they believe is reasonable, and the judge modifies this demand (perhaps it is higher or lower).



Exodus 21:23–25 “But if there is injury, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, lash for lash.

However, if there is any injury—whether suffered by the mother or child—then the resultant punishment should be equivalent and appropriate.

This law applies, whether the injury is to the mother or to the child. There is nothing to suggest that only the mother’s well-being is addressed.

This is a principle given by God. There is no discussion here about ensoulment (that is, when does the soul enter the body or affix itself to the body). It seems that the historic consensus among Jews and Christians is, ensoulment occurs at the moment of birth, when the child takes his first breath, and that God breathes soul-life into each and every infant. I lean toward this as being the case. Many Christians and Christian theologians today believe that the soul is a part of the body from the moment of conception. I don’t know that the Bible clearly defines when ensoulment takes place. We know through science that the fetus in the womb can hear and response to sounds and voice, appears to smile and frown, and apparently dreams.

This passage, vv. 22–25, has a point-of-view separate from that theological difference. The soul of the infant/fetus is not a part of the consideration. There is harm as a result or there is no harm. Fines and consequences are based upon what actually happens to the mother and to her child (children).

At this point, we return to another law regarding the treatment of a slave.

Exodus 21:26 “And when a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he is to let him go free for the sake of his eye.

Interestingly enough, although there is an order in these laws, it might not have been how we would have organized them. I would have placed vv. 26–27 after the master striking the slave in vv. 20–21. However, we have the equivalent punishment concept, which speaks of an eye-for-an-eye and a tooth-for-a-tooth, and that leads us into vv. 26–27.

If a master strikes a slave and there is permanent damage done to the slave, then the slave goes free as a result. If the master blinds him in one eye, the slave will go out from slavery.

Now, I have seen many a film on slavery in the southern states pre-Civil War, and inevitably, there is always a tremendous beating or a whipping delivered to a defiant slave. The film always takes this to the point of death—the slave in the film dies or he nearly dies. If still alive, the slave always suffers for a long time after and has permanent and deep scars.

Did such a thing take place? Probably on occasion. After all, the slaves brought from Africa were completely unwilling (and the circumstances of their slavery was anti-Biblical from the start, as we have already studied).

Let me suggest two things. First, believers in the southern states (the slave states) were born into this culture and the culture we are born into is often accepted by those who find themselves in the midst of it (whether slaves, slave owners, or others). The second thing which is true is, believers in the south had access to the Scriptures. How many slave owners read these Scriptures, looking to justify themselves, and found themselves condemned instead? How many pastor-teachers from this era studied these same Scriptures and then taught them?

Slavery began in the United States in August of 1619 and the Civil War took place in 1861–1865. In other words, the believers in the southern states had about 240 years to straighten out the problem of slavery. Man-stealing was not allowed in the Old Testament and it was punishable by death. The slave-trade in the United States was based upon man-stealing. As we have seen, the laws of slavery in the Bible are fairly clear. If believers accepted some passages of Scripture (such as, *slaves, obey your masters*) but ignored other Scriptures (those dealing with man-stealing or with maltreatment of slaves), that was problematic. We do not get to pick and choose unless the

Bible gives us reason to (for instance, the dietary laws do not remain in effect in the Church Age; Sabbath observance is also not for the church).

On the one hand, we are not put here on earth to whitewash the devil's world. However, it was certainly the responsibility of pastor-teachers, in both the north and the south, to teach the passages which we just studied. The right thing to do would have been to individually manumit one's slaves or to provide them with a great deal more freedom (which, apparently, some slave owners did).

The United States of America had 240 years to figure this problem out, and because they did not, they brought war upon themselves—a bloody, vicious civil war, one which is still being discussed today. Good luck on finding any truly objective historical source on this topic.

Exodus 21:27 “And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he is to let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

If the master knocks out a tooth, the slave goes free. Some physical punishment was allowed by the slave owner. However, there were limits, and this passage defines what those limits are.

### **Laws Concerning Liability and Restitution**

Exodus 21:28 “And when an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall certainly be stoned, and its flesh is not eaten, and the owner of the ox is innocent.

We are also responsible, to a limited degree for our animals. The first time an ox gores a man or a woman, that ox is to be killed and its flesh not eaten. However, the owner is not fined or charged with any crime.

Exodus 21:29 “However, if the ox was previously in the habit of goring, and its owner has been warned, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox is stoned and its owner also is put to death.

However, if the ox has done this before and the owner was warned, then he will be executed if his animal kills anyone.

Exodus 21:30 “If a sin-covering is laid upon him, then he shall give the ransom of his life, whatever is laid on him.

What is called a *sin-offering* here is simply a specified sum of money paid to the family of the person who was killed. A judge makes the determination of what this amount should be and the animal owner pays that amount instead of forfeiting his own life.

Exodus 21:28–30 If an ox gores a man or a woman and that person dies, then the ox will be destroyed and its flesh will not be eaten. However, the ox's owner will not be held liable for the death. However, if the ox is known to have a predilection for goring and the owner has been warned, then the ox will be destroyed and the owner executed. Now, if the owner pays a reasonable ransom for his life, then that will be considered sufficient. (Kukis paraphrase)

The man who owns the ox can purchase his own life by paying a large fine—presumably to the family whose father or son is killed by the ox.

Exodus 21:31 “Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to this right-ruling it is done to him.

If this person's animal, known to be aggressive, has killed someone's son or daughter, there will be an award of the court made to the family. This is paid in lieu of the owner being executed. Now, remember the words, *an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life?* These laws tell us that penalties should be appropriate but not

necessarily the exact same thing. Such rulings are called by other translators *judgments*, indicating that a court of law is involved in the final ruling.

Exodus 21:32 “If the ox gores a male or female servant, he is to give to their master thirty sheqels of silver, and the ox is stoned.

If an ox gores (kills) a servant, the master is reimbursed for the servant and the animal is destroyed.

#### Laws About Restitution

We might better understand these as liability laws.

When it comes to a modern-day application, there are enough specifics given so that an outrageous settlement is not determined against the person who is liable.

Exodus 21:33 “And when a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in it,

A person might dig a pit in order to find water and establish a well on his property. However, the existence of a pit is potentially dangerous to others. The man must do something in order to keep others from falling into it, or their animals.

If a pit is dug, but no water is produced, then the owner of the land must fill the pit in (that is what is meant by the verb *cover*).

Exodus 21:34 the owner of the pit is to repay, he is to give silver to their owner, and the dead beast is his.

If the animal of a neighbor falls into the pit and dies, the animal must be paid for.

Another more literal translation of this passage may help with your understanding:

Exodus 21:33–34 When a man leaves open a pit or when a man digs a pit, and he does not cover it [or, *fill it up (again)*], and an ox or a donkey falls in there, the owner of the pit will make [the loss] good. He will restore [with] silver to [the animal's] owner and he [will keep] the dead [animal]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 21:35 “And when the ox of a man smites the ox of his neighbour and it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the silver from it, and also divide the dead ox.

If one ox kills another ox belonging to another person, then the live ox is sold. The proceeds from the sell are divided; and the dead ox is caved up and divided between the two owners as well.

Exodus 21:36 “Or if it was known that the ox was previously in the habit of goring, and its owner has not kept it confined, he shall certainly repay ox for ox, while the dead beast is his.

However, if the ox doing the killing is known to have done this before, then the surviving ox owner must pay for the dead ox and he may keep the dead ox (to eat).

Although the next chapter begins with a new topic, there was really no reason to divide these chapters at this point.

# EXODUS 22

## Exodus 22:1–31

**Introduction:** Chapter 22 continues with property rights and related laws and it legislates morality, of all things. Most of the laws carry with them penalties up until v. 21. At that point we have particular regulations for the Hebrews but we do not have in place an appropriate penalty to be levied by the judicial system. Here, as before, the Ten Commandments have provided a framework upon which hang these laws.

The division between chapters 21 and 22 seems arbitrary to me.

### Outline of Chapter 22:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Vv. 1–6   | Property rights                         |
| Vv. 7–15  | Your property under the care of another |
| Vv. 16–17 | Pre-marital sex                         |
| Vv. 18–20 | Possible demon activity                 |
| Vv. 21–24 | Behavior toward the weak                |
| Vv. 25–27 | Behavior toward your fellow Hebrews     |
| Vv. 28–31 | Behavior toward God                     |

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### Property Rights

**"If a man steals an ox or a sheep and kills it or sells it, five oxen will he pay for an ox and four sheep [will he pay] for a sheep. [Exodus 22:1 (21:37 in Hebrew Bible)]**

This verse rightfully belongs in a section different from chapter 21 because it deals with property rights whereas the previous verses dealt with injuries. However, apart from this being a new section, God is still enumerating laws to Moses.

Notice here that we have departed from *an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*; stealing requires payback + interest + penalties. If only this could be applied today—we have so many white collar criminals who, because they don't carry a gun and walk into a convenience store and demand \$80 from the till, receive very little punishment for the money which they have extorted, embezzled, defrauded. They should pay back as the Bible demands, five times for grand larceny and four times for petty larceny. Here their house should be sold, along with their car and their salary attached, if necessary, for the rest of their natural lives; and this should not be expunged by bankruptcy.

Similarly, there are thieves who should be locked up until they can earn enough money to (1) pay for their stay in Jail and (2) to reimburse their victim(s) four to five-fold. A criminal cannot do this while being paid a few dollars a day; he should receive a reasonable wage according to his work output and the value of his services. Those who refuse to work or are an escape risk and a security risk, should rot in jail until they are ready to tow the line. However, notice that there is no jail time prescribed by this verse. The thief pays four to five times as much as he has stolen and then he is off. Also, there is nothing said here about a thief who is poor and hungry getting a break (however, such robberies certainly make up a very small minority of the crime of today).

**"If the thief is discovered in the breaking in and is struck so that he dies, [there will be] no blood(s) [shed] for him. [Exodus 22:2 (22:1 in the Hebrew Bible)]**

There is no nonsense here about whether the intruder startled, frightened or threatened the owner of the home. When a thief is caught within someone else's home, we are allowed to detain him, protect ourselves and /or protect our loved ones in any way we can, including executing the criminal on the spot. However, the next verse seriously modifies this verse. The criminal is in this verse discovered to be breaking into the house and it is possibly night (see v. 3) and/or the owner of the house *is* startled and surprised and possibly threatened.

**"If the sun has risen upon him, [there will be] blood(s) [shed] for him. He will make restitution; if he has nothing, then he will be sold for his theft. [Exodus 22:3 (22:2)]**

Are we merely saying that it is daytime or are we saying that the thief is outside the home in the daytime? V. 2 *did not* say anything about this breaking in occurring at night. Had it said that, then the question of when can you kill an intruder and when can you not would be easier to answer. V. 3 begins with the hypothetical particle *if* and the subject of the sentence is *sun*. *Risen* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular (*sun* is in the feminine voice), Qal perfect of *zârach* (זָרַח) [pronounced *zaw-RAHKKH*] and it is a word specifically for the *rising of the sun* (see Deuteronomy 33:2 2Kings 3:22 Psalm 112:4 Ecc. 1:5). The perfect tense means that this is a completed action. The imperfect voice would place the time in the morning as the sun is rising. How the phrase stopped here or had the previous verse carried with it the descriptor *at night*, then we would certainly be speaking only of daylight. However, we have the preposition 'al (אֶל) [pronounced *gahl*] is a preposition denoting motion to or direction towards something. The sun has risen in the direction of or towards the criminal. The implication here is that there is no danger; no one is startled, the criminal may have even already left the property. This means that we are not allowed to summarily execute the criminal out of our mental attitude sins toward him if there is no danger to ourselves or to our family.

When you uses an English translation, you must realize that there is a certain amount of commentary or interpretation that goes with it. Initially when I first read portions of the NIV, I was extremely impressed; however, there are some verses which are strictly an interpretation of what is there as opposed to a translation, and this is one of them. V. 3a in the NIV reads: *But if it happens after sunrise, he is guilty of bloodshed*. The alternate reading is: *But if he strikes him after sunrise, he is guilty of bloodshed*. There is no phrase in the Hebrew in this verse for either *it happens after* or *he strikes him after*. To the NIV, the difference is between daylight and dark; to the author of *The Emphasized Bible*, the difference is between being caught in the act or not.

Therefore, in this situation, he is possibly outside, it is definitely daylight, and there is no danger to the members of one's household. It is very possible that this is well after the crime. The owner may not execute him for his crime. There is no vigilantism allowed when the owner's family is safe and the criminal is not breaking into the house and it is daytime. However, he is to pay for his crime and note the marvelous way of dealing with this. If he has stolen out of lust and has possessions, he must pay back the person he stole from according to the law. However, if he has stolen out of need (or, has no means to restore that which he has taken) then God provides another out for him; he is not placed into confinement, but he is placed into slavery. As a slave, he will have his basic necessities taken care of and, from the laws we have already studied, will be free to go in seven years.

Also, when it comes to restitution, if a criminal has little or nothing to offer for restitution, than a judgment for same is really unhelpful. So the criminal must offer up all that he has, which is, himself. He is sold into slavery and the homeowner receives the proceeds.

Why is it not exactly clear here? God the Holy Spirit knows the hearts of men. He could have easily written in v. 2 the qualifier that the thief was breaking in at night yet He did not. He could have given a list of twenty other laws to describe exactly when we can use deadly force and when we cannot. However, God the Holy Spirit did not do that. Here is an important point to be learned: *you do not make a law for less than one percent of the population or for less than one percent of the occurrences*. Part of the purpose of a judicial system is to deal with grey areas where it might be daytime, yet the thief breaks in, startling or frightening the occupants. He might be wielding a weapon. The judge must decide under what circumstances the killing of the criminal took place and which law it falls under. For instance if today a kick burglar suddenly invades your home, day or night, you certainly act quickly and kill if necessary. However, if they are out the door, your family is safe, or if you have detained them at gunpoint, then you are not allowed to act as judge and executioner, even if you would like to.



The gist is that we are allowed to protect our home using *reasonable* force appropriate to the situation; and in some cases, that would involve killing the thief. However, we are not allowed to act as judge and executioner if the situation is under control nor are we allowed to act as a vigilante and find and execute the criminal later.

**"If the stolen beast is found in his possession [lit., hand], whether it is an ox or an ass or a sheep [and it is] alive, he will pay double. [Exodus 22:4 (22:3)]**

He has not killed and eaten what he has stolen; he has not sold it; he still possesses it. Under these circumstances, where the stolen property is returned intact and in perfect condition, the thief must pay back double of what he has stolen. Again, these are wonderful laws and something we unfortunately do not apply today. For most people who begin a life of crime by robbing, often the first offense is probation. Restitution should be a part of the sentencing of every thief.

**"When a man cause a field or a vineyard to be grazed over or lets lose his beast and it feeds in another man's field, he will make restitution [with] the best in his own field and in his own vineyard. [Exodus 22:5 (22:4)]**

This has wide application to today's business environment. When one business encroaches on another, such as, one business dumps chemicals into a river, causing other businesses which depend upon that river for clean water to suffer, there must be restitution made.

One can even extrapolate copyright laws from this verse. One person writes a song, a book or a poem and it is stolen by someone else for monetary gain—it is exactly the same principle. When restitution is made, any inequality in terms of quality and quantity should be in favor of the person who suffered loss. This is why the field is replaced with the best of the guilty party.

**"When fire breaks out and catches in thorn bushes so that the stacked grain, or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he that started the fire will make full restitution. [Exodus 22:6 (5)]**

Here we have unpremeditated destruction of the property of another; restitution is made for that which is lost. A fire is the illustration given here, but not the only application.

Although one source said that thorn bushes were used as hedges in the ancient world (see Proverbs 15:19 Isaiah 5:5 Micah 7:4), it was also likely that the thorns just grew up side by side with the wheat. During harvest time, they were even drier than the wheat. Proper care and diligence was expected as the grain was very dry prior to reaping and there was always a danger of fire. Israel's enemies were aware of this and occasionally caused fires to intentionally weaken those who depended upon the crops (Judges 6:1–6 15:4–5). After the harvest and before the autumn rains, these thorns and the weeds were often then burned to clear the land and to provide a fertilizer of sorts for the next growing season.

### **Your Property under the Care of Another**

**"If a man delivers money or goods to his neighbor to keep and it is stolen out of the man's house, then, if the thief is found, he will pay double. [Exodus 22:7 (6)]**

It is the thief here which pays double for the stolen property.

**"If the thief is not found and the owner of the house will come near to God whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's goods. [Exodus 22:8 (7)]**

The owner of the house has offered, for whatever reason, to take responsibility for the goods of another. These are stolen and not recovered. The owner of the house goes before God (a judge representing God) and is judged and will pay according to what the judge determines. We have seen previous that when we find God in this verse

that we have a spiritual parallel. Israel was entrusted with the gospel and with God's Word. Israel was to teach God's Word to the world—Israel was a client nation to God. A number of things will happen with Israel and God's Word: they will misplace it, they will guard it, they will disregard it. God's Word belongs to God and given to Israel for safekeeping. At some point in time, Israel will be scattered for her failures—not so much in the realm of morality but in their responsibility to keep and teach God's Word.

**"For every matter of transgression, whether it is for ox, for ass, for sheep, for clothing or for any ind of lost thing of which one says this is it the cases of both parties shall come before God and he whom God shall condemn shall pay double to his neighbor. [Exodus 22:9 (8)]**

Again we have the judges acting in place of God, making these decisions. They will hear the facts and try determine who is the negligent party—the one who entrusted the neighbor in the first place or the neighbor who kept the goods. What spiritual parallel is found here? Whether a country fulfills its obligation as a client nation to God and whether the nations around it respond are two different issues. Noah taught for 120 years before the floods came and his only converts were his sons, wife and his sons' wives. Noah was absolutely faithful. However, his teaching of God's Word made no impact on an unsaved world. So though Israel is entrusted with the Word and even though other nations may not respond; this is not always the fault of Israel.

**"When a man delivers to his neighbor an ass or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep and it dies or is hurt or is taken captive without anyone seeing it; [Exodus 22:10 (9)]**

This is a goofy place to cut off a verse. We are dealing with a similar situation. One neighbor has entrusted another with a piece of property and it becomes damaged or ruined (in this case, what we are speaking of is animals); whether compensation is due needs to be determined. There are various reasons for doing this: (1) animals are left for breeding purposes; (2) animals are kept for safekeeping, for feeding, for some special service; (3) and by application, this can be anything which is lent, entrusted, given for safekeeping to another. This is not a matter of the animals being lent as that will be covered in v. 14 and following.

**"[Then] an oath of Y<sup>e</sup>howah will be between them both whether he has not put his hand to the property of his neighbor and the owner shall accept the oath and he will not make restitution. [Exodus 22:11 (10)]**

V. 11 begins with the feminine construct of *oath* (the construct means *oath of*). Then we have our Lord's name, Y<sup>e</sup>howah without any intervening preposition. This is why we do not add in the words *by* or *before*.

An obvious and distinct possibility is the neighbor who has been entrusted could be negligent or could have actually sold or traded the item to someone else. Here, the circumstances are not clear to the injured party. Under these circumstances, the person in whose care the item was, made an oath by the Lord God that he was not negligent and this oath will have to suffice the injured party (the one who suffered the loss).

Do we have any application today? Certainly, today the person who suffered the loss would often bring his neighbor into court and sue for his loss, whether the neighbor was at fault or not. In a situation where the fault cannot be determined without doubt, the best the court can do is have to entrusted person give the injured person an oath of innocence before God.

**"However, if it is stolen from him, he will make restitution to its owner. [Exodus 22:12 (11)]**

When someone has entrusted you with an article of value, it is up to you to take better care of that than you would your own possessions. This would involve taking better care of it to insure that even theft would not occur. In the event that it does, the item must be replaced. This was primarily applied to shepherd who fed the flocks. How would any of this apply today? A stock broker or a fund manager for a mutual fund today has things which are of value to us. If he exercises ordinary care in his investing, then the person who entrusted him with the funds must bear whatever the market does. However, if the stock broker or fund manager does not exercise reasonable caution and diligence, then he should be subject to the same loss the client suffered.

**"If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence for what has been torn [and] he will not make restitution. [Exodus 22:13 (12)]**

This is interesting where a household is held partially responsible for a theft but not for something which is destroyed by that which parallels natural catastrophe. There were similar laws and similar traditions which go at least back to the time of Jacob (see Genesis 31:39)

**"And when a man borrows [or, asks] from his neighbor and it is hurt or dies, his owner not being with it, he will make full restitution. [Exodus 22:14 (13)]**

In this situation, a man has borrowed the animal from his neighbor (and this applies to anything that we would borrow from someone else) and the animal suffers harm. God requires that we make full restitution regardless of the reason for the harm done to the animal.

**Application:** When you borrow something from another, then you are assuming full and complete responsibility for that thing. Here, it is an animal; but it could be applied to renting a house, borrowing a car, or whatever.

**"But if the owner [is] with it, he will not have to make restitution; if it [the animal] [was] rented, [then] it came with its compensation. [Exodus 22:15 (14)]**

If the owner is there at the time the animal is injured or dies, it is back under the owner's care. The second phrase is a tad bit more difficult to render. It begins with an hypothetical particle, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular pronoun and the descriptive adjective *sākîyr* (שָׂכִיר) [pronounced *saw-KEER*] for *hired*. Whereas this word usually stands for a hired laborer, here it means *rented*. *Then* is inferred by the hypothetical particle and it is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular, Qal perfect of *bôw'* (אוּב) [pronounced *boh*] and it means *come, go*; the preposition *in, at, by, with*; and the substantive masculine singular with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine suffix of *sākâr* (שָׂכָר) [pronounced *saw-KAWR*] and it means *its wages, its rental amount, its compensation*.

What is being said here is that this was not borrowed but rented and the rental amount should cover damages. Since they did not have insurance, the implication was to charge enough under these circumstances to take into account the risk involved.

### Pre-marital Sex

**"And when a man persuades a virgin who is not engaged and lies with her, he will definitely provide a dowry for her [lit., in giving a dowry, he will give a dowry] and make her his wife [lit., to him to wife]. [Exodus 22:16 (15)]**

To indicate a change in subject matter, the particles are changed. Throughout a previous dozen or so verses, most of them began with *if*; this one begins with *and when*. In the KJV, NIV, Owen's and the NASB, there is not a great deal of consistency afforded these particles and connectives here. Even *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* was not entirely consistent, although it was better than the rest. The Hebrew has a change of particles in order to grab us and say *new topic*.

*Pâthâh* (פָּתָה) [pronounced *paw-THAW*] means *open*. It is in the Piel imperfect; the Piel is intensive and it means *entice, deceive, persuade, allure*; we find it in the Piel in such diverse contexts as here, Judges 14:15 2Samuel 3:25 1Kings 22:20–22 Proverbs 1:10 Jeremiah 20:7 (where Y<sup>e</sup>howah is the subject). The most consistent rendering which I can come up with is *persuade*. Deception does not need to be involved here.

*Virgin* is b<sup>e</sup>thûwlâh (הַלֹּוֹתָב) [pronounced *beth-oo-LAWH*] and it means *virgin*; it is not the same word as we find in Isaiah 7:14<sup>43</sup>. ʿÂras (שָׂרָא) [pronounced *aw-RAHS*] is found only in the Piel or the Pual (the passive of the Piel) and it means *betroth, engaged to be married*. In this instance, this is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular feminine, Pual perfect; meaning, she *stands engaged, she has been engaged, she is engaged*. This does not indicate that she is necessarily even engaged to this persuasive young man.

*Lie* is the Qal perfect of shâkab (שָׁכַב) [pronounced *shaw-KAH<sup>B</sup>V*] is the simple word for *sleep, lie down* and it is found several hundred times in the Old Testament. However, combined with the preposition *with* and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular suffix, it means *to have sexual relations with*.

The consequences are given by the verb mâhar (מָהַר) [pronounced *maw-HAHR*] used twice here and only here (although it might be in Psalm 16:4, but the text is dubious there). Luckily, this is close enough to a noun for the purchase price of a wife (found in Genesis 34:12 Exodus 21:17 1Samuel 18:25) to indicate that this means to pay a dowry for this woman to make her his wife. Since this is so rare today, I should explain that a dowry is money, goods or estate brought generally by the wife into marriage (the father of the bride most often provided this).

Over the years, a dowry has degenerated into a hope chest and now the woman just bills her parents for the wedding and the down payment on their first house. It worked both ways, however; a man might bring in money, gifts or an estate in order to persuade her parents to allow her to marry him. This verb is first found in the Qal infinitive construct and then in the Qal imperfect. Literally, it reads *in providing a dowry he will give a dowry*. The doubling of the verb makes this a certain event.

This verse ends with a preposition affixed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix (*to him*) followed by the same preposition and the word for *wife* (translated *to wife*). It was customary for the man to give a rather substantial gift or gifts for the bride and her family to indicate his sincerity and his financial strength (or, financial backing when the gift came not directly from the husband but from his father). We have an example of this back in Genesis 24:53, where Abraham sends by servant gifts on behalf of Isaac for Rebecca. *And the servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to he brother and to her mother.*

The point of all of this is that those who engage in premarital sex should get married. If they do not have the courage to marry, then they should not engage in premarital sex. Any young man who is faced with having to marry the woman he seduces would think twice about doing such a thing. Any woman faced with having to spend the rest of her life with such a man would give second thoughts to this also. The intent is for a married couple to have had relations with no one other than one another.

Unfortunately, this is a kind of a bond unfortunately almost unknown today. I read a letters to the lovelorn column where the columnist likened premarital sex to trying on a pair of shoes until you find a pair that fit. How horribly degenerate, as if promiscuous predilections and a temporarily good sex life were the ingredients to a good relationship. This is foolish. God's Word, as has been mentioned, everywhere encourages young men and women to be chaste until marriage. However, God is not foolish; He realizes that some will not listen to Him. Therefore, God gives us here what is the inferior plan B approach: do not have sex until you are married; however, if you do have premarital sex, then marry that person.

It is this continual trying on of shoes which has confused men and women concerning the identification of their right person. Premarital sex causes a scar tissue to form over our souls making soul identification difficult if not impossible. How many men have met and essentially ignored their right woman because they were having a torrid affair with some other woman (or simply desired another woman)? How many women, emotionally entangled with some lover, have bypassed the man that God designed for them in eternity past? How many people have rejected the person designed by God for them because they were not virtuous and would engage in premarital sex with

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<sup>43</sup> That word can mean *virgin, young lady* or *young woman*; however, the context of Isaiah 7:14—the fact that this woman will give birth to a child and that this is a sign—that indicates that it is *virgin* in Isaiah.

them? How many have rejected that person because they did not sexually turn you on immediately and you had to have an animal magnetism or someone who looked like a celebrity? How sad that you could throw away 50 years of happiness to try on some tattered pair of shoes that you can't walk in just because they are shiny?

**"If her father absolutely refuses [lit., in refusing, refuses] to give her to him, he will pay money [lit., weigh out silver]—the equivalent to the marriage present for virgins. [Exodus 22:17 (16)]**

Women have been known to become pregnant in order to catch a man or to keep a husband; they have also been known to have premarital sex in order to engage a man to whom they are attracted. Here, a man can do the same. He can be attracted to a woman, yet, despite his own shortcomings (which she will not see until they are married), he is able to seduce this young woman possibly even with the intent of marrying her.

As a high school teacher, I have seen the oddest pairings of young people that you could ever imagine—children who are so ill-suited for one another that it borders on being humorous. Often it is a slightly older young man who has no prospects and no future and he seduces a woman who has both. She is so dazzled by the fact that he is a year or two older, moderately attractive and paying attention to her that she neglects to notice that he is a total loser. Here is where the father comes in (ideally speaking). He recognizes the degeneracy of her young man and even if his daughter is now deflowered by him (and sometimes because of that fact) he refuses to allow her to marry this jerk. Even under this scenario, this man is not completely in the clear. Seducing this young woman will require that he cough up a suitable amount of money which will become a part of her dowry when she gets married.

### **Possible Demon Activity**

**"A sorceress you will not permit to live. [Exodus 22:18 (17)]**

This is a sudden change in topic, brought out by a sudden change of sentence structure. Sorceress is the feminine singular, Piel participle Hebrew word *kāshaph* (כָּשַׁף) [pronounced *kaw-SHAF*] and it means *practice sorcery, enchant, whisper a spell*. It is more than fooling around with artifacts of witchcraft; it is communion with the demons of Satan. It is being in contact with and being subservient to with the unseen demonic forces. I realize that there are great numbers of people who view demons as nonexistent. It was said and even quoted in a movie that Satan's greatest feat was to convince people that he did not exist.

Most people with any kind of sensory powers recognize that we are living in a degenerate, evil world. Furthermore, we all know that there is a tremendous unseen reality in just the mentality and the souls of the people on this earth. Even most people would agree that there are presences which do not have a human form; however, we do not want to call these presences demons or Satan; if possible, we often think of them as departed persons whose souls have hung around. Out in this world there is a whole unseen invisible army of all that is evil, vicious and repugnant. Such demons may present themselves as ministers of light and mouth all the proper words about world peace and loving everyone, but they are as filthy and as degenerate as we could ever imagine and to them we are no more than pawns. If they can achieve a small goal through our extended suffering and pain, they would do so without blinking. If they could bring about our deaths because we represent the God Who created the universe, they would. It is only the fact that we have a great wall of fire about us; that God exercises protection and guidance that we are not even remotely aware of which keeps us safe from direct demonic attack.

Throughout the ages of man, demons have changed their tact and the concentration of their effort. Also, God's restrictions on their activity has changed from time to time. At one time, demons were able to assume bodily forms and take the women of the earth to themselves to propagate a race of half-demon, half-man creatures (popularized and distorted by mythology). God disallowed this contact so they indwelt and influenced people (we see this particularly in the first century A.D.); and now, their influence is less supernatural and less overtly evil (which is a part of Satan's scheme to be less noticeable). However, in the times of the Old Testament and the New Testament, demons made a concerted, very overt attack upon man, exchanging promises and little nothings in order to direct the life of individuals for incarnate evil. These are the people, who allow their bodies to be used



by the demons, who were to be put to death. See the **Doctrine of Demonism—not finished yet!!** Also, see Deuteronomy 18:9–14.

**"Whoever lies with a beast will be put to death.** [Exodus 22:19 (18)]

Note that this verse is found between vv. 18 and 20 (a rather deep point). V. 18 deals with demonic involvement and v. 20 deals with idolatry (which is demon worship). This is not found here by accident. Sexual involvement with animals is demonic. The demons coming to earth and fornicating with human females is analogous to our fornicating with animals. Sometimes the demons indwell wither the person or the animal and engage in sexual relations. In any case it is degenerate and evil and demon-influenced. A person like this cannot have a normal sex life and will destroy the female that they marry with their degeneracy.

God's punishment is swift and sure. Although Genesis 6 did not portray copulation between angels and animals, we have myths of half-men, half animals (satyrs, for instance, known for the sexual proclivities), indicating that it is possible that not only this occurred, but there were resulting offspring. The NIV points out that ancient myths and epics whic came out of Babylon and Canaan depict fornication between pagan gods, demigods and animals.

**"Whoever sacrifices to any god except to Y<sup>e</sup>howah will be utterly destroyed.** [Exodus 22:20 (19)]

*Utterly destroyed* is an unusual word in the Hebrew; it is the Hophal imperfect of *châram* (חָרַם) [pronounced *khaw-RAHM*] and it means basically two very different things: *to utterly destroy* (Num. 21:2 Joshua 2:10 8:26 Isaiah 11:15 34:2) and *devoted to* (Lev. 27:28–29 Ezra 19:5 Micah 4:13); the latter usage being found in only those four verses. This seems like we have two different words, but the key here is that some things were dedicated unto God by completely destroying them. Some animal sacrifices burnt on the altar were completely burnt up. In this way, they were both *utterly destroyed* and *devoted to God*.

Although context places this as a responsibility of the nation Israel to be applied to Hebrews, God would have the Hebrews destroy entire tribes and nations of idolatrous peoples because their idolatry was indicative of their demon involvement. **And when the Lord God delivers them before you and you will strike them, then you will completely destroy them. You will make no covenant with them and show no grace to them...you will tear down their altars and smash their pillar and take down their Asherim<sup>44</sup>, and burn their graven images with fire** (Deuteronomy 7:2, 5b; see also Num. 21:2–3 Deuteronomy 3:6).

Here we have a definite change from today. At this time, this nation was a Theocracy, a nation ruled directly by God. It was a client nation to God also, responsible for the preservation and dissemination of His Word internally and throughout the world. There will never be a nation in the church age which is a Theocracy therefore this commandment cannot be followed today. In fact, it is important for a free nation to preserve freedom of religion so that God's Word can be taught and people can be evangelized.

### Behavior Toward the Weak

**"You will not wrong or oppress a stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.** [Exodus 22:21 (20)]

The Hebrews just came out of a land where they were oppressed, they were taken into slavery and treated cruelly. Even thoug God has give approval to the institution of slavery, he has not given tacit approval to cruelty and vicious treatment of those who ae not in Israel. This same word describes the treatment by Egypt of the Hebrews (Exodus 3:9—the verb and the noun cognate are both found in this verse).

**"You will not afflict any widow or orphan.** [Exodus 22:22 (21)]

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<sup>44</sup> Wooden images representing a female deity

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine plural, Piel imperfect of ʿānâh (הָנַח) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*] means *to debase, afflict, browbeat, humble, mishandle*; I tend to like the rendering *mishandle* here (and elsewhere where we have the Piel of ʿānâh) because it is applicable here. These are the helpless people; the ones without a voice, without someone to fight for them, the weak and the poor. They do not have to be directly abused by the Hebrews; they need only be neglected or uncared for; left to go hungry or left to go homeless.

This is not as much an active afflicting but more of a passive one in this case. This is one of the rare times when we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural and not the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular. The reason for this is God is directing the nation Israel as to how to treat the helpless as opposed to explaining to individuals what is right and what is wrong.

**"If you do mishandle [or, mistreat] them, and they call out to me, I will definitely hear [lit., in hearing, I will hear] their voice. [Exodus 22:23 (22)]**

*Call out* and *voice* are cognates of one another. The KJV usually translates them both *cry*; which is a very good one-word, consistent translation, albeit dated. We are back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular; God will hear the helpless who call out to Him when they are afflicted by those who are stronger. There are men who actively prey upon older people. Some mug them because they are not strong enough to fight back; some steal away their lifetime savings through various schemes and cons. God hears them when they call to Him. Although this is a part of the Law, it is also a promise to any helpless person who calls upon Him.

**"And my wrath will burn and I will kill you with the sword and your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. [Exodus 22:24 (23)]**

This is a promise made directly to Israel; if they chose to mistreat the helpless, then God would kill their strong. This is a promise made directly to Israel, but the principle is the same for all time—if the helpless are maltreated, they are to call on God and He will avenge them. However, when you take a matter to the supreme court, you must leave it there in God's hands.

### **Behavior Toward Your Fellow Hebrews**

**"If you lend money to any to my people to any to the poor with you, you will not be to him like a creditor; you will not exact from him [or, place on him] usury. [Exodus 22:25 (24)]**

This is interesting—fellow Hebrews who were poor and in need were not to be lent money as a high yield monetary investment. Those who lent money were to not charge exorbitant interest rates to the poor. They all belonged to the same God. Under times of financial stress and vicious persecution, we see that the Christians in Jerusalem binded together and shared all the material things that they had with one another (Acts 4:32–37). Israel under God was to be compassionate toward their poor. Money was to be lent without interest and the helpless were not to be mistreated.

It is possible to see this verse as prohibiting the charge of any interest to the poor, but I do not think that is the gist. See **the Doctrine of Interest—not finished yet!!** The Doctrine of Money (**Marantha Church**) (**Charlie Clough**).

**"If you take your neighbor's garment [as] a solemn pledge [lit., in taking a pledging, you take a pledge], you will restore it to him before the sun goes down. [Exodus 22:26 (25)]**

What has happened here is that you have taken as a pledge a cloak or a garment from a neighbor (which, in all of these laws, is a fellow Jew), then it must be returned to him before that night, before he needs it. The NIV points out that only the poorest of the poor had only their coat to offer as collateral.

**"For that is his only covering; it is his mantle for his body. In what else will he sleep? And if he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am compassionate. [Exodus 22:27 (26)]**

A cloak or a mantle was a necessity for those who lived in the cold weather. In the country, it was thick wool which was wrapped around the body with a seam at the shoulders and arm holes. This is the kind we are speaking of here. There was also the more formal cloak, which was similar to a loose dressing gown with wide sleeve and designed for warmer weather. It was a luxury item when made out of silk.

When I was much younger and knew nothing about the Bible, I was given the impression that the God of the Old Testament was much different from the God of the New Testament; that the Old Testament God was vengeful and exacting. However, as you can see in these laws, a part of God's purpose is to protect the weak from being preyed upon by the strong. God in the Old Testament as well as the New is a compassionate God Who hears us when we call on Him.

### Behavior Toward God

**"You will not curse God; or curse [or, execrate or imprecate] a ruler of your people. [Exodus 22:28 (27)]**

Most translations tell us that we will not *revile* God. This is the negative plus the Piel imperfect of qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced *kaw-LAL*] and this is a word which means very different things, depending upon its stem. In the Qal stem it means *abate, were swift, to lightly esteem*; in the Niphal stem, it means that something is trivial or unimportant; in the Piel, it means *to curse*. See the **Doctrine of Qâlal—not finished yet!!** This means *to curse someone because they are trivial and unimportant*.

Those who use profanity are guilty of this. They treat the Lord Who bought them, the God Who created them as a nothing more than something to pepper their speech with. And when they are under pain and pressure, then they curse the God who made them. The second word for curse is somewhat different: 'ârar (רָחַק) [pronounced *aw-RAHR*] See the **Doctrine of 'ârar—not finished yet!!** In the first instance, God is being cursed because He is viewed as insignificant, unimportant. In the second case, the ruler is being cursed in terms of wishing unpleasant things for him, such as *I hope you die, I hope you rot in hell*, etc. A good one word translation is *execrate* (or, even, *imprecate*). Even Paul when provoked recognized the truth of this law (Acts 23:4–5).

Authority-orientation is a firm precept in the Bible. The followers of Jesus are depicted as long-haired revolutionaries by those who do not have a clue. The Bible clearly teaches respect toward God and respect toward the rulers that He has placed over them in both testaments (see Romans 13). A parent who teaches his children any differently is doing them a great disservice. In the time that I write, because parents have been cavalier about their substance abuse prior to and during pregnancy, their children are born with a lot more problems than we have seen in the past.

Because of a confused manner of raising children—parents do not discipline them or see disciplining as some archaic notion—by the time these children are six or seven, they are out of control and they are medicated rather than disciplined with medications such as Ritalin. The parents have not imposed any true discipline upon the children so they have no self-discipline; consequently they are chemically assaulted with drugs that should be illegal.

Our legal system has gotten out of control and we have people going to court who have no reason to be there. Our system of justice has become distorted, confused and unwieldy, serving the lawyers more than serving the people (I speak as one who has been included in a number of frivolous class-action suits against my will and desire). These suits did nothing more than line the pockets of a few dozen lawyers, which, in the long run, cost me a great deal of money.

However, even though we live in a system where most of our representatives are thoroughly corrupt—congressmen pass laws to which they will not even subject themselves; they line their pockets with millions of dollars in retirement funds while we cannot keep up with our ever increasing debt—we are still to afford those who rule over us respect and honor. A nation gets the rulers it deserves. We in America have become greedy, materialistic,

giving much more thought to the television that we will watch than to the God Who made us. Those in power that we have elected are nothing more than a reflection of ourselves who plunder the treasury because had we the same opportunity, we would do the same. Regardless of the state of affairs, we are to have respect for the office of those in authority.

**"You will not delay [or, hold back] your fulness and from your overflow [NASB alternate reading: fullness and tears]; you will give the firstborn of your sons to Me. [Exodus 22:29 (28)]**

In this verse, we have the Piel imperfect of 'âchar (אָחַר) [pronounced *aw-KHAHR*] and it is often translated by that absolutely horrible KJV word *tarry*, a word which personally makes my skin crawl. In reference to people, it means *to hinder, to delay* (Genesis 24:56 32:4 2Samuel 20:5 Isaiah 46:13); in reference to things, it means *to hold back*. (Judges 5:28 Hab. 2:3).

*Fulness* refers to the abundance of that which God has provided them; however, the other word is found only here in Scripture and similar words nearby mean *weep*. It is guessed that this means the *overflow* (or, *the outflow*) of *the wine and olive presses*. The issue though is clear; God prospers them and God expects them to not withhold their prosperity from Him nor to allow their prosperity to stand in the way of their worship of God. Giving of the firstborn to God is not some heathen sacrifice but rather a dedication of the firstborn to service to God. The principle of giving is the same today—we give of our prosperity and overflow; we dedicate our all to God.

**"You will do likewise with your oxen, with your sheep. It will be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day, you will give it to Me. [Exodus 22:30 (29)]**

Several translations say that the oxen and sheep will be with the *dam* for seven days. The word is 'êṁ (אֵם) [pronounced *aim*] and it means *mother*. The analogy is that God the Father will allow Jesus Christ to walk upon this earth and after so many days, give Him to die for us. It is not clear in this verse whether the animal will be dedicated, given to the Levitical priesthood (not setup yet) or simply sacrificed (which seems the most likely).

**"A consecrated man will you be to me; therefore, any flesh in the field that is torn by beasts you will not eat; you will cast it to the dogs. [Exodus 22:31 (30)]**

Throughout all of v. 31, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person is plural, referring to the Hebrews as a group. As a people, they are set apart unto God, not as individuals. They are not to eat the scraps and the leftovers of animals but they are to operate as royalty, as God's people.

# EXODUS 23

## Exodus 23:1–33

**Introduction:** Chapter 23 continues with the laws for which there are no expressed judgements. The first set of ordinances deal with one's correct behavior in the legal system; the second with the Sabbath year and the Sabbath day; the third set of ordinances were about three of Israel's feasts. The last portion of Exodus 23 is God's promises and His expectations concerning the conquest of the land.

### Outline of Chapter 23:

- Vv. 1–9 **Proper judicial behavior, testimony and bias**
- Vv. 10–13 **The Sabbath year and the Sabbath day**
- Vv. 14–19 **Three of Israel's national feasts**
- Vv. 20–33 **God's promises and expectations concerning the conquest of the land**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 10 **Basic Points on the Sabbath**
- v. 11 **Prophecy in Scripture and Critics of Prophecy  
Châgag**

## Proper Judicial Behavior, Testimony and Bias

We continue with this verse to list a series of ordinances without specific judgements. That is, there is no recommended penalty. This does not mean that a breach of these ordinances carries with it no judicial or civil penalty, but that the judge was given the latitude to penalize as he saw fit. Most of the next nine verse are applications of the ninth commandment.

**"You will not lift up a false [lit., worthless] report; [Exodus 23:1a]**

The first portion of Exodus 23 deals with correct legal behavior. Although lying is wrong 99% of the time, this verse relates particularly to one's testimony as a witness. This verse begins with the negative plus the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*], which is translated 46 different ways in the KJV version, Qal stem alone. Although we see it translated by such words as *bring forth, burn, fetch, forgive, marry, pardon, receive, respect, set, spare, yield*, it means *lift up, carry*. The point is that there is more to this in context than just a simple lie. If that were the case, then the verb would have been a verb denoting simple speech. However, this is something that you are picking up and carrying around with you and presenting it to others. It is more than a simple, white lie spoken one time (this does not excuse the so-called white lie; however, that is not what is in view here).

*Report* is masculine singular construct of *shêma'* (שְׁמָע) [pronounced *SHAY-mahg*] and this is not just a saying or a few words, but it is *an organized and/or formal report* (Deuteronomy 2:25 Isaiah 23:5). It is something which should be heard or listened to, which is why it is often translated *hearing*. It is the information reported about someone who is famous (Num. 14:15 1Kings 10:1 2Chronicles 9:1 Job 28:22) and in that context is translated *fame*. Even Young, who prides himself on a consistent literal translation, translates this word, which only occurs 19 times in the Bible, at least four different ways. *Shêma's* root means *to hear*. It has a active and a passive meaning: it is *that which is spoken so that several people will hear it or that which is heard by several people*. *Report* is a good one-word, almost all-purpose rendering; *proclamation* being too formal for some contexts. One person's take on rendering one language into another was that human experience is all the same and for every word in one language, there will be a corresponding word in another language. As we have gone through these verses, I hope it is obvious to you that notion is crock.



*Report* is modified by the word *shâv* (שָׁו) [pronounced *shawv*] which we saw in the third commandment where we were not to use our Lord's name in vanity and emptiness. Here it means *empty, worthless, vain, false, meaningless*. The report is *empty, meaningless, and worthless* because it is false. This word deals with the quality of the report because of its content rather than directly with the content of the report. A report or a testimony which is *false* is, accordingly, *empty, meaningless and worthless*.

**"You will not join hands with a criminal [or a malevolent person] to be a malicious [and/or, corrupt] witness.** [Exodus 23:1b]

The word usually translated *wicked* (an unfortunately out-of-date term) is *râshâ'* (רָשָׁע) [pronounced *raw-SHAWG*] and it often means *criminal* (Exodus 2:13 Num. 35:31 Deuteronomy 25:2 2Samuel 4:11 Psalm 109:7 119:53, 61). It is in contrast with the *righteous* (Genesis 18:25 Deuteronomy 25:1 Malachi 3:18) and with the *just* (Psalm 37:12) and is occasionally translated *ungodly* (2Chronicles 19:2 Job 34:18 Psalm 1:1, 4, 6). This is clearly unregenerate man (Psalm 101:8 119:55); however it is more than that. This is the man who is criminal and condemned, if not by man's laws, then by God's. An outstanding, modern, one-word rendering would be *malevolent* [pronounced *ma-LEV-a-lent*] for those whose vocabulary exceeds 1000 words. Other good renderings would be *maleficent, reprehensible (worthy of blame), corrupt, reprobate*; and reasonable but less satisfying would be the translations *ungodly, corrupt, unredeemable, unregenerate, iniquitous, wicked*. If you have been raised under the KJV, *wicked*, with an annotated use *criminal* would cover the meaning here. In this verse, the adjective acts as a substantive, so the renderings *criminal, malefactor, reprobate*. would be apropos.

When we give a worthless report, joining hands with a criminal, our witness is *châmâç* (חָמָץ) [pronounced *khaw-MAWC*], a word usually translated *violence* (Genesis 6:11, 13 49:5 2Samuel 22:3, 49); however, there are a number of instances where *violence* would be totally inappropriate (Genesis 16:5 Deuteronomy 19:16). Therefore, a more suitable translation should be sought. The behavior described by *châmâç* is consistently wrong, often involving violence and/or criminal activity. It is a noun which here is used to modify the word *witness*. I personally lean towards the words *malicious, cruelty, corrupt* or *corruption*, because such terms can imply criminality and/or violence in the right context. Several of our laws place a person who lies in a legal proceeding in the same category as the criminal. He becomes an accomplice to his criminal activity, as his testimony or witness is false, thus misleading those who are after the truth and, eventually, after justice. This concept is based upon the solid Biblical principles found here. A gang member or a friend may give false testimony (or lie) when questioned by police officers in order to protect a criminal; that person by his testimony is a witness of *corruption, maliciousness, and cruelty*.

Lev. 19:16 carries a similar prohibition: **You will not go about as a slanderer among your people and you are not to take a stand against the life of your neighbor; I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** Deuteronomy 22:13–19 deals with a specific act of perjury involving marriage. If a man turns against his wife and falsely accuses her of not being a virgin at marriage in order to get out of the marriage, he would be fined and he must remain in the marriage. In 1Kings 21, we have an example of Ahab who indirectly kills a man by false testimony against him, and gains possession of his land. Under these circumstances, God intervened and punished Ahab. God continues to intervene.

We become discouraged at times because we live in an unjust world and people commit crimes for which they are not punished. We do not have to worry. If all legal action has been pursued for naught or if the criminals have never been apprehended, God will see to justice being done. We may not be able observe God's justice, but He will leave no criminal unpunished, no wronged saint un-avenged. I have had personal situations where I could have taken various individuals to the civil courts where I have instead left the matter in God's hands and God saw to it that I was repaid and they were punished. I've had to put innumerable matters into God's hands and I was not always allowed to see the results—but I know that God took care of the matter. This does not mean that we do not avail ourselves of the legal system nor do we disregard the civil court system; however, if we are to a point where we are trying to obtain legal revenge, God can avenge us much better than any court system can. No one gets away with anything on this earth, including you and including me.

If you ever sue someone (or are the cause of someone being sued<sup>45</sup>), then you have better check, re-check, and triple check your motivations.

I knew of two Christians, one of whom sued the other over the repair of a vehicle. The one who sued got money; was vindicated in court; but he also lost many of his friendships at the church.

**"You will not follow a crowd [or, group] into injuries [or, wrongs] nor will you bear witness concerning a dispute turning aside after a crowd in regards to bending [or distorting] [your testimony]. [Exodus 23:2]**

*Follow* is a preposition rather than a verb, but it is reasonably translated. Rabbîym (רַבִּיִּם) [pronounced *rah<sup>b</sup>v-BEEM*] is an adjective meaning *much, many, great*. Here, since it follows the preposition and has no noun in the vicinity to modify, it stands alone as a substantive and means *multitude, (the) many, group, crowd*.

The word usually translated *evil* is the feminine plural of the adjective râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced *raw-ḠAW*] and it is the softer version of râ' (evil). We have the passive meanings *miseries, distresses*; and the active meanings *injuries, mischief, wrongs*. In other words, these are not acts of great evil which are spoken of here. This is less than joining a gang and becoming involved in a crime spree and murder. This is a reference to activity in a group or in a gang, but it refers to significantly tamer activity. Maybe you'll steal a car, bully someone outside of the gang, engage in some petty theft. The example given is, a distortion of testimony in order to benefit the group. The point is that even the things which a more hardened gang might think is standard everyday innocuous behavior is forbidden. Certainly, by extension, the more pernicious forms of evil are therefore forbidden as well.

No verb comes between *crowd* and *evil* and *evil* is preceded by the preposition *to, for, in regard to*. The first half of this verse speaks against mob violence and against gang violence. Actually, the word râ'âh does not even have to result in violence but in illegal activity; in doing that which is wrong. Here we are enjoined not to become a part of this sort of activity. The message is simple—God knew then as has become very apparent—that people in groups, when it comes to illegal activity, behave differently than they would as individuals. We are able to avoid falling into a mob mentality by not following them. This would keep us away from unions which go beyond the law, from abortion protest rallies which could result in violence, from gang associations, from mob retaliation, even when the cause seems just.

When a crowd (gang, group, mob) becomes involved in illegal activity and is hauled into court, then those who are bystanders or those who are in the crowd are expected to hang together with the group. The conjunction and the negative could be translated *and [you will] not* or simply as *nor*. Rîyb (בִּיר) [pronounced *ree<sup>b</sup>v*] means *strife, dispute, controversy*. It is preceded by the preposition 'al (עַל) [pronounced *ḡah*], which, like most Hebrew prepositions, had a variety of applications. It generally means *upon, on, on the grounds of*; but it can mean *concerning, by, on, to*. It does not mean *in per se*, which is the way it is often rendered.

This is a matter which has ended up in court or possibly is being resolved outside of court. *After* is the same preposition as *follow*. then we have the preposition *to, for, in regards to* and the Hiphil infinitive construct of the verb nâṭâh (נָטָה) [pronounced *naw-TAWH*], which means *stretch, bend, extend, distort*. There is no word for outright lying here; this is a bending or stretching of the testimony, or witness that you give. You leave out a crucial detail or two; you didn't see this or that; you mislead a judge or an investigating officer by suggesting another theory or an idea suggested by some bystander who was there.

The intent is to mislead those who are listening to you. So note here that even if you do fall into a crowd and it results in illegal activity, you are not to even *bend* your recollection of the facts in order to further follow this crowd. Note the first law of criminality—you never rat on another criminal; and the first law of gang membership—the preservation and welfare of the gang comes first. Both of these concepts are diametrically opposed to the Word of God. You do not become involved and when interviewed in a dispute or a court matter, you do not stretch or alter the truth in any way.

<sup>45</sup> In the case of residents who complain to a neighborhood association.

**"Nor will you honor a poor [or, weak one] in his dispute. [Exodus 23:3]**

Every juror on a civil suit against a company with deep pockets should have this ingrained in their minds. It is a common mentality to favor the underdog. When you have an individual standing up against a corporation or a company that they claim has wronged them and therefore they deserve compensation; we are not to automatically side with the plaintiff. So many people think, the victim is really not asking for much; and the company is so profitable. Or, they simply see the big company (corporation) as being in the wrong, without supporting evidence.

Hâdar (חָדַר) [pronounced *haw-DARH*] means, in a good sense, *honor, adorn*; and in a bad sense it means *to be partial, to favor*. The psychology here is to err on the side of the weak and the poor against the strong. However, the defendant is innocent until proven guilty and no matter how rich the company and no matter how poor and wretched the plaintiff, this is still not a reason so side with the plaintiff. The facts are to be listened to and if the plaintiff has proven his case, then you are to side with him.

**"If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you will bring it back to him. [Exodus 23:4]**

All of us, at one time or another, make an enemy. Often it is deserved; however, there are even instances when it is not. In any case, we are to not only respect the property and the privacy of our enemies, but we are to actively take part in protecting their property when the situation arises. The ox and the donkey in this context are examples of personal property, rather than the limitations of personal property covered by this ordinance.

Today, you may have a dispute with your next door neighbor; however, if tomorrow, you suspect his home is being vandalized, then you immediately phone the police. You must be his advocate, if he is not there. What is taught by this verse is that we are to go out of our way to protect that which belongs to our enemy. In the sermon on the mount, our Lord said, You have heard that it was said, **"You will love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."** When Jesus spoke these words, the Hebrews were involved in a serious political struggle with the Romans and they resented the occupation of their land and the control of their government by the Romans; so they taught that it was reasonable to hate the Romans. However, the God of the Old Testament and the New is the same God. We are to treat our enemies without partiality.

Part of the point of vv. 2–3 is to not be partial. This verse takes it out of the realm of dispute and out of the courthouse and into day-to-day life. Our enemies should receive the same treatment that we give to our friends. This does not mean that we have to spend time with them, that we have to like them or say five nice things about them; however, we are not to celebrate their misery and we are to treat them and their possessions with the same respect that we would of a friend.

**"If you see the donkey of one who hates you crouching [or, lying] under its burden, you will refrain from abandoning it [the donkey]; you will by all means [or, certainly] free [the donkey] from it [or, you will certainly remove [the burden] from it]<sup>46</sup>. [Exodus 23:5]**

Now let's cover the finer points of the translation of verse 5. One of the things in this verse which reaches out and grabs you is the same verb is used three times. The verb is 'âzab (אָזַב) [pronounced *gaw-ZA<sup>B</sup>V*] and it means *loosen, relinquish, permit, free, let loose, abandon, forsake*. It is first preceded by the prefixed preposition min (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and it is a preposition which can express separation (*from, off, on the side of, away from*) and it can express cause (*on account of, since, at, by, in consequence of, proceeding from*). When prefixed to an infinitive (as it is here), it can have a causal force, but more often, it comes after verbs which imply or express *restraint, preventions, cessation* and it is translated *f* Romans. The preceding verb is châdal (חָדַל) [pronounced

<sup>46</sup> For an entirely different slant on this verse, I commend Bullinger's *Figures of Speech*, pp. 1007–1008. Bullinger maintains that 'âzav means also *to raise up, to help*. To support this, he quotes the parallel passage, Deuteronomy 22:4. Then the translation would read: **If you see the donkey, belonging to one who hates you, laying under his burden, and you would refrain from helping him with it; you will certainly help with it.**

*khaw-DAHL*] which means *to cease, desist*. 'Āzab (אָזַב) [pronounced *gaw-ZA<sup>B</sup>V*] is in Qal infinitive construct with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular suffix, so these three words should be rendered *cease from forsaking it*.

This is followed by the Qal infinitive absolute 'āzab. The infinitive absolute when it stands alone functions primarily as a noun; however when it is a complement of affirmation, it is translated *surely, indeed*; and when it is the complement of improbability and condition, it can be translated *at all, freely, indeed*. That is, when it is used with the same verb, as it is here, it is used to intensify the meaning. The third time 'āzab is used (the next word), it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Qal imperfect. The intensified meaning combined with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person transforms this into a very strong command without using the imperative mood. It should be translated, *you will certainly loosen (or set free)*. The last word is the preposition which usually means *with*, however, when used with verbs of *departing, taking, removing*, it means *from with, away from, far f Romans*. The preposition has with it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular suffix so this portion of the verse should read: *you will cease from abandoning it; you will certainly remove [the burden] from it*.

After having gone into the finer points of translation, you may think that this verse says essentially the same thing as the previous verse. However, notice what has occurred; the donkey has collapsed under its load. Donkeys rarely load themselves up; it was the one who hates you—he overloaded the donkey. It was his fault. He has done this to himself and to his donkey. However, do you do to him the next day and say, "Too bad about your donkey; I told you not to put so much on him." You fix the problem then and there even if this was a problem which your enemy has caused. Now this does not mean you become a busy body and follow your enemies around and try and fix everything they screw up. However, if in your normal state of affairs, you can help your enemy, even if their problems are their own fault, then you do so. You are to treat their property and their troubles as if they were your own.

I do not want to neglect the kindness shown to the beast as well in this verse. Because the roads are rough, a donkey might look as though he can handle a particular load until he comes to a steep incline or comes across rocks or an uneven surface, he falls. Under this load, it is nearly impossible for the donkey to set itself upright again.

In the story (not the parable) of the good Samaritan, as found in Luke 11, a man is attacked and beaten by thieves on his way to Jericho. A priest and a Levite, both men supposedly learned in the Law see this man laying half dead by the side of the road and they each walk by him on the other side of the road. The Samaritan, from a group despised by some Hebrews, stops and aids the victim. In this way, the Samaritan shames to priest and the Levite who do less for this beaten man than they are supposed to do for an enemy's donkey. Many people have the mistaken impression that our Lord came and changed the Mosaic Law in His teaching. He confirmed the Mosaic Law and properly applied it; something sorely lacking in the religion of the Hebrews, who sought to obey it in legalism.

This extends to social situations as well. There are times that you must work or socialize with people who dislike you (and this is often our fault); however, there are a few of us who are disliked without a reason. And these enemies occasionally treat us unfairly, speak evil against us and carry mental attitude sins against us. We are to treat them with the same consideration, kindness and tact that we would afford a close friend. Whereas, it is unreasonable to go out of our way to make continual contact with those who cannot stand us; on the other hand, when we do not have a choice, our minds should be free of mental attitude sins, our words should be kind and not acerbic, we should not resort gossiping about them and our interaction with them should be characterized by thoughtfulness and consideration. This obviously requires the power of God the Holy Spirit and when we fail at this, we confess that sin to God and move on. I can almost guarantee that when you fail in this when dealing with an enemy, God will give you another chance, another enemy, and another opportunity to be gracious toward them.

**"You will not cause to distort the judgement of your needy [friend] in his dispute. [Exodus 23:6]**

V. 6 begins with the negative and the Hiphil imperfect of *nāṭāh* (נָטָה) [pronounced *naw-TAWH*] again. This is followed by the construct of the noun *mīsh'pāṭ* (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish'-PAWT*] and it is *the act of rendering a verdict, the act of deciding a case; the process, procedure or litigation before a judgement*; it can mean *justice*,



*right, ordinance, decision.* *Judgement* is a reasonable one-word translation, but recall that this word occurs about 500 times in the Old Testament.

Then we have the word *ʿebʿyôn* (אֶבְיֹן) [pronounced *eb<sup>ve</sup>-YOHN*] and it means *want, needy, poor*. It is qualified by the suffix *your* (in the singular), implying friendship or relationship. If *your* were in the plural, it might refer to the needy in Israel in general. However, the singular suffix implies a closer relationship. This means not only do you not side with the poor, but even if this is a friend of yours going to court and he desperately needs money, you still do not distort the truth in his favor.

**"Keep far from a lying words and do not slay the innocent and the righteous, for I will not justify the malevolent.** [Exodus 23:7]

*Dâbâr* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR*] is one of those words translated 84 different ways in the KJV. It is a reference to what has been said or spoken and can be translated *word, charge, message, report, tidings, speech, discourse, saying*; etc. It is coupled with the substantive used as a descriptor: *sheqer* (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced *SHEH-ker*], which means *deception, disappointment, falsehood*. There are times I admire the translation of the KJV and other times, like now, when it makes me scratch my head. This exact same pair of words is found in Exodus 5:9 (translated *vain words*); 23:7 (translated *false matter*); Proverbs 13:5 (translated *lying*); 29:12 (translated *lies*); and Jeremiah 7:4, 8 29:23 (translated *lying words*). The two together are more than just *deception, falsehood*—they refer to something which is spoken and which is false. The scene here is likely a courtroom or a criminal investigation. The result of lies during an investigation and ensuing trial is oft times the conviction and execution of an innocent man. Those who support the lies are guilty of murdering the person convicted by the judge. Although the translation *acquit* is very up-to-date and it seems to fit, the word here means *justify, make righteous, vindicate*. It is a step further than being acquitted—the person is also declared righteous. Who God will not justify is the *criminal* or the *malevolent* person.

This is not another verse which again says *you will not murder*, but in different words. This is equating the person giving false testimony in a criminal case to the criminal. At one time this was a rare occurrence; now in gangs, those who are picked up by the authorities are filled with lies and falsehoods. I have mentioned 1Kings 21:9–13 earlier; this passage is an illustration of one who has broken this ordinance.

The malevolent here, is not the criminal, but the person who perverts the judicial system by prosecuting and convicting an innocent person. How many district attorneys prosecute a person whose guilt they are not convinced of; however they prosecute this person with great intensity for their own political promotion. How many suppress or ignore evidence which might free an innocent man? How many members of the police force do the exact same thing? They have a suspect who they feel is probably the guilty party and evidence which might exonerate the man is not examined as carefully as the evidence which condemns him. For the most part, I am sure that these are very small percentages; but they do happen and innocent people are convicted as a result.

Our own system of justice is corrupt insofar as when new evidence which either unequivocally condemns or exonerates a man who has been previously tried and a verdict rendered, this man is not retried. For we have nuances of the law which prevents condemning evidence from being introduced into a trial. All of the evidence against a man should be introduced into trial. If some of it was obtained illegally, then that is a separate matter to be determined in another court with other types of outcomes (for instance, a suit against the arresting officer or a suit against the city for illegal search and seizure<sup>47</sup>). For, **he who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to Y<sup>e</sup>howah** (Proverbs 17:15).

Secondarily, when an innocent man is condemned (which is bound to happen in any legal system), this verse means that the guilty person does not get off scot free. God will punish that person as well.

**"Furthermore, you will not take a bribe because a bribe blinds the officials and subverts [or, overturns] the words of the righteous.** [Exodus 23:8]

<sup>47</sup> However, a guilty man should not be allowed to retaliate in this way.



When those who are in a place to judge criminal cases take bribes, it is an indication of a greedy and degenerate society. Such a one has a place of high respect and generally commands a reasonable salary. Still his lust for more materialistic things causes him to lose his focus upon justice. *Çâlah* (סָלַח) [pronounced *saw-LAHF*] is translated *subvert, pervert and overthrow*. It is found in this passage, and also in Deuteronomy 16:19<sup>48</sup> Job 12:19 Proverbs 13:6 19:3 21:12 22:12. When it is used with reference to the words of the righteous, it is translated *pervert, subvert*; however, in relation to the words of the transgressor, it is translated *overthrow*. *Çâlah* *perverts and overturns*; *subvert* or *overturn* are good one-word renderings. The righteous man is just one who is telling the truth here; he is relaying the facts exactly as he perceived them; however, because those involved in the justice system have been bribed, his words have been overturned, subverted and supplanted.

Samuel the judge and the prophet, a man often ignored in the pulpit, was an honorable official; the last judge over Israel before their continual demands resulted in the installation of a king. He illustrated with his life what it means to be in a place of authority and to maintain personal integrity. The people he judged testified to this when they said, "**You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from any man's hand.**" (1Samuel 12:4b). Regardless of the position that we hold, whether we have a great deal of authority or none at all; our lives should be characterized by the personal integrity of Samuel. Samuel, like all judges, had great opportunity to bend a rule or a judgement here or there which would result perhaps in additional personal wealth; however, he remained true to his position and function therein as unto the Lord. On the other hand, his sons did not possess this same personal integrity (1Samuel 8:3).

**"And you will not oppress an alien. You know what is it like to be an alien [lit., you know the soul of an alien] for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.** [Exodus 23:9]

Israel will be open to people of all other nations as Israel is to be the light of the world, the possessor of the one true God. Therefore, with this responsibility, they would occasionally experience an influx of immigrants. The KJV word is sojourner, which is an excellent rendering, as it means one on a visa; a temporary visitor (even the the Israelites were in Egypt for 400 years, this was temporary). Unfortunately, the word is so dated that it no longer communicates whereas alien does. An alien falls into the class of people who can be easily taken advantage of. They could be forced into slavery; a judge could arbitrarily deny him due process of the legal system; people might try to cheat and persecute him because he cannot fight back and he has no family and no one to stand up for him (just as Egypt one day decided to arbitrarily place the Hebrews under slavery, despite their great numbers). Israel cannot reflect the character of God and treat the alien as Egypt had treated them. This is a simple, you know exactly what it feels like to be taken advantage of, to be persecuted, to have your property and livelihood taken from you by the state—now don't do it to someone else.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Sabbath Year and the Sabbath Day

**"Now you will sow your land for six years and gather in its yield.** [Exodus 23:10]

Many people glibly ignore much of what the Bible says about morality, particularly that which is found in the Old Testament because they can find other laws which they believe to be ridiculous by today's standards. What has happened here is that we have because so uneducated in the Old Testament, that we have no real clue as to why these laws were in existence. Israel was a theocracy—that is, they were ruled directly by God. They existed as a nation for several centuries without having a king to rule over them, which was almost unheard of for a very united group of small nations. This is because God ruled over them with God's Laws. Some of these laws dealt with a morality designed for that time period; some of them dealt with a morality for all time.

<sup>48</sup> Which is a parallel passage given to the next generation of Israelites

However, there were some law that were simply ceremonial and spoke of the Christ Who was to come. Taking a ceremonial law which pointed forward to Christ coming and citing that as a ridiculous law indicates that the person so trashing God's Law has no idea what the ceremonial portion was about. It was important for there to be a seven-day week with a Sabbath for several reasons—let cite a few of them:

### Basic Points on the Sabbath

- 1) God created (or restored) the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. Having a Sabbath day rest points back to God's work and recognizes God's work. The fact that practically every nation on earth functions on a seven-day work week is a testimony to God's restoration of the earth.
- 2) Man needs some time off; man requires some certain amount of rest and relaxation to recharge his batteries; even for the unbeliever, the Sabbath-day concept is important.
- 3) Man needs some time set aside in any given week to worship God. It should be a nightly affair at least; however, the once a week gathering is a bare minimum.
- 4) The Sabbath concept—that God has done all of the work and man can simply receive what God has provided, teaches grace and teaches the concept of salvation by grace apart from any merit.
- 5) When it comes to the Church Age, there is an indication throughout the New Testament that the church often met on the first day of the week, which was Sunday, to commemorate the fact that Christ, the Savior, did come, and was raised from the dead on our behalf.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The use of the word *for* in other Bible translations to begin this verse sounds as though this is an inference continued from the previous verse. However, the word is the simple waw conjunction, properly rendered *and*. Since the Hebrew is bereft of a cacophony of conjunctions, I prefer to pepper it up periodically; however, not in a way which would mislead the reader as to the intended meaning. There is a Hebrew word which is an inferential conjunction and would be translated *for*; however, that word is not found here. This is a new ordinance; or an ordinance covering a different topic.

God did not choose to cover the ordinances in the organized fashion that we may have developed ourselves. So, we do not find all of the *alien* passages in one place, the festivals in another, the Sabbath day passages in another. God chose to present these in smaller chunks and my guess is that the laws are more palatable and easier to listen to if one particular topic is not beat to death, so to speak.

This approach to the Law also prepares us for the investigation of Scripture in general. When we want to find out something about the justice of God, there is no particular book or chapter in the Bible which completely covers the justice of God. We may have to examine a dozen or 3 dozen passages in order to put together a cohesive doctrine. Well, the Law of Moses was organized in much the same way. Laws about the Sabbath day, about the Sabbath year and about the various festivals can be found throughout the Law. So, in order to understand a particular festival, we might find ourselves looking at 3 or maybe even 8 different passages, and comparing them.

This verse begins the discussion of the Sabbath year, something which is unique and would have set the Hebrews apart from every nation in the world. Most nations today have a weekend, or days off; and even some professions offer a Sabbatical to their workers (at least when I taught in California, a teacher could go on Sabbatical, receive one-half of his salary, and pursue intellectual pursuits—I don't know whether that is still available to them). A sabbatical year was the seventh year where to Hebrews rested from their labors and allowed God to take care of them. This was one of the laws which they totally ignored. They wrote law after law after law which dealt with the Sabbath day, detailing what could be done and what could not be done on the Sabbath; yet, at the same time, they totally ignored this Sabbath year.

**"And in the seventh year, you will let it [your land] rest and lie fallow and the poor of you people may eat and what they leave, the wild beasts will do likewise with your vineyard and with your olive orchard. [Exodus 23:11]**

We have since found that it is good to let a portion of crop land rest now and again. Here, whatever grew as a *volunteer* (as one gardener used to call it) was allowed to grow and to be harvested by the poor and then by the wild animals. This would have been a statement to the other nations unlike any other: a people would actually cease harvesting for one full year every seven years and depend upon their God. No other nation in the world would be foolish enough to depend upon their idols and their gods because they would all starve. Unfortunately, Israel would not either and God had to enforce this Sabbath year. Israel was dispersed from the land temporarily, during which time the land enjoyed its Sabbath years all at once.

### Prophecy in Scripture and Critics of Prophecy

One of the main reasons for the goofy theories about the four different authors of the Pentateuch and for denying Mosaic authorship is that it made very accurate predictions concerning what would happen to the Hebrews. In Leviticus 26:32–35 we read: **"And I [God] will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it will be appalled over it. You, however, I will scatter among the nations and I will take out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste. Then the land will enjoy its Sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its Sabbaths. All the days of desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your Sabbaths, while you were living on it."** We expect to read this as having been written years after the Hebrews were dispersed; not forty years prior to their even entering the land for the first time.

The scholar who despises divine authorship of the Word cannot cope with the idea that here in the desert, during their first year, 40 years before they enter the land, God tells them (1) enemies would settle into their land; (2) the land will not be a land flowing with milk and honey for them; it will appall them; (3) the Hebrews would be removed from the land; (4) their land would become desolate and their cities rubble; and, finally, (4) they would not observe their Sabbath year, so God would enforce it, giving a time table to the length of their original dispersion. No unbeliever likes the idea that this passage speaks accurately of future events. No man who despises God and His Word and attempts to demythologize it cares for prophecy. They automatically assume that all prophecy has to occur after the event; that is a tacit assumption on their part. Therefore, the five books of Moses cannot be written by Moses because they assume that there can be no such thing as prophecy. There can be no such thing as miracles. Moses cannot look that accurately into the future and determine events hundreds of years in advance. Therefore, they come up with extremely convoluted theories of authorship which have no basis in fact other than they fit their own particular predispositions.

[Jeremiah is speaking roughly twenty years prior to the dispersion] **"For thus says the Lord: 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.' For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope." For thus says the Lord of the armies, "Behold, I am sending upon them the sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like split-open figs that cannot be eaten due to rotteness. I will pursue them with the sword, with famine and with pestilence; and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and a horror, and a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them, because they have not listened to My words," declares the Lord, "which I sent to them again and again by My servants, the prophets; but you did not listen," declares the Lord (Jeremiah 29:10–11, 17–19).**

**Therefore, He brought them up against the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on the young man or virgin, old man or infant; He gave [them] all into his hand. And all the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought them all to Babylon. Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its fortified buildings with fire, and destroyed all its valuable articles. And those who had escaped from the sword, he carried away to Babylon;**

## Prophecy in Scripture and Critics of Prophecy

and they were servants to him and to his son s until the rule of the kingdom of Persia; to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept Sabbath until seven years were complete (2Chronicles 36:17–21).

In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of years which was [revealed by] the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem: seventy years (Dan. 9:1–2).

My point is, the Bible is filled with prophecies concerning nation Israel. These prophecies are found throughout the Word of God. They are not confined to a single grouping of books.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**"Six days you will do your work but on the seventh day you will rest that you may rest your ox and your donkey and the son of your bondmaid and the alien may be refreshed. [Exodus 23:12]**

Here we are given a rationale for the Sabbath day other than a sign between God and His people. It is a time for rest not only for the Hebrews, but for all of the people in their land. God is a God over all and all men need some time to rest and recuperate. All of us need this refreshment and this is God's divine provision for us.

Throughout most of my young life (meaning before age 50), I tended to work long hours. It was common for me to have 2 or 3 or even 4 jobs simultaneously (only 1 would be a full-time job). One particular political party seems to have a great deal of trouble with this, and they complain that some people have to work too hard. So many of them act as if holding down two jobs is a bad thing. It is not. It allows a person who is not highly paid to get ahead.

**"Take heed to all that I have said to you; and make no mention of the names of other gods nor let [their names] be heard out of your mouth. [Exodus 23:13]**

V. 12 is another take on the fourth commandment, the Sabbath day; and v. 13 is another take on first commandment. There is no God but Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of the Universe; every other god is a semblance of Satan or one of his demon missionaries.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

## Three of Israel's National Feasts

**"Three times in the year you will keep a feast to Me. [Exodus 23:14]**

My remembrance of the Bible before I knew anything about it or Jesus Christ was that the Hebrews were a people who fasted a lot; those who followed our Lord Jesus fasted a lot. I had this picture of a lot of skinny, hungry people following our Lord around. However, this far into God's Word and we have not even seen the word *fast*. Not until we reach the degenerate time of the judges will we hear word one about fasting (Judges 20:26).

At this point, we should examine the word found here: *châgag*, since we will find it used several times throughout the Law: the **Doctrine of Châgag (not completed yet)**.

**"You will keep the feast of the unleavened bread for seven days. You will eat unleavened bread as I had commanded you at the appointed time in the month of Abib; for during that month [lit.,**

**in it] you came out of Egypt and they will not appear before Me [lit., My face] empty-handed.**  
[Exodus 23:15]

There are a couple of problems with the translation here. People do not like being aware of this verse and Exodus 33:20, 23b, which reads: **But He said, "You cannot see My face for no man can see Me and live! You will see My back, but My face shall not be seen"** Often the Hebrew takes words which are properly applied to parts of the body and uses them in a more poetic, figurative manner. *Face* is another word for *presence*. This still leaves us with the problem of Exodus 33:20. The point of that verse is that we cannot be in God's perfect, holy presence as we are. All men are corrupt, sinful and have been imputed with Adam's original sin. In God's presence, He can only condemn us as we are. The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine plural, Niphal imperfect of *râ'âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], simply meaning *to see*. The Niphal is the passive voice, so this means *to be seen by, to appear before*. Rather than these verses contradicting one another, these verse complement each other.

We cannot appear before God empty-handed; that is, we cannot appear before Him with nothing. We take to God the perfect work of Jesus Christ. We do not bring to him the puny works of our own hands (the mistake of Cain). We do not bring to him our intentions, our attempts to be good, the works of our hands; because these things are appearing before Him empty-handed; we come before Him in Christ, perfect by imputation.

We have already covered the feast of unleavened bread. One of the greatest setbacks to Israel is that they mixed God's Truth with a lot of false doctrine. They allowed themselves to be influenced by other peoples and by their gods; and they added great volumes of literature to the Law, which distorted the Law. In other words, they added leaven to the lump, and it leavened the whole lump. The feast of unleavened bread was a sign to keep God's Word pure and separate from false doctrine and false interpretations. God's Word is the unleavened bread of life and Jesus Christ is the bread of life.

**"And the feast of harvest, the first fruits of you labor of what you sow in the field; and the feast of ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labor from the field.**  
[Exodus 23:16]

These last two feasts are new and had not been mentioned prior to now in the Bible. Jesus Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection (1Corinthians 15:20). Once He has been harvested—raised from the dead—then we who are alive will be raised; and seven years later, the OT saints. This is the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year. God will gather all of us at the end of time unto Him; and this is the feast which speaks of that. It is a time of celebration. We will cover the feast days altogether in more detail when we get to Leviticus 23.

**"Three times in the year, all your males will appear in the presence of [lit., in the face of] the Lord Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** [Exodus 23:17]

Three times a year, after the Israelites settled in Canaan, their males would travel to Shiloh or to Bethel or to Jerusalem, wherever their sacred city was at that time (the sacred city would be wherever the Tent and the Ark of God were<sup>49</sup>). First, we should look at the word *males*, which corresponding Hebrew word is only found in four passages. The word is *zâkûwr* (זָכוּר) [pronounced *zaw-KOOR*], which is generally translated *male*. However, there is no emphasis upon *males* exclusively in these four passages where this word is found (Exodus 23:17 34:23 Deuteronomy 16:16 20:13). Strong's #2138 BDB #271.

In practice, this would often be entire families (see, for instance, 1Samuel 1:1–7, 21 Luke 2:41–44). In fact, for the family to eat of the offerings, they had to attend these feasts (Deuteronomy 12:17–18 16:14). And certainly neither this passage or any of its parallel passages *require* that the influx be exclusively males. The males, at minimum, were required to show. Jerusalem certainly made provision for such an influx, and those who were unable to find shelter lived in their tents either along or in the streets or on the outskirts of town. Freeman points out that this was done with more ease than we would expect, citing the more recent Muhammadans who in great numbers, make their journey to Mecca, carrying enough provisions to get them there and back, along with the

<sup>49</sup> Later, this would be Jerusalem where the Temple was.



necessary provisions for their camels and donkeys. If Satan's counterfeit of the real thing can do this then certainly the Hebrews were able to accomplish this.

Now, a minor problem is that we have 8 various feasts (actually 7 with one added much later) and three times that Israel is to gather. We will deal with this point by point in Deuteronomy 12:5.

This continues the parallel; at the end of time, all men will stand before our Lord—specifically the believers—for evaluation. The harvest which they bring before Y<sup>ehowah</sup> is the yield of the ground brought forth by God. They are bringing before God what He has wrought. Just as when we stand in the presence of our Lord and we are judged, He first justifies us as we stand under the work of Jesus Christ; that is, we are justified because we are His and because we have appropriated the work of Jesus Christ, as no good thing dwells within us. Then we bring for reward the works that God has wrought through us in the power of the Holy Spirit, through the understanding of His Word. Those who appear before God without the blood of Christ will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. God has no choice but to judge and condemn that person. God has done everything He can to bring us to Him. When we reject His Son, we have rejected Him and the only provision which allows us to stand before God. For the believers who appear before God empty-handed (that is, bringing no works of the Spirit to Him; works which He would have done through us), there is that moment of shame prior to going into eternity.

**"You will not offer [lit., sacrifice] with [lit., upon] leavened bread the blood of my sacrifice or let the fat of my feast remain until morning [or, you will not slay and pour out the blood of my sacrifice upon leavened bread or let the fat of My feast remain until morning]. [Exodus 23:18]**

Leaven is apostasy and falsehood mixed into the truth. God's gospel of salvation and the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ is not to be polluted with leaven. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is perfect and sufficient for our salvation. There is no need to add any works, good deeds or human additions to what He accomplished. Whatever we would add to God's plan, to Christ's work on the cross, to the gospel of our Lord, would be nothing but leaven.

The *fat of My feast* is a metonymy for the sacrifice offered to the Lord. Once our Lord died for our sins, he was taken immediately off the cross. He was not left on the cross until morning. Once He had paid for our sins, He gave up the spirit and physically died. Then he was taken from the cross and placed into a tomb. Those who ate of the feast were not to allow the food to remain until morning. They were to partake of the food immediately, as we are to partake of our Lord immediately upon hearing the gospel. We are to eat of the gospel of our Lord, the bread of life, and whoever eats shall never again hunger.

**"You will bring into the house of Y<sup>ehowah</sup>, your God, the first of the first fruits of your ground. You will not boil a kid in its mother's milk. [Exodus 23:19]**

Although the Hebrews did not have the specifics yet, they would, at some point in the future, have a tabernacle and then a temple, both of which spoke of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His death on our behalf. God gives them the harvest. He brings the rain, He gives them the ground and the seed, and He causes the seed to grow. All that we have has been given to us by God. The offering of the first fruits is a recognition of this. After salvation, we present our bodies as a living sacrifice to our Lord. Our labors should be for Him, on His behalf. Therefore, the best that we have, our first fruits, belong to Him (this is after salvation; prior to salvation, we have nothing to offer Him).

When God speaks of judgement, He uses the analogy of fire. When an animal is offered to our Lord, it is burnt with fire—as our Lord was judged by God the Father and therein paid for our sins. Nor do we immerse our Lord in the doctrine of his earthly mother, Mary; the mother of His humanity. She has nothing to do with salvation; she has an old sin nature as does everyone else. This same command is repeated in Exodus 34:26 and Deuteronomy 14:21.

## God's Promises and Expectations Concerning the Conquest of the Land

**"Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared [for you]. [Exodus 23:20]**

Angel is the word mal'âk (מַלְאָךְ) [pronounced *mahl'-AWK*] and its root means *to dispatch*. This is one dispatched by God, generally an angel—often a manifestation of Jesus Christ. It is reasonably translated *angel*, *messenger* and the word is used for both men who are priests (Mal. 2:7 and possibly Eccles. 5:5) or prophets (2Chronicles 36:15–16 Isaiah 42:19 44:26); and this word is used for our Lord Jesus Christ, in theophanic form, prior to the incarnation (Genesis 19:1, 15 28:12 32:2). In the case of the former, God accepted the offerings of the priest and He sent the prophet with a message from Him.

In other instances, the Angel of God was the revealed member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, Who appeared several times in various forms to the Israelites and guided them through the desert. It was not time for them to enter into the land yet because they were not ready and the degeneracy of the Amorites was not yet full.

A great deal of the Old Testament is an illustration, an analogy or a type of that which was to come. These were literal occurrences during those times, but they meant more than the actual historical event which is recorded. That is, God literally prepared the land of Canaan for Israel to take possession of—a land flowing with milk and honey. This real event finds its New Testament parallel in John 14:2–3 where our Lord is speaking to His disciples: **"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for you see, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."** The promised land represents eternity with God the Father in a place prepared by God the Son specifically for us; just as God the Father and God the Son prepared the land of Canaan for occupation by the Hebrews.

**"Observe Him and listen to His voice; not becoming bitter [toward] Him, for He will not bear with reference to your transgression; for My name [is] in Him. [Exodus 23:21]**

### Various translations of Exodus 23:21

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>         | Give heed to Him, listen to <i>and</i> obey His voice; be not rebellious before him or provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgression; for My name is in Him. |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>        | Take thou heed of his presence and hearken to his voice—do not vex him,—for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is within him.                         |
| KJV                                | Beware of Him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name <i>is</i> in him.  |
| NASB                               | Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him.                  |
| NIV                                | Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him.                               |
| NRSV                               | Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.                              |
| Owen's Translation                 | Give heed to him and hearken to his voice. Do not rebel against him for he will not pardon your transgression for my name is in him.                                  |
| <i>Young's Literal Translation</i> | Be watchful because of his presence, and hearken to his voice, rebel not against him, for he beareth not with your transgression, for My name is in his heart;        |

Obviously, we have a lot of agreement here, and you would think with all that we could quickly dispense with this verse and move on. However, there is a lot here which is lost in the English.

This verse begins with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Niphal imperative of *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*]. This is a word which defies a one-word rendering from the Hebrew into the English. The root means *to hedge*. When it is used of God's Word, it means *guard, keep, preserve*; when used of our Lord in this context, it means *watch, observe, pay attention to*. The Niphal is generally the passive of the Qal, but in the imperative, a passive meaning is more difficult to wrest from this word (other than the one given: *pay heed to, observe*). The Niphal can refer to the verb in progress or in development and the English word *being* is sometimes added to the translation to give the feeling of more continuous action. Individually, they were to pay attention, to watch, to observe the Angel of God. He was to be the focus of their attention. Strong's #8184 BDB #.

Then we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular, Qal imperative of *shâma'* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHĠ*], which passively means *to hear intelligently* and actively means *to listen intently*. The Qal is active and the imperative corresponds to an active voice. Again, this is directed toward every individual. God speaks to Israel as a nation and as a group of people at times, but primarily as to each and every individual. Furthermore, this is a play on words which we miss entirely in the English: *shaw-MAR shaw-MAHĠ*. Strong's #8085 BDB #.

This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of *mârar* (רָרַר) [pronounced *maw-RAHR*], a word which is translated *bitter* everywhere but here (as you can see). This is accompanied with the negative so the Israelites are being told to not be bitter against the Angel of God. *Against Him* is not a preposition with the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix, as you would suppose from the translations, but merely the masculine singular suffix of the verb. The Hiphil is the causative stem, and it means *not causing yourselves to be bitter [toward] Him* or *[with reference to] Him, not becoming bitter*. I don't think that we could translate this *not causing Him to be bitter*, as the suffix is 3<sup>rd</sup> person but the verb is 2<sup>nd</sup> person. In this verse I become rather disheartened with *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* because he purports to be the literalist, yet translated this verb *rebel*.<sup>50</sup> The author himself points out at the beginning of his translation of the Bible that several words are erratically translated and then he translates this differently than it is translated elsewhere in his rendering.

This verse continues with a conjunction, the negative and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*] and it is wrongly translated *pardon, forgive*. How does this happen? The highly respected KJV begins with this translation and it can be interpreted that way; so most translations go right along with it. There is a word for *pardon* and a word for *justify*, yet neither of these words are here. This word means *lift, bear, carry*. We find, unfortunately, 46 English words in the KJV which translate this one word. What will our Lord not *bear*? Finally, we have a word correctly rendered: *your transgression* (which is in the singular and obviously refers back to their bitterness, which indicates negative volition toward God). However, there is one minor problem here: the translations leave out the *lâmed* preposition, which means *to, for, in regards to, with reference to*. *Your transgression* is not the object of the verb; the angel will not *bear, carry, or lift, with regard to your transgression*. *Your*, here, is plural, rather than singular. This refers to a national transgression which arises from many individual transgressions.

The verse ends reasonably well, however, in the translations. God's name is His reputation, His character and He places this inside of this angel because this angel is God. The Angel of the Lord has the exact same essence as God the Father.

**"Because if you listen carefully to His voice** [lit., in listening, you listen to His voice] **and do all that I say, and I have become hostile toward those being hostile to you and I have besieged** [or, encompassed and assaulted] **to the ones afflicting [or, distressing] [all of] you.** [Exodus 23:22]

V. 22 has some problems in the translation, but ones which are not quite as flagrant as v. 20. Most renderings read *I will be an enemy to your enemies*. It sounds as though we have *hâyâw* coupled with two nouns. Actually,

<sup>50</sup> Examine, if you need to, the other occurrences of this verb: Genesis 49:23 Exodus 1:14 Ruth 1:13, 20 1Samuel 38:17 Job 27:2 Dan. 8:7 11:11

we have the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect of 'âyab (אַיַב) [pronounced *aw-YA<sup>B</sup>V*] which means *to be hostile toward, to be at enmity with*, and then we have the Hebrew mark of a direct object, which is the word 'êth (אֶת) [pronounced *ayth*] (the Hebrew does not have a case system as does the Greek).

What follows is the masculine plural, 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular suffix, Qal active participle of 'âyab again. The participle acts like a noun, but there is action involved. This would be more literally rendered, *those being hostile toward you*.

You would expect to find the exact same sentence structure here with the next phrase, judging by what we have in the English—and we do—with the exception that there are two different verbs here. The first verb is tsûwr (צוּר) [pronounced *tzoor*], which has two different listings in the Hebrew lexicons (as two different verbs spelled the same way in BDB) and as a verb and a noun in Strong's. It's primitive root means *confine, cramp*; and it appears as though it can have two rather distinct meanings depending upon the context. In some contexts, there is no hostility involved (Exodus 32:4 Deuteronomy 14:25 SOS 8:9<sup>51</sup>) and in others, this word seems to refer to an all-out attack (Deuteronomy 14:25 2Samuel 11:1 Ezekiel 4:3). In the latter sense, the subject of the verb is encompassing or surrounding the object of the verb with hostile intentions; in the former use, there is an encompassing or surrounding, but the intentions, as per the context, are not hostile. *Beseige* is an absolutely marvelous translation, as it carries with it the connotation of *attacking* or *assaulting* and the idea of *enclosing*. The second word is the verb tsârâ (צָרָא) [pronounced *tsaw-AHR*], a word which appears less than sixty times in the Old Testament, but is translated by over a dozen English words. It carries with it the same primitive root as does tsûwr, but it does not appear to carry with it the connotation of an actual attack (with the exceptions of 1Kings 8:37 2Chronicles 6:28 Neh. 9:27). It means *to afflict, to suffer distress, to distress*.

As you see, the literal translation, in meaning, is not too far from the traditional translations; however, the wording is dramatically changed. The Hebrews thus far have the point of reference the Egyptians. They have seen what this means for God to be an enemy to their enemies. The Egyptians were more numerous and much stronger than they were, and much better adapted to warfare. The only edge on the side of the Israelites was that the Egyptians had a large group of gods and the God of the Hebrews was Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

**"When my angel goes before you and brings you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the<sup>52</sup> Hivites and the Jebusites, then [lit., and] I have removed them.**  
[Exodus 23:23]

These are the names of those groups which occupied the land of Canaan—groups and tribes and nations which were much stronger and more aggressive than Israel and these same groups and tribes and nations are no longer found.

The verb is the Hiphil perfect of kâchad (כָּחַד) [pronounced *kaw-KHAHD*] means *hide, cut off, blot out*. *Remove, purge, depose* would be a good, one-word, active translation, whereas *removed, hidden* would be reasonable renderings of the passive meaning. The Hiphil is the causative stem; however, it also means that the object participates in the verb as a second subject. This is clearly human volition factored into this equation. God did not bring the Hebrews into the land immediately because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet complete (Genesis 15:16).

A people must participate in their own destruction; in their own removal from history. God does not arbitrarily take out a people just because He would like His people, the Hebrews, to occupy that piece of real estate. Their degeneracy must reach a peak, a point of no return; they must be at a place where they are a cancer to society and society would only be served by removing them entirely.

**"You will not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do according to their works, but you will utterly overthrow them and break in pieces their pillars.** [Exodus 23:24]

<sup>51</sup> You're thinking, yes, *but wait until they've been married for five years...*

<sup>52</sup> The Western Samaritan and the Targum of Onkelos read *and the*

*Utterly overthrow*, as you may have suspected, is a doubling of the verb.

There is no other God but Y<sup>e</sup>howah and if the Hebrews chose to worship any other god, this would be demon worship. Now were they to do anything on behalf of the demon gods—that is, they were not to participate in the worship service, to watch the sacrifices to them, etc. Neither today are Christians to have any involvement with demonically inspired religion. We are not to attend apostate churches, support organizations which are influenced and empowered by demons; our strength and our guidance comes through God's Word. Because Israel was to be a theocracy, they could destroy all vestige of degenerate demonism.

**"You will serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God and He will bless your bread and water and I will remove sickness from the midst of you. [Exodus 23:25]**

God blesses our daily needs and provides for our necessities if we serve Him. Notice the combination of the first person and the third person in this verse. The trinity is again inferred.

V. 26 can sound and mean something entirely different, depending upon the translation:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>  | None shall lose her young by miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i> | There shall be nothing casting its young or barren in thy land,—the number of thy days will I make full.    |
| NASB                        | There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land: I will fulfill the number of your days.           |
| NIV                         | And none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span.                         |
| Owen's Translation          | None shall be casting her young or be barren in your land; the number of your days I will fulfil.           |

**"She will not be bereaved nor [be] barren in your land; [Exodus 23:26a]**

V. 26 begins with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, feminine singular, Qal imperfect of *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] which is the Hebrew equivalent of *be* or *become*. This is combined with the negative. This means the subject is a female, not the word *none*. When the negative precedes the verb, it negates the verb.<sup>53</sup> This is followed by the feminine singular, Piel participle of *shâkal* (שָׁכַל) [pronounced *shaw-KAHL*]; in the Qal, it means simply *bereaved* (that is, the person has lost his or her children; Genesis 43:14 clearly shows that this is not necessarily a miscarriage). In the intensive Piel stem, it can also mean *bereavement* (again, not necessarily a miscarriage—Genesis 42:36 1Samuel 15:33). In fact, of the 24 times this word occurs, it usually does not refer to a miscarriage (with the exception of Genesis 31:38 Hosea 9:14) but to the loss of children already born (Lev. 26:22 Ezekiel 5:17 14:15 Hosea 9:12). A participle can function as an adjective or as a noun (actually, it is used most often as an adjectival noun). When there is no specified subject, the participle is best translated as passive.<sup>54</sup>

This is followed by the conjunction and the adjective for *barren*. Adjectives in the predicate form imply the verb *to be*. The conjunction takes with it the negative. We do not have a subject for the first clause of this verse and the main verb is in the feminine singular. We might translate this as *It will not come to pass that she will be bereaved or barren*. *Your* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular suffix affixed to *land*. God is addressing the people of Israel in general; each one specifically. As is the case with most languages, when you are speaking to males and females, you use the male gender.

Now that we have the first portion of this verse straightened out; it simply means that God will protect women from bereavement (whether by miscarriage or loss of already born children) and from barrenness. However, this is

<sup>53</sup> BDB 518

<sup>54</sup> *Biblical Hebrew Step By Step*; Menahem Mansoor; 2:103



predicated upon fulfilling vv. 24–25; that is, they Hebrews will not fall into the idolatry of the peoples who inhabit the promised land (v. 24) and that they serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah (v. 25).

**"The number of your days I will fulfil. [Exodus 23:26b]**

Mâlê' (מָלֵא) [pronounced *maw-LAY*] means *to be full*. It can be translated in a good sense as *filled with abundance, plenitude*; and often when dealing with age or time, the implication is completion or fulfillment. It would be translated in a bad sense when context directs, as in Job 36:17 Jeremiah 16:18. You understand what this means. You have people whose lives seem to be cut short, lives which seemed to accomplish little. Even the phrase, *I am too young to die* doesn't quite convey the negative, as most people are never ready to die. This verse is the positive side; the lives of people who have accomplish all that was reasonable for them to accomplish; that they leave this life with nothing undone. Perhaps another way to convey this is that they are ready to spend eternity with God. Losing them is a loss for their loved ones; however, their dying is a blessing. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (Phil. 1:21).

**"I will send my terror [better translated, a terror of Me] before you and will throw into confusion all the people whom you come [against]; and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. [Exodus 23:27]**

With what God had done on behalf of the Hebrews in the exodus from Egypt, many of those who dwelt in the land of Canaan were afraid of them. They were afraid of the Hebrews because of Y<sup>e</sup>howah Who led them. Rahab the prostitute told Joshua, **"I know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah has give you the land, and that the terror you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have become demoralized before you."** (Joshua 2:9).

We find the word for *thrown into confusion* in Joshua 10:10a. Joshua is warring with five kings. The battle is summarized by: **And the Lord confounded them before Israel, and He killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon.** This is one of the many verses which fulfills God's promise from Exodus 23:27.

Enemies turning their backs to the Hebrews means that they are running away from the Hebrews in battle. This was also fulfilled in Joshua 10:10 (as well as elsewhere): **And He pursued them by the way to the ascent of Beth-horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.** People have their backs to you when you pursue them.

**"And I will send hornets before you which will drive out [the] Hivite, Canaanite and Hittite from before you. [Exodus 23:28]**

I am not positive as to the meaning of this verse. We find parallel verses in Deuteronomy 7:20 and Joshua 24:12. When a word shows up so infrequently and the interpretation of the verse might depend upon it, one of the places to look is the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament made several hundred years prior to our Lord's incarnation. They translate this word *wasp*, but, as the NIV notes point out, this could have been an educated guess. This Hebrew word is applied to a number of different insects, the largest of which corresponds with our English word for hornet.

One theory is that these are literal hornets, a carnivorous insect whose sting is painful and, due to the large amount of injected venom, sometimes even dangerous. Since the Hebrew word also takes in the wasp, it is possibly a reference to wasps who live in large groups with their nests suspended from tree branches. A group of soldiers passing through could conceivably upset a colony and cause widespread panic either prior to a battle or even during a battle. Such a panic could reverse the outcome of a confrontation. Furthermore, we have seen what God did with the insects in Egypt, as Israel's enemies had heard, so they might have been even more skittish concerning insect attacks and the attacks could have been in reality much more devastating than normal (the latter explanation seeming to be the most reasonable for this verse).

In any case, God has prepared to land for the invasion of the Jew, in such a way that the people occupying the land would be neutralized, preoccupied or frightened. This should primarily looked upon as a promise to the

Jewish people that they would be able to possess the land despite the large number of war-like peoples living in the land. We may not know the agent or agents which God has employed to enable the Israelites to defeat and displace the much more numerous, experienced and powerful groups of people who inhabit the land, but God is assuring them that this has been taken care of.

**"And I will not drive them [lit., him] out from before you in one year, so that the land does not become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. [Exodus 23:29]**

God warns Moses that the control of the land—or, more specifically, large chunks of the land—would not materialize within a year. God will not allow the land to lie desolate for a long period of time nor allow for an overpopulation of wild animals during a time of desolation. This is elaborated upon below:

**"Little by little I am driving them [lit., him] out from before you until you are increased and possess the land. [Exodus 23:30]**

The Hebrew is literally *little little*; however, this would make little sense to us; however, *little by little* is a marvelous rendering of both the words and their idiomatic meaning. God will give to Israel portions of the land as they increase in population; and then He will give them another chunk of land, and then another. Their conquest of the land will not be like their leaving Egypt, which occurred in a relatively short time.

**"And I will set your bounds from the Reed Sea to the sea of the Philistines and from the desert to the Euphrates [lit., the river] for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand and you will drive [lit., have driven] them out before you. [Exodus 23:31]**

In the past three verses, God uses the word *gâraš* (גָּרַשׁ) [pronounced *gaw-RASH*], which means *to drive out, to cast out, to throw out, to thrust out, to expel*. In v. 29 it is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular with the negative; v. 30 is the same construction without the negative; and v. 31 is 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Piel perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix. To God, it is driving out the same entity—a large group of degenerate unbelievers who, in most cases, must be executed en masse. However, unlike the Exodus, where Israel stood idly by and observed God drowning the Egyptians, they will fully partake in this expulsion of the Canaanites from the land. To Israel, it will be battle after battle, so it will not seem like one man. However, the perfect tense of completed action suggests unconditional fulfillment of this promise.

As for the boundaries promised here, the Mediterranean Sea is the Sea of the Philistines; the *River* is the Euphrates River, and the desert is the Arabian desert. This is actually a lot larger area than Israel has ever occupied even to this day. At some point in the future, the desert will recede a great deal and the area then will even larger than we would determine now. However, this was specifically fulfilled in Solomon's day. **And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates [lit., river] to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These countries brought tribute and were Solomon's subjects all his life (1Kings 4:21).**

**"You will make no covenant with them or with their gods. [Exodus 23:32]**

Israel does not have the option of bargaining peace with the inhabitants of the land. They must be driven out en total or destroyed. They will become a destructive, vicious cancer with whom there is no compromise. Recall the order to us of the New Testament: Be not unequally yoked. This is a principal for all time going back to the implications of this passage.

**"They will not dwell in your land so that they do not make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will be a snare to you." [Exodus 23:33]**

A snare is a trap set for an animal, and there are several words in the Hebrew which are translated snare. However, this is a snare which has bait or a lure. There are several kinds of bait which are employed. The beautiful foreign women are one type of bait. The religious activities and the false gods are another bait. Once the Jew is trapped in this snare, he may not even realize that he has been trapped. The snare of religion is very

subtle. They often become moral, they are involved in religious activities, they are pursuing a god of sorts (and often one gets so liberal in their thinking that they believe that it is the same God as Y<sup>e</sup>howah, but with a different name.

For what unity has darkness with light? God knows that if He allows the Canaanites to dwell side-by-side with the Israelites, that there would be intermarriage; that many Israelite men would fall in love with Canaanite women and relax their religious beliefs and their ties to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Interaction, intermarriage, business alliances, military alliances, etc. would result and these things would lead to a compromise of the principles of truth revealed by God to the Israelites. God could not allow that. Throughout the Old Testament, there are several instances where men of God have been unduly influenced by unbelievers and have softened their stand for God's Word.

# EXODUS 24

## Exodus 24:1–18

### Outline of Chapter 24:

- Vv. 1–2      **God tells Moses to return with representatives of Israel**
- Vv. 3–8      **The people vow obedience to God**
- Vv. 9–14     **Moses and the elders return to Mount Sinai**
- Vv. 15–18    **Moses climbs up the mountain to hear to God**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** With chapter 24, we take a short break from the laws of God and enter into a little narrative. Moses will climb the mountain and receive the ten commandments written in stone. The sons of Israel will also pledge obedience to all of God's laws in this chapter. They have seen some marvelous miracles and are willing now to vow that they will do what God tells them to do. Their vow will not last very long, but they are sincere (showing that sincerity means little or nothing).

#### God Tells Moses to Return with Representatives of Israel

**And to Moses He said, "Come up to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel and worship from afar off. [Exodus 24:1]**

*Come up* is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Qal imperfect, meaning that God is speaking to Moses directly, telling him personally to ascend the mountain. This indicates that God is finished giving laws at that time.

Then God asks Moses to bring up what might be termed the seventy elders. From Jacob's loins, came seventy who were the seed of the nation Israel (Exodus 1:5). God always has set up a system of authority or hierarchy. Here, Moses was pre-eminent, with Aaron as his counsel and second in command.

The seventy served both as witnesses and as those in command of their respective groups. At this point in time, it sounds as though these 70 might already exist or that Moses almost randomly choose them from a larger group of elders. In any case, Moses is asked to bring up 70 elders again in Num. 11:16, 24–25, and there, God makes it clear that they are to be carefully chosen. It was upon these that God would pour out His Spirit so that Moses could employ these men specifically as heads of state, as it were. He was shouldering too much responsibility and needed to delegate much of it (as his father-in-law had wisely suggested in the matter of the courts in a Exodus 23).

Moses was more qualified than anyone else to be in command at all levels; however, that does not mean that he should command at all levels. Sometimes when we find that we are good at something, we tend to go overboard and allow it to be all-consuming. It doesn't matter if you are the absolute, undisputed best; there are times to delegate authority. Because Jesus Christ is Y<sup>e</sup>howah of the Old Testament, He also chose seventy disciples early on in His ministry to go out herald His coming in every city wherein He was to go.

*Worship* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, Hithpael perfect of shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced *shaw-KHAW*], which means *bow down*. This same word is used when one prostrates himself before a ruler or a monarch. However, in an instance such as this, worship is the better translation, as *worship* is a bowing of the soul or of the heart, and not necessarily an overt position. We have the same word in the same stem and tense in Exodus 33:10, which reads: **When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship [lit., bow down], each at the entrance of his tent.**

In Genesis 22:5, Abraham tells of his intention to go with his son and worship; and this is done by offering his son on the altar before God. *Worship* is in the plural, even though Isaac was first scurrying around for wood and then he was tied up on the altar; and Abraham was about to cut Isaac's throat, then God provided him with the scapegoat.

In this passage, since *worship* is in the imperfect (a continuous tense), all of these actions come under the heading of worship. In Genesis 24:26, 48 Exodus 4:31 12:27 Num. 22:31, we have both the physical act of bowing one's head where this is accompanied by worship. That this word does not necessarily refer to a physical position may be further implied by 2Samuel 16:4<sup>55</sup> 2Kings 5:18<sup>56</sup> Esther 3:2, 5 Psalm 29:2 96:9 Isaiah 27:13 Ezekiel 8:16. The point of all this is that they will worship by bowing down, but there will be more to their worship than their simple posture before God. They will have an attitude of humility, or grace orientation in their souls.

The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel (intensive) stem. They will cause themselves to worship and this worship will be intense. The perfect tense means that this is looked upon as a completed action; that is, they will ascend the mountain and worship, then they will return.

Nadab and Abihu are the first two sons of Aaron (Exodus 6:23). However, even though they have been chosen for this great honor, this does not mean that they can sustain any sort of a spiritual life. We are occasionally offered the chance to serve God in a wonderful capacity (I can think of several television evangelists who very likely do or did have the gift of evangelism). However, in a position of great spiritual responsibility, the penalty is also great for disobedience. Aaron's two sons both die the sin unto death in Num. 10:1–2.

**Moses alone will come near to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, but the others will not come near; and the people will not come up with him.** [Exodus 24:2]

Because *come near* is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular, this means that this is not a direct quote from God to Moses, but Moses is speaking of himself in the third person (as he does throughout the Pentateuch; as is the custom for most writers of Scripture; the most notable exception being that of Luke, the Gentile<sup>57</sup>). The seventy elders will apparently come to a low plateau of the mountain and they will remain there as Moses goes back up again to record the law (Joshua perhaps joins him).

Moses, throughout the Pentateuch, is a type of Christ; that is, many of his actions and his deeds portray the Lord Jesus Christ in shadow form. Whereas Moses is the one mediator between God and the people of Israel, Jesus Christ is the mediator between man and God.

Moses brought the old covenant to the people of Israel, Jesus Christ presents us with a new covenant. **Therefore, family of God set apart, partakers of a heavenly vocation: consider Jesus, the Apostel and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses was also [faithful] in all his house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those thing which wre to be spoken later; but Christ [was faithful] as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and boast of our hope stabilized until the end** (Hebrews 3:1–6).

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<sup>55</sup> Where it is translated *humbly beseech* in the KJV

<sup>56</sup> In this verse, *shâchâh* is used several times, both for the act of prostrating oneself and for the act of worship, as these two activities are different, albeit related

<sup>57</sup> This is something that we observe in the book of Acts, not in the book of Luke (as Luke played no part in the earthly ministry of Jesus).



## The People Vow Obedience to God

**And Moses came and told the people all the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and all the ordinances and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All of the words which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has spoken, we will do." [Exodus 24:3]**

At this point, Moses, through the power of the Spirit, recalls all the words of God and speaks these to the people. The Israelites, many of them emotionally unstable, pledge their emotional allegiance to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. They have seen spectacular miracles, have been the recipients of tremendous protection, and they sincerely means this pledge to God. Great sincerity when expressed by a person with little or no substance is meaningless. Certainly you have had someone confess undying love to you. If that person does not have the character or stability to back this up, that declaration isn't good for more than twenty or thirty minutes.

We are all so much in love with ourselves that when someone else seems to recognize what we have known all along, we tend to be a little less discerning (thinking them to be a person of obvious good taste). These declarations are important, but don't let them blind you concerning the person who makes them. If they are unstable; if they lack character, then what they say should not be taken as words from God. When you allow yourself to be disappointed by people because you find out that they say things because they sound and feel good in the moment and because all their emotion and sincerity are riding on these words, then it is your fault for being disappointed. Examine the character and then decide how much weight you want to place upon their words. With these Hebrews, we have the same thing. These are flaky, unstable, unfaithful men who much less allegiance to God's Word than they let on. In fact, they will get so far out of line that God assigns them all the sin unto death and Moses, their mediator, stands in for them and pleads on their behalf. Without Moses as their mediator, as a type of Christ, this people, who answered with one voice, *All of the words which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has spoke, we will do*; this people would have been destroyed by God for their negative volition, for their refusal to obey Him.<sup>58</sup>

**And Moses wrote all the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and he rose in the morning and build an altar at the foot of the mountain and twelve memorial stones according to the twelve tribes of Israel. [Exodus 24:4]**

So that there is no confusion as to what Israel has promised to obey, Moses wrote these laws down. For a long time, due to mostly preconceived ideas, it was thought that there was writing was nonexistent in the days of Moses, despite this clear declaration. Because we, at one time, did not have archeological evidence of writing during this time period, and because some people do not like the fact that Moses wrote prophetic statements which came true in all their details, it was taught in some liberal seminaries (which is most seminaries?) and colleges that Moses did not write the Pentateuch because no one had advanced far enough during this period of time to write anything down. The theory was that all of the first portion of the Bible came down to us orally for several thousand years. Along with this oral tradition arose a number of errors in Biblical thought. One of them was that the Pentateuch was the work of four different sources, one of which assembled and edited everything at the end, long after Moses passed from the scene (this is known variously as the JEPD or JEDP theory or Documentary Hypothesis). Other mistaken ideas include that Moses wrote the entirety of the Pentateuch, Genesis coming to him either by direct revelation from God or through the oral tradition. If Moses committed the book of Genesis to writing, then he accepted the text that already existed.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> We will examine all of this in Exodus 32

<sup>59</sup> I believe that there was a tradition of *reading* the book of Genesis in the family of Jacob, even before the text was written down. In fact, there was very likely a time when Jacob, Joseph and Jacob all spoke the text aloud together, taking turns as appropriate.

Since we have since discovered a great many writings which predate Moses by well over a thousand years,<sup>60</sup> some scholars have grudgingly admitted that writing could have occurred in the time of Moses. Furthermore, as having been brought up in the palace of Pharaoh, Moses was likely skilled in many things, writing being just one of the many. In fact, it is also likely that Moses knew how to make the scrolls and the writing instruments that he used. Since you could not simply go down to an office supply store and pick up a packet of pens and a ream of paper, it would be almost as important to one able to write to be able to assemble the products needed for writing.

When it comes to the medium of writing, recall that we are in a desert filled with sand, very little water, and two million people and their sheep. Moses was probably able to use papyrus to make paper and he was likely able use animal skins to write upon. He certainly could write in Egyptian hieroglyphics and in Canaanite script (as Canaan was linked with Egypt at the time of Moses' early education). However, in order to communicate with the Hebrews, since there was a healthy population of them in Egypt during his youth, some of the better educated were able to write in Hebrew (writing which I believe pre-dated Moses by a millennium). As we have seen, his adopted mother knew of his origin and certainly would have made excuses for him to be educated in the language of his people, even if it were under the pretense of preparing him to rule over all of Egypt.

Now papyrus and animal skins (called vellum) were likely what Moses used to write on; and, by their very nature, these are not items which we would ever expect to find today. Examine if you will our comic books or hardbound books which are fifty years old—unless unusually good care was taken to preserve these items, they are showing signs of serious disintegration already. The reason that we know writing predates Moses by a millennium is that, some who wrote used clay tablets and stone so their writings lasted for several millennia, providing us the evidence of early writing which I have alluded to. Jeremiah and Ezekiel both likely used clay in some of their writings (Jeremiah 17:13 Ezekiel 4:1). There was some use made of stone even by Moses (Exodus 24:12 31:18 32:15–16 34:1, 28 Deuteronomy 5:22 27:2–3 Joshua 8:31–32—**look these up!!**). Vellum is never directly mentioned in the Bible as a medium of writing. It might be inferred by Jeremiah 36:23; however there are some who believe that writing on animal skins cannot be dated further back than 200 B.C.

Given that the Hebrew people have had a reputation for great literacy and education, it would not be a great leap to assume that (1) many in the Exodus generation could read and had access to writing materials and (2) Moses may have had Hebrew teachers when he lived in the palace. In fact, I have previously discussed that this is how Moses may have come to learn about his past and his direct ties to the Hebrew people. There are things which God says to Moses, early on in the book of Exodus, which presupposes that Moses has knowledge of his ancestors. When God says that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 3:6, 15–16 4:5 6:3), Moses does not stop Him and say, “Now, just who are those guys that you are talking about?”

Perhaps Moses wrote in the evening, then got up early in the morning and built the altar. We don't know what the pillars were made of; however, they were probably not pillars as we think of them, but rather an individual stone, set up as a memorial. In the past, this had been done to commemorate an appearance of God (Genesis 28:18, 22 31:13 33:20 35:14—**look these up!!**); however, this was not their exclusive use; they were also used for the headstones of graves (Genesis 35:20).

**And he sent young men from the people of Israel who offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices of oxen to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 24:5]**

What was occurring here was Moses was giving them all the gospel through these animal sacrifices; the entirety of Israel was gathered to observe these burnt offerings. The offering of the animal represents Jesus offering Himself on our behalf; and the fire of the burnt offering represents the judgment which the Lord endured for us.

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<sup>60</sup> We have clay tablets from Ur of the Chaldees dating back to 2100 B.C; and other tablets which date back to 3500 B.C. which have been found in Uruk (also known as Erech in Genesis 10:10) and Kish. We have seen the hieroglyphic script of Egypt occurs prior to the founding of Dynasty I, which occurred circa 3100 B.C. The Egyptian writings *The Teachings for Kagemni* and *The Teaching of Ptah-Hetep* both date to 2700 B.C. The point here is that writing in Egypt not only predated Moses, it predated Joseph and predated Abraham. For more information, see Geisler and Nix's most excellent *A General Introduction to the Bible*, a text I was lucky enough to have assigned to me at a Bible Institute in Sacramento.

**And Moses took half of the blood and put [it] into basins and half of the blood he threw against the altar. [Exodus 24:6]**

What the sons of Israel observed before all else was all of this blood, half of it splashed upon the altar. It is this altar on which these sacrifices are offered which speaks of Jesus Christ on the cross. The Hebrews had to be cleansed by the blood before they could obey the Word.

**Then he took the book [possibly, scroll] of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that Y<sup>e</sup>howah has spoken, we will do; furthermore, we will be obedient." [Exodus 24:7]**

Çêpher (כֶּתֹב) [pronounced SAY-fer] means *document, writing, book*. We first find this word used in Genesis 5:1, which implies that that portion of Genesis was written down (as was the rest<sup>61</sup>). Moses was told to record the battle between Joshua and Amalek in a *book* (Genesis 17:14). This is only the third time this word is used; however, this is the word used of the Bible or portions of the Bible (Deuteronomy 28:61 30:10 31:24 Joshua 23:6 1Kings 14:19 2Chronicles 16:11 17:9 20:34 25:4 34:14–15 Nahum 1:1); of other books (2Samuel 1:18 1Kings 11:41) and it is used of documents much smaller than a book (Deuteronomy 24:1, 3 2Samuel 1:14 2Kings 19:14). This was by no means an exhaustive look at all of the appearances of çêpher, only a representative sampling. It is possible that this refers to a scroll, of paper made with papyrus. As the reader read, he would unroll one end of the papyrus roll, they would be simultaneously, albeit with no little difficulty, be rolling up the other end of the roll.

What is the difference between this verse and v. 3? In v. 3, Moses had come down and told the Hebrews what God had said. In v. 7, Moses wrote these things down and read this to them again. It was not unlike that those who verbally agree to a contract might also write everything down on *paper* which was agreed to.

Again, the Hebrews cry out that they will obey God's word and do all that God has said to them. It sounds great until we read further into God's Word about this generation of believers. Furthermore, Hebrews 10:28–29 tells us: **Anyone who has disregarded the Law of Moses, as per two or three witnesses, dies without pity. How much more severe the punishment do you think he will deserve—the one trampling under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of Grace?**

**And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people and said, "Behold, the blood of the covenant which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has made with you in accordance with all of these words." [Exodus 24:8]**

Kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced kaw-RATH] and it means *to cut, to cut off* (Genesis 17:4 Deuteronomy 19:5 20:20 Isaiah 18:5 Jeremiah 6:6); however, it is used a number of times to mean *make* a covenant (Genesis 15:18 21:27, 32 Exodus 23:32 Deuteronomy 4:23 1Kings 8:9). Several Bible translations give the literal or the alternate translation as *cut* in an instance like this; however, I think that this is a case of two different Hebrew words which are spelled the same. There is the possibility that they are the same word, related in some way. Perhaps when a covenant was agreed to, the terms and conditions were written on some medium of writing and then cut in half so that the two parties possess the agreement (or half of it).

The blood on their robes was a witness against them. They have given tacit approval to God's Word as it concerns their lives. These are people who are dedicating and rededicating; they are making vows before God. They are not just believers in Jesus Christ; they have made Him Lord over all. This is the emotional fervor and the sales pitch of some revivals. And it means little or nothing.

Moses bathes them in the blood as (1) a symbolic gesture; (2) to remind them of this vow that they are making; and (3) the sprinkling of the blood after they have given testimony to their faith indicates the application of justification to those who have believed. **In the same way, [Jesus took] the cup also after supper, saying, "This**

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<sup>61</sup> This does not negate the concept of an oral tradition.

cup is the new covenant by means of My blood; do this as often as you drink, in remembrance of Me." (1Corinthians 11:25) But now He [Jesus Christ] has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator or a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises (Hebrews 8:6).

### Moses and the Elders Return to Mount Sinai

**Then Moses went up; and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel.** [Exodus 24:9]

Although all of these nouns are connected with a series of *ands*; we know that Moses is separate and is the subject of our sentence as *went up* is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular. He goes up and they are with him, but they wait behind at some point (I believe that they are on a low summit of Mount Sinai). Back in Exodus 19:12, God told Israel, "Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall certainly be put to death." (Exodus 19:12b) Has God withdrawn this prohibition? Certainly not. God requested for Moses to bring these men to witness His glory and to prepare themselves for true leadership. God is not going to suddenly strike them dead and point out, "I didn't say *Simon says*." When God called for Moses to bring the others part way up with him, this is divine permission to ascend the mountain.

**And they saw the God of Israel and under His feet [which were] upon a work of pavement of sapphire stone and in the very structure of the heavens with reference to clearness [or, purity].** [Exodus 24:10]

In v. 10, we have several different opinions as to how to translate the last half:

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | ...and under His feet it was like pavement of bright sapphire stone, like the very heavens in clearness                                     |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...and under his feet like a pavement of sapphire, and like the very heavens for brightness [or, purity]                                    |
| KJV                             | ...and <i>there was</i> under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in <i>its</i> clearness |
| NASB                            | ...and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself   |
| NIV                             | Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself  |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ...and under His feet <i>is</i> as the white work of sapphire, and as the substance of the heavens for purity                               |

As we deal with this translation, realize that we are dealing with figurative language. There is no *as it were* following *under His feet*. This is the translators' way of telling us that this language is figurative. I will leave this out of my translation and leave it to the reader to recognize that the language is more poetical or impressionistic than literal. What these men saw they had never seen before; Moses—a master of at least two languages and probably three or more—will use a unique word to describe what he saw. What we are getting here is *I'm not sure exactly what it was, but this is what it looked like*.

We have the bēth preposition (*in, into, at, by, on, upon*—the key here is proximity) and the construct of ma'āseh (מַעֲשֶׂה) [pronounced *mah-ġa-SEH*], which is translated in a dozen different ways; it means *work, accomplishment, deed, business, pursuit that which is manufactured or made*. It is a very common word found a couple hundred times throughout the Old Testament. This is followed by the construct of libnāh (לִבְנָה) [pronounced *lihnb-NAW*] and this is our problem word. It occurs but once in the Old Testament. It is very similar to the word for *brick, tile* and also similar to the word for making brick; both of which are related to a word translated white. The color of the brick (white) made seems to be prominent in the meaning of the verb (see Psalm 51:7 Joel 1:7). Interestingly enough, there are four words, *moon, tile, poplar*, and lib<sup>e</sup>nāh which differ only in vowel points.

The use of the word *work* means that what they were seeing was unnatural. That is, below our Lord's feet was not ground, or a rock, but something which looks to be someone's handiwork. The separation is what is important here—God is perfect and cannot have contact with that which is imperfect. God is holy and righteous and His perfect character cannot come into contact with anything less. We have two prepositions which make this stand out: *under* His feet followed by the *bêyth* preposition denoting proximity (*on, upon*).

This pavement is made of the *sapphire stone*, which is the second hardest naturally occurring mineral. It has a blue tint to it. Again, this is figurative language—Moses is doing the best that he can explain what it is that he is seeing. It is as though the Lord is standing upon a work of paving, not white exactly, but as though someone had made a paving of the precious stone sapphire. Whatever it is, it is clear but casts a light bluish tint, as we will see. It's not like water, but a hard, paved surface.

We then have a the *waw* conjunction and the *bêyth* preposition again and a word we would not expect: *etsem* (עֶצֶם) [pronounced *geh-TSEM*] which means *bone, body, substance, self*. This is a very unusual word; remember when Adam pronounced the woman as *bone* of my *bones*, flesh of my flesh? Or when Noah entered into the ark on the *selfsame* day—it is the same word. The could be the same spelling of two different words or a word with two divergent meanings connected by the idea that it refers to the inner structure of whatever is named; as a reference to people, it is their bones; in reference to the word day, it would refer to the body or the structure of the day. This word shows up in one or two completely different places: this passage and Job 21:23 when it reads: one dies in his own *strength*.

The *lâmed* preposition means *with reference to*; *ṭôhâr* (טוֹהַר) [pronounced *TOH-hawr*] is a word used but three times (it is also found in Leviticus 12:4 & 6) and if it were not for the verb cognate, which means *purify, cleanse*, we would not know its meaning.

An alternate reading given this verse in *The Emphasized Bible* is wonderfully poetic: *And they saw the God of Israel; and under his feet like a pavement of sapphire, and like the substance of the sky for purity*. We have to clarify the they did not see God, per se, but a manifestation of God, as God is a Spirit and no man has seen God at any time. However, this manifestation is so unlike anything that Moses has ever seen, that he waxes poetic to describe it. Even the ground beneath our Lord was like a huge, flat sapphire stone, pure and blue as the heavens. It's as though God is insulated by the heavens and by this footing from the evil world in which we live. Note that the description of Moses only is in reference to where the manifestation of God stood. Other than that, there is no description of how God manifested Himself to them.

**And He did not stretch out His hand against the prominent men of the people of Israel; they beheld [lit., saw] God and ate and drank. [Exodus 24:11]**

The men chosen out from the children of Israel to observe all of this were not seeing God Himself, but a manifestation of Him. They also saw the flooring beneath God and a description of same was almost beyond their vocabulary. What is amazing, as so stated in this verse, is that they saw a manifestation of God and were still able to live. God is holy and we are anything but; and in the ancient world, when someone without regeneration and without being temporally cleansed by rebound (personal confession of sins to God), anyone this close to God would have been struck dead. We have never seen before a closer relationship between God and a group of men. We seen it with individuals, but not with a group.

Eating and drinking can represent two rather antithetical things. In the times of Noah, people were eating a drinking and marrying and giving hand in marriage; this indicates a total absorption in the things of the world to the exclusion of Jesus Christ. This would not be the place to insert a booze sermon. However, in this context, this is a covenant meal between God and these men (similar covenant meals have occurred in Genesis 26:26–31 and 31:44–55). In the New Testament, we have a similar ordinance, the Lord's Supper, in which we celebrate the new covenant (1 Corinthians 11:23–26). The other take on this verse is that, *although* they saw God, these men *survived* and were *able* to eat and drink. On the one hand, they were granted special permission to ascend the mountain; however, I believe that their eating and drinking herein mentioned was more significant than to testify that they were still alive, having beheld God's glory.



**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and wait there and I will [or, must<sup>62</sup>] give you tables of stone with the law and the commandments which I have written for their instruction." [Exodus 24:12]**

The Hebrew people, particularly the religious ones, horribly distorted the law and its purpose. It was not the end-all, be-all in religious practice for Israel. God promised Israel a Savior, a Deliverer, a Messiah. If the Law was all they needed, why would God send a Savior? Why must God establish a different priesthood? However, along with the Law, God also promised the Messiah, a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4). The writer of Hebrews expressed this point in Hebrews 7:11: **Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizekek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?**

There is still this structure of authority and this mediatorship. God does not work directly with these men; he works through Moses to reach them with the law and they will in turn speak to those under their charge. Part of this is logistics, but most of the reason for this behavior is to make it clear that we must go through a mediator to get to God. The mediator for all of Israel was Moses and, even beneath him, was another structure of authority which presented the law. Similarly in our time, Jesus Christ is the one mediator between God and man and the role of the pastor teacher is to present God's Word to the populace.

Paul refers to these tables of stone written on by the finger of God. The Corinthians began to question his Paul and his authority over them, asking for letters of reference concerning his authority, Paul responds: **You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and examined by all men; being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, ministered to under our authority, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts** (1Corinthians 3:2–3).

**So Moses rose with his servant Joshua and Moses went up into the moutian of God.** [Exodus 24:13]

It has become clear to Moses that his replacement will be Joshua; Joshua is one or two generations behind Moses, but he is faithful in all things and he believes strongly in Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He is one of the very few of his generation who recognizes and understands most of what is going on. He will become Moses' replacement.

**And to the elders he said, "Wait for us here until we come again to you. And see that Aaron and Hur [are] with you; whoever [is] an owner of a cause, let him go to them."** [Exodus 24:14]

V. 14 near the end is poorly rendered. At best, it is less than literal in most Bibles. It begins with the interrogative *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*] and, in general, it means *who*, *whoever*. Then it is not followed by *whoever has a cause* (Owen), or *if any man have any matters* (KJV), or *whoever has a legal matter* (NASB); it is the construct of the noun *ba'al* (בַּעַל) [pronounced *BAH-gahl*] and it means *master*, *owner*, *lord*, *husband*; although it is often modified by whatever noun happens to follow; which, in this case, is the *d<sup>e</sup>bârîym* (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-vawr-EEM*] and it means *words*, *sayings*, *doctrines*, *commands*; *things*, *matters*, *affairs*; *reports*. This is a matter which has become so pressing that there are arguments between some of the seventy. And for those of the seventy who have a matter or a problem that they are the masters or the owners of, they are to go to Aaron or Hur.

Hur is a man that we have only heard of one time before; he helped kept Moses' arms up during the first battle of Israel in Exodus 17:10–13.

### **Moses Climbs up the Mountain to Hear to God**

**Then Moses went up on the mountain and the cloud covered the mountain.** [Exodus 24:15]

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<sup>62</sup> According to *The Emphasized Bible*, this is well-known for having the force of the *cohortative* (p. 108)

Just as our Lord on the cross was covered by a thick darkness, Moses was also covered by a thick, impenetrable darkness, a cloud which allowed only him to commune with God directly. Again, Moses is a type, being held up between heaven and earth directly facing God, covered with a thick cloud, just as occurred with Jesus Christ. The purpose of the thick cloud (which become impenetrable darkness over Golgotha) with our Lord was two-fold: (1) to give Him privacy as He bore our sins in His own body on the cross; such a thing was akin to being naked in a group—it was not just embarrassing, it was a disgrace and a humiliation to Him. (2) When it comes to salvation, all come to God through faith in Jesus Christ, including those who were at the crucifixion. No one can do anything but believe in Him. Those in attendance at the cross were unable to see God punish our Lord for our sins. Moses is covered by a thick cloud as a type of Christ and to further accentuate his exclusive mediatorship (which, in itself, is a characteristic type of Christ).

**And the Glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah settled upon Mount Sinai and six days the cloud covered it. And He called to Moses on the seventh day out of the midst of the cloud. [Exodus 24:16]**

Other than the momentary glance which the elders had of the manifestation of God, they have not gone for six days without hearing or seeing anything. We do not know what Moses did, whether he continued in prayer, whether he spend much of this time climbing the mountain.

He had been ordered by God to write and he likely took with him writing utensils and a medium upon which to write. He will need this as God will speak to him for the next forty days and there will be at least the next eight chapters which are dictated to Moses by God. However, it is not necessary that this was the extent of the communication. Other portions of the Law could have been written during this time also. It is possible that during these six days Moses completed the book of Exodus up until this point. We are not given any details.

**Now the appearance of the glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [became] like a consuming [or, devouring] fire on the top of the mountain in the sight [lit., eyes] of the people of Israel. [Exodus 24:17]**

Moses has been up on the mountain for six days and suddenly the glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah appears. To those below, to the elders and to even the rest of Israel, all they can see is an incredible display of fireworks. The description here is not unlike that of a volcano; however, we have no accompanying lava or earthquakes. However, they know approximately where Moses is and they see on the seventh day an incredible all encompassing fire from that area. The words are the construct of the Hebrew word for *fire* (also used for lightning, as we have seen) and the Qal active participle for the verb *eat*. *Consuming or devouring* are good translations. This is more likely a reference to incredible lightning which completely encompasses and consumes to top of Mount Sinai as lightning would accompany a black cloud. In the blackness, the lightning stands out even more. And we know that **our God is a consuming fire** (Hebrews 12:29).

**And Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. [Exodus 24:18]**

This portion of God's Word would have to be written after the fact. It is a summary of the time factor which will be incorporated into the rest of Exodus until Exodus 32. This describes his leaving the seventy, entering into the cloud, and being taken out of their sight. It also gives us a time factor so that we understand the motivation behind the golden calf incident which will follow Exodus 32. Jesus Himself fasted for forty days and forty nights.

# EXODUS 25

## Exodus 25:1–40

**Introduction:** Chapter 25 finds Moses in the presence of God once more, writing down what God is telling him. In this chapter, we find a clear declaration of the doctrine of giving and the directions for the building of certain articles of furniture which would be placed in the tabernacle. These articles would represent our Lord Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. The tabernacle and its contents would give us a complete Christology for the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit through these various items would reveal Jesus Christ to Israel and they would chose to believe or not.

### Outline of Chapter 25:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Vv. 1–9   | <b>Contributions and the tabernacle</b>       |
| Vv. 10–22 | <b>The ark of the covenant</b>                |
| Vv. 23–30 | <b>The table of the bread of His Presence</b> |
| Vv. 31–40 | <b>The golden lampstand</b>                   |

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### Contributions and the Tabernacle

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying,** [Exodus 25:1]

As we will see hundreds of times in the books of Moses and throughout the Old Testament, that God often spoke directly to the writers of Scripture.

**"Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me an offering from every man whose heart willingly offers it. You will receive the offering for me.** [Exodus 25:2]

This verse is not tithing—it is spiritual giving. It is a freewill offering on the part of the giver. There is no coercion involved here. We have here the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix, Qal imperfect of *nâdab* (נָדַב) [pronounced *naw-DAHb*] and it means *to willingly offer* (it can refer to a freewill offering and it could refer to giving of oneself in war or willingly offering oneself over to the military). We need to add an *it* here for the suffix, making this *from every man whose heart willingly offers it*. See Judges 5:2 1Chronicles 29:9, 17 Ezra 3:5 for examples of this word. An interesting sidelight to the linguist: this word is found only in the historical books—Exodus through Nehemiah—it is not found in any of the writings nor in any of the prophetical books.

Time after time after time we have fundamental preachers telling us to give 10%. It certain appears as if their motivation is the support their own ministry. They aren't certain that God will do it, so they have learned to put their own hand out and beg. As a new believer, I heard one radio show where the speaker spend nearly the entire time asking for money, presumably so that he would have his bills covered so that he might return to ask for money the next day.

We as believers are to give of our substance to God. God gave us the monetary blessing and we recognize this by giving a portion of it back to him. This is the mark of a maturing believer. Someone who just drops a dollar of a five into the offering plate as a perfunctory action part and parcel fo being in church, or the person who every week or every month, as he gets his paycheck, writes out a check to the church for 10% of that, thinking that he must do that or he won't be blessed or God won't give him good luck—these people are mistaken. As Thieme used to so aptly put it, "Don't think that you can bribe God with 10% of your measly income."

We are to give as motivated by our hearts (2Corinthians 9:7) and as God has prospered us (2Corinthians 8:14). There is a certain cause and effect relationship involved; but our continued prosperity is not based upon our giving, but upon our positive volition toward God and our continuing maturity, which results in certain spiritual works such as giving (2Corinthians 9:6). God provides the means from which we can give (2Corinthians 9:8–11). However, this giving must be done in the power of the Spirit, which is indicated by the word *love*, in 1Corinthians 13:3a.

**"And this is the [content of the] offering that you will receive from them: gold and silver and bronze. [Exodus 25:3]**

God has a specific task in mind and will require specific items to be given in order to build the tabernacle and its furniture. Gold speaks of the deity of Jesus Christ; silver refers to redemption (see Exodus 30:11–16); and bronze is related to judgement (Scofield gives the examples the brazen, or bronze, altar and the serpent of bronze—Exodus 38:30 39:39 Num. 21:6–9).

**"Blue and purple and things of scarlet things and fine twined linen and goat's hair. [Exodus 25:4]**

This is the first mention of material which has been dyed in the Bible. The nuts and bolts of the actual process are never given in the Bible, partially because many crafts were passed down in certain families, therefore many of the secrets were perhaps never written down (or if they were written down, the formulae were kept secret). So it was with the dyeing industry. Since then, we have discovered that blue and purple dyes came from the various shellfish which are found in the northeastern Mediterranean. According to *The New Manners and Customs of the Bible*, the scarlet dye came from ground lice eggs, indigo from the pomegranate rind, purple from the murex shellfish and blue also came from the murex shellfish, although there was a variation in the process to change the color. This was such a major industry (obtaining and manufacturing these dyes) that Canaan was named after this area of manufacturing (Canaan means *land of purple*). Purple is a color of royalty and blue is a color which represents heaven or *heavenly in nature or origin*.<sup>63</sup>

Scarlet is a dye gotten from the eggs and carcasses of cochineal insects while in the larva state. These worms were crushed in order to squeeze out the dye. The word used for *scarlet* and the word used for *worm* are the same two Hebrew words (which are sometimes transposed); context determines whether it is the dye or the worm crushed for the dye (the worm crushed for the dye is analogous to Jesus Christ bearing our sins on the cross). This obviously speaks of the blood of Christ, *who was crushed for our iniquities, bruised for our transgressions; the chastening for our peace [with God was] upon him ( Isaiah 53:5). But I am a worm, and not a man—a reproach of men, and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; they separate with the lip [a facial scorning], they wag the head, [saying, "Commit to the Lord; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, because He delights in Him.(Psalm 22:6–7).*

Fine linen is made from thread which is spun from the fibers of flax straw. The Egyptians had very high quality linen, so white and woven so tight that at times only a magnifying glass will distinguish it from silk. Fine linen was a material of choice for Egyptian royalty. This speaks of our Lord's royalty. Goat's hair, as one might gather, is a strong, black,<sup>64</sup> very coarse hair from long-haired goats used to weave tents.

**"And ram's skins dyed red and goatskins and acacia wood. [Exodus 25:5]**

Once the wool is removed, we are left with something akin to present day Moroccan leather. Dying this red represents exposing the humanity of Jesus Christ (the leather; his human flesh) to the judgement for our sins.

The next word is translated *sea cows* (clarified by the footnote, *that is, dugongs*) by the NIV, *badgers* by *The Emphasized Bible*, *goatskins* by Owen, *fine leather* by the NRSV and *dolphin (or porpoise) skins* by *The Amplified*

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<sup>63</sup> Scofield's Bible, KJV, p. 101

<sup>64</sup> SOS 1:5 6:5

*Bible.* Obviously, we have a bit of disagreement here. In any case, what we have here is likely some form of leather.

Although we are not entirely positive, the acacia wood is from the Shittim wood (one Biblical reference is to the tree rather than the wood). It is a tree which flourished in barren regions, much darker and harder than oak, a wood avoided by termites and other wood-devouring insects. This speaks of the humanity of Jesus Christ in a barren earth, Himself being the only perfect man.

The barrenness of the land is just like the barrenness of our earth when it comes to finding a righteous man, since *not one is righteous who dwells on the earth*. However, since these trees were common, Jesus appeared to be just like any man from the outside (his enemies could never seem to recognize Him, would often lose Him in a crowd and they required Judas to point Him out). Only His sheep could hear His voice. The fact that wood burrowing insects would not burrow into this wood speaks of His uncompromised and perfect humanity.

*Whedon: [T]he account of the tabernacle shows acquaintance with the productions of the Desert. The boards of the sanctuary are made not of cedar or cypress, as they would have been in Palestine, but of the desert shittah, or acacia, and it was covered with the skins of the tachash, the seal or the halicore of the Red Sea. Mr. Holland measured acacia trees in the Desert nine feet in circumference, and the Bedouins make sandals of the skin of the halicore.*<sup>65</sup>

In order for us to obtain the skin of these animals, they must die. It is their skins that we wear which offer us protection from the elements and this symbolizes putting on Christ to shield us from the judgement of God.

The acacia wood speaks of the humanity of Jesus Christ.

**"Oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense.** [Exodus 25:6]

Oil is often used to refer to the Holy Spirit, Who indwells us and gives us power and sustenance, as the oil of a lamp. Without the oil, a lamp is useless.

The spices and incense speak of propitiation toward God the Father. It is because of the sweet savor of our Lord dying on our behalf on the cross that God forgives us. The spices themselves will be mentioned in Exodus 30:23–24, 34. The incense was sacred and was used for nothing other than worship. They used frankincense, resin from under the bark of the boswellia tree, galbanum (which was likely the gum of a Persian plant) and two ingredients which are still unknown today, stacte and onycha<sup>66</sup> (Exodus 30:34–38).

**"Onyx stones and stone for setting for the ephod and for the breastpiece.** [Exodus 25:7]

Stones are used in memorials, to represent permanence, and for foundations upon which to build. Precious stones refer to royalty and these stones will be enumerated in Exodus 28:17–20.

The Ephod is the upper garment worn by a priest. It was made of fine white linen for the priests and it was multicolored and was ornately embroidered for the high priest.

The high priest alone wore this breastplate, which went over the ephod. Inset on this breastplate were 12 precious stones, each stone representing one tribe. This was used to determine God's will at certain points in Israel's history.

**"And the will make me a sanctuary that I may dwell in their midst.** [Exodus 25:8]

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<sup>65</sup> *Whedon's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*; Editor: Daniel D. Whedon, D.D. L.L.D.; ©1874–1909; from E-sword; Exodus Book Commentary.

<sup>66</sup> *The New Manners and Customs of the Bible*, p. 370



A very early theme of Old Testament theology is that God would dwell among His people. He would be in their midst. This is because in the future, God would literally dwell in the midst of his people Israel when He would take upon Himself the form of a man and dwell among us. **In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by means of Him; and apart from Him, nothing came into being that has come into being. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth** (John 1:1–3, 14).

The word sanctuary comes from the Hebrew word *miq<sup>d</sup>dâsh* (מִקְדָּשׁ) [pronounced *mik-DAWSH*] and it means a *sacred place, a place set apart to God*. We might think of a sanctuary as physically set apart—perhaps out in the mountains; however, this is a sanctuary which has been spiritually set apart. It also indicates a place of safety and blessing; God is said to become a sanctuary for us in Ezekiel 11:16.

Now the main point in what has been said: **we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord put together, not man** (Hebrews 8:1–2). This does not mean that in heaven there is a tabernacle just as has been described in this chapter, because the earthly tabernacle is a copy of the heavenly tabernacle, not vice versa. It means that there is a place in heaven which is a dwelling place for God so to speak, where He receives angels and judges (Job 1:6–12). In this holy place, there were but three items of furniture: the ark of the covenant (actually, more of a chest), the golden lampstand and the table of shewbread (to quote the King James' English).

**"You will build [this] according to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture.** [Exodus 25:9]

God intends for the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed by the tabernacle and by the furniture; therefore, this cannot be some slipshod operation. God is not going to tell the artisans of Israel to build him a house and make it really really nice with a lot of ornate fixtures and breath-taking design. That would be man's handiwork, which we find in church after church, and it would speak to man's glory and not to God's.

Again the theme of God living among us is germane to the word tabernacle. A tabernacle is almost exclusively a reference to a temporary dwelling place of God (Exodus 26:36 Leviticus 26:11 Ezekiel 37:27–28) and it rarely refers to a place for man (Jeremiah 30:18 Hab. 1:6). **And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and I will be their God. And they will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah, their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah, their God** (Exodus 29:45–46). **"Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they will be His people and God Himself shall be among them."** (Rev. 21:3b).

A tabernacle was a moveable tent, designed (1) for Israel's nomadic lifestyle, (2) to represent that Israel was not in the land yet, (3) to represent that this earth is not our permanent home but a temporary dwelling place, (4) to represent that this body that we live in is a temporary dwelling place for our souls and not our permanent home.

The tabernacle had several different, but related names. It was called the *tabernacle of testimony* because it contained the ark which contained the tables of the law (or the tables of testimony) along with the other items which condemned sin in man (Exodus 38:21). Because God met the people there, it was called the *tent of meeting* (Exodus 40:34). Because God manifested His Presence there, it was called the *house of Y<sup>e</sup>howah* (Exodus 34:26).

The Levites were to be the ones in charge of the tabernacle (Lev. 18:2–4).

## The Ark of the Covenant

**"They will make an ark of acacia wood, 2½ cubits in length [lit., its length] and 1½ cubits deep and 1½ cubits high. [Exodus 25:10]**

The Ark is mentioned first because the Ark represents Jesus Christ most fully, along with the plan of God. Therefore, it is the first item to be described in detail.

It was not until I read *What the Bible Really Says* that I realized how far out people have gotten about this ark. Some have thought that the ark was a kind of electoral storage battery and gave the one(s) who possessed the ark superhuman powers. An Erich von Däniken thought that it was possible that the ark was an electronic relay system which monitored transmissions from spacecraft hovering above our planet sending us messages of spiritual benefit to our spiritually bereft planet. Alchemists of the Middle Ages thought that the ark contained a philosopher's stone which allowed various metals to be turned into gold.<sup>67</sup> However, the Bible more than adequately describes the ark and its contents. They might not be quite as exotic or nearly as humorous but the Bible is clear as to its contents and their meanings:

So that we have a feel for the size of the ark, cubits were based upon the measure of the arm. The Latin word, *cubitus*, means lower arm; and the Hebrew word means *mother* of the arm, i.e., the forearm. People disagree as to whether there are two or three different meanings for cubits in the Old Testament. Some differentiate between the *cubit of a man* (Deuteronomy 3:11), *cubits according to the first measure* (2Chronicles 3:3), and *great cubits* (Ezekiel 41:8). People estimate the Mosaic cubit to be anywhere from 12 to 22 inches. I would lean toward the longer length, as the Babylonian and Egyptian cubit is nearly 21 inches. However, most agree that the Mosaic cubit is 18 inches and that a longer cubit was adopted after the Babylonian captivity. This makes the ark three to four feet long and two or more feet in height and width.<sup>68</sup>

The wooden ark represents the humanity of Jesus Christ. It is a container (or a *chest*, as the NIV puts it), just as our bodies contain our souls. This container's contents reveals our Lord's essence and our depravity. This chest contained three items. **The ark of the covenant, covered on all sides with gold, in which there was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant** (Hebrews 9:4). After awhile, only the two tablets containing the ten commandments was in the ark (1Kings 8:9).

The tablets of Law did not delineate sin in its entirety, which we have studied, but revealed enough about sin (i.e., it revealed the basis of all law) to condemn us eternally for our actions. As defined by our Lord Jesus Christ, we have each likely broken every single commandment, as most of us have lusted after a person who was not our right man or right woman (you will not commit adultery) and most of us have hated some person at one time or another (you will not murder). Although few of us have some representation of deity that we carry around, all of us have placed an whole host of things before God and our relationship with Him, making us idolaters.

The golden jar (or, pot) of manna speaks of God's daily provision for us, which is logistical grace. Because of the rebellion of Korah and the people who followed him, God killed 14,700 Israelites (Num. 16:49).

To reaffirm the spiritual leadership of the Levites and their mediatorship, Aaron's rod of the twelve rods of the twelve tribes budded—that is, miraculously brought forth buds, blossoms and almonds (Num. 17:8). This was placed in the ark as a witness against the rebellion of the Israelites so that they would not have to face death for making the mistake of rebelling against God (Num. 17:10). I personally believe that Aaron's rod that budded also speaks of our eventual resurrection. So what we have in the ark is three aspects of sin: sin as a rebellion against God, sin as a rejection of God's provision, and sin as a transgression of God's Law. We all stand guilty of these sins and these three items in the ark stand as a witness against us, as they did against the people of Israel.

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<sup>67</sup> *What the Bible Really Says*, p. 125

<sup>68</sup> This information came from my *Manners and Customs of the Bible* by James Freeman, which seems to be one of the most reasonable reference books that I have

The ark traveled with the Israelites throughout the desert, even to the point of preceding them into battle (Num. 3:30–31 Joshua 6) and had a prominent place in the lives of the Israelites (it is mentioned dozens of times in Scripture: Num. 10:33 Joshua 3:3–17 Judges 20:27 I Sam. 3:3 4:1–11 5:1–11 etc.).

The ark itself was placed into what will be called the Holy of Holies. It is an area inside the tabernacle in which only the high priest could go (and only once a year). This is going directly before the presence of God. Our High Priest, Jesus Christ, Who makes intercession for us, can go directly before the Father on our behalf. Prior to the cross, a man would be arrogant to think that he could stand before God and today it is only in Christ that we can stand before God.

Scofield had an interesting comment. When God dictated this information to Moses, He begins with Himself with regards to the furniture of the tabernacle and works outward to man. Man, outside the tabernacle, moves toward God in the Holy of Holies.<sup>69</sup> In a similar way, even at the Levitical offerings, man begins at the cross (the brazen altar) and moves toward God (Lev. 1–5).

Archeology has turned up a similar ark in the funeral furniture of King Tutankhamun (circa 1350 B.C.), and finds in Nimrud and Samaria have turned up similar altars, dated sometime later. Shrines from that same era are similar in form, construction and size.

**"And you will overlay it with pure gold within and without you will overlay it; and you will make upon it a molding of gold round about. [Exodus 25:11]**

The gold (not mixed with silver or any other alloy) represents the undiminished, uncontaminated deity of Jesus Christ. The wood and the gold together represent His hypostatic union. You must understand that this ark could have been metal or all gold mixed with silver or a number of other things. God chose it to be made out of things which would convey the idea of that which is earthly and that which is heavenly.

**"And you will cast four gold rings for it and put them on its four feet; two rings on the side of it and two rings on the other side of it. [Exodus 25:12]**

The word for *rings* is *ṭabba'ath* (תַּבְּבַ'אֶת) [pronounced *tahb-BAH-g'ath*], and, although the NIV claims that this word means *house*, it is used exclusively in the Bible for rings (signet rings in Genesis 41:42, as a gift in Isaiah 3:21, and most often for the sacred furniture, as here). On the other hand, this word may be similar to our English word *housing*, which I have seen used often in a mechanical sense, such as the housing for various parts of a car (these things are placed into the housing). Housing is a place designed for a thing to be placed into.

Man will touch and handle that of Jesus Christ which is His divine power—or, more accurately, the divine power of the Holy Spirit working through Him. When our Lord comes and walks among men, He will touch men and heal them from their sicknesses and infirmities. In fact, some will touch even the hem of His garment and be healed.

**"You will make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. [Exodus 25:13]**

Again, this all speaks of the hypostatic union.

**"And you will put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark by them. [Exodus 25:14]**

This is more than just a matter of convenience—there will always be some distancing between God and man in the Old Testament. Man is innately corrupt and God is absolute perfection, so there is no fellowship which can take place except through the mediator.

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<sup>69</sup> Scofield's KJV, p. 102

**"In the rings of the ark, the poles will remain—they will not be taken from it. [Exodus 25:15]**

The character of Jesus Christ remains intact, despite his bearing our sins.

**"And you will put into the ark the testimony [i.e., legal evidence and/or the sworn testimony] which I will give you. [Exodus 25:16]**

Rather than saying this is a list of the things which will be placed in the ark, God uses the word *ʿēdūwth* (תֹּדֶעַת) [pronounced *gay-DOOTH*] and it means *testimony*. The NIV says that this is closely related to the Babylonian word for *covenant stipulations*. Surprisingly, the KJV is quite consistent on this translation; however, our concept of testimony in the courts confuses the issue somewhat. Strong's #5715 BDB #730. This is the legal evidence and/or the sworn testimony of God. I do not have a better word or words by which to define this. This is the evidence which exposes man for what he is and also reveals God's character for what it is. This *testimony* will be the tables of the law, written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18 Hebrews 9:4).

**"Then you will make a mercy seat [lit., a cover] of pure gold, 2½ cubits in length and 1½ cubits in width. [Exodus 25:17]**

*Mercy seat* obviously became the more popularized name, as God spoke to Moses from above this covering, making it a throne of sorts (Exodus 25:22 Num. 7:89). However, this Hebrew word is *kappôreth* (תְּכַפֵּרֶת) [pronounced *kap-POH-reth*] and it is a covering placed over the Ark. It comes from the verb which we translate *cover*, *propitiate*; and therefore is better represented as a covering. Strong's #3727 BDB #498.

We were covered by the promises of God in the Old Testament until Christ came at the perfect time to die for our sins. When God looks at us, He does not see us but rather He sees His mercy seat, His covering, which is the perfect work of our Lord Jesus Christ. When God looks to us, He sees His Son. **Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, Whom God displayed publicly as a covering (propitiation, mercy seat) by means of His blood, through faith, a demonstration of His righteousness (Romans 3:24–25a). And He Himself is the covering for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world (1John 2:2).**

God does not yet tell Moses all that will go into the ark, or the chest. In this chapter, we will find out that the commandments etched in stone will be placed into the Ark (vv. 21–22). What will go in there, the testimony against us, will that which condemns us. This will be all of the legal evidence needed in order to convict us. However, before He condemns us, God makes provision to cover this. So God tells Moses how to build the cover first; then He will tell us what the ark is to contain—those things which will make us stand condemned before God.

The Ten Commandments are a righteous standard which none of us can attain.

**"And you will make two cherubim of gold of hammered work you will make them on the two ends of the mercy seat [lit., covering]. [Exodus 25:18]**

The cherubim, or angels, represent the two types of angels involved in the Angelic Conflict: elect and fallen angels. These angels watch the earth and mankind and they see the execution of God's plan on the earth. These represent angelic creation, who bend over and watch intently at what transpires on this earth. God's greatest work is His salvation that He has provided for us; the cherubim looking down upon the cover are witnesses to this great work on our behalf (1Corinthians 4:9). The cherubim are above us, so to speak, looking down, and God is enthroned above them (2Kings 19:15 Psalm 99:1).

Some people are confused by this verse and those which describe the ornate items which would be kept in the tabernacle. They think that this somehow contradicts the second commandment prohibiting idolatry. The idolatry mentioned in the commandment (which is not the only kind of idolatry) specifically refers to the construction of idols for the purpose of worshiping them. We are not to worship the statues which were designed to represent the world we cannot see. The reason for this is that these idols would represent demons and those who worshiped

the statue would be worshiping the demons behind the statue. However, there is a great reality to which we are not visually privy, which includes all of angelic creation. The elect angels form a great cloud of witness encompassed about us watching intently all of our moves. We are witnesses before them, as well as before man. We are not to worship the cherubim who are on the cover of the ark; but we are to be cognizant that they are there.

It was virtually impossible for anyone in Israel to worship any of these things which were built, as most everything was placed into the Tabernacle, and there was no public access to the Tabernacle. Worshipers could be in the courtyard of the Tabernacle, but they could not see the articles of furniture from any vantage point outside the Tabernacle.

**"Make one cherub on the one end and one cherub on the other end with the mercy seat you will make the cherubim on its two ends. [Exodus 25:19]**

The two angels represent the elect and the fallen angels. Some angels chose to sin against God and some did not. Those who sinned against God are fallen; and, insofar as we know, there is no redemption for them.

**"And the cherubim will spread out their wings above, overshadowing with their wings the mercy seat, their faces one to another; the faces of the cherubim will be toward the mercy seat. [Exodus 25:20]**

God looks upon the covering, the mercy seat, Jesus Christ when He sees us—this is the focus of His righteousness and justice. They are not independent characteristics acting in separation from one another but two cohesive elements which make up the perfect character of God, both acting in tandem.

**"And you will put the mercy seat on the ark with regards to the upper portion [or, upon and above the ark]. And in the ark you will place the legal evidence and/or sworn testimony that I will give you. [Exodus 25:21]**

We miss a lot in the English translation here. Following *on the ark* we have two prepositions and an adverb of location. We have the preposition of separation, a preposition *to, for, in regard to* and the adverb (or substantive in this case) meaning *the higher part, the upper portion*. The mercy seat is simply the covering of the ark, placed over the ark, with two angels, one at each end, both facing toward each other and looking down at the covering.

**"There I will meet you and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony of all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel. [Exodus 25:22]**

This is where God the Father meets with us—upon Jesus Christ, our one true, unfailing mediator.

### **The Table of the Bread of His Presence**

**"And you will make a table of acacia wood two cubits in length, one cubit wide and 1½ cubits high. [Exodus 25:23]**

When something speaks of Jesus Christ, it will be made of acacia wood and overlain with gold.

**"And you will overlay it with pure gold and make for it a molding of gold around. [Exodus 25:24]**

The molding of gold is God the Holy Spirit, the power in which Jesus Christ operated. He did not function within His own deity on earth. All of His miracles were done in the power of the Spirit. His life was led in His humanity, as led by God the Holy Spirit.



**"And you will make for it a frame a handbreadth wide around and you will make a molding of gold around the frame. [Exodus 25:25]**

The frame represents God the Father and His plan.

**"And you will make for it four rings of gold and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. [Exodus 25:26]**

Just like the ark, these rings will be used for poles to be put through in order to carry it around.

**"The rings will lie close to the frame as holders for poles to carry the table. [Exodus 25:27]**

Again, we will have no direct contact with the frame except through the poles, which represent Jesus Christ (they are wood poles overlaid with gold).

**"You will make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold; and the table will be carried with these. [Exodus 25:28]**

Our direct contact in this life is with Jesus Christ first. We have no fellowship with God until we have come to Him through His Son. There is no Mohammed, no Buddha, no Joseph Smith that we go through to get to God. **"For there is but one name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. There is no salvation in anyone else."** (Acts 4:12, transposed)

**"And you will make its plates an dishes and its flagons with which to pour libations—you will make them of pure gold [Exodus 25:29]**

Jesus Christ used eating and drinking to represent salvation through believing in Him. Anyone can eat and drink; these are nonmeritorious abilities that we have. Our bodies act automatically to shut off the trachea as the food comes down our throats and it is routed into our digestive system. We did not have to go to college to know how to do this. It occurs naturally. It is a nonmeritorious function in our life by which we are kept alive. If our system did not automatically breathe and guide our nourishment, we would die. Yet all men, good, bad, moral, immoral, amoral can each and drink and this does not interfere with our breathing even though both seem to go through the same traffic signal. **Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; but the water that I will give him shall become in him a well of water spring up to eternal life."** (John 4:13–14) **Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."** (John 6:35)

**"And you will set on the table bread of Presence before Me always. [Exodus 25:30]**

This verse deals with that which is more commonly known as shewbread. The words here are the masculine singular construct of *bread* (the construct simply means *bread of*). This is followed by the noun *pânîym* (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEM*] and it means *faces*. However, in the very poetic Hebrew language, this word stands for presence; for instance, in Genesis 4:16a we read: **And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.**<sup>70</sup> The word is *pâneh*, referring to God's presence. In another context, this word can mean *surface*, as we see in Genesis 7:18 & 23. As has been alluded to many times, a strong Old Testament theme is that of the presence of Jesus Christ in Israel. **And He (Y<sup>e</sup>howah) said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."** (Exodus 33:14). God's presence in Israel resulted in both blessing and discipline ( Isaiah 63:8–10).

On this table which represents Jesus Christ, we have the cups and the plates, which, for the unbeliever, represent contact with God for salvation and for the believer, contact with God for fellowship; just as when we eat and drink,

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<sup>70</sup> See also Genesis 3:8 10:9 11:28 17:1 19:13

we fellowship with those around us. God is omnipresent and is always there with salvation for the unbeliever and He is always there for fellowship with us.

There were twelve loaves of bread on the table, one for each tribe (Lev. 24:5). This also represented continual, daily provisions by God on behalf of Israel. This is known as *logistical grace*,<sup>71</sup> all that God is free to do for us on the basis of the cross in terms of day-to-day living. We need food, shelter, clothing and God's Word. God has provided all of these things for us because He is with us every day.

The loaves were replaced every Sabbath by one of the priests and the old bread was removed and eaten by the priests (Lev. 24:5–9 1Samuel 21:6). This represents the fact that our fellowship with God must be renewed on a regular basis (through confession of sin to God). The eating of the bread by the priests indicates that the priests themselves must have fellowship with God. Their fellowship, because of their position, should be more consistent, which is why they would eat the seven-day-old bread. They are still able to have fellowship with Him.

The bread itself also represents Jesus Christ. **Jesus therefore said to them, "Point of doctrine: it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world. Point of doctrine: he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life" (John 6:32–33, 47–48)**

### The Golden Lampstand

**"And you will make a lampstand of pure gold; and you will make the lampstand of hammered work. Its base and its shaft, its [flower-like] cups, its capitals [buds] and its flowers [blossoms] will be of one piece with it. [Exodus 25:31]**

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. There is one Jesus Christ, not several messiahs coming to several different groups and cultures of peoples at different times, just as there is one God of Israel, Y<sup>e</sup>hovah and that the Israelites were not to run after other gods of other countries. Our God is a jealous God and He is One. Buddha came from the hand of Satan; Mohammed came from the hand of Satan; Joseph Smith came from the hand of Satan; Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy came from the hand of Satan; the Maharishi came from the hand of Satan. **There is but one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1Timothy 2:5). There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light but *came* that he might bear witness of the light. There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man (John 1:4–9). Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12) "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5) You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1Peter 2:9).**

The ends of the lampstand itself are similar to an almond tree branches, which is the first tree to blossom in the spring in that area. There are three parts to an almond *fruit*, if you will: the nut itself, its shell, and a generally pale green outer covering which opens when the almond is ready to be picked. The cups of the lampstand resemble this outer covering.

**"And six branches going out of its sides; three branches of lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of lampstand out of the other side of it. [Exodus 25:32]**

The three branches represent the trinity and the six altogether represents the number of man. Jesus Christ is the light of the world and He reveals Himself to men. He is the shaft of the lampstand from which *grow* the branches. **"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you**

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<sup>71</sup> A term which I believe is original with R. B. Thieme, Jr.

can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and prove to be My disciples." (John 15:5–8)

This lampstand was the only light of the tabernacle; natural light was excluded from it because ...**a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is discerned by no man** (1Corinthians 2:14–15).

**"Three cups made like almonds on one branch, capital and flower; and three cups made like almonds on the other branch, capital and flower. So for the six branches going out of the lampstand. [Exodus 25:33]**

The continual use of threes refers to the trinity of God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit. A *capital* is the uppermost portion of a column or a pillar which is the side portion, on which sits whatever is above it.

**"And on the lamp stand, four cups made like almonds with their capitals and flowers. [Exodus 25:34]**

Okay—I don't know what the four cups are all about

**"And a capital under each pair of the branches of one piece with it; and a capital under each pair of the branches with one piece with it; and a capital under each pair of the branches of one piece with it, of the six branches going out from the lampstand. [Exodus 25:35]**

We have to be careful about the criticisms brought on by archeology. For years, Biblical critics claimed that the tabernacle and the furniture of the tabernacle, including these lamp stands, made a relatively late appearance in the history of Israel, claiming that the evidence of archeology could at best show these things existed circa 600 B.C. (and this all went right along with the idea that Moses did not write the Law but that it was compiled and written in final form many centuries later). Eventually, W. F. Albright spearheaded an excavation south of Jerusalem which turned up seven-sprouted lamps dating back to 1200 B.C. Joseph P. Free found similar lamps which dated back to 1400–1200 B.C. somewhat later. The point here is that *lack of evidence* does not in itself constitute evidence.

**"Their capitals and their branches shall be of one piece, the whole of it one piece of hammered work—pure gold. [Exodus 25:36]**

The one piece represents the unity of the trinity, the one Savior, the one God.

**"And you will make the seven lamps for it; the lamps will be set up so as to give light upon the space in front of it. [Exodus 25:37]**

This will all be enclosed inside the tabernacle; however, it is to be seen to whomever God chooses to reveal His gospel to. The number seven represents perfection or completeness in the Bible.

**"And its snuffers and their trays: pure gold. [Exodus 25:38]**

When referring to deity, there is no substitute for gold.

**"It will be made with a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. [Exodus 25:39]**

None of these things are to be worshipped; they merely represent symbolically Jesus Christ and the plan of God the Father as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. Nothing is made into an image of any sort. Similarly, we have no

idea as to what Jesus looked like in His physical form. There are no paintings, statues, etc. Nothing was created during those first three centuries to reveal to us what He looked like; as was God purpose. We have many paintings which were done long afterwards, with a great deal of artistic license. However, no man has seen God at any time. And no one really knows much about what Jesus looks like, apart from a few general things (He was male, very strong, very healthy, probably dark skinned and had short hair and a beard).

**"And see that you make [these things] according to the pattern for them which is being shown you on this mountain." [Exodus 25:40]**

God has a definite plan to reveal the gospel to Israel. It has to be done through His Word, through the animal sacrifices, through the Levitical priesthood, through the tabernacle and through the furniture of the tabernacle. All of these things reveals Jesus Christ to the people of Israel without revealing to Satan, the greatest genius of all creation of all time, insofar as we are aware, that Christ would come in the form of a man and die upon the cross for our sins. Satan knew that there would be a Messiah, but was nonplussed by the dichotomy of Isaiah 53 and Psalm 68 (or Isaiah 43 or 49). How could a plan be greater than to reveal the gospel through the Holy Spirit to millions of people throughout the times of the Old Testament and yet keep the cross a complete secret from Satan!

Now if He [Jesus Christ] were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; who serve [as] a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned when he was about to erect the tabernacle, for He says, "See that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain." But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises (Hebrews 8:4–6). For the Law [and what we are studying is the Law], since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very substance of things, it can never by the same sacrifices year after year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near [to the altar] (Hebrews 10:1).

# EXODUS 26

## Exodus 26:1–37

**Introduction:** Chapter 26 deals with the construction of the holy of holies and of the tabernacle itself.

### Outline of Chapter 26:

- Vv. 1–6      **The curtains of linen**
- Vv. 7–14    **The curtains of goats' hair then covered with leather**
- Vv. 15–30   **The superstructure of the tabernacle**
- Vv. 31–37   **The holy place and the holy of holies**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### The Curtains of Linen

**"Moreover, you will construct the tabernacle: ten curtains of fine twined linen and violet and purple and scarlet. Cherubim, you will make them skillfully worked. [Exodus 26:1]**

The tabernacle, the dwelling place of Y<sup>e</sup>howah among the Hebrews, will have colors representing royalty and judgement. There is an outstanding picture of the tabernacle in the *NIV Study Bible, 10th Anniversary* p. 124. The structure on the inside was 45'x15' and the walls were 15' high. The inside of this contained the holy of holies (which was about 15'x15') along with the holy place, where the golden table for the bread of Presence and the golden lampstand and the altar of incense were.

**"The length of each curtain [will be] twenty-eight cubits and four cubits in breadth; each curtain [will be] one measure with reference to all of the curtains [made]. [Exodus 26:2]**

These are long curtains—42 ft. long.

**"Five curtains will be coupled to one another together with five [other curtains] will be coupled to one another. [Exodus 26:3]**

The reason for these numbers and why they are made in five pieces as opposed to two much longer pieces, I don't have a clue.

**"And you will make loops of blue on the edge of the one curtain at the end as joined together; and similarly, you will make on the edge of the outmost curtain in the second set. [Exodus 26:4]**

These loops will be what the curtains will use to be attached to the poles. My guess is that this is not unlike a shower curtain.

**"You will make fifty loops on the one curtain and fifty loops you will make on the edge of the second set of curtain(s); the loops being opposite of one another. [Exodus 26:5]**

So these curtains will be opposite one another. They will be forty feet high and about thirty feet wide when attached and set up.

**"And you will make fifty clasps of gold and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps that the tabernacle may be one. [Exodus 26:6]**



This is the holy of holies because the material is fine linen and the fine linen stands for the purity of Jesus Christ. *Tabernacle* means *dwelling place*.

### The Curtains of Goats' Hair Then Covered with Leather

**"And you will make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; you will make eleven curtains. [Exodus 26:7]**

These are the outer curtains for the tabernacle itself, goat hair reminded us of the scapegoat, which is one of the many names for Jesus Christ, our scapegoat.

Tabernacle means *dwelling place*; and it is not a word which means *temporary dwelling place*. From the outside, the Tabernacle looked like a tent, but the Hebrews were assured that Y<sup>e</sup>howah God dwelt within. From the outside, in His first advent, our Lord looked just like a man, but in that shell dwelt the fulness of Deity. **But we do see Him, who has been made for a little while lower than the angels—Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God, He might taste death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9). Who, although He pre-existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing [of profit] to be held, but He emptied Himself [of the proper function of Deity], taking the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men; and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:6–8). For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form (Colossians 2:9).**

**"Each curtain will have a length of thirty cubits and a breadth of four cubits; each curtain [the] same measure as the eleven curtains. [Exodus 26:8]**

Okay, I am confused; it says the same measure, but these are two cubits longer. Perhaps it is just the breadth which is the same and that is the reference here.

**"And you will couple five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves and you will double over the sixth curtain at the front of the face of the tent. [Exodus 26:9]**

This is definitely the tabernacle itself. The extra curtain is the one being doubled over. This likely made the Tabernacle waterproof.

**"And you will make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain—the one outmost in one set of fifty loops on the edge of the curtain in the second set. [Exodus 26:10]**

This is so this could all be attached.

**"And you will make fifty clasps of bronze and put the clasps into the loops and couple the tent that it may be one whole. [Exodus 26:11]**

God is one in essence, even though there are many aspects to His character. The word for *bronze* might mean *copper*.

**"And the part that remains of the curtains of the tent—the half curtain that remains will hang over the back of the tabernacle. [Exodus 26:12]**

I am glad that these are not my instructions. I don't follow exactly what to do; however, it is my guess that this is made in a similar fashion to other tents of that day, so that some of the Israelites would have been familiar with the design and structure of the tents.

Prior to the exodus, the manufacture of tents was likely restricted to a very small number of Hebrews, since they would not be in great demand; however, during the exodus, it seems as though a tent for each family would be in order.

**"And the cubit on the one side and the cubit on the other side of what remains in the length of the curtains of the tent will hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and that side to cover it. [Exodus 26:13]**

I am somewhat confused here also. Then the linen curtains are in direct contact with the curtains made from goat's hair. However, the goat's hair curtains hang over a foot and a half on each side. This sounds as though this would be the top of the tabernacle (?).

**"And you will make a covering for the tent [of] rams' skins, tanned and a covering of the skins of goats over and above. [Exodus 26:14]**

The ram's skins and the skins of goats speaks of the sacrifice of these animals, which points to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. The end of this verse has the same construction as the middle of Exodus 25:21.

### **The Superstructure of the Tabernacle**

**"And you will make the frames [boards] for the tabernacle of acacia wood standing upright. [Exodus 26:15]**

This is what the curtains will hang on and/or hang over.

**"The length of the frame [will be] ten cubits and the breadth of each frame 1½ cubits each. [Exodus 26:16]**

These boards will be about fifteen foot by a little over two feet.

**"Two tenons [lit., hands] in each frame joined together; [and] so you will do for all the frames of the tabernacle. [Exodus 26:17]**

We should look at this word translated *tenons* in the KJV and in Owen's translation. The Hebrew word is *yâd* (יָד) [pronounced *yawd*] and it means *hand*. It occurs over 1500 times in the Old Testament. Other translations translate this word in this context as *pegs*, *projections*, *handles*; and the idea here is that this is how the boards are fitted together. They grasp each other by shaking hands and my guess is that this was a technical builder's term which came from the idea of either shanking hands or using one's hands to grasp something.

**"You will make the frames for the tabernacle [as follows]: twenty frames for the south side. [Exodus 26:18]**

Apparently, this will be quite sturdy when it is finished. It will be something which can be taken apart, but it is much more substantial than tents that we are used to.

**"And you will make forty bases of silver under the twenty frames; two bases under one frame for its two tenons and two bases under one frame for its two tenons [lit., hands]. [Exodus 26:19]**

These bases will hold the boards upright. Something which I would have never noticed had it not been pointed out to me by the NIV Bible is that the forty bases of silver here, the 40 in v. 21, the 16 in v. 25 and the 4 in v. 32 make up 100, which is the number of talents of silver which the Israelites came up with in Exodus 38:27.

**"And for the second side of the tabernacle: twenty frames on the north side. [Exodus 26:20]**

From what I can grasp so far, these frames are for the tabernacle itself and the curtains are for the Holy of Holies. I still am not positive here.

**"And their forty bases of silver, two bases under one frame and two bases under one frame.**  
[Exodus 26:21]

I don't quite follow the repetition here. Is this for the north side and the south side (?).

**"And for the rear [lit., extreme parts] of the tabernacle on the west you will make six frames.**  
[Exodus 26:22]

So the tabernacle will be three times longer than it is wide.

**"And two frames you will make for the corners of the tabernacle in the rear [lit., extreme parts].**  
[Exodus 26:23]

This indicates that the corners will be slightly different. The word for *corners* also means *angles* and could refer to mitred joints at the corners.<sup>72</sup>

**"And they will be separate beneath but joined at the top at the first ring. Thus it will be with both of them with reference to the two corners that they will form.** [Exodus 26:24]

I personally would have built the west and the east wall and then worried about four corners instead of two, but this is God's plan.

**"And there will be eight frames with their silver bases—sixteen bases, two bases under one frame and two bases under another [one] frame.** [Exodus 26:25]

I am not sure if these eight frames include the corners or whether we are dealing with the east wall.

**"And you will make acacia wood bars—five for the frames of the side of the one tabernacle.**  
[Exodus 26:26]

Again, I am lost. I do not know what is being built here exactly.

**"And five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle and a second five bars for the frame of the tabernacle at the rear in the west.** [Exodus 26:27]

and....

**"And the middle bar halfway up the frames will pass through from end to end.** [Exodus 26:28]

Which means...?

**"And the frames you will overlay with gold and their rings you will make of gold rings [i.e., holders] for the bars and you will overlay the bars with gold.** [Exodus 26:29]

Now the gold and the wood together speak of our Lord's hypostatic union. This is a theme constant throughout the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture.

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<sup>72</sup> NIV, p. 125

**"And you will erect the tabernacle according to the plane for you which has been shown you on the mountain. [Exodus 26:30]**

Part of the problem is that many of these terms are builder's terms, which Moses was aware of as were those who did construction; however, the exact meaning of these terms may have been lost to us over the years.

### **The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies**

**"And you will make a veil—blue, purple and scarlet and fine twined linen—the work of a skilful artisan, one will make it [as if] cherubim [made it]. [Exodus 26:31]**

I have looked at several different English translations and I do not follow why we have the word cherubim here unless it means *as if made by cherubim (angels)*. *Make* is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect, *it* is a direct object and cherubim is a plural noun which follows without a preposition, accompanying verb, adjective, etc. My translation and the inferred meaning of cherubim is a total guess on my part.

These are the curtains which will separate the tabernacle into two rooms; the holy of holies, wherein was the ark of the covenant, and the outer area, the holy place, still enclosed, which had the lampstand and the table and the altar of incense. Veil literally means *separation*. These curtains were also called the *shielding curtain* in Exodus 39:34 40:21 and Num. 4:5. NIV claims this shielded the ark, but it actually shields the people and the priest from the ark. No one could go to the ark of the covenant except for the high priest and he went in there only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1–19). He would take in with him the blood of a bull for his own sins and for the sins of the other priests (because they were men all with old sin natures) and the blood of a goat for the people.

The Ark of the Covenant was God's Presence. The things found within the ark were never seen by the people and the Ark was never seen by the people, just as when Jesus Christ went and stood before God the Father in the throne room of God, none of us witnessed that, although God bestowed upon Him the highest honors for His work on our behalf. Man could not go into the holy of holies and behold the ark without dying because man could not come into the presence of God. When Christ had died upon the cross, the curtain which hung between the outer area and the holy of holies was torn in half, giving us access to the holy of holies because the work of our Lord was no longer just a promise, but a reality (Matt. 27:51 Mark 15:38 Hebrews 6:19–20 10:19–22). **But when Christ appeared a high priest of the good things that have come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. And for this reason, He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with the blood not his own. Otherwise, He would have need to suffer often, since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the consummation of the ages, He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (inasmuch as it is appointed for men once to die and then the judgement; so Christ also having been offered once to bear the sins of many) (Hebrews 9:11–12, 15, 24–28a). By this we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all...He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God (Hebrews 10:10, 12).**

**"And you will hang it upon four pillars of acacia [wood] overlaid with gold; furthermore, their hoods [will be gold] and [the boards will sit] upon four bases of silver. [Exodus 26:32]**

The next verse will tell us how to hang this:

**"And you will hang the veil from the clasps and bring the ark of the testimony within the veil and the veil will separate for you the holy place from the most holy [lit., the holy of holies]. [Exodus 26:33]**

This veil of blue, purple and scarlet, made from fine linen, will separate the holy tabernacle from the holy of holies which is within the tabernacle. The Hebrew language lacks a superlative, so this is expressed when a noun is followed by itself in the genitive plural (for instance, Genesis 9:25 and Deuteronomy 10:27). We could translate this *the Holiest of Holies, the Holy of Holies, the Most Holy*.

**"You will place the mercy seat [lit., the covering, the propitiatory] upon the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies. [Exodus 26:34]**

The items which were built in the previous chapter are all taken into the sanctuary or into the Holy of Holies.

**"And you will set the table outside the veil and the lampstand opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle and the table you will place on the north side. [Exodus 26:35]**

Right outside the table we have the lampstand on one side and the table on the other (this is the table of showbread).

**"And you will make a screen for the door of the tent [of] blue, violet and scarlet and [of] fine twined linen embroidered with needlework. [Exodus 26:36]**

There will be this screen which separates all of man from the holy place and the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest will be able to enter into the Holy of Holies just as only Jesus Christ will be able to enter into the throne room of God and make intercession for us.

The light outside the Holy of Holies guides us to there. Jesus said, **"I am the door, if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved and he will go in and out and find pasture."** (John 10:19)

**"And you will make for the screen five pillars of acacia [wood] and overlay them with gold and their hooks [will be] gold and you will cast for them five bases of bronze. [Exodus 26:37]**

We have changed from silver bases, silver speaking of redemption; to bronze bases, which speaks of judgement. It would be reasonable to not have a good understanding of the gospel, other than to know that you have been redeemed. Once you learn the gospel and you move closer and closer to the Holy of Holies, then you realize what is involved is judgement and the penalty for our sins must be paid by someone. Furthermore, whereas gold was used inside the Holy of Holies and in the outer room, bronze would be found in the outer area.



# EXODUS 27

## Exodus 27:1–21

### Outline of Chapter 27:

- Vv. 1–8      **Construction plans for the brazen (bronze) altar**
- Vv. 9–19    **Blueprint for the court of the tabernacle**
- Vv. 20–21   **Oil for the lamp**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### **The Breadth of the Court [vv. 12–15]**

**Introduction:** Chapter 27 will deal with the building of the altar and the outer court of the tabernacle.

#### **Construction Plans for the Brazen (Bronze) Altar**

**"And you will make the altar [out of] acacia wood, five cubits long, five cubits wide—the altar will be a square—and three cubits high. [Exodus 27:1]**

This is the brazen (or bronze; possibly copper) altar which will be outside of the tabernacle, and inside the courtyard of the Tabernacle. Obviously, this speaks of the cross and our Lord dying on our behalf on the cross.

Scofield points out that this altar is twice as high as the mercy seat (the covering of Exodus 25:10); this means that the cross not only atones for our sins, but it glorifies God and reveals his tremendous mercy and justice. Our Lord proclaimed to God, **"I have glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You had given Me to do."** (John 17:4)

**"And you will make projections [lit., horns] upon its four corners—the horns will be of one piece from it; and you will overlay it with bronze [possibly, copper]. [Exodus 27:2]**

The bronze speaks of judgement. This is illustrated when one compares Num. 21:9 with John 3:14.

If I am reading this right, the horns will be an integral part of the altar. The horns are projections of the four corner posts. They are used to symbolize refuge (1Kings 1:50 2:28 Psalm 18:2). Although one can hold onto the projections and beg for mercy, they are holding onto the bronze, which speaks of the judgement of our Lord.

The animal blood from the sacrifices was poured out upon these horns before pouring out the rest on the base of the altar (Exodus 29:12 Leviticus 4:7).

Psalms 118:27b reads: **Bind the festive [animal] sacrifice with cord even to the horns of the altar.** This tells us that it was customary to tie the animal sacrifice to the protrusions of the altar, just as Jesus Christ would be bound to the cross.

**"And you will make pots for it to receive its ashes and its shovels and its basins and its forks [lit., flesh-hooks] and its firepans [possibly, fire shovels] and all its utensils you will construct out of bronze. [Exodus 27:3]**

The Hebrew word here is 'āsâh, and it means to *make something out of something*. In this case, it is to construct these tools and utensils out of bronze. After offering so many animals, their ashes and the ashes of the wood that was burned had to be removed. The shovels got the ashes out of the grating and the ashes from below; the pot

was used to carry the ashes away. The basins were used to catch the blood of the animal and one was used to sprinkle the blood around the altar. No doubt, some basins had water for cleansing.

The forks were three-pronged which were used to move the animal if necessary while being burned; and it was also used to remove the priest's portion of the sacrifice. Finally, the firepans were used to move fire from one location to another.

**"And you will make for it a grating, a network of bronze you will make upon the net; four bronze rings at its four corners. [Exodus 27:4]**

This network or grating is somewhat confusing. Will it be over the altar and along the sides? The text tells us that it will be along the sides of the altar. If it is over the altar, then it would have the practical task of separating the sacrifice from the burning embers and wood below. That does seem reasonable here.

**"And you will place it under the ledge of the altar underneath [it] so that the net extends half way down the altar. [Exodus 27:5]**

In examining this verse, I have noticed the same construction as I have seen in two other verses. We have two prepositions together with an adverb. It makes me think that those two prepositions have a particular meaning when used together. The first is *mîn* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and by itself it conveys the idea of separation and is translated *out of, from, on account of, off, on the side of, since, above, than*. The second preposition is the *lâmed* (ל) [pronounced *l*] and it means *to, for, in regard to*; direction might be noted, so we might translate it *towards*; and when proximity is intended, we translate this *at, near*. However, we have seen this combination before in Exodus 25:21. This means that we likely have a combined meaning. BDB recognized this long before I did and noted that they occur together with certain adverbs (p. 513). Literally, we have *off and with reference to beneath* as they are compounded with the adverb *down, downwards*.

I didn't imagine that we have a great deal of agreement amongst the translators here: *beneath* (NASB, Owen, *The Emphasized Bible*, Young's, KJV) and [not translated] (NIV, NRSV, *The Amplified Bible*); however that's the most agreement that I have ever seen. I wonder if it might now be better translated *somewhat below [it]* or *somewhat beneath [it]*?

**"And you will make poles for the altar; poles of acacia wood and you will overlay them with bronze. [Exodus 27:6]**

The bronze over acacia wood speaks of our Lord's humanity and of His dying for our sins.

**"And the poles shall be placed through the rings so that the poles will be upon the two sides of the altar when it is carried. [Exodus 27:7]**

This is to allow the altar to be carried. The bearers of the altar have no direct contact with the altar, just as we can have no direct contact with God. "When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all its furniture, as the camp sets out, after all that, the sons of Kohath will come to carry them; but they will not touch the holy thing, or they will die. These are the things of the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry." (Num. 4:15)

**"And you will make it hollow with boards as it has been shown you on the mountain, so they will make [it]. [Exodus 27:8]**

I don't know what the hollowing of the boards are about except that they would be much lighter and easier to carry. The actual building will take place in Exodus 38:1–7.

## Blueprint for the Court of the Tabernacle

**"And you will make the court of the tabernacle [lit. dwelling place]: on the side of the Negev, to the south, hangings of the court fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one side. [Exodus 27:9]**

We have the oft used word negev (נֶגֶב) [pronounced *NEH-ghev*] comes from the root *parched*, and it is used in relationship to Judah as the land south of Judah, the desert area; and sometimes of Egypt. Here, it also refers to the desert area more to the south of them. For the reason of this verse, the Negev, or desert area being clearly delineated as being south of them (it is actually in a southeasterly direction), taking in much of Saudi Arabia. The two descriptions possibly modify one another. One of them alone would mean due south or toward the desert; and together they could mean southeast or southwest.

Scofield had an interesting take on this verse. The fine white linen suggests personal righteousness. Anyone who chooses to be saved by personal righteousness has the Law guide him into all of the things that they must do. These hangings in the court condemn the righteous man as well as the sinner. God demands perfect righteousness and because these demands cannot be met, there are no colors.

Figuratively speaking, Christ hung out the fine white linen before a lawyer in Luke 10:25–28. The only way to approach God is through the one gate, Jesus Christ. **"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, will be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture."** (John 10:9) When we go through the gate, as in Exodus 27:16, the colors reappear—those colors which represent Jesus Christ (see Exodus 26:31 and 27:16).

This was misplaced in e-sword.

### Peter Pett on Exodus 27:9–19

The Courtyard of The Tabernacle (Exo\_27:9-19).

Before and around the sanctuary was a large courtyard into which the people themselves could come. They could not enter the sanctuary, only the chosen priests would be able to do that, but they (usually the heads of households except where individual offerings were to be offered) could come before it with their offerings and their prayers knowing that He was there to hear. And here they could offer their worship and their thanksgiving to God.

But it must be appreciated that many would not even enter this court except through their representatives, the fathers of their houses. It was a sacred place and not to be entered lightly. To the vast majority of Israel the area around the courtyard would be the place where they came to meet with Y<sup>e</sup>howah. This may well be why in Deuteronomy, when speaking to the people as a whole, Moses spoke of 'the place' (maqom) which Y<sup>e</sup>howah had chosen which incorporated the whole. They were not, however forbidden entry when it was necessary, especially for judgment before the door of the Tent (e.g. Num\_5:16; Num\_5:18; Num\_5:25).

We may analyse this passage as follows:

a They were to make the court of the Dwellingplace, and along the south side were to be hangings of fine twined linen one hundred cubits long suspended on twenty pillars seated in twenty sockets of brazen copper. The hooks and connecting rods were to be made of silver (Exo\_27:9-10).

b Along the north side were to be hangings of fine twined linen one hundred cubits long suspended on twenty pillars seated in twenty sockets of brazen copper. The hooks and connecting rods were to be made of silver (Exo\_27:11).

c Along the west side (the rear) there were to be hangings stretching for fifty cubits, with ten pillars and sockets (Exo\_27:12).

d Along the breadth of the court on the East side was to be fifty cubits, but as the entrance had to be there the hangings each side of the entrance on each side were to be fifteen cubits, leaving a gap of twenty cubits for the entrance. Each fifteen cubit hanging would be supported on three pillars and three sockets. (Exo\_27:13-15)

d For the entrance of the court there was to be a screen of twenty cubits, of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer, with four pillars and four sockets (Exo\_27:16).

## Peter Pett on Exodus 27:9–19

c All the pillars of the court round about were to be filleted with silver (or 'joined by silver rods'), their hooks of silver and their sockets of brazen copper (Exo\_27:17).

b The length of the court was to be one hundred cubits and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits, of fine twined linen, with sockets of brazen copper (Exo\_27:18).

a All the instruments of the Dwellingplace in all its service, and all its pegs and all the pegs of the court were to be of brazen copper (Exo\_27:19).

The patterning must have been difficult in this particular case and yet it was to some extent achieved. In 'a' the making of the courtyard of the Dwellingplace is called for and the length of the south side of it described, while in the parallel the instruments to be used in that courtyard are to be of brazen copper. In 'b' the north side is one hundred cubits and in the parallel the court is to be one hundred cubits. In 'c' the west side (the rear) is to have hangings stretching for fifty cubits, with ten pillars and sockets, while in the parallel the pillars were to be connected with silver rods and to have silver hooks and sockets of brazen copper. In 'd' we have the hangings on each side of the entrance, and in the parallel details about the entrance.

Exo\_27:9-11

"And you shall make the court of the Dwellingplace. From the south side southwards (or 'on the south side on the right') there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen, a hundred cubits long for one side. And its pillars will be twenty, and their sockets twenty of brazen copper. The hooks of the pillars and their fillets (or connecting rods) will be of silver. And in the same way for the north side in length there will be hangings a hundred cubits long, and its pillars twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brazen copper. The hooks of the pillars and their fillets (or connecting rods) of silver."

The two sides of the courtyard were to be one hundred cubits in length and to be formed by fine twined linen on twenty pillars whose hooks and fillets were of silver. The fillets may in fact have been connecting rods connecting the pillars and supporting the curtains, although some see them as a band running round the base of the pillars.

The twined linen separated the court from the outside world and may well have depicted the idea of purity and righteousness in contrast with the sinfulness of the outside world. Those who would come before God must do so in purity and righteousness. Leaving their sins behind they must enter to obtain atonement and enjoy time in God's presence. While the pillars could be of brazen copper the actual fittings that held the curtain material must be of silver.

So as we go along we see that gold is used in the sanctuary itself, although silver is used where contact has to be made of the holy with the marginal ground. Silver is also used to connect the holy with what is earthy, such as here, connecting the twined linen with the pillars, and mainly brazen copper for what is outside the sanctuary, again denoting the movement from the most holy to the less holy. The silver hooks on the brazen copper pillars may therefore here depict the linen curtain as being of a holy nature, and therefore not to be treated lightly (but not most holy). But there may also have been another practical purpose in all this. Gold easily available may have been seen by God as too great a temptation to place before men where it could be accessed too easily. They were not likely to enter the sanctuary, but they might well have been prepared to despoil the fencing of the outer court for gold. He knew the hearts of men.

"Southwards." Directions were determined by facing the rising of the sun, so the East was before, the West behind, the South to the right and the North to the left (see Job\_23:8-9).

Exo\_27:12-13

"And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits. Their pillars ten and their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the East side eastwards (or 'in front') shall be fifty cubits."

Looking from the front, the courtyard was fifty cubits wide and thus only required half the number of pillars. The court was thus one hundred cubits by fifty cubits, in proper proportion but without the perfection of the perfect square of the Holy of Holies.

Exo\_27:14-16

"The hangings for the one side shall be fifteen cubits. Their pillars three and their sockets three, and for the other side will be hangings of fifteen cubits. Their pillars three and their sockets three. And for the entrance of the court will be a screen of twenty cubits, of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer, their pillar four and their sockets four."

The entrance to the courtyard was to be on the east side, with the actual entrance twenty cubits wide, with

## Peter Pett on Exodus 27:9–19

fences of fifteen cubits either side. The entrance curtain was to be multicoloured, and very carefully wrought, in distinction from the fine twined linen of the outer screen, a reminder that they were entering the courtyard of the king.

Here again there are ten (three + four + three) pillars as with the west side. Whether the end pillars of the north and south sides were also utilised for these screens, or doubled up, is an unanswered question.

Various attempts have been made to construct the Tabernacle as described. Some have found difficulty because they have made assumptions that were not stated such as that the pillars were always the same distance apart, or that the entrance screen was necessarily continuous with the other screens on the eastern side, rather than set in a little in order to provide entrances at the side of the entrance screen. Others have been more successful. But all we can say is that this is how it might have been, not that this is how it was. Anyone who has tried to construct something by use of only written guidance will know how difficult it often is to know exactly what was meant. Fortunately Moses had been shown the pattern on the Mount, and much, such as the shape of the Cherubim, might then have been something that was well known.

Exo\_27:17-18

“All the pillars of the court round about shall be filleted with silver (or ‘joined by silver rods’), their hooks of silver and their sockets of brazen copper. The length of the court shall be a hundred cubits and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits, of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brazen copper.”

The actual size of the court is now stated with the added information that the white linen screen will be five cubits high. It will be noted how all is, where practicable, in multiples of five, the covenant number. This is the Dwellingplace of their covenant God, and entering it they enter, as it were, within the covenant blessing, and sacrifice at the covenant altar.

Exo\_27:19

“All the instruments of the Dwellingplace in all its service, and all its pegs and all the pegs of the court will be brazen copper.”

All that is used in the outer court will be brazen copper. Inferior to the gold of the sanctuary, and indicative of the fact that the courtyard is not most holy, but still valuable as a metal and indicating its genuine holiness. Such would include the laver of brazen copper, the tent pegs, and many other accoutrements. It was a useful and pliable metal.

Dr. Peter Pett; *Commentary Series on the Bible*; from e-sword, Genesis 27:9–19 (all of this section was misplaced in e-sword).

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**"And [there will be] twenty pillars [lit., and their pillars: twenty] and twenty bases of bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver. [Exodus 27:10]**

Fillets are probably connecting rods, or hooks or something which allows connecting rods to connect one pillar to another. .

**"And similarly on the north side for its length hangings a hundred cubits<sup>73</sup> in length and their pillars, twenty and their bases, twenty of bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver. [Exodus 27:11]**

We do the other side of the court the same way. The hooks here are pegs, nails or pins to interlock with the fillets (or rings).

<sup>73</sup> Missing from the Massoretic text, *cubits* is found in the western Samaritan and Septuagint



**"And for the breadth of the court on the west side, hangings for fifty cubits, their pillars tens and their bases ten [Exodus 27:12]**

This reads more like a parts list rather than directions; the last verb was found at the beginning of v. 9.

**"The breadth of the court on the east side toward the sunrise fifty cubits. [Exodus 27:13]**

We have two different words translated east here and they are completely different words. Before even consulting a lexicon, my guess would be one refers to the rising of the sun and the other is the word for east. We have the word for *side* and the word *qêdem* (קֵדֶם) [pronounced *KAY-dem*], which means *to the front*, and is commonly translated *east, eastward, east wind*. Together with the *lâmed* preposition, we would translate them *on the east side*; or *with reference to the east side*.

This is followed by the locative *he* [pronounced *hay*] meaning *toward* (directions are involved here). Then we have the noun *miz<sup>e</sup>râch* (מִזְרָח) [pronounced *miz<sup>e</sup>-RAHKH*] and it means *place of sunrise*.

**"And fifteen cubits hangings for the one side [lit., shoulder]; their pillars three and their bases three. [Exodus 27:14]**

We are looking at both sides of the entrance; the word *shoulder* implies there are two of them. In between will be the gate or the entrance. Then entrance of the tabernacle, of Solomon's temple and Herod's temple all faced east.

**"On the other shoulder, fifteen hangings, their pillars three and their bases three. [Exodus 27:15]**

In the English, we would have put an entirely different structure on this portion of God's Word in order to convey what is occurring:

| The Breadth of the Court [vv. 12–15] |    |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|----|---|---|
| On the West Side:                    |    | On the East Side (Toward the Sun Rising): |   |
| 50 Cubits [in length]                |    | 50 cubits [in length]                     |   |
| Pillars                              | 10 | 15 cubits of hangings on one shoulder     | 15 cubits of hangings on the other shoulder |
| Bases                                | 10 | Pillars 3                                 | Pillars 3                                   |
|                                      |    | Bases 3                                   | Bases 3                                     |

In this way, we keep with the brevity of the Hebrew, the lack of verbs. With a chart like this, we can be almost entirely literal and keep to the intention of the directions. I would love to see a translation where the bulk of the previous chapters are given in a chart form as above.

**"And for the gate of the court, a screen twenty cubits blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen embroidered with needlework; their pillars four, their bases four. [Exodus 27:16]**

I don't know exactly how the front was going to be, whether these will be curtains that will be drawn to one side or what. In any case, as we saw in v. 9, these colors represent our Lord Jesus Christ, His royalty, His deity and His death on our behalf. This is the only entryway. The color *blue* here might possibly be *violet*.

**"All the pillars of the courts will be built with connecting rings [lit., filleted with silver]; their hooks with silver and their bases of bronze. [Exodus 27:17]**

These rods and hooks which hold up the hangings, are made of silver; silver represents redemption and the colored hangings are the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. The fine white linen hangings represent the righteousness which is expected of us.

The support or the base for the court is bronze—judgement laid upon Jesus Christ. The **foundation** for our redemption is His death upon the cross.

**"The length of the court, one hundred cubits; and breadth, fifty and [lit., by] fifty and height five cubits. [All of] fine twined linen and their bases bronze. [Exodus 27:18]**

This summarizes the overall dimensions. This information may or may not have been given to Moses with verbs and in full sentences. At this point, he was guided by the Holy Spirit to record the information; almost a shopping list, if you will. Notice that the height of the tabernacle is above the height of the walls of the outer court. People must be able to see the tabernacle; just as people must be able to see Jesus Christ, as it were. However, the walls were high enough to preserve the privacy of the worshippers inside.

**"All the utensils of the tabernacle for every use and all its pegs and all the pegs of the court of bronze. [Exodus 27:19]**

Bronze speaks of judgement and the pegs are embedded in the earth, so that which is connected to the earth is judged. The utensils used for the altar are also bronze. The building of the court of the tabernacle was completed in Exodus 38:9–20.

### Oil for the Lamp

**"And you will command the people of Israel that they bring to you pure, beaten olive oil for the light that a lamp may be caused to ascend continually. [Exodus 27:20]**

Oil has long been a symbol of God the Holy Spirit (Zech. 4:2–6 John 3:34 w/ Hebrews 1:9). Jesus Christ, filled with the Spirit, is the light of the world. Unripened olives were crushed and then strained through cloth for this type of oil. This oil was clear and burned with little or no smoking.

Matthews, in his *Manners and Customs in the Bible* gives a slightly different scenario. The ripe olives are harvested and crushed under a flat, revolving stone. The oil and juice was caught in a cistern, wherein the finest oil gradually rose to the top and was skimmed off for the use in these lamps. He does not mention any straining through a cloth.

Freeman, in *Manners and Customs of the Bible* claims that this oil was gotten from olives which were not completely ripened. They were pounded into a mortar, rather than being placed in a press. The resulting oil was considered to be the best and the purest. It had a whiter color, a better flavor and it burned more cleanly than did oil collected in conventional ways.

This sort of oil is mentioned in Exodus 29:40 Leviticus 24:2 Num. 28:5 1Kings 5:11 and it may be the *cold drawn oil* in Psalm 92:10. The differences herein noted could be a difference of interpretation of the archeological and historical data and it could be a difference of eras; one kind of oil was collected for awhile, then later the Hebrews collected their oil in a different way. In any case this crushing and straining all speaks of our Lord's work on the cross.

This order was repeated in Leviticus 24:1–4, indicating, perhaps, that the Israelites may have been remiss in continuing to bring this oil. The light is Jesus Christ, as He has said, **"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."** (John 8:12b) The Hebrews were the light to the gentile world and therefore, it was commanded them to bring the oil to keep the lamp lit.

There were two lights in the tabernacle: the golden lampstand which guided people to Jesus Christ, to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel and the Shekinah glory in the holy of holies, the light manifested by the glory of God. This latter light, prior to the cross, only the high priest was privileged to behold.

Since the cross, we as believer-priests are enjoined to walk in the light as He is the light (1John 1:7). This light of His glory is now beheld in the face of Christ (2Corinthians 4:6) and it is in this light that we have fellowship with him (1John 1:6–7).

With regards to the latter portion of the verse:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | ...to cause it to burn continually [every night]   |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...that the lamp may lift up its flame continually |
| KJV                             | ...to cause the lamp to burn always                |
| NASB                            | ...to make the lamp burn continuously              |
| NIV                             | ...so that the lamps may be kept burning           |
| NRSV                            | ...so that a lamp may be set up to burn regularly  |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ...to cause the lamp to go up continually          |

This time, *Young's Literal Translation* is a literal translation. We have the masculine singular of *lamp* (without a definite article). The verb is the Hiphil infinitive construct preceded by the lâmed preposition of 'âlâh (עלה) [pronounced aw-LAWH] and it means *to go up, to ascend*; and, in the causative stem, it means *cause to go up*. The prefixed preposition denotes purpose, result, explanation or an imminent event.

**"In tent of meeting outside of the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons will take care of it from evening to morning before Y<sup>e</sup>howah, a statute forever throughout their generations by the people of Israel." [Exodus 27:21]**

It is important to note that this is not a meeting place where all the people came to meet one another and *fellowship*. This is where God met His people on His terms at His appointed time. **"For the generations to come, this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the tent of meeting before the Lord. There I will meet you and speak to you. There also, I will meet with the Israelites; and the place will be consecrated by My glory."** (Exodus 29:42–43)

One of the things introduced here: the Levitical priesthood proceeds directly through Aaron. This veil is between the holy place and the holy of holies (Exodus 26:33).

The evening to morning (sunset until morning) covers the times that a lamp is burning. The sons of Aaron are to take care of the tabernacle in general and the lamp specifically. It was lit in the evening and put out at sunrise (1Samuel 3:3).

Barnes: *In form, structure, and materials the tabernacle belongs altogether to the wilderness. The whole was a tent, not a fixed structure, such as would naturally have been set up, and in point of fact was set up very soon in Palestine. The metals, bronze, silver and gold, were those which the Israelites knew, and doubtless brought with them from Egypt; the names of many of the materials and implements which they used, and the furniture and accessories of the tabernacle, the dress and ornaments of the priests, are Egyptian; and it is also certain that the arts required for the construction of the tabernacle, and for all its accessories, were precisely those for which the Egyptians had been remarkable for ages; such as artizans who had lived under the influence of Egyptian civilization would naturally have learned.*<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Exodus Chapter Commentary (introduction).

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# EXODUS 28

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## Exodus 28:1–43

### Outline of Chapter 28:

- Vv. 1–5 The priestly garments for Aaron
- Vv. 6–14 The ephod
- Vv. 15–30 The breastplate
- Vv. 31–35 The robe
- Vv. 36–39 The turban and the tunic
- Vv. 40–43 The priestly garments for Aaron's sons

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** Chapter 28 covers the clothing to be worn by those in the Levitical priesthood. The gifts to underwrite these garments are named in Exodus 35:20–29 and the manufacturing of these garments is alluded to in Exodus 35:30–35. The actual construction of these garments is described in Exodus 39.

#### Chapter Outline

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Priestly Garments for Aaron

**"Then bring near to you Aaron your brother and his sons with him from among the people of Israel to serve Me as priests: Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Thamar, Aaron's sons. [Exodus 28:1]**

Because God did not want Aaron to accompany Moses when Moses represented God to Pharaoh, we may have had some misgivings. After all, so far, in everything that we have seen, Aaron seems to be an okay person. He has not made any major errors, he has demonstrated great affection and faithfulness toward Moses; he has not exhibited any jealousy of the position of his younger brother. All of these things seem to indicate that God's first choice should have been for Aaron to go along with Moses. However, it was not and the reason is that, if Moses went to Pharaoh alone, he is a much better type of Christ. There is one mediator between God and man and that mediator the man Christ Jesus. With two men going to Pharaoh, that confused the issue.

God's preferences here, however, does not mean that God had no place or plan for Aaron. Aaron's parents were obviously as careful with Aaron's upbringing as were Moses' adoptive mother and, for the reasons mentioned, Aaron had, generally speaking, a clear grasp of the situation and his place in God's plan. Therefore, the Levitical priesthood is actually the Aaronic priesthood, as the priests which minister to the Israelites will primarily be from the progeny of Aaron.

In general, a priest is a person who represents man to God. They offered gifts and sacrifices to God on behalf of the Israelites and on behalf of themselves. **For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertain to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; he can deal gently with the ignorant and the misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; and because of it, he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself** (Hebrews 5:1–3). They were to read the Law before the people. **Then Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month...and Ezra opened the book on the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people and when he opened it, all the people stood up...Also, Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Peliaiah and the Levites, explained the Law to the people while the people [were] in their place. And they read from the book, from the Law of God, exegiting to give the sense so that they understood the reading** (Neh. 8:2, 5, 7–8).

**"And you will make holy garments for Aaron your brother for glory and for honor [or, distinction].**  
[Exodus 28:2]

In case you don't have a KJV, these garments are for *glory and for beauty*. The word often translated *beauty* is *tîph<sup>e</sup>ârâh* (תִּפְאֶרֶת) [pronounced *tif-aw-RAW*] and is so translated (in the KJV) in 2Chronicles 3:6 Jeremiah 13:20 and is translated similarly as *comely, fair* in Isaiah 4:2 Ezekiel 23:26. However, it is more often rendered *glory, honor* in such passages as Exodus 28:40 Deuteronomy 26:19 (its only other occurrences in the Law) Judges 4:9 1Chronicles 22:5 29:11 Isaiah 10:12 20:5. Kalisch likes the rendering *distinction*. Of the 50 or so times this word occurs, none of the passages demands the rendering *beauty* (and there are other words in the Hebrew for *beauty*).

The word translated *glory* is the common word for *glory*.

Even though the verb is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, Moses himself will not personally sew Aaron's priestly garments. However, this responsibility is given to Moses, who will delegate it (as God will mandate in the next verse). There will be more here than people just wearing their Sunday best when ministering in the tabernacle. This is not just a command by God that the priests wear a nice suit and tie. Their clothes, as everything connected with the tabernacle, will speak of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. The priests will be set apart from all of the people due to their clothing and the high priest will be set apart from the priests because of his clothing.

A portion of the next verse is poorly rendered in several translations:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i> | ...whom I have endowed with skill and good judgement... |
| NASB                       | ...whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom...     |
| NIV                        | ...to whom I have given wisdom in such matters...       |
| NRSV                       | ...whom I have endowed with skill...                    |

A relative pronoun is followed by the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix of the verb *mâlê'* (מָלַא) [pronounced *maw-LAY*] and it is never translated *given* or *endowed* in the KJV. It means *to fill, to fulfill, to be full*. We find it used when a prophecy is fulfilled and when something has been filled up with something. It is found several hundred times in the Old Testament; it is occasionally used in the sense of *fulfilling* in Leviticus 12:4 Job 36:17 Lam. 4:18; but it is primarily used with the idea of *filling something with something else*, as in Genesis 6:13 Exodus 10:6 Jeremiah 46:12.

The preposition *with* is implied by the verb and is not a separate word. The words which follow are *rûwach* (רוּחַ) [pronounced *ROO-ahkh*], which means, *wind, breath, spirit*. and *châk<sup>e</sup>mâh* (חָכְמָה) [pronounced *khawk<sup>e</sup>-MAW*] or *wisdom, skilled*. It means *whom I have filled with Spirit [with] wisdom*. If Spirit were in the construct, then this would be a *Spirit of wisdom*; but it is not. Several translations were closer here, e.g., *The Emphasized Bible*, *The Amplified Bible* and the KJV.

**"And you will speak to all of have the ability [lit., are wise of heart] whom I have filled with Spirit [with] wisdom; and they will make Aaron's garments with regards to consecrating him for My priesthood.** [Exodus 28:3]

God gives the ability to do a large number of tasks that today's Christendom would view as unimportant or less than spiritual. In this age, you probably brush shoulders now and again with spiritual giants, but you would never suspect because you are too preoccupied with human viewpoint. We have been misled to think that there are specific areas of service— such as evangelism, witnessing and teaching the word—which are our primary functions, and that the other things that we do are not worthwhile.

We are to lead our lives filled with God the Holy Spirit and we should be growing every single day in His Word and in His grace. We may have absolutely no human contact and still be spiritual giants. We may never witness, evangelize or give a stirring message, and still be spiritual giants. We have a day in and day out ministry before the angels; we have our prayer lives, which are generally unseen and definitely under-appreciated, and we have



various forms of service, not all of which are enumerated in the Bible. God will provide these and they change from generation to generation. For instance, at one point in time in the early church age, we have had people who had gifts of healing and of tongues. We have had linguistic geniuses in the past handle translation duties; we have had people risk their lives in various ways to get God's Word out of the hands of those who would hide it and into the hands of the people. We have had great archeologists and historians and philologists who have helped to round out our understanding of each jot and tittle in the Bible. You remove a hundred so so men from history and I would have nothing to teach you; or my teaching would not be a quarter as rich as it is.

**"These are the garments which they will make: a breastplate and an ephod and a robe and a coat of checker work; a turban and a girdle; and they will make consecrated garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve Me as priests. [Exodus 28:4]**

This verse is just a shopping list, giving no details, just enumerating the items which will have to be made. This would be perfect to do in *list form*.

**"And they will receive gold and blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen. [Exodus 28:5]**

All these things represent different aspects of our Lord's ministry. As we have seen, the colors go far beyond the mere keeping of the law; far beyond mere redemption.

## The Ephod

**"And they will make the ephod of gold or blue and purple of scarlet and of fine twined linen skillfully crafted. [Exodus 28:6]**

An ephod is a vest, armless and close-fitting which usually extended below the hips.

**"There will be two shoulder-pieces attached to it upon the two edges that it may be joined together. [Exodus 28:7]**

So this vestiture was open at the head and the shoulders and arms and there were shoulder pieces which kept it in place.

**"And the skillfully woven band upon it of the same workmanship from the same material of gold, blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen. [Exodus 28:8]**

Scarlet is still two words; one for the worms from which it was made and one for the word *scarlet*, *crimson*. This waistband apparently held the ephod to the priest's body.

**"And you will take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel [Exodus 28:9]**

These are the names of the twelve tribes. Because of their nomadic lifestyle and because they were able to keep only a few things as slaves, some Hebrews developed the art of engraving and jewelry making. In other words they had to deal in smaller items.

**"Six of their names one the one stone and the names of the remaining six on the second, in the order of their birth. [Exodus 28:10]**

The oldest son is the first one of his new generation in his family and he often sets the pattern or the example for those who are to follow him; therefore, the firstborn is given some pre-eminence.

**"You will engrave the two stones [as] the work of a stone engraver, like seal-ring engravings with the names of the sons of Israel in settings of filigree [or, plaitings] of gold you will enclose them. [Exodus 28:11]**

Notice that all of these things were to be made of the best material without any shoddy workmanship. Everything was to be done professionally. From my meager understanding of things to do with jewelry, it sounds as though the gold is more than just gold-plating as we know it, but more like many gold strands wrapped about it individually (but it is hard to tell; the words difficult for me).

The stones, representing Israel, were placed in the gold settings, which represent the deity of Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

**"And you will set the two stones upon the shoulders-pieces of the ephod as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; and Aaron will bear their names before Y<sup>e</sup>howah upon his two shoulders for remembrance. [Exodus 28:12]**

I think that the tribes of Israel can remember who they are; I believe that it is a sign to God for Him to remember Israel, because there will be times that He will wish that He hadn't chosen them (these feelings are all anthropopathisms describing the motivations and actions of God in terms of human feelings that we might have a better frame of reference. The reason that Aaron wore the names of the tribes of Israel rather than someone else is that he, as the high priest, represented all of Israel.

**"And you will make the settings of gold. [Exodus 28:13]**

The two stones are on each of Aaron's shoulders, where God can look down upon Aaron and see the names of the tribes of Israel.

**"And you will make (them) two chains of pure gold, twisted; and you will attach the corded chains to the settings. [Exodus 28:14]**

The setting of gold and these chains all represent God and God's plan for history of Israel.

## **The Breastplate**

**"And you will make a breastplate of judgment; of skilled craftsmanship like the work of the ephod, you will make it; of gold, blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen you will make it. [Exodus 28:15]**

The high priest will be covered with things which represent Jesus Christ our Lord to the world. The NIV translates the *breastplate of judgement [or, justice]* as *breast piece for making decisions*. A judge spent his entire day making one decision [or, judgement] after another. A dispute which was not easily discerned by the Law was brought to him. He rendered the final decision. This breastplate was used in the same way—it was used to render difficult decisions.

**"It will be a rectangle: two spans in length and a span in breadth. [Exodus 28:16]**

I've taken great liberties with the rendering of this verse. The word I've translated *rectangle* could be square (as in Exodus 27:1 30:2) or rectangular (1Kings 7:5).

A span need not be a particular size, but this could set up a ratio instead. However, as a measurement, it was roughly half a cubit (the distance between a thumb and a finger on an outstretched hand).

**"And you will place in it a setting of stones: four rows [of] stones: a row of sardius (carnelian), topaz and carbuncle (the first row). [Exodus 28:17]**

Sardius is a translucent stone, which will reflect brown to orange-brown light but is deep red by transmitted light. It is found rarely in the scriptures (Rev. 21:20). Topaz looks like yellow varieties of quartz and we sometimes find it translated by the word *chrysolite*. A carbuncle is a fiery colored precious stone; probably a garnet.

**"And the second row: an emerald, a sapphire and a diamond. [Exodus 28:18]**

One of the most valuable of the gemstones, emeralds are deep green and occasionally a rich yellow-green in color. Sapphires are blue precious stones and they are, next to the diamond, the hardest naturally occurring mineral. A diamond is, of course, the hardest naturally occurring mineral, and the most desired of all stones. It is made of pure carbon and generally is found in the form of octahedral crystals.

**"And the third row: a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst. [Exodus 28:19]**

A jacinth is often called a hyacinth today and it is a transparent gemstone, usually red in color, although it can be orange or brown. Sometimes a bluish gem is translated with this name. An agate contains alternating layers of various colors, usually white, blue and pale brown. An amethyst is a violet or purple quartz, transparent. It is an ornamental or a gem stone.

**"And the fourth row, a beryl and an onyx and a jasper. Their setting will be set in gold. [Exodus 28:20]**

A beryl is a mineral that can come in a variety of different colors. It is usually a pale green, but it can be deep green, blue, yellow, brown, pink or white. Onyx stones are similar to agates in that they may be many layers of different colors, although these layers are of uniform width and they are generally black and white. A jasper stone is impure and it can be red, brown or yellow (and occasionally a number of other different colors). Generally speaking it is opaque (which appears to contradict Rev. 21:11 where one is said to be translucent); however, there could be impurities making it translucent and it could be just a description or an analogy.

**"And the stones will be with the names of the twelve sons of Israel according to their names. They will be engravings of a signet-ring each with its name, for the twelve tribes. [Exodus 28:21]**

Each tribe is a jewel in God's sight—not because of any inherent worth or value but because of our Lord's death on their behalf on the cross. The various gem stones indicate strikingly different personalities.

**"And for the breastplate you will make twisted chains like cords of pure gold. [Exodus 28:22]**

The twisted cords of gold refer to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy spirit.

**"And you will make two rings of gold for the breastplate and place the two rings on the two edges of the breastplate. [Exodus 28:23]**

This is going to make it possible to wear this breastplate.

**"And you will place the two cords of gold in the two rings upon the edges of the breastplate. [Exodus 28:24]**

The cords represent the Godhead and they are intermingled with the future of Israel and with what Israel should do.

**"And you will attach the two edges of the two cords to the two settings of the filigree and so attach [the] shoulder-piece of the ephod in front. [Exodus 28:25]**

The high priest used this for guidance, since they did not have the full canon of Scripture nor did they have the Holy Spirit indwelling them.

**"And you will make two rings of gold and put at the ends of the breastplate on its edge which on [is] on the side of the ephod inside. [Exodus 28:26]**

Since the breastplate is going to be rather heavy, it will need to be secured all the way around.

**"And you will make two rings of gold and attach them on the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod to the lower portion in front close by at its joining above the band of the ephod. [Exodus 28:27]**

Here they are going to attach the breastplate to the ephod.

**"And they will bind the breastplate by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue that it may lie upon the skillfully woven band of the ephod so that the breastplate will not come loose from the ephod. [Exodus 28:28]**

It sounds as though this breastplate will completely cover the ephod.

**"So Aaron will bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goes into the holy place to remembrance before Y<sup>e</sup>howah continually. [Exodus 28:29]**

Again, even though God is omniscient, this breastplate of remembrance is for Him because there are things that Israel will do that will, if we look at this on a human level, cause God to want to forget that He chose the Hebrews.

Aaron, as representative before God for the entire nation of Israel, wore the names engraved on the stones and on his breastplate over his heart (this might be the same list of names?).

**"And you will put in the breastplate of judgement the Urim and the Thummim; and they will be upon Aaron's heart when he goes in before Y<sup>e</sup>howah and Aaron will bear the judgement of the people of Israel upon his heart before Y<sup>e</sup>howah continually. [Exodus 28:30]**

These two words, *Urim and Thummim*, occur together here, Leviticus 8:8 Deuteronomy 33:8, Ezra 2:63 (parallel passage to Ezra in Neh. 7:65). Urim is found alone in Num. 27:21 1Samuel 28:6. They have been translated as proper names because their actual meaning has been lost in history. The definite article is used in almost every reference, which indicates to us that these are not proper names. The traditional explanation is that these are stones kept in the pouch of the breastplate drawn out to indicate what Israel should do. Thieme refers to them, if I recall right, as the breastplate itself; but with a similar purpose.

When Y<sup>e</sup>howah chose Joshua to succeed Moses, God said, **"Furthermore, he will stand before Eleazar the priest, who will inquire on his behalf by the judgment of the Urim before Y<sup>e</sup>howah."** (Num. 27:21a) Therefore, the priest was to use the Urim to inquire on behalf of Joshua.

In this context, there is nothing specific—it is a look into the future and God is speaking in generalities, indicating that this will be a customary thing to do to determine divine direction for Israel. However, when a leader of Israel gets too far out of fellowship, then God breaks all communication with that leader. **When Saul inquired of the Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets** (1Samuel 28:6). Therefore, these two verses associate the Urim with divine guidance.

*Breastplate* could possibly mean *breast-pouch*, and the Urim and Thummim could be placed inside this pouch and drawn out to determine God's will. We have only educated guesses as to what exactly these Urim and Thummim were and how exactly they operated; Zodhiates reasonably notes that this was a deliberate omission so that we would not be tempted to make counterfeits of them in order to obtain divine guidance. You will notice that they are not mentioned whatsoever between the early monarchy and the post-exilic period of Israel's history, as God spoke to Israel during that time through His prophets; therefore, Urim and Thummim were unnecessary. Today, because we have the filling of the Holy Spirit and God's complete Word, we do not need to have any kind of device to guide us in our lives.

The NIV points out the Urim begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet (aleph) and Thummim begins with the last letter (taw), which makes this designation not unlike the *alpha and the omega*, a designation of Jesus Christ found in Revelation.

There are several theories as to what Urim and Thummim mean (none seem to address the fact that these words are likely plural (as they have the plural *im* ending). Most of them say that these are a couple of stones which, when drawn out of the pouch, gave direction as to God's will. For more information to be examined in the future, *The New Bible Dictionary*, p. 1306. It is possible that Urim and Thummim is merely a collective name for the stones on this breastplate.

## The Robe

**"And you will make the robe of the ephod all of blue. [Exodus 28:31]**

Here we have a problem with the colors—blue represents the heavens and violet represent royalty and we are not certain which color is referred to here. This robe was worn under the ephod.

**"And it will have an opening for the head in the midst; there will be a border to the opening round about, the work of a weaver—like the opening of a garment there will be to it; it will not be torn. [Exodus 28:32]**

The way this garment is to be sewn is to preclude the tearing (or cutting?) of a hole for the head; the material will not be torn. All of this is to be professionally done.

**"And you will make on its hem pomegranate of blue and purple and scarlet around its hem, with bells of gold between them [and] around. [Exodus 28:33]**

The hem of the priests' clothing was to be quite colorful and decorative.

**"A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate on the hems of the robe all around. [Exodus 28:34]**

I am not certain at this time what the significance is of the bell or the pomegranate. The repetition means that these two objects would alternate on the hem of the robe.

**"And it will be upon Aaron when he ministers and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy place before Y<sup>e</sup>howah and when he comes out, so he will not die. [Exodus 28:35]**

Apparently, the hem will make a noise which God must hear when Aaron enters into the holy place. This garment represents Jesus Christ, the only one allowed into the holy place and then into the holy of holies. The Jewish tradition states that a rope was tied to the ankle of the high priest and if we could not longer hear the sound of this bell, then it would be assumed that he died and he would be pulled out by the rope (no one else could enter the holy of holies and live). The high priest must do everything just right in the holy of holies to avoid the sin unto death. **And he will place the incense on the fire before Y<sup>e</sup>howah, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, so that he does not die (Lev. 16:13).**

## The Turban and the Tunic

**"And you will make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it like the engraving of a signet *Holy to [or, in regards to] Y<sup>e</sup>howah*. [Exodus 28:36]**



This golden plate will be marked consecrated to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

**"And you will fasten it by a cord of blue. It will be on the turban—on the front of the turban will it be. [Exodus 28:37]**

The pure gold plate is Jesus Christ, and He is holy in regards to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

**"It will be upon Aaron's forehead and Aaron will bear [the] guilt incurred in the holy offering which the people of Israel hallow as all their holy gifts and it will be upon his forehead always so that they may be accepted before Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 28:38]**

A continual theme in the Old Testament is the bearing of one person's guilt or iniquity by another. The parallel is obvious: Aaron is the high priest of Israel and he has taken upon himself the guilt of the people of Israel. **There are those who offer the gift according to the Law; who serve [as] a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things (Hebrews 8:4b–5a).** Now He [Jesus] said to them, "These are My Words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44) And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His would you were healed (1Peter 2:24). He [Jesus] is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him because He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; Who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for those of the people because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself (Hebrews 7:25–27).

**"And you will weave the coat in checker work of fine linen and you will make a turban of fine linen and you will make a girdle embroidered with needlework. [Exodus 28:39]**

This tunic or coat was worn underneath the robe, which was underneath the ephod.

### The Priestly Garments for Aaron's Sons

**"And for Aaron's sons you will make coats and you will make girdles for them and you will make caps for them for glory and for honor [or, distinction] [Exodus 28:40]**

Those who represented God stood out apart from the others of Israel.

Part of the translation in v. 41 is unfortunate.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | ...and [you] shall anoint them and ordain and sanctify them...                              |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...and [thou] shalt anoint them and install them and hallow them...                         |
| KJV, NRSV                       | ...and [thou] shalt anoint them and consecrate them, and sanctify them...                   |
| NASB                            | ...and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them...                         |
| Owen's Translation              | ...and [you] shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them...                       |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ...and [thou] hast anointed them, and has consecrate their hand, and has sanctified them... |

Young's translation hints at the actual meaning and both *The Emphasized Bible* and the NASB in the footnote indicate that this should read not *ordain them* but to *fill their hand*. We find the same phrase with the same morphology (the verb *fill* is in the Piel perfect) in Exodus 29:9 Leviticus 21:10 Num. 3:3 2Kings 9:24 29:31 Psalm 129:7 Ezekiel 43:26. A similar construction but different use is found in 1Kings 8:15, 24 and 2Chronicles 6:4 where the reference is to fulfilled prophecy, fulfilled by God. In Psalm 129:7, this phrase refers to prosperity or abundance (actually, the antithesis, since it occurs with the negative). Exodus 29:9 gives a better feel for what this phrase means: **"And you will bring his [Aaron's] sons and place tunics on them; and you will gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and place headgear on them and they will have the priesthood by a perpetual statute.**

In this way, you will fill the hands of Aaron and his sons." (Exodus 29:8–9) That is, Moses goes through the ceremonies identifying them and indicating that they are the ones to serve in the priesthood; he places upon them the sacred clothing for glory and honor; and, in this way, fills their hands—that is, gives them full responsibility in this spiritual realm. Therefore, as an *interpretation*, the word *install* (from *The Emphasized Bible*) is good, or *appointed to fill a position*; and *fill their hands* is the correct literal translation. See also Leviticus 16:32 Judges 17:5, 12.

**"And you will put them up Aaron your brother and upon his sons with him and you will anoint them and ordain them [lit., fill their hand] and consecrate them that they may serve me as priests. [Exodus 28:41]**

There was more to the priesthood than just be a descendant of Aaron's. Priests had to be anointed, ordained and consecrated. The anointing speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit (however, it means to anoint with oil). Ordaining means to give to them great responsibilities. Consecration means that they are set aside to God for this purpose. So it is with our Lord Jesus Christ. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.*" (Luke 4:18–19, 21b and Isaiah 61:1) *The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind: "You are a priest forever."* So much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant and the priests on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, hold His priesthood permanently (Hebrews 7:21b–24 and Psalm 110:4). *"You are My Son; today I have begotten You."* (Hebrews 5:5b and Psalm 2:7).

**"And you will make for them linen undergarments to cover naked flesh they will reach from loins to thighs. [Exodus 28:42]**

Man in his humanity must be completely covered when approaching God.

**"And they will be upon Aaron and upon his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur iniquity and die. [This is a] perpetual statute for him and for his descendants after him." [Exodus 28:43]**

This verse is a summation of chapter 28.

We will cover the **Doctrines of the Priesthood** and of the **High Priest** when we get to Exodus 30:21.

# EXODUS 29

## Exodus 29:1–46

### Outline of Chapter 29:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Vv. 1–46  | <b>The consecration of the priests</b>                                   |
| Vv. 10–25 | <b>The consecration of the priests: the sacrificial offerings</b>        |
| Vv. 26–28 | <b>The consecration of the priests: the wave offerings</b>               |
| Vv. 29–30 | <b>The consecration of the priests: the wearing of the holy garments</b> |
| Vv. 31–34 | <b>The consecration of the priests: food for the priests</b>             |
| Vv. 35–46 | <b>The consecration of the priests: seven days of offerings</b>          |

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| v. 5  | <b>Aaron's Priestly Garments</b>             |
| v. 33 | <b>Scofield Reference Notes on Atonement</b> |

**Introduction:** Chapter 29 gives the exact things which Moses had to do to ceremonially cleanse and consecrate Aaron and his sons. This was actually done in Leviticus 8. These priest offerings were to be done regularly, with the installment of a new High Priest.

### The Consecration of the Priests

**"Now this is the thing which you will do to them to consecrate them that they may serve me as priests: Take one young bull and two rams without blemish. [Exodus 29:1]**

Even though this is all about Aaron and his sons, they themselves are not good enough to serve as priests to God. There had to be more to it. Ceremonially, because they were people with old sin natures, they had to be cleansed. If they were to represent man to God then they had to be clean. The cleansing process as always, involved animals which were without spot, blemish or defect, to die on their behalf (or in their stead).

**"And [take] unleavened bread and unleavened cakes mixed with oil and unleavened wafers spread<sup>75</sup> with oil; you will make them of fine wheat flour. [Exodus 29:2]**

Oil speaks of the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit revealed the gospel to the onlookers sometimes mysteriously, that they would believe in God the Son—Y<sup>e</sup>howah, during the Old Testament dispensation. The unleavened bread and cakes refer to pure, unadulterated doctrine; God's perfect truth revealed through them by means of the Holy Spirit.

**"And you will place them in one basket and bring them into the basket and the bull and the two rams. [Exodus 29:3]**

Those in the priesthood also had to be exposed to the gospel. Like anyone, they might view it as ritual without any reality and they might grasp its significance. In any case, God gave them the gospel also.

**"And you will bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. [Exodus 29:4]**

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<sup>75</sup> This is the same word translated *anoint* in v. 8

The washing with water can represent the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5), the washing of the word (Eph. 5:26), and the washing of the Holy Spirit as a restoration to fellowship (1John 1:9). In this context, their washing is salvation and in regards to the washing of the laver (Exodus 30:18–21), that washing is daily cleansing from personal sins.

In any case, the priest is dirty in God's sight and must be cleansed. Even though there is a religious hierarchy of sorts, God does not intend for the priests to see themselves as above the people. They are fallen souls just as are the other Hebrews and require redemption also. A pastor-teacher is the same way. He has an old sin nature, he had to be saved by grace without works or even promise of same. Any evangelist and any man of great spiritual import came the same way—without merit, through Jesus Christ, the Son. **Let us draw near to God with a true heart in complete confidence from doctrine, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water** (Hebrews 10:22). **And corresponding to that [Noah and his family delivered in the ark], [what] baptism<sup>76</sup> [symbolizes] now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1Peter 2:21).** For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; Who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for those of the people, because He did this once for all when He offered up Himself. For [you see], the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, [appoints] a Son, made perfect forever (Hebrews 7:26–28).

**"And you will take the garments and place on Aaron the coat and the robe of the ephod and the breastpiece and put on him (with) the skilfully woven band of the ephod. [Exodus 29:5]**

Many of the older translations use the word *gird*, which does not communicate a lot. This particular Hebrew word is found only twice: here and in Leviticus 8:7 and it is the corresponding verb to the Hebrew word for ephod in the same way that *gird* relates to *girdle*. I used the verb *put*; the word *belt* would have functioned equally well. What we should cover here is the **Doctrine of the Priest's Clothing—not finished yet!!**

The priestly garments of Aaron were put on in the reverse order of the instructions for making them:

### Aaron's Priestly Garments

- 1) They first put on the linen undergarments (Exodus 28:42)—not mentioned here, but understood.
- 2) Then the coat, which was an oriental long garment made of fine linen (Exodus 28:39)
- 3) And the robe of the ephod, a long seamless robe made of linen dyed blue (or violet) was put on next (Exodus 28:31–35). This is the robe with the pomegranites and bells alternately embroidered on the bottom; a wide belt, or girdle secured this robe (Exodus 28:39–40).
- 4) Next was the ephod, a two-piece affair held together by two shoulder straps and a band at the bottom. The ephod was made of gold, blue (or violet), purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen (Exodus 28:6–30 39:1–21 Leviticus 8:7–8). On the shoulders were two onyx stones, set in gold, with the names of the twelve tribes engraved on them. Similar ephods were worn by David (2Samuel 6:14), the priests of Nob (1Samuel 22:18) and Samuel (1Samuel 2:18). Just as the high priest bore before God the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, our high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, bears out names before God the Father.
- 5) Over this was worn the breastplate, held on by golden chains from the shoulder portions of the ephod (Exodus 28:15–21, 29–30). On this breastplate were the 12 stones (in four rows), each of which represented a tribe of Israel. In a square pouch was the Urim and Thummim, possibly two stones used to determine God's will.
- 6) On their heads they placed a turban made of line linen, sporting a gold plate in front with the engraved words: *Holiness to Y<sup>e</sup>howah* (Exodus 28:36–37).

<sup>76</sup> As a side note, the baptism of our Lord by John, represented complete identification with man and our Lord's identification with the plan and purpose of God

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"And you will set the turban on his head and place the holy crown upon the turban. [Exodus 29:6]**

This crown is the plate of pure gold from Exodus 28:36, I believe.

**"And you will take the anointing oil and pour [it] on his head and anoint him. [Exodus 29:7]**

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not indwell the saints, but *anointed* them, you might say. This was symbolic of the ministry of God the Holy Spirit; in the Old Testament, it refers to the enduement of the Holy Spirit. The word *anoint* is *mâshach* (מָשַׁח) [pronounced *maw-SHAHKH*] and it means *to smear, to apply, to anoint*. It refers both to the physical act of putting oil on someone and to the ceremonial act recognizing Aaron and his sons as priests.

**"Then you will bring his sons and place coats upon them. [Exodus 29:8]**

The same ceremony is repeated with Aaron's sons.

**"And you will belt them, Aaron and his sons, with sashes; and place upon them headgear. [The priesthood will be theirs by perpetual statute; so you will appoint to a position [or, confer the priesthood upon; lit., fill the hands of] Aaron and his sons. [Exodus 29:9]**

The office of a priest is a solemn office and the ceremony in connection with it must also be solemn.

### The Consecration of the Priests: the Sacrificial Offerings

**"Then you will bring the bull before the tent of meeting and Aaron and his sons will lay their hands upon the head of the bull. [Exodus 29:10]**

The entire congregation will see that even Aaron and his sons must have their sins taken away ceremonially. They are not placed in some sinless position above the rest of the congregation. A bull is a sin offering (see v. 14). When they put their hands on the head of the bull, their sins were transferred from themselves to the bull, which becomes the sin bearer (obviously a representative image of Jesus Christ). The bull, in his death, took upon himself the sins of Aaron and his sons, and bore those sins and symbolically paid for them. The priests must be clean in order to offer sacrifices on behalf of others.

**"And you will kill the bull before Y<sup>e</sup>howah at the door of the tent of the meeting. [Exodus 29:11]**

An innocent sacrifice must die to take upon itself their sins.

**"And you will take part of the blood of the bull and place it upon the protrusions of the altar with your finger and the rest of the blood you will pour out at the base of the altar. [Exodus 29:12]**

To someone who does not realize that there is an exact parallel between the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of these animals, all of this would seem rather primitive and macabre. However, the animal sacrifices were meant to be shocking and bloody. These were extreme measures as required by God. We are not cleansed by anything less than the blood of Christ.

**"And you will take all the fat that covers the entrails and the appendage of the liver and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and burn [these] upon the altar. [Exodus 29:13]**



The actual structure of this sentence ends with *and you will incense the altar [or, make fragrant the altar]*. The entire animal is judged and offered to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, including that which cannot be seen. When we hear the word *fat*, it conjures up something entirely different than what is meant here. *Fat* is the choicest portion of the bull; it is the very best meat of the bull. Jesus Christ is the very best that God had to offer. When He dies on our behalf, He was the choicest from God.

**"But the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung, you will burn with first outside the camp; it is a sin [offering]. [Exodus 29:14]**

The word *offering* does not occur in this verse; however, the Bible often uses the word *sin* instead of *sin offering* to show that the two are so closely intertwined (Genesis 4:7 Exodus 30:10 Leviticus 4:3 6:25 Num. 8:8).

This verse parallels the death of Jesus Christ. Even though the right (in fact, the duty) of capital punishment was conferred upon the Israelites with the Law, by the time our Lord was sacrificed, He was taken outside the camp of Israel, as it were, and placed on the cross by the Romans. **For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest for sin are burned outside the camp. Therefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach** (Hebrews 13:11–13).

**"Then you will take one of the rams and Aaron and his sons will lay their hands upon the head of the ram. [Exodus 29:15]**

There should be no question within the camp that there must be a covering for the sins of Aaron and his sons. They all have old sin natures. Whenever some religious icon in Christianity is portrayed as sinless, this causes confusion among both Christians and heathen alike. All men are fallen.

**"And you will slaughter the ram and take its blood and throw [its blood] against the altar round about. [Exodus 29:16]**

The sacrificial animals were not tortured in their deaths; however, once they were dead, the ceremonials gave testimony to a violent judgement.

**"Then you will cut the ram into pieces and was its entrails and its legs and place [these] on its pieces and on its head. [Exodus 29:17]**

God judged the entirety of the animal.

**"And burn the entire ram upon the altar; it is a burnt offering to Y<sup>e</sup>howah—a pleasing [or, soothing, tranquilizing] odor, it is an offering by fire to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 29:18]**

Fire also stands for judgement. In this verse and several others in this chapter, the anthropopathism of smelling is attributed to God the Father; this is to convey to us divine information on a human level.

**"And you will take the second ram and Aaron and his sons will lay their hands upon the head of the ram. [Exodus 29:19]**

When this ceremony is finished, there will be no question in the minds of the congregation that their priests require ceremonial cleansing, just as they do.

**"And you will slaughter the ram and take part of its blood and place [it] upon the tip of the [right] ear of Aaron and upon the tips of the right ears of his sons and upon the thumbs of their right hands and upon the great toes of their right feet and throw the rest of the blood against the altar, round about. [Exodus 29:20]**

Aaron and his sons are all sinful and require God's covering for their sins. They must come into contact with the blood of the sacrifice, as we must come into contact with the blood of Jesus Christ (which we do be believing in Him and His sacrificial death on our behalf on the cross). The blood on their ears symbolizes hearing God's Word and being guided by the Holy Spirit; the blood colors all that we hear from His Word. The blood on the toes and the hands refers to service to God and their service to the people of Israel.

**"Then you will take part of the blood that is on the altar and of the anointing oil and sprinkle [them] upon Aaron and his garments and upon his sons and his sons' garments with him and he will be sanctified—he and his garments and his sons and his sons' garments with him. [Exodus 29:21]**

We have spent a full chapter discussing the beauty and the intricacy of the clothes that Aaron and his sons would wear and notice that even this must be stained with the blood for the sacrifice. No matter what a scholar a particular Bible teacher is; unless they have been washed by the blood of Jesus Christ, they have nothing to teach; they cannot minister to the people of God.

**"And you will also take the fat of the ram and the fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails and the appendage of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them and the right thigh—it [is] for a ram of installation [lit., fullness]. [Exodus 29:22]**

In this verse, in Owen's translation, we have the word *ordination* (also translated this way by the NASB and the NIV); it is *consecration* in the KJV and in Young's. However, the word which is found here occurs for only the second time in the Old Testament. It is *mīllu'īm* (מִלֻּאִים) [pronounced *mil-loo-EEM*]; it is found only in the plural and we have seen this word previously in Exodus 25:7 for stones *inset* in the ephod. The related feminine word is found in Exodus 28:17, 20 and all of these words are forms of the word we have been properly rendering *fill* [the hands]. However, you could look at a dozen of the best translations and not have a clue as to this word's correct rendering from the Hebrew.

**"And [take] one loaf of bread and one cake of bread with oil and one wafer out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 29:23]**

The bread symbolizes the Word of God, the oil the Holy Spirit, and the lack of leaven is the purity of the doctrine.

**"And you will place all these in the hands [lit., open palms] of Aaron and in the hands [open palms] of his sons and wave them for a wave offering before Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 29:24]**

You may wonder why God had them wave these things before Him. This is done as a reminder, so to speak, to God. It is not that God requires reminding; however, He is glorified when we go to Him in prayer and call Him on specific points of doctrine or demand specific promises that He has made to us in His Word. They held before God his uncorrupted Word (the unleavened bread and cakes) revealed by the Holy Spirit (the oil).

**"Then you will take them from their hands and burn [them] on the altar in addition to the burnt offering as a pleasing odor before Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and it [is] offering by fire to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 29:25]**

These items are an integral part of the ministry of Aaron and his sons. We may wonder why are the pomp and circumstance. Why did not God reveal as clearly in the Old Testament as He did in the New of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? He did, but these things were revealed by the Holy Spirit within the souls of those who were regenerated. For centuries, the exact method of God's redemption of man was revealed to millions of men, but not to Satan or his band of demons. This is how God could year after year have animals sacrificed, each sacrifice repeat with meaning which only those to whom the Spirit spoke understood; and those in opposition to His plan and His Word could not fully comprehend what was going on. This is why Satan was fully compliant to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. It was because of Satan's first advent and the fall of man that required Jesus to bear our sins and it was God taking that which outwardly would seem so evil and unjust, the death of the innocent on the cross; a chance for unregenerate man and for Satan to reveal their hatred for God

and all that God is, and take our Lord all the way to the cross in their evil, and for God the Father to take this act of evil and transform it into the most generous act of love and justice known in the history of the universe. Satan saw God's plan revealed before his eyes and he was even a part of evil, turned by God into good, taking our Lord to the cross; and who knows when he realized what God had done? However, all the way back to Adam and Eve, God's perfect love encased in His perfect righteousness and justice was revealed to all of mankind. Satan values and exalts his own intellect, yet it was not great enough to comprehend what every regenerated Jew and Gentile understood at salvation.

If you want to better understand how it is possible for the genius Satan and his minions of fallen angels to witness all of what is found in Israel's offerings without understanding, let me give you the example of Abraham offering up his son to God. Now, to us, we understand this to be a beautiful picture of God offering His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. However, to many unbelievers, this is all about human (or child) sacrifice. There have been many anti-Bible memes made about this incident, because they do not understand what this offering is all about (quite frankly, Abraham himself did not fully appreciate what he was about to do—for him, it was all about obedience).

So, just as many unbelievers can hear about Abraham being willing to offer up his son (he did not, by the way) and are horrified; so fallen angels and Satan could observe all of these blood offerings and never comprehend what God was communicating to His people.

### **The Consecration of the Priests: the Wave Offerings**

**"And you will take the breast of the ram of the installation [ceremony] of Aaron and wave it for a wave offering before Y<sup>e</sup>howah and it will be your portion. [Exodus 29:26]**

Even Moses must be sanctified before God as he carries within him an old sin nature.

**"And you will consecrate the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the priests' offering which is waved and which is offered [lit., lifted up] from the ram of ordination [lit., filling] since it is for Aaron and for his sons. [Exodus 29:27]**

Here we have the word correctly translated *consecrate*. It is the word qâdash (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DASH*] means *to set apart, to make holy, to consecrate, to honor as sacred, to hallow*. This is a separation from and a separation unto. Things which are consecrated are removed from their everyday, mundane use, and placed in special service to God; they carry with them a spiritual significance.

**"And it will come to pass for Aaron and his sons as their perpetual portion from the people of Israel for it is the priests' portion to be offered by the people of Israel from their peace offerings; it is their offering to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 29:28]**

In front of the entire congregation, it is important for them to recognize that Aaron and his sons all have feet of clay. We become confused in this era when we look to certain Christians expecting them to lead lives of perfection and we act devastated when we see their feet of clay. No man is perfect.

The portions alluded to in this verse is the portion of meat given to Aaron and his sons for their sustenance. There must be a certain amount of realism in the ministry of Aaron and his sons. They had to eat; they required some financial support. God required them to serve Him constantly so they couldn't carry an additional job to make ends meet. They were remunerated financially for this work and their food was provided through these sacrifices.

### The Consecration of the Priests: the Wearing of the Holy Garments

**"The holy garments of Aaron will be for his sons after him to be anointed in them and installed [lit, filled their hand] in them. [Exodus 29:29]**

Again, we have our words for filling up their hands.

**"The priest shall wear them seven days in his place from his sons when he comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the holy place. [Exodus 29:30]**

Seven is the number of perfection.

### The Consecration of the Priests: Food for the Priests

**"And you will take the ram of ordination [lit., filling] and boil its flesh in a holy place. [Exodus 29:31]**

**I do not know the spiritual connotation of boiling!** The *holy place*, however, is likely the courtyard of the tabernacle.

**"And Aaron and his sons will eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket at the door of the tent of meeting. [Exodus 29:32]**

They participate in salvation as does everyone else.

**"And they will eat those things by which atonement was made [by them] to install them [lit., to fill their hand] and to consecrate them; but an outsider will not eat because they are holy. [Exodus 29:33]**

This is not a ritual for just anyone to participate in. Rituals in the Christian life are to illustrate reality and not for some ethereal spiritual feeling. If one participates just to go along with the culture, it is meaningless. The rituals here pertain to the ordination of the high priest and those in the priesthood. It is not designed to be a nice ritual. God is not sloppy in His plan.

See the **Doctrine of Atonement** ([Grace Bible Church](#)) ([Chafer Theological Seminary](#)).

### Scofield Reference Notes on Atonement

Hebrews kaphar, "to cover." The English word "atonement" (at-one-ment) is not a translation of the Hebrews kaphar, but a translator's interpretation. According to Scripture the legal sacrifice "covered" the offerer's sin and secured the divine forgiveness; according to the translators it made God and the sinner at-one. But the O.T. sacrifices did not at-one the sinner and God. "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." Hebrews 10:4. The Israelite's offering implied confession of sin and of its due desert, death; and God "covered" (passed over," Romans 3:25 his sin, in anticipation of Christ's sacrifice, which did, finally, "put away" the sins "done aforetime in the forbearance of God."

Atonement:

The biblical use and meaning of the word must be sharply distinguished from its use in theology. In theology it is term which covers the whole sacrificial and redemptive work of Christ. In the Old Testament atonement is the English word used to translate the Hebrew words which mean "cover," "coverings," or "to cover." Atonement

## Scofield Reference Notes on Atonement

(at-one-ment) is, therefore, not a translation of the hebrew, but a purely theologic concept. The Levitical offerings "covered" the sins of Israel until, and in anticipation of the Cross, but did not "take away" (Heb 10:4) those sins. These were the "sins done aforetime" ("covered" meantime by the Levitical sacrifices), which God "passed over" (Rom 3:25) for which "passing over" God's righteousness was never vindicated until, in the Cross, Jesus Christ was "set forth a propitiation."

From <http://bibleapps.com/commentaries/exodus/29-33.htm> accessed October 26, 2013  
and <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/cmt/sco/lev016.htm> accessed October 26, 2013.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"And if any of the flesh or of the bread for the anointment [lit., filling] remains until the morning, then you will burn the remainder with fire; it will not be eaten because it is holy. [Exodus 29:34]**

The gospel must be taken when given to us by God...we may not be given another chance. We understand the gospel once or twice or several times in our life as unbelievers; however, when we reject it, we lose the understanding of what the gospel says. It is revealed to us by God the Holy Spirit and only for a few minutes or, at best, a few hours. All spiritual information is spiritually discerned and we only understand it as unbelievers for a short time because the Holy Spirit to make it real to us acts as a human spirit (which unbelievers lack). Once the Holy Spirit leaves us (we reject God's Word), our understanding of God's Word in the form of the gospel is gone. This represents the gospel which is here today for us and gone tomorrow if we do not respond to it.

### The Consecration of the Priests: Seven Days of Offerings

**"Thus you will do to Aaron and to his sons according to all that I have commanded you; through seven days, you will ordain them. [Exodus 29:35]**

V. 35 both concludes what has gone before and lists some additional ritual which is a part of the ordination of the sons of Aaron.

**"And you will offer a bull as a sin offering every day for atonement [or, covering]; also, you will offer a sin offering for the altar when you make atonement upon it; and you will anoint it to consecrate it. [Exodus 29:36]**

Day after day, we see the sacrifice of animals on behalf of the sons of Aaron. Even the altar is spoken of as being anointed and consecrated.

**"Seven days you will make upon the altar and consecrate it and the altar will be the holy of holies; whatever touches the altar will become holy. [Exodus 29:37]**

It takes very little to be saved; so little here to become holy illustrates that. Jesus Christ is our altar, who has been purified and consecrated and anointed. He becomes our burnt offering.

**"This is what you will offer upon the altar: lambs, a year old, two day by day continually. [Exodus 29:38]**

It will appear as though there are animals being offered continually from the altar so that eventually, the necessity of the offering of an innocent animal will penetrate the psyche of the Israelites.



**"You will offer one lamb in the morning and the second lamb you will offer in the evening [lit., between the evenings (meaning) at dusk]. [Exodus 29:39]**

Each animal is an illustration of the one time Jesus gave Himself for us on His cross. This is where God instituted the offerings in the mornings and in the evenings, a tradition which was continued even during times of great apostasy (2 Kings 16:15).

**"And a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with beaten oil—a fourth of a hin; and a drink-offering—a fourth of a hin of wine—with the first lamb. [Exodus 29:40]**

As we have seen, the oil is the Holy Spirit and the wine stands for the blood of Christ. A tenth measure (or, a tenth of an ephah) is about two quarts (or two liters) and a fourth of a hin is approximately one quart. Wine represents prosperity and blessing by God (Genesis 27:28). The one receiving the wine also offered a portion of it back to God to indicate that he knows from whence the wine originated.

**"And the second lamb you will offer in the evening [lit., between the two evenings] and you will offer with it the according to the grain offering of the morning and according to its libration for a pleasing odor to Y<sup>e</sup>howah an offering by fire. [Exodus 29:41]**

The salvation of the unbeliever was always a pleasing odor to God the Father. The two offerings for the evening and for the morning were to be identical.

**"A continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tent of meeting before Y<sup>e</sup>howah—[that is] where I will meet with you (there); to speak to you there. [Exodus 29:42]**

We achieve fellowship with God through the death, burial and resurrection of His Son, and the payment for our sins.

**"And I will meet with the people of Israel there and it will be sanctified by My glory. [Exodus 29:43]**

Our fellowship with God always must be preceded by death. The references to God's glory often refer to His presence.

**"And I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; Aaron also and his sons will I consecrate to serve me as priests. [Exodus 29:44]**

All of these things are washed by the blood and set aside by our Lord.

**"And I will dwell among the people of Israel and I will be their God. [Exodus 29:45]**

God chose to have an intimate relationship with the nation of Israel, different from all countries and all cultures to that time and different throughout eternity. The personal relationship is not unlike our personal relationship to God at salvation.

**"And they will know that I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah their God who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them—I am Y<sup>e</sup>howah their God. [Exodus 29:46]**

Just as Jesus Christ took upon Himself the form of a man and physically dwelt among us; so did our Lord in His preincarnate form dwell with the people of Israel. It was a shadow of things to come. The deliverance from Egypt was a shadow of our salvation and the many particular deliverances that we would enjoy.

# Exodus 30

## Exodus 30:1–38

### Outline of Chapter 30:

- vv. 1–10 The altar of incense
- vv. 11–16 The half shekel atonement
- vv. 17–21 The bronze (or copper) laver
- vv. 22–33 The anointing oil
- vv. 34–38 The incense

Introduction: Chapter 30 covers two main topics: the altar of incense and the contribution of the atonement money.

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 10 **The Furniture of the Tabernacle and Jesus Christ**

#### Chapter Outline

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

#### The Altar of Incense

**"And you will make a burning of incense altar; you will make it of acacia wood.** [Exodus 30:1]

God must be satisfied by the sacrifice; He must be propitiated. When Jesus Christ died on behalf of us and our sins, God raised Him from the dead, indicating that He was satisfied with His death. God's acceptance of His Son's death for us is illustrated by the altar of incense. **And Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer and place it in fire from the altar and lay incense ; then bring it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for the wrath has gone forth from Y<sup>h</sup>owah, the plague has begun."** The Aaron took [it] as Moses had spoken and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he positioned the incense and made atonement for the people (Num. 16:46–47). See **The Doctrine of Incense—not finished yet!!**

The burning of incense can also be our prayers to God. **May my prayer be counted as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering** (Psalm 141:2). Actually, in that case, the prayer of the saint is analogous to the incense offering rather than the other way around. The idea is that the incense floats from earth on up into the heavens to reach the *nostrils* of God. **And when He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints** (Rev. 5:8). Our first prayer, or communication with God, is telling Him that we believe the gospel, that we believe in Jesus Christ. Those who mature continue to pray. **And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand** (Rev. 8:4).

The reason that incense burning first and foremost is representative of our Lord's work on the cross, is that only the priests were allowed to offer it. **As a reminder of the son of Israel that no stranger who is not of the descendants of Aaron should come near to burn incense before Y<sup>h</sup>owah; that he might not become like Korah and his company—just as the Lord had spoken to him through Moses** (Num. 16:40).

In v. 2, we must have some kind of a record. A preposition and one word are translated by 8 or 9 words:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>  | <b>It's horns will be of one piece with it.</b>  |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i> | <b>Of the same [shall be] the horns thereof.</b> |

NASB                      Its horns *shall be* of one piece with it.

The rest of the translations are similar. The preposition is min (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and it means *from out of, separated from, away f* Romans. It carries with it the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix. Then the dual feminine with a 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular suffix of the word qar<sup>e</sup>nayim (קַרְנַיִם) [pronounced *ker-nah-yihm*] and it means *protrusions, horns*. Literally it is *from it, its two protrusions*.

**"It will be a square; a cubit in length and a cubit deep; and two cubits high. From it, Its two protusions. [Exodus 30:2]**

This will be an 18"x18" square and stand three feet high; it will have the wood protruding in two places.

**"And you will overlay it with pure gold; its top and its sides [[lit., walls] round about and its protrusions; and you will make for it a molding of gold for around it. [Exodus 30:3]**

I am a bit confused why *protrusions* would be in the dual in v. 2 and the plural here. However, the plural does not preclude there being two of an item. The wood overlaid with gold is Jesus Christ, His humanity and His deity in view. The construction of the incense altar was completed in Exodus 37:25–26.

**"And you will make for it two golden rings from beneath its molding on two of its sides you will make [them] on its two sides and they will be holders [or, receptacles; lit. houses] for poles with which to carry it. [Exodus 30:4]**

The sacred furniture was never handled directly, but by two poles placed in the rings and it was carried in that way.

**"And you will make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. [Exodus 30:5]**

Every article of furniture and the things which relate to them are made from acacia wood overlaid with gold; what better way to illustrate the hypostatic union.

**"And you will place it before the veil that is by [lit., over, upon] the ark of the testimony before the mercy [lit., propitiatory] seat that is over the testimony where I will meet with you (there). [Exodus 30:6]**

God meets with His children at the point of Jesus Christ. Only in Him are all the conditions of God's perfect righteousness met. The curtain mentioned here separated the holy place from the holy of holies, where Y<sup>e</sup>howah was said to be. Only the high priest could ever go beyond this curtain into the holy of holies and that, only once a year.

**"And Aaron will burn on it fragrant incense every morning; he will burn it when he tends the lamps. [Exodus 30:7]**

The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ is without value unless it propitiates God the Father. If God the Father is not satisfied with His work on the cross, we are not saved.

**"And when Aaron sets up the lamps in the evening, he will burn perpetual incense before Y<sup>e</sup>howah throughout your generations. [Exodus 30:8]**

The salvation of our Lord is permanent, throughout all generations.

**"You will offer no unholy incense thereon nor burnt offering nor cereal offering; And you will not pour out a libation thereon. [Exodus 30:9]**

The altar of incense illustrated one aspect of salvation alone—God's satisfaction with the work of Jesus Christ. It was so important for the rituals to be carried out as God specifically designed them, that those who did not suffered the sin unto death for their disobedience (Lev. 10:1–3). A different incense implies that there is a different way in which God can be propitiated; that there might be a different sacrifice that would be a sweet savor to God. Each part of the tabernacle represents a different aspect of salvation; God does not intend for us to get them mixed up.

**"And Aaron will make atonement upon its protrusions once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement in the year; he will make atonement for us throughout your generations. It [is] most holy to Y<sup>e</sup>howah." [Exodus 30:10]**

The blood indicates what is required to satisfy God the Father—only Jesus' death for our sins would satisfy Him.

An annual atonement was made (1) so that no one thought that atonement to God actually occurred via a ritual repeated whenever necessary; and, (2) it occurred often enough to emphasize its importance and necessity. **Now you will have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses, he did (Lev. 16:34).**

Now might be a good time to summarize what we have so far.

### **The Furniture of the Tabernacle and Jesus Christ**

1. The Ark of the Covenant, was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The acacia wood speaks of the humanity of Jesus Christ and the gold speaks of His deity.
  - a. In the Ark was placed 3 items: Aaron's rod that budded, the book of the Law and the manna (Exodus 16:33–34 Num. 17:10 Deuteronomy 10:1–5 31:26 1Kings 8:9 Hebrews 9:4).
    - i. The book of the Law contains the offenses which we have committed against God. It also contain Jesus Christ in shadow form (as we have been studying).
    - ii. Aaron's rod that budded speaks of resurrection—the rod was a dead piece of wood and from it came life. This is Jesus Christ being raised from the dead; this is our lives being taken from death to life.
    - iii. The pot of manna speaks of God's provision for us. While we are on this earth, it is not simply a matter of, we are saved, we die, and then God provides for us. From our spiritual birth on, God's has provided for us, and He did so in eternity past.
  - b. Man was not to treat the Ark as an object of curiosity or as some sort of a good luck charm (see 1Samuel 4–7).
  - c. The Ark of the Covenant was kept in the Holy of Holies. Israel could not see the Ark, generally speaking (except when it led them in battle, as in Joshua 6). Exodus 26:34
  - d. On top of the Ark was the golden mercy seat, with the Cherubim observing. The Cherubim represent the angelic population which watch us and all that we do; the mercy seat speaks of Jesus Christ dying for our sins. Once a year, the High Priest, by himself, would enter into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat and offer up incense, speaking of the dead of Jesus Christ for our sins and the fact that this is acceptable to God as our offering. Leviticus 16
  - e. The people of Israel did not see Jesus Christ; He was future from them; therefore, the people of Israel did not see the Ark of the Covenant (the exception being, Joshua 6—as there have been a small number of believers in Israel's history who interacted with the Angel of Jehovah, Who is the Lord of Glory).
2. The table of showbread is also made of gold and acacia wood, speaking of the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. The loaves of bread baked fresh and kept there spoke of God's daily provisions (specifically for the 12 tribes of Israel, but this can be applied to His provisions for all of us). Exodus 25:23–30
3. The golden Lampstand speaks of Jesus Christ as being the light of the world (Exodus 25:31–40 Matthew 17:2 John 1:4–9 3:19 5:35 8:12). This could also speak of Israel as the light to the world as well (see Matthew 5:15–16).
4. The bronze altar, to which sacrifices were tied and offered up to God, obviously speaks of Jesus and His

## The Furniture of the Tabernacle and Jesus Christ

death on the cross. Exodus 27:1–8

5. The altar of incense, made of acacia wood and pure gold, speaks of the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ; the fragrant incense burned on the altar indicates that God is satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ. There is to be no strange incense offered here, as only the work of Jesus Christ is propitious. Exodus 30:1–9

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

#### The Half Shekel Atonement

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, saying,** [Exodus 30:11]

It is likely that what has been written between Exodus 25:1 was one entire session of dictation. This begins another session. Now, was this session more lengthy than it appears here and was there other material covered? Possibly. Possibly this would be other material found in Leviticus. However, I would be hard-pressed to figure out where this material was placed in this entire series of meetings between God and Moses.

**"When you take the census [lit., sum] of the people of Israel—in regard to their numbering—each will give a ransom for himself to Y<sup>e</sup>howah when you number them that there be no plague among them when you number them.** [Exodus 30:12]

God demands a ransom on behalf of those in the slave market of sin. This accomplishes two objectives: (1) we are active participants in our salvation insofar as our volition is concerned; that is, we must believe in Jesus Christ; and, (2) this money would go to support the priesthood.

**"Each who is numbered in the census will give this: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (twenty gerahs to the shekel); half a shekel as an offering to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** [Exodus 30:13]

The Hebrews had a money system in place in their culture based upon a weights of silver. It is unlikely that these are coins but rather this is a reference to silver by weight. So far, coins have not been found in the area of Palestine which date prior to 700 B.C. The Hebrews likely began using coined money around 500 B.C., and prior to that used a system of bartering which involved cattle, grain, spices and precious metals. The early mention of shekels and talents refers to weight and not coins (Genesis 23:15–16 1Chronicles 21:25).

Henry W. Soltau (quoted by Arno Gaebelin): *We learn from this division and analysis that the first section begins with the groans of the enslaved people in the house of bondage and ends with the song of redemption, sung by the redeemed and delivered nation. The beginning of the second section shows the redeemed people in the wilderness of Shur and describes their experiences; it ends with the finished work and the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle. Both sections are prophetic. Israel 's groans and captivity will end in deliverance. Their wilderness wanderings will yet terminate in a future of glory, with Jehovah in their midst.*

Soltau continues: *Another truth enunciated in this type is, that salvation must be an individual, personal matter; between the soul and God. Every man has to bring his own half shekel. One of the devices of Satan at the present day--and it is spread far and wide--is the way in which he obscures this truth, by inducing whole communities to believe they are Christians; made such, either by baptism, or by some formal profession of religiousness; and placing, in the lips of thousands, "Our Saviour," and "Our Father"; and thus beguiling them into the thought that they are included in a general redemption of mankind, which affects the whole human race.*



Soltau concludes: *The half shekel was to be of silver; the unalloyed, unadulterated metal. Three things are probably here presented to us in type: the Lord Jesus as God--as the pure and spotless One--and as giving His life a ransom for many. The silver, being a solid, imperishable precious metal.*<sup>77</sup>

Peter makes the apt observation: ...**knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.** (1Peter 1:18–19)

There is more information in the Annotated Bible.

**"Everyone who is numbered in the census from twenty years old and upward will give Y<sup>e</sup>howah's offering.** [Exodus 30:14]

By age twenty, the Hebrews were capable of making informed adult decisions concerning their lives (implied in Ezra 3:8). This included military service (Num. 1:3) and their eternal salvation (2Chronicles 31:17). The Israelites who rebelled against God in their grumblings against Him, would die in the desert; those who were twenty and older (Num. 14:29). This was virtually all of Israel who left Egypt as adults (Num. 32:11). Those who left Egypt as children were very different as a generation.

**"The rich will not give more and the poor will not give less than the half shekel. when you give Y<sup>e</sup>howah's offering to make atonement for yourselves.** [Exodus 30:15]

This was a system of taxation and note that God did not propose graduated levels of taxes. In fact, in this situation, they did not even give a percentage of their incomes; they all gave a specific amount. Everyone who is saved had Jesus Christ die for all of their sins and every man is required to believe in Jesus Christ.

**"And you will take the money of the atonement from the people of Israel and you will appoint it for the service of the tent of meeting that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before Y<sup>e</sup>howah so as to make atonement for yourselves."** [Exodus 30:16]

Every man must participate; here, it was by giving a half shekel, which illustrated individual faith in the Revealed God (Jesus Christ) and the partial payment for their sins (a shekel is the price of atonement?). Throughout the Levitical system, there would be various payments offered up for sins.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Bronze (or Copper) Laver

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, saying,** [Exodus 30:17]

Throughout God's Word, God makes it clear that He is speaking. The Bible is either the most elaborate sham in human history or it is God's Word. Like Jesus Christ, there is not a middle ground. The Bible does not list a few options in life which the author's thought were praiseworthy; the Bible comes right out and makes claim to being God's Word. It is either making a true and actual claim or it is a lie perpetuated by its authors. However, one cannot pass off the Bible as simply a very good and religious book and not God's Word.

There is a very different quality between the Bible and other religious books. The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years (that is a conservative estimate; I believe that, in truth, the Bible began to be recorded with Adam. I believe that each generation memorized what his portion was and took it to the next generation. So, it is my thought that the Bible was recorded over a period of 3000–4000 years. Maybe there were only 40 authors; but

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<sup>77</sup> Arno Clement Gaebelein, *The Annotated Bible*; 1919; from e-Sword, Exodus Chapter Commentary (Appendix A).

I would suggest that about 10 different men were involved in the recording of the book of Genesis. Whether we are talking about 40 or 50 authors, it still comes down to, this was never the vision of a single individual or a group of individuals with a specific set of goals (like getting religious power). This kind of thinking had to be much more grand than that.

The book of Mormon, for instance, was the work of a single man. I cannot recall if he put together the Doctrines and Covenants or not, but, at most, we are talking about two men who gained religious authority by their writings, Islam is the work of one man. Now Mohammed claims to stand upon Hebrew and Greek writings of Scripture, but Islam teaches a theology which is fundamentally opposed to Christianity (or even to Judaism). If you take Mohammed out of the picture, there is no Islam, just as like, if you took Joseph Smith out of the picture, there is no Mormonism.

What is fascinating is, if you removed Jesus from the picture, there is no Christianity—but (1) Jesus Himself wrote nothing down and (2) He gained no temporal power by His life or by the doctrines which He taught (a majority of these doctrines come straight out of the Old Testament).

**"You will also make a laver of bronze [possibly, copper] for washing and you will place it between the tent of meeting and (between) the altar and you will place water in it. [Exodus 30:18]**

Even after salvation, man sins and we require a daily washing from sin (in many cases, a minute by minute washing from sin). Our Lord illustrated this in John 13, when He washed the disciples' feet. Peter confused the meaning of this ritual and desired for our Lord to wash him entirely. **"He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet; but is completely clean; and you are clean."** (John 13:10a). This cleaning is more effective when accompanied by the washing of the Word (which removes scar tissue from our souls): **That He might sanctify her [the church], having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word; that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless** (Eph. 5:26–27). This bronze basin was made from mirrors given from the women (Exodus 38:8).

Now would be a good time to take a look at the **Placement of the Furniture in the Tabernacle**. See the **Model of the Tabernacle** (which represents Jesus Christ and the cross) ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), which shows how the furniture was placed.

**"And Aaron and his sons will wash their hands and their feet out of it. [Exodus 30:19]**

Even those chosen by God to represent Himself are not completely devoid of sin; and must be cleansed regularly from sin.

**"When they go into the tent of meeting, they will wash with water and they will not die; and [they will wash] when they come near the altar to minister to burn an offering by fire to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 30:20]**

All spiritual service must be performed while in fellowship. It is absolutely meaningless unless we are in fellowship. God was so concerned that we understood this, that the penalty for Aaron or his sons rendering spiritual service out of fellowship was death. When we sin and take ourselves out of fellowship, we estrange ourselves from God.

Quite interesting is the word for *offering* in the Septuagint. What we find here is the Greek word holokautōmata (ὁλοκαυτώματα) [pronounced *ha-la-kaw-TOE-maw-taw*]; the vocabulary form is holokautōma (ὁλοκαύτωμα) [pronounced *ha-la-KAW-toe-ma*], from whence we get the word *holocaust*.

**"And they will wash their hands and their feet so they will not die; and this will be to them a statute forever; even to him [Aaron] and his descendants throughout their generations." [Exodus 30:21]**

Even unto today, we are to perform all of our spiritual service in fellowship. **If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1John 1:6–7).** This would be a good place to examine **the Doctrine of the Priesthood** and **the Doctrine of the High Priest—not finished yet!!**

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Anointing Oil

**Moreover, Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses,** [Exodus 30:22]

I am not certain why this is mentioned every few verses, whereas before, we went several chapters without being reminded that this was God the Father speaking. What is likely is, this is another session.

**"You take the finest spices: 500 of liquid myrrh, half as much (250) sweet-smelling cinnamon; and 250 of aromatic cane.** [Exodus 30:23]

All this must represent various aspects of propitiation. Myrrh is balsam sap, cinnamon comes from the bark of the cinnamon tree, which is a species of laurel, and cane is the pith from the root of a reed plant.

**"And 500 of acacia according to the shekel of the sanctuary; and a hin of olive oil.** [Exodus 30:24]

Apparently the shekel of the sanctuary is an established weight, not set by the government, but set by the priests (although, apart from sentences like these, I am not aware of them being given this responsibility to determine and maintain monetary standards).

**"And you will make a sacred anointing oil of these; blended perfume of an ointment-pot as by the perfumer—it will be holy anointing oil.** [Exodus 30:25]

It is not just one spice or type of incense which is burned on the altar, but a specific mixture as designed by God. The combination of spices and incense was actually done in Exodus 38:29.

**"And you will anoint the tent of meeting with it and the ark of the testimony;** [Exodus 30:26]

All of the sacred furniture was presented to God as a sweet savor. The spices and the incense will all be related to the various articles of furniture.

**"And the table and all its utensils and the lampstand and its<sup>78</sup> utensils and the altar of incense;** [Exodus 30:27]

All the sacred furniture speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ and it is His work which must have a sweet savor to God.

**"And the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils and the laver and its base;** [Exodus 30:28]

God must be completely propitiated by the work of our Lord; just being in fellowship depends upon His propitiation.

**"And you will consecrate these things [lit., them] that they may be holy of holies [so that] whatever touches them will become holy.** [Exodus 30:29]

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<sup>78</sup> Possibly, *and all its utensils* (Western Samaritan and the Septuagint)

Whoever comes in salvation contact with Jesus Christ is also made holy.

**"And you will anoint Aaron and his sons and you will consecrate them that they may serve me as priests. [Exodus 30:30]**

The anointing here is a part of the anointing/consecration process for the priests.

**"And you will say to the people of Israel, saying, 'This will be to Me holy anointing throughout your generations.' [Exodus 30:31]**

The *Me* here is God the Father. The anointing of oil is certainly the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, enduing one with power in the Old Testament and filling us in the New Testament. **"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the more remote portions of the earth."** (Acts 1:8)

Our Lord was given the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34), and Hebrews quotes this as **Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions** (Hebrews 1:9b and Psalm 45:7; see also Isaiah 61:1–3).

**"It will not be poured upon the flesh of man<sup>79</sup> nor will you make any like it in the proportions; it is holy; it is holy to you. [Exodus 30:32]**

None of the holy furniture nor the other things which spoke of Jesus Christ was to be imitated. These things were holy because they spoke of Jesus Christ. The incense spoke of the sweet savor unto God; the sweet savor of propitiation. This was not something to be duplicated or used except under the most solemn of occasions.

Quite obviously, there is no duplicating the word of Jesus Christ. We are saved by Him; there is not salvation through any other.

**"Whoever compounds any [incense] like it or whoever places any of it on an outsider will be cut off from his peoples." [Exodus 30:33]**

God's plan and the way He reveals Himself to man is not a game nor is it a meaningless ritual. These things taught salvation to the Old Testament saints; God spoke to man through these rituals and cheap imitations only confused the issue. Just like those who cannot properly give the gospel. They tell unbelievers to ask Jesus into their hearts; they are producing imitation incense and pouring it all over. This kind of false information does not communicate God's Word; it confuses the issue.

Being cut off from one's people could mean death or banishment (Genesis 17:14 Exodus 31:14 Leviticus 20:2–3)

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Incense

**"And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum—sweet spices with pure frankincense, part for part there will be. [Exodus 30:34]**

Notice that already we have mentioned two of the spices brought to our Lord at His incarnation: frankincense and myrrh. When the wise men brought frankincense and myrrh to our Lord, they recognized His identification with

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<sup>79</sup> This is the word we know as *Adam*

the altar of incense. These things speak of the work of our Lord on the cross being a sweet savor to God the Father and these spices were brought to Him at his birth.

Onycha is made from mollusk shells and galbanum is a rubbery resin which comes from the roots of a Syrian fennel, a flowering plant common to Syria and Persia. It is a fragrant spice. Stacte is a sweet gum resin from the storax tree. The latter two spices are educated guesses.<sup>80</sup>

Frankincense may be obtained from three different species of the *Boswellia* tree. Although almost everyone associates frankincense with our Lord's incarnation, it is found only twice in the New Testament: Matthew 2:11 and in Rev. 18:13; the latter reference pertaining to the fall of Babylon and frankincense as being one of the things available for purchase from Babylon. Throughout most of the Old Testament, the mention of frankincense is only with regards to its use on the altar of incense, its preparation, etc. The exceptions are SOS 3:6 where the *traveling couch* of King Solomon is associated with myrrh and frankincense and SOS 4:6, 14 where myrrh and frankincense are associated with the olfactory beauty of the mountains and of the maiden.

**"And make an incense blended as by a perfumer seasoned with salt, pure, holy. [Exodus 30:35]**

The design of this incense was to be perfect, as God the Son was perfect in His humanity.

**"And you will beat a very small part of it and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you (there)—the holy of holies with will be for you. [Exodus 30:36]**

God manifested Himself in the holy of holies and the incense allowed Him to meet with the high priest Aaron there. We in our bodies are abominations to God; His holiness cannot come into contact with us and it is this sweet incense that makes us something with whom God can fellowship. Of course, this is all representative of the true sweet savor of the Lord's death on our behalf.

**"And the incense which you will make according to its composition, you will not make [it] for yourselves; it is holy for you to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 30:37]**

What these things illustrated were so important that God did not allow these things to be duplicated even with the best of motivations. No motivation was acceptable; there were no exceptions to this requirement.

**"Whoever makes any like it to use it as perfume, he will be cut off from his people." [Exodus 30:38]**

This incense illustrates a great spiritual truth and is not to be cheapened by secular use.

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<sup>80</sup> See *The New Manners and Customs of the Bible*, R. Gower, p. 370



# EXODUS 31

## Exodus 31:1–18

**Introduction:** In Exodus 31, God specifies two men who are skilled craftsmen and whom God will fill with the Holy Spirit in order to perform some of the work which needs to be done. They will construct over oversee the building of the Tabernacle and its furniture. In the second half of this chapter, God will impress upon Moses the importance of the Sabbath.

### Outline of Chapter 31:

- Vv. 1–11      The Spirit-filled craftsmen
- Vv. 12–18    The sign of the Sabbath

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### The Spirit-filled Craftsmen

**The Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying,** [Exodus 31:1]

There is no other book like the Bible; no other book continually claims to have portions of it spoken directly by God to the author.

**"See I have called by name Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur or the tribe of Judah.** [Exodus 31:2]

*Bezalel* means *in the shadow-protection of God*. This artisan is mentioned more times in the Bible than many kings over Israel and Judah. We find his bloodline mentioned in Exodus 38:22 and 1Chronicles 2:20; his handiwork is recalled even to the time of the writing of 2Chronicles (2Chronicles 1:5). God's calling is found here and in Exodus 35:30; and the actual work that he does is found in Exodus 36:1–2 and 37:1. In fact, approximately fifteen verses in God's Word are devoted to Bezalel, his skills and his service. The point being that what he accomplished, if not emphasized by God in His Word, would have been thought to have been relatively inconsequential. However, on God's scale of values, the time he put into the construction of the furniture for the tabernacle was much more important than the reign of many kings of Israel and Judah.

**"And I have filled him [with] the Spirit of God, with ability and with intelligence and with knowledge and with all craftsmanship...** [Exodus 31:3]

This is the second time that the filling of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Bible (the first is in Exodus 28:3). In the Old Testament, believers could be filled with the Holy Spirit and their work in the Spirit was not unlike our own service in the Spirit. The primary difference was that several, but not many, were endued by the Holy Spirit, and those had the ability to be filled by the Spirit. Most believers, 99.9% of them, were not endued by the Spirit of God and those that were could lose the Spirit, something we cannot do.

Take note that Bezalel is not a man without talent. God prepares His people (if we allow it); He does not use unprepared people.

This verse tells us that a man in Bezalel's position had both the intelligence and the artisan skill to perform the tasks which God required of him. Furthermore, God filled him with the Holy spirit because of the importance of building the furniture correctly to God's precise specifications. God is not sloppy and we who labor in His field ought not to be sloppy and lame. We need to be skilled, intelligent, and filled with the Spirit. Any person offering less should not open their mouths but keep their faith a secret. God does not need the help of a pastor who has not studied for many years in the Word and in the original languages; God does not need an evangelist who does not know the gospel of Christ (and anyone who tells an unbeliever to ask Jesus into their hearts does not know

the gospel of Jesus Christ). God does not need anyone to pray, give, witness or dink around a church unless they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Our service apart from God the Holy Spirit is absolutely meaningless and worthless. Now we may accomplish a great deal of improvement in the devil's world operating outside of God the Holy Spirit and we may accomplish things which earn the praise of men in our periphery; but this means nothing to God and all such service will be burned as wood, hay and stubble in the last judgment.

**"...to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and in silver and in bronze... [Exodus 31:4]**

Besalel's specific talents are herein enumerated. The average Christian, in retrospect, would have mentioned Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, but would have forgotten about someone like Bezalel. However, God did not forget him or his important role in God's plan.

**"...and in cutting stones for setting and in carving wood for work in every craft. [Exodus 31:5]**

Having had a father who appeared to be able to do almost anything in the area of construction, I envy the skill and patience and craftsmanship of such people. This man was apparently skilled in all of the areas necessary to building the furniture of the tabernacle.

**"And see I, even I, have set [or, placed, given or appointed] with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan; and in the heart of all men who are skillful I have given ability that they make construct all that I have commanded you: [Exodus 31:6]**

The first verb is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect of *nāthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *maw-THAN*], a word given to over eighty renderings in the Authorized Version, yet it means *to put, to place, to set, to give, even to appoint*. We find this word approximately 2000 times in the Old Testament, so we would think that it is a verb with wide application.

Moses himself was a man of many abilities; however, even he did not have the ability to construct the tabernacle furniture to God's specifications. Oholiab, like Bezalel, is mentioned several times throughout the Law in Exodus 35, 36. His name means *the Father is my tent (tabernacle)*. The reference is to God the Father and his parents were obviously very strong on doctrine.

There is the alternative, he received this as a second name or a play on his original name. However, since the Bible is actually quoting from God directly, we may assume that he was given this name from his parents.

**"[I.e.,] the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony and the mercy seat that is thereon and all the furnishings of the tent,... [Exodus 31:7]**

The furniture of the tabernacle will be built primarily by these two men, Bezalel and Oholiab. The tent of meeting again is where God met man, not where men got together to meet one another.

**"...and the table and its utensils [or, vessels (and so throughout)] and the pure lampstand with all its utensils and the altar of incense,... [Exodus 31:8]**

The specific instructions for building these things goes back to Exodus 25–30 and the actual construction takes place in Exodus 35–36.

**"...and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils and the laver and its base,... [Exodus 31:9]**

The lampstand is mentioned in Exodus 25:31–40, the brazen altar in Exodus 27:1–8 and the laver in Exodus 30:18–21; however the clothing in the next verse is from Exodus 28.

**"...and the garments of finely worked [material] and the ministering garments<sup>81</sup> and the holy garments for Aaron, the priest, and the garments of his sons for their service as priests; [Exodus 31:10]**

Even though the skills of Oholiab and Bezalel don't necessarily include this craftsmanship—the working with clothing materials—God has prepared someone to handle this also. It appears that Bezalel and Oholiab will oversee all of the construction of the Tabernacle, its furniture, and the clothing for the priests.

**"...and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the holy place according to all that I have commanded you; they will do." [Exodus 31:11]**

There is a chain of command for all important things which are to be done. God did not go directly to Oholiab and Bezalel, but He went to Moses and then Moses will go to them. Some of the work which they are assigned, they will subcontract out to those more skilled in those other areas (the mixing of the incense, the making of the clothing).

## The Sign of the Sabbath

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying, [Exodus 31:12]**

This new quote will take us to an entirely different topic: the Sabbath. These things may have been given to Moses by God in this order, but it is not necessary for that to be the case.

**"And you will speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'Surely you will keep My Sabbaths because this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I Y<sup>e</sup>howah sanctify you. [Exodus 31:13]**

The Sabbath is an interesting topic. It was practiced back to the beginning of time; it was emphasized even more to the Hebrews and they had several Sabbaths and several types of Sabbaths. We have already covered this topic in more detail back in Exodus 20 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

The Sabbath is Saturday and it is not something which we as believers observe today. It was a sign which separated Israel from all of the other nations, as God says here. And you may wonder, what about Genesis 2:2–3? Didn't God set the Sabbath apart as a holy day at that time? Why is Israel sanctified if this is a law from the beginning of human history? At that time, God did set Saturday, the Sabbath apart from all other days as the day in which *He rested*; however, this was not a law that anyone had to follow. The first mention of the Sabbath is Exodus 16. The God of the Universe, the God Who created heaven and earth and then restored the earth; this is the God Who set apart the Sabbath and this is the very same God who commands Israel at this time. This connects Israel not to some mighty God but to the God Who restored the earth. It was this day, among many other things, which separated the Hebrews from the rest of humanity. The reason that the Sabbath is mentioned here is that even in God's work—that is the building of these various pieces of furniture and the making of the priests' clothing—even in this service to God, the Sabbath was to be observed.

**""You will keep the Sabbath because it is holy for you; everyone who profanes it will be put to death. Whoever does in it any work shall be cut off—that should from his people. [Exodus 31:14]**

The Hebrews were sanctified by the Sabbath as God had sanctified it. Note that the penalty for breaking the Sabbath was harsh: death and separation from the people of Israel. Unfortunately, the Hebrews came up with a great number of extraneous laws concerning the Sabbath which were never authorized by God.

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<sup>81</sup> This phrase is added in the Western Samaritan text, the Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, the Syriac and several others

**"Six days, work will be done; but the seventh day [is] a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; whoever does nay work on the Sabbath day will be put to death. [Exodus 31:15]**

God's laws were simple concerning the Sabbath; if you worked on the Sabbath, you were put to death. There are a number of cults which observe the Sabbath; however, they likely come up short with regards to executing those members of their congregation who work on the Sabbath.

**"For this reason, the people of Israel will keep the Sabbath, observing [lit., doing] the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. [Exodus 31:16]**

V. 16 has one of those oft-used verbs, the Qal infinitive construct of 'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct something out of something else* (recall this word was just used in Genesis for restoration; such as Genesis 1:7, 16, 26 2:22). According to *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*, this word is given 74 different renderings in the KJV. Owen's and the NRSV translates is *observing*, NASB *to celebrate*, Young's *to keep*, NIV *celebrating*, and the KJV *to observe*. Literally, it means *to do the Sabbath*.

God set up a pattern when He restored the heavens and the earth and His people should reflect that pattern. The Hebrews were His peculiar people therefore they should in their service to Him reflect God's last acts of restoration and work upon the earth (other than the day to day ministry of God the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ to the people of Israel. However, since creation, a much greater act of God has taken place: the cross, and our service to Him should reflect that act rather than the act of restoration, as His accomplishments upon the cross were far greater and much more important than restoration.

**"[The Sabbath] is a sign between Me and between the people of Israel forever; that in six days, Y<sup>e</sup>howah made heaven and earth and on the seventh day, He rested and was refreshed." [Exodus 31:17]**

The word here for *made* is Qal perfect of 'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] and it means *to make something out of something else*. Had God *created* the earth in six days, the word which would have been used here would have been *bârâh*, which means *to make something out of nothing, to create*. This word is found in Genesis 1:1, 21, 27 whereas 'âsâh is found in Genesis 1:7, 16, 26 and 2:22. These are the six days of *restoration*; not creation, per se (although the souls of man and animals were created).

Herein, Y<sup>e</sup>howah gives two reasons for the Sabbath: it is a sign between Israel and God and it is a time of refreshment. I am one of the lucky people who has spent the majority of my life doing work which I thoroughly enjoy. However, even in this work, I take a break and am refreshed by this break.

**And He gave to Moses when He had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai the two tables of the testimony; tables of stone written with the finger of God. [Exodus 31:18]**

The NIV Bible is quite informative at this point. Many of us have the picture of the first five commandments written upon one table and the other five upon the other table. This was not what took place. A covenant is a contract between two parties. When we sign a contract with someone else, it is standard for both parties to receive their own copy of what it was that they have signed. This is not a new development in society; this has been a part of man's history as far back as archeology will take us. The two tables were replicas of each other, each with the ten commandments, a copy for the Israel and a copy for God; both of these tables were kept in the ark of the covenant as a witness between God and man. The sign to all mankind that there was a covenant between God and man was the Sabbath; the Sabbath told all those who came into contact with Israel that there was a special relationship between themselves and God. It told them and their children and their children's children that there was a covenant between themselves and God. When asked why do we stop on Saturday and set aside a spiritual time, it was answered them that they had a covenant with God the Father, the God of Israel, to keep the commandments of God and that by so keeping these commandments, they would receive blessing.

*Written by the finger of God* is an anthropopathism, indicating that God did write these commandments on stone, miraculously, if you will. These were not things that Moses chipped away at.

Now Moses has been up on Mount Sinai for forty days. The laws herein mentioned were certainly given during that period of time. It is possible (and I am not there yet, so I don't know for certain) a great many other laws given by God to Moses during this time period which are placed later on in the books of Law. During this time, Moses' life has been almost like a dream, speaking on holy ground directly with Y<sup>e</sup>howah; he will return to an impatient group of degenerate Hebrews.



# EXODUS 32

## Exodus 32:1–35

## Moses Intercedes for the Israelites

### Outline of Chapter 32:

- vv. 1–6 **In the absence of Moses, the people make a golden calf as an idol**
- vv. 7–14 **Moses acts as a mediator and as an advocate for his people**
- vv. 15–19 **Moses returns from the mountain to observe the degeneracy first-hand**
- vv. 20–30 **Moses takes action in the camp of Israel**
- vv. 31–35 **Moses returns to speak to God**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 10 **Was God's Offer to Moses Real?**
- v. 10 **The Parallels Between Moses and our Lord's Intercession**
- v. 20 **Meekness/Grace orientation**
- v. 25 **Pâra' (עָרַף) [pronounced paw-RAHG]**

Introduction: With chapter 32, we return to narrative and one of the most marvelous occurrences of the Old Testament. Moses, filled with the Spirit, will mediate between God and man and ask for mercy from God toward the children of Israel. God did not order Moses to take such a position; Moses assumed this position and, as such, was a type of Jesus Christ, standing in the gap, Who is ever making intercession for us.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

## In the Absence of Moses, the People Make a Golden Calf as an Idol

**When the people saw that Moses delayed [causing them disappointment] to come down from the mountains, then [lit., and] the people gathered themselves to Aaron and said to him, [Exodus 32:1a]**

We begin with the Polel perfect of būwsh (בוּשׁ) [pronounced *boosh*] and it means *to be disappointed, to be pale, to be ashamed, to delay*. Some Hebrew grammars do not even mention the Polel stem. What it is, is there are certain verbs which do not strictly have a Piel, Pual or a Hithpael stem because characteristic of these stems is the doubling of the middle consonant. However, in certain situations, this middle consonant either drops out or becomes a long vowel, making it impossible to double. So we have the Polel, Polal and the Hithpolel stems, the first replacing the Piel, or intensive, stem. Būwsh is found only twice<sup>82</sup> in the Piel (Polel) stem and in this stem it means *to delay, to disappoint because one has delayed*.

The people perceived that there were two great leaders, Moses and Aaron. They also knew who they could work—Aaron. This is not difficult; I recall a family that I lived next door to and listening to their three year old daughter was fascinating. She knew that when her mother said *no*, she meant *no* and that was the end of that discussion; however, the father just required a reasonable amount of nagging and he would eventually give in. So if a three-year old child can discern this from her parents, then certainly the people of Israel could determine this about Moses and Aaron.

Recall that in Exodus 24:1 that Moses went to the foot of Mount Sinai with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy elders (which must have included Joshua—Exodus 24:13). These men stayed at the foot of the mountain as Moses ascended it with Joshua. We do not know how far Joshua went with Moses because he is not mentioned again

<sup>82</sup> The other passage is Judges 5:28

during the giving of the instructions for the building of the furniture for the tabernacle. However, the people were to come to Aaron and the elders with any disputes or legal matters (Exodus 24:14). Moses had already been on the mountain before and had returned to the people with the ten commandments and several ordinances. So they had heard "You will not make for yourselves an idol or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth." (Exodus 20:4) They heard those words from the mouth of God. And their response had been "All that the Lord has spoken to we will do, and we will be obedient." (Exodus 24:3b, 7b)

**"Arise! Make us god(s) who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt; we do not know what has become of him."** [Exodus 32:1b]

The people come to Aaron and command him with the Qal imperative of קוּמ (qûwm) [pronounced *koom*]. This word means, *arise, get up (often after being sick or asleep), stand (up)*. Aaron and the elders are at the foot of the mountain waiting for Moses and the people have become impatient.

The number forty is often used for a time of testing, or, more precisely, a time preceding testing<sup>83</sup>, and the children of Israel were being tested. Just as our Lord, the mediator of the New Covenant, fasted for forty days and forty nights before He began His public ministry which revealed the justice and the mercy of God and revealed Himself as Messiah and Savior; Moses was also gone for forty days before he presented Israel with the blue prints for the tabernacle and its furniture, which also revealed Jesus Christ as Savior.

The word for god is elohim, which is in the plural. Only one idol will be made; however, the trinity was always referred to in the plural (this was a convention begun by God). It was unlikely that any Old Testament saints fully comprehended the doctrine of the trinity, although Isaiah might have (Isaiah 44:6 48:16). Moses had not given the people a time table; he did not know how long he would be up on the mountain; however, he had commanded his men *to wait*; and this applied to the people of Israel also (Exodus 24:14). Forty days was far too long for the children of Israel to wait. They had been talking to one another, discussing the Moses situation and the inordinant amount of time (in their opinion) that he had been gone. They had discussion groups where they shared their ignorance with one another and their theories about Moses. There was a lot of lightning coming from the mountain and Moses had been gone for forty days. Who knows what could have happened to him. Finally, they decided to take matters into their own hands. They put their case before Aaron.

**And Aaron said to them, "Remove the rings of gold which are in the ears of your wives, your sons and your daughters and bring them to me."** [Exodus 32:2]

This is fascinating; women and children all wore earrings, not unlike today. Lest anyone desire to make too much of a point out of this, recall that we are dealing with a very degenerate generation of Israelites. Furthermore, these were items which were taken from an even more degenerate group, the Egyptians. The Hebrews took these things when they left Egypt as payment due for four hundred years of service.

Notice the Aaron needs very little prompting. Up until this time, he has functioned in an outstanding manner in the shadow of his younger brother Moses; he took his orders from Moses, who took his orders from God. However, Moses has not been available as of late to guide Aaron, so he acts too quickly, not thinking doctrine. He is faced with a crowd which could become unruly in their restlessness. He puts them to work and tells them to take off their gold earrings and bring them to him. In reading this, I wonder if Aaron has not semi-formulated a plan. He may be thinking, "I'll just send these guys home to collect their wives and kids' jewelry. It's unlikely that this will go any farther." That might be the best view we might take of Aaron.

Aaron is easily swayed and he had little to offer in the way of true leadership. A real leader would have told these people, "Hell no; and if you push this issue, I will have you executed." However, the best we can hope for with Aaron is that he hoped that the wives and kids would balk at giving away their jewelry and that would end this mistake.

<sup>83</sup> Three examples which readily come to mind: (1) The Hebrews wandered throughout the desert for forty years (Deuteronomy 2:7 8:2, 4); (2) Goliath presented himself to Israel to do battle for forty days (1Samuel 17:16); and (3) our Lord fasted for forty days prior to being tested by Satan (Matt. 4:2).

**So all of the people removed the rings of gold which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron.** [Exodus 32:3]

Bullinger points out that here we have what is known as synecdoche [pronounced *syn-EK-do-kee*] of the genus, where the whole is put in for the greater part. That is, not every single person who wore earring necessarily brought their earrings to Aaron. However, a large majority of those who wore earrings did. The use of the word *all* refers to that large majority.

These people were restless, had not had any stimulation in over a month (Moses, a powerful public speaker, did not speak before them; and God had not performed any tremendous miracles in their eyes for sometime now—apart from the daily manna). There are some teenagers, when not given enough stimulation, when bored, do some extremely stupid and/or destructive things. They become self-destructive, abusing drugs, alcohol, ownership of a car; they become vandals, they do things simply for excitement without much thought to consequence. These Israelites are no different. They restless, un-stimulated; and they want some excitement and stimulation in their lives. They have just seen things which were phenomenal; sights as we will never observe in our stay on earth. However, for over a month now, they have had nothing but a portion of the Law to entertain them, and that was not enough.

If God's Word is not enough for us as Christians, we tend to do some very stupid things.

**And he received at their hand [the gold earrings] and fashioned it [the gold] with an engraving tool [possibly, formed in into a mold] and made a calf image (or, a calf of molten metal) and they said, "These are you gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt."** [Exodus 32:4]

There are a lot of singulars and plurals in this verse which need to be straightened out. Aaron does not do this entirely on his own; he is among a collection of representatives—perhaps some of the elders—and no one appears to voice an objection. Do we hear some protesting, someone asking that we wait just a little longer for Moses? Nothing is recorded.

*Made* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular (Aaron), Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix of the verb *ʾāsāh* (אָסָה) [pronounced *aw-SAWH*] and it means *to make something out of something*. The imperfect voice tells us that it took some time for Aaron to make this; perhaps a couple hours or longer. The gold had to be melted down after the earrings had been collected; this alone would have taken a day or so just to collect them. Then a mold would have had to have been made.

Then we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine plural of *ʾāmar* (אָמַר) [pronounced *aw-MAR*]**—they** said. That is, Aaron and the elders presented this to the delegation which came to them and then those people took the calf back to the general population of Israel and said, "Here it is!" From the previous verse, *rings* is in the masculine plural, but *gold* is in the masculine singular; Aaron fashions it, the gold, into a calf (which is in the masculine singular construct) of molten metal (which is in the feminine singular).

*These* is a plural relative pronoun, referring to the singular calf but tied grammatically to Elohim, which, as we have seen many times before, is in the plural. However, correctly understood, *Elohim*, when referring to the trinity, always takes a singular verb (for instance, Genesis 1:1, 4–6, 20–22). However, these people and Aaron are quite mixed up. Instead, they combine a singular *calf* with the plural gods, which takes a plural verb here. *Brought* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, Hiphil perfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix of *ʾālāh* (אָלָה) [pronounced *gaw-LAW*] which means *to go up, to ascend, to climb*; however, in the Hiphil, the causative stem, it means *to cause to go up, to bring out*; the Hebrews were caused by God to go up out of Egypt.

Notice the confusion: God is One, but we have the plural verb. Aaron does not have a complete grasp of doctrine, nor do the men who are with him. They are violated the most basic commandment: **you will not make any manufactured images as idols**. In fact, these Israelites will violate the first 3 commandments, completely rejecting the God Who brought them out of Egypt—the very God Who is, even to this point in time, providing them with the very food that they eat.

The calf was possibly cast in solid gold, a crude copy of those they saw in Egypt (Apis is the bull-god of Egypt). NIV suggests that this could have been gold plating over wood, as does Freeman. Freeman, in his excellent book *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, points out that many large idols were made first of wood and then plated with metal. He gives the examples from Isaiah 30:22 40:19 Nahum 1:14 Habak. 2:18–19. The image first cast in wood or in stone was then covered with a flat sheet of gold or other metal. Whether this was melted or pounded into place or a little of both is not clear.

The graving tool would likely be what would be used to fashion it to the shape of the image. Freeman suggests that this is likely the way this was made due to the way that Moses destroyed it; Moses first burnt it, turning the inside to ashes, then he ground the gold into a fine dust.

In my opinion, Aaron would have thought to do gold plating over wood but, to represent gods, would have cast the calf in solid gold. Furthermore, there is no mention of wood in any of the exposition.

Satan is the great counterfeiter and this could have been a counterfeit Christ. This would be reasonable because even though the Hebrews are not aware of the furniture of the tabernacle, Satan, who has been studying Y<sup>e</sup>howah and Moses upon the mountain, knows what God has planned and is counterfeiting in advance.

That degenerate King Jeroboam made two golden calves and then quoted this verse in 1Kings 12:28. His intention was to unite Israel (v. 26). You may wonder why Satan inspires gods shaped like animals. Prior to the flood, angels were allowed relations with humankind, resulting in a super-race which was so degenerate, it had to be destroyed. In addition, God no longer allowed cohabiting between man and demons. However, demons could still indwell men and animals (we see illustrations of both in the New Testament) and it is not farfetched to think that some bestiality is inspired by Satan and animals indwelt by demons. Therefore, demons which indwelt animals would inspire their images to be made as animals.

**And Aaron saw and he built an altar before it and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "A feast to Y<sup>e</sup>howah tomorrow." [Exodus 32:5]**

The wording used here is fascinating. We have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of the verb *râ`âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*] which means *to see, to observe, to look*. If you have ever done something which goes against your own norms and standards, it sometimes feels as though you are observing another person going through these motions.

So Aaron observes what is going on; he is looking at himself; God the Holy Spirit tells us that he realized what was going on, he could see what was going on, and yet he continued in this evil. He has made an image of God, something which was unequivocally prohibited, and then he built an altar for this idol. But here is the clincher; these people are bored and they want some excitement so Aaron plans a feast, a holiday, a party for the next day. This will keep them busy and occupied. He may even be fully cognizant that what he is doing is wrong, but he thinks that under the circumstances he has no real choice. The people are getting restless and he needs, as the one in charge, to placate them.

Moses, when he returns, will take a slightly different tact. This feast to Y<sup>e</sup>howah is an abomination, for what fellowship has light with darkness or, righteousness and lawlessness? (See 2Corinthians 6:14.) There is no honor in this proclamation of Aaron's. Adding in, as a second thought, a feast to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, after breaking God's second commandment further reveals that Aaron is not a leader. Satan often attempts to cloak lies in the thin veil of the truth. Often, all it takes is a small amount of truth to confound some people. The people have caused him to follow their degeneracy. A great leader would have quelled this rebellion against God.

Aaron's actions in this chapter make it clear why God chose Moses and not Aaron.

**And they rose up early on the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings and the people sat down to eat and they drank and they rose up to mock [to dance lasciviously]. [Exodus 32:6]**

The final verb is the Piel infinitive construct of tsâchaq (צחק) [pronounced *tsaw-KHAK*], which, in the Qal stem, means *to laugh* (as in Genesis 18:12–13 and 15 when Sarah laughed within herself about having a child). However, in the Piel, with the possible exception of Genesis 26:8, this verb means *to mock* (Genesis 19:14 21:9 39:14, 17 Judges 16:25).

At time appointed by God, under the proper circumstances, feast days and celebrations are apropos; however, when the participants are simply bored, and are bullying their weak spiritual leaders, the basis of their celebration is often idolatry, as it is here. R. B. Thieme, Jr. has translated this word as *intercourse with demons*; the basis of their celebration is an idol made by hands and behind all idols are demons ready to receive glory and adoration. When one worships a demon (as well as the work of his own hands), he simultaneously mocks God and has intercourse with the demon. The sexual connotation comes from Genesis 26:8 (this is where the Philistine king looks out his window and sees Isaac *caressing* his wife Rebekah—that is quite possibly the PG version of the word).

The Egyptians commonly had various animals whose idols they worshipped. Freeman points out that associated with Egyptians worship was lascivious dancing and other obscene practices (if that is what is occurring). Since the Hebrews had spent this time with the Egyptians, it is likely that they copied their form of worship. Centuries later, when writing to the degenerate Corinthians, Paul quotes this verse, warning them not to become idolaters (1Corinthians 10:7).

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses Acts as a Mediator and as an Advocate for His People

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Go down, for your people whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt—they have spoiled [or, ruined] [themselves]. [Exodus 32:7]**

God begins by giving Moses two Qal imperatives: the first is *hâlak*<sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced *haw-LAHK*], which means *go*; and the second is *yârad* (ירד) [pronounced *yaw-RAD*] and it means *go down, descend*; so God orders Moses *to go* and *to go down*.

This is a remarkable change from what God had been saying. He now calls the children of Israel Moses' people, not God's. They revealed their most corrupt nature and their degeneracy, taking after their human nature. In this way, they were not children of God but they became Moses' people; the people that Moses brought out of Egypt. God had a covenant with His people and His people twice ratified this covenant with great enthusiasm, sincerity and emotion. However, this people broke their covenant with God and are no longer related by covenant to God. Therefore, they have become the people of Moses rather than the people of God. What God is doing is placing Moses in the position of being a mediator between God and man. Moses will become an advocate for his people before God. God had foreordained this from eternity past to parallel Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit constantly making intercession before God on our behalf.

The phrase *they have ruined themselves* is difficult to translate literally. The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect of *shâchath* (שחַת) [pronounced *shaw-KHATH*] and its root meaning is *to decay*. The KJV in the first four occurrences of this word in the Piel perfect, translate it *spilled* (Genesis 38:9), *perish* (Exodus 21:26), *have corrupted* (our passage) and *shall destroy* (Num. 32:15). It means *to render useless, to ruin, to waste*. There is no suffix, so *themselves* is an addition of several translators. This is not causative nor is it passive—the Hebrews rendered themselves useless. In the Piel, or intensive stem, there is sometimes a causative aspect, although that aspect is not the emphasis of the verb<sup>84</sup>. This allows us to insert *themselves*, as they have actively caused themselves to become useless and wasted. Other examples of this verb in the Piel perfect can be found in 2Kings 19:12 Proverbs 23:8 Jeremiah 12:10 Lam. 2:5–6 Ezekiel 26:4 Hosea 13:9 (this

<sup>84</sup> Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, p. 2281



is a representative, not an exhaustive, list). Kalisch translates this *is depraved*, which avoids the reflexive use of *themselves* altogether. The singular goes with the singular word *people*.

**"They have turned aside quickly—out of the way which I commanded them.<sup>85</sup> They have made for themselves a calf of molten metal and are worshiping it and are sacrificing to it and they keep saying, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'" [Exodus 32:8]**

There are leaders and there are followers. The leaders are those who have effectively usurped Moses' and Aaron's authority; even though Aaron willingly obliged the apostate Hebrews who came to him and even became more than a participant, but a leader in this degeneracy, he was still following the lead of the people who came to him. The leaders who came to him demanded that something be done in the absence of Moses. Once this calf had been constructed, these leaders filtered throughout the people saying, "These are your gods, one ones bring you out of Egypt."

**Application:** How does this apply to us? Influential people are constantly coming to the pastor, to the board of deacons and going to the people and suggesting a variety of apostate activities for the church to become a part of. Some sound very holy and righteous, such as some missionary work where the missionaries have clothed the people of some forsaken tribe and have caused the chief to give up all but one of his wives. They may have taught them farming with implements and a host of other things; however, they may not be at all straight on the gospel, if it is presented at all. Sinking inordinate amounts of money into church social events is another mistake (although there is nothing which forbids social activities amongst church members; not even activities sponsored by the church). It is a fine line that sometimes must be drawn.

To the children of Israel, they were worshiping the gods who their leaders say, *brought them out of Egypt*. Against God, these people are committing almost unpardonable blasphemy. Only Moses will stand in the gap and protect them.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "I have seen this people and observe, they [are] an obstinate [lit., stiff-necked] people. [Exodus 32:9]**

*Observe* is the demonstrative particle *behold* and *people* is in the singular and should be preceded with *it [is]*; however, it just does not sound reasonable in the English. Israel has long been known to God as a *stiff-necked people* (Exodus 33:3, 5 34:9). *Neck* is a term which always implies volition when used in the Bible (such as, Jeremiah 27:11–12). We place bridles on horses to control the direction that their neck turns (by pressure upon their soft gums) and thereby control their volition. The Israelites used yokes to accomplish the same purpose with oxen. It refers to their volition and their lack of obedience to Him. A mule or a camel which is stiff-necked is one who purposely goes its own direction, ignoring his master. The people of Israel have always been that way before God. The word *obstinate* is a good one-word rendering.

Lest we self-righteously look down our noses at them, remember that we believers in Jesus Christ in this dispensation are no different. The religious ones hold *revivals*, ask for people to *rededicate*, demand that people recognize Jesus as Lord, ask that unbelievers ask Jesus into their heart; they hold Bible studies in their homes, all giving their own opinions of what they feel various passages mean—things which are stock *Christian* activities and things which have no place with the people of God. These people who refuse to place themselves under the leadership of a pastor-teacher, who refuse to rebound (confess their sins to God). Such people are an abomination to God and they are a stiff-necked people.

Then there are the licentious Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and make up their own rules and laws as they go through life, completely ignoring the Lord Who bought them. And what condemns us even more is that each and every one of us has the indwelling of the Spirit and no matter how awful and degenerate we have behaved,

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<sup>85</sup> One edition of the Septuagint and the Targum of Onkelos both translate this *which you commanded them*; as an aside, the Targum of Onkelos is thought to be the older Aramaean version extant and is highly valued by the Hebrews

we can quickly and unemotionally name our sins to God and we are instantly filled with the Holy Spirit. Old Testament did not have this kind of opportunity which we too often squander. Worse yet, there are thousands of entire church congregations who have never been taught to confess their sins to God to restore fellowship. It is almost unfathomable and sadly tragic that there are hundreds and thousands of Christians in various pockets or groups, none of whom have been filled with the Spirit since their spiritual birth. This is a vast wasteland of untapped spiritual resources; of people whose lives are a mess and they have no clue as to why; people whose lives are steeped in self-righteousness, much to the aggravation and nuisance of the unbelievers in their periphery.

**"Now, therefore, let Me alone that My wrath may burn hot against them and that I may consume them; but of you, I will make a great nation." [Exodus 32:10]**

Rotherham points out that behind these words is a thinly veiled encouragement to Moses to intercede on behalf of the Hebrews. God is baiting Moses, so to speak, to elicit the reaction of one who would intercede on their behalf. What God does not do is show Moses exactly what the Hebrews were doing. Moses has no idea how degenerate they have become in such a short time. Had Moses seen the people and their degenerate behavior, he may not have been so quick to stand in the gap. When he returns to the people and sees how bad it really is, he will actually return to God for the expressed purpose of making certain that God really was going to keep them alive after what the Hebrews had done.

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| The next issue to determine is whether or not this is a bona fide offer:   |
| <b>Was God's Offer to Moses Real?</b>  |
| <div>1. God had a covenant with these particular Hebrews.<br/>2. Moses brought the law to the Hebrews directly from God; this was a covenant between God and the Hebrews.<br/>3. We have seen that the Hebrews swore to obey God's laws.<br/>4. This covenant, the ten commandments, had been written on the two tablets of stone in two copies for both parties to the covenant.<br/>5. Since the Hebrews had already ratified this covenant, these tablets of stone were the final copy of the agreement.<br/>6. The Hebrews then broke their covenant with God by engaging in idolatry.<br/>7. Therefore, God was free to break His part of the covenant.<br/>8. Moses, when he breaks the tablets of stone effectively breaks the covenant between God and the Hebrews.<br/>9. God promised those three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that He would make a great nation from them. God could destroy these Hebrews and still keep his covenant with them.<br/>10. Therefore, this was a bona fide offer to Moses.<br/>11. However, the intention is for Moses to intercede on behalf of these people, despite their horrendous degeneracy.</div> |

Furthermore, even though God wants Moses to intercede for the Hebrews, God still give Moses a great temptation that all of God's people will come from the loins of Moses. Moses has seen the power of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and knows that He could, in an instant, destroy all of Israel.

There is another temptation here which I have not seen commented on by any other expositors. We have noted that Moses' marriage was obviously rocky and that even if his wife had returned to him, she has not been mentioned and will never be mentioned again. God transformed Sarai (bitch) to Sarah (princess) and, if necessary, could provide Moses a new wife or wives. Furthermore, the children of Moses are rarely mentioned and it is likely that they have grown up with their mother, chiefly, with very little exposure to them by Moses (1Chronicles 23:15–17 26:25–26). This could also mean additional children for Moses and much less responsibility and far fewer headaches. He is presently responsible for two million whining, rebellious, stiff-necked

Hebrews, who run hot and cold in their instability. Moses will be stuck with a generation of these for the next thirty-nine years. In other words, this is potentially a great deal for Moses. This is a real temptation.

Satan offered Jesus Christ the kingdoms of the world and, as the god of this world, this was a bona fide offer. The more that I study the Bible, the more I am convinced that Satan was not aware of the cross until our Lord was actually crucified, so what Satan offered our Lord was all the kingdoms of the world if He would only subjugate Himself to Satan. Our Lord knew that it was even more of a temptation because this would give Him the kingdom without going to the cross, anguish and torment much greater than we could ever imagine.

**However, Moses besought Y<sup>e</sup>howah, his God, and said, "Why, O Y<sup>e</sup>howah, does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? [Exodus 32:11]**

Note how Moses has changed this around. They are not **his** people that **he** brought out of Egypt, they are **God's** people that **God** brought out of Egypt. Moses is making intercession for his people. He is standing between them and God's desire to destroy them (I am being anthropopathic here). Moses is a type of Christ here, guaranteeing God's covenant to the Hebrews, interceding on their behalf. **So much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant...therefore, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him because He always lives to make intercession for them** (Hebrews 7:22, 25).

**"Why should the Egyptians speak, saying, 'With mischievous intent did He bring them forth—to slay them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth.' Turn from Your fierce wrath and change your mind against this evil concerning Your people." [Exodus 32:12]**

The quote of the Egyptians begins with the feminine word *râ'âh* (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-GAWH*] which is *evil, misery, distress, injury, mischief*. I had originally translated this as did Owen as *with evil intent* and was even put off somewhat by what at first appeared to be a more watered-down *with mischievous intent*, as per Rotherham's version. However, the feminine gender takes the edge off this word; that is, the masculine is a more forceful version and the feminine is a softer version. The implication is that God is playing with the Hebrews; God is being entertained by hauling them out to the desert with great fanfare and then killing them (this would be the accusation of the Egyptians). It is a word which makes God out to be capricious, arbitrary and indecisive. It reminds me of a cat that is not hungry, but still catches the mouse and plays with it until it dies. This is not God's character and the point of Moses is that this is the impression that would be given to the unbelieving world.

Moses goes to God with a good argument. Moses is a genius. God has brought the Jew out of Egypt and this is the basis for evangelism throughout the world. Now how would it look if God suddenly just killed all of these people that He brought out of Egypt. It would make the wonders and signs and power revealed in Egypt appear for nought because God, after delivering His people, then kills them. This would be extremely bad PR. Why would any individual want to have a God like that?

Our Lord is merciful to us, although we our evil within, because He has delivered us by the cross. There are innumerable times when our lives seemed worthless to God and our sins had piled up to a point where it would seem that we were most deserving of death. Many of us have wasted years, huge blocks of time wherein our Christian witness was deplorable and pathetic. **Who will bring charges against God's elect? God is One Who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather Who was raised, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also intercedes for us** (Romans 8:33–34). It is because of Jesus Christ that we are not instantly destroyed due to our degenerate lives. It is because of Moses that the Hebrew people were not instantly destroyed for their degeneracy. God has placed Moses in the position of intercessor, so that we would have a pattern for our Lord Jesus Christ, a type of Christ.

This sort of foreshadowing is why the Bible appears to be written in the beginning by One Who knows the end because it is written by God the Holy Spirit in conjunction with man, each and every word inspired by God, each and every incident teaches us about our wonderful Savior **Who ever lives to make intercession for us.**

Just in case there is one who does not completely follow this scenario—God is not about to kill His Own people. He is not going to destroy them, only to be talked out of it by smooth-tongued Moses. God is not going to suddenly change His mind because Moses has provided Him with some arguments that He just did not really consider before. God knows what is at stake. God knows everything that Moses has said and has known these things from eternity past. God knew that He would preserve the Hebrews. All of this is presented in such a way that we have a better understanding of infinite God and God's perfection and Moses interceding on our behalf as our Lord would do. To finite man, it appears as though God is changing His mind. However, what is being done here is: (1) God's motives and actions are brought down to the level of man so that finite man can better understand infinite God; and, (2) God has set up a situation to illustrate to the Hebrews the importance; yea, the necessity, of a mediator and an intercessor on our behalf before God.

The parallels are simple:

| The Parallels Between Moses and our Lord's Intercession  |   |
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| Moses interceded on behalf of the Hebrews.   | Our Lord interceded on our behalf.  |
| Moses was given a temptation to bypass the headaches and heartaches of leading two million Hebrews into the promised land. | Our Lord was given the temptation to bypass the excruciating pain of the cross and to receive His kingdom without going to the cross. |
| Moses interceded for a large group of rebellious, sinful, degenerate people.   | Our Lord interceded for the entire world population, which is rebellious, sinful and degenerate.                                      |
| Moses will still return and discipline the Hebrews for their behavior.   | Whom the Lord loves, he scourges with a whip.   |

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Your servants to whom You have sworn by Your Own self, and you continued to say to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants and they will inherit [it] forever.'"**

[Exodus 32:13]

The stiff-necked Hebrews are right now having a party, celebrating their idolatry and their total lack of understanding of the Lord Who brought them out of Egypt, and Moses, unbeknownst to them, is making intercession on their behalf for their lives. How many times has Satan gone before God to accuse us, to point out our faults, to point out to God that we have been out of fellowship for three years, never thinking about confession of our sins, thinking that our service, whether in or out of the Spirit, should be sufficient for God. And our Lord, completely unknown to us, stands in the gap, arguing on our account, placing before God the Father His own blood from the cross and God's Own promises to us. Who could ask for a greater Savior? Who could imagine such security and mercy and love?

Moses places before God the promises which God had made to His servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel—God had promised them the land and had promised to bring them into the land. God's very Own Word is a stake here and Moses brings that to God's attention. There are times that we are totally deserving of severe punishment and death when God had backed off and has shown us mercy because of His promises to us; because of the death of His Son on the cross. The parallels here are phenomenal.

Notice what Moses does in this verse. **He quotes Scripture to God!** Somehow, somewhere there was Scripture. Now I realize that something like this can be carried verbally; however, considering the size of Genesis, it is highly unlikely that in a day when writing existed, that the Hebrews memorized everything rather than write it down. They wrote it down and from these writings, things were memorized. The Psalmist, speaking of this incident, wrote **For He remembered His holy word [spoken to] Abraham His servant** (Psalm 105:42 in context).

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah changed His mind against the evil which He thought to do to His people... [Exodus 32:14]**

The KJV uses the word *repented*, which is an archaic term. It really means *to change one's mind*, as I have translated it here. Again: God was not going to destroy Israel until Moses talked him out of it, presenting several good arguments that He had not really given consideration. This is an anthropopathism, attributing to God the thoughts, intents and actions of man so that we can better understand God's actions and His motivations. God is a merciful God, but His justice and righteousness are not compromised in order to redeem us. Our punishment was required; justice had to be done. Our Lord paid in full the price for our sins, God's justice demanding the full penalty for that which is abhorrent to Him.

To us, it appears as though God has changed His mind because Moses has interceded on behalf of his people; and to us, it **appears** in salvation and post-salvation experience that God is merciful toward even to the point of compromising His own justice as we have an Intercessor before Him. However, all of this is possible because God's justice was satisfied at the cross. All the evil that we have done and propose to do has been paid for on the cross. Similar anthropopathisms are found in 2Samuel 24:16 Psalm 106:45 Amos 7:1–6.

This is a tremendous parallel to our lives. We are this worthless mass of people who, even with God's grace, have continually moved away from Him. It is our nature to retreat from God. *All we like sheep have gone astray, each one of us has turned to his own way* (Isaiah 53:6a). We do not deserve mercy, we do not deserve God's grace. You may wonder, *why didn't God simply wipe out this entire lot of worthless individuals? If they could not wait for 40 days, why on earth does God show them any mercy?* But then you could turn this around and apply it to ourselves. We were born in a state of sin. Almost the first thing that we do, when we begin to learn right from wrong, is to do that which is wrong. We deserve to be destroyed by God. We do not deserve His grace. It is only through the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ that gives us His mercy. Herein is the tremendous foreordination of God. He chose this weak and rebellious people to teach His grace. God chose the weak to confound the strong. It is clear to us that these people deserve to be destroyed, yet Moses stands between God and Israel, as an intercessor for Israel, just as Jesus stands between us and God as our Intercessor. We deserve death, yet God gives us life because Jesus has interceded on our behalf. It is a tremendous lesson which God teaches us here, planning all of this to occur from eternity past.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses Returns from the Mountain to Observe the Degeneracy First-hand

**...and Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tables of the testimony in his hands; tables that were written on both [lit., their] sides—they were written on the one side and on the other. [Exodus 32:15]**

Now that Moses has interceded on behalf of his people, the Hebrews, he will carry down to them the very ten commandments written in stone which they had twice vowed to obey. This will be the testimony against them. We are lucky that our testimony is: *He has made [us] alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having cancelled our certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which was hostile toward us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross* (Colossians 2:13b–14).

**And the tables [were] the work of God—they and the writing—the writing of God, it graven upon the tables. [Exodus 32:16]**

This sentence begins with the word *tables* (or, tablets) and ends with the same word. This is called epanadiplosis [pronounced *EP-an-a-di-PLŌ-sis*], which, in English means an *encircling*. What is being said to a complete circle; it begins and ends with itself. This figure of speech calls attention to its great solemnity. Although this figure of speech is found over two dozen times in the Bible, it is often missed because the translator, to make the rendering sound like English, often has to vary the word order. Then, in the middle of this verse we have anadiplosis



[pronounced *AN-a-di-PLO-sis*] where a word is repeated, either at the end of one sentence and then at the beginning of the next, or at the end of one phrase and the beginning of the next. This makes these words stand out as the most emphatic portion of the text. These two similar figures of speech occurring in the same verse command great attention to be paid to this verse. It is a way of emphasizing, underlining or italicizing a verse.

The emphasis here by Moses is that not only are these laws the laws of God but that God Himself wrote them in stone as a witness of the covenant between Himself and His people. The ten commandments are a result of God's righteousness, His perfect expectations, our reasonable service and obedience to Him.

**When Joshua heard to noise of the people in their shouting, he then said to Moses, "A sound of war in the camp." [Exodus 32:17]**

From the generation of Moses (actually, the one subsequent to Moses' generation) we have very few heroes. One of the few is Joshua. We do not know if he witnesses this intercession of Moses on behalf of the Hebrews, whether he was part way up the mountain, or what; however, Joshua is not involved in the melee below them. He is one of the few men who would have stood up and opposed the error of the Hebrews.

**But he [Moses] said, "[It is] not the sound to sing in strength nor the sound to sing in weakness; [just] a sound of singing I am hearing." [Exodus 32:18]**

We lose a lot in this verse to the translation. Moses is waxing poetic here. He begins with a substantive which means *nothing*; 'ayin (אין) [pronounced *AH-yin*]; qôwl (קול) [pronounced *kole*], which means sound; 'ânâh (ענה) [pronounced *aw-NAW*], which means *to sing or chant*, and gebûwrâh (גבורה) [pronounced *gheb-oo-RAW*] and it means *might, power*. The Moses add a conjunction and repeats the same three words and instead of the word for *strength*, uses a word for *weakness* (used only here in the Bible): châlûwshâh (חלש) [pronounced *khal-oo-SHAW*]. Then Moses says qôwl (קול) [pronounced *kole*], which means sound; and 'ânâh (ענה) [pronounced *gaw-NAW*], which means *to sing*, but there is no addition of a modifier; the people are not singing of their strength or of their weakness; they are just singing. I know that this is lost on most of you, but Moses is hearing a sound of singing, but not the sound of singing of strength and not the sound of singing of weakness; but merely singing; and as he comments on this, he is practically singing. This makes it more cheerful sounding than it is supposed to be, but Moses, at this point, is nonplused. He does not yet appreciate just how degenerate his people are. He is listening carefully to what he can hear and he is poetical in his auditory perception of what is going on below. This is called a paronomasia [pronounced *par-o-no-MA-si-a*] when so many sounds are similar. Not only is this a paronomasia, which deals with sounds which are similar, but it involves perceiving sounds which are similar. It is difficult to translate something like this and retain the literalness of the verse and also convey the paronomasia. I think that I have done a fine job, but let me give you Bullinger's take on this: **"It is not the sound of those who strike, neither the sound of those who are stricken; but the sound of those who strike up (musically) do I hear."**

The party being held by the Hebrews was so loud that its sound reached Moses and Joshua as they walked down the mountain. It was extremely loud and difficult to discern its purpose. Joshua first thought that the Hebrews were at war with someone; however, as they came closer and listened more carefully, what they heard was loud singing.

**And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and dancing, then the anger of Moses burned hot and he threw the tables out of his hands and broke them at the foot of [lit., beneath] the mountain. [Exodus 32:19]**

Moses has been gone a scant forty days. He has led the Hebrews out of Egypt and they have seen day after day the power and strength of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. They are eating the Lord's manna every single day. They have vowed to uphold the law which was delivered to them only a month and a half previous, which included a prohibition of idolatry. Now here they were dancing like maniacs, celebrating the idol which they had made of a god (I am making the assumption that these people understood that the idol was representative).

Moses, meanwhile, has spent all of this time in communication with God, writing down the Law of God. All Israel had to do was to keep it together for a little over a month. Moses had left Aaron in charge, and he expected to find some semblance of order when he returned. When Moses comes into the camp and sees all their carrying-on, he becomes so livid that he breaks the tables of the law, symbolic of the Hebrews breaking their covenant with God in his absence.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses Takes Action in the Camp of Israel

**And he took the calf which they had made and burn [it] with fire and ground to powder until it was pulverized and scattered [the dust] upon the water and made the people of Israel drink [it].**

[Exodus 32:20]

There is a parallel passage to this in Deuteronomy 9:21, which is a part of Moses' memoirs, so to speak. Also, I have mentioned that King Jeroboam similarly cast two golden calves. The work of his hands received the same treatment as did this calf. In 2Kings 23:15, his calves are ground to dust and burned.

**Meekness/Grace orientation:** Exodus 32:20 is a passage which R. B. Thieme, Jr. loved to emphasize. This is Moses, whom God the Holy Spirit calls the most humble or the meekest man on the face of the earth (Num. 12:3); and here he is grinding down this idol into dust and forcing hundreds of Hebrews half his age to drink this gold filled water, to drink the idol that they made with their hands to show them that the idol is nothing. For most of us, this should not fit our conception of meek. An humble, meek man ought to have his eyes downcast, speak softly, back down to anyone and anything; and perhaps even employ a holy language most of the time. Was this Moses? Absolutely not! However, God the Holy Spirit instructed Moses to write that he was the most humble man on the face of the earth. Even though Moses wrote that, it was at the direction of God the Holy Spirit, making that statement inspired. In other words, that is a true statement.

Even though Moses is said to be the meekest of men, he still stood before God and argued the case of the Hebrews, even after hearing what was purportedly God's plan of action. This is the Moses who came down the mountain and forced hundreds of apostate Hebrews to drink water mixed with the gold of their idol. So you should be asking yourself—just what does it mean for someone to be meek? What does it mean for someone to be humble? The operational term here is *grace-oriented* (this is a phrase which I heard thousands of time from R. B. Thieme, Jr.). Moses was grace oriented. He understood his place on earth; he understood his destiny, his personal strength and God's power. He understood God's plan and his place in God's plan. He understood his operating assets, which included the strength of God the Holy Spirit and the power of God's Word in his soul. He understood his own character, his relationship to God and he understood God's character.

We are grace-oriented when we understand that we operate under God's power in God's plan. We are grace-oriented when we know our place in God's plan. When we don't think of ourselves in terms of arrogance but trust God in all things, we are grace-oriented. Humility and grace-orientation has nothing to do with a physical stance, or with being pathetically shy and withdrawn. Humility is not mumbling holy phrases. Moses was the leader of two million people; Moses stood between man and God; and Moses was the most humble man upon the earth. Moses spoke forcefully, he did not mince words, he was a powerful man, one who brought God's viewpoint to the attention of all those in his periphery. This was the status of the meekest man on the earth. In other words, meekness and humility are not positions in life, they are not a stance or a way of walking and talking, but a mental attitude—a mental attitude that recognizes the power of God and His absolute sovereignty in our lives. We will study the lives of a lot of saints in the Bible and Moses made damn few mistakes. He was fallible and he made some errors in judgement, but it is hard to find anyone else who made fewer mistakes. Paul, a man of grace, the Apostle of grace, who did have a sense of his place on this earth, still made a few grave errors in judgement. Moses made damn few.

**And Moses said, "Aaron, what did you do to this people that you have brought upon them a great sin?" [Exodus 32:21]**

Moses understands authority and Aaron was placed in authority in the absence of Moses. Had Moses died upon Mount Sinai or had been unable to continue as the leader of the Hebrews, the second place would have likely fallen into the lap of Aaron, which would have been an horrible mistake. He has control of the Hebrews for a scant forty days and already they are building idols and carrying on in a party fashion. It becomes obvious why God chose Moses and not his brother Aaron to be first in command. In fact, Aaron became second in command only through coming in the back door. That was not necessarily God's first choice (Joshua and Caleb would have been God's first and second choices, had God required backup).

Aaron remaining second in command kept him harmless enough as long as God gave him very significant spiritual guidance via Moses. Aaron was a great follower but a lousy leader. In his position of temporary authority, he, instead of quelling this nonsense, he encouraged it and cast the golden calf himself. This short period of independent power was far too much for him. Aaron was unable to handle it; and it took Moses here to brace him and slap him back into line (I mean that figuratively, of course). In this position of authority, Aaron was guilty concerning the sins of his people and fully accountable for their misdoings.

**And Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn hot; you know the people that they [are] into evil." [Exodus 32:22]**

Lest you are nonplused by my translation, the last four words of this verse are: (1) *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*], meaning *for*; (2) the prefixed preposition *bê* (בְּ), meaning *into, in*; (3) *ra'* (רָעָה) [pronounced *rawg'*], which means *evil*; and (4) the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine pronoun (which I, along with most translators, translated *they*; it is a reference to the word *people*, which is in the masculine singular).

Moses has not asked for a clarification or for an explanation. He has just chewed Aaron out. Aaron should have said, "Yes, sir; no excuse, sir." There is nothing more pitiful than a grown man who will not take responsibility for his actions. With children, you expect it. A child is often distinguished from a mature adult in his inability to take responsibility for his own actions. However, it is tragic when an adult will not assume this responsibility. Here Aaron pathetically tries to crawfish out of it. If you have ever seen a crawfish moving backwards, away from you—this is Aaron. He is backing down from Moses, he is making excuses, he is going to blame those in his periphery when this was his responsibility. He was the most responsible person there. It doesn't matter that the Hebrews are set upon evil; this is not an issue. Moses doesn't put up with any crap and Aaron should not either. When the Hebrews came to him desiring to make an idol, desiring to have a celebration to a god which they manufactured, Aaron should have knocked a few heads together and straightened them out (I am speaking figuratively).

**"For they said to me, I must make for us gods who will go before us; [they also said], 'As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt—we do not know what has become of him.'" [Exodus 32:23]**

The only thing worse than the mistake that Aaron made in the absence of Moses is the mistake that he is making right now and trying to crawfish his way out of the responsibility. Having taught high school for over two decades, the way you spotted a child, one who was a long ways from adulthood, was a young man or women, when caught in the act of doing something wrong, blaming everyone in is periphery. A child cannot take responsibility for his own actions—everyone else is always to blame. Aaron will just do as best as he can when it comes to passing along this blame to others. Sure, the Israelites were out of line and demanded that Aaron do that which was not right—that is not the issue—the issue is that Aaron went ahead and did that which was wrong.

**"And I said to them, let any who have gold take it off; so they gave it to me and I threw it into the fire and there came out this calf." [Exodus 32:24]**

Here, Aaron misrepresents his part in the action. He just threw the gold into the fire and the calf jumped out of the fire and there was the idol. Aaron has seen a great many wonders and miracles performed by God at the hand of Moses and thought this was a reasonable, almost believable story. However, Moses recognized this for the blatant lie that it is. Aaron had to fashion this idol; he may have used an existing mold for something else and modified it; he may have allowed it to melt in the sand until it formed into something, make a mold for itself. Whatever the situation, the end result was a hand or tool sculpted idol, which represented all manner of false gods and demons.

We can only imagine the disappointment felt by Moses to have his own brother try to feed him this line of bull. When a student would come up and lie straight faced to me, my favorite line to use (one which I stole from a close friend of many years ago) was *I only look stupid*.

**And when Moses saw the people, that they were unrestrained [unruly, uncontrolled and uncovered]; for Aaron had let them become unrestrained [unruly, uncontrolled and uncovered] to their shame among their enemies [lit., those who rise up against them].** [Exodus 32:25]

We need to examine some of the translations of this verse.

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | And when Moses saw that the people were unruly <i>and</i> unrestrained...           |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | And Moses saw the people, that unbridled they were...                               |
| KJV                             | And when Moses saw that the people were naked...                                    |
| NASB                            | Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control [lit., <i>let loose</i> ]... |
| NIV [NRSV]                      | [When] Moses saw that the people were running wild...                               |
| Owen's Translation              | And when Moses saw the people that they had broken loose...                         |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | And Moses seeth the people, that it is unbridled....                                |

Here, the various translations complement one another and help us to have a fuller understanding of what was occurring here. We have the common word for see in the Qal imperfect, the common stem, continuous action. Moses comes down and keeps observing the people.

**Pâra' (פָּרָא) [pronounced paw-RAHḤ]:** After people, we have a conjunction kî (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*] which means *that, for, when*. We are examining the actions of the people which Moses observed. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular pronoun, which is needed here because even though the verb usually supplies us with the person, gender and number, here it is in the Qal passive participle, and the participle does not convey that information. The verb is pâra' (פָּרָא) [pronounced paw-RAHḤ] and it means *to let go, to let loose, to let alone*. However, none of these meanings quite convey what is occurring. These people were operating without restraint. They had never been totally free before, out from under the domination of Egypt, out from under Moses' control; they were ignoring God's laws. The word meaning *unrestrained* comes from the primitive root meaning *to loosen*, which, by implication means *to expose, to uncover*. We find this word used in Num. 5:18 where it refers to *uncovering* the woman's head (see also Leviticus 10:6 13:45 21:10); this same word is found in Judges 5:2 with its noun cognate, where its usage is uncertain<sup>86</sup>. It seems to have a different, but possibly related use in Proverbs. Poetry and language which is literary often changes the meaning of a word or uses a word from the Hebrew in ways that we would not readily expect (this same word is found in Proverbs 1:25 4:15 8:33 13:18 15:32 29:18). Also, time will have an effect upon a word and its meaning is altered by the passage of time. In the spirit of completeness, this word is also found in 2Chronicles 28:19 and Ezekiel 24:14.

what seems to be happening here is a toga party without the togas. Not everyone is necessarily naked, but several of them are. Recall the word we had trouble with back in v. 6. The vocabulary of this verse helps to explain that word. Remember the word was tsâchaq (צָחַק) [pronounced *tsaw-KHAK*], which means *to laugh* in the Qal stem (as in Genesis 18:12–13 and 15 when Sarah laughed within herself about having a child; see also Genesis 17:17 21:6); however, in the Piel, it can refer to intimate caresses (Genesis 26:8) as well as *to mock*. R. B. Thieme, Jr. has translated this as *intercourse with demons*; the basis of their celebration is an idol made by

<sup>86</sup> BDB, p. 828; it is translated *avenging* [lit., *avenging the avenger*] in the KJV

hands and behind all idols are demons ready to receive glory and adoration. When one worships a demon, he simultaneously mocks God and has intercourse with the demon. The sexual connotation comes from Genesis 26:8 and from the implications of this verse. It is possible that, with so many restraints lifted, that some people were involved in a public orgy.

The verse continues with the same *kîy* conjunction, Aaron as the subject, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular suffix of *pâra'* again. Aaron is the subject, corresponding to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular and the people (singular) are the object, spoken of in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix. Aaron has cut these people loose; he has given active consent to their unbridled, uncontrolled, shameful behavior. What they are doing is far more than just a simple party or celebration. There are no rules, no laws and they are behaving like animals.

Then we have a strange word: *shîm<sup>etsâh</sup>* (שִׁמְעָה) [pronounced *shim-TSAW*] found only in this verse. It is translated *shame* in the KJV, *laughingstock* in the NIV; *a derision* in the NASB; *whispering* by *The Emphasized Bible*. In the masculine, we find the word in Job 4:12 and 26:14, BDB translates it *to whisper* and *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance* breaks tradition and supplies a translation *to emit a sound* (it normally does not supply an additional translation). I am going to give a new sense to this verse that perhaps is not found in other commentaries. We are not speaking of the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites or the Jebusites—those people that Israel will drive (or, will attempt to drive) out of the land. At this point in the narrative, we are out in the middle of a desert. There are not a large number of spies from other nations watching the Hebrews from afar and whispering about them. The nation Israel is a new thing in history. God is instituting a new program. He had instituted the Jewish race and now was forming this race into a nation. He was giving them the Law through Moses. This is an historical time in human history.

Whereas, it was not likely that their soon-to-be enemies from the land of Canaan were hiding off in some bushes watching them, it was absolutely definite that the Israelites were being observed by angels, by Satan and by a huge delegation of demonic powers. Satan and his cadre of evil were observing this, bringing the behavior of the Hebrews before God in the throne room of God as they did against Job (see Job 1 & 2). Those involved here are not literally the *enemies* of Israel, but those who are *among them who rose up against them*. There are no groups of people who are among the Hebrews who rise up against the Hebrews. There are demons who have filled the camp of Israel who continually judge and present to God in the court of heaven evidence against the Hebrews; evidence of their great degeneracy; evidence why the Jew should be destroyed.

Furthermore this is the *derisive whispering*; it is not something that the human ear can pick up; that's why this word only occurs here. This period of time in history is absolutely unique; we have the founding of the nation Israel, and they are behaving like animals in heat, unrestrained, without the law, and Satan is before God every few minutes with another long list of accusations against these people, whispering derisively against these people—this is your nation Israel? These are your people? They are among the most degenerate people on the face of the earth. Their behavior was a shame to them and Satan had a field day continually whispering against them. It was not a whisper insofar as God was concerned; Satan, in his melodramatic voice which sounds like a pipe organ, dramatically presented the offenses, the degeneracy in the courtroom of God, for all angelic creation to hear. However, to the Israelites, this was but a whisper, something said behind their backs in derision, something which could not be heard over the loudness of their degenerate partying.

The calf, an idol, a representative of the demon underworld was there and they did unrestrained obeisance to it. How often is your name brought before God in derision, as an example of one whose God's righteousness should not suffer to remain alive? How often must our advocate, our intercessor appear before God the Father, defending us, standing in the gap, protecting us from God's wrath?

Let me add an addendum to all of this. How many of you in your personal Bible studies and your Bible groups got together with five to ten other people and kicked this verse around (or this chapter). How many of you realized what was going on? When you were sharing your ignorance, how many of you recognized and brought to the attention of everyone else what this verse said? God has provided for you the gift of pastor-teacher and 99% of all believers should be under a person with that gift. And if your pastor-teacher is not feeding you properly, then



you find one that does. You pray to God to provide you with a teacher. [God] is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6b). [Jesus is speaking]: "If any man is willing to do His will, he will now of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether I speak from Myself*" (John 7:17) God has a plan for all of us and this includes being under the training, guidance and teaching of a pastor-teacher.

**The Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Whoever [belongs] to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, [gather yourselves] to me." Then all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him. [Exodus 32:26]**

What Moses said was very abbreviated. Literally this reads: "Whoever to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, to me!" There are no verbs; it was terse and to the point. God knew who would side with Moses and this is why some of the sons of Levi were given the spiritual responsibilities that they had been given previously in Exodus.<sup>87</sup> God foreknew their stand and vindicated them. There are a few scattered times in the Bible when a great spiritual leader must call out those who are believers and whose salvation means something to them; I am reminded of Joshua who said, "Now, therefore, fear and respect Y<sup>e</sup>howah and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah. And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah, then choose for yourselves today whom you will serve; whether the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve Y<sup>e</sup>howah." (Joshua 24:15; see also 1Kings 18:21) "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hat the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other." (Matt. 6:24a)

As back in v. 3, when it reads *all* the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him, it is a synecdoche of the genus; that is, the word *all* stands for the greater part. Certainly there were some sons of Levi who joined in the degeneracy, but the greater part of them did not. There was such a large number of them that Moses spoke of them as all of the sons of Levi.

The priesthood was specifically reserved for Aaron and his sons; however, there were duties and spiritual responsibilities that the Levites were privileged to perform. It is because of the stand that they took here that God gave them spiritual responsibilities and spiritual blessings. Moses commissioned them to go throughout the camp of Israel and execute the Hebrews in rebellion.

**And he said to them, "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, God of Israel, 'Put every man his sword on his side and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp and slay every man his brother and every man his companion and every man his neighbor [lit., close relative].'" [Exodus 32:27]**

|                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>  | ...and every man his neighbor. |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i> | ...and every man his neighbor. |
| KJV                         | ...and every man his neighbor. |
| NASB                        | ...and every man his neighbor. |

I trust that I have made my point. Most translators seem to agree and if you have several translations, you probably feel that you are ready to move on with the interpretation of this verse. Only the NASB hints at a slightly different translation. They allow for the alternate reading *and every man his kin*. The last word is the adjective qârôb (בָּרֵךְ) [pronounced *kaw-ROBE*] and, as an adjective, it means *near*, so most translators translate this *neighbor*, when it is used as a substantive. However, when used as a substantive, it tends to imply a near relationship as opposed to merely a near proximity. This same word is found in Leviticus 21:2–3 Num. 27:11 Ruth 2:20 Neh. 13:4. Whereas, it is possible that this could mean neighbor, I believe a closer relationship is implied here, which is more in keeping with v. 29.

Israel had gotten out of control; in less than six short weeks, the sons of Israel were thoroughly entrenched in antinomian degeneracy; they were lawless, ignoring the laws of God they had twice sworn to obey. They were engaged in shameful behavior bringing Satan into God's courtroom continuously with reports of their lascivious,

<sup>87</sup> Aaron, a son of Levi, and his descendants were specifically given the spiritual responsibilities inherent in the tabernacle and the sacrifices; therefore, those of the priesthood are often called Levites

orgiastic behavior. This was a degenerate generation and some of them had to be removed from Israel like a cancer. Such a stance may seem unduly harsh, but these were the men and women who were to be the founders of the nation Israel. Their sons and daughters observed them and their shameless behavior. God had to remove this cancerous growth from Israel before they destroyed this nation at its inception.

Certainly, you are thinking to yourselves *this is behavior that I would never engage in*. So—how many of you single women with children have allowed a man to move in with you? Have had men spend the night? Single men: the same question. You don't think that your children are ignorant of what is going on? You don't think that you have influenced your children in such a negative way that you could destroy their chances at right man/right woman because they will copy your behavior rather than wait for the right person? God will go through a generation and often He must cut out the degeneracy in order to preserve a nation. God, thorough wars, depression and disease, must often remove large segments of a population in order to save the population as a whole. We have seen this several times in our history with the great depression, with the several wars that we were involved in, with AIDS. It was promoted by the degenerates who engaged in deviant behavior that their sexual predilections, their drug usage, their immorality was their own business and affected no one but themselves. Look at the children who have been brought into the world over the past three decades, those whose minds and health have been affected by the drug usage of their parents; look at the innocent people who have been affected by AIDS, a disease that could have been 99% contained were it not for the drug usage and sexual habits of a significant segment of our society; look at the crack babies, children whose lives are forever impacted; look at the amount of money which comes out of the pockets of those who are not involved in the taking of drugs, are not involved in homosexual or promiscuous behavior. The old saying, *no man is an island*, is true; everything that we do impacts the society and the people that we live in; those who God has entrusted with children, almost every decision that we have made from our teens on have affected the welfare of those children. If you were promiscuous as a young person and now you are divorced with children—your promiscuity affected these children decades before they were born. You do not exist in a vacuum and degenerate behavior is never confined to those engaging in it. So God has and God will cut out great segments of our population in order to preserve us.

There is a difference in methodology which I should point out to the 1% who become confused by passages such as this: in leading the nation Israel, Y<sup>e</sup>howah was their God, their ruler, and He communicated directly with certain people and authorized some of this culling out. God will throughout Israel's history call upon them to destroy large populations that occupied the land of Canaan and this will leave some of you nonplused. God is not calling us as individuals to go out and destroy segments of society that we perceive as degenerate; that is not our calling in life. In this dispensation, God speaks to us through His Word and we cannot control the morality of our neighbors. We cannot, other than what is prescribed by law, kill those segments of population which are killing us.

**And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses and there fell about 3000 men of the people that day. [Exodus 32:28]**

Recall that this is a population of two million. 3000 out of that is less than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 1% of the population. As a teacher, it has always been my opinion that a very small percentage of children could be removed from our schools and our schools would be improved a hundredfold. There is a segment of high school population who are not going to learn anything significant for the rest of their high school career; they are marking time. Much of the problem is that we have not provided for them a suitable avenue of instruction. Our high schools are geared for academic preparation, and not every child needs that kind of a preparation. Mechanics, plumbers, computer technicians, electricians and various other craftsmen make good salaries and perform absolutely necessary functions in our society in honorable professions. We could take 10% of our high school population and place them in journeymen programs, paying and preparing them in some field, using standardized tests and personal preferences to guide our placement. Remove the 1-2% criminal element from the high schools on top of that and we would have some of the best performing secondary schools in the world. It only takes the removal of a small percentage of people to significantly affect the entire population.

More application: in society, we have drug pushers who chemically murder large segments of society and cost us incredible amounts of money. We have criminals who, because of their own degeneracy, because of drug usage, because of a poor home life and environment, because of a low IQ—but chiefly because of their own

degeneracy—murder; they should be removed from society entirely by the death penalty, which should be swift and just. Such animals destroy our society and should be eradicated at a minimal cost (a murderer, although as accused, should be afforded the rights of an innocent man; as convicted should not be kept on death row for ten to twenty years, allowing appeal after expensive appeal to tie up the courts). And no murderer should be allowed to go free on a technicality; that is degeneracy in our court system.

**And Moses said, "Ordain yourselves [lit., fill your hand] today for Y<sup>e</sup>howah, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother that he may bestow upon you this day a blessing." [Exodus 32:29]**

Degeneracy struck and caused one brother to stumble and another was essentially unscathed; a man might avoid it and his son may fall into it. In any case, the Levites had to kill the cancerous elements of their society, even though those elements were of their own flesh and blood. Taking such a drastic measure would result in blessing for those who remained. Now this is a very particular time of history when God is ruling directly over Israel—we do not have that in the United States today, so we have to be careful about application. We cannot use this to advocate the bombing of abortion clinics, gay bars, or any other establishment where there are people with whom we do not agree. However, with Y<sup>e</sup>howah as their direct leader, it was sin not to kill their own brothers and near relatives. The Levites were to ordain themselves that day—the very day that they went out and destroyed the enemies of God.

Some who totally misunderstand or misrepresent the words of our Lord, think that there is some sort of a great contrast or disagreement between the New Testament and the Old. The chief differences are (1) the Old Testament looks forward to the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord, whereas the New Testament records these events or looks back on them; and (2) the custodianship of the Word of God has changed. However, this is the Word of God inspired by the same Holy Spirit. God did not change His mind drastically when He came to the time of the New Testament; His program did change, but that is because Jesus Christ came and divided history in half. Our Lord did not change what was taught in the Old Testament, but He clarified it and gave it the proper interpretation. Here, in this passage, men had to slaughter those of their own family. This is not too different from the words of our Lord when He said, **"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For you see, I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worth of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worth of Me."** (Matt. 10:34–37 Micah 7:6). And future from our Lord's day, things will remain the same: **"And brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father [his] child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death."** (Matt. 10:21 Micah 7:6).

However, since I got off on this tangent, I should deal with familial relationships. Many Christians do not get along with their family, co-workers and associates because they are self-righteous asses. They have not taken some great, holy stand for God, but have embarrassed God with their repugnant self-righteous behavior. They don't get along with those in their periphery because they are a pain in the neck to be around. We are to reflect the character of Jesus Christ through the indwelling of the Spirit. This will certainly draw the enmity of those vehemently opposed to the work of God. However, for those who are still undecided, our behavior should not be a reason for them to look elsewhere for spiritual guidance. If almost all of our relatives and associates are pained to be around us, this does not mean that we are fulfilling these verses but instead, this often means that we are jerks who need to keep our mouths shut until we learn some doctrine.

And let me add this: please do not think that you have been called to slaughter the enemies of God. This is a different set of circumstances and a different program of God. If you have any thoughts that these verses pertain directly to you and that God wants to use you to destroy his enemies, you are extremely confused and possibly mentally ill.

**And Moses said to the people, then, on the morrow, "You have sinned a great sin and now I will go up to Y<sup>e</sup>howah; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." [Exodus 32:30]**

Most of the Hebrews participated to one degree or another in this idolatrous orgy; some just praised God through the golden calf, others praised the golden calf, others possibly fornicated out in plain sight; God had the most degenerate of the Hebrews killed. However, it appears that very large numbers of them participated, with the possible exception of Caleb and perhaps a handful of others; therefore, all of them shared some guilt here, even Aaron. Moses had only been back for a day or so and had to return to God on their behalf, hoping that he could cover their sin (atone for their sin). This is not the same as hiding their sin from God; God would from His Own volition, cover over the sin, hiding it from Himself until Jesus Christ paid for the sin in human history. Moses did not realize how bad things were when he was arguing with God until he actually came down off the mountain and saw with his own eyes how terribly degenerate the Hebrews had become in just a few short days.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses Returns to Speak to God

**So Moses returned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and said, "Alas, this people have sinned a great sin and they have made for themselves gods of gold. [Exodus 32:31]**

Although Moses had *talked* God out of killing all of the Hebrews, after seeing the extent of their sin, Moses felt that he needed to go again before God just in case to speak on their behalf. This is analogous to our having been saved, yet we still continue to sin; Satan continues to accuse us; and Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Great Advocate and Mediator, stands in the gap and defends us against the discipline that we so deserve.

**"But now, if You will forgive their sin—and, if You won't forgive their sin [lit., if not], [then] blot me out, I pray You, out of Your book which you have written." [Exodus 32:32]**

In the middle of this verse we have a part of speech known as aposiopesis [pronounced *a-po-si-o-PEE-sis*] which means *sudden silence*. We have the *if* portion of an *if-then* statement, but we never have the *then* portion. Moses is about to make some sort of a promise or a vow on behalf of the people and suddenly stops; if after a scant forty days of his absence the people go out of control, how can he make any promises that they would keep. He stops suddenly and offers himself in their place.

We find the word *if* twice in this verse, but what Moses is doing is giving God an ultimatum.

Moses, without realizing it, in his greatness, makes himself a type of the Messiah to come when he offers to have his name taken out of the book of life; he offers himself up in place of the Hebrews. If what they have done is too great to overlook, then he offers himself for God to punish, to lay upon him their sin. What a marvelous analogy between Moses and our Lord. As we have seen, much of the Old Testament is a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ and His death on the cross for us. Moses has already been revealed as our advocate, our mediator; and now he presents himself as a sacrifice on behalf of the Hebrews. God did not have to engineer this, bend anyone's volition, place unusual circumstances which would inordinately coerce anyone's volition. In His perfect plan, God allows for the degeneracy of man, for the great honor of Moses to all stand as a witness to His Son who would come 1400 years later and offer Himself as Moses offered himself. Moses has given us a marvelous type that we cannot miss in the church age.

**But Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Whoever sinned against Me, him I will blot out of My book. [Exodus 32:33]**

When it comes to salvation, all men are potentially saved because Jesus Christ died for all. This is why the Book of Life is presented as a book from which names are blotted out. If Jesus died for the elect only, then no one's name would ever be blotted out before God's Book of Life would have only the names of the elect in it. You see, if Christ died only for the elect, then no one else's name would ever be in the Book of Life because there would be no reason for it to be there. Those who sins reveal that they are not believers in Y<sup>e</sup>howah—those names will be taken out of God's Book of Life, once they die having not believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior. This book

is also mentioned in Psalm 69:28 Isaiah 4:3 Dan. 12:1 Phil. 4:3 and Rev. 2:5, which reads: "He who overcomes will be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."

**"But now, go; lead to people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel will go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit upon them their sin." [Exodus 32:34]**

God has ordered Moses to return to his people. This means if Moses is going to lead, then God will leave some people alive to follow him. This means that God will continue the covenant with Israel which He first delivered to Abraham. So God has reassured Moses that He, God, will not destroy the Jewish race and begin again with Moses. On the other hand, even though Moses does not know it at this time, but God does—God will destroy everyone from the generation of Moses and all of the adults down to those who are twenty years of age. Those believers, who mature under Moses teaching during their wanders throughout the desert, will enter into the land. God will keep them alive and will visit upon the others and kill them, leaving their carcasses to rot in the desert. They will not even have their bones carried to the promised land, as is being done for Joseph. **"But as for you, your corpses will fall in the desert and your sons will be shepherds for forty years in the desert and they will bear your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the desert."** (Num. 14:32–33)

An implication which is often ignored is this tells us the punishment is sometimes postponed. Satan, the god of this world, has been judged; however, he will not be placed forever into the lake of fire until the end of the millenium, which is no less than 1007 years from today. **Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah proclaimed, "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in grace and truth, Who preserves grace for thousands, who lifts up punishment, rebellion and sin; still, He will by no means leave [the guilty] unpunished"** (Exodus 34:6–7a)

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah sent a plague upon the people because they made the calf which Aaron made.**  
[Exodus 32:35]

God will begin, bit by bit to destroy the degenerate portion of Israel. However, just like a reoccurring cancer, God will take out some here and some there; then the cancer will flare up again, and God, with the precision of a surgeon, will take out yet more of the cancer. Finally, He will be left with none but the very youngest generation to leave Egypt and these will be capable of entering into the land.



# EXODUS 33

## Exodus 33:1–23

### Outline of Chapter 33:

- vv. 1–6 **Y<sup>e</sup>howah tells Moses to resume their journey**
- vv. 7–11 **Moses and the tent of meeting outside the camp**
- vv. 12–20 **Moses intercedes for the people and asks for God's graciousness**
- vv. 21–23 **God places Moses in the cleft of the rock**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 2 **The Peoples in the Land of Canaan**
- v. 3 **God's Forgiveness and God's Discipline**
- v. 10 **Why Were Believers in the Old Testament Not Given the Holy Spirit?**
- v. 11 **How Does Moses Speak Face to Face With God?**

**Introduction:** In chapter 33, we find a change in the relationship between God and that generation of Hebrews. God will no longer move in the midst of the Hebrews. He warned that if His presence was manifested in their midst, He would destroy them. So God will meet with Moses outside the camp. This is a foreshadowing of the church age.

Placing this chapter in time is difficult. It appears in v. 1 that we are heading out, but in subsequent chapters, Moses receives a second set of the Tablets of the Law on Mount Sinai (he himself must first cut out the stone—Exodus 34:1). Exodus 34 is the last time that Mount Sinai will be mentioned as a part of the current narrative. Later, it will be mentioned, but in the sense of looking back (Lev. 7:38 26:46).

Also, in the next few chapters, the Tabernacle (Tent of God) was erected (Exodus 26). This is different from the Tent of Meeting spoken of here; although both will have the same name.

What appears to happen is, God here gives the orders to move out, but it is unclear whether they do. In Exodus 34, they will still clearly be near Mount Sinai and Moses will go up Mount Sinai. Several times in the book of Leviticus, the *wilderness of Sinai* will be mentioned (as it is in Numbers as well). What appears to be missing is just exactly when Israel broke camp and left.

Originally, I thought that this chapter has what Moses typically did. As Israel moved, he pitched a tent outside the camp as a prototype Tent of God. The problem with that is, although this could have been what generally happened, there is a very specific conversation here between Moses and God, one which seems to change the dynamics of God's relationship with Israel; and Moses climbs Mount Sinai again in Exodus 34.

We have to go by a few clues. One year passes between Israel's leaving Egypt and the original erection of the Tent of God (Exodus 40:2, 17). Prior to that, Moses apparently spoke with God in a different tent; somewhat of a prototype.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**Y<sup>e</sup>howah Tells Moses to Resume Their Journey**

**Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt to the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, saying 'I will give it to your descendants [lit., seed].' [Exodus 33:1]**

The Hebrews have been in the desert for approximately a half a year to a year. They were camped out at the foot of Mount Sinai while Moses went up and receive the Law and they appear as if they are on the move again. This call for the people to depart will apparently be postponed, and it appears to be the result of a conversation that Moses will have with God later on in this chapter.

God no longer calls this generation *My people*; He does not even call them *Moses' people*; or they are alluded to with a simple definite article. God reiterates His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—in fact, this is the only reason He is going to continue to guide them.

Now, what is slightly confusing is that Moses will have the tablets of the Law replaced in the next chapter on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:1–4) whereas all the previous commands seem to have come from Mount Sinai (Exodus 18:5 19:11, 20, 23 24:13, 16). There are two reasonable solutions: (1) God was originally going to have the people of Israel leave Mount Sinai, but Moses talks God out of that (which conversation is found in this chapter). Or, (2) these chapters are not in chronological order. I believe that #1 is the correct understanding.

**"And I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanites, the<sup>88</sup> Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the<sup>89</sup> Hivites and the Jebusites. [Exodus 33:2]**

We have not gone through a list of names since Genesis, so it is about time for a quick review:

| The Peoples in the Land of Canaan |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Canaanites</b>                 | Their name comes from their father, Canaan, the son of Ham, the son of Noah. God had cursed him in Genesis 9. From Canaan came eleven groups of peoples who inhabited Phœnicia and Palestine, including the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites and the Jebusites (Genesis 10:15–18).  |
| <b>Amorites</b>                   | Because these are born of the Canaanites and had some intermingling with the Hivites (cp. Genesis 12:5, 6 34:2, 30 48:22), these three terms are sometimes interchanged. Sumerian and Akkadian inscriptions of the end of the third millennium B.C. describe these as <i>desert people unaquainted with civilized life</i> <sup>90</sup> . Around 2000 B.C. they moved into Babylonia and established an Amorite dynasty there. Two Amorite kings ruled the Transjordanian area during the invasion of Israel (Joshua 12:1–6 Judges 1:36). |
| <b>Hittites</b>                   | The Hittites principally occupied Syria (Joshua 1:4). Although I have not personally examined them, there are supposedly very striking similarities in details and the arrangement of their law code and the Pentateuch. Their power peaked in the 1300's B.C. and began to wain under their continued hostilities with Egypt. The Hittite empire proper never extended as far south as Palestine; however, there were migrants in Palestine from the Hittite group (Genesis 22).  |
| <b>Perizzites</b>                 | This is the only group not mentioned as one of the branches of the Hittites. They did inhabit Palestine (Genesis 15:20 Exodus 3:8 Deuteronomy 7:1), but we are unsure as to their racial origins. Their name possibly refers to villages or hill dwellers rather than to a particular ethnic background.   |

<sup>88</sup> Several codices read *and the* (Western Samaritan, Syrian and the Targum of Onkelos (the early printed edition)

<sup>89</sup> Some codices (Samaritan, Septuagint, Syrian and the Targum of Onkelos) read *and the*

<sup>90</sup> *The New Bible Dictionary*, J. D. Douglas, p. 31

| The Peoples in the Land of Canaan |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Hivites</b>                    | This group lived in the Lebanon hills in association with the Arkites (Genesis 10:17 Exodus 3:8 Judges 3:3) where they still lived until the time of David (2Samuel 24:7). As we have studied earlier, these may have also been the Horites. |
| <b>Jebusites</b>                  | The Jebusites lived in the hill country of Israel and in and around Jerusalem (Num. 13:29 Joshua 11:3 15:8 18:16 Judges 19:10–11). They were a minority group in this area.  |

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

In v. 3, God tells Moses that He will not go up with them, so the angel in v. 2 is not our Lord Jesus Christ, but an inferior angel, a created angel. This is not the same as the Angel mentioned in Exodus 23:20–23.

**"To a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you for you are an obstinate [lit., a stiff-necked] people; otherwise [lit., lest], I would consume you in the way." [Exodus 33:3]**

God manifested Himself to the Hebrews at close range quite a number of times. He was the pillar of fire and the cloud that went before them. However, God's anger is too great (I am being anthropopathic here) to be in close proximity with the Hebrews. This is easy to understand if we take this to an analogous human level. Idolatry is often compared to infidelity in marriage; idolatry is spiritual infidelity. Jesus Christ, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel, has taken this people to Himself and has protected them and guided them and given them His law, and after three weeks of minimal supervision, the Hebrews are worshiping idols.

A man whose wife—a woman he has given his all to and has loved and cherish—has cheated on him might not be able to be around this woman. Whereas killing one's wife and lover are not necessarily right, such a crime of passion does occur. In any case, when either member of a marriage has been cuckolded, it is difficult, if not impossible to return to what they first had in marriage. God is analogous to the cuckolded husband who cannot bear to be around his wife, lest anger consume him.

We might at this juncture ask where is God's forgiveness? Why can He not write this off to their old sin natures, forgive them and continue in their midst?

### God's Forgiveness and God's Discipline

1. The people of Israel have not sought God's forgiveness themselves.
2. The people have not confessed their sins to God.
3. God has covered their sin and He has allowed Moses to intercede on their behalf.
4. We must realize that sins provoke several responses from God:
  - 1) Discipline in many categories: God knows what hurts us and He spans us to correct us and to get our attention. He may, in discipline, give us a disease, reduce our finances, take away a material item or items which bring us pleasure; He might change our position at work and reduce our responsibilities; He may lessen our spiritual responsibilities; He may do things which cause us mental, physical and/or emotional pain.
  - 2) There are, in addition to the above, the natural consequences of sin. For instance, if you are sexually involved with several people outside of marriage and prior to marriage, the natural result will be that (1) you will not be able to recognize or appreciate your right man or right woman when they appear on the scene; (2) you might be into a hot affair during the period of time that you would have met your right man or right woman and they will eventually get bored and go off elsewhere; (3) you reduce your ability to love and/or respond to your right person; (4) you do yourself possibly irreparable harm to your own character, making you a horrible choice for marriage; (5) you confuse your own sexuality, and some people who become involved sexually outside of marriage, outside of their right man right woman relationship, in the right environment after continued exposure to people who are not your right man or right woman, after continued exposure to people who simply use you, you can even become

## God's Forgiveness and God's Discipline

involved in homosexual relationships. (6) You may become infected with a sexually transmitted disease. (7) You may have your heart broken by someone that you thought was your right man or right woman because you became sexually involved with them outside of marriage. (8) Sex outside of marriage done once makes it much easier to fall into the same sin a second time. (9) Any one of these things may lead to other negative results in your life which are not God disciplining you, but natural results. For instance, the sexually transmitted disease for some women could result in birth defects to their future children which would last the entire life of the child. Those who have had their hearts broken, may suffer depression, despondency; their job performance might suffer even to the point of losing their jobs. Some might even respond in inappropriate and even psychotic ways. However, all of these are natural consequences of sexual sins outside of the playing field designed by God. They are not discipline from God. Furthermore, this is just one example of one kind of sin and the possible natural results. When you add cement, sand and water, the result is concrete which lasts for a long time—it is a natural result. All sins have natural results, some of which may last a lifetime. I personally have committed sins as an unbeliever teenager (I am pretty certain that I was an unbeliever then) which have results that have followed me to this day.

- 3) Once we have rebounded, God allows in some instances the discipline which He instituted to continue as blessing. When we have touched a hot stove, God may allow our hand to continue to burn to remind us not to do it again.
- 4) When we rebound, the natural results will in almost every case continue. If you catch AIDS from having a sexual relationship outside of marriage, outside of the right man right woman playing field, rebound does not mean that God will also remove the disease AIDS from your life. God may cause the HIV virus not to become a full-blown case of AIDS for several years, but you will from then on carry the virus in your body and likely suffer the natural physical results of carrying the HIV virus by eventually suffering and dying from AIDS. If we have a torrid affair, during which time we ignore the right person that God has brought to us (this is usually because we are unable to recognize that person), they might run off and get married, move to another state, etc. We may end our affair and even become celibate—that person is still out of state or that person is married to someone else or that person, in desperation, is in the midst of an affair.
5. For prolonged time out of fellowship, God places us under intensive discipline and, even after rebound, still exposes us to a series of painful, disciplinary actions. A good example of this is David's affair with Bathsheba (who was his right woman).
6. God to Israel, because of Israel's adulterous behavior, is showing this generation and us that some sins have results which last for a long time. There are sins that we will commit and sins that we have committed which have made their mark, have left their scars and the results will remain with us for our entire lives.
7. Israel was guilty of spiritual adultery. Anyone who has ever been in love and married to their right man or right woman can testify how devastating an affair can be to both parties. A husband or a wife who is unfaithful to their right person during their marriage can destroy that marriage and leave permanent scars on the other person, on themselves and upon their children. People who become sexually involved prior to marriage are adulterers in a sense, and the results can last your entire lifetime.
8. This generation, for this particular sin and for others that will follow, will be struck down dead in the desert; a trip which should take several weeks, will require forty years as God kills each and every Israelite from this generation, with a handful of exceptions

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**When the people heard this evil word [or, distressful information], they mourned and no man put his ornaments on himself. [Exodus 33:4]**

*The Amplified Bible*  
 NASB  
 NIV  
 NRSV

When the people heard these evil tidings...  
 When the people heard this sad word...  
 When the people heard these distressing words...  
 When the people heard these harsh words...

Young's Lit. Translation    **And the people heard this sad thing...**

I couldn't find any of the translators who were consistent in their translation here. However, consistency in translation is not necessarily the way for a translator to always go. Since Bibles are read by laymen and by pastors who are not students of the original languages, some interpretation must occur to guide them. To be consistent, this would read: **When the people heard this evil word (or, saying), they were caused to mourn and no man put his ornaments on him.**

The word for *evil* is ra' (רָע) [pronounced *rahg*]. It means, *evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; misery, distress, injury; that which is displeasing [disagreeable, grievous, unhappy, unfortunate, sad]*. This is our common word for evil. Strong's #7451 BDB #948. However, to be clear, nothing that the Lord says is evil nor is the intent behind what He says evil. However, what loss the Hebrews endured because of their infidelity seemed evil to them. A good one-word translation would be *displeasing, grievous, or distressful* in this context.

The ornaments which were spoken of are the jewelry and ornaments which the Hebrews received as payment from the Egyptians for their 400 years of slavery. The Hebrews wore these in celebration of their deliverance by God and to celebrate the plunder which God had given them. However, a similar occurrence is to never be, as God will no longer personally lead them—so God says here. The result is, they have no reason to wear these ornaments of celebration.

**For Y<sup>e</sup>howah had said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, 'You are an obstinate [lit., stiff-necked] people; [if] for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you; so now, remove your ornaments from you that I may know what to do with you.'" [Exodus 33:5]**

The Hebrews removed these ornaments in obedience to God. God told Moses what to say to them and Moses spoke to them the same words. If God went before them or into their midst, he would *consume* them. That word is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Piel perfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix of *kâlâh* (כָּלָה) [pronounced *kaw-LAW*] and it means *complete, accomplish, finish*; however, this is one of those Hebrew words with many varied English renderings. *Completion* seems to be the sense when something in the context needs to be completed (Genesis 18:33 24:15, 19 44:12 Ruth 3:18<sup>91</sup>); however, occasionally, this appears to mean *consume entirely* as in *finished off, completely annihilated*. It is used in this sense in Genesis 41:30 Num. 25:11 Psalm 119:87.<sup>92</sup> The two meanings are tied together insofar as both are making an end to something or causing something to come to its end. Context is fairly clear as to which of the two senses this can be taken in.

**Therefore, the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments on account of Mount Horeb. [Exodus 33:6]**

Obviously it was not Mount Horeb (or, Sinai) which was the cause of the Hebrews behavior, but it was their behavior at the foot of Mount Horeb which caused God to partially turn His back on them.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses and the Tent of Meeting Outside the Camp

**Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp far off from the camp and he called it the *tent of meeting*; and it came to pass [that] everyone who sought Y<sup>e</sup>howah would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp. [Exodus 33:7]**

<sup>91</sup> I am looking strictly at the Piel

<sup>92</sup> Ditto



This was a prototype tabernacle. It did not have copies of the furniture or anything like that and it may or may not have had an altar upon which to offer sacrifices. However, the Tabernacle that we are familiar with had not yet been built. We know this for several reasons: (1) the Tabernacle was to be inside the camp with the various tribes camped around it (Num. 2:17–31); here, this tent of meeting was outside the camp. (2) God will command Moses to begin construction later on in Exodus (Exodus 35:10). (3) the completion of the tabernacle is recorded in Exodus 36:1–40:33, future from this time. (4) This verse seems to be the key to the fact that this is a prototype Tent of God—Moses himself pitches the tent.

What may confuse some people is, both this tent and the Tabernacle are the same word in the Hebrew, which is *'ohel* (אֹהֶל) [pronounced *OH-heh*]. It means, *tent, tabernacle, house, temporary dwelling*; and it is the ordinary word for *tent*. Strong's #168 BDB #13. Both this tent and the Tabernacle are called *the Tent of Meeting*.

This would become a Levitical responsibility (Num. 1:49–53). We will see the actual Tent of God erected in Exodus 40, which appears to be a much bigger deal than we have here (although it appears as though Moses did the erecting). However, prior to this construction, Moses had to have a place to meet God. However, God would not come into the midst of His people; otherwise He would destroy them. Since the tabernacle was not built at this time (although God had identified the men to work on it). It would be logical to pitch this tent in a place of easy access to all of the Israelites; however, because of their sin, the tent of meeting was moved away from the camp so that God would not consume them. There is only one solution for this, and that is for Moses to act as an intercessor, which is what He will do later in this chapter.

When the Hebrews committed spiritual adultery, just like its marital counterpart, God's relation with that generation would never be the same again. God would resume His leading of the Hebrews and the tabernacle would be built in the camp, after Moses acts as a mediator. However, just as an affair scars a marriage and a relationship forever, so will God's relationship with this generation of people be. In some ways, everything will seem copacetic, but God's Word would reveal that God loathed that generation (Deuteronomy 32:5 Psalm 95:10 Hebrews 3:10).

The next few verses describe a *modus operandi*. This is not a particular instance, but what is spoken of occurred many times over the course of the next several weeks or months. It was a temporary arrangement where God and Moses had contact, but the Lord was clearly not in the midst of Israel. Between vv. 7–11, Rotherham says that the verse tense are unusual. I personally do not see that; however, as my knowledge of Hebrew increases, maybe I will change my mind on that.

**And it came to pass that whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood every man at his tent door and looked after Moses until he had gone into the tent. [Exodus 33:8]**

These people have committed spiritual adultery. They are obviously sorry for their actions. They have yet to rebound (confess their sins to God). All they can do is wistfully watch while Moses has fellowship with Y<sup>e</sup>howah, their God.

Since most people have this tremendous desire to meet and marry their right person, when you have committed adultery prior to your marriage—that is, you have fornicated outside of and prior to marriage, we have gone through a list of natural results of this choice. You might spend the rest of your life *outside the tent*, as it were, looking in. The only person on prom night without a date, the only woman on Valentine's Day not to receive flowers, the only man you know on Valentine's Day that has no one to take out; in this regard, you are outside the tent watching those able to enter the tent. You will be rather unhappy and disturbed when you see others inside the tent. This is analogous to the way that Israel felt.

Only Moses had a decent relationship with God. Only Moses could go into the tent of meeting and speak to God. Israel could only watch in sadness as the God who delivered them from the Egyptians, the God Who performed a series of marvelous miracles in their presence, as this God will meet only with Moses and will not come into their presence.

**When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the door of the tent and He spoke with Moses.** [Exodus 33:9]

One of the many manifestations of God to the nation Israel was this pillar of cloud. This pillar of cloud led them out of Egypt and this same cloud will settle in above the tabernacle when it is completed (Exodus 40:33–34). They were exposed to a physical representation of God that we do not receive today. We have, however, a better gift—God the Holy Spirit, and, even after sinning (and then confessing our sins, of course), we can be filled with the Spirit and spend a great portion of our lives in service to God. To the out-of-fellowship believer to the young believer, this may not sound like much; however, it is in our fellowship with God, our growth in His Word, and the resulting spiritual service which is our happiness.

**And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the door of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship every man at his tent door.** [Exodus 33:10]

The people observed the manifestation of God and the fellowship with God that Moses enjoyed; they themselves worshipped God from afar.

Let me continue with the analogy which I have carried throughout this chapter. You may have been involved in fornication prior to marriage and you realize the devastation which you have reeked upon your own life. You may stand at your own tent desiring that which you have deprived yourself of, as Israel is doing in this passage. However, as we will see, it will not be long before Israel fails again, before they fall into sin; all their sincerity and their obvious grief over their own sins does not count for much. We have yet to see them confess their sins to God (rebound) and to ask God for forgiveness.

In our dispensation, we all have been given the Holy Spirit from the moment of our spiritual birth. We can rebound and we can be filled with the Spirit once again. In the Old Testament, only a very small percentage of believers had the Holy Spirit, and He could be removed from them if God so chose. The believers spoken of here did not have the Holy Spirit as did Moses. Some would be indued by the Spirit to enable them to construct the tabernacle and to enable them to engage in the various tabernacle functions; however, most of them did not have the Holy Spirit then. We may wonder why are we given the Holy Spirit, each and every one of us, and why the believing Israelites were not. There are several reasons:

### **Why Were Believers in the Old Testament Not Given the Holy Spirit?**

1. Jesus Christ had not yet come in the flesh and had not yet died for our sins in human history; therefore, all tabernacle worship had to point forward to His coming, all sins were temporarily covered up, but not forgiven, the Holy Spirit was given to accomplish certain specific spiritual tasks (some of which lasted a considerable period of time, as 40 years of Moses' life leading the Israelites and writing the Pentateuch).
2. In the Church Age, we are not allowed to function outside of the Holy Spirit when it comes to our spiritual service to God.
3. Satan has sinned, he took a third of the angels with him, and God has passed sentence. However, Satan has not yet been punished—he has appealed God's decision. He has appealed on several different counts and with each new dispensation, he makes new appeals to God.
4. Because of these appeals, God has a slightly different plan and modus operandi in every dispensation. In the age of Israel, God will operate directly in a specific nation, Israel, and carefully instruct that nation exactly what to do, and reveal the gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that every man woman and child who is positive toward God at God-consciousness will receive this gospel. It will be understandable to them, through the sacrifices and the functions of the priests at the Tabernacle (and later the Temple) in such a way that the greatest genius of all time, Satan, will not be able to fully comprehend it.
5. In the age of Israel, Satan is the ruler of the earth and he is not faced with every single believer being filled with the Holy Spirit. In fact, he can operate on earth almost unhindered by the Holy Spirit.
6. Satan continues in time to oppose God, first in cohabiting with mankind prior to the flood; secondly, he inspires nations and kings outside of Israel to oppose Israel; thirdly, in the church age, he is allowed to counterfeit the entire modus operandi of the church. In the tribulation, Satan will be given essentially what

## Why Were Believers in the Old Testament Not Given the Holy Spirit?

amounts to world domination, and he will continue to attack and attempt to destroy Israel. Finally, in the millennium, man will be given 1000 years of perfect environment and Satan will come out of his holding cell and inspire man to rebel against God and against perfect environment.

7. The point is that there are several different scenarios, all prompted by various objections and appeals by Satan, to show that sin in any form, that rebellion against God in any way, has permanent and horrid results, and that the one guilty of such should be punished forever, and removed entirely from fellowship and relationship with God. Throughout the Bible, we will see many forms of sin, the results and devastation of same, and God's perfect character. It is through all of this that we might be able to choose to remain in fellowship with God after death forever

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Thus Y<sup>e</sup>howah used to speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. When he [Moses] returned into the camp then [lit., and] his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.** [Exodus 33:11]

Moses, as a prophet, as the Old Testament mediator, was unique among all the prophets. As we have seen, on several occasions, Moses and his actions paralleled those of our Lord. That is, many times, he was a type of Christ. For the most part, prophets did not communicate with Y<sup>e</sup>howah in the way that we see here—face to face, as a man speaks to a friend. God communicated directly with all the prophets, but the relationship does not seem to be quite as personal. Moses apparently made very few mistakes, the Scripture records two, if I recall correctly. (1) He insisted that Aaron accompany him, thus confusing the issue of there being one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus (see Exodus 6:12–13 1Timothy 2:5); and, (2) Moses struck the rock twice in order for it to yield living water, which kept Aaron and him from going into the land (Num. 20:8–12). These mistakes, to the unbeliever, would seem relatively minor, if not meaningless. However, both mistakes cloud and confuse the issue of our Lord's exclusive mediatorship and the fact that He was judged once for all sins (Romans 6:10 Hebrews 9:28).

One of the many so-called contradictions of the Bible is the phrase that *no man has seen God and any time* compared to *and Y<sup>e</sup>howah used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend*. There is no contradiction here and this verse explains it. This is best done by points:

### How Does Moses Speak Face to Face With God?

1. No man can see God directly in all God's glory for two reasons:
  - 1) God is a spirit
  - 2) God's glory and perfect righteousness would demolish us.
  - 3) Even in this same chapter, God says, "**You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.**" (Exodus 33:20; ESV)
2. God reveals more of His glory to some than to others. This is why Moses pitched the tent of meeting outside the camp and why only Moses went inside to speak to God.
3. Because God is a spirit, various men have seen at various times manifestations of Him; Jesus Christ, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, is the revealed member of the Trinity and He has revealed Himself as a burning bush, as a pillar of cloud and as a pillar of fire. The latter two manifestations were visible to all Israel.
4. When God revealed Himself to Moses, Moses would perceive more of God's character in however God manifest Himself to Moses, including His righteousness and justice and perfection, than other people would receive.
5. However, even Moses could not behold God's perfection and glory in its entirety. Such a revelation would be overwhelming.
6. There are degrees of spiritual blessing, there are degrees of answered prayer, there are degrees of spiritual growth. These things are all tied to spirituality and spiritual growth through God's Word.
7. Therefore, it should not be difficult to understand that there are degrees to which God has revealed Himself

## How Does Moses Speak Face to Face With God?

in the past to various believers.

8. Even Moses would be given just the briefest view of a portion of the Lord's glory because even he was a fallen man. Exodus 33:20–23

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

In the Hebrew, there was no letter *J*, so Joshua is obviously not Joshua. His name is transliterated Y<sup>e</sup>hōwshūa' (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ) [pronounced *y<sup>e</sup>hoh-SHOO-ahg*] and it means *he will save*, or, more simply, *savior*. The NT version of *Joshua* is Jesus. In case you are wondering why so many Old Testament names begin with a *j* when there is no *j* in the Hebrew; most of them began with a *y* but when the names were brought into the Koine Greek, there was no *y*. Nor is there a *j*, in the Koine Greek. The transliterating from Hebrew to Greek to English took its toll, and several names were changed somewhat due to the difference in the alphabets.

Not all of the Hebrews from Joshua's generation were degenerate and not all of them would die the sin unto death. Some of the Levites would remain with Moses, and Caleb and Joshua would remain alive after Moses to lead the people. Joshua, even realizing that Y<sup>e</sup>howah had broken fellowship with his generation due to their spiritual adultery, still waits outside the tent with great patience. Joshua, as the servant of Moses, would have had several duties; the NIV suggests that he stood outside the tent to guard against intrusions by others, which would seem reasonable, as the Israelites were emotional wrecks and would be wont to do something like that.

Vv. 7–11 describe what commonly took place. To illustrate speaking face to face, we have the example of a prayer which was possibly spoken several times by Moses. Included in this prayer is the one time which God answered Moses directly on this prayer. We know that God and Moses spoke as people speak face to face with a friend; and all the prayers to God which I recall from Moses were answered verbally in context. This does not mean that every prayer that Moses made was answered verbally by God immediately. Moses may have petitioned God several times on certain issues, just as Paul went to God three times about his own suffering yet, he did not know God's answer until the third time.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

## Moses Intercedes for the People and Asks for God's Graciousness

**Then Moses said to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Look, You have told me to bring up this people but You have not let me know whom You will send with me; yet You have said, 'I know you by name and you have also found grace in My sight.' [Exodus 33:12]**

At this time, Moses is strong and vigorous, despite being over eighty years old. He will be alive and with the sons of Israel for another forty years. He knows that he needs a successor, and Moses knows that he cannot lead the nation entirely on his own, that it will require help and guidance. He is going to God on the basis of his own relationship; he is going to God and quoting God's Word to God. This may seem impertinent, but it is not. God has given us an entire book of promises. God wants us to take His Word to Him. God wants us to know His Word and to demand from Him what He has promised us. God is glorified when we demand of God what He has promised us.

Our connection to God on this earth is the indwelling Holy Spirit, the filling of the Spirit when we are in fellowship, and His Word. A human child who drinks his mother's milk is fairly ineffectual as a human being. We, as spiritual children, even filled with the Holy Spirit and even drinking milk, are similarly ineffectual. It is our lives as adult Christians, after we have spent a great deal of time filled with the Spirit and we have fed upon God's Word, that we have great spiritual impact. In this maturity, we can come to God—we are encouraged to come to God—and require of Him what He has promised us. Very few of us have even a clue as to how important God's Word is to us on this earth. God is glorified when we take Him at His Word, when we believe the Word of God, when we

learn God's Word and when we call upon Him to fulfill His promises to us, which we can enumerate in prayer to Him.

This is what Moses, the meekest man on the earth, the most grace-oriented man of the land, is doing. He is going to God in prayer, he is quoting God's Word to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, and asking Him to fulfill His Word to Moses. This is not arrogance; in fact, this is the absolute antithesis of arrogance—this is complete grace orientation. You can rest assured that if, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that you go to God and present Him with His Word, God is glorified and He will hear you and respond. The simplest, most basic form of this is rebound. We get out of fellowship due entirely to our own volition—we choose to sin. We can go to God, name the sins that we have committed, and demand (if we feel like it) restoration to fellowship. **God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness** (1John 1:9). The more that we know about God and His Word, the more we can go to Him in prayer and place His Word before him. We can go boldly, with confidence, to the throne of grace, in fellowship and armed with His Word. This is a spiritual asset whose power is beyond our ability to fully fathom.

**"Now, therefore, I ask You, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way that I may know You that I may find grace in Your sight. Consider also Your people, this nation."** [Exodus 33:13]

Moses is asking God to give him the grace to know God's ways to find more grace in God's sight. We have a parallel passage in the New Testament: **But He [God] gives greater grace; therefore it reads, God is opposed to the arrogant but He gives grace to the grace-oriented** (James 4:6 Proverbs 3:34b). Moses petitioned God regularly and God spoke to Moses regularly. Much of the Law was dictated to Moses by God, which is somewhat different than the rest of the Bible.

Most of the Bible is recorded by man and inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that no portion is more divinely inspired than another. However, some books have complete chapters quoting God as He spoke. This is likely not the only time that Moses prayed concerning these things to God. There are some things which we bring before God daily. God is glorified when we depend upon Him *and* when we function as filled with the Spirit.

Notice that Moses does not offer up the typical prayer of the believer who is out of line, out of fellowship and has found himself disciplined by God. This sort of believer continually prays *help* and *make it stop hurting*. This same believer is not going to do diddly squat when God provides him with ample opportunities to take in His Word. He wants God to make everything all better so that he can return to his Godless life. Moses prays for God to first grace him out, and then to show Moses God's guidance for his life so that he might find more grace in God's sight. The more grace we get, the more grace we get. God doesn't have exactly one bucket full of grace to distribute that much to everyone, nor does he have three sizes of buckets for those who have been good, very good and excellent. God will pour and pour and pour more grace upon us. The more grace we get, the more grace we get. We can't use it up. The only way we lose it is by getting out of fellowship and staying there; or by being given the opportunity to grow and we don't.

The word *way* here is a very commonly used word in the Bible, a translation of the Hebrew word *derek*<sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced *DEH-rek<sup>e</sup>*], a word found no fewer than 600 times in the Old Testament; and it means *way, road, distance, journey, manner*. When Moses here prays for God to teach him God's way, this covers a lot of ground. Moses was asking for guidance toward the land of Canaan as well as for spiritual and moral guidance. God would provide both and continue to give Moses the remainder of the Law, as well as guide them toward the land of Canaan.

Note one of the other things which Moses prays for: **"Teach me Your way that I may know you..."** This Moses receives an answer when God tells him, **"Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished."** (Exodus 34:6b–7a) Throughout the rest of Moses' life, he comes to know God better and better as God continued to reveal His character to Moses.



Notice that Moses does not pray for himself alone but for Israel; even though it seems as though they are a lost cause, Moses took their case before God again and again. God is glorified when we go to Him and trust Him for His answer. God will answer this prayer, beginning in Exodus 34:6–11, where He promises to drive out the degenerate nations from before Israel, and to perform miracles greater than any of those prior to this time. These are promises here, mostly to be fulfilled in the book of Joshua, but they indicate that the intercession of Moses through prayer, through God's Word, was effective.

**And He said, "My presence will walk [with you] and I will give you rest." [Exodus 33:14]**

God immediately answers the prayer of Moses and assures him that He will remain with Moses and that He would give Moses rest. Moses has found that leading a nation is a great deal of responsibility and a lot of headaches. He was never one of those who wanted power; God gave it to him because God knew that Moses could handle it. Moses would be provided for and a suitable replacement was being groomed.

**And he said to Him, "If Your presence does not walk [with us], [then] do not lead us up from here. [Exodus 33:15]**

Moses realizes that without God's Presence, the nation Israel is worthless and it makes little difference where they go. The promised land is no longer meaningful without God's presence. Moses realizes clearly that it is God's specialized presence and God's grace that will make Israel what it should be. He is grace-oriented. Someone who lacks the grace-orientation of Moses would have said, "I'm tough and I'm strong; I can lead these people and whip them into line. I know what's what, even if they don't. I will guide them and rule over them." That is arrogance. Moses knows that he is nothing without God's guidance and strength. This is why he was the meekest man on the face of the earth.

There is also an interesting, but subtle, tug-of-war here. God tells Moses that He, God, would be with *him*, Moses. Moses speaks about God's Presence being with *us*, Moses and all Israel. Note that Moses will say that in vv. 15 and 16.

**For how shall it be known then that I have found grace in Your sight—I and Your people—is it not in Your going with us so that we are set apart, I and Your people, from all other people upon the face of the earth [or, land]." [Exodus 33:16]**

Notice the tremendous logic of Moses. He knows that God will pour out grace upon him. He knows that God will bless him. However, unless God goes with him, he cannot be blessed and the nation Israel is not distinct from all other nations. The word translated *distinct* is *pâlâh* (פָּלָה) [pronounced *paw-LAW*]. Also, *pâlâh* is not the common word for *set apart*. It is found in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, Niphal perfect; this is the passive stem, meaning they have received from God this setting apart; it was not anything they earned; and the perfect voice says that this is a completed action.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken, I will do, for you have found grace in My sight and I know you by name." [Exodus 33:17]**

Moses obeyed God and Moses was faithful toward God and Moses desired to know God's ways (which would include divine guidance, Old Testament spirituality and God's laws—in other words, the entire realm of OT doctrine). This desire of Moses set him apart from the rest of *hoi polloi*.<sup>93</sup> For anyone desiring to have special consideration from God, this is the simple method. This is the key to special consideration and the key to answered prayer.

Again, Moses here is a type of Jesus Christ. He represents before God a rebellious generation of degenerate people who, in his absence, fall into spiritual adultery. Jesus Christ represents us, the entire believing population

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<sup>93</sup> Lit., *the many*

of this earth, to God. Hence, also, He [Jesus Christ] is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him because He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25; see also Mark 16:19 Romans 8:34 Eph. 1:20). Furthermore, to guide us, Jesus Christ has petitioned God the Father to send us the Holy Spirit (John 16:7 Acts 1:4, 6).

**And he said, "Show me, I pray You, Your glory." [Exodus 33:18]**

The NIV points out that this prayer was actually answered in Luke 9:29–32: **And while He [Jesus] was praying, the appearance of His face became different and His clothing become white, gleaming, and behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.** Moses was unable, in his human body, to gaze completely upon the glory of God. However, in our resurrection bodies, we apparently can have more of God's glory revealed to us.

**And He said, "I will make pass all my goodness before you and will proclaim by name<sup>94</sup> Y<sup>e</sup>howah before you [lit., to your face]; [Exodus 33:19a]**

Man cannot fully comprehend God's perfection and righteousness. It is beyond our human comprehension. **For we now see in a mirror dimly; but then, face to face; how I know in part, then I shall know fully just as I have been fully known** (1Corinthians 13:12). Our body is filled, each cell, with an indwelling old sin nature. This sin nature controls or the Holy Spirit controls our life—it is like a light switch, one is on and the other is off. We have committed personal sins and we carry within us imputed sin of Adam. These imperfections that we carry with us make it impossible for us to see God in all of His glory. Even Moses, the most grace-oriented man on the face of the earth, will not be able to see God in His complete glory. God tells Moses that He will answer his prayer and does in Exodus 34:5–7 (part of which I have already quoted).

At this time, I would be unable to give a good rendering of the word for goodness. There are two different nouns, a feminine cognate, a verb and two adjectives (masculine and feminine gender) all found on pp. 373–5 in BDB.

**"And I have been gracious to whom I am gracious and I have shown mercy on whom I show mercy." [Exodus 33:19b]**

I have changed up the tenses somewhat from what you are used to. The first use of the word *gracious* is in the Qal perfect and *shown mercy* is in the Piel perfect. Generally speaking, the perfect tense has been thought to be completed action. However, it refers to the event or the action of the verb as a whole without regard to the duration of the events. Context determines whether this is past, present or future (and near or far future). It can even refer to an event which has begun in the past and continues into the present (or begins in the present and is continued into the future). When it is viewed in God's eyes, his graciousness and mercy are completed events, as He stands outside of time. This have been foreordained events from the beginning. To us, His graciousness and mercy appears to come and go (at least to the weak believer who associates these terms with good luck and bad luck). Even to the mature believer, in a weak moment, we sometimes loose sight of His grace and mercy, but it is a constant in our lives.

The second verb forms of graciousness and mercy are in the Qal imperfect and the Piel imperfect, respectively. The imperfect tense views the action of a verb as a process or as a series of consecutive actions. This is what we see when it comes to God's grace and mercy. We see it occasionally; more often as we become more mature. The imperfect tense never takes into account whether the action of the verb has been completed or not; this does not mean that we are speaking of an incomplete action (although that can certainly be the case) but that our focus is often on the process of the action of the verb. The imperfect tense is often used for contingent action, which is

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<sup>94</sup> *My name* in the Septuagint

exactly what we have here. In English, we might use the future tense and in the Greek we might use the optative or subjunctive mood to convey the imperfect as contingent upon some other action or event.

God's graciousness and mercy are dependent upon His divine character and choice. People have a great deal of trouble with God's sovereignty because they confuse it with capriciousness. If we had all the power in the universe, we would be capricious. One day we would do one thing and the next, something else, as guided by our whims. If someone does something mean to us on one day, we might remove him from this world, if we had sovereignty. However, God is not blown to and fro by whims; His behavior and actions are never capricious or arbitrary, but they are tied directly to His perfect character. If you have a true desire to know God, to know His will and to live within His plan for your life, God will guide you in that direction. He did not arbitrarily decide in eternity past that Charley Brown was going to get the shaft, no matter what Charlie Brown chose to do in time. Every action of God is tied directly to His perfect righteousness, mercy and justice. On that, we can depend. Now, am I able to explain every tragedy and difficulty in life? Certainly not. But, ultimately God is righteous in all that He does.

Moses has prayed to God for grace and God adds this half-verse to his response to Moses, which Paul quotes in Romans 9:15. We do not always completely comprehend God's actions just as we cannot fully see His perfect being. There are people who are blessed in this world that we believe should be smashed and destroyed; and there are people in this world who spend much of their lives in great torment and suffering—and we cannot fully understand each and every situation. Some are easy to understand. In the devil's world, there is suffering as there is a kind of evil prosperity, things which occur naturally in a world of good and evil. God also gives blessing and it is according to His perfect character. Some people who have sinned and are out of fellowship are under God's discipline. However, there is a great deal of suffering in this world experienced by those who are not out of fellowship. We have several people mentioned in the New Testament: Timothy who had stomach problems (probably ulcers at a young age from being tied up in knots over what occurred in his church); Trophimus, whom Paul left sick; Paul himself suffered a painful eye malady.

Some of these cases are understood as suffering for blessing. God can only bless us in suffering in this very short time that we spend here on earth. For some people, this is not a statement which can be comprehended. On the blessing side, some are blessed because they are in some way related to a mature or to a growing believer. We have seen in Genesis the concept of blessing by association. To pull two names out of a hat—William Gates and Donald Trump; I know nothing about either man personally except Donald Trump appeared on David Letterman and seemed quite congenial and personable; and that both men, as of this writing, have enjoyed tremendous wealth and temporal blessings.<sup>95</sup> They may or may not be believers and may or may not be growing; but even if they are unbelievers, there could be a spiritually mature janitor working directly under them; they could have a spiritually mature vice president; they could be associated somehow, through business, through family, through friendship, with a mature believer and God could be pouring out blessing on them because of that relationship. For some people, it is only in this very short life that God can bless them with material blessings because they will spend eternity in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels. And God gives them grace because of this. Other people must suffer as unbelievers because this is the only way that God can reach them. Personally, I was in great suffering when I believed in Jesus Christ (at a point when I became positive toward God and His plan). It is possible, having gone to a Baptist daily vacation Bible school that I received the gospel there<sup>96</sup> (although I do not recall it). When I do recall believing in Jesus Christ for salvation, I did it several times. It took the first time, but I just wanted to make sure.

At first I was nonplused by this verse. There are two things mentioned here; Moses is told that God will pass by in all His goodness; and then He says, "I will be gracious to whom I am gracious and merciful to whom I will have mercy." It sounds as though these are unrelated concepts. However, if we were able to perceive His character in its entire perfection—if we were able to see God's perfect goodness, we could understand the reasons for every

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<sup>95</sup> I wrote these words originally in the late 1990's.

<sup>96</sup> I doubt that I believed in Jesus Christ there. I do recall having brought the most kids to daily vacation Bible school that summer and was given an award—that award was a Bible. As a young person with no understanding, I was profoundly disappointed. I would have preferred a set of army men.

person's suffering and blessing, including our own. I do believe, however, that when it comes to our own lives, most of us, given a reasonable amount of doctrine, can perceive most of the reasons for our own suffering and blessing. When it comes to my own suffering, I can usually point to my sin or my attitude or my lifestyle, and clearly see why I have been disciplined.

**And He said, "You cannot see My face for man will not see Me and live."** [Exodus 33:20]

Here it is clear. We cannot see God in all of His glory. Even today, after our Lord has died on our behalf and has risen and has been glorified, simply being tied to our bodies of sin precludes us from being able to perceive God in His perfect righteousness. John wrote: **No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him** (John 1:18). As our Lord told His disciples: **"He who has seen Me has seen the Father."** (John 9:14b). **For now we see in a [poor] mirror dimly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known** (1Corinthians 13:12). God the Son, having been resurrected and sitting at the right hand of God now dwells in unapproachable light (1Timothy 6:16). Just as we cannot look directly into the sun for any amount of time without burning our retinas and destroying our vision; similarly, we cannot look directly into the face of God, as it were, directly at His glory and live.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### God Places Moses in the Cleft of the Rock

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said, "See, a place with Me where you will stand upon the rock** [Exodus 33:21]

Just as God's graciousness and mercy are at times incomprehensible to us, so are some of His actions. No doubt Moses recorded this incident, yet did not perceive fully as to why God even did this. In retrospect, it is clear. It is only standing upon Jesus Christ, the rock of God, that we are able to see God in His glory. It is only in the cleft of this rock, being in Christ that we are able to have a relationship with God, to have fellowship with God. It is only here that we can have in our bodies of sin any contact whatsoever with the perfect God of the Universe. **Just as it stands written, See, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock which opposes. And he who believes in Him will not be humiliated** (Romans 9:33 Isaiah 28:16).

**"And while My glory passes by, I will place you in a cleft [or, hollow] of the rock and I will cover you with My hand until I have passed by."** [Exodus 33:22]

Being in the cleft of a rock is being in Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, God covered up our sins, awaiting the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Here we have a marvelous analogy. To Moses, perhaps, it was this rock which protected him in its strength; to us, we clearly recognize this rock as being Jesus Christ, and being in Him allows us to see God, as it were. **See the Doctrine of the Rock in the Old Testament** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

**"Then I will take away My hand and you will see my back; but My face will not be seen."** [Exodus 33:23]

Some versions of the English Bible will help us to understand what God is saying to Moses here:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...and you will see behind Me [more literally, my afterparts],—but my face must not be seen. |
| KJV                             | ...and you will see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen.                            |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ...and thou hast seen My back parts, and My face is not seen.                                |

What we see (or actually, what Moses will see), is not God's full glory and essence, as God is too holy and perfect for even Moses to gaze upon, but he will clearly see *where God has been*. He will see the manifestation of God's power and God's character. I will try an analogy: in the midst of a tornado, it is likely that you will not actually see the tornado itself; however, you will see evidence of its passage before you.

*Exodus 33*

From the Old Testament to the New, God no longer merely covers our sin, but we are able to enjoy fellowship with Him being in Christ, being in the cleft of the rock.



# EXODUS 34

## Exodus 34:1–35

**Introduction:** In chapter 34 Moses goes back up Mount Sinai to speak with God. Previously, Moses has gone before God, interceding on behalf of the Hebrews. He asked God for another chance. This will be the other chance. Moses will go back up on the mountain and he will receive the Law of God from the mouth of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He will be gone for forty days and forty nights, as before. When he returns, this time the Hebrews will not be engaged in spritual adultery. As before, when he was on the mountain, Moses will again be told to write down what God has told him. This will be a chapter which requires quite a bit of time to go through some individual verses and to deal with some of the concepts contained herein. Several of my sources had rather lengthy notes of certain sections.

In this chapter, God will call Moses up to Mount Sinai again. It is not certain that these conversations took place during the same vigil of Moses in Exodus 33.

### Outline of Chapter 34:

- Vv. 1–9 Moses ascends the mountain and speaks with God
- Vv. 10–17 God renews His covenant with Israel and re-emphasizes His Law
- Vv. 18–27 The feasts and gatherings of the people
- Vv. 28–35 A summary and Moses returns from the mountain, his face shining with God's glory

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 6 **Scofield Notes on the Names for God**
- v. 6 **Proper Names for God From the Bible** (by Kurtis Karr)
- v. 7 **What is the difference between iniquity, sin, and transgression?** (Got Questions)
- v. 13 **Moses, His State of Mind, and His Revelation of God**

### Moses Ascends the Mountain and Speaks with God

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Chisel for yourself two tables of stone like the first and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the tables which you first broke. [Exodus 34:1]**

God commands Moses to pāçal (פָּחַל) [pronounced *paw-SAL*] the stone tablets. The KJV uses the word *hew* and *graven* (Hab. 2:18) and Owens uses the translation *cut*. Nevertheless, this is not the usual work that we have for *cut*. What is the ideal in translations is to consistently translate the same word in the Hebrew; and to use another word to translate a different words Romans the Hebrew. We have had numerous examples where this is extremely difficult to do, although *Young's Literal Translation* does make a serious attempt to whittle down some words translated 70+ different ways down to a dozen or fewer. Here is a place where I think the NIV uses the best possible translation: the word *chisel*.

This is interesting. Moses cuts out the tables of stone that God would write on. It is interesting that God does not cut out the tables Himself. It is implied, but not stated, that God cut out the first set of stone tablets (Exodus 24:12 31:18). In any case, it is clear here that Moses will have the second set of tablets cut out.

Let me suggest that Moses broke the tablets of the Law. He was responsible for that. He may have been reasonably upset with the people; but that did not give him the go-ahead to break the tablets written by God's finger.

**"And be ready in the morning and come up in the morning to Moun Sinai and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. [Exodus 34:2]**

Moses is to immediately get two tables of stone since God will expect him to climb up the top of Mount Sinai the next morning. That seems like a short period of time, which suggests to me that there were men among the Israelites who were skilled in this area.

**"And a man shall not come up with you; furthermore, let not a man be seen throughout all the mountain. Also, flocks or herd are not to be fed before that mountain." [Exodus 34:3]**

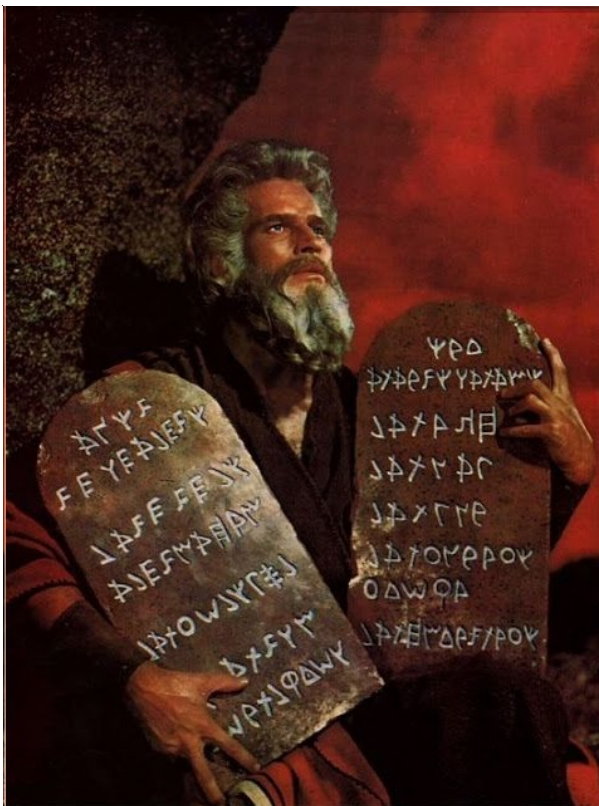
God refused to come into contact with the Hebrews from that generation. Very likely, God's justice would require Him to destroy them if there was any close contact. There was not even to be someone near the mountain with the excuse that he was just tending his herd there.

**So he chiseled two tables of stone like the first and Moses rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded him, and took in his hand two tables of stone. [Exodus 34:4]**

Lûwchôth (לוחות) [pronounced *loo-KHOOTH*], means *tables or tablets [of stone], boards [of wood], plates [of metal]; something upon which words are inscribed*. This can be a tablet for writing, it can refer to wooden planks (Exodus 27:8–38:7) or to metal plates (1 Kings 3:36); however, it is used primarily for the two tablets of stone upon which the Law was written.

There are many pictures and statues of Moses, with horns

Moses (a photo of a statue by Michelangelo); from [Wikipedia](#); accessed December 29, 2019. In this chapter, we will explain what that is all about.

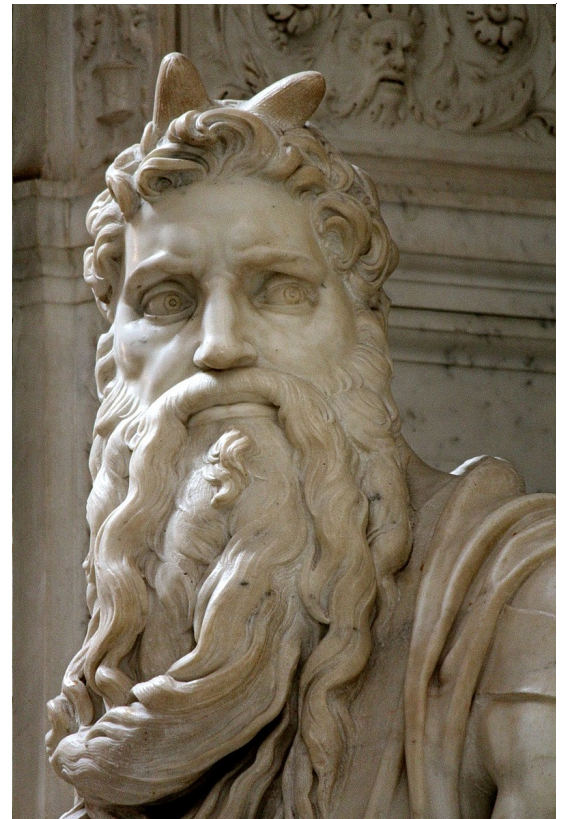


There are also paintings and drawings of Moses, carrying these two very large tablets, approximately 2½–3 feet high and perhaps 2 feet wide, one in arm, resting on his hips.

Moses with the Tables of the Law (based upon Charlton Heston as Moses); from [Blog spot](#); accessed December 29, 2019.

Despite Moses being a very strong man, most of the artistic renditions have the stone tablets being so large that few men could have carried them down a mountain.

These are pictures similar to those pictures of Jesus Christ with very long, wavy hair. Pictures with religious and Biblical themes are only pictures created by artists centuries (and even millenniums) after the fact. Sometimes a picture has been well-researched and is accurate in many respects. However, pictures of Moses with horns and pictures of Moses



with these two huge tablets are not accurate (and Jesus with long brown hair). Do you have any idea how heavy a tablet of stone would be that is 3x2 feet? Moses has these two tablets and all that he wrote down and only two hands for a portion of the trip down the mountain. Although the tablets this size could fit into the ark (just barely), it is more likely that these tables are closer to book-size, and *The Amplified Bible* suggests that they were even pocket-sized.<sup>97</sup>

There is one area where the Catholics seem to have a clue which has eluded many Protestant religions. Notice when Moses is going up to the mountain—in the morning. The Bible often speaks of believers rising early in the morning to handle their spiritual needs. Abraham arose early when he was going to offer Isaac up to God as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:3); Job worshipped God early in the morning (Job 1:5). Jesus would pray prior to daybreak (Mark 1:35). It is not uncommon for Catholics to have sunrise services. This does not mean that evening services are undesirable. I recall many years ago reflecting on the idea of monks getting up as early as 3 or 4 am to pray to study, and how this just seemed too unreal. Since those days, I have begun to get up at 4 am and sometimes earlier to do my studying. It is quiet throughout the house (save for my pecking away at the keyboard), I am wide awake, my mind is at its clearest. Furthermore, it sets the mood for the day. When I take in spiritual information in the evening, I am more apt to begin to doze off, or for my mind to wander. In the evening, taking in doctrine sometimes seems to be more of a reaction to the day rather than something which initiates the day. Again, this does not mean that services should not be held in the evening. However, it does imply the if a church has midweek services (and it should have several), then some of those should be in the early hours.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed [called upon] the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 34:5]**

The content of what God proclaimed is found in the next verse.

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah passed before him and proclaimed, "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Y<sup>e</sup>howah, a God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. [Exodus 34:6]**

The doubling of the name Y<sup>e</sup>howah emphasizes that name. It is like placing an exclamation mark behind it. Moses in the previous chapter had prayed to know God better than he did and this is the response of God to that prayer. God declares to Moses His Own character. This early revelation of God's character was been frequently repeated throughout Scripture: Num. 14:18 Neh. 9:17 Psalms 86:15 103:8 145:8 Joel 2:13 Jonah 4:2. R. B. Thieme, Jr. coined the term the essence box, which was used to describe the Person of God.

## Scofield Notes on the Names for God

### Elohim

The name here is **Elohim**, the first of the names of Deity, a plural noun in form but singular in meaning when it refers to the true God. The emphasis in Genesis 1:26 is on the plurality in Deity.

Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image ..."

In Genesis 1:27, the emphasis is on the unity of the Divine Substance (cf. Genesis 3:22).

Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

The plural form of the word suggests the Trinity.

### El Elyon

In Genesis 14:18, the phrase "the most high God" is **El Elyon**, meaning simply "highest". El Elyon is God the Highest.

The first revelation of this name, in this verse, indicates its distinctive meaning. Abram, returning from his victory



## Scofield Notes on the Names for God

over the confederated kings (Genesis 14:1-17) is met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, the “priest of the most high God,” who blesses Abram in the name of El Elyon, “possessor of heaven and earth.” This revelation produced a remarkable impression upon the patriarch. Not only did he at one give Melchizedek “tithes of all” the spoil of the battle, but when the king of Sodom offered of that spoil to Abram, his answer was, “I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord [Jehovah], the most high God [El Elyon], the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet.” (Genesis 14:22,23)

The Lord [Jehovah] is known to a Gentile king, Melchizedek, by the name “most high God” [El Elyon]. A Gentile is the priest of El Elyon, and His distinctive character as most high God is “possessor of heaven and earth.” Appropriately to this Gentile knowledge of God by His name “Most High” it is written that “the Most High divided to the nations (i.e., Gentiles) their inheritance when he separated the sons of Adam.” (Dent. 32:8). As “possessor of heaven and earth” it was the prerogative of the Most High to distribute the earth among the nations according to whatever principle He chose. That principle is declared in Deuteronomy 32:8. To the same purport is the use of the name in Daniel, the book of Gentile prophecy (Dan. 3:26; 4:17,24,25,32,34; 5:18,21). As “possessor of heaven and earth,” the most high God has and exercises authority in both spheres.

The most high God exercises heavenly authority (Dan. 4:35,37; Isaiah 14:13,14; Matt 28:18).

The most high God exercises earthly authority (Deuteronomy 32:8; Sam. 22:14,15; Psalm 9:2-5; 21:7; 47:2-4; 56:2,3; 83:16-18; 91:9-12; Dan. 5:18).

### Adonai

Genesis 15:2, “And Abram said, Lord God, What will you give me, seeing I go childless...”

The primary meaning of **Adon**, **Adonai**, is “Master.” It is applied in the Old Testament scriptures both to Deity and to man. The latter instances are distinguished in the English versions of the Bible by omitting the capital letter. As applied to man, the word is used of two relationships, those of master and husband (Genesis 24:9,10,12 “master” may illustrate the former (Genesis 18:12), “lord” the latter). Both of these relationships exist between Christ and the believer (John 13:13, “Master,” and 2 Cor. 11:2, “husband.”)

Two principles adhere in the relation of master and servant: (1) the master’s right to implicit obedience (Luke 6:46; John 13:13,14); and (2) the servant’s right to direction in service (Isaiah 6:8-11).

Clear distinction in the use of the divine names is illustrated in Exodus 4:10-12. Moses feels his weakness and incompetence, and “Moses said unto the Lord [Jehovah], O my Lord [Adonai], I am not eloquent...” Since service is in question, Moses appropriately addresses Jehovah as Lord. But now power is in question, and it is not the Lord [Adonai] but Jehovah [Lord] who answers (referring to creation power), “and the Lord said unto him, Who has made man’s mouth?...now, therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth.” The same distinction appears in Joshua 7:8-11.

### Adonai Jehovah

When used distinctively (e.g. Genesis 15:2), this compound name, while gathering into one the special meanings of each, will be found to emphasize the Adonai rather than the Jehovah character of Deity, illustrated in the following passages: Genesis 15:2,8; Deuteronomy 3:24; 9:26; Joshua 7:7; Judges 6:22; 16:28; 2 Sam. 7:18-20,28,29; 1 Kings 2:26; Psalm 69:6; 71:5; Isaiah 7:7.

### El Shaddai

Genesis 17:1, “And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and by thou perfect.”

**El Shaddai** is the name of God which sets Him forth primarily as the strengthener and satisfier of His people. It is to be regretted that Shaddai was translated “Almighty.” The primary name itself, **El** or **Elohim**, sufficiently signifies almightiness. “All-sufficient” would far better express the characteristic use of the name in Scripture. Almighty God [El Shaddai] not only enriches but makes fruitful. This is nowhere better illustrated than in Genesis 17:1-8, where we have the first occurrence of the name. To a man 99 years old, and “as good as dead” (Hebrews 11:12), He said, “I am Almighty God [El Shaddai], ... I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.” To the same purport is the use of the name in Genesis 28:3,4.

As One who bestows fruitfulness, Almighty God [El Shaddai] chastens His people. For the moral connection of chastening with fruit-bearing, see John 15:2, compare Ruth 1:20; Hebrews 12:10. Hence, Almighty is the

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characteristic name of God in Job. The hand of **Shaddai** falls upon Job, the best man of his time, not in judgment but in purifying unto greater fruitfulness (Job.5:17-25).

### El Olam

Genesis 21:33, "And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-Sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God."

The Hebrew **Olam** is used in Scripture (1) of secret or hidden things (e.g., Leviticus 5:2, "hidden": 2 Kings 4:27, "hid"; Psalm 10:1, "hides"); (2) of an indefinite time or age (Lev. 25:32, "at any time"; Joshua 24:2, "in old time"). Hence, the word is used to express the eternal duration of the Being of God (Psalm 90:2, "from everlasting to everlasting"). It is also the Hebrew synonym of the Greek AION, "age."

### Jehovah

Exodus 34:6,7, "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

The primary meaning of the name Jehovah [Lord] is "The Self-Existent One;" literally (as in Exo. 3:14) "He that is who He is," therefore, "the eternal I am."

It is significant that the first appearance of the name Jehovah in Scripture follows the creation of man. It was God [Elohim] who said, "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26); but when man, as in Genesis 2, is to fill the scene and become dominant over creation, it is the Lord God [Jehovah Elohim] who acts (Genesis 2:4 ff). This clearly indicates a special relation of Deity, in his Jehovah character, to man, and all Scriptures emphasize this. Jehovah is distinctly the redemption name of Deity. When sin entered the world and man's redemption became necessary, it was Jehovah Elohim who sought the sinning ones (Genesis 3:9-13) and clothed them with coats of skins (Genesis 3:21), a beautiful type of the righteousness provided by the Lord God through sacrifice (Rom 3:21-25). The first distinctive revelation of Himself by His name Jehovah was in connection with the redemption of the covenant people out of Egypt (Exo. 3:13-17).

As Redeemer, emphasis is laid upon those attributes of Jehovah which the sin and salvation of man bring into exercise. These are (1) His holiness (Lev. 11:44,45; 19:1,2; 20:26; Hab. 1:12,13); (2) His hatred and judgment of sin (Deuteronomy 32:35-42; Genesis 6:5,-7; Exo. 34:6,7; Psalm 11:4-6; 66:18); and (3) His love for and redemption of sinners, but always righteously (Genesis 3:21; 8:20,21; Exo. 12:12,13; Leviticus 16:2,3; Isaiah 53:5-6,10). Salvation by Jehovah apart from sacrifice is unknown in Scripture.

Lord [Jehovah] is also the distinctive name of Deity as in covenant with Israel (Exo. 19:3; 20:1,2; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Lord God [Jehovah Elohim] is the first of the compound names of God. Lord God is used distinctively:

1. Of the relation of Deity of Man
  - a. as Creator (Genesis 2:7-15)
  - b. as morally in authority over man (Genesis 2:16,17)
  - c. as creating and governing the earthly relationships of man (Genesis 2:18-24; 3:16-19, 22-24), and
  - d. as redeeming man (Genesis 3:8-15, 21).
2. Of the relation of Deity to Israel (Genesis 24:7; 28:13; Exo. 3:15,18; 4:5; 5:1; 7:5; Deuteronomy 1:11,21; 4:1; 6:3; 12:1; Josh 7:13, 19,20; 10:40,42; Judges 2:12; 1 Sam. 2:30; 1 Kings 1:48; 2 Kings 9:6; 10:31; 1 Chr. 22:19; 2 Chr. 1:9; Ezra 1:3; Isaiah 21:17).

In God's redemptive relation to man, various compound names of Jehovah are found which reveal Him as meeting every need of man, from his lost state to the end. These compound names are:

Jehovah-jireh - "The Lord will provide", (Genesis 22:13-14) that is, the Lord will provide a sacrifice.

**Jehovah-rapha** - "The Lord who heals" (Exo. 15:26). That this refers to physical healing the context shows, but the deeper healing of soul malady is implied.

**Jehovah-nissi** - "the Lord is my banner" (Exo. 17:8-15). The name is interpreted by the context. The enemy was Amalek, a figure for the flesh, and the conflict that day illustrates the conflict of Galatians 5:17, the war of the Spirit against the flesh. Victory is wholly due to divine help.

**Jehovah-shalom** - "the Lord our peace," or "the Lord send peace" (Judges 6:24). Almost the whole ministry



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of Jehovah finds expression and illustration in that chapter. Jehovah hates and judges sin (Judges 6:1-5); Jehovah loves and saves sinners (Judges 6:7-18); but only through sacrifice (Judges 6:19-21; compare Romans 5:1; Eph. 2:14; Colossians 1:20).

**Jehovah-tsidkenu** – “the Lord our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 23:6). This name of Jehovah occurs in a prophecy concerning the future restoration and conversion of Israel. Then Israel will hail him as Jehovah-tsidkenu.

**Jehovah-shammah** – “the Lord is present” (Eze. 48:35). This name signifies Jehovah’s abiding presence with his people (Exo. 33:14,15; 1 Chr. 16:27,33; Psalm 16:11; 97:5; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5).

There are also descriptions in the Old Testament of the activities of the Lord which are in some cases similar to compound names of Jehovah, but are not properly so, such as in Psalm 23:1; 27:1; 28:1; 61:3,4, and 62:6,7).

**Jehovah Sabaoth**

1 Sam. 1:3, “And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh...”

“Sabaoth” means simply, “hosts,” but with special reference to warfare or service. In use the two ideas are united; Jehovah is Lord of warrior hosts. It is the name, therefore, of the Lord in manifestation of power. “The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of glory” (Psalm 24:10), and accordingly in the Old Testament this name is revealed in the time of Israel’s need it is never found in the Pentateuch, or directly in Joshua or Judges, and occurs but rarely in the Psalms. But Jeremiah, the prophet of approaching national judgment, uses the name about 50 times; and in Malachi the name occurs about 25 times.

The meanings and uses of this name may be thus summarized:

1. The word “hosts” in the Bible is related to (a) heavenly bodies (Genesis 2:1; Neh. 9:6; Isaiah 40:26); (b) angels (Luke 2:13); (c) saints (Joshua 5:15); and (d) sinners (Judges 4:2; 2 Sam. 10:16; 2 Kings 5:1). As Lord of hosts God is able to marshal all these hosts to fulfill His purposes and to help His people (Genesis 32:1,2; Judges 5:20; 1 Sam. 11:8-11; 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Kings 6:16,17; Isaiah 10:16; 14:24-27; Jeremiah 27:6-8; 43:10-13; Acts 4:27,28). No wonder the Psalmist derives such confidence from this name (Psalm 46:7,11).
2. This is the distinctive name of Deity for Israel’s help and comfort in the time of her division and failure (1 Kings 18:15; 19:14; Isaiah 1:9; 8:11-14; 9:13-19; 10:24-27; 31:4-5; Hag. 2:4; Malachi 3:16,17; James 5:4).

**Summary**

The revelation of God by His names is invariably made in connection with some particular need of His people, and there can be no need of man who which these names do not answer as showing that man’s true resource is in God. Even human failure and sin but evoke new and fuller revelations of the divine fullness.

The Old Testament scriptures reveal the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of the universe and of man, the Source of all life and of all intelligence, who is to be worshipped and served by men and angels. This Supreme Being is One, but, in some manner not fully revealed in the Old Testament, is a unity in plurality. This is shown by the use of the plural pronoun in the interrelation of Deity, as evidenced in Genesis 1:26; 3:22, Psalm 110:1, and Isaiah 6:8. That the interrelation of Deity includes that of the Father and Son is directly asserted in Psalm 2:7 (with Hebrews 1:5); likewise the Spirit is distinctly recognized in His personality, and to Him are ascribed all the divine attributes (as in Genesis 1:2; Num. 11:25; 24:2; Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14; 2 Sam. 23:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Psalm 106:33; 139:7; Isaiah 40:7; 59:19; 63:10).

The incarnation is intimated in the theophanies, those appearances of God in human form (as in Genesis 18:1,13,17-22; 32:24-30), and distinctly predicted in the promises connected with redemption (Genesis 3:15, etc.) and with the Davidic Covenant (Isaiah 7:13,14; 9:6,7; Jeremiah 23:5,6). The revelation of Deity in the New Testament

The revelation of God to man is one of authority and of redemption. He requires righteousness from man, but saves the unrighteous through sacrifice; and in His redemptive dealings with man all the divine persons and attributes are brought into manifestation. The Old Testament reveals the justice of God equally with His mercy, but never in opposition to His mercy. The flood, for example, was a mercy to unborn generations. From Genesis to Malachi He is revealed as the seeking God who has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and who heaps up before the sinner every possible motive to persuade him to faith and obedience.

In the experience of the Old Testament men of faith, their God inspires reverence but never slavish fear; they exhaust the resources of language to express their love and adoration in view of His loving-kindness and tender mercy. This adoring love of His saints is the triumphant answer to those who pretend to find the Old Testament

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revelation of God cruel and repellent. It is in harmony, not contrast, with the New Testament revelation of God in Christ.

Those passages which attribute to God bodily parts and human emotions (such as Exo 33:11; 20-23; Deuteronomy 29:20; 2 Chr. 16:9; Jeremiah 15:6) are metaphorical and mean that in the infinite being of God exists that which answers spiritually to these things – eyes, a hand, feet, etc.; and the jealousy and anger attributed to Him are the emotions of perfect love in view of the havoc of sin.

In the Old Testament revelation there is a true sense in which, wholly apart from sin or infirmity, God is like His creature, man (Genesis 1:27); and the supreme and perfect revelation of God, toward which the Old Testament points, is a revelation in and through a perfect Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, God's unique Son.

From Doud's [grace notes](#) accessed October 26, 2013, culled from the Scofield Bible.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Karr reduces much of the verbiage:

### Proper Names for God From the Bible (by Kurtis Karr)

God's name is not actually "God". That is just one of His many titles. The Bible calls God by many proper names – most commonly YHWH or Yahweh. However, there are many other names for God from the Bible.

"Elohim" (or Elohay) is the first name for God found in the Bible, and it is used throughout the Old Testament over 2,300 times. Throughout the Bible, Elohim is combined with other words to describe certain characteristics of God. Some examples:

Elohay Elohim – God Of Gods: (Deuteronomy 10:17).  
 Elohay Kedem – God of the Beginning: (Deuteronomy 33:27).  
 Elohay Marom – God Of Heights: (Micah 6:6).  
 Elohay Mauzi – God Of My Strength: (Psalm 43:2).  
 Elohay Mikarov – God Who Is Near: (Jeremiah 23:23).  
 Elohay Mishpat – God Of Justice: (Isaiah 30:18).  
 Elohay Selichot – God Of Forgiveness: (Nehemiah 9:17).  
 Elohay Tehilati – God Of My Praise: (Psalm 109:1).  
 Elohay Yishi – God Of My Salvation: (Psalm 18:46).  
 Elohim Chaivism – Living God: (Jeremiah 10:10).  
 Elohim Kedoshim – Holy God: (Leviticus 19:2, Joshua 24:19).

"El" is another name used for God in the Bible, appearing about 200 times in the Old Testament. El is considered the shortened form of Elohim, and is often combined with other words for descriptive emphasis. Some examples:

El De'ot – The God Of Knowledge: (1Samuel 2:3).  
 El Echad – The One God: (Malachi 2:10).  
 El Elyon – The Most High God: (Genesis 14:18).  
 El Emet – The God Of Truth: (Psalm 31:6).  
 El HaKadosh – The Holy God: (Isaiah 5:16).  
 El HaNe'eman – The Faithful God: (Deuteronomy 7:9).  
 El HaShamayim – The God Of The Heavens: (Psalm 136:26).  
 El Olam – The God Of Eternity (Genesis 21:33).  
 El Yeshuati – The God Of My Salvation: (Isaiah 12:2).  
 El Yisrael – The God Of Israel: (Psalm 68:35).  
 Immanu El – God Is With Us: (Isaiah 7:14).

"Elah" is another name for God, used about 70 times in the Old Testament. When combined with other words,

## Proper Names for God From the Bible (by Kurtis Karr)

we see more descriptive attributes of God. Some examples:

Elah Sh'maya – God of Heaven: (Ezra 7:23).  
 Elah Sh'maya V'Arah – God of Heaven and Earth: (Ezra 5:11).  
 Elah Yerush'lem – God of Jerusalem: (Ezra 7:19).  
 Elah Yisrael – God of Israel: (Ezra 5:1).

"YHWH" (or YHVH) is the Hebrew word commonly translated as "Lord". It is found more often in the Old Testament than any other name for God (approximately 7,000 times). The name is also referred to as the "Tetragrammaton". YHWH is the special name that God revealed to Moses at the burning bush. "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM; and He said, thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you... this is My eternal name, and this is how I am to be recalled for all generations'" (Exodus 3:14-15). Although some pronounce YHWH as "Jehovah" or "Yahweh," no one really knows the proper pronunciation. The Jews stopped pronouncing this name long ago out of fear of breaking the commandment "You shall not take the name of YHWH your God in vain" (Exodus 20:7). (Modern rabbis typically use "Adonai" in place of YHWH.) Here are some examples of YHWH used in scripture:

YHWH Elohim – LORD God: (Genesis 2:4).  
 YHWH M'kadesh – The LORD Who Makes Holy: (Ezekiel 37:28).  
 YHWH Nissi – The LORD My Banner: (Exodus 17:15).  
 YHWH O'saynu – The LORD our Maker: (Psalm 95:6).  
 YHWH Shalom – The LORD Of Peace: (Judges 6:24).  
 YHWH Tzidkaynu – The LORD Our Righteousness: (Jeremiah 33:16).  
 YHWH Yireh – The LORD Who Sees/provides: (Genesis 22:14).

There are literally hundreds more names and titles for God in the Bible. I have barely scratched the surface.

From <http://www.kurtiskarr.com/proper-names-for-god-from-the-bible/> accessed December 29, 2019.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**"Guarding steadfast love [or, preserving grace] for thousands [of generations], lifting up [or, off] the punishment for iniquity<sup>98</sup> and [personal] transgression and [the indwelling old] sin [nature]; but in [this] cleansing, He will not leave [these things] unpunished; visiting [with punishment] the iniquity [or, guilt] of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." [Exodus 34:7]**

We have a great many words to examine in this verse. The first is the Qal active participle of *nâtsar* (נָצַר) [pronounced *naw-TSAR*] a word which has a good connotation (*to guard, protect, maintain, preserve*) and a bad connotation (*to conceal, hide, blockade*). Here, the participle acts as an adjective describing God; and, in that it is God, it is obviously used in a good sense. What God is guarding or preserving is *cheçed* (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*], a word translated *mercy, kindness, steadfast love, goodness*. This word can be simply translated as *grace*. This grace, kindness and mercy which God is preserving and keeping and guarding for thousands is salvation and the spiritual life.

We will deal with *thousands* in a paragraph or two. *Nâsâ'* (נָסָא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*] is one of the most used words in the Old Testament. It means simply *to lift up, to carry, to take*. *Âvôn* (אָוֹן) [pronounced *aw-VONE*] and it means *guilt, punishment for iniquity*. What God does is He lifts the punishment for iniquity from off of us. Such punishment would totally crush us. This is often translated *forgiving iniquity*; but that is only a portion of the concept here. **But Y<sup>e</sup>howah willed to crush Him, putting Him to grief, if He would render Himself a guilt offering**

<sup>98</sup> Sometimes translated *forgiving iniquity*

( Isaiah 53:10a). God has picked up the punishment for iniquity which we deserve and has crushed the Lord Jesus Christ with it, making Him a guilt offering.

We have three words for acts which are opposed to God here—iniquity, transgression and sin, which we need to differentiate. At this time, I would say that we are dealing with (1) the punishment for iniquity; (2) Personal sins and transgressions and, (3) the indwelling old sin nature (as opposed to Adam's original sin, which may have been too much of a doctrine for the OT Jew).

I have been meaning to do a study on this, but I just have not gotten to it yet. Got Questions appears to be a pretty good resource.

### **What is the difference between iniquity, sin, and transgression? (Got Questions)**

In Psalm 32:5, the psalmist says, "I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.'" In this one verse, "sin," "iniquity," and "transgression" are all mentioned. Basically, the three words communicate the same idea: evil and lawlessness, as defined by God (see 1John 3:4). However, upon closer examination, each word also carries a slightly different meaning.

The word sin and its cognates are used 786 times in the New International Version of the Bible. Sin means "to miss the mark." It can refer to doing something against God or against a person (Exodus 10:16), doing the opposite of what is right (Galatians 5:17), doing something that will have negative results (Proverbs 24:33–34), and failing to do something you know is right (James 4:17). In the Old Testament, God even instituted sacrifices for unintentional sins (Numbers 15:27). Sin is the general term for anything that "falls short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Sin leads to a downward progression that, without the restoring power of the Holy Spirit, we all tend toward. The sin nature is present in every human being born since the Fall of Adam (Genesis 3:6–7; Romans 5:12). If left unchecked, continual sin leads to a "reprobate mind," spoken of in Romans 1:24. Our sin nature causes us to gravitate naturally toward selfishness, envy, and pride, even when we are trying to do good. The apostle Paul alluded to his propensity to sin when he wrote, "For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" (Romans 7:18).

The sin nature leads to trespassing. A trespasser is someone who crosses a line or climbs a fence that he should not cross or climb. A trespass may be intentional or unintentional. Trespass can also mean "to fall away after being close beside." Peter trespassed when he denied Jesus (Luke 22:34, 56–62). We all "cross the line" in thought, word, or attitude many times a day and should be quick to forgive others who do the same (Matthew 6:15).

Transgression refers to presumptuous sin. To transgress is to choose to intentionally disobey; transgression is willful trespassing. Samson intentionally broke his Nazirite vow by touching a dead lion (Numbers 6:1–5; Judges 14:8–9) and allowing his hair to be cut (Judges 16:17); in doing so he was committing a transgression. David was referring to this kind of sin when he wrote, "Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered" (Psalm 32:1). When we knowingly run a stop sign, tell a lie, or blatantly disregard an authority, we are transgressing.

Iniquity is more deeply rooted. Iniquity refers to a premeditated choice; to commit iniquity is to continue without repentance. David's sin with Bathsheba that led to the killing of her husband, Uriah, was iniquity (2Samuel 11:3–4; 2Samuel 12:9). Micah 2:1 says, "Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it." In David's psalm of repentance, he cries out to God, saying, "Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin" (Psalm 51:2).

God forgives iniquity, as He does any type of sin when we repent (Jeremiah 33:8; Hebrews 8:12). However, iniquity left unchecked leads to a state of willful sin with no fear of God. The build-up of unrepentant sin is sometimes pictured as a "cup of iniquity" being filled to the brim (Revelation 17:4; Genesis 15:16). This often

## What is the difference between iniquity, sin, and transgression? (Got Questions)

applies to nations who have forsaken God completely. Continued iniquity leads to unnatural affections, which leads to a reprobate mind. Romans 1:28–32 outlines this digression in vivid detail. The sons of Eli are biblical examples of reprobates whom God judged for their iniquities (1Samuel 3:13–14). Rather than repent, Eli's sons continued in their abominations until repentance was no longer possible.

The biblical writers used different words to refer to sin in its many forms. However, regardless of how depraved a human heart may become, Jesus' death on the cross was sufficient to cover all sin (John 1:29; Romans 5:18). Psalm 32:5, quoted at the beginning of this article, ends with these words: "And you forgave the guilt of my sin." The only sin that God cannot forgive is the final rejection of the Holy Spirit's drawing to repentance—the ultimate fruit of a reprobate mind (Matthew 12:32; Luke 12:10).

From <https://www.gotquestions.org/iniquity-sin-transgression.html> accessed December 29, 2019.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Then we have a negative and the verb *nâqâh* (נָקָה) [pronounced *naw-KAWH*] used twice. *Nâqâh* means *to make clean*. It is used first in the Piel infinitive absolute, followed by a negative, and then it is found again in the third person, masculine singular, Piel imperfect. Literally, it means *in not cleaning, He will not cleanse*. It is possible that this would be even better translated, *in cleansing, He will not cleanse*; or, *in cleansing, He will not acquit [or not hold innocent]*. This word also means *to let go unpunished, to hold innocent, to acquit*. This reveals God's perfect justice. He will lift the punishment for sin from us; and lift up from us and take away our personal sins and our indwelling old sin nature. However, God will not acquit us, nor will He hold us innocent, nor will He allow our transgressions and old sin nature to go unpunished.

He will not just lift these things up from off of us and cleanse us just because He likes us a lot or because we are really nice people. In this cleansing, He will not forgive the iniquity or forgo the punishment. This would go against His perfect justice and righteousness, which require that all sin be punished. The point of this portion of this verse is that these things will be lifted up from off of us, and, in this act of cleansing, still these things will not go unpunished. For those who do not have these things lifted from off of them will be crushed by the punishment for sin, as well as by their old sin nature and their personal sins. We have a very similar grammatical construction in Psalm 49:7 using the word *redeem*.

*Pâqad* (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAD*] means *to visit, to muster, to attend to*. It is a verb of very wide application, translated variously in the KJV as *visited* (Genesis 21:1); *numbered* (in the sense of taking a census to determine battle-readiness and the number in one's army—Num. 1:44 4:27); *shall make* (Deuteronomy 20:9); *hath charged* (2Chronicles 36:23); *will appoint* (Jeremiah 15:3); *hath enjoined* (Job 36:23); *will punish* (Jeremiah 9:25)—and this is just in the Qal perfect. It is also translated *there lacketh not, that were set over, the officers, missing, lacking, empty, wanting, mustereth, deprived, commit*. What is stressed here is the face to face contact; the subject of the verb comes into contact with the object of the verb. The results of coming into contact can be varied. When we are dealing with sin, this contact is in the form of punishment. The context determines whether the visit is for good or for harm. What is being visited is *'âvôn* (אָוֹן) [pronounced *aw-VONE*], which we just dealt with; it means *guilt, punishment for iniquity*. We also have the words *of the fathers*; which means that the guilt and iniquity of the fathers will be visited by God, and this visiting will occur *upon or against the children and upon [or against] the children of the children*. God will visit those who are guilty; and He continues to visit those who are guilty.

In the phrase *the iniquity of the fathers* [or, *in the punishment of the iniquity of the fathers*]; we have what is known as an antimereia [pronounced *AN-ti-ME-rei-a*] of the noun where we find a noun in regimen instead of an adjective.<sup>99</sup> In general, an antimereia means we find one part of speech where we would expect to find another. What this does is carries *the iniquity of the fathers* to their sons; that is, their sons are due the same punishment

<sup>99</sup> *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p. 498.



for committing the same or similar iniquities. We find the same thing in 2Kings 24:3 where the *sins of Manasseh* really refer to the *sins committed which were like Manasseh's sins*.

The word generation does not occur in this verse; however, the words *third* and *fourth* both *pertain to the third and fourth something* and since we are speaking of fathers, children and children's children, it is reasonable to translate these words as *third and fourth generations*. These two words are found only in Exodus 20:5 34:7 Num. 14:18 Deuteronomy 5:9. There is no reason to translate it otherwise. The word for a *thousand* means simply that and has a wider range of uses in Scripture. In this context, *thousands of generations* is a reasonable rendering. My opinion is that it was originally thought of as meaning simply *thousands*; however, the time which has gone by implies *of generations*.<sup>100</sup>

We have covered the third and fourth generation curse. This is a doctrine which some confuse God's sovereignty with capriciousness and arbitrary decisions. God's sovereignty is not arbitrary, nor does God act on a whim or capriciously. God's character is perfect so this curse is perfect. A generation which is just and righteous breaks out of the four generation curse. However, it is clear from the generation of the 60's, the self-centered, drug-taking promiscuous teenagers, grew to either be inept and unable to care for themselves (those who dropped out with drug usage and never dropped back in); and those who became greedy and continued in their self-centered movement on a more material level in the 70's. Their children were neglected, raised without firm moral values, and they had become the teenagers of the 90's, many of whom are as degenerate as their parents; many of whom were raised without both parents, and a few of whom were genetically disabled due to the activities of their parents. For those who are having a problem with the generalization—this does not mean every person of the 60's was degenerate nor does this mean every child in the 80's and 90's is degenerate; however, there are a disproportionate number of children and adults who have missed the mark. An even better example are the Blacks of the 60's who, once the 90's were reached, we have millions of Black children who have not been raised by their own father, sometimes they have never seen their own father; and often have been raised by only a mother, who is often either overworked and unable to attend to all of their needs or is on welfare and sets a poor example for her children. This has resulted in neighborhoods of children, who, by the time they are 10 or 12, they are dangerous to be around, carrying real guns when they should still be playing with toys.

What can happen in this third and fourth generation curse is that you can have even a generation of believers who are degenerate and faithless, like the Exodus generation, who, because of the teaching of Moses, gave way to a relatively decent generation who went into the land under Joshua, who gave away to a third and fourth generation of spiritually corrupt people who were scattered throughout the land under the judges.

To give one an idea of the extent of their confusion, I have seen several people who say they positively cannot understand how someone can be against abortion and pro-death penalty. That is confused thinking, one who cannot grasp the difference between the two positions. They fail to understand that the distinction lies in the criminal behavior of the one to be executed. To give you an idea as to the extent of the detachment from reality, a set of statistics which I read in the mid-90's proclaimed drug usage on the rise with 38% of high school students (and this may have been Seniors; I don't recall) as having taken drugs of one kind or another. At the same time, about 1/4th of the parents of drug-using children even had a clue that their children were involved with drugs. As a teacher, I witnessed this continually. I would have a child who would carry *High Times* magazine, scrawl pictures of marijuana leaves on his binder and folders, and the parent would invariably think that maybe his child knew some other kids who took drugs or that he just like drawing marijuana leaves, but certainly his own child did not partake. And when a child gets to that stage where he is advertising his usage to all those around him, that means that he has either participated in drug usage for sometime or has taken a clear, strong stand in favor of drug usage. Yet the parent hasn't a clue.

My point in all of this is that a degenerate generation leaves its mark on subsequent generations, often down to the fourth generation. No man lives or dies to himself. Our influence, whether good or bad, lives on long after us, whether we chose for it to do so or not. So far, I have seen the excellent guidance of my own parents affect their own children for the good; and their grandchildren were similarly affected for the good.

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<sup>100</sup> This is so translated in NRSV and alluded to in the NIV notes.

Kalisch wrote, *God does not clear off the sin at once, but settles it gradually within three or four generations; lest the individual, crushed by the weight of the punishments, perish. And this is indeed an act of divine mercy!—But the sons to the third or fourth generation can the more bear a part of the guilt, as a blessing of [a] thousand, that is, innumerable generations is promised to them, so that this circumstance also is a testimony of the love of God.*<sup>101</sup>

Although Kalisch totally ignores the responsibility of the third and fourth generations for bearing some of the guilt, this observation is an apt one. Let me add to it by saying, there are times when one generation is so degenerate, that they cause innumerable problems, heartaches and struggles for the several generations which follow. For instance, those who participated in slavery as an evil institution early in our country's history have caused innumerable racial problems to fall upon our heads, centuries later. This in no way nullifies what you have been taught about the third and fourth generation curse, but supplements it with what is also true.

**And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped.** [Exodus 34:8]

The Israelites who would have climbed the mountain to peek at what was going on would be simply thrill seekers; those curious about what was going on. Moses took his position and his responsibilities seriously and he understood the holiness and sovereignty of God. His worship of God was more than perfunctory—it was real and sincere and done out of respect and fear.

**And he said, "If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Y<sup>e</sup>howah, let Y<sup>e</sup>howah, I pray to You, go in the midst of us, although we are [lit., it is] an obstinate people and pardon our iniquity and our sin"<sup>102</sup> and take us for Your inheritance."** [Exodus 34:9]

God has called Moses back upon the mountain to continue giving him the Law. Moses still is praying on behalf of his people. This tells us that it is okay to pray for the same thing several times.

### **God Renews His Covenant with Israel and Re-emphasizes His Law**

**And He said, "Note, I renew [lit., cut] a covenant before all your people; I will do marvels such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation and all the people, among whom you are, will see the work of Y<sup>e</sup>howah; for it is awe-inspiring that I will do with you."** [Exodus 34:10]

When Moses first went up on Mount Sinai and wrote down the words of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, these words became known as *the Book of the Covenant* (Exodus 20:22–23:33). This second trip he will return with a more abbreviated version: *the Renewal of the Covenant* (Exodus 34:10–26). We would assume that, there is much more that Moses learned during this period of time (80 days and nights learning from God). Much of the latter half of Exodus and most of Leviticus likely came from these meetings with God.

God has already made several conditional and unconditional covenants with Israel. The word for *renew* here (which is often translated *make*) here is *cut*, word which will be found in Exodus 34:13. *Cut* is the common word for making a covenant and perhaps it is because important covenants had to be cut into stone as a permanent record; then each person received a stone with the inscription of what had been agreed to (I am only partially guessing as to the origin of the use of this word).

God had never declared null and void His covenants with Israel. He needed for Moses to act as an intercessor so that Moses would strengthen his personage as a type of Christ.

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<sup>101</sup> From *A Historical and Critical Commentary on the Old Testament: Exodus* by Moritz Markus Kalisch, p. 262. From [Google books](#), accessed December 30, 2019.

<sup>102</sup> The Samaritan, Septuagint and Syriac codices render *iniquity* in the plural; and the western Samaritan, Septuagint and Syriac codices translate *sin* in the plural also.

God here promises Moses that He will continue with Israel as is and that He will cause tremendous works to be done among the people of Israel. Several translations end v. 10 with the rendering *it is a terrible thing that I will do with you* (KJV, Owen's) and others call it a *fearful thing* (NASB, Young's). This is the Niphal participle of the word *yârê'* (יָרֵא) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*], the word for *fear, respect*. The Niphal is the passive voice, and, on occasion, the subject acts upon himself. The unbeliever fears God and His power; the believer with doctrine respects it. The NIV, NRSV and *The Amplified Bible* all use the adjective *awesome*, which was a marvelous translation until it was over-used and lost all of its power because of a younger generation, so *awe-inspiring* is a reasonable alternative. This means that, despite the evil and degeneracy of the Exodus generation, God will continue to work through Moses and the nation Israel, and inspire the nations and cause fear in the nations which surround them.

**"Observe for yourself what I command you this day: see, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. [Exodus 34:11]**

*Observe* is translated *observe for yourself* because it is in the Qal imperative with a 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine singular suffix. This is the exact same list that we had back in Exodus 33:2 (although the Amorites and the Canaanites have switched positions). God has promised to drive these groups out. This will require the positive volition of the Hebrews, which was not always forthcoming.

**"Take heed to yourselves so that you do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land unto which you will go; so that it does not become a snare in the midst of you. [Exodus 34:12]**

The Hebrews already have a covenant with Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the Creator of the Universe. What benefit could it be to them to have a treaty (or, a covenant) with a degenerate group of people? A covenant establishes an alliance, a compact and a pledge between two parties. The Hebrews had such an alliance with God. Since God has promised from eternity past that those who occupy the land would be thrust out of the land, and since God has destroyed some of the inhabitants of the promised land already due to their degeneracy, it would make no sense for Israel, allied to God, to ally themselves with God's enemies—whom God would eventually destroy. One of the reasons from the standpoint of the Jew of why they should not become entangled with those in the land, is that through intermarriage, they would be drawn away from Y<sup>e</sup>howah. It is the nature of those opposed to God to try to pull others away from God; and so it would be the influence of the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.

The Hebrews were advised again and again not to rely upon man. Jeremiah proclaimed, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help." God will always allow the Hebrews their own free will. Because of this, some groups will not be driven from the land and some groups will partially assimilate (for instance, Uriah the Hittite, served under King David).

**"For you will tear down their altars and you will break their religious monuments and you will cut down their Asherim [i.e., religious obelisks]. [Exodus 34:13]**

It is typical for the religious liberal today to reject the exclusivity of any religion. Some groups pick and choose from all religions and take bits and pieces from the ones that they like. It never occurs to them that what they are doing is making God in their own image. They have set themselves up as the judge and jury in matters religious. Somehow, they arrogantly think that God has granted them, rather than the religious groups that went before them, the sophistication and discernment to determine what portions of the historical faiths they will accept and what portions they will reject.

When it comes to Moses, who spoke face to face with God as one man speaks to another, they believe that either God did not give him the whole scoop, that he was delusional, or that he was a product of the collective Jewish imagination. Let's take those one at a time:

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## Moses, His State of Mind, and His Revelation of God

1. God provided Moses with the Law, that condemns man, as well as with a complete soteriology and a complete Christology, both in shadow form. Since Moses walked away from his several meetings with God with a very detailed enumeration of God's laws along with the ceremonial laws, it seems unlikely that God left out anything for that period of time.
2. How could a man who stood against Pharaoh and led his obstinate people for forty years be that delusional? People who say that they talk to God face to face are not the kind of people that we see as leading us. We institutionalize these people. It is illogical for a person to be so fragmented in that portion of their psyche and so well-focused and rational in the rest of their beings.
3. We have more and better historical documents about the historicity of Moses than we do of any other historical contemporary of his. The nature of the historical documents in one way testifies to his historicity. Many historians try to ignore the Bible when it comes to things historical because it contains direct communication with God, prophecy, religious information and miracles; but what is so compelling about it is its absolute objectivity when dealing with various historical characters or with the Jewish people themselves. Here, it paints a rather unflattering picture of the Jewish people and there are many instances of famous, revered men whose historical documentation is less than complimentary (David, Solomon and Jonah quickly come to mind); such objectivity is rare (if not entirely absent) from ancient historical documents.
4. My point here is that those who pick and choose from various religions have no real sound philosophical reason to accept only a smattering of what God revealed to Moses, other than personal choice, which allows them to fashion God in their own image, which is no different and no less reprehensible than the idolatry that we were recently exposed to the Jewish people.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

God is very exclusive. In a nation where He is their ultimate ruler, God even instructs Moses and his people to destroy those people who worship other gods. In some cases, God did not even allow for evangelism—these people were slaughtered wholesale. Notice what God tells Moses what he and the Jewish people will do. Nâthats (נָתַט) [pronounced *naw-THATS*] means *pull down, break down, tear down*. It refers to the physical tearing down of a structure or to the pulling down of a nation or a person. Here it is a heathen altar where sacrifices are offered to demons and not to God.

Shâbar (שָׁבַר) [pronounced *shaw-VAR*], found here in the Piel imperfect, means *to break, to break into pieces*. This was the same word used when Moses came down from Mount Sinai and broke the tablets of the Law into pieces. Most translations translate four different Hebrew words all as pillar, including the one here, matstsêbâh (מַטְסֵּבָה) [pronounced *mats-tsay-VAH*], which refers to a monument, often a rock, which has been set up indicating some religious significance. This can be used in a good sense (Genesis 28:18 31:13 Exodus 24:4) and in a negative sense (Exodus 23:24 Deuteronomy 7:5 2Kings 3:2). The word itself is neutral. It can be used as a memorial set up for a person who has died (Genesis 35:20); as a personal memorial (2Samuel 18:18–19); as a token of an agreement between two parties (Genesis 31:45, 51–52); as well a commemoration of an appearance of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Genesis 28:18 31:13). If you examine these passages, it will be obvious that the word *pillar* does not even come close to properly rendering this word.

Kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced *kaw-RATH*] is a word with wide application; it means *cut down, cut off, chewed between the teeth*; and, by implication, *destroy, consume*. It is also used *to make (cut) a covenant*. What are to be cut down are the sacred poles, or trees (or a good modern rendition is *obelisks*), set up near the heathen altar; these poles signify their goddess of fortune and happiness (this is the G version), Ashera (the *im* is plural). Asherah was the wife of El, the chief god of the Canaanites and these poles were erected as a monument to her.<sup>103</sup> Asherim is in the plural as it refers to the poles themselves. Some versions, such as the KJV, translate this word *groves*

<sup>103</sup> There were also images made of her, referred to in 1Kings 15:13 2Kings 21:7 2Chronicles 15:16

and others transliterate it as *Asherah*. The context reveals to us whether we are speaking of the goddess or of the poles erected in her honor.

These poles were made out of wood (Judges 6:26), manufactured (1Kings 114:15); planted (Deuteronomy 16:21); erected (1Kings 14:23). They were burned, cut down, overthrown and destroyed by the Hebrews (Deuteronomy 7:5 12:3 2Chronicles 34:4 Micah 5:14).<sup>104</sup> Our God is not a God of religious freedom and do your own thing and believe in whatever you want to believe in.

For awhile, we only knew of Asherah from the Bible, as is true of several historical figures and incidents. However, in Ugaritic writings, we have found her, describing her as the mother of several gods as well as the mother of Baal (with whom she is associated in Judges 3:7 6:26–30). In relationship to Israel, Asherah made no inroads with the Patriarchs nor was she associated with the monarchy of Israel. However, soon after the division of the kingdom, she is actually brought into the temple, later to be removed by Josiah and burned (2Kings 21:3, 7 23:4).

Nation Israel, for many centuries, was a Theocracy—a nation ruled directly by God. Because of that, the people of Israel were divinely guided when it came to matters of war and religion. In our own nation, we are not a theocracy, so our laws concerning religion must be liberal enough to allow Christianity to exist (which is accomplished by the separation of church and state and by the freedom of religion for others) and we must exercise great caution and wisdom when entering into war.

**"For you will not worship another god because Y<sup>e</sup>howah, His name is jealous—He is a jealous God. [Exodus 34:14]**

God often speaks of Himself in human terms; this allows us to comprehend His actions. God is bound to Israel by covenant, just as a husband and wife are legally bound. Israel was married to Y<sup>e</sup>howah, being called the bride of Y<sup>e</sup>howah in several places (Isaiah 54:5, 6 62:5 Jeremiah 31:33). As the husband of the nation Israel, God is certainly distraught when Israel plays the whore and commits (spiritual) adultery. The Bible in several places equates idolatry with spiritual adultery (Jeremiah 3:8–9, 20 Ezekiel 16:20–34 23:37). To describe His actions, God emphasizes that He is a jealous God, as a loving husband would be jealous. A husband who absolutely loves and adores his wife would be thrown into a jealous rage if she slept with another man. God behaves in a similar fashion, as understood from the human point of view. Although God does not get jealous and does not go into an emotional rage, the intensity of His discipline of Israel would seem to be that way to those who are close up. This is the often occurring anthropopathism, where God's actions and thoughts are expressed in human terms in order to simply convey on our level what is transpiring.

**"...So that you do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to their gods when [lit., and] one asks you and you eat of his sacrifice; [Exodus 34:15]**

Notice a very important point made in this verse: these Hebrews are not the only ones who play the whore when they chase after other gods; those heathen in the land are also guilty of spiritual adultery. There is only one God, the God of Israel, the God of the Universe, Jesus Christ—anyone who worships anything else is guilty of spiritual adultery. Just as there is one right man and one right woman, there is one right God for everyone and that is Jesus Christ. Otherwise, the religious heathen is united with a demon or demons, to the detriment of his own soul. Such a one pays for this pleasure with eternity in the lake of fire, bound to the god of his whoredoms forever. We all have a free will choice as to who we choose to spend eternity with. We can spend it with the God of the Universe or with the god we have made in accordance to our own image. Anytime you say, "Now this is what God should behave like" or "This is what God is to me" or "This is who God is to me," we are making God in our own image and in truth worshiping ourselves.

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<sup>104</sup> My thanks to ZPEB, vol. 1, p. 355 for this list



God will have to have almost all of the inhabitants of the land destroyed so that Israel does not fall into spiritual adultery with them. There is a lot in the Old Testament made of Israel remaining racially pure and this was misapplied by many in the past. The racial purity of Israel was necessary in order to maintain their religious purity. Israel was not to make covenants with other nations, not to intermarry, and not to become close to heathen nations or their peoples; but, every time God issued a mandate in that regard, He always explained that this was to keep them from joining in with the heathen and their heathen religious rites. Even eating the food sacrificed to idols can invite spiritual compromise in the weak believer (or even when witnessed by the spiritually weak believer—1Corinthians 8 10:18–21).

So we have gone from the Old Testament to the New Testament in that past sentence, but some would be wondering, "So, what application does that to me? I don't eat meat sacrificed to idols—I wouldn't even know where to buy it." There are associations in life which are wrong—attending apostate churches to eek out a grain of truth, involvement with the fast crowd, with illegal drugs, with drunkenness; these are things we do not do. And there are also associations which confuse the weak believer—associations which we are allowed to have, but the mature believer sometimes chooses not to in order to keep from derailing the weak believer. There might not be a decent church within 200 miles of where you live where the Bible is taught; this does not mean that you will get out on the golf course on Sunday morning. It is not wrong to golf and it is not wrong to golf on a Sunday morning during church; however, under the correct circumstances, it could cause a weak believer to stumble. Or, your Friday after work drink and happy hour and turned into a situation where a couple people become visibly drunk or takes place where several people get visibly drunk. Your being there, in some instances, can cause the weaker believer to stumble. You have the freedom to be there and it is possible that your group is not even drinking alcohol; however, this can cause the weaker believer to stumble. It is a case-by-case situation and the mature believer will understand when he needs to abstain from things which are not sinful in themselves. A pastor, a choir director or a Sunday school teacher may have to avoid R-rated movies for the same reason. This will all be covered in more detail in 1Corinthians.

**"And [so that you do not] take their daughters for your sons and the daughters prostitute themselves to their gods and make your sons prostitute themselves to their gods. [Exodus 34:16]**

God has recognized from the beginning the strength of the attraction of the male for the female (and it works the other way also). Men can be so in love that they lose all grounding in their beliefs and they compromise what is right and true with that which is false.

Now would be an excellent time to examine the **Doctrine of Racial Intermarriage** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

**"You will not make for yourselves molten gods. [Exodus 34:17]**

Y<sup>e</sup>howah will continue with a list of laws, some of which will be a repetition of what the Hebrews had heard before. Moses will record these laws and re-emphasize their importance. When Moses was last on this mountain speaking to God, the Hebrews were down below making (or causing Aaron to make) the image of a calf. This does not outlaw sculpturing—it did, however, disallow the Hebrews to make items to worship. Just as they were not to pursue the gods of the Canaanites, they were not to produce their own gods either. Because the Hebrews were so short-sighted and faithless, God reiterates what laws he had laid down before.

### **The Feasts and Gatherings of the People**

**"You will keep the feast of unleavened bread. Just as<sup>105</sup> I have commanded you, you will eat unleavened bread seven days at the time appointed in the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib, you came out from Egypt. [Exodus 34:18]**

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<sup>105</sup> This follows the translation of the western Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, the Targum of Onkelos and the Targum of Jonathan.

One of the very first things which God told the Hebrews upon exiting Egypt to do was to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In fact, they had not even left Egypt and God, in Exodus 12:14, told the Hebrews that feast would be a memorial to their manumission. This indicates to me that they had been in the desert for less than a year since the exodus and God was reminding them of this feast.

**"All that opens a womb is mine; the firstborn males<sup>106</sup> of all your livestock, [whether] cattle or sheep. [Exodus 34:19]**

A year has gone by and God is reminding them of what He told them at the time of the exodus (Exodus 13:2), prior to the pursuit and attack of the Egyptians. Much of this is reminding them of what they were all supposed to know.

**"...and you will redeem the firstborn [lit., the first-opening] of a donkey with a lamb; or, if you will not redeem [them], then you will break the neck of all the firstborn. You will redeem your sons; they will not appear before My face empty[-handed]. [Exodus 34:20]**

Even though the firstborn is dedicated to God, the firstborn must be redeemed. All who are in God's plan must be redeemed. The imagery is this: God would give up His firstborn for us; He dedicates His Firstborn to us; we are to dedicate our firstborn to Him. However, all mankind must be redeemed, particularly those who serve Him; so God made certain that the Israelites realized that all of their males, even the firstborn, must be redeemed.

Redeeming the firstborn of the animals was so important that if they could not be redeemed, their neck was to be broken.

**"Six days you will work; but on the seventh day, you will rest [lit., keep Sabbath]—in plowing time and in harvest, you will rest. [Exodus 34:21]**

After the Pharaoh and his men were drowned, God fed the people with manna and instituted the Sabbath day at that time. God repeated this with the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and in Exodus 23 and 31. God repeats this to them again, and emphasizes that this is to take place at any time of the year. One could not make up an excuse and claim that it was the harvest and they had to work 16 hour days, seven days a week until all was harvested. God did not give them that out. Regardless of the time or the season, the Hebrews were to take the Sabbath day.

**"Furthermore, you will observe the feast of weeks—the harvest of the first fruits of wheat—and the feast of ingathering at the year's end [or, at the turn of the year]. [Exodus 34:22]**

We will save the Doctrine of the Feast Days for Leviticus 23; however, God has made Israel aware of these feasts back in Exodus 23. The *turn of the year* was the fall.

James Rickard: *Interestingly, The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), with its "wave offering", celebrates Jacob's blessed multiplication from a single patriarch into a great and mighty nation, cf. Deuteronomy 16:9-12. And as you know, the Feast of Pentecost after our Lord's Ascension was the beginning of the*

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<sup>106</sup> This word could either be *males* [zâkar (זָכָר) (pronounced zaw-KAR)] or *remembers* [zâkâr (זָכַר) (pronounced zaw-KAWR)]; the former seems to fit better in this context (which is not the Biblical criticism decides to choose one word over another); even the NRSV indicates that there is uncertainty over its meaning (p. 81). However, the main problem is the vowel points, which were added millenniums after the Bible was written, are different. The pronunciation of these words is quite similar. The general law of textual criticism is when there are two different readings, you adopt the reading which seems contextually to be the **least likely**. The reason for this is that if the passage was changed by anyone, it would have been changed from a confusing word to a more understandable word. Therefore, it is assumed that most intentional alterations occurred for this reason. However, not every passage was changed in order to make more sense. Some could have been changed unintentionally by a slip of the pen or a mispronunciation. I believe the latter to be the case in this passage.

*Church Age in which the Holy Spirit was given to every Church Age believer for permanent indwelling; a major portion of your Portfolio of Invisible Assets so that you can be an overcomer. In regard to the Feast of Tabernacles and the Millennial Reign of our Lord, Scripture tells us He will “judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for (RAB) strong nations far and wide, Micah 4:3, NIV. God also promised to save a remnant and make them into a (ATSUM), strong nation, Micah 4:7 NASB.<sup>107</sup>*

**"Three times in the year, all your males will appear the face of the Lord Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel. [Exodus 34:23]**

The verb in this passage is râ`â (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AW*] which simply means *to see*. It is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Niphal imperfect. Even though it does not look that way, *all of your males* is a singular subject, going with this verb. The Niphal is passive, therefore is translated *appear* (Genesis 1:9 12:7 Exodus 6:3).<sup>108</sup>

We have three names for our God in this verse. This was also a repeat of God's commandments to Israel from Exodus 23. Why are these things being repeated? God gave a clear commandment that the Hebrews were not to make any graven images of deity and not to engage in idolatry, yet they still did. God will begin to repeat and repeat until Israel has got it. This is a brief renewal of the covenant originally delivered to Israel while Israel committed adultery with another god.

**"For I will dispossess nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will man desire your land when you go up to appear before Y<sup>e</sup>howah, your God three times in the year. [Exodus 34:24]**

Many Bibles translate this first verb as *cast out* or as *drive out*; however, the word here is yârash (יָרַשׁ) [pronounced *yaw-RASH*] and it means *take possession of, inherit, dispossess*. God will not necessarily cast these nations out or drive them out because in many cases, God will require the total slaughter of some nations, due to their degeneracy.

One immediate concern of the Israelites is that their neighbors might observe their ritual of going before the Lord three times a year and decided to strike their land and to take it during that time. God assures them that during that period of time, no one will *desire* their land. We might even understand *desire* to be a metonym for *take*.

**"You will not offer [lit., slaughter and pour out] the blood of my sacrifice with [lit., upon] leaven; neither will you leave the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover [out] until the morning [lit., left out overnight]. [Exodus 34:25]**

Shâchaṭ (שָׁחַט) [pronounced *shaw-KHAT*] means *to both slaughter and to pour out*; many translators opt to go with the word *offer*.

The sacrifices made to God were not to be mixed with leaven, as leaven represents false doctrine and infiltration of that which is false into that which is pure.

In this verse, in each case, *sacrifice* is in the singular, because there is but one sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. Just as our Lord was removed from the cross before nightfall and not left out throughout the entire night until morning; similarly, the other sacrifices are not left out. Once Jesus died for our sins, His sacrificial offering was over and there was no need to humiliate Him by continuing to display his body.

**"You will bring the first of the first fruits from your ground to the house of Y<sup>e</sup>howah your God. You will not boil a kid in its mother's milk. [Exodus 34:26]**

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<sup>107</sup> From <http://gracedoctrine.org/proverbs-chapter-7/> accessed October 20, 2015.

<sup>108</sup> Rotherham disagrees on this, claiming this is not the Niphal; however, citing Dr. C. D. Ginsburg's *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical edition of the Hebrew Bible*; however, my other sources thought otherwise. Owen's Hebrew and Zodhiates, as well as most translations, translate this *appear*, which does make more sense.

Again, these are repeated commands. God is the provider of all things and Israel reveals her faith in God by bringing the first of the first fruits to Him. In a sacrifice, the animal sacrificed is generally burned, which represents judgement.

It is not boiled in its mother's milk because the involvement of the mother has nothing whatsoever to do with the sacrifice of the kid; just as Mary, the mother of the humanity of Jesus Christ had absolutely nothing to do with His sacrifice for us on the cross.

**"And Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to Moses, "Write for yourself these words; for, in accordance with these words, I have made with you a covenant; and [I have made a covenant] with Israel." [Exodus 34:27]**

*In accordance with* (translated in the KJV as *after the tenor of*) is literally *in accordance with the mouth of*. It is used in a similar manner in Genesis 41:40 and Exodus 17:1 (meaning *according to the command of*); Deuteronomy 17:6 19:5 (meaning *according to the evidence of the sentence of*); and in Genesis 43:7 and in our passage (meaning *in accordance with*). When we use the word *mouth*, it refers to not the physical mouth in these passages, but to what has been spoken. In the masculine singular construct, this is properly *according to the mouth of these words*, which obviously is a little awkward in the English. *Mouth* comes first because the one who is saying these words is being emphasized over the words themselves. I personally don't think that we would do the verse too great an injustice by translating this *in accordance with these word [I have] spoken*. Furthermore, the verse is a bit more complex than most translations make it out to be. *These words* is actually a definite article, *words* (which is not in the construct), another definite article, and the word *these*.

God has made a covenant with Moses which is the federal head of Israel, so God has thereby made a covenant with Israel. Moses, will write these down twice, as covenants were done (for years during this past century, we used carbon copies until the Xerox machine came along). It might be a stretch here, but it is possible that the sentence structure implies two sets of laws (*for yourself* could be easily left out without affecting God's command to Moses to write these things down). In any case, there is no question here but that Moses could write and he had some sort of writing material with him.

### **A Summary and Moses Returns from the Mountain, His Face Shining with God's Glory**

**And he [Moses] was with Y<sup>e</sup>howah forty days and forty nights, [during which] he did not eat bread or drink water. Furthermore [lit., and], He [Y<sup>e</sup>howah] wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments [lit., ten words]. [Exodus 34:28]**

This name that we have taken for the decalogue<sup>109</sup> is used here and in Deuteronomy 4:13 10:4. The use of the term *words* here is technical. This is the Hebrew word *dābār* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw-BAWR*], which means *words* (it is in the plural in this verse); however, in this context, it is a technical term for *covenant stipulations*.<sup>110</sup>

This forty days and forty nights appears to have been a period of testing. Moses remaining up there for that amount of time without food and water means that he lived on the word of God; God sustained him. Obviously, no one could do that—it is a miracle; however, God sustained Moses. **"Man will not live on bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God"** is what Jesus said to Satan after our Lord had gone without food for forty days and forty nights (and He waws quoting Himself from Deuteronomy 8:3).

Moses was with God for this period of time, foreshadowing our Lord fasting for 40 days, prior to being tested by Satan (Matt. 4 Luke 4).

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<sup>109</sup> Deca means *ten* and *logue* is from *logos*, which means *word*

<sup>110</sup> NIV p. 114

Forty days and forty nights is much longer than it would have taken Moses to write the portion of the Law that he did. Obviously he prayed and spoke with God and what we have here is only a portion of God's words to Moses and Moses' response. It is possible that during this time, Moses composed the first portion of the book of Exodus. Much of what Moses wrote down is not recorded in Exodus 34 but will be said directly to the Hebrews (for instance, Exodus 35:1–3).

**When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of the testimony [or, the two witness talbles] in the hand of Moses, Moses did not know, as he came down the mountain, that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with Him. [Exodus 34:29]**

First we have to cover the vocabulary. Some translations, principally the Latin Vulgate, has Moses sprouting horns at this point. It is possible that you have even seen pictures of Moses portrayed with horns and you wondered what is the deal here? What are these horns all about? The problem is this noun *keren* (כֶּרֶן) [pronounced *KEH-ren*] and it undoubtedly means *horns* in Genesis 22:13 Dan. 8:3, 5; it refers to a musical instrument shaped like a horn (Dan. 3:5, 7). This word may also refer to radiance or light beams (Hab 3:4). The latter two uses are far in the minority. However, the verb cognate, *kâran* (כָּרַן) [pronounced *kaw-RAN*] in the Qal appears to mean *to radiate light* (it is found only in this passage: Exodus 34:29–30) and in the Hiphil it clearly appears to mean *to sprout horns* (found only in Psalm 69:31). The reason for our taking this stand that Moses did not have horns but had a radiant face is five-fold: (1) The subject of this verb three times is *the skin of his face*. (2) Moses was unaware that this occurred (he would more than likely noticed recently sprouted horns). (3) To cover this, he wore a veil, not a hat. (4) The Septuagint, the first translation of the Old Testament, agrees with this rendering. (5) This is how Paul interprets this passage under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit in 2Corinthians 3:7–18.

This is the reflected glory. Moses had asked to see God's glory and was unaware that he was now radiant. He is reflecting some of God's glory. Moses had shone a great deal of growth during this period of time (from his first meeting with God on Mount Sinai to the second). R. B. Thieme, Jr. may have called this going from supergrace into ultra supergrace. This shining is God's reflected glory. Moses reflects God's character and essence, having spent that much time with Him on Mount Sinai. Moses face shown here but this is not mentioned the first time that he came down from the mountain. My first guess is that there had been minimal growth in the children of Israel and now they could see this? However, Moses' servant, Joshua, has always shown inklings of spiritual maturity and he would have seen this both times. Another guess would be that this occurred before, but was not mentioned before. However, that won't wash because of the reaction that we see below. If this were the second time that this happened, it would have been less likely to have occurred. My final guess, which I would go with, is Moses had shown great growth and we, when we have matured, reflect God's glory and God's character. We do not have the same physical manifestation as Moses, but people see God's reflected glory and, whether they know what it is or not, they respect it.

As an tangent from this verse: we all have enemies and we all have people who do not like us for one reason or another. Sometimes they are very justified in their feelings and sometimes they are having an old sin nature reaction. However, if we reflect God's glory, then someone—in fact, often many people—will have respect for us. If no one in our periphery has any respect for us, then we are not reflecting God's glory but our own natural sin nature. If those in your periphery only think of you in terms of using you; have no respect for you; dislike you, etc.; then you are not reflecting God's character. **But if the ministry of death, in letters, engraved on stones, became glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, it was fading; how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory...but we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the sameimage from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (1Corinthians 3:7–9, 18).**

**And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and noted the skin of his face shone, they were afraid to come near him. [Exodus 34:30]**

Recall that this is Moses the one who ripped these people to shreds verbally and ground down their idol to dust, mix it with water and made many of them drink the water. They still have respect for Moses. These Hebrews may



had considerable shortcomings, but they recognize God's reflected glory and this frightened them. This time they did not build any golden calves and go off the deep end in their behavior. Since Moses had been gone forty days and forty nights before, this did not seem to be an excessive amount of time this time around. In the light of God's glory, our pitiful sin nature, our meaningless dreams and aspirations are shown for the waste of time that they are. To the immature believer, coming to close to God's glory is an intimidating thing.

**And Moses called to them and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him and Moses talked with them.** [Exodus 34:31]

The more mature of the exodus generation of believers were able to approach and speak with Moses. It was the immature and reversionistic<sup>111</sup> believers who were afraid to be near Moses. In reading that portion of Thieme's book, I am reminded of how indebted I am to Bob not only for the spiritual growth which I experienced under his ministry and the ability to go to a passage of God's Word and correctly exegete it, but for the vocabulary which he provided. In the beginning of the book of *Reversionism*, Bob points out that the English language has changed a great deal since the 1600's, the time of the KJV, and that our spiritual vocabulary needs an overhaul due to anachronism, misuse and overuse. Thieme coined several dozen words which I personally believe will become commonly used by theologians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>112</sup>

**And afterward, all the people of Israel came near and he gave them in commandment [lit. commanded them] all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.** [Exodus 34:32]

*Gave them in commandment* is one word, the Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix of tsâvâh (צִוָּה) [pronounced *tsaw-VAWH*], and it means *enjoin, charge, command*. The word *them* comes from the suffix. The people of Israel are rightfully afraid of Moses and of his character. However, when they see that the elders can stand in his presence and not suffer harm, they, like curious children, move forward to speak with Moses.

**And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.** [Exodus 34:33]

Moses would have told the congregation what occurred in his speaking with God and he would have read what he had written—direct quotes from God. In the midst of all this, Moses would have exhorted and upbraided the people. As he spoke, God's glory shown in his face. Ideally, the people were in fellowship when Moses spoke to them and could look upon his face (those who were not possibly could not look up at him). Then he covered his face with a veil, because he was no longer speaking God's Word.

**However, whenever Moses went in before Y<sup>e</sup>howah to speak with Him, he took off the veil until he came out and when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded.** [Exodus 34:34]

Moses still went into the tent of meeting and spoke to God. He went before God on Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments once again, which was a covenant between God and Israel. Furthermore, these commandments were written with the finger of God in stone. However, the rest of God's laws, ordinances and requirements were learned in the tent of meeting (and later in the tabernacle) when Moses met with God there.

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<sup>111</sup> This is one of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s terms for a believer who, instead of growing on God's Word and remaining in fellowship, he has retrogressed to a place where he is, for all intents and purposes, an enemy of God. Quoting directly from Thieme's book *Reversionism* (pp. 8–9), *reversionism is a maladjustment of the justice of God...a state of spiritual decadence brought on by rejection or neglect of Bible doctrine...as a result, he remains in a state of carnality...and is therefore under perpetual divine discipline*.

<sup>112</sup> This is in no way to try to glorify Bob Thieme, but to offer thanks and appreciation for the time that he put into his personal study of God's Word, which I estimate to be in excess of 100,000 hours. It is men of his character and vision whose shoulders I stand upon when I teach God's Word. At first I had trouble with his personalized spiritual vocabulary, but in retrospect, I can see that it was long overdue.

**And the people of Israel saw the face of Moses that the skin of the face of Moses shone and Moses would put again the veil upon his face until he went in to speak with him. [Exodus 34:35]**

This became the *modus operandi* of Moses. He would go into the tent of meeting and later into the tabernacle, remove his veil and then speak to God. When he would exit, his face would be shining, so he would cover it with a veil. When he spoke directly to the children of Israel, Moses would remove this veil for speaking. This would have been a visual sign to a huge crowd that he was about to speak God's Word. However, it was Paul who properly interpreted this passage for us. Moses did not wear the veil because no one could look upon his face unless he wore the veil. He wore this veil because the glory of God reflected in his face was fading, yet the authority of Moses was not fading, nor was his spiritual life in trouble. The veil hid the fact that after speaking to God, the radiance in Moses' face did fade. So, (1) Moses would go into the tabernacle or into the tent of meeting with a veiled face; (2) he would remove the veil and talk to God; (3) He would exit the tent of meeting or the tabernacle with a radiant face which reflected God's glory; (4) he would speak to the children of Israel, telling them what he was told; (5) and he would put the veil back on because this radiance would soon fade (1Corinthians 3:13).

Why would someone come up with a translation like *having horns*? Certainly the Hebrew allows for this, but why would some people buy into it? Archeologists have found figures of horned gods in the ancient Near East and in pre-Christian Europe.<sup>113</sup> These horns believed to be upon Moses could be no more than pagan influence. Even some coins bearing the likeness of Alexander the Great have him with horns. As we have studied, horns are a symbol of power in the Bible

What is marvelous about this passage when compared to 1Corinthians 3 is that only Moses was allowed to look into the face of God, as it were, and reflect God's matchless glory. We may now look intently into the perfect law of liberty, God's Word, and, no matter what our station in life, reflect God's glory in our own faces through the power of the Holy Spirit and the working of the Word in our lives. This glory is not some pansified, holier-than-thou expression peppering our language with religious slogans and tripe, but a glory which is strength and character and intelligence; a glory which is kind, grace-oriented and thoughtful; a glory which reflects the true character of God. Every Christian can experience this glory. This is not the sorry personality imitation of some man, or the pathetic matching of voice-inflections with those who have influence over us—this is God's glory, God's presence which is perceived and respected by some of those in our periphery. This is available to every believer in Jesus Christ.

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<sup>113</sup> *What the Bible Really Says*, M. Barthel, p. 123

# EXODUS 35

## Exodus 35:1–35

### Outline of Chapter 35:

- Vv. 1–3 **Moses re-teaches the Sabbath**
- Vv. 4–9 **Moses Lists the Items Need for the Tabernacle**
- Vv. 10–19 **Moses Calls for Craftsmen to Work on the Tabernacle**
- Vv. 20–29 **The Israelites Bring the Items Requested**
- Vv. 30–35 **Moses Calls for Bezalel and for Oholia**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** Exodus 35 may seem to move rather quickly. We have covered all of this material before in Exodus 25:1–8 and 31:1–3. That is where God commanded these things to be done and this is the first step in the fulfillment of these things. The general projects will be named, the materials will be gathered, and the two foremen will be named (again).

All that we have had in the Law so far have been, essentially, the Ten Commandments, the Passover, some of the other feasts and a description of what God wanted built. From this point, much of Exodus will be devoted to actually building the things required by God; and, in much of Leviticus, we will cover the ceremonial laws to which Israel was to be subject. These ceremonial laws were designed to take Israel from its inception as a nation (actually, prior to this time) and take them all the way to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. All of these laws and ceremonies were to tie the Creator of the Universe to His people and to the provision which He has made for His people. These laws were not designed to survive the birth, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These laws pointed to the Son of God to come, as well as looked back to God Who created all there is.

### **Moses Re-teaches the Sabbath**

*Similar Passage: Exodus 31:13–17*

**An Moses assembled all the congregation of the people of Israel and said to them, "These are the words which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has commanded, to do them. [Exodus 35:1]**

Moses has returned from speaking to God on Mount Sinai. This time; the people did not get out of control as before (recall that many of them were slaughtered by the Levites and this certainly made an impression on the remaining Israelites). Moses is going to repeat some of the commandments to them that he has given them before. However, there were portions of the previous covenant which had not been covered, as Moses had to spend all of his time with them in discipline. What will be covered is the construction of the Tabernacle, which represents Jesus Christ. For them (as well as for us) Jesus Christ is great blessing as He is our redemption and our redeemer.

Notice how much time was wasted on discipline in order to get to the great blessing which God had designed for them. How much time have you wasted with your life under great discipline while God is standing by, tapping His foot, waiting for you to stay in fellowship for five minutes and listen to His Word so that He can bless you?

Nearly the last word in this verse is the Qal infinitive construct, 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix of 'âsâh (עָשׂוּ) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*], which means *to do, to make*. It is used to *make something out of something else*. This would be reasonably translated by *These are the things which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has commanded; you are to do the following things:*

**"Six days, work will be done; but on the seventh day, you will have a holy Sabbath of solemn rest [lit., a Sabbath of Sabbath] to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Whoever does any work on it will be put to death. [Exodus 35:2]**

Observance of the Sabbath day connects the children of Israel with the God Who created the universe and restored the earth. It is interesting that damn few of the cults that demand that their members keep the Sabbath ever follow this directive out as God had required; that is, putting to death those who did not follow this commandment. We have already covered the Doctrine of the Sabbath; this was a Law for Israel and we do not keep the Sabbath today; we are in a perpetual Sabbath, a perpetual rest, where God has provided everything for us. Please do not start a church wherein members are enjoined to keep the Sabbath; and those who do not are killed. That is a very bad idea.

Although God explained what it meant to rest on the Sabbath, the Hebrews themselves went too far and defined what *not working* meant to the *n<sup>th</sup>* degree. Interestingly enough, it does not appear as though they put to many people to death because their interpretation of keeping the Sabbath was not followed.

**"You will not burn a fire in all you habitations on the Sabbath day." [Exodus 35:3]**

We have the negative plus the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect of bâ'ar (רָעַב) [pronounced *baw-GAHR*] and it means *to burn, to kindle*. However, it is found in several passages translated *brutish* and *you shall put away* (see Deuteronomy 13:5 17:7 Jeremiah 10:14, 21). My first thought was *could you light it right before sundown and then throw a log in now and again; or, could you light the fire before sundown and let it burn itself out?* However, there is nothing to indicate that this means *to begin a fire* only. This seems to be pretty clear on disallowing even the burning of a fire in one's home on the Sabbath. The Sabbath indicates that everything has been done; that God has provided everything for our needs. Fire often symbolizes judgement and from God's standpoint, outside of time, our sacrificial Lamb had been sacrificed. My personal take on this is that a fire was now allowed to be burning in one's household on the Sabbath.

An interesting point concerning this commandment—almost every commandment delivered to the Israelites up until this time has been in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular. This time is in the plural. With the negative, it means *none of you all*. On the other hand, I am not sure how to interpret that.

When God first spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave Moses detailed instructions concerning the building of the tabernacle and immediately followed this with a reminder to keep the Sabbath (Exodus 31:12–18). Before Moses sets the people in motion to bring the items needed for the tabernacle and to begin the work on the items needed for the tabernacle, he instructs them as to Sabbath day observance. Regardless of how important the construction of the tabernacle is, following God's laws concerning the Sabbath are even more important.

### **Moses Lists the Items Need for the Tabernacle**

*Similar Passages: Exodus 25:1–9 39:33–40*

**And Moses said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "This is the word which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has commanded, saying, [Exodus 35:4]**

Now Moses will quote verbatim from what was delivered to him.

**"Take from among you an offering to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Whoever is generous of his heart, let him bring it, the offering of Y<sup>e</sup>howah: gold and silver and bronze [possibly, copper]. [Exodus 35:5]**

These metals speak of our Lord's deity; particularly the gold. The NASB gives the alternate readings of *contribution* and *heave offering* for the word *offering*. I do not know what *heave offering* is, unless it means to wave this stuff before God. This particular Hebrew word *terûmâh/terûwmâh* (תְּרוּמָה/תְּרוּמָה) [pronounced *tehr-oo-MAW*], is not used until Exodus 25:2 in the parallel passage. This may distinguish it from a burnt offering, but the

word *burnt* pretty well does that for us. There is nothing in this passage which indicates that these things were first waved before God and then given nor is there any indication anywhere that should have been done. When these things were *waved* before God, so to speak, and this word *têrûmâh* is used, there is an additional word used to indicate that they were waved before God (see Num. 15:20). **See the Doctrine of Hebrew Words for Offering—not finished yet!!** I may want to teach this with Leviticus or Num. 18:11.

**""...and blue [possibly, violet] and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen and goats' hair. [Exodus 35:6]**

These will be used in the hangings, these colors representing the royalty of our Lord.

**""and tanned rams' skins and goatskins and acacia wood... [Exodus 35:7]**

The skins speak of the covering of sin and the acacia wood is the humanity of Jesus Christ.

**""...and oil for the light and spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense... [Exodus 35:8]**

The oil is God the Holy Spirit. The light is both the living Word Jesus Christ and for the written Word, which is revealed by means of the Spirit.

The spices are for the sweet savor to God found in both the incense and in the anointing oil, which is the power of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

**""...and onyx stones and stone for setting for the ephod and for the breastpiece [or, pouch]. [Exodus 35:9]**

The breastpiece and the ephod are used for divine guidance.

I am wondering as I work with these verse why the person(s) who chose where to make the partitions between verses stopped mid-sentence continually in this chapter (the chapter and verse divisions are not divinely inspired).

### **Moses Calls for Craftsmen to Work on the Tabernacle**

*Similar Passages: Exodus 31:6 36:1–2*

**""And every able man among you should come and make all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah has commanded. [Exodus 35:10]**

Notice that the offerings and the help are on a voluntary basis.

*Barnes: Two separate accounts of the erection of the tabernacle are given. In the first Moses relates the instructions which he received, in the second he describes the accomplishment of the work. Nothing would be less in accordance with the natural order of a history written at a later period than this double account. It is however fully accounted for by the obvious hypothesis that each part of the narrative was written at the time, and on the occasion, to which it immediately refers.<sup>114</sup>*

Let me see if I can put this in a different way, by offering up an analogy. Whenever I am rehabbing a house, I take before and after photos. However, sometimes, if the work is lengthy, I may take photographs of various things as they are completed or come near to being complete. For someone to record an event while living through that experience, is more likely to take snapshots as one goes along further and further. However, if someone comes in after the fact, after these things have been done, they are far less interested in what happened originally. They

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<sup>114</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Exodus Chapter Commentary (introduction).



only look at the finished product. So, someone moving into a house recent rehabilitated may take a lot of photos graphs when they move in, they are far less likely to ask for photographs of what the house used to look like.

In the same way, an historian looking back at these events described by Moses, is not going to talk about what happened along the way. He will focus on the finished product, the completion of the Tabernacle. The point being, this is further evidence that Moses was the author of this material and not someone who came along later.

**""The tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its hooks and its frames, its bars, its pillars and its bases. [Exodus 35:11]**

This is simply a list of those things which God has commanded the children of Israel to build.

**""The ark with its poles, the mercy seat [lit., covering] and the veil of the cloth partition. [Exodus 35:12]**

The ark of the covenant speaks of Jesus Christ and how he bore our sins.

The tables of the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod that budded and a bowl of manna will be placed into or beside the Ark. One view is that, these things speak of sin and the covering (mercy seat) is over them. Our Lord bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

The veil speaks of the veil between man and God prior to the first advent, death, burial and resurrection of our Lord.

**""The table with its poles and all its utensils; and the bread of the Presence. [Exodus 35:13]**

The furniture all speaks of Jesus Christ and the poles were a way of carrying the furniture without coming into direct contact with the Deity of our Lord (represented by the gold plaiting).

**""The lampstand also for the light with its utensils and its lamps and the oil for the light. [Exodus 35:14]**

The Lampstand is Jesus Christ as the light of the world, a baton passed on to us. The oil is the filling of the Spirit which allows us to be the light of the world.

**""And the altar of incense with its poles and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense and the cloth partition for the doorway at the doorway<sup>115</sup> of the tabernacle. [Exodus 35:15]**

There is only one door into the tabernacle just as there is but one door to salvation.

**""The altar of burnt offering with grating of bronze along with its poles and all its utensils, the laver and its base. [Exodus 35:16]**

The altar where the sacrifices are offered are obviously our Lord bearing our sins on the cross.

**""The hangings of the court, its pillars and its bases and the cloth partition for the gate of the court. [Exodus 35:17]**

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<sup>115</sup> This sounds better in English if translated *and the screen for the doorway at the entrance of the tabernacle*; however, the Hebrew word is the same in each case.

The opening to the court speaks of God-consciousness; if someone has positive volition at God-consciousness, they enter into the court; once they enter into the court, the continuous sacrifices offered tells them the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**""The pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the court and their cords. [Exodus 35:18]**

**""The finely wrought garments for ministering in the holy place; the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons for their service as priests."" [Exodus 35:19]**

It is these garments which set Aaron and his sons apart from the rest of the populace. The white of the garments speaks of the purity of our Lord.

**The Israelites Bring the Items Requested**  
*Similar Passages: Exodus 25:2–7 35:5–9*

**Then all the congregation of the people of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. [Exodus 35:20]**

From here until the end of this chapter, most of the verbs are in the perfect tense for completed action. When Moses initially gave his people God's instructions, the verbs were generally in the imperative mood or the imperfect tense (It is that proper to refer to the imperative as a mood in the Hebrew and the imperfect and perfect as tenses).

The NIV study Bible has a footnote in this chapter where they mention the past and the future tense of the Hebrew: this is a linguistic anthropathism, if you will. They are expressing for you, the reader, a difficult concept in language of accommodation. There is actually no past present and future tense in Biblical Hebrew (although there is in Modern Hebrew).<sup>116</sup> They just carried over the verb endings and began using them differently, probably as exposed to indo-European languages and thoughts while distributed throughout the world.

Moses has delivered the first set of commandments to the people with regards to bring to him the items needed for the building of the tabernacle.

**And everyone whose heart stirred him [lit., lifted him up] came; and every one whose spirit moved him [lit., made him willing], they brought Y<sup>e</sup>howah's offering to be used for the tent of meeting and for all its service and for all the garments of the holy place. [Exodus 35:21]**

God, knowing that this was a sinful and faithless generation, still knew that they would provide all of the things which were required for the building of the tabernacle.

When any church is organized and eventually built, God will supply when He believes it necessary to do so.

**So the men and the women came, all who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets and all sorts of gold objects; and every man who dedicated an offering of gold to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. [Exodus 35:22]**

The jewelry is that which is most expensive and most highly prized by the Hebrews. This was the most expensive of the gifts and a great deal of gold was required in order to cover over so many different items.

**And every man with whom was found blue or purple or scarlet material or fine linen or goats' hair or rams' skins or goats' skins brought [these things]. [Exodus 35:23]**

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<sup>116</sup> *Biblical Hebrew*; Menahem Mansoor, Vol. 1 p. 71

These are for the clothing worn by the priests.

**Every one of who could make an offering of silver or bronze brought [these] as an offering of Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and every man with whom was found acacia wood of any use in the work brought [it].**  
[Exodus 35:24]

God had a large number of items which needed to be used in this construction and knew that all of the people in Israel would be able to bring all of the items needed.

**And all women who had the skill [lit., and all women wise of heart] with their hands spun and brought what they had spun in blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen.** [Exodus 35:25]

God in eternity past knew that these people would build the golden calf and be idolatrous and he knew in eternity past when He told Moses that He was going to destroy this generation of Hebrews, that Moses would intercede on their behalf. God also knows that, when given a second chance, that the building of the tabernacle would take place with every item needed would be provided. The tabernacle was the key to the Jewish worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and it had to be built right the first time. God knew that each and every one of the skills needed would be available.

**And all the women whose hearts lifted them up with wisdom, spun the goats' hair.** [Exodus 35:26]

I have given this verse its most literal translation. Compare it to yours. It is fascinating how many times words like wisdom and knowledge are hidden in the Hebrew and the Greek in the Bible.

**And the leaders brought onyx stones and stone to be set for the ephod and for the breastpiece.**  
[Exodus 35:27]

Moses told the people what was needed by God in Exodus 35:5–19 and this is the fulfillment of those needs.

**And spices and oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense.** [Exodus 35:28]

The leaders organized the people and so that each person did not bring an item or two to Moses but these things were brought to them and they would then take it to Moses.

**All the men and women whose heart moved them to bring anything for the word which Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded to be done by the hand of Moses—these people [lit., sons] of Israel brought a freewill offering to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.** [Exodus 35:29]

As was said before, giving is a matter of freewill and not compulsion.

**Moses Calls for Bezalel and for Oholiab**  
*Similar Passages: Exodus 31:1–11 36:1–2*

**And Moses said to the people of Israel, see Yaheweh has called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri son of Hur of the tribe of Judah.** [Exodus 35:30]

Part of the reason here is that we do not always know how to pick the right person for the job and God knows who will do the best and most professional job. God picked these men.

**And He has filled him with the Spirit of God with ability with intelligence and with knowledge and will all craftsmanship [lit., work]...** [Exodus 35:31]

This was not some crackerjack stumblebum who suddenly had skill to work with his hands. God placed him in situations for most of his life where these skills were perfected, then God filled him with the Spirit for this particular job, as all spiritual service which is emanigful must be done in the power of the Spirit.

**...and to devise artistic designs [lit., to devise devices] and to work in gold and silver and bronze...**  
[Exodus 35:32]

All these metals have different melting points and all of them have different compositions and consistancies and only one with the proper training can work with all three.

**and in cutting stones for setting and in carving wood for work in every skilled craft.** [Exodus 35:33]

The skills of Bezalel extended to all types of crafts and abilities. He was a master of many trades.

**He has also inspired him to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.**  
[Exodus 35:34]

These duties and responsibilities cannot be accomplished by just one or two men. They will have the skill and ability to teach others to do some of the tasks involved and act as builders do, subbing out a great deal of the work.

**He has filled them with ability [or, a wise heart; lit. wisdom of heart] to do every sort of work by a craftsman or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen or by a weaver by any sort of workmen or skilled designer.** [Exodus 35:35]

# EXODUS 36

## Exodus 36:1–38

### Outline of Chapter 36:

- Vv. 1–2      **The Builders of the Tabernacle**
- Vv. 3–7      **The Contributions Toward the Building of the Tabernacle**
- Vv. 8–19     **The Curtains and the Tent**
- Vv. 20–38    **The Framing and the Doorway**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** Chapter 36, like 35, will move rather quickly. We have covered all of this material before in Exodus 26 and 31.

#### The Builders of the Tabernacle

*Exodus 31:1–6 35:30*

**"Now Bezalel and Oholiab will work and every man wise of heart in whom Y<sup>e</sup>howah has placed wisdom and intelligence in them to know how to construct any of the work of the construction of the sanctuary<sup>117</sup> in accordance with all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah has commanded." [Exodus 36:1]**

Many of the words which should be translated wisdom are too often translated *ability*. Knowing God's Word should be our primary pursuit in this life. God uses prepared people and if you are unprepared then God uses you as an example of a believer who is out of fellowship and suffering; as an example of a baby believer without any spiritual impact in this world.

**Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every man wise of heart in whose heart Y<sup>e</sup>howah had placed wisdom; every one whose heart lifted him up to come to the work to do it. [Exodus 36:2]**

The word *heart* לֵב (לֵב) [pronounced *lay<sup>b</sup>v*] is found three times in this verse, although in some translations, this word occurs once or twice. This is the integrated thinking of the soul; the thing which evaluates life in the light of divine information; the invisible, but real portion of the person. The emphasis continues to be upon the intelligence and the wisdom of these men, even though these words might be hidden in the translation. This does not refer to *book-smart* but to intelligence when it comes to a craft or an ability. These are people who are not sloppy in their work or their approach to their work. This includes Bible doctrine in their souls and the fortitude to do one's job as unto the Lord.

Many people have ruined lives, poor marriages and unsuccessful careers because they do not behave with wisdom and intelligence. Their fundamental defect is, they do not lead their lives as unto God. A man in a marriage is commanded to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. This does not mean to love your wife only when she is likeable. Jesus Christ, when we were yet sinners, gave Himself for us. We were not just unlikeable, we were dispicable. And a woman is to behave in a marriage with respect and honor toward her husband and obedience. In a marriage, each person should feel as though they are giving 90% and getting 10%. Then they are performing their functions in marriage as unto God. This is wisdom; this is intelligence of heart. At your job, if you are guided by Bible doctrine, you behave as if you are working for God and not for man. You may not like your boss and you may even be making your boss money hand over fist; but you treat him (or her) with respect and honor.

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<sup>117</sup> Although this is different from the NASB, this is more literal



Similarly, God here is looking for craftsmen who are wise. God wants men who are positive towards God's plan. This is what it means for them to have their hearts lift them up to go to do the work. They do their work as unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah and not as man-pleasers.

### **The Contributions Toward the Building of the Tabernacle** *Exodus 25:2–7*

**And they received from Moses the entirety of the contribution which the people of Israel had brought for the work on the sanctuary to do it; and they still kept bringing him a freewill offering every morning.** [Exodus 36:3]

God saw to it that the things required to build the tabernacle were provided. The two words for *offering* here are different words in the Hebrew. The first one I have translated *contributions* and the latter *freewill offerings*. They are both in the singular in the Hebrew. These words will be covered in Num. 18:11 in more detail.

**Then all the wise men came who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary; each away from the his task that he was doing [or, constructing].** [Exodus 36:4]

It is amazing that these unstable people, at least for this short period of time, just as God planned, came together, dropped everything that they were doing, left their previous chores, and gathered to do God's bidding. Only God could have foreseen that these people, as unstable and as faithless as they were, would have the high and low points, but the things which God intended to do through them was done without coercion, without their volition being bent even one iota.

**And Moses spoke, saying, "The people bring much more than enough of the labor for the work which Y<sup>e</sup>howah has command to do it."** [Exodus 36:5]

Moses is amazed; this group of people who not but two months earlier were involved in idolatry were now offering their time and their abilities in excess of what what required.

**So Moses issued a command and word [lit. a voice] was proclaimed throughout the camp, which said, "Let no more work for the offering for the sanctuary be done." In this way, the people were restrained from bringing [more].** [Exodus 36:6]

Moses had a mandate written up and circulated throughout the camp for the people to stop bringing their offerings; that they had more than enough already. Now when was the last time you heard a preacher come on the radio and tell you not to send any more monetary gifts for awhile because they had too many monetary gifts already? The people brought much more than Moses ever expected. He will say this several times in different ways, perhaps because it really surprised him.

**For the material [lit., work] was sufficient for all the work to do it and more.** [Exodus 36:7]

There was an excess of labor and an excess of provisions.

### **The Curtains and the Tent** *Exodus 26:1–14*

**And all of the wise of heart among the workmen constructed [out of existing materials] the tabernacle with ten curtains, fine wined linen and blue and purple and scarlet material; cherubim, a work of skilled foresight, he constructed them.** [Exodus 36:8]

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...with cherubim the work of a skilled weaver did he make them.     |
| KJV                             | ... <i>with</i> cherubims of cunning work made he them.             |
| NASB                            | ...with cherubim, the work of a skilful workman, Bezalel made them. |
| NIV                             | ...with cherubim worked into them by a skilled craftsman.           |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ... <i>with</i> cherubs, work of a designer he hath made them.      |

We see by the KJV and Young's translation that *with* is in italics, meaning this is not found in the passage and the word cherubim is plural, which is revealed by the *im* ending. Cherubim are angels, not to be worshipped. They are servants, just as we are. These cherubim may also be found both standing upon the mercy seat and weaved into the curtains. This is because they observe what is happening with man and with God's plan. Elect angels will see all that God is and all that He does; and they will remain elect. They will not sin against Him.

*Cherubim* is followed by the masculine singular construct of ma'ăseh (מַעֲשֶׂה) [pronounced *mah-ġa-SEH*], which should be translated *work of*. We find the Qal active participle of chāshab (חָשַׁב) [pronounced *khaw-SHAHB<sup>v</sup>*], which is translated a number of ways in the KJV: *counted* (Genesis 15:6), *thought* and *meant* (Genesis 50:20), *devise* (2Samuel 14:13–14), *imagine* (Psalm 140:2), *purposed* (Psalm 140:4), *conceived* (Jeremiah 49:30), *to find out* (2Chronicles 2:14), and *cunning* (Exodus 26:1); and these are just the Qal stem. BDB translates this *think, account*. In any case, *thinking, foresight, and pre-planning* are involved. The participle acts like an adjective, describing the *work*. A good way to render this might be *cherumbim, a work of skilled foresight*. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Qal perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix of 'āsâh (אָסָה) [pronounced *ġaw-SAWH*] which is the cognate of ma'ăseh and we have seen that this means *to make something out of something else, to construct*. This means *he constructed them*. This means these were worked into the pattern of the curtains.

**The length of each curtain twenty eight cubits and breadth four cubits, each curtain the same [lit., one] measure with regard to all the curtains.** [Exodus 36:9]

A table might be better than a verse to express this thought.

**And he couple five curtains to one another and the other five curtains he coupled to one another.** [Exodus 36:10]

We are not told who this *he* is, whether it is Moses, Bezalel or Oholiab. It might even be one unnamed craftsman. Or, it could be that God did that so we would emphasize the production over the person performing the production. However, what is most likely is that there are several dozen men involved in this work and that only Moses and the two builders are named. The others are sub.contractors, involved in the nitty gritty of the construction of the Tabernacle and its artifacts, and their production, if done in fellowship, is recorded in heaven and will be rewarded.

**And he made loops of blue on the edge of the one curtain at the end of the thing joined; likewise, he made on the edge of the outmost curtain of the second set.** [Exodus 36:11]

Again, no name is given for this particular craftsman. We learn from this that even some time spent filled with the Spirit and the spiritual activity can be wiped out when one enters into reversionism and falls back several steps. The translation at this point is difficult, but I am not certain that I want to spend much time with it, as the spiritual benefits would be minimal.

**He made fifty loops on the one curtain and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set [lit. coupling]; the loops were opposite one another.** [Exodus 36:12]

**And he made fifty clasps of gold and joined [lit., coupled] the curtains one to the other with clasps so the tabernacle was one whole.** [Exodus 36:13]

I don't know if there was a spiritual significance to the several curtains or if that was just a practical matter of only being able to make the fabric so large.

**He also made curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains, he made them.** [Exodus 36:14]

The royalty and splendor of the other curtains were hidden beneath the curtains of the goats' hair, just as the majesty and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ was hidden beneath the exterior of a man.

**The length of each curtain [was] thirty-four cubits and the breadth of each curtain the same [lit. one] measure for eleven curtains.** [Exodus 36:15]

These curtains are roughly 45 feet x 6 feet each.

**And he joined [lit., coupled] five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves.** [Exodus 36:16]

I would be interested in the spiritual significance of this verse.

**And he made fifty loops on the edge of the outmost curtain of the one set [lit., coupling] and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain of the second set [lit., coupling].** [Exodus 36:17]

**And he made clasps of bronze, fifty to couple the tent that it might be one whole.** [Exodus 36:18]

It is possible that this speaks of the many facets of God's character, which is one whole being.

**And he made a covering for the tent of rams' skins tanned red and a covering of goatskins upwards.** [Exodus 36:19]

We will later speak of Bezalel and Oholiab, but this does not appear to be either one of them. It is a believer whose service is more important than him.

*The Amplified Bible: These last coverings of the tabernacle text are not to be confused with the second one of goats' hair (v. 14). There were four distinct covers of the tabernacle tent. 1. A covering of fine twined linen woven with blue, purple and scarlet, with figures of cherubim upon it. It was made of two long pieces, one running from north to south, the other from east to west [and overlapping for the ceiling] (Exodus 16:1, 6). 2. Over this a covering of woven goats' hair was thrown (26:7; 36:14). 3. Outside this was another of rams' skins made red. 4. And "above it" another covering of dolphin or porpoise skins, weighting the others down and giving perfect protection from the weather (36:19).*

### **The Framing and the Doorway** *Exodus 26:15–29, 31–37*

**Then he made the boards for the tabernacle [out of] acacia wood [which he set] upright.** [Exodus 36:20]

The acacia wood is the humanity of Jesus Christ.

The rest of this chapter might be better expressed as a work order or a parts order:

|       |                                  |                    |
|-------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 36:21 | <b>The Frame-board material:</b> | <b>Acacia wood</b> |
|       | <b>The Board Length:</b>         | <b>10 cubits</b>   |

|       |   |                                   |
|-------|---|-----------------------------------|
|       | <b>Board Width:<sup>118</sup></b>   | <b>1½ cubits</b>                  |
| 36:22 | <b>Tenons/frame (for binding together):</b>                               | <b>2/board</b>                    |
|       | <b>Work accomplished with regards to all the boards of the tabernacle</b> | <b>✓</b>                          |
| 36:23 | <b>He constructed the boards for South Side for the tabernacle:</b>       | <b>20</b>                         |
| 36:24 | <b>Bases of Silver constructed:</b>                                       | <b>40</b>                         |
|       | <b>Bases for under the 20 boards</b>                                      | <b>2 each</b>                     |
|       | <b>Under each board:</b>  | <b>2 bases for its two tenons</b> |
|       | <b>For under every board:</b>   | <b>2 bases</b>                    |

The tenons apparently hold these boards together.

|       |  |                |
|-------|--|----------------|
| 36:25 | <b>For the second side of the Tabernacle (on the North Side):</b>  |                |
|       | <b>Boards fashioned:</b>   | <b>20</b>      |
| 36:26 | <b>Their silver bases (2 bases/frame)</b>  | <b>40</b>      |
| 36:27 | <b>And for the Rear of the Tabernacle (West side)</b>  |                |
|       | <b>Boards fashioned:</b>   | <b>6</b>       |
| 36:28 | <b>For the Corners of the Tabernacle in the Rear</b>   |                |
|       | <b>Boards fashioned:</b>   | <b>2</b>       |
| 36:29 | <b>And they were separate, beneath and together they will be joined at the top at the first ring; in this way he made two of them for the two corners.</b> |                |
| 36:30 | <b>And there were [summary of Rear Specs after completion]:</b>  |                |
|       | <b>Boards:</b>   | <b>8</b>       |
|       | <b>For those boards: Silver Bases:</b>   | <b>16</b>      |
|       | <b>Bases under every frame:</b>  | <b>2 bases</b> |

Although in order to design this table, I have taken a few liberties with the translation, these liberties are not any less literal than a typical translation. This is a list of the work which has been accomplished as opposed to what we have in Exodus 26:15–29, which is a work order.

**And he made bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle.** [Exodus 36:31]

The bars run crossways to the frame boards, holding them all together.

**And [he made] five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle and five bars for the boards of the rear (the westward side) of the tabernacle.** [Exodus 36:32]

<sup>118</sup> Approximately 15 x 2¼ feet

This certainly could have been done as part of the table above. However, it was easier to give a literal translation in verse form.

**And he made the middle bar to pass through the midst of the boards from end to end. [Exodus 36:33]**

This holds the boards together further up the sides.

**And he overlaid the boards with gold and their rings he made of gold holders [or, receptacles; lit., houses] for the bars and overlaid the bars with gold. [Exodus 36:34]**

This verse is amazing. We know the size of all this. All of it is overlaid with gold, which is an incredible amount of gold. The Hebrews both plundered the Egyptians big time and they were willing to give up a lot of this gold for the tabernacle.

**And he made the veil of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen; a work of skilful foresight, he constructed it [the veil]; cherubim. [Exodus 36:35]**

The verse ends with *he constructed it*, the suffix being in the feminine singular, referring back to the veil, the only thing in this verse in the feminine gender. Then, without a verb, preposition, or even a definite article, we have the noun *cherubim*. There were to be two cherubim made for the covering, or the mercy seat, of the ark. However, there is nothing in this context to infer that we are speaking of them; furthermore, there is no detail here, whereas everything else is covered in explicit detail.

**And for it [the veil], he made four pillars of acacia [wood] and overlaid them with gold and their hooks of gold and he cast for them four bases of silver. [Exodus 36:36]**

I am still amazed as to how much gold was used in the construction of the tabernacle.

**He also made a a cloth partition for the doorway of the tent of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen the work of a variegator [a weaver of colors]. [Exodus 36:37]**

This entryway for the tabernacle is Jesus Christ in His royalty, as the King of Israel. This is the first entrance that the Hebrews must pass through.

In working on a reasonably literal translation, I often come upon the short comings of Owen's most excellent work. John Joseph Owens put together the *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*, which is an outstanding four volume set which gives the Hebrew, parses the verbs and gives pertinent information concerning the number, gender, etc. for the verbs, adjectives and nouns; and renders an English translation. Unfortunately, his English translation is quite inconsistent<sup>119</sup> (as are all English translations, including *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*). The other weakness is that the conjunctions and prepositions are mentioned without a BDB page number. In a way, I am improving upon his work in these ways: (1) I am making one of the translations more literal and consistent, (2) I am listing the variants found in other texts; (3) I include more information about the prepositions; and, (4) I have included Strong's numbers. This is not to denigrate Owens' fine work, as I practically could not teach without it.

**And its five pillars with their hooks and he overlaid gold [on] their tops and their rings; but their five bases silver. [Exodus 36:38]**

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<sup>119</sup> Also, Owens primarily makes use of the RSV translation throughout; not a bad translation, but for a work like this, he should have gone as literal as possible and allowed the pastor to exegete.



# EXODUS 37

## Exodus 37:1–29

### Outline of Chapter 37:

- Vv. 1–5 **Bezalel constructs the ark**
- Vv. 6–9 **The construction of the mercy seat and the cherubim**
- Vv. 10–16 **The construction of the table of shewbread and its accessories**
- Vv. 17–24 **Construction of the lampstand and its accessories**
- Vv. 25–28 **Construction of the altar of incense**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

**Introduction:** Chapter 37 will move rather quickly; this is the work accomplished with regards to the furniture of the tabernacle. Bezalel will construct the ark, the mercy seat, the cherubim, the lampstand, the altar of incense and their respective poles and utensils. We will briefly allude to their significance, spend a very small amount of our time in the Hebrew, and move on. It would have been more reasonable to have lengthened this chapter to include Exodus 38:1–20 (or at least vv. 1–8); since the rest of the furniture is dealt with therein.

It is good to recall where we are in the journey of Israel. They are out in the middle of the desert; they have not entered into Canaan. In fact, entering into Canaan is not on their minds at all. What comes first is their spiritual relationship with God, which will be steeped in ritual and symbology.

### Bezalel Constructs the Ark

*Exodus 25:10–15*

**And Bezalel constructed the ark of acacia wood, 2½ cubits long [lit., its length]; 1½ cubits wide and 1½ cubits high. [Exodus 37:1]**

This is the first time we have a name attached to the actual construction of anything. Some translations insert Bezalel's name in the previous chapter, but it is not found there in the Hebrew. However, even as the builder in this project, he was involved in some of the hands-on construction. The ark was perhaps the most sacred of the tabernacle furniture and he had the privilege of working on it. However, we will not hear his name throughout the rest of the chapter. The dimensions of the ark were approximately 3.75 x 1.25 x 1.25 feet. The acacia wood is the humanity of our Lord.

**And he overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside and made for it a molding of gold all around. [Exodus 37:2]**

*Molding* could be translated *crown*, *rim*. The gold was more than just a show. The gold was where it could be seen and where it could not be seen. The gold speaks of the deity of our Lord and He was undiminished deity, fully God.

**And he case for it four rings of gold for its four corners [lit. feet] and two rings on its one side and two rings on its other [lit., second] side. [Exodus 37:3]**

How much of this work Bezalel did and how much he delegated to others is not known. He likely oversaw the entire construction process, as well as worked on certain items himself. To what extent that he did this is really unrelated to the importance of this construction.

The ark of the covenant, which was Jesus Christ and soteriology and hamartology all in one package, was extremely important. Bezalel would have recognized, to some extent, the importance of what he was doing, but he would not have known that these articles of furniture were typical.

**And he made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.** [Exodus 37:4]

The recurrent theme is gold and wood; Deity and humanity.

**And He put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry to ark.** [Exodus 37:5]

*Put* is in the imperfect tense (as are most of the verbs in this chapter). This does not refer to the construction where he finished them and then placed them into the rings of the ark for good. He constructed them, tried them out, and, when they ark was to be moved, they were placed into the rings again. This might help with differentiating the imperfect tense used here with, for instance, the perfect tenses used at the beginning of Exodus 36:1. Those who carried the ark from place to place were not to come into direct contact with it. The poles made it easier to transport.

### **The Construction of the Mercy Seat and the Cherubim** *Ex. 25:17–20*

**And he made a mercy seat [lit., a covering] of pure gold, 2½ cubits long [lit., its length] and 1½ cubits wide.** [Exodus 37:6]

The mercy seat, or covering, covers the items which speak of sin which are held in the ark of the covenant; the same sins which Jesus Christ bore in His Own body on the tree.

**And he constructed two cherubim of gold; he had constructed them of hammered work on the two ends of the mercy seat.** [Exodus 37:7]

V. 7 carries with it the imperfect and the perfect tense of the same verb. The first examines the process and the second the completed cherubim.

**One cherub on the one end [lit. from the end on this; or, out of this end] and one cherub on the other end from the mercy seat. He had constructed the cherubim on its two ends.** [Exodus 37:8]

There are all kinds of goofy views about who these cherubim are and what their purpose it. Most will agree that we are speaking of angels; however, they are not guarding the arks to keep people from taking out the ten commandments; that's silly. That is attributing to these statues powers and abilities that they do not possess, which is idolatry. They, like everything else, are representative of something; they represent the great cloud of witnesses, the billions of angels on this earth and in the heavens, which are observing us and God's perfect work on our behalf.

**And the cherubim were spreading out [two] wings above, overshadowing with their wings the mercy seat with their faces on to another toward the mercy seat were the faces of he cherubim.**  
[Exodus 37:9]

They did not have one eye on the other and the other eye cocked toward the mercy seat. The cherubim had two wings each, they were facing each other and looking down toward the mercy seat. Their position, the tilt of the heads are important. Their wings were not spread out and their eyes vigilant to the world around them, as if to protect the mercy seat, the ark and their contents, as some have suggested. Their eyes are toward the ark and the covering of the ark, which, at this point, the angels do not fully understand or appreciate. For the angels, at that point in time, this would have been somewhat perplexing. They are looking at the Mercy Seat. My point being, the angels did not know about the cross or exactly Who Jesus is/would be. They are also within the

confines of human history. They have viewed perhaps 1000–2000 years of human history; and they are, at the moment that this is taking place, at the same place as Moses and Bezalel are at this time. Let me emphasize that, God knows the end from the beginning; but the angels who are seeing all this take place, do not. They are learning in real time, despite having made their choices already, for or against God.

The covering is over the various particulars of sin: (1) The Ten Commandments, sin as the conscious and willful disregard of God's will; (2) The golden jar of manna, a testimony to God's gracious provision (which is often rejected in negative volition)—Exodus 16:32–34; and, (3) Aaron's rod that budded, that which is dead is brought to life; this illustrates both the rebirth and sins as rebellion against God (Num. 17:1–10). But, the Mercy Seat will not be important as the lid over the Ark of the Covenant; but because, once a year, blood will be sprinkled upon that lid, year after year, for the next 1400+ years. Angels will witness this being done.

### **The Construction of the Table of Shewbread and its Accessories** *Exodus 25:23–30*

**And he made the table of acacia wood, its length: two cubits, its breadth: one cubit, and its height: one and one-half cubits.** [Exodus 37:10]

This is the table of shewbread.

**And he overlaid it with pure gold and made for it a molding of gold all around.** [Exodus 37:11]

It is on this table which we have the provisions of God—both the Word of God for our spiritual nourishment; and also, the physical bread from God, our daily sustenance.

**And he made for it a rim [or, frame] a handbreadth wide around and he made a molding of gold for its rim [or, frame] all around.** [Exodus 37:12]

This is a 3–4 inch framing which goes around the table. It further lends the interpretation that we are completely surrounded by God when it comes to His provisional will. We are surrounded and protected by a wall of fire which the forces of evil cannot penetrate. We may think in our pitiful lives that these walls have been breached and we are suffering at the hands of Satan; however, much of the time we are out of fellowship, under divine discipline, and are miserable failures. We still have protection far beyond anything that we could imagine. If you want to see what Satan would do to us if given half a chance, examine the life of Job. If given the go-ahead, Satan would cause great pain and disruption in our lives.

**And he cast for it four rings of gold and fastened [lit., put] the rings on the four corners at its four legs [lit., feet].** [Exodus 37:13]

In dealing with the translation of this, I am thinking how nice it would be if a translator decided that each Hebrew word would have its own English translation, that a maximum of two or three different renderings for the same verb would be allowed (with perhaps five different renderings for a very small number of widely applied verbs; consistent with the stems); and a footnote to indicate its other renderings elsewhere in the Scripture.

**The rings were close to the frame as holders [or, receptacles; lit., houses] for the poles to carry the table.** [Exodus 37:14]

As before, the Hebrews did not come into direct contact with God, but worked through an intermediary. No man was to touch the Ark. Direct contact with the Ark, for a long time, meant certain and immediate death. The poles could be handled to move the Ark; but the Ark could not be touched.

**And he made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold to carry the table.** [Exodus 37:15]

All the furniture was to be transported in this way.

**And he made the utensils [vessels] which were to be upon the table; its plates and its dishes for incense and its bowls and its jars with which to pour libations [were all made of] pure gold.**  
[Exodus 37:16]

Just as we use the word *utensils* to incorporate a great many objects, the Hebrews and others of the ancient world used the word for *vessels* the same way.

### Construction of the Lampstand and its Accessories

*Exodus 25:31–39*

**And he made the lampstand of pure gold; of hammered work he made the lampstand; its base and its shaft, its cups, its capitals and its flowers were of one piece with it.** [Exodus 37:17]

The lampstand is Jesus Christ as the light of the world. Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light to the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12). He is surrounded by men (six is the number of man; Rev. 13:18) who also act as the light of the world. [And Jesus said], "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matt. 5:14). In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness did not comprehend it...There was the true light, coming into the world, enlightens every man (John 1:4–5, 9).

**And six branches were going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand from the one side of it and three branches of the lampstand from the second side of it.** [Exodus 37:18]

The lampstand is one pole going straight up on one both sides of this are three branches on each side.

**Three cups made like almond [blossoms]; on one branch a bulb and a flower; and three cups made like almond [blossoms]; on the other branch a bulb and a flower; so for the six branches going out of the lampstand.** [Exodus 37:19]

My guess is that the almonds blossoms represent spring, a new beginning, a new birth; spiritually a new birth. The flower is the production of the spiritual life.

**And on the lampstand four cups made like almond [blossoms] with their bulbs and flowers.**  
[Exodus 37:20]

I personally need a visual aide here; I don't quite follow the *four* thing. I don't know if on the stems, so to speak, of each branch if there are these four cups or what exactly. We do not have any lampstands from the period of time to verify exactly what these looked like; what we have are from several hundred years later (?)<sup>120</sup>.

**And a bulb under each pair of the branches out of her [the lampstand]; and a bulb under each pair of the branches out of her; and a bulb under each pair of the branches out of her; for the six branches going out of it.** [Exodus 37:21]

It is difficult to determine exactly how to translate some of these words. This is an example.

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<sup>120</sup> NIV, p. 125.

### Translating the Word *Kaphtor*

|                                 |                  |   |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | knob             | This is the word kaph <sup>et</sup> tôwr/kaph <sup>et</sup> tôr (כַּתְּפֹת/כַּתְּפֹת) [pronounced <i>kaf-TORE</i> ] and it is found only in Exodus 25 and 37 and in Amos 9:1 and Zeph. 2:14. It apparently became an architectural term, meaning the upper portion of a pillar or column, where it would be a little wider and more ornate. Here it is a bulb or knob or an ornamental portion of the lampstand; it's sort of an ornate, lumpy portion of the lamp. |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | apple            |   |
| KJV                             | knop             |   |
| NASB                            | bulb [or, calyx] |   |
| NIV                             | bud              |   |
| NRSV                            | calyx            |   |
| Owen's Translation              | capital          |   |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | knop             |   |

**Their bulbs and their branches one piece with it were the whole of it of hammered work—one piece [of] pure gold.** [Exodus 37:22]

The lampstand is pure gold here; there is no acacia wood.

**And he made its seven lamps and its snuffers and its fire-pans [or, trays] of pure gold.** [Exodus 37:23]

These are simply the articles necessary to work the lamp and the lampstand.

**He constructed it [out of] a talent of pure gold; and all its utensils.** [Exodus 37:24]

This is approximately 75 pounds (or 34 kilograms). So the lampstand was quite heavy.

### Construction of the Altar of Incense

*Exodus 30:1–5, 22–38*

**And he made the altar of incense of acacia wood; a cubit in length and a cubit in width (it was a square) and two cubits high; its protrusions were of one piece with it.** [Exodus 37:25]

This measures about 18" x 18" x 36". The four corners protruded above the level surface of the top.

**And he overlaid it with pure gold: its top and its sides, all around, and its protrusions; and he made a molding of gold round about it.** [Exodus 37:26]

The altar of incense is a cross; the sacrifice of the cross, the paying for the sins is a sweet savor to God.

**And two rings of gold he made on it under its molding on its two sides; on its two sides as holders for poles with which to carry it.** [Exodus 37:27]

God has made provision for all of these holy objects to be moved as the Hebrews move.

**And he made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.** [Exodus 37:28]

Deity and humanity.

**And he made the holy anointing oil and the pure fragrant incense, the work of a perfumer.** [Exodus 37:29]

The altar of incense must have the properly prepared incense.



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# EXODUS 38

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## Exodus 38:1–31

**Introduction:** The first portion of Exodus 38 should have been included with the end of Exodus 37. However, the difference between Exodus 37 and Exodus 38:1–20 is, the first is the actual building of the interior furniture and the Tabernacle; the first half of this chapter is devoted to the exterior of the Tabernacle and the furniture built for that.

Vv. 1–8 is the construction of the brazen altar, which is one of the pieces of furniture in the tabernacle. The outside court is built in vv. 9–20. The end of this chapter (vv. 21–31) will be a record of all of the materials used for building the Tabernacle and its furniture (inside and out).

Like the past few chapters, we have covered the significance of most of what we find in this chapter already so we will move rather quickly through it.

### Outline of Chapter 38:

- Vv. 1–8     **Construction of the brazen altar and the laver**
- Vv. 9–20   **The hangings of the court**
- Vv. 21–31   **The completion, cost and statistics concerning the tabernacle**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### Construction of the Brazen Altar and the Laver

Exodus 27:1–8 30:17

**And he constructed the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood; five cubits long and five cubits wide (it was a square); and three cubits high.** [Exodus 38:1]

V. 1 explains what we need to know about the altar. It is much larger than the other items of furniture. It is approximately 7.5' x 7.5' x 4.5'. You can place a rather good sized animal on this altar. It is also fairly high up in the air. This is because people from all around will be able to view it from a distance.

**And he constructed protrusions for it on its four corners; its protrusions were out from it. Furthermore, he overlaid it with bronze [or, copper].** [Exodus 38:2]

The legs just extend a little bit above the top of this altar (those are the horns). Some translations have the phrase *one piece with it*; this is the preposition of separation and, in this case, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix, referring back to the altar itself.

**And he constructed all the utensils of the altar—the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks [or, the flesh hooks] and the fire pans—all its utensils he made of bronze [or, copper].** [Exodus 38:3]

Utensils, as we have seen, is a word which literally means *vessels*; however, it is used the same way that we would use the word *utensils*, *tools* or *accessories*. Bronze speaks of judgement. On the altar, the animals are sacrificed in the place of the Hebrew people.

**And he made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze beneath, under its ledge, extending halfway.** [Exodus 38:4]

The word which is translated *down* or *below* is actually two prepositions and an adverb. It simply means, when combined like this, *beneath*.<sup>121</sup>

**And he cast four rings on the four corners [lit. extremities] of the bronze grating as receptacles [lit., houses] for the poles.** [Exodus 38:5]

This, like all the furniture, will be carried around as they move for almost forty years by the Hebrews.

**And he constructed the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze.** [Exodus 38:6]

Notice that we no longer have gold over acacia wood, but bronze (or, copper). It is the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ which is judged, which takes the full brunt force of the punishment for our sins. His deity is not judged. Therefore, we have judgement over His humanity; copper (or bronze) over acacia wood.

**And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it with them; hollow with planks he had constructed it.** [Exodus 38:7]

*Them* is a suffix referring to the Hebrews when they moved from camp to camp. *It* is also a suffix (used twice in this verse) referring to the brazen (bronze) altar.

**And he constructed the laver [or, wash basin] of bronze [or, copper] and its base of bronze from the mirrors of the ministering [or, serving] women who ministered [or, served] at the door the tent of meeting.** [Exodus 38:8]

I don't believe that we are told exactly what these women did. The tent of meeting, which was the temporary meeting place between God and Moses, is never dealt with in any sort of detail. The tabernacle proper will later be called the tent of meeting. There were no glass mirrors in the ancient world as we know them. Instead, they used polished copper or brass to see their own reflections.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Hangings of the Court

*Exodus 27:9–19*

**And he constructed for the south side of the court: the hangings of the court, 100 cubits of fine twined linen.** [Exodus 38:9]

The fine twined linen speaks of the purity of Jesus Christ.

**Their twenty pillars and their twenty bases of bronze and their rings of silver.** [Exodus 38:10]

The bases of bronze speaks of judgement.

**And for the north side, a hundred cubits, their twenty pillars, and their twenty bases of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their rings of silver.** [Exodus 38:11]

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<sup>121</sup> BDB, p. 641.

**And for the west side: fifty cubits of hangings, their ten pillars and their bases, the hooks of the pillars and their rings of silver.** [Exodus 38:12]

The tabernacle courtyard was 150' x 75'.

**And for the east side toward the sun-rising, fifty cubits of hangings, fifty cubits for one side [lit., shoulder] of the gate, their three pillars and their three bases.** [Exodus 38:13–14]

I believe that we are only speaking of one side of the gate here. There will be three pillars on each side of the gate.

**And for for the other [lit., second] side [lit., shoulder] on one side and on the other side in regards to the gate of the courts, fifteen cubits of hangings, their three pillars and their three bases.** [Exodus 38:15]

So all along the walls we have these hangings of the fine twined linen (so far, only, mentioned only in v. 9).

In the middle of this verse, we have the word *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*] twice and, by itself, it means *here, this*. However, it is with the prefixed preposition *mîn* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] and it occurs twice with a conjunction between. Under these circumstances, it means *on this side and on that side*. What is being described is on the left and on the right of the gate.

**All of hangings of the court round about of fine twined linen.** [Exodus 38:16]

In the court, one was surrounded by this fine, twined linen, the purity of the humanity of Jesus Christ.

**And the bases for the pillars: bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their rings: silver. The overlaying of their capitals: silver. Finally, all the pillars of the court were furnished with silver rings.** [Exodus 38:17]

This is an overview of what metals had been used for what.

**And the a cloth partition of the gate of the court [was] professionally embroidered with needlework in blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen, twenty cubits long and high; five cubits wide corresponding to the hangings of the court.** [Exodus 38:18]

To describe the quality of the embroidery, Owen's says, *embroidered with needlework*; NASB reads: *the work of a weaver*; the NIV renders this *the work of an embroiderer*. The key here is that this is professionally done, which should be the aim of all things that Christians do. The gate to the court was covered with this colorful hanging, which speaks of our Lord's royalty and deity, which means those who pass through the gate have some interest in God at God consciousness.

**And their four pillars and their four bases of bronze and their hooks of silver and their overlayings of their capitals [or, tops] and their rings of silver.** [Exodus 38:19]

Again, just a final lists of the materials used.

**And all the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court round about [were of] bronze.** [Exodus 38:20]

These pegs are what come into contact with the earth, and they are to be judged.

## The Completion, Cost and Statistics Concerning the Tabernacle

**This is the sum of things [used] for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of testimony, as they were inventoried [or, appointed] at the commandment of Moses for the work of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest: [Exodus 38:21]**

I must admit that I have complained about lack of consistency in translations, but I have just taken a word and translated it differently than I ever have before. Pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAD*] means *visit, muster, attend to, appoint*. It has a wide variety of meanings. Here, Moses has ordered an inventory be taken so that there is not way too much taken for the construction of the tabernacle. He puts Ithamar, Aaron's son, in charge of this task.

To understand the division of labor; the builder was Bezalel, who likely sub-contracted out much of the work. Whatever he was unable to do, his assistant, Oholiab, was able to do. Oholiab was in charge of embroidering and he was an engraver. The Levites collected and inventoried the offerings, under the control of Ithamar. Notice that this was done professionally, with distinct levels of authority, a clear division of labor and authority, and clearly defined responsibilities. The Hebrews were not sloppy or haphazard in their approach to this work. Similarly, our own lives should reflect this organization and professionalism when doing God's work. Even though God would later say that He loathed this generation, they did have their moments and this was one of them.

**And Bezalel, the son of Uri, son of Hur of the tribe of Judah, constructed all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded Moses. [Exodus 38:22]**

The builder of a house may not even lift a hammer; he often subcontracts out 50–100% of the work to be done. He oversees what is done and occasionally lends a hand himself. We know that he built the ark of the covenant himself (or much of it) and the rest is not necessarily his own handiwork.

**And with him, Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, a craftsman and an intelligent designer and embroiderer of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen. [Exodus 38:23]**

To understand Oholiab's responsibilities, let's examine the Hebrew. Chârâsh (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced *khaw-RAWSH*], which I have translated *craftsman*, following Owen's lead, is a man who can work with metal (1Samuel 13:19 Jeremiah 10:9), wood (2Samuel 5:11 Jeremiah 10:3), stone (2Samuel 5:11) and an engraver of stone (Exodus 28:11). It comes from the verb chârash (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced *khaw-RASH*] which means *cut, engrave, plough*.

Oholiab was also the Qal active participle of châsha<sup>b</sup>v (בָּשַׁח) [pronounced *khaw-SHA<sup>B</sup>V*]. This is a verb used, in the participle, as a substantive to describe one of his abilities. Today, if someone is called a *writer of books*; the verb *writer* describes his vocation, avocation or interest. The verb itself means *think, account*. It is translated a myriad of ways in the KJV; among them: *thought* (Genesis 50:20), *meant* (Genesis 50:20), *devise* (1Samuel 18:25), *think* (Neh., 6:6), *cunning* (Exodus 35:35), *purposed* (Jeremiah 49:20), *conceived* (Jeremiah 49:30), *reckon* (Lev. 25:50), *count* (Lev. 25:52), *impute* (Lev. 17:4), *accounted* (1Kings 10:21). It occurs over 150 times in the Old Testament and is rendered in over ten different ways. In any case, this is a verb of *thinking and planning*. After spending sometime in my thesaurus, I am going to go with *an intelligent designer*.

His last designation is the Qal active participle of râqam (רָקַם) [pronounced *raw-KAM*], and it simply means *to variegate, embroider, a weaver in colors*. The participle gives his skill by describing what he does.

It is possible, although it is not stated directly, the Oholiab did much of the embroidery of the hangings; however, he could have just as easily overseen the job, having had the experience and ability to oversee this work. This sentence alone tells us that Bezalel did not construct everything that had to be constructed for the tabernacle.

**All the gold that was used for the work in all the construction of the sanctuary and the gold from the offering was twenty-nine talents and 730 shekels by the shekel [standard] of the sanctuary.** [Exodus 38:24]

This is approximately 2175 pounds of gold for that which is in talents. This is a little over a ton of gold. The shekel here is also, in some translations, called the *sacred shekel*. It is simply a standardized measure instituted by the sanctuary (or the tabernacle hierarchy; i.e., Ithamar, son of Aaron) for purposes of standardization (I think!).

Recall that the Egyptians gave them a great many things and a great deal of wealth; this was their redemption money, which was associated with their manumission (being freed from slavery). This means that this redemption money was used to construct much of the tabernacle. Redemption is closely tied to the meaning of the tabernacle, which was Jesus Christ and His work for us upon the cross; i.e., the redemption of our souls.

**And the silver of those of the congregation who were inventoried was one hundred talents and 1775 shekels, according to the shekel [standard] of the sanctuary.** [Exodus 38:25]

This is over 3¾ tons of silver. When it says *of those who were inventoried*, it makes me think that there was a lot of giving at first and then Moses, after a few hours or a few days, decided that he had better inventory this material that was being given them. Again, a talent is approximately 75 pounds and there are 3000 shekels in a talent.

**A beka a head, half a shekel by the shekel of the sanctuary for everyone who passed over to be numbered in the census from twenty years and upward for 603,550.** [Exodus 38:26]

A half a shekel is approximately 1/5th of an ounce (5.5 grams). Mathematically, if you take 1/5th of an ounce and multiply it by 600,000 people, you will end up with 3¾ tons. Note that it takes very little per person to bring in an incredible amount of precious metal. This is a literal census of men only at age twenty and above. Women and children below the age of twenty give us another 1,400,000 people, roughly.

This census numbering is the cognate of the word we translated *inventoried*. This is the census of the men whose bodies would rot out in the desert due to their faithlessness. They operated great in spurts.

**And a hundred talents of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary and the bases of the veil; a hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent for a base.** [Exodus 38:27]

One talent weighs about 75 pounds.

**And of the 1775 [shekels?] he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their capitals and made rings for them.** [Exodus 38:28]

This is about 45 pounds of silver.

**And seventy talents of bronze that was contributed 2400 shekels.** [Exodus 38:29]

I am not certain on the weight of a shekel, but the copper (or bronze) is 5250 pounds (or, 2½ tons) when looking at the talents alone.

**With it he made the bases for the door of the tent of meeting and the altar of bronze and the gating of bronze; for it and all the utensils of the altar.** [Exodus 38:30]

The *tent of meeting* transferred over to the tabernacle section within the courtyard.

**And the bases of the court round about and the bases of the gate of the court and the pegs of the tabernacle and all the pegs of the court round about..** [Exodus 38:31]



The Cambridge Bible makes these observations: *The descriptions, when examined carefully, are found to be marked by omissions and obscurities, indicating that they are not the work of an eye-witness, or the working directions upon which a fabric, such as is described, could be actually constructed. Thus nothing is said of the shape of the cherubim, the nature and position of the ledge on the bronze altar, the position of the 'border' round the Table of Presence—bread, the thickness of the solid gold 'mercy-seat,' and, especially, of the thickness of the 'boards' or 'frames,' or of the manner in which the hollow wooden case, plated with bronze, which formed the altar of burnt-offering, was to be used. It is remarkable also that for the transport of the Tabernacle and the court, consisting of 48 'boards' or 'frames,' each 15ft. high, 2¾ ft. broad (their thickness is not stated), with 13 'bars' (ch. Exodus 26:26–28), and 100 bases of solid silver—according to Exodus 38:27 weighing 96 lbs. each, and altogether therefore more than 4 tons,—the 9 pillars of acacia wood, each 15 ft. high, for the veil and screen, the 300 pillars for the court, each 7½ ft. high (their other dimensions are not given), with their 300 bronze bases, and the cords and bronze pegs for keeping both the Tent and court in position (Exodus 38:31), the Merarites have only four wagons assigned to them (Num. 7:8; cf. Num. 3:36 f.),—evidently an altogether insufficient number.*

Some of the objections to the narrative can be dealt with. For instance, the 4 wagons—there were thousands of Levites, and they were in charge of the Tabernacle and other spiritual items. Could be that the wagons carried the large pieces of furniture, and the individual boards got carried by individuals. Could be that these were not the only wagons.

The Cambridge Bible further observes: *It is perfectly true that the Egyptians, like the Babylonians, had long before the time of the Exodus acquired high proficiency in many of the useful and fine arts: but it can hardly be supposed that this proficiency was shared by a subject nation such as the Hebrews, who did not live in great cities, who had no palaces or temples to keep up, and no domestic state or luxury to cultivate, but whose principal occupations were the pasturing of cattle, and the forced labour of the corv'e. Can it be deemed likely that a people such as this possessed the skill in joinery, weaving, embroidery, the casting and hammering of metals, and the forming them into often difficult and complicated forms, necessary to carry out the specifications contained in Exodus 25-31? Years afterwards, when the Hebrews had been long settled in Palestine, and had no doubt added something to their knowledge of art from contact with the Canaanites, Solomon hired Phoenician workmen to make all the metal furniture and vessels of his temple (1Kings 7:13 f., 40ff.). 'Further, it is difficult to suppose that a desert tribe, even after spoiling the Egyptians, possessed the requisite materials. Apart from the precious stones and the fine linen thread, the amount of metals alone, as given in Exodus 38:24-29, works out' (on the most probable computation of the shekel, at 224 grs.) as follows: gold, 40,940 oz. [= c. 1¼ ton], silver, 140,828 oz. [= c. 4¼ tons]; bronze, 108,749 oz. av. [= c. 3 tons]. 'Moreover, it would be very difficult to procure in the desert the olive oil for the lamps, and the dyes—violet and purple from Tyrian shell-fish, and crimson from an insect found on a particular kind of oak tree [see on Exo\_25:4]' (McNeile, p. 81). It is also (cf. on Exodus 12:37; and see more fully on Numbers 1) quite certain that the numbers of the Israelites at the Exodus could have been in reality nothing even approaching 2,000,000; Petrie, a most circumspect historical critic, who is himself well acquainted with the products and capacities of the Sinaitic Peninsula, places the utmost number that the country could support at 5000: but even though we doubled this figure, it would not be credible that 10,000 nomad serfs could have possessed precious metals in these quantities, or even metals in general and the other materials mentioned, in quantities sufficient to construct the Tabernacle according to the specifications of Exodus 25-31.<sup>122</sup>*

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<sup>122</sup> *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; 1882-1921; by Cambridge University Press; General Editor J. J. S. Perowne, from e-sword, Exodus Book Commentary (Appendix IV; The Historical character of the Tent of Meeting).*

# EXODUS 39

## Exodus 39:1–43

**Introduction:** Exodus 39 covers the making of the priestly garments and is a review and a confirmation of the work order issued earlier in Exodus 28. There are two things which set this chapter apart from all of the previous chapters: (1) Often, in this chapter, those who are involved with making the priests clothing are described in the plural rather than in the singular. We will see a lot of *they* constructed this or that. (2) Secondly, we find the phrase, *as Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded Moses* occurring over a half dozen times. I must admit that I do not know why it occurs so often here and not as often as the previous chapters. However, this conveniently marks the point at which a new paragraph begins. It is possible that every time we see this phrase, that a different team of weavers and tailors are involved.

### Outline of Chapter 39:

- Vv. 1–5     **The construction of the ephod**
- Vv. 6–21   **The construction of the breast piece and the mounting of the stones**
- Vv. 22–26   **The weaving of the robe**
- Vv. 27–29   **The tailoring of the other clothing for the priests**
- Vv. 30–31   **The plate of the holy crown**
- Vv. 32–43   **The finished work is inventoried**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

#### The Construction of the Ephod

*Ex. 28:6–14*

**And of the blue and purple and scarlet material, they made finely woven garments for ministering in the holy place. They made the holy garments for Aaron as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.**

[Exodus 39:1]

The priests, who represent man before God, will wear colors of royalty and dignity. This is not because of their association with man but because they appear before God.

**And he made the ephod [from] gold, blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen.**

[Exodus 39:2]

These are the royal colors.

**And he hammered out the gold leaf and cut [it] into threads to work into the blue and purple and the scarlet material and into the fine twined linen, work of intelligent design.** [Exodus 39:3]

The word found here is *châshab* again, which means *intelligently designed* rather than *skilled design*, *skillful workman*, or *skillful weaver*. Note that they had great abilities when it came to working with gold in the ancient world. They were able to, with their limited technology, to make gold thin enough to be used as a thread. This is definitely possible, as gold is one of the most malleable of the metals; however it is especially impressive that they were able to do that in that era.

**They made joined shoulder pieces for it, joining at its two edges.** [Exodus 39:4]

*Joined* could be replaced by the word *attached* and still convey the correct meaning here. The shoulder pieces were made separately and then joined together.

**And the intelligently designed band upon it [was] of the same material and workmanship; [it was] gold, blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses. [Exodus 39:5]**

God had laid out the specifics as to how these things should be designed and made, and Moses, overseeing the work, saw to it that it was done correctly.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Construction of the Breast Piece and the Mounting of the Stones

Ex. 28:15–30

**And they prepared the onyx stones enclosed in settings of gold, engraved like the engravings of a signet according to the names of the sons of Israel. [Exodus 39:6]**

There were actually two different stone settings—on the shoulder pieces and on the breast piece. On the shoulder pieces we have the onyx stones which have been engraved with the names of the sons of Israel.

**And he set them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod—stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had command Moses. [Exodus 39:7]**

We have in here the construction of the breast piece in much less detail than what is found in Exodus 28:15–30. You might say that the theme of this chapter is *as Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded Moses*, as this particular phrase occurs nine or ten times in this chapter.

**And he made the breast piece [as] an intelligently designed work, like the work of the ephod—gold, blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen. [Exodus 39:8]**

I am trying to be consistent with *châshab* and translate it in a similar fashion each time we come across it.

**It was squared; they constructed the breast piece folded double, a span its length and a span its breadth when folded double. [Exodus 39:9]**

This is 9" x 9". *Squared* and *folded double* are both Qal passive participles, and therefore translated as such. With the Qal perfect of *hâyâh*, *squared* acts almost like our predicate nominative. It is interesting that this is one of the very few verses where the unspecified subject is *they* rather than *he*. V. 10 is the same. We are dealing here with one of the smaller objects which is commanded by God to be constructed, yet, there are so many people involved that they are called *they*.

**And they inset [lit., filled] four rows of stones, a row of ruby, topaz and emerald—the first row. [Exodus 39:10]**

Although the words *inset*, *mounted*, and *set* sound best to begin this verse, this is simply the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine plural, Piel imperfect of *mâlê'* (מָלַךְ) [pronounced *maw-LAY*] and it is the simple word for *fill*; as in the earth being *filled* with violence (Genesis 6:13) or *filled* with glory, mercy, goodness, knowledge (Psalm 33:5 119:64 Isaiah 11:9) or to *fill* the earth with a population of something (Genesis 1:22, 28 2:1); *to fill* with anything (2Kings 4:6 2Chronicles 7:1 Isaiah 21:3), days or years have been *fulfilled*, *accomplished*, *filled* [with living] (Genesis 25:24 Leviticus 25:30), or, *fulfilled*, in terms of *completing*, *finishing* with regards to time (Lev. 8:33 12:4 Esther 1:5 Jeremiah 25:12); it is used in *to fill the hand*, which means to give someone a full-time vocation in service to God (Exodus 32:29); *to fill* with the Spirit (Exodus 28:3 31:3); Throughout the Bible, it has been variously translated as *set*, *filled*, *fulfilled*, *replenish*, *fully*, *accomplished*, *mounted*, *consecrated*; to be consistent, I would stay with *fill* or *fulfill*. I do not believe that it is used for a *fulfillment* of prophecy, however. Strong's #4390 BDB #569.

**And the second row: a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond.** [Exodus 39:11]

This parallels Exodus 28:18.

**And the third row: a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst.** [Exodus 39:12]

We've covered these stones in Exodus 28:19.

**And the fourth row: a beryl, an onyx and a jasper, [all] enclosed in settings of gold in their fillings.**  
[Exodus 39:13]

*Enclosed* is a good rendering of Hophal participle of *çâbab* (בָּבַס) [pronounced *saw<sup>b</sup>-VAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *turn about, go around, surround*. The Hophal is a rarely used stem which is basically a passive stem. The word for settings is found only in conjunction with *settings* in Exodus 28 and 39, with the exception of the figurative language of Psalm 45:13. In most translations, the last word is made out to be the same word as *settings* or a cognate of *çâvav*. It is a noun found only here and in Exodus 28:17, 20. It is closer in form to the word we have for fullness (related to *fill* above). In fact, it only differs from the word for *fullness* by a couple of vowel points and a dagesh. Using the word *fillings* conveys that without losing the meaning of the word.

**And the stones with the names of the sons of Israel; they [were] twelve according to their names—an engraving of a signet each [stone] with its name for the twelve tribes.** [Exodus 39:14]

The breast piece had to be woven; each stone had to be cut and polished; a setting had to be made for it and that setting professionally attached to the breast piece. Each stone was engraved with the name of a specific tribe (although I do not believe that we are privy to know which tribe corresponded to which stone). In other words, there were several very specific skills involved in the construction of this small, 9" x 9" portion of the clothing of the high priest.

**And they constructed on the breast piece chains of cords of twisted gold.** [Exodus 39:15]

This breast piece was a very ornate, elaborate accessory to the ephod.

**And they made two settings of gold and two rings of gold and placed the two rings on the two edges of the breast piece.** [Exodus 39:16]

These rings are designed so that this could be attached to clothing of the high priest.

**And they placed the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breast piece.** [Exodus 39:17]

Moses is overseeing all of this. As these items are being made, he has set up a system of authority; however, as the man in charge, he spends time either observing the accomplishing of the work which God had placed in his hands, or receiving reports from those he delegated authority to. In any case, he records the work as it is accomplished.

**And two ends of the two cords they had attached to the two settings; in this way they attached these to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod in its front.** [Exodus 39:18]

Owen's translation (which is basically the RSV) is a little weak here; there are a lot of suffixes which are ignored. It is not the breastpiece is spoken of in the plural here, but the two ends of the two cords.

**Then they made two rings of gold and placed at the two ends of the breastpiece on its inner edge which [is] on the side of the ephod.** [Exodus 39:19]

This is still the nitty gritty of how everything was attached.

**And they made two rings of gold and attached them on the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod beneath in front at its joining above the woven band of the ephod. [Exodus 39:20]**

This parallels Exodus 28:27.

**And they bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a cord of blue so that it should lie upon the woven band of the ephod; that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses. [Exodus 39:21]**

As I work through the Old Testament exegesis, I am particularly struck by the personal nature of God, which was lost when the Hebrews refused to say His name and has been replaced by *Lord* rather than His name, Y<sup>e</sup>howah. As has been discussed, Y<sup>e</sup>howah is a reasonable guess as to the pronunciation. It is not Jehovah, although, having been raised with that name, it seems better to me. However, there is no *J* in the Hebrew. Therefore, what has been lost is the vowels and the inflection.

In any case, God was a very personal being to the Hebrews, the Creator of the Universe involved in their daily affairs down to the last detail of constructing this breast piece and attaching it to the ephod.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Weaving of the Robe

Ex. 28:31–35

**He also made the robe of the ephod, woven all of blue. [Exodus 39:22]**

This could be the word *violet*; it is a color of royalty.

**And the opening [lit. mouth] of the robe in it like the opening in a garment<sup>123</sup> with a binding for its opening round about that it might not be torn. [Exodus 39:23]**

I am not certain whether we are speaking of this being torn after being used or torn in order to accommodate a person's head. In either case, it was not to be torn.

**And they made on the skirts of the robe pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen.<sup>124</sup> [Exodus 39:24]**

The pomegranate is mentioned thirty times in Scripture and it is one of the fauna in the Old Testament over which there is no disagreement. I am not certain as to what they refer to in Scripture. Pomegranates are associated with the prosperity of the land of Israel in Deuteronomy 8:8. When the pomegranate tree does not bear fruit, this is associated with divine discipline (Joel 1:12). Pomegranates seem to be associated with blessing and that which goes over and above what God provides in logistical (or, basic provisional) grace. We find it several times in, of all places, the Song of Solomon, a book about right man/right woman and wrong man/wrong woman (SOS 4:3, 13 6:7 7:12 8:2). The pomegranate tree itself is beautiful in the spring with its red, yellow or white blossoms; and the fruit itself is circular, ready to burst, with a crown at one end. Inside is a marvelous red, pulpy fruit. The juice, although expensive, is wonderful. When we are associated with God, believers and growing, then we

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<sup>123</sup> The meaning of this word in the Hebrew is uncertain; it is translated variously as *collar*, *coat of mail*, *garment*, *habergeon*; this word is only found here and in Exodus 28:32.

<sup>124</sup> This translation is according to the western Samaritan, the Septuagint and the Syriac; the Massoretic text reads simply *twined* and no *fine* or *linen*



receive more than just basic day-to-day necessities. This is what a pomegranate represents; that which is a nicety in life, more than what is needed. They were used here to decorate the robe of the high priest; Solomon used them on the tops of the pillars of his temple; and they were later put on the silver shekel of Jerusalem and circulated between 143 and 135 B.C.

**They also made bells of pure gold and placed the bells between the pomegranates upon the skirts of the robe round about between the pomegranates.** [Exodus 39:25]

Whereas the pomegranates were woven semblances of pomegranates, the bells appear to be actual bells. It is said that the high priest wore these so that he could be heard while in the holy of holies; just in case he had to be removed because of his death. Bells were also used for personal adornments in Egypt, from at least 800 B.C., and possibly earlier. They were also attached to children so that their whereabouts might be known.

**A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate upon the skirts of the robe round about; [the robe] for ministering as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 39:26]

Instead of saying that the bells and pomegranates alternated around the entirety of the robe, the phrase *a bell and a pomegranate* was repeated.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Tailoring of the Other Clothing for the Priests

Ex. 28:39–43

**They also made the coats; fine linen woven for Aaron and his sons.** [Exodus 39:27]

The priests wore the less ornate, but clean white outer garments.

**And the turban [of] fine linen and the caps [possibly, turban ornament] [of] fine linen and the linen undergarments of fine twined linen.** [Exodus 39:28]

All of these things speak of the purity and the perfection of the humanity of Jesus Christ. Also, those who appeared before Him must be cleansed.

**And the sash [of] fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet material the work of an embroiderer, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 39:29]

These are the royal colors around the waist of the priests.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Plate of the Holy Crown

Ex. 28:36–38

**And they made the plate of the crown holy, of pure gold and engrave it with [lit., wrote upon it] an inscription like an engraving of a signet: *Holy [Separated] to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.*** [Exodus 39:30]

The *crown holy* is also called the *sacred diadem* in the NIV; and this designation is found here but not in the parallel passage mentioned above. A priest was someone who was separated from the rest of the populace and to God. These men ministered before God daily, offering sacrifices on behalf of others. No man could offer a sacrifice in his own behalf. In this way, they were peculiar to God, separated unto God.

**And they tied to it a cord of blue to fasten it on the turban above, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 39:31]

This merely described how the plate was held onto the turban.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Finished Work Is Inventoried

**Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was completed. Thus the people of Israel constructed [these things]; according to all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses, so they had constructed [all of these things:]** [Exodus 39:32]

This will be a summary of the work which was completed. All of these things to be done were put under the direction of Bezalel and certain crafts were under the guidance of Oholiab. Once these things had been constructed, all the various items were brought to Moses for their final assemblage.

**And they brought the tabernacle to Moses—the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its boards, its bars and its pillars and its bases;** [Exodus 39:33]

This is all of the framing for the tabernacle and some of the utensils designed for it. Throughout most of the rest of this chapter, there are disagreements and alternate readings when it comes to how many *and*'s there are. I will not point these alternate renderings out; however, they can be found in Rotherham's *Emphasized Bible*.

**And [they brought] the covering of rams' skins, tanned, and the covering of goatskins, and the veil of the cloth partition;** [Exodus 39:34]

This is the covering for the tabernacle and the veil to the holy of holies (I think?)

**[They brought] the ark of the testimony with its poles and the mercy seat [lit., covering];** [Exodus 39:35]

The way these are inventoried might indicate the different teams of men who worked on each group of tabernacle items. This was specifically constructed by Bezalel.

**[They brought] the table, with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence;** [Exodus 39:36]

This is the table of Showbread, that which speaks of God's intimate relationship with and provision for the Jewish people.

**[They brought] the lampstand, pure [gold of one piece], and its lamps, with the lamps set in array, and all its utensils and the oil for the light;** [Exodus 39:37]

When the lampstand is called pure, that refers to the fact that it was cast of one piece of gold, 75 pounds worth.

**And the altar, gold, and the oil of anointing, and the fragrant incense and the cloth partition for the door of the tent;** [Exodus 39:38]

This is the altar of incense.

**The bronze altar and its grating of bronze, its poles and all its utensils, the laver and its base [or, stand];** [Exodus 39:39]

This is the outside altar upon which all of the sacrifices were offered.

**The hangings of the court, its pillars and its bases, and the cloth partition for the gate of the court, its cords and its pegs and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle for the tent of meeting.** [Exodus 39:40]

The word here translated *utensils* could possibly be translated *furniture*. I would need to spend some more time on this. This is all of things necessary for the court of the tabernacle, with the exception of the boards which were brought in v. 33.

**[And they brought] the clothing of [tabernacle] service [or, garments of office] for ministering in the holy place—the holy garments for Aaron, the priest, and the garments of his sons to serve as priests.** [Exodus 39:41]

We have a rare word here translated variously as *service*, *woven*, *plaited*, *braided work*, *colored*, *finely worked*, *of variegated stuff*. There are almost as many renderings for the word s<sup>ê</sup>râd (סֵרָד) [pronounced s'RAWD] as their are translations. This is because this word's origins are unknown, some even (mistakenly) thinking that it might be a loan word from the Aramaic. It is only found in four passages, always used in the same way: Exodus 31:10, 35:19, 39:1, 41. Since it is always used in conjunction with the word for *clothing*, *garments*, *rainment* and only for the clothing in general used at the tabernacle, I have rendered the two words: *clothing of [tabernacle] service*. Kalisch renders these words as *garments of office*.

**According to all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded, so the people of Israel had performed [lit., constructed] all of the labor.** [Exodus 39:42]

Unfortunately, the literal translation here suffers in the English. The main problem is 'âsâh, which generally means *make something out of something*; the word *construct* is a reasonable translation most of the time.

**And Moses oversaw [and reviewed] [lit., saw] all the work and, observe, they had constructed it as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded; so they had accomplished [the work] [lit., constructed], and Moses blessed them.** [Exodus 39:43]

It is difficult to be too literal here without losing the smoothness of the language. However, the word *constructed* occurs twice, both times in the Qal perfect. These two times, perhaps, sets up some sort of finality.

Because of the generosity of the Israelites in terms of the time and offerings given, Moses blesses them. This is perhaps their finest hour because from hereon in it will be all down hill.

# EXODUS 40

## Exodus 40:1–38

### Outline of Chapter 40:

- vv. 1–15 **God's instructions to Moses concerning the erecting of the temple**
- vv. 16–33 **Moses assembles and raises the temple according to God's instructions**
- vv. 34–38 **God's glory fills the temple**

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

- v. 2 **The Physical Description of the Tabernacle**
- v. 3 **The Ark of the Covenant**
- v. 4 **The Table of Show-Bread**
- v. 5 **The Golden Altar of Incense**
- v. 6 **The Brazen Altar**
- v. 7 **The Brazen Laver**
- v. 8 **The Outer Court**
- v. 13 **A Full Description of the Garments of the Priesthood**

**Introduction:** Exodus 40 is the final chapter of Exodus. In it, God instructs Moses as to the assemblage of the tabernacle (recall that the Hebrews would be traveling through the desert during this time and it would be taken down and set up several times throughout the next thirty-nine years). The remainder of the chapter will be the first time that the Hebrews, under the direction of Moses, erect the tabernacle. Once it is completed, God's glory fills it.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

## God's Instructions to Moses Concerning the Erecting of the Temple

**And Y<sup>e</sup>howah spoke to Moses, saying,** [Exodus 40:1]

I am certain that this phrase occurs more often in the writings of Moses than any other person. No doubt someone has counted these occurrences up.

**"On the day of the first month on the first of the month, you will erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.** [Exodus 40:2]

This tells us when they will first assemble the parts of the tabernacle and implies that this is when they would in the future re-erect the tabernacle. As we go through this chapter, we will stop and take a look at the tabernacle and each piece of furniture. The greater portion of the descriptions comes from Freeman's *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; pp. 76–86

### The Physical Description of the Tabernacle

1. The tabernacle (or the tent of meeting) was approximately 30 cubits by 10 cubits by 10 cubits (45' x 15' x 15'), since each board was a cubit and a half wide, and there were 20 boards on the north and south sides and 6 boards (plus two corner boards which were not as wide) on the east and west sides (Exodus 36:20–30)
2. Josephus tells us that the boards were four fingers thick, except for the corners which were a cubit thick, according to his *Antiquities of the Hebrews*, Book III, chap. 6, §3.
3. At the base of each board were two tenons, which is a projection from the end of the board and designed to attach or fit or connect the board to something else (Exodus 36:22).

### The Physical Description of the Tabernacle

4. These tenons fitted into silver mortises. These mortises were bases made of pure silver with a slot designed for the tenon to fit into (Exodus 36:24).
5. Brass pins went through the mortises into the ground (Exodus 38:20) and Josephus tells us that these brass pins were a cubit (18") in length.
6. Further up, the boards were held together with wooden bars that had been covered with gold (Exodus 36:19).
7. Several coverings were made to be placed over the tabernacle:
  - a. The under layer was made of fine linen, using blue, purple and scarlet threads, on which were woven or embroidered figures of cherubim, indicating that we are constantly watched by angels (Exodus 36:8–13). Historians and theologians are not certain whether this layer was only seen on the ceiling or whether much of it was suspended inside the tabernacle and over the boards. I personally like to think that it could not be seen from inside the tabernacle; although, those in the tabernacle were fully cognizant that there were angels all around them, even though they could not see them.
  - b. The next layer was one of goats' hair, woven into cloth, a much coarser fabric (Exodus 35:26 36:14).
  - c. The third layer was made from rams' skins dyed red, a heavier, more protective covering.
  - d. The final layer was the hide of an unknown animal, called a badger, porpoise, and a myriad of other things, which provided the final protection from the harsher outdoor elements (Exodus 36:19).
8. It is unknown whether the roof of the tabernacle was flat or pitched. There are excellent theologians who take opposite sides of this issue. Since the Bible says nothing about poles in the middle of the tabernacle to support the roof, it is my opinion that the roof was flat (Oriental houses were generally flat and oriental tents were generally peaked). Since this does not have to conform in any way to Oriental customs, as God chose how the tent of meeting was to be, and since 15' seems to be reasonably high without having an additional pitched roof, this would be another reason why the ceiling was just 15' all around. Simply the fact that there are not two sets of heights given suggests that this roof was flat.
9. The front of the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle, was a veil of fine twined linen, of blue, purple and scarlet, hung upon five pillars (Exodus 36:37–38). This tent of meeting was divided into two sections:
  - a. The Holy Place had the golden candlestick and the table of show-bread in it (Exodus 26:35 28:29 40:22–24) and the golden lampstand. Although the dimensions are not given in the Bible, it would be a reasonable assumption that the Holy Place, with two pieces of furniture, would take up two-thirds of the tent of meeting; also, these would be the same dimensions of the temple. Furthermore, this would allow for the doorway to be in the center of the tabernacle and lead into the Holy Place.
  - b. The Holy of Holies was likely a perfect cube (cp 1Kings 6:19–20), housing the ark of the covenant covered by the mercy seat with the two cherubim (Exodus 26:34 40:21). This was veiled off from the rest of the tabernacle, to be entered into only once a year by the High Priest. The veil was fine twined linen, of blue, purple and scarlet, and embroidered with cherubim; and hung on four pillars (Exodus 36:35–36).
10. We know nothing about the floor of the tabernacle. I believe that the lack of the mention of the floor means that the floor is the ground

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"And you will place there [the] ark of the testimony and you will overshadow the ark with a veil.  
[Exodus 40:3]**

Çâkak<sup>e</sup>

In this verse we have a Hebrew word which, if we had the right word in the English, we could use this word consistently. The word is çâkak<sup>e</sup>/sâkak<sup>e</sup> (צָכַק/צָכַק) [pronounced *saw-KAHK<sup>e</sup>*], and it has the following possible renderings: *shroud, cover, overshadow, screen, shelter, spread over, overspread, enshroud*. I don't want to translate this covering because it implies that something is right on top of it, covering it up completely; and *covering* is the translation of another Hebrew word. Ideally, a literal translation should be consistent and it should differentiate between different words. The veil will enshroud the ark completely; however, it will not be close to



the ark (as in laying right on top of it) and *çâkak* is used for the wings of the cherubs which will *screen*, or *overshadow* the mercy seat (lit., this word is *covering*). *Çâkak* is found used in this way in Exodus 25:20 37:9 1Kings 8:7 Job 40:22. *Çâkak* can be used in a good, possibly even protective way, as in Exodus 25:20 Ezekiel 28:14, in a neutral sense (Exodus 40:3 Lam. 3:44) and it may be used in a negative sense (Job 3:23 Isaiah 9:11 19:2). When you look up these passages, you may even have a difficult determining from the English where this verb actually is in the verse, because *çâkak* is rendered six different ways in the KJV and it only occurs 22 times. And, unfortunately, it is most often rendered *covering*, just as *kâphar* (כָּפַר) [pronounced *kaw-PHAR*] should be translated *covering* to be literal (it is found in Genesis 6:14), but it is usually translated *atone* (and *cleanse*, *pardon*, *purge*). *Çâkak* is also found used twice *to cover one's feet* (Judges 3:24 1Samuel 24:3). Therefore, what we need is a word which can have a good, neutral and negative connotation; one which does not mean to cover in the sense of being close to and completely enshrouding; therefore, the best English equivalent that I can come up with is *overshadow*.

God begins with the ark of the testimony, which carries within it the list of the offenses against us.

### The Ark of the Covenant

1. This is called the ark of the covenant (Deuteronomy 31:26), the ark of testimony (Exodus 40:3) and the ark of God (1Samuel 3:3). So there is no confusion with the vocabulary, an ark is simply a container, a chest or a box.
2. It was 2½ cubits by 1½ cubits by 1½ cubits (45" x 27" x 27"), made from acacia wood overlaid with gold. Around the top was an ornamental molding, or a cornice, made of pure gold. On opposite sides near or at the bottom corners were two gold rings through which the poles were placed in order to carry this ark (Exodus 25:10–15). It is a matter of disputation whether we have the word *feet* or *corners* in Exodus 25:12.
3. This was kept in the Holy of Holies (Exodus 40:3).
4. In the ark was placed the two tables of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 25:16). Also in the ark were placed Aaron's rod which budded and a golden pot of manna (Hebrews 9:4). 1Kings 8:9 does not contradict this; it merely means that at the time of Solomon, only the two tables of the Law were to be found. This does make me wonder if the writer of Hebrews, besides being guided by the Holy Spirit, received his information from another source? It is possible that the book of the entire law, that is, the Pentateuch, was placed in the ark, which would make perfect sense, and would have been my personal preference. However, it is more likely that their Bible was placed next to the ark (Deuteronomy 31:25–27); the Hebrew suggests that it was **by** the side of the ark. This will be discussed in more detail when we examine that portion of Scripture.
5. On top of this was placed a covering, called the *mercy seat*, which was fashioned from pure gold (Exodus 25:17, 21). On this mercy seat, probably attached were two cherubim with wings, facing toward each other and looking down at the cover of the ark (Exodus 25:18–20). Freeman points out that for all the minute detail that we find with respect to the construction of the articles of furniture and the tabernacle itself, we do not know what the cherubim looked like—not these or the ones embroidered on the fabric for the walls and doors. Freeman speculates that this was intentional on the part of God and/or the people at that time knew what to sculpt when it came to cherubim. They likely had two wings each, as this is how Solomon designed them (although he seemed to take a certain amount of artistic license when building the temple and not everything is designed exactly like the tabernacle—see 2Chronicles 3:10–13). According to Jewish tradition, their faces were human; and it is both Freeman's and my opinion that, other than the wings, the cherubim looked like men. I hold that opinion because when angels came to walk among us, including the Theophanies, they were indistinguishable from other men (recall Genesis 19:1–5).

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"And you will bring in the table and arrange its arrangements; and you will bring in the lampstand and set up its lamps. [Exodus 40:4]**

The table speaks of God's provision for the children of Israel (by extension, His provision for us) and the light of the world, the lampstand. When we come into this world, God provides us with basic provisions and the gospel,

if we have an interest in knowing Him at God-consciousness. As believers, our daily provision is even better taken care of. We have seen marvelous things done on the part of the Jew in this book of Exodus.

### The Table of Show-Bread

1. The table of show-bread was on the north side of the holy place, which I believe would be the centered along the north side wall of the tent of meeting. Exodus 26:35
2. It was constructed, like most of the furniture, of gold overlain on acacia wood. Exodus 25:23–28
3. Its dimensions were 2 cubits by 1 cubit by 1½ cubits (high) (36" x 18" x 27"), which strikes me as being very short. Exodus 25:23
4. Around it was an ornamental band of gold, similar to the ark of the covenant. Exodus 25:25
5. It also had rings for the poles to carry it. Exodus 26–27
6. On this table were placed the twelve loaves of bread in two rows or piles; and frankincense was placed at each row. Leviticus 24:5–9
7. Also on top of the table were golden vessels of various kinds, probably to hold the frankincense and wine<sup>1</sup>. Exodus 25:29
8. Freeman points out that we have a picture of the table of show-bread from Herod's Temple, fashioned after Solomon's temple, found in the celebrated triumphal arch which was erected in Rome to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.<sup>2</sup> The items taken from the temple in this massacre are represented on this arch. It is likely that they are very similar to those articles of furniture found in Solomon's temple, which would be similar to the articles of furniture built for the tabernacle

<sup>1</sup> Freeman suggests bread as well.

<sup>2</sup> See Freeman's *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, p. 80 for a picture (also, this is almost a direct quote from same).

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

As for the lamps (or lights), Rev. 21:23–25 reads: **And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp [is] the Lamb. And the nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed.** We probably know less about the physical specifics about the lampstand than almost anything else. We do not know its size, whether all six branches came up to the same level as the middle candlestick, whether they came up to the same level themselves, whether the six branches made an arch or a right turn, etc. The lampstand itself was quite substantial, being made from a full talent of gold. We also know that the number of perfection in the Bible is seven and that six is the number of man.

**"And you will place the altar of gold for incense before the ark of the testimony and set up the cloth partition for the door of the tabernacle. [Exodus 40:5]**

I believe the way this goes is that in front of the ark, which is overshadowed or veiled, will be the altar of incense, which will be out in the open. This is the God-ward side of things. The sacrifice of our Lord will be, in one sense, a sweet smell to God the Father, as we are atoned for by His death.

### The Golden Altar of Incense

1. The golden altar of incense, like much of the furniture, was pure gold over acacia wood. Exodus 37:25–26
2. Its dimensions were one cubit by one cubit by two cubits high (18" x 18" x 36"). Exodus 37:25
3. At the top were four projections, or horns as they are often called. Exodus 37:26
4. Around the top was a cornice of gold, and it had rings and poles for transport. Exodus 37:26–27
5. The altar of incense was just inside the veil of the Holy Place. Exodus 40:26

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"And you will place the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. [Exodus 40:6]**

This tent of meeting is not where everyone would come in to worship and possibly meet God. This was where the High Priest, priests and Levites would go to perform specific duties (which duties were not seen by the general public just as God's actions are not seen by the general public).

At this point, I am unsure if Moses would go (or could go) into the Tent to meet with Y<sup>e</sup>howah (it appears that Moses, for that first year, had a tent where he would go to speak with God).

However, regarding the Tabernacle, the people will remain outside. It is because of this burnt offering, the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross, that we will be cleansed to go into the tent of meeting to fellowship with God. Since our Lord had not come in the flesh as of yet, only certain ones were allowed beyond that brazen altar and laver to go into the Tent of Meeting.

Take note that outside the tent of meeting, the only furniture visible to man was the brazen altar, where they went for salvation; and the laver, where they went for restoration of fellowship. The other items of furniture which represented other doctrines in Scripture other than salvation and rebound, were hidden from view. It was God's Word which made these other pieces of furniture real to those who never saw them. These are like the doctrines which we cannot see apart from God's Word, which reveals them to us. Furthermore, such things are only revealed to believers who have first temporally washed themselves.

### The Brazen Altar

1. Although it is possible that throughout the Old Testament, the term *bronze* (or *brazen*) may actually mean copper, I personally love the term *Brazen Altar*. This altar was placed outside the tent of meeting in the court, near the entrance to the Holy Place (Exodus 40:29).
2. It is made of acacia wood but it is covered with brass (or copper, possibly) rather than gold (Exodus 27:1–2). This is because it was the humanity of Jesus Christ which was judged and penalized for our sins; not His deity. Furthermore, this would have been a matter of practicality as well as symbolic, as copper would have a higher melting point.
3. It was five cubits by five cubits by three cubits (7.5' x 7.5' x 4.5'), making it the largest piece of furniture, and therefore the most prominent. It stood out from all of the rest. Exodus 27:1
4. The altar was hollow and filled partway with earth. Exodus 20:24
5. Like the altar of incense, it had four horns or protrusions in the four corners. It had brazen rings whereby it could be carried, using poles made from bronze over acacia wood. Exodus 38:5
6. Around the middle, there was a ledge (Exodus 27:5 38:4). It is possible that this ledge projected outwards far enough for the priest to walk upon. This ledge could possibly been on any number of sides of the altar; however, I would think that at least one side would not have a ledge, and that is where the blood would have been poured for some of the sacrifices. Exodus 29:12 Leviticus 4:7
7. It is guessed by some that there was an incline coming down from the ledge at one side, which helps to explain how Aaron could *come down* from the altar. However, the altar was elevated, so Aaron would be coming *down* from the altar no matter what the means. Leviticus 9:22
8. The grating spoken of (Exodus 27:4–5 38:4) is a matter of disagreement. Some place it inside the altar, parallel to the surface of the top, coming about midway up. Its purpose here would not really make much sense. If it were the top surface of the altar and there were a second similar surface below it, that would make sense. What has been suggested is that this was more of a skirting (as you might see on a mobile home or a house built on a pier and beam foundation), which went around the outside of the altar, extending from the ground to the ledge. In this case, its purpose may have been more a matter of aesthetics. I don't know that I have seen this graphical representation, however.

**"And place the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it [lit., there].**  
[Exodus 40:7]

After salvation (this is going past the brazen altar), we must be periodically cleansed from sin. Sometimes, this is every ten seconds; other times, we might go a few hours and perhaps much of the day before we require cleansing. However, we must be cleansed in order for us to have any spiritual impact whatsoever. This means that we must name our sins when we have sinned. Before Bible class, you must confess your sins; before giving, you must confess your sins; before praying, you must confess your sins; one of the last things you do at night and one of the first things that you do in the morning is confess your sins. Every time you get cut off in traffic, you confess your sin of anger (presuming that makes you angry). While on the job, when in church, when you are with friends, when you are alone—if you have sinned, then you must confess that sin.

### The Brazen Laver

1. This laver is not given a description in terms of size or shape. Most have supposed it to be circular.
2. The material it is made of is quite significant: highly polished bronze (probably copper). Exodus 38:8
3. The highly polished metal is significant because the laver represents rebound, or self-judgement and reflection. This is not a matter of falling into some highly retrospective state; it is a matter of looking at yourself honestly and naming your sins to God. **If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged.** 2Corinthians 11:31
4. The laver is not placed inside the tent of meeting, because this is something that all Christians and born-again Hebrews participate in. It is not an article of furniture which is hidden. Nor is this the first article of furniture that you come to. We do not first cleanse our hands and feet and then go to the altar of burnt offering. It is outside the tabernacle, between the brazen altar and the entrance to the tent (Exodus 40:30). We first go to the brazen altar for salvation, we then wash ourselves as necessary, and then we can enter into the tent for fellowship with God (something ceremonially reserved for the priests).
5. I do not know exactly what the foot of the basin is (mentioned in Exodus 30:18, 28 31:9 35:16 39:39 40:11 Leviticus 8:11). It is either the base upon which the laver sits; although it would be reasonable to suppose that this was a lower basin for the washing of one's feet

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Notice that this placement of furniture is not haphazard nor is it meaningless. God had a reason for each article of furniture and for placing it where he did. Although in His directions, God began with the ark of the covenant, which contained the writing of offenses against us, and then He proceeded to the lampstand (the light by which the gospel is revealed) and the table of show-bread (divine provision); the Jew was confronted first with the brazen altar, the only issue to the unbeliever. When you witness to an unbeliever, your stance on abortion, your take on the current political scene, the Bible's teaching concerning adultery, pre-marital sex, capital punishment, etc—these things are not the issue and 99% of the time, discussion of same should be avoided. The issue is salvation and the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made on behalf of us and on behalf of all unbelievers. For one who questions God's love and provision, the cross is where you take the unbeliever. Other issues are immaterial. When I was saved, I had moderately long hair, with no intentions of cutting it. At salvation, my long hair was not an issue. I had a lot of goofy, un-Biblical ideas and viewpoints—they were not the issues that I needed to examine (an unbeliever *will always* hold views which oppose God's Word; that is a part of the nature of being an unbeliever).

*The Amplified Bible* points out that those who have made pictorial representations of the court of the tabernacle and place the laver off to the side miss what is being taught here. This laver is placed smack dab between the brazen altar and the door to the tabernacle. The NIV Study Bible gives an unfortunately inaccurate pictorial representation of all this. The brazen altar leads to the laver, which leads to the entrance of the tent of meeting, behind the veil of which is the table of showbread. To one side of the table there is the lampstand and to the other side of the table there is, behind the veil, the ark of the covenant. If you can visualize that, what these pieces of furniture make is a cross. To quote from *The Amplified Bible* (p. 119): *It [this arrangement into a cross] could have*

*no significance to the Hebrews of that time, but the One Who planned it had those in mind to whom Christ would one day say, "And these [very Scriptures] testify about Me!"*

**"And you will set up the court round about and hang up the cloth partition for the gate of the court. [Exodus 40:8]**

There is only one gate in—that is through Jesus Christ; there was not a north and a south entrance. You have to go inside to have all of this revealed to you—that is, before you could see the brazen altar, the laver, the ark of incense.

### The Outer Court

1. The court was 100 cubits by 50 cubits (150' x 75'). Exodus 27:9, 12, 18
2. It's canvas wall was five cubits high (7.5'). Exodus 27:18
3. The sides and end of the court were made of fine linen curtains, hung upon silver fillets (possibly hooks or rods). Exodus 27:9
4. These rods were supported by pillars of bronze (probably copper), which were connected to the rods by silver hooks. Exodus 27:10–11
5. There were twenty of these pillars on each side, and ten at the ends (this would make them spaced about 5 or so cubits apart from one another; 7.5'). Exodus 27:10, 12
6. The pillars were all fitted into brazen sockets (possibly bases?). Exodus 27:10, 12, 18
7. The entrance was at the east end of the court. It was twenty cubits (30') wide with fifteen cubits (22.5') on either side. Exodus 27:13–16
8. The curtains at this entrance were made of the most elaborate and expensive of the hangings. Exodus 27:16
9. The walls of the court were steadied by means of cords which were attached to the ground by tent pins. Exodus 27:19 35:18

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**"Then you will take the oil of anointing and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it and consecrate it and all its furniture and it will become holy. [Exodus 40:9]**

Sanctifying or consecrating something means that it is being set aside strictly for spiritual use.

**"You will also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils and consecrate the altar and the altar will be most holy. [Exodus 40:10]**

All of the furniture in the tabernacle were set aside for particular use by God.

**"And you will anoint the laver and its base and you will consecrate it. [Exodus 40:11]**

Every part of the court of the tabernacle and its furniture were set apart unto God.

**"Then you will bring Aaron and his sons near to the door of the tent of meeting and you will wash them with water. [Exodus 40:12]**

Notice that no one is exempt from the temporal cleansing; not even the high priest and the priests. When Peter was first exposed to the doctrine of temporal washing versus eternal cleansing, he did not grasp it. *Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. And then He came to Simon Peter, he said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him "What I do you do not understand now, but you will understand hereafter." Peter said to Him, "Never will You wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." And Jesus said to him, "He who has*



bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."<sup>125</sup> (John 13:5–10).

**"And you put the holy garments upon Aaron and you will anoint him and consecrate him that he may serve Me as priest. [Exodus 40:13]**

Aaron has to be set apart to God and cleansed and consecrated, just as everything and everyone else. All the things in God's service were to be holy to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

### A Full Description of the Garments of the Priesthood

1. Linen drawers (underwear) was worn by both the priests and high priest, not unlike boxer shorts, but a bit longer. Exodus 28:42
2. A one-piece white linen tunic, or shirt, with sleeves, which possibly extended to the ankles. It was designed with a checkered pattern. Exodus 28:39–40 29:5
3. A girdle, or a wide cloth belt or wrap was worn around the body, between the waist and shoulders (Exodus 28:39). Josephus tells us that it was four fingers in width and *so loosely woven that you would think it were the skin of a serpent*<sup>126</sup>.
4. On the head was worn a linen turban, bonnet, or headgear. Exodus 39:28
5. Both the priests and the high priest wore an ephod, although the one of the high priest was more elaborate than the one worn by the priests (Exodus 39:2 1Samuel 22:18). It is unclear whether the priests adopted the wearing of an ephod at a later date (which would explain 1Samuel 22:18).
6. Worn exclusively by the high priest were the following items:
  - a. The high priest wore a one-piece robe, made of blue (possibly violet), with an opening probably made for the head. This was worn over the tunic and it is uncertain as to how far down it came. The bottom of it was elaborately embroidered in purple and scarlet with pomegranates and between these were hung small golden bells. Exodus 39:22–26
  - b. The ephod worn by the high priest was made of beautifully colored woven material which included the use of golden threads, an art the Israelites may have learned from the Egyptians (Exodus 39:3). The ephod was made up of two pieces, a front and a back, both joined by *shoulder pieces*, which were a continuation of the front portion of the ephod (Exodus 28:6–7 39:4). There was a stone in a gold setting on each shoulder piece engraved with the names of six of the tribes of Israel (Exodus 28:9–12). The lower portion of the ephod did not hang free but the front and back were also held together by a band of sorts, which was a part of the front piece (Exodus 28:8).
  - c. The breastplate, or breast piece, or pouch was made of the same material as the ephod, a half a cubit by one cubit (9" x 18"), which was folded to make a 9" square which formed a pouch or pocket. There were twelve stones in four rows of three on the front of this, all in gold settings, each with the name of one of the tribes of Israel. This breast piece was attached to the ephod by means of golden chains. Also, in connection with this breast piece, we have Urim and Thummim, possibly meaning *lights and perfections*, which could have been two stones, either attached to the front of the breastpiece or (more likely) placed in the pouch of the breast piece and used for divine guidance (Exodus 28:15–29). See Exodus 28:30 for more information on Urim and Thummim.
  - d. Finally, the high priest wore a place of gold, engraved with the words *Holiness to Y<sup>e</sup>howah*, and attached by a blue ribbons to the headgear. Exodus 39:20–31

As with all the descriptions in this chapter, I am indebted to James Freeman's *Manners and Customs of the Bible*.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

<sup>125</sup> In this context, *not all of you* does not refer to Peter and his entire body, but to Judas Iscariot; however, the principle is still the same—after salvation, we only need temporal cleansing, which comes when we judge ourselves.

<sup>126</sup> Freeman's *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, p. 84, which quotes Josephus' *Antiquities*, Book III, ch. 7, §3.

**"And you will bring his sons and put on them coats..." [Exodus 40:14]**

Due to Aaron's faithful service (we noted the one serious mistake that he made by participating in the incident of the golden calf), he and his sons would have a special service to God as priests—those who serve God and represent man before God.

**"...and anoint them as you have anointed their father that they may serve me as priests and their anointing has been to be for them a perpetual priesthood of everlasting to their generations."**  
[Exodus 40:15]

The translation is a little weak at the end of this sentence:

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i>      | ...for their anointing shall be to them for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.           |
| <i>The Emphasized Bible</i>     | ...so shall their anointing remain to them for an age-abiding priesthood, to their generations.               |
| KJV                             | ...for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.                |
| NASB                            | ...and their anointing shall qualify [lit., be for them] a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations. |
| NIV                             | Their anointing will be to a priesthood that will continue for all generations to come.                       |
| NRSV                            | ...and their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout all generations to come.         |
| <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i> | ...and their anointing hath been to be to them for a priesthood age-during, to their generations.             |

The meaning is not unclear, there are distinct differences here as to how it is actually translated. However, literally, it is rather confusing. Young's literal translation is the closest, as the verb *to be* *hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAWH*] occurs twice. However, it is first in the 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular, Qal perfect, and then in the Qal infinitive construct, 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix (which should be translated *their*). The only other word anywhere in the vicinity which is a feminine singular is the noun construct of *k<sup>h</sup>unnâh* (הַנְּחָה) [pronounced *k'hoon-NAWH*] (the *k* has dagesh, meaning it is pronounced as a hard k—no h; and the dagesh in the *n* refers to a doubling of the consonant. This is *priesthood*, in the feminine singular. However, the subject might be *anointing*, as this verb is Qal infinitive construct, which can act as a verbal noun. So that portion of the verse might read *their anointing is their priesthood*.

However, mixed in amongst those three words is the Qal infinitive construct of *hâyâh* (again) the lamed preposition (*to, for, with regards to*), and the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix (*them*), altogether should be translated *to be with regards to them*. This is all preceded by a conjunction (*and*); and it all ends with the word *ôwlâm* (עוֹלָם) [pronounced *ôo-LAWM*], a word indicating *long duration, perpetuity, antiquity, futurity*. It seems to be used as a word outside of time in terms of direction, but it occupies a long period of time. This is usually translated *of old* (Genesis 6:4 Deuteronomy 32:7), *always* (Genesis 6:3), *forever* (Exodus 3:15 12:14), *everlasting* (Genesis 17:7 Exodus 40:15), *perpetual* (Num. 19:21). Context seems to determine the direction of the long time. Strong's #5769 (& #5865) BDB #761.

Finally, the last words are the lamed preposition (*to, for, with regards to*) and the word for *generations*, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix (*their*). I do not have enough Hebrew to try to render this literally or per its rough English equivalent. The rendering which we see is my best effort at this time. The two verbs *to be* likely help to emphasize that this priesthood stands forever (implying here that it will return).

Then entire line of Aaron was set apart as priest to God. Obviously, this was not a priesthood of celibacy; otherwise, this line of priests would end somewhat sooner than the word *everlasting* seems to indicate.

Finally, so we do not lose track of the meaning and the parallels, John 17:17–19 reads: **Sanctify them in the truth; Your Word is truth. As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them [our Lord's disciples] into the world. And for their sakes, I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word.**

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses Assembles and Raises the Temple

**Mose did thus; according to all that Y<sup>e</sup>howah command him, so he did.** [Exodus 40:16]

Moses has no need to disagree with God on these things, as he had not opposed God with respect to any of God's laws or ordinances. Moses did, however, stand up to God to intercede on behalf of the children of Israel (this is from a human standpoint). What he was doing there, however, is falling right into God's plan and being a type of Christ. Just as we saw in Exodus 39, we have a continual repetition of this phrase: *as Y<sup>e</sup>howah commanded Moses, so he did* (Exodus 40:19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32—v. 16 is almost the same phrase).

**And it came to pass in the first month in the second year on the first day of the month [that] the tabernacle was erected.** [Exodus 40:17]

This gives us an exact time table that the Hebrews had followed. Three months after leaving Egypt, they found themselves at the Sinai desert (Exodus 19:1). This was nine months later; it had been less than a year since they had left Egypt and almost exactly one year since our Lord instituted the Passover.

**And Moses erected the tabernacle and he placed its bases and set up its frames and placed its bars and raised up its pillars.** [Exodus 40:18]

This does not mean that Moses personally did all of these things. Whereas, it is possible that he did; what is likely is that he directed this finishing work to be done and oversaw the entire process.

**And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and placed the covering of the tent over it above, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:19]

The tabernacle is two compartments; the tent of meeting and the Holy of Holies. This tent covers them both. Notice that some of the most ornate work of the builders—the ark, the cherubim and the mercy seat—are never seen by the public again. These things are placed into the Holy of Holies, only where the high priest could go once a year.

**And he took and placed the testimony into the ark and placed the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat on the ark above [it].** [Exodus 40:20]

I should be a little more exact here. There are two different words which I am translating *placed* here, and in other passages. BDB #'s 962 & 678. The testimony is the covenant between Y<sup>e</sup>howah and the people of Israel; that is, the Ten Commandments.

**And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the cloth partition and overshadowed the ark of the testimony, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:21]

The veil between the holy of holies even kept the priests from viewing the ark of the covenant. People, after a generation or two, only knew what it was supposed to look like. The ark of the covenant, the cherubim and the mercy seat all represent doctrines which are unseen, but very real. Men, during the era of the 1<sup>st</sup> advent, actually saw Jesus walk the earth and teach of Mosaic Law. Some men even saw angels. Exactly as this generation of

Israelites saw the furniture built and then placed into the Tabernacle. However, with few exceptions, subsequent generations did not see this furniture.

We are observed by angels continually; who primarily are focused upon God's plan and God's character, wisdom and perfection. The mercy seat, the covering, represents the covering of sin from God's eyes. That is, when He looks upon us, He does not see our sins, as Jesus dies for these. How could anyone read this and not realize that this was symbolic? If you have items kept within an ark—items that no one ever saw; and if you have an ark, a mercy seat and two cherubim spreading out their wings above it, and nobody ever sees this (except for the high priest once a year); does it not occur to you that this all might mean something? These are more than just some religious symbols cooked up in someone's mind.

**And he placed the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the the tabernacle, outside the veil.** [Exodus 40:22]

The table of shewbread was kept inside the tabernacle, wherein only the priests went; but on the other side of the veil from the ark of the covenant.

**And he arranged in order on it the bread before Y<sup>e</sup>howah, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:23]

The bread upon the table of showbread illustrates God's provisions for the tribes of Israel. Now if He already has their provisions laid out for them, so to speak, does this not mean that God has some sort of a plan for them? If God has provided for your every need in eternity past, don't you think that He just might have a path on which to walk, a direction for you to travel in? This does not mean that we owe Him for the food and drink and shelter—that is grace, as is our entire lives in Him. The plan that He has designed for us is perfect and the best possible life for us. It is not burdensome, boring or degrading. Nor do we become mind-numbed robots. God's plan for our lives is an extension of God's perfect character.

**And he placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle.** [Exodus 40:24]

Notice that almost all of this furniture is in the tent of meeting, far from the prying eyes of the Jewish people. They saw these things when they were being made and will never see them again. How many churches build something beautiful and ornate out gold, and then hide it in the basement? Well, these were God's precise instructions. Now, how do the people know about these things? They know about them from the Word of God, their very lifeblood.

**And he set up the lamps before Y<sup>e</sup>howah as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:25]

The lamps speak of God's revealing the gospel to the unbeliever and the truth of His Word to the believer. We need only look to His light.

**And he place the altar of the gold in the tent of meeting, before the veil.** [Exodus 40:26]

This is the altar of incense.

**And he burnt upon it fragrant incense, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:27]

I am a little confused here, this being under the tent; however, as long as incense is not burned by the pound, then it would not fill the entire tabernacle with smoke (the Tabernacle has a very high ceiling). This incense represents two things, as do many of the articles of furniture. Prior to or coterminous with salvation, the sacrifice of our Lord is a sweet savor to God, as it atones for our sins.

During our lives, our prayers are incense to Him. **And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might offer to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand** (Rev. 8:3–4). **May my prayer be fixed as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering** (Psalm 141:2).

**And he put up the textile partition for the door of the tabernacle.** [Exodus 40:28]

There is one entrance into the tabernacle itself. I just realized that for some time now I have been translating the word *mâçâk*<sup>e</sup> (מָצָאֵךְ) [pronounced *maw-SAWK*<sup>e</sup>] by the word *screen*. What I think of is a *screen door* when I use that term, and that is obviously not correct. A better translation would have been *partition, veil, curtain, textile partition, cloth partition*. (I have changed this except for Exodus 26 & 28)

**And the altar of burnt offering he placed at the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting and offered upon it the burnt offering and the cereal offering, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.**  
[Exodus 40:29]

This the the article of furniture which the Hebrews saw day in and day out: the brazen altar (although it may have been made from copper; I just like the sound of the brazen altar). They saw sacrifice after sacrifice of spotless, perfect animals on this altar for their sins. This is how God communicated the gospel to them, without allowing the demons to know what His plan was for the incarnation. God imparted this information to the human spirit of the person who was positive toward God at God-consciousness. How much exactly does the unbeliever understand about the gospel in the Old Testament and how much is retained after believing is unknown to us.

The mechanics are that the Holy Spirit acts, temporarily, as the human spirit, allowing enough spiritual truth to come into their souls that they could respond by either believing in the saving power of the revealed member of the Godhead, Y<sup>e</sup>howah; or by rejecting their Savior. In this way, millions upon millions of people were saved right under the nose of Satan and he did not fully understand what was happening until God judged His Son on the cross for our sins. Sometime during that judgement process or afterward when it was explained by the Apostle Paul, it sunk in.

**And he placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing.**  
[Exodus 40:30]

Notice the order here: (1) the brazen altar comes first because salvation is the only issue to the unbeliever; (2) then comes the laver for the periodic washing away of our sins that we commits after salvation; and, then, (3) when we are temporally (not temporarily) clean, then we have fellowship with God. Everything fits right into place and this is why God had the tabernacle, its court and all of the furniture arranged so specifically.

We may also understand the things inside of the Tabernacle to be what God does for us while we are alive on this earth. We don't see everything that God does on our behalf; or we may not recognize and appreciate all that He does for us—and so those things are inside of the Tabernacle, out of the sight of Israel.

Do you see just how odd this all is? Inside of the Tabernacle are beautiful pieces of furniture which is well-maintained. Why not have them open to the public in some way (even by lifting up the flap of the entryway). But that is not what God did; that was not His plan.

**And Moses washed Aaron and his sons with it—their hands and their feet.** [Exodus 40:31]

The first people to be cleansed were the priests who represented man to God because these were earthly priests, a representation of the good things to come. See Exodus 30:19–20 as a parallel passage.

**When they entered into the tent of meeting and when they approached the altar, they washed, as Y<sup>e</sup>howah had commanded Moses.** [Exodus 40:32]



The sons of Aaron had to do everything in connection with tabernacle worship exactly as God had directed. He was teaching salvation to the Hebrews at that time and would teach salvation through the services at the tabernacle (and, later, the temple) for the next 1450+ years.

**And he erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar and hung up [lit., set] the cloth partition of the gate of the court; so Moses finished the work<sup>127</sup>. [Exodus 40:33]**

This was a milestone accomplishment. Millions of Hebrews would come into the court of the tabernacle, observe the services and the sacrifices, and receive eternal salvation when they place their faith in the Revealed God.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### God's Glory Fills the Temple

See also Exodus 13:21–22 Num. 9:15–23

**The cloud covered the tent of meeting and the glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah filled the tabernacle.** [Exodus 40:34]

This is divine approval and to let the sons of Israel know that Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of the Universe, would dwell in their midst, in the camp of Israel, in a temporary dwelling place, just as Jesus Christ would dwell in the camp of Israel, in a temporary dwelling place; i.e., His human body. **For in Him [Jesus Christ], all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form** (Colossians 2:9).

Up until that point, God had guided the Hebrews as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The cloud represents His close association with the Hebrews and His guidance of the Hebrews. Five hundred years later, Solomon will build a temple, a permanent dwelling place for the glory of God, and God's glory also filled it (2Chronicles 5:13–14). Four hundred years after that, the Hebrews will enter into a period of such great degeneracy, that God's glory will depart from the temple during the time of Zedekiah, who is the last king of Judah (Ezekiel 11:22–23). God's glory will not again return to Israel until the millenium when His glory will fill the millennial temple (Ezekiel 43:1–9). In the tribulation we will have this: **And the temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished** (Rev. 15:9). Then the glory of the millennial temple will be greater than the glory of the original temple or tabernacle (Hag. 2:9). Refer to the **Doctrine of the Glory of God** (not finished, but originally alluded to in Exodus 16:7).

The NIV study Bible: *With the glory of the Lord entering the tabernacle, the great series of events that began with the birth of Moses and his rescue from the Nile, foreshadowing the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, comes to a grand climax. From now on, the Israelites march through the desert, and through history, with the Lord tenting among them and leading them to the land of fulfilled promises.* I quoted that portion in its entirety because it succinctly draws all of Exodus to a conclusion and because it uses to marvelous phrases, *the Lord tenting among them* and *the land of fulfilled promises*. Both of these are very expressive and accurate.

There is a New Testament parallel; the filling of the tabernacle by the glory of God is analogous to the church being filled with the Holy spirit. **For through Him [Jesus Christ], we have both our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself, being the corner stone, in whom the whole building beign fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God by means of the Spirit** (Eph. 2:18–22). The glory

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<sup>127</sup> Several codices (western Samaritan, Septuagint and the Vulgate) have *all the* inserted prior to *work*.

of God indwelling the tabernacle was a two-fold shadow, speaking first of our Lord tenting among us in the flesh, and, secondly, as analogous to the filling of the spirit that we would experience in our own temples, our bodies.

**And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting because the cloud settled upon it and the glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah filled the tabernacle. [Exodus 40:35]**

Moses, the most sanctified, the most spiritually mature of all of the camp of Israel, could not enter into the tabernacle because even he could not come into the close of contact with the glory of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. The word translated *settled* is shâkan (שָׁכַן) [pronounced *shaw-KAHN*] it means  *dwell, settle, abide*. A more permanent dwelling is implied by this word.

Allow me again to quote Rev. 21:23–25: *And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp [is] the Lamb. And the nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed.*

**Whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would journey [onward] in all their journeys. [Exodus 40:36]**

We have a verb and its noun cognate used here, so I have translated this verse to reveal that. The cloud of Y<sup>e</sup>howah had led them thus far out of Egypt and their movements from thereon in were guided by this cloud. When the cloud no longer dwelt upon the tabernacle, it was time to move to a place where it would dwell. Obviously, Moses and the people were not lost, per se, in the desert; God kept them in that desert, testing them, hoping for approval and obedience (I am obviously using an anthropathism here).

**But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey [onward] until the day that it was taken up. [Exodus 40:37]**

The Hebrews learned a simple system of guidance. When God opens the doors, when God leads the way, then you follow. If God does not guide you in a specific direction, then you do not go in that direction.

**For the cloud of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [was] upon the tabernacle by day and the fire was in it by night in the sight of the house of Israel throughout all their journeys. [Exodus 40:38]**

It is likely that Moses either wrote this last sentence (or the last phrase) near the end of his life; that Joshua added that phrase *throughout all their journeys*, or that, after another year or two in the desert, Moses wrote this. Moses certainly did not expect that the time that he wrote this that they would spend an additional 39 years in the desert.

The term, the *house of Israel*, implies an extended family.