

# EXODUS

YHWH GOES TO WAR

## Small Group Guide: The Proving Acts of Exodus

Based on Exodus 7-10: God's War Against False Gods

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### OPENING PRAYER & ICEBREAKER (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** What's something you believed was powerful or important when you were younger, but later discovered wasn't as significant as you thought?

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### SERMON RECAP (5 minutes)

This sermon explored the plagues of Egypt as more than just miraculous events—they were God's systematic war against the false gods of Egypt. Each plague demonstrated Yahweh's supremacy over the demonic influences and false worship systems that held Egypt captive. We saw two responses: Pharaoh's obstinate hardness versus Moses and Aaron's obedience.

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### KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. **God is Supreme Over All** - The plagues weren't random; each targeted a specific Egyptian god, proving Yahweh's absolute sovereignty.
  2. **Two Responses to God's Revelation** - Pharaoh hardened his heart despite seeing God's power; Moses and Aaron responded with obedience and trust.
  3. **God's Story, Not Ours** - We're called to teach our children and grandchildren about God's greatness, not just our own accomplishments.
  4. **True Repentance Requires Change** - Pharaoh said "I sinned" but never changed direction. Biblical repentance means realigning our entire lives with God.
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# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. **What surprised you most about understanding the plagues as God going to war against specific Egyptian gods?** How does this change your view of these familiar stories?
2. **Read Exodus 10:1-2.** Why does God say He hardened Pharaoh's heart? What purpose was God accomplishing through these plagues beyond just freeing Israel?
3. **Track Pharaoh's responses throughout the plagues.** At what points does he seem to soften? What patterns do you notice in how he hardens his heart again?

## Personal Reflection (20 minutes)

4. **The sermon mentioned modern "false gods" like money, pride, power, health, and even nationalism.** Which of these (or others) do you find most tempting to put before God? Why do you think that particular thing has such a pull on you?
5. **Moses went from making excuses (Exodus 3-4) to complete obedience (Exodus 7-10).** What do you think changed in Moses? What would complete obedience to God look like in your current circumstances?
6. **Pharaoh confessed "I have sinned" but never truly repented.** What's the difference between acknowledging sin and actually repenting? Can you share an example from your own life where you moved from mere acknowledgment to true repentance?

## Application & Action (20 minutes)

7. **Read Exodus 10:2 again about telling the story to our children and grandchildren.**
  - How much of your conversations with younger generations focus on God's story versus your own achievements or family history?
  - What's one specific way you could shift this in the coming week?
8. **The sermon challenged us to see everything through the lens of "Yahweh is at the center."**
  - Think about a current news story, family situation, or personal challenge. How would viewing it with "God at the center" rather than "me at the center" change your perspective?
  - Practice this together as a group with a current event.
9. **Some Egyptians believed God's warning about the hail and protected their livestock (Exodus 9:20-21).**
  - What does this teach us about responding to God's warnings in faith?
  - Is there an area where God has been warning you, and you need to take protective action?

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# PRACTICAL CHALLENGES FOR THE WEEK

Choose one of the following to commit to this week:

**Challenge 1: Realignment Audit** Each day this week, identify one area of your life (schedule, finances, relationships, entertainment, etc.) and honestly ask: "Is Yahweh supreme here, or have I made this into a false god?" Journal your findings and what needs to change.

**Challenge 2: Storytelling Shift** Have at least one conversation with a child, grandchild, or younger person where you intentionally tell God's story rather than your own. Share how you've seen God work in your life, focusing on His character and power, not your achievements.

**Challenge 3: Repentance vs. Acknowledgment** Identify one area where you've been like Pharaoh—acknowledging sin but not changing direction. Write out:

- What you've been acknowledging
- What true repentance would look like
- One concrete step you'll take this week to realign your life with God

**Challenge 4: God-Centered Worldview** Each time you check the news or social media this week, pause and ask: "How is God at work in this? What does this reveal about His character or His story?" Share your insights with the group next week.

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## CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTIONS (10 minutes)

- **What is one thing God spoke to you about through this discussion?**
- **How do you need to respond differently than Pharaoh did when God reveals Himself to you?**
- **What does it look like for you to pledge allegiance to Yahweh and Yahweh alone this week?**

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## PRAYER TIME (10 minutes)

**Suggested Prayer Focus:**

- **Confession:** Acknowledge areas where we've allowed false gods to compete with Yahweh's supremacy in our lives.
- **Repentance:** Ask God for the grace to truly change direction, not just acknowledge sin.
- **Worship:** Praise God for His supremacy over all false gods, powers, and influences in our world today.
- **Petition:** Pray for soft hearts that respond in obedience rather than hardness when God reveals Himself.
- **Next Generation:** Pray for wisdom and opportunities to teach children and grandchildren about God's greatness.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we'll study the Passover and the final plague. Come prepared by reading Exodus 11-12 and considering:

- What does the Passover lamb teach us about redemption?
- How does this point forward to Jesus?

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## LEADER NOTES

- **Be Sensitive:** The topic of God hardening Pharaoh's heart can be theologically challenging. Allow space for questions, but keep the focus on our response to God's revelation rather than getting lost in sovereignty debates.
  - **Encourage Honesty:** Create a safe space for people to admit their false gods. Model vulnerability by sharing your own struggles.
  - **Emphasize Grace:** While the call is to repentance and obedience, remind the group that we can only do this through God's power, not our own effort.
  - **Multigenerational Connection:** If possible, consider inviting a younger person or family to join your group for the storytelling challenge discussion.
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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

1. **What stands out to you most about Moses' identity crisis?** How did growing up in three different cultures (Hebrew birth, Egyptian upbringing, Midianite family) complicate his sense of belonging?
2. **Why was the name "Yahweh" (I AM) so significant?** What does this name reveal about God's character compared to the regional gods of that time?
3. **Read Exodus 3:7-8.** What four things does God say He has done regarding Israel's suffering? What does this tell us about God's character?

### Personal Reflection

4. **Moses kept making excuses to God (can't speak well, send someone else).** What excuses do we commonly make when God calls us to something? Why do we struggle to trust that "I will be with you" is enough?
5. **The sermon stated: "What makes us effective for the Lord is the presence of the Lord with us."** How does this challenge our culture's emphasis on natural talent, education, or experience?
6. **Moses hadn't circumcised his son—a sign of partial allegiance to God.** What are some ways we might give God "most" of our lives but hold something back?

### Application

7. **If someone examined your calendar, bank statements, social media, and conversations, where would they say your allegiance lies?** (This is meant for personal reflection, not to shame—be gracious with one another.)

8. **The sermon defined worship as "a lifestyle that says God is worthy of everything I am and have."** How does this definition differ from how we typically think of worship? What would change in your daily life if you embraced this definition?
  9. **Read Romans 12:1-2.** How does Paul's call to be "living sacrifices" connect with the theme of full allegiance to God?
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## Key Takeaways

- ✓ **God hears, remembers, sees, and knows His people.** He is faithful to His promises even when we can't see His plan unfolding.
  - ✓ **God's presence is the guarantee of success in His plans.** Our abilities matter less than His presence with us.
  - ✓ **Yahweh demands full allegiance, not partial commitment.** We cannot serve God with only part of our hearts.
  - ✓ **Worship is not a moment or activity—it's a lifestyle.** Everything we do should declare God's worthiness.
  - ✓ **The proper response to God revealing Himself is to believe and repent.** Repentance means realigning every aspect of our lives to God.
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## Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE area below to focus on this week:

#### Option 1: The Allegiance Audit

- Spend 30 minutes journaling through these questions:
  - Where do I spend most of my time?
  - Where do I spend most of my money?
  - What do I think about most?
  - What do I talk about most?
- Ask God to show you where your allegiance truly lies and one specific area to realign.

#### Option 2: The "I Will Be With You" Exercise

- Identify one thing God has been calling you to do that you've been avoiding.
- Write down all your excuses (like Moses did).

- Next to each excuse, write: "But God says, 'I will be with you.'"
- Take one step of obedience this week, trusting in His presence.

### Option 3: Worship Lifestyle Shift

- Choose one daily activity (commute, meal prep, exercise, etc.).
  - Intentionally do it this week as an act of worship—thanking God, praying, or simply doing it with excellence for His glory.
  - Journal about how this changes your perspective.
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## Scripture Memory

### Matthew 22:37

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."*

## Closing Reflection

Read this quote from the sermon together:

"Yahweh wants your full allegiance in every aspect of your life. Every aspect of your life... Worship is a life that says, God, everything I am and everything I have, I align to you because only you are worthy."

**Final Question:** What is one specific way you will realign your life to God this week?

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## Closing Prayer

Pray together using Psalm 139:23-24 as a guide:

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"*

Pray for each person's specific area of realignment and for the courage to fully surrender to God's lordship.

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## Leader Notes

- **Be vulnerable first.** Share your own struggles with divided allegiance before asking others to share.
- **Create a safe space.** Emphasize that this is about growth, not shame.
- **Don't rush.** It's better to discuss fewer questions deeply than to race through all of them.
- **Follow up.** Check in with group members during the week about their practical applications.

# Small Group Guide: Exodus 1-2 - God's Supremacy Over All Opposition

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Share a time when something you feared or worried about actually worked out better than you expected. How did you see God's hand in that situation?

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## Sermon Summary (5 minutes)

This week we began a new series in Exodus, exploring how God fulfills His promises to Abraham despite opposition. We saw how Pharaoh tried to stop God's plan through slavery and death, yet God used even these evil tactics to grow and strengthen His people. The story culminates with Moses' miraculous preservation—saved by Pharaoh's own daughter! The central message: anything that stands against Yahweh will ultimately fail.

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## Key Takeaways

1. **God Always Keeps His Promises** - God promised Abraham descendants, land, and that his family would bless all nations. Despite 400 years and intense opposition, God was faithful.
  2. **Opposition to God's People is Opposition to God Himself** - Pharaoh's attacks on Israel were attacks on Yahweh, and they all backfired.
  3. **God Uses Evil for His Glory** - What Pharaoh meant for evil, God used to strengthen His people and display His supremacy.
  4. **We Must Choose Which God We Will Serve** - Like the Hebrew midwives, we face daily choices between fearing Yahweh or bowing to cultural gods.
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## Discussion Questions

## Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. **Read Exodus 1:8-14.** What were Pharaoh's motivations for enslaving the Israelites? What does this reveal about his character and his view of God?
2. **Read Exodus 1:15-21.** What risk did Shiphrah and Puah take by disobeying Pharaoh? What does verse 17 tell us about their motivation?
3. How does the irony of Moses' rescue (Exodus 2:1-10) demonstrate God's sovereignty? What does this teach us about God's character?

## Personal Application (20 minutes)

4. The pastor said, "Persecution against God's people is an attack on Yahweh himself." Have you experienced opposition because of your faith? How does knowing this truth change your perspective on that opposition?
5. The midwives "feared God" more than they feared Pharaoh. What are some modern-day "pharaohs" (cultural pressures, workplace expectations, family dynamics) that tempt us to compromise our faith?
6. Pharaoh kept trying to defeat God and kept failing. Where in your life might you be resisting God's will? What would surrender look like in that area?

## Going Deeper (15 minutes)

7. The pastor mentioned we live in an increasingly pluralistic society with many "tribal gods." What are some of the false gods our culture worships today? (Examples: success, comfort, political ideology, self-determination)
8. **Read Acts 9:4-5.** When Jesus appeared to Paul, He asked, "Why are you persecuting ME?" How does this connect to the Exodus story? What does this teach us about the church's relationship to Christ?
9. The church historically grows fastest under persecution. Why do you think this is true? What does this suggest about comfort and spiritual growth?

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## Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge (Choose One or More)

#### Individual:

- **Daily Choice:** Each morning this week, pray: "Yahweh, I choose to align my life with You today. Show me where I'm trusting in false gods." Journal about what God reveals.
- **Scripture Memory:** Memorize Exodus 1:17 - "But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live."
- **Courage Inventory:** List areas where you're tempted to compromise your faith. Choose one and take a concrete step of obedience this week.

#### As a Group:

- **Prayer Partners:** Pair up and share one area where you're facing opposition or temptation to compromise. Commit to praying for each other daily.
- **Encouragement Project:** Identify a Christian brother or sister facing persecution or hardship. Send them an encouraging note or gift, reminding them of God's supremacy.

### Going Forward:

- **Study the Plagues:** As we continue through Exodus, research which Egyptian god each plague was directed against. This will deepen your understanding of God's war against false gods.
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## Reflection Questions for Personal Quiet Time

1. Am I living as if Yahweh is supreme in every area of my life, or are there compartments where I trust in other things?
  2. Like the midwives, am I willing to risk social, professional, or financial consequences to obey God?
  3. Where have I seen God turn something meant for evil into something good in my own life?
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## Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

### Prayer Focus:

- Thank God for His faithfulness to keep His promises
- Ask for courage to fear God more than cultural pressures
- Pray for believers facing persecution around the world
- Request wisdom to recognize and reject false gods in our lives

**Closing Prayer:** "Father, thank You that You are supreme over all opposition. Help us to align every word, thought, and action with You through Jesus Christ. Give us the courage of Shiphrah and Puah to fear You above all else. May we trust that You will use even the hardest circumstances for Your glory and our good. In Jesus' name, Amen."

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## Looking Ahead

Next week we'll continue in Exodus, watching as God raises up Moses as the deliverer of His people. Come prepared to discuss what makes someone qualified to be used by God.

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## Additional Resources

- Book recommendation: *The Gospel According to Moses* by Sinclair Ferguson
- For those interested in Financial Peace University, see Ron Kuntz (mentioned at the beginning of the sermon)