

# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

God Will Not Forget His Promises	Exodus 1-2
God's Working in Your Backstory	Exodus 2
God Equips and Empowers His Servants	Exodus 3-4
God is Greater Than Oppressive Rulers	Exodus 5-11
God is Greater Than False gods	Exodus 5-11
God Provides a Passover Lamb	Exodus 12-13
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God Doesn't Need Superman	Exodus 18
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God's 2nd Greatest Command - Love Others	Exodus 19-36
God, Forgive and Realign our Idolatrous Heart!	Exodus 32

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IDEA**

**GOD DELIVERS, DEFENDS, DIRECTS  
& DISCIPLINES HIS CHILDREN**

# EXODUS

## Introduction

### Title

The title 'Exodus' is derived from the name which the ancient Greek translators gave to the book, *Exodos*, meaning 'the going out', 'exit'. The name reflects the book's particular interest in the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

### Literary nature

As the second book of the Bible, Exodus forms part of a larger narrative which begins in Genesis and continues at least as far as the book of Deuteronomy. This material has traditionally been viewed as a unit, the Pentateuch (see article on the Pentateuch). Exodus is an integral part of this larger work, depending upon the book of Genesis for important background material (*e.g.* God's covenant with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the divine guarantee that their descendants would possess the land of Canaan; and an explanation as to how the family of Jacob came to be in Egypt), and anticipating events which are recorded in Leviticus (*e.g.* the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests). While Exodus has much in common with Genesis and Leviticus, it does have, as we shall see below, a number of its own distinctive themes.

Although Exodus may appear at first sight to be a collection of separate incidents, it has been carefully composed. The narrative is a skillful blend of different types of material (*e.g.* prose, poetry, genealogy, speeches, regulations, laws) which have been brought together to produce a unified work. The narrator makes no attempt to give a comprehensive picture of all that took place in the period covered by the book; on the contrary his account is quite selective. Consequently, the text often omits information which the narrator did not believe to be important for his purpose in writing (*e.g.* a detailed record of Moses' time in Midian).

The book of Exodus is composed of blocks of material which usually have clearly marked beginnings and ends. The present chapter divisions are a poor guide to these narrative units and are best ignored. The different episodes are rarely self-contained. They assume a knowledge of earlier material and anticipate later events. To understand Exodus it is important to follow the flow of the narrative and see how the various episodes relate to each other (*e.g.* the account of the Israelites' meeting with God at Sinai in ch. 19 has close parallels with Moses' first encounter with God at Horeb/Sinai in ch. 3).

### Main themes

The author of Exodus is primarily interested in theology; that is, he writes in order to highlight particular ideas and concepts about God. To appreciate this and see how each section of the book contributes to this overall purpose, it is

important to recognize the book's main themes; other minor themes are noted in the commentary.

Exodus is essentially a book about knowing God through personal experience. The plot centres on the relationship which develops between God and the Israelites, from the dramatic meeting with Moses at the burning bush (3:1–4:17) to the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle (40:34–38). In all of this Moses acts as a mediator, the one who first makes the Lord known to the people and who subsequently plays an important role in establishing the covenant relationship which enables the Lord to dwell in the midst of the Israelites. Significantly, it is always God who takes the initiative, revealing himself not only through words, but also through wonders and signs. In Exodus God both speaks and acts; moreover, what he says happens.

The first half of the book is dominated by the theme of coming to know God. At the outset Moses met with God at the burning bush, and in the ensuing conversation discovered much about God's nature, including his divine name, 'the LORD' (3:1–4:17). The theme reappears when Pharaoh expressed his ignorance about the Lord: 'Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go' (5:2). As the different signs unfold, the Egyptians gradually came to acknowledge the Lord's sovereign power. Ultimately, God lured Pharaoh and his army to their death in the Sea of Reeds in order that 'the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD' (14:4, 18). With the defeat of Pharaoh the Israelites worshipped God in a dynamic song of celebration praise: 'Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?' (15:11).

The second half of Exodus develops further the theme of knowing God by focusing on the establishment of a close and lasting relationship between the Lord and the Israelites. To this end the narrative concentrates on two topics which receive extensive coverage, the making of the covenant and the construction of the tabernacle. The former of these, like the signing of a contract or the taking of marriage vows, sets out the conditions under which the Israelites must live in order to enjoy an ongoing relationship with God; these are recorded in the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant. The people are obliged to follow God's standards if they wish to know his continued blessing and presence. Considerable attention is given not only to the making of the initial covenant agreement (chs. 19–24), but also to the events concerning the golden calf which almost brought the relationship to an early and abrupt conclusion (chs. 32–34). The building of the tabernacle forms a natural sequel to the making of the divine covenant. Built according to divine instruction, the tabernacle became the focal point of the Lord's presence in the midst of the people, and reminded them, through its materials and structure, of God's sovereign, holy nature. Significantly, Exodus ends by noting how the Lord, following the erection of the tent, took up residence in the middle of the Israelite camp (40:34–38).

Closely associated with the theme of knowing the Lord is that of obedience. Exodus stresses throughout the importance of obeying the Lord. In the early chapters we observe both Moses' reluctance and Pharaoh's stubborn refusal to comply with God's demands. Later, to achieve their safe deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites had to follow exactly the Lord's instructions regarding the Passover. Finally, after throwing off the yoke of Egyptian slavery, the Israelites had to learn obedience to their new sovereign. Significantly, obedience to God lies at the heart of the covenant relationship (*cf.* 19:8; 24:3, 7). Exodus emphasizes, however, that since God is the one who acts first, human obedience does not create this special covenant relationship, it merely helps maintain it. When the Israelites later made and worshipped the golden calf they were punished for their disobedience and the covenant relationship with God was broken.

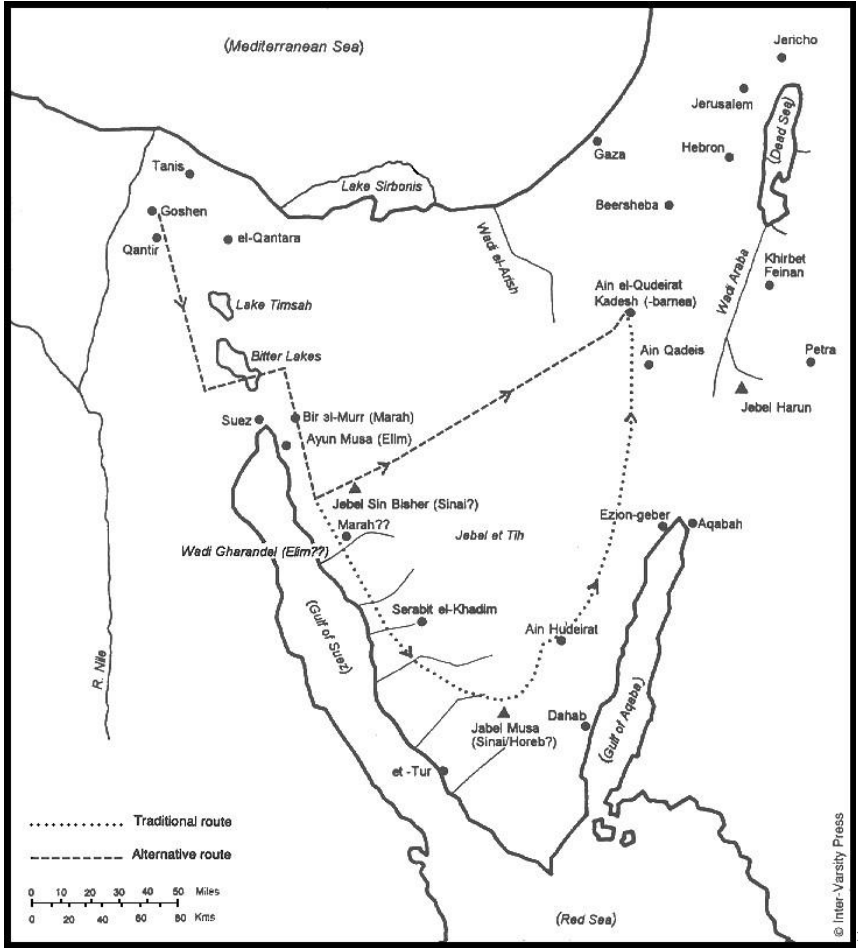
Another important theme is that of holiness. On the one hand, Exodus reveals that God alone is innately holy and that human beings, because of their sinful nature, can come into his presence only in certain circumstances. When Moses encountered God at the burning bush he had to remove his sandals because the ground was holy (3:5), and later the Israelites were prevented from ascending Mt Sinai lest they should die as a result of seeing God (19:12–13, 21–24; *cf.* Heb. 12:14). Because of the incompatibility of divine holiness and human sinfulness specific measures had to be taken before the Lord could reside among the Israelites. A specially designed tent was constructed, incorporating features made necessary by the holiness of God (*e.g.* the curtains which formed a protective shield between God and the people).

On the other hand, Exodus stresses that the Israelites should share God's holy nature; they are to be 'a holy nation' (19:6). To this end the instructions and laws of the Decalogue and Book of the Covenant indicate those qualities associated with God's holy nature. Here holiness is primarily linked with moral purity and exemplary behaviour. However, since such perfection of character is beyond human attainment, Exodus underlines the importance of sacrifices which can both atone for sin and purify that which is unclean. This is displayed in various ways. We see it in the sacrifices associated with the Passover and the making of the covenant at Sinai. Similarly, sacrifices are an integral part of the procedure for consecrating the priests (29:1–46). Moreover, to symbolize the fact that God may be approached only through the offering of acceptable sacrifices the large bronze altar was placed between the entrance to the tabernacle courtyard and the Holy Place.

Special attention is also drawn to the divine qualities of compassion and justice. They are very evident in the first half of the book when God acts out of real concern for the Israelites and punishes the Egyptians because of their unjust treatment of the Israelites. Both qualities are prominent in the laws and moral imperatives which form an important part of the Sinai covenant. Not only must the Israelites maintain a particular standard of justice, but they must also act

with compassion towards the more vulnerable members of society. Finally, they reappear in the events concerning the golden calf. God’s justice is displayed in his punishment of the Israelites for their rebellious actions, but, because of his compassion, the covenant is subsequently renewed when Moses intercedes on behalf of the people.

**Traditional Route Map of Exodus**



1  
 T. Desmond Alexander, [“Exodus,”](#) in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 92–94.

# EXODUS

A DIVINE EXIT 

“God Will Not Forget His Promises”

## Sermon Notes

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**BIG  
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**YOUR PAIN DOES NOT BYPASS  
THE PROMISES OF GOD**







# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

God is Greater Than Oppressive Rulers

### Sermon Notes

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**THE FEAR OF MAN ENSNARES  
THE FEAR OF GOD EMPOWERS**



Exodus 12-13

April 5, 2020

# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

“God Provides a Passover Lamb”

### Sermon Notes

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**JESUS WAS PUNISHED SO WE  
COULD GO FREE**



# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

“God Doesn’t Need Superman”

### Sermon Notes

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**GOD DOESN'T NEED YOU TO BE  
EVERYTHING TO EVERYONE...  
THAT'S HIS JOB**

# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

“God’s Greatest Command – Love Him”

### Sermon Notes

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**BIG  
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**LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH  
ALL YOUR HEART, MIND & SOUL**

# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

“God’s Great Command – Love Others”

### Sermon Notes

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**BIG  
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**LOVE OTHERS LIKE JESUS  
LOVES YOU**

# EXODUS

## A DIVINE EXIT

“God, Forgive and Realign our Idolatrous Heart”

### Sermon Notes

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**BIG  
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**GOD'S PATIENCE AND  
FORGIVENESS KNOWS NO LIMIT**





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