

# The Quarterly

Exodus 1-26





Cities Church

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The Quarterly is a publication of Cities Church that complements our current sermon series. It includes Bible study resources and articles from our congregation.

All Scripture quotations are in ESV unless otherwise noted.

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Week One

E X O D U S 1

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Hopeful  
Expectation

B R E T T T O N E Y

# Exodus 1

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.” Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, “When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live.” But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and let the male children live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian

women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.”

# Hopeful Expectation

Brett Toney

**W**e always read the Bible with hopeful expectation. Not that we are always hopeful or expectant when we read, but we read expecting hope. It is the drive of the narrative of Scripture, moving us onward and upward from the sorrow, despair, and pain of sin and its effects. We come to the word looking for help, for hope. The words in Exodus thrust our gaze ahead to what is to come.

Promise, fulfillment. Type, anti-type. Pattern, reality.

The story of Exodus sets the table of redemption to give us the utensils to be able to feast on the banquet of deliverance accomplished by Jesus. The revelation of “I AM” to the incarnation of “I AM.” The plagues on Egypt to the severity of hell. The Passover lamb to the Lamb of God. The Red Sea to the empty tomb. Manna in the wilderness to the True Bread. Water from the struck rock to living water from the one who was struck. Mount Sinai to Mount Zion. The Tabernacle to the New Heavens and Earth.

The hope we find in Exodus prepares our minds to understand and our hearts to embrace the greater redemptive work God accomplishes in Christ. We read Exodus training our affections for the real thing, not just the shadow.

Pause and reflect on that for a second.

Some of the most remarkable and vivid events in the Bible are in Exodus. “Oh, to have been there to see the unburning bush with Moses!” we may think. “If only to have seen the sea part!” “Those were the glory days!” Literally. Moses’ face shown because of his encounter with the glory of God.

Likewise, as we wait until the day when sin is no more, we ought to remember God’s promises and faithfulness. He has not left you. He has not forsaken you. He hears your cries for help.

But as unimaginably amazing as the events of the Exodus were, they are the shadow. We don’t hopefully expect to one day go back to those days. The things we participate in by virtue of being in Christ are the real things, and

they only get better. In Christ, and by the indwelling presence of the Spirit, we commune directly with the Triune God. We have been raised with Christ, enjoying that resurrection power over sin and death. The in-breaking of the kingdom of God has secured our inheritance and citizenship under the reign of King Jesus.

Yet we do not currently experience the full benefits of Christ. There is a sense in which we are still in Egypt. We still very much feel the entanglements of sin and the sting of death. And in that, reading Exodus serves us so well.

Exodus meets us in our present experience and points us forward to a promised, better country.

Even as we read the first chapter, we’re reminded of the reality that we are not yet what we will one day be.

Egyptian slavery illustrates our bondage to sin. The progression in Exodus 1 of the descendants of Jacob increasing to having taskmasters set over them to being enslaved parallels the progression of sin's ensnaring. We live close to sin, let it exert power over us, and all too quickly we can't get free of it.

Contrary to the Israelites, however, we go willingly into our enslavement. We assert our falsely perceived self-sufficiency to wrest "control" so that we have a vain sense of security. We exalt the opinions of followers and friends to worship at the altar of acceptance. We gorge on pleasures that we know won't satisfy, yet we keep going back for more as the consequences compound. We love our sin. We are beholden to our captor. It's Stockholm syndrome with eternal ramifications.

As God's people, we groan and cry for help to be finally free. We look at the chains that have been broken, but still cling so closely, and lament. How long, O Lord? We know that deliverance is ours because Jesus has been raised. The tomb was empty. We presently

experience so many of the wondrous benefits Christ has secured. Yet sin persists. How long?

In our waiting, we can look again to Exodus 1 to be reminded of God's faithfulness so that present faithfulness would be bolstered. The statement in Exodus 1:7 about the people of Israel being fruitful and increasing greatly is not just a plot device to tee up their enslavement. We should read those words and be reminded of God's commission to humanity to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28). That commission is one God promised he would accomplish for Israel—God promised Abraham's family would become a great nation (Genesis 12:2) that would increase numerically (Genesis 22:17).

In their slavery, Israel ought to remember God's promises and his faithfulness to keep them. The evidences of grace are present. Likewise, as we wait until the day when sin is no more, we ought to remember God's promises and faithfulness. He has not left you. He has not forsaken you. He hears your cries for help.

Calling to mind God's faithfulness and his steady fulfillment of his promises, we are emboldened in our own faithfulness. The Israelite midwives feared God more than the king of Egypt. They knew who their God was. Surely, they knew he would be true to his promises. They could stand boldly in the midst of great difficulty and sorrow because they knew the promises were true.

Even though we have received far greater promises and far greater guarantees, we too readily let our circumstances define our perspective. Things don't go according to our plans, and we want to grip tighter to control. People don't respond the way we desired, and we want to strive harder for their acceptance. That pleasure didn't satisfy as long as expected, and we go looking for more and more.

We need this word to realign our hope, to adjust our focus on the real thing. We need to read with hopeful expectation to persevere until that day when we have what is ours in Christ.

# Day 1 – Introduction to Exodus

- ① Read the Introduction to Exodus in a Study Bible and jot down new things you learned about the book of Exodus. Have you ever read or studied the book of Exodus? What assumptions do you have about Exodus? How are those assumptions challenged by considering how Exodus anticipates the deliverance Jesus accomplished?
- ② Based on what you know about Exodus or what you learned in your Study Bible, what parallels do you see between Exodus and your walk with the Lord?
- ③ How can you practice reading Scripture with more hopeful expectation?

## Day 2 – Exodus 1:1-14

- 1 Read Exodus 1:1-14. What examples can you think of in the Bible where God shows himself faithful? Do you see this in Exodus? In what ways have you witnessed the faithfulness of God? Who is a person you'd want to share these truths and experiences with?
- 2 Where do you see temptations in your life that you get too close to? In what ways are you already being slowly entangled in them?
- 3 Are there any sin or effects of sin that you need to lament? Write a prayer of lamentation using Psalm 13 as a guide.



## Day 3 – Exodus 1:15-22

- 1 Read Exodus 1:15-22. Note one new thing you learned in the passage. In what situations are you tempted to fear other people more than to fear God?
- 2 Identify one to two ways in which you need to see faithfulness to God increase in your life. Write out a prayer for this. Share this with someone close to you so they can pray for you and encourage you in them.
- 3 What hinders you from more boldly living according to the way God would have you?

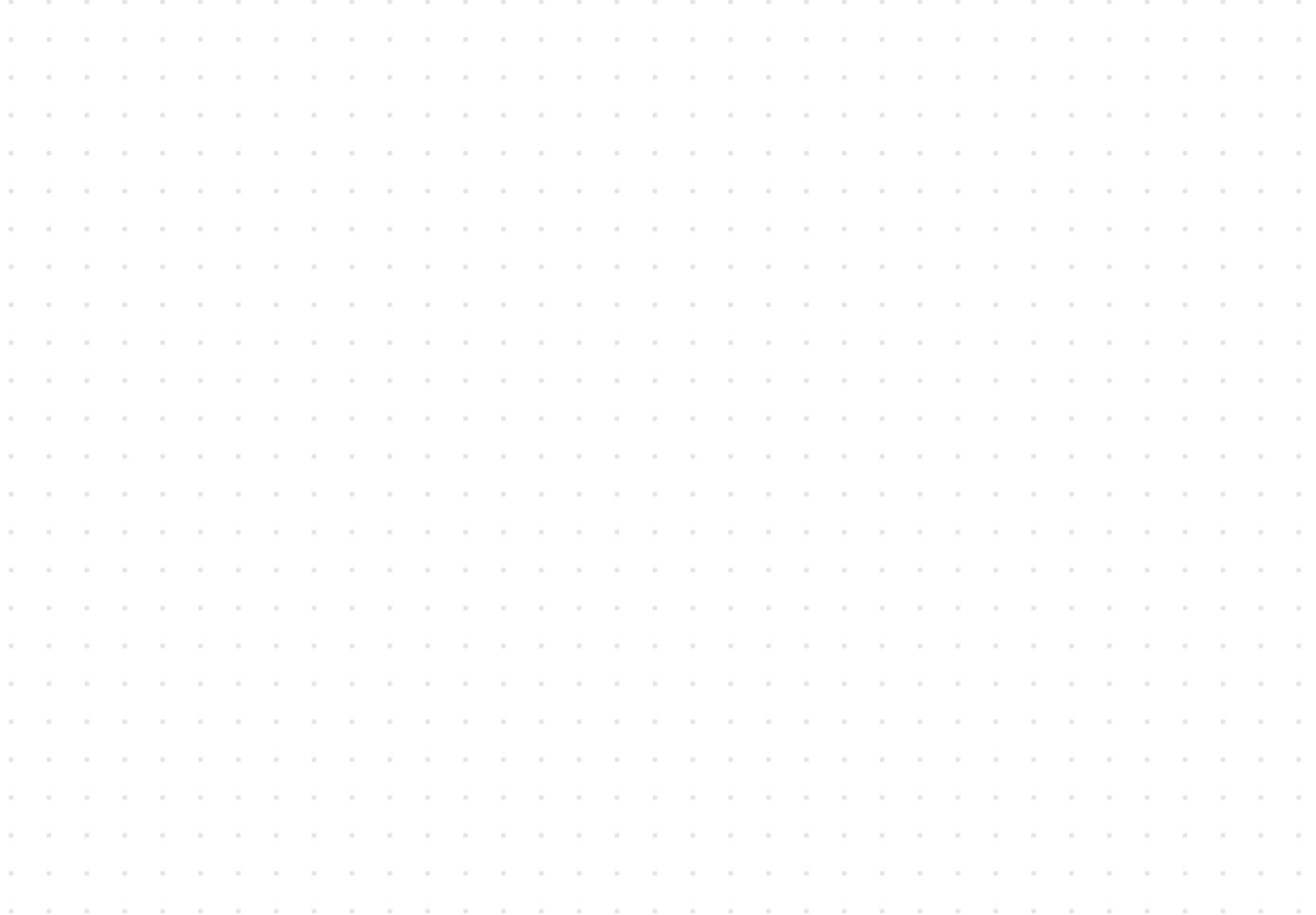
# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Galatians 3:7-10

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

## Notes



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Two

He Hears  
and He Cares

J E S S I C A H A N S E N

## Exodus 2

Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?" He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely

the thing is known.” When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well.

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock. The shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and saved them, and watered their flock. When they came home to their father Reuel, he said, “How is it that you have come home so soon today?” They said, “An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds and even drew water for us and watered the flock.” He said to his daughters, “Then where is he? Why have you left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.” And Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. She gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, “I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.”

During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.



# He Hears and He Cares

## Jessica Hansen

**A**s a mom, this chapter resonates with me.

A little background: Exodus 2 begins with the story of the birth of Moses. When he was three months old his mother, Jochebed, could no longer keep him hidden from the Egyptians who were trying to kill Hebrew boys, so she sent him down the Nile in a basket. Bathing in the river, Pharaoh's daughter happened to see Moses and picked him up. Moses' sister, Miriam, was watching nearby and ran up offering to go and find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby. Miriam suggests her mom, Jochebed, to nurse the baby, and Pharaoh's daughter says, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages" (Exodus 2:9).

Umm. What!? How amazing is this! Jochebed probably thought she would never see her baby Moses again, or that he might not even survive. But then she gets to see him, touch him, hold him, nurse him, and be *paid* for it (insert 'shocked-face' emoji)! How good and sovereign is our God?! He not only spared this baby's life, but blessed this

mother with the gift of nursing him, and getting money for it! God didn't have to do that. But he did.

There are no coincidences in the kingdom of God. There are no "accidents." Every little detail of our lives—good and bad—is orchestrated by the King of this universe. What a reminder that God is in authority over all things, and tenderly cares for every little detail in our lives. I do wonder if Jochebed prayed and asked God to let her baby Moses live. I wonder if she thought to pray and ask God to let her nurse him again. Or even to let her be paid wages to nurse him. That would be quite the prayer! One day in heaven, I would like to ask this Levite-mama if she asked God to do just what he did.

God loves to give good gifts to his children, and he gives exceedingly and abundantly above all we can ask or think or imagine. He hears our prayers. And he heard the groaning of the people of Israel. At the end of chapter two, it goes on to say, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant..." (Exodus 2:24) The Israel-

ites were in slavery. They were groaning and shouting to their God for help, and God heard them.

Y'all, they were in slavery; it must have been so hard for them to actually believe that God wants good for them, let alone hear their cries! Do you ever wonder if God *hears* your groaning? Do things ever seem so messed up in your life that it's hard to look through the chaos and know that God hears you? One definition of "hear" is to be aware of, or know the existence of, or perceive with the ear the sound made by something or someone.

God is aware of your groaning. He knows of your existence. The sounds you make when you cry out to him, he actually *hears* with his ears. Let that sink in. He really, actually hears you. Doesn't that change things for you? For example, if I'm talking to someone on the phone and my end is on mute and I don't think the person on the other line can hear me, I'm not going to bother yapping and talking to them. It would be pointless. What's the point in sharing my heart and wasting my breath

if they aren't even going to be able to hear me?

If we truly believed God heard us, wouldn't we cry out to him? If you knew that our loving and gracious Father, ruler over all, Lord over your whole universe, who wants good for you, can hear your cries, wouldn't you run to him all the time?

I can cry out to God for grace when I feel as if I'm going to yell at my daughter to "obey mommy!" I can cry out to God when I'm driving with two littles screaming in the back seat and I am at the end of my rope with patience that day. I can cry out to God when I feel the sadness of a strain in a family relationship that I don't know will ever be the same. I can cry out to God when I find myself falling prey to that same old sin, again.

He hears.

And he cares.

Let us direct the aches and pains and joys we feel up to heaven, to our Father, who *hears*.

# Day 1 – Exodus 2:1-10

- 1 Read Exodus 2:1-10. Describe Moses' birth. What striking things take place?
- 2 Has there been a time in your life where God has done something that seemed impossible? What life-preserving, life-threatening, or life-altering events took place in your grandparents' and parents' lives that allowed for you to be born? How did God preserve Moses' life as an infant?
- 3 How was Jesus' life preserved as a child (see Matthew 2:13-23)?

## Day 2 – Exodus 2:11-22

- ① Read Exodus 2:11-22. Describe the events that we learn about Moses' early years. How did God preserve him?
- ② What does it mean to be a sojourner? How is this like the Christian life?
- ③ Study Hebrews 11:23-28 to learn more about Moses.

## Day 3 – Exodus 2:23-25

- 1 Read Exodus 2:23-25. Define “groan.” What was the situation that the Israelites were in? How did they respond?
- 2 What prevents you from crying out to God?
- 3 How do you feel about the fact that the people were suffering, and God knew? Does it help you or discourage you to think that God knows about your suffering, but in the moment, isn't fixing it the way you may want him to? Explain.

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study 1 Corinthians 1:25-31

For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is

low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (ESV)

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Three

I AM, Israel,  
and Us

D A N G R A N O

## Exodus 3

Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And 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.

Then the LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 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." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.’” And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’ But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians.”

# I AM, Israel, and Us

## Dan Grano

### Background

The second chapter of Exodus ends with unresolved tension. We have seen the affliction of the Israelite people – their heavy burdens, their harsh taskmasters, the murderous paranoia of Pharaoh. Even worse, their situation doesn't seem capable of changing. To them, this is always how it will be. Suffering is always terrible, but many of us know how amplified it feels when there is no end in sight.

Languishing in their suffering, the helpless Israelites call out to God for help. “Do you see our suffering? Do you hear our cries? Do you know what we are going through?” And what they received in response was silence. To them, it may have seemed like their prayers had changed nothing about their slavery. They woke up the next day and started the same routine. The same back-breaking labor. The same harsh treatment. The same death-sentence from Pharaoh for newborn baby boys.

Yet, in the midst of this tension, we are given a sense that the winds are changing. The narrative shifts its focus

to the perspective of God. The Israelites may not know it, but he hasn't been absent; the text tells us that their cries for deliverance have not been in vain. God heard. God saw. God knew (Exodus 2:24–25). The reiteration of these three-words conveys God's deep understanding of the situation. The only unresolved question coming into chapter three is what God will do about it.

### I AM WHO I AM

At the start of chapter three, God catches the attention of Moses through the burning bush and then communicates his comprehensive knowledge and loving concern for the Israelites' plight by using the same keywords from the end of chapter two. “I have surely *seen* the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have *heard* their cry, because of their taskmasters. I *know* their sufferings” (Exodus 3:7). God understands their situation completely. Even more, his love and commitment to them is compelling him to move. “I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians” (Exodus 3:8). God com-

forts Moses by saying that he will be with him as Moses confronts Pharaoh to demand the release of the Israelites.

Moses then asks God a question that no one had ever asked before: “What is your name?” God's response: “I AM WHO I AM... Tell this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you,’” (Exodus 3:13–14). ‘I AM’ is the divine name, ‘YHWH.’ Each time your Bible says ‘LORD’ in all-capitals, it is referring to the divine name of God—the name that he chose to give to himself above all others.

What is communicated by this unique way that God chose to identify himself? If we take what we know from other parts of the Bible, we could gather a list of different attributes of God that are implied by his name ‘I AM.’ Maybe we would mention his self-sufficiency, his supremacy, his eternity, or his sovereignty over all things. Maybe we would reference Exodus 34:6, where YHWH passes before Moses and proclaims his name as well as his character: “The LORD, The LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and

abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness....”

However, I wonder what it was like from Moses’ perspective to hear the actual name of God for the first time, without all the advantages we now have from seeing how God has revealed himself in the rest of the Bible. I can imagine Moses understandably thinking in the moment, “Okay, I now know you are called ‘I AM.’ But what does that *mean*? *Who* are you?” It’s not necessarily a bad question. It’s one that Pharaoh will ask in Exodus 5:2 with much less humility—“Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?” He hears the same name that Moses heard from the burning bush, but the name means nothing to him. That will soon change.

Throughout the rest of the Exodus story, God will display the greatness of I AM WHO I AM through unleashing awesome and terrible plagues, appearing in pillars of cloud and fire, parting the Red Sea, and doing many other wonders. In this way, he will further answer the question “Who is the LORD?” before Pharaoh, Moses, Israel, and us as readers 3,000+ years later. This is why the first meeting between Moses and I AM in chapter three is so important—it sets the stage for the rest of Exodus, and the rest of the Old Testament. It’s easy to focus our attention on the Israelites and the human players in the story, but the main character of Exodus (and the Bible) is the holy and terrifying I AM that has committed to ransom them.

## Israel and Us

I AM will continue to show his greatness to this generation of Israelites, but it often seems like they just don’t get it. God has told them his name, he has shown them his power, and he has made unbreakable promises to deliver them from Egypt and bring them to their promised land. Yet, Israel keeps doubting, falling, and failing. A few examples:

- They get thrown into a panic when Pharaoh’s army catches up to them by the Red Sea, even while God is leading them and guarding them by pillars of cloud and fire (Exodus 14:10).
- They whine to Moses when they get hungry, that it would have been better to be slaves in Egypt than to die in the wilderness (Exodus 16).
- They become impatient with Moses on Mt. Sinai (which they just saw literally smoking with the holiness of God) and make a golden calf to worship instead (Exodus 32).
- When they first spy out the promised land, they refuse to go in because they are scared of the large inhabitants (Numbers 13–14).

It’s like they don’t understand how having I AM on their side is a complete game-changer in every situation they encounter. As I read these stories, I find myself getting frustrated at them, and thinking, “Don’t you remember what God has done, and who he is? Do you remember any part of the story?” It’s al-

most too easy to pick on them for their lack of faith and their foolish, wandering hearts.

But here’s the thing—I am just like them. Israel’s story isn’t just an amazing true story; it’s also a metaphor for our hearts, one that plays out throughout the rest of the Bible. If I am honest with myself, Israel too often is a mirror of my spiritual condition. I, too, am quick to doubt God, becoming fearful and anxious when faced with life’s uncertainties. I, too, run after my own personal idols of comfort and glory. I, too, attempt to fix my own life and myself without regard for God, instead of acknowledging him in all my ways (Proverbs 3:6).

But thanks be to God for Jesus! While I was sinking down in the slavery of my sin, God sent Christ to deliver me from my bondage. He endured the suffering of the cross that he might ransom me to be part of his new covenant people. Christ removed sin’s penalty on me, is progressively freeing me from sin’s enslaving power over me, and one day will completely eradicate sin’s presence in me, when I behold the great I AM face to face in glory, no longer afraid and ashamed to look.

# Day 1 – Exodus 3:1-6

- 1 Read Exodus 3:1-6. Moses is now a shepherd in a Midianite clan, and has likely been for decades. Starting at Moses' birth, what unlikely events has God used to bring him to this exact place and time, which God has specifically chosen to speak with Moses?
- 2 God appears to Moses through a burning bush. What might the significance of this be?
- 3 Why would Moses be afraid to look at God? What does it mean to fear God? In what ways do you fear God?

## Day 2 – Exodus 3:7-12

- 1 Read Exodus 3:7-12. What implications do verses 7-9 have for our prayer life?
- 2 What about this passage reminds us of Jesus? Compare Moses' commissioning by God's powerful words with those for Jesus (see Matthew 3:13-17).
- 3 Moses doubts his ability to go to Pharaoh to bring the people out of Egypt. What makes Moses properly equipped for his commanded task? What tasks do you have to do that you feel ill-equipped to do, and how does faith in God help you take steps forward in your responsibilities?



## Day 3 – Exodus 3:13-22

- 1 Read Exodus 3:13-22. God repeatedly identifies himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He tells Moses to communicate this to the people of Israel. What significance would this identification have for them? What is this communicating about God?
- 2 Define “sovereign.” What does it mean that God is sovereign? How does this passage display God’s sovereignty and complete control over all things?
- 3 How does this passage display God’s goodness and love towards his people? How has God displayed goodness and love in your life? How was Jesus’ death a loving act from God?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study 1 Hebrews 13:7-9

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse

and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Four

E X O D U S 4

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Fear, Courage,  
and Obedience

A N A B R O W N

## Exodus 4

Then Moses answered, “But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘The LORD did not appear to you.’” The LORD said to him, “What is that in your hand?” He said, “A staff.” And he said, “Throw it on the ground.” So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. But the LORD said to Moses, “Put out your hand and catch it by the tail”—so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand—“that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” Again, the LORD said to him, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” And he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow. Then God said, “Put your hand back inside your cloak.” So he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh. “If they will not believe you,” God said, “or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. If they will not believe even these two signs or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.”

But Moses said to the LORD, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.” Then the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.” But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.” Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees

you, he will be glad in his heart. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him. And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs.”

Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Please let me go back to my brothers in Egypt to see whether they are still alive.” And Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.” And the LORD said to Moses in Midian, “Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead.” So Moses took his wife and his sons and had them ride on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

And the LORD said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. 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.’ If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’”

At a lodging place on the way the LORD met him and sought to put him to death. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin and touched Moses’ feet with it and said, “Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!” So he let him alone. It was then that she said, “A bridegroom of blood,” because of the circumcision.

The LORD said to Aaron, “Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.” So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him to speak, and all the signs that he had commanded him to do. Then Moses



and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.



# Fear, Courage, and Obedience

## Ana Brown

At the start of Exodus 4, we meet Moses at an incredible crossroads in his life. Yahweh has appeared to him in the most dramatic of scenes—a voice from a burning bush, instructing Moses to return to Egypt to be part of the rescue of God’s people. You can practically hear the music crescendo as Moses puffs with emboldened confidence in Yahweh’s power—at least this is how the scene would have unfolded in Hollywood. But the story was not portrayed by actors but by a flawed and fearful man, and the powerful, gracious, and faithful I AM.

While I read this passage, I was equally surprised, irritated, and empathetic with Moses’ response to God’s command. Surprised that a man who followed God’s voice in the midst of great danger began his story so fearfully. Irritated that despite multiple visual and physical representations of God’s omnipotence, Moses repeatedly protested and pleaded with God to pick someone else. And yet, entirely empathetic because I likely would have responded with equal, if not greater,

objection to facing certain ridicule and possible physical harm. So, what is the relationship between courage, fear, and obedience when it comes to listening to God?

While beautiful when they go together, we learn through this story that obedience to God does not require fearlessness. Fearlessness is not a strict prerequisite to obeying the Lord. In fact, there is something especially beautiful and faithful about obeying the Lord’s voice even when you are terrified. Moses certainly was not the only man who was terrified of God’s command, yet ultimately, he obeyed. Consider Jonah who ran from God before obeying. Or Gideon, who continued to ask that God show him his power and plan before obeying (Judges 6:36–40). Or Mary, who was terrified of Gabriel’s message regarding the conception of Christ, yet faithfully submitted to God’s will (Luke 1:30–31, 38). Even Christ, who was obedient to death on a cross (Philippians 2:8), pleaded with God to change the plan (Matthew 26:39). God did not command Moses to be fearless or

to “buck up.” Instead, he commanded Moses to continue in obedience, trusting that God was strong enough and faithful to do what he promised.

Perhaps I’m the only person who mentally practices conversations prior to them occurring. Whether it’s a difficult conversation delivering bad news or something as silly as convincing a customer service agent to give me a refund, I want control over what comes from my mouth in the hope that I can influence the other person’s response.

For that reason, I empathize with Moses’ concern. It would be disconcerting for Moses—who claimed to be a poor communicator—to need to deliver a message to people who had previously rejected him (Exodus 2:13–14) without a script to practice. God did not validate his excuses, nor did God attempt to convince Moses that he was the right man for the job. Rather, God provided Moses every tool in the book for “success” despite Moses’ perceived inadequacies. “You aren’t sure people will listen? I will give you miraculous signs that they cannot ignore. You aren’t el-

loquent in speech? I will be your mouth and speak for you. You don't want to go? I will send Aaron with you to bear your burden and speak." He eliminated every one of Moses' excuses, but Moses still pleaded with God to send someone else.

God would have been entirely justified to allow his anger to consume Moses, or at the least to leave Moses behind in Midian, rather than including him in his plan of salvation for his people. Instead of leaving Moses in his fear and excluding him from God's great plan for Israel's salvation, God not only continued with Moses as the leader for the people of Israel, he also provided relief for Moses' fear at every turn.

We don't actually know what caused Moses to finally obey the Lord. Did he realize his excuses were pointless? Did he finally trust that God would provide? Or was he frightened by the Lord's anger? Or was he simply just tired out from protesting and finally gave in to obedience?

Reading this story in 2019, we have the luxury of knowing how it ends. In

fact, it almost seems ironic how perfectly the story unfolds, just as God said it would. Look at the first verse of this chapter, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice..." and the last verse of the chapter, "And the people believed..." I can't help but wonder if Moses felt silly and ashamed for questioning God once it was all over. There was absolutely no deviation from what God told Moses from the start. And, as we know, God did, in fact, harden Pharaoh's heart, yet still delivered Israel from their oppressor. And ultimately, we know that has God fulfilled all of his promises in providing Jesus Christ to save his people from their sin. God always does what he says.

While I scoffed at Moses initially, I had to ask myself, do I trust in who God says he is? Do I trust him to do what he promises? Do I actually and actionably believe that when he urges me to open my mouth he will speak for me? Do I obey him, even when I am terrified or uncertain? Do I remind myself of Psalm 56:3, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you"? Or believe the words of 2 Cor-

inthians 12:9, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness'"?

The start of Moses' role in delivering Israel from Egypt was not nearly as dramatic or epic as one might expect. In fact, it was somewhat pathetic. Moses shows us that God includes flawed and fearful people in the fulfillment of his promises. Fearlessness is not a prerequisite for obedience, and many times there will be great fear that accompanies obeying God. Perhaps the best way to grow in confidence of God's provision and promises is to obey in spite of our fear. God does not expect fearlessness, but he does demand obedience and deserve our trust. When we are afraid of what God is asking of us, let us recall the times that he has been faithful both to his people in the Bible and to us in the 21st century. And then, though our hands may still be trembling, let us pray that the Lord will sustain us to move forward in obedience.

# Day 1 – Exodus 4:1-9

- 1 Read Exodus 4:1-9. How do these three miraculous signs foreshadow the future for Moses? How do they foreshadow Christ?
- 2 Why do you think there is such a focus on Moses' hands in these signs? What is it meant to signify?
- 3 What does it mean to Israel to know that the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, had appeared to Moses? What does it mean to you that this same God entered into this world in Christ, who is now available to you by faith?

## Day 2 – Exodus 4:10-17

- 1 Read Exodus 4:10-17. Why do you think that God provided Aaron to go with Moses, rather than send Moses alone? Why did God allow for this provision?
- 2 What is an excuse or a perceived inadequacy that has stopped you from obeying God?
- 3 Why do you think Moses finally obeyed and went to Egypt? Do you think he fully trusted God before he began his travel to Egypt?

## Day 3 – Exodus 4:18-31

- 1 Read Exodus 4:18-31. How did Moses' disobedience to God's covenant nearly thwart the plan? Why do you think the story of Zipporah is included in this passage?
- 2 What is a time that God was faithful, despite your disbelief? How did he fulfill his promises to you?
- 3 What aspect of God's character have you come to understand more fully through Exodus 4?





# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Five

When Obedience  
Is Hard

H A A K O N H A N S E N

# Exodus 5

Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” 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.” Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens.” And Pharaoh said, “Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!” The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, “You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks that they made in the past you shall impose on them, you shall by no means reduce it, for they are idle. Therefore they cry, ‘Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.’ Let heavier work be laid on the men that they may labor at it and pay no regard to lying words.”

So the taskmasters and the foremen of the people went out and said to the people, “Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I will not give you straw. Go and get your straw yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced in the least.’” So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The taskmasters were urgent, saying, “Complete your work, your daily task each day, as when there was straw.” And the foremen of the people of Israel, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, “Why have you not done all your task of making bricks today and yesterday, as in the past?”

Then the foremen of the people of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, “Why do you treat your servants like this? No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, ‘Make bricks!’ And behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is in your own people.” But he said, “You are idle, you are idle; that is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.’ Go now and work. No straw will be given you, but you must still deliver the same number of bricks.” The foremen of the people of Israel saw that they were in trouble when they said, “You shall by no means reduce your number of bricks, your daily task each day.” They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them, as they came out from Pharaoh; and they said to them, “The LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

Then Moses turned to the LORD and said, “O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.”

# When Obedience Is Hard

## Haakon Hansen

There are times where reading the Bible instructs me and impacts me in different ways. Sometimes, God's word is very clear and direct: "do this, don't do that." Or "this is good, and that is bad." Remembering my simple and forgetful brain, God is gracious to give me direct instruction at times. However, there are times where God makes me work a little harder for instruction. He doesn't give a clear commandment, or the outcome of following one of his clear commandments is very uncertain. Exodus 5 captures both of those realities for me.

In chapter four, just before this, God had been meeting with Moses to direct him about returning to Egypt. God had told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him to "let my son go that he may serve me," referring to the people of Israel as God's son who was in slavery to the Egyptians. This is an example of a direct commandment from the Lord. He told Moses what to do and what to say very clearly. The challenge for Moses comes in chapter five, where he carries out this commandment.

After Moses returns to Egypt, he speaks to Pharaoh as God had instructed him. At this point, it is interesting to me to pause and think about what Moses anticipated the outcome of following God's commandment would be. Did he think that Pharaoh would listen to him, or did he think that Pharaoh would get mad, or some combination of both? Whatever expectations Moses had, I don't think he was prepared for the outcome that happened. After Pharaoh heard what Moses had to say, he mocked God and accused Moses of lying for the sake of laziness. Pharaoh then made the Israelites' day-jobs much harder by taking away their supply of straw for making bricks. The Israelites now had to find and gather their own straw, as well as make the same number of bricks they did when straw was supplied for them. And this is where the chapter ends—with Pharaoh angry, the Israelites miserable, and Moses in despair asking God why he had him do this.

To summarize, at the conclusion of Exodus 5 we have seen the following

progression: a clear command from God was obeyed; the obedience of that command led to social, civil, physical, emotional, and spiritual hardship; and there was no clear answer for when it would all get better.

I have felt like this before. There have been times where I knew I needed to obey God in a given area, or I knew I needed to speak out or separate myself from something earthly. And I knew that it would cause me social hardship.

When I think about these situations, reading Exodus 5 helps me in two ways. First, I am helped to see examples of men in Moses and Aaron, who obey God when he commands something. They heard from God, God's command was clear, and they executed on what God had commanded. They didn't ponder the outcome for days or weeks. They simply obeyed. This is so hard to do, and having a clear example of this is helpful.

Second, while chapter 5 ends with the Israelites and Moses feeling lost and in despair, I know what happens in the proceeding chapters. I know

that God does not leave them there and that he ultimately delivers them. This is where I find the most comfort. There will be times when following God's commandments will bring some sort of experiential trial into my life. This may mean looking awkward to a co-worker or neighbor for how I parent my children. This may mean offending a family member for what I believe the Bible says about a certain topic. This may mean irritating my employer for my unwillingness to participate in certain activities. In all of these situations, if I imagine them now, it is so much easier to see the Exodus 5 part of it. I can imagine and see the discomfort that obeying God in these situations would produce. But I must remember that there is more to the story. Exodus chapter 14 is coming; God will deliver me out of the hands of any oppressor. Though I may not be able to see it now, in the end, it will be shown that obeying God was worth it and all other actions would have been futile.

So, the next time I come to an Exodus 5 moment in my life, I will remem-

ber Moses and Aaron and their example of prompt obedience. I will also remember that regardless of the immediate, experiential outcome of my obedience, my story will not end there. There are more chapters, and God will deliver me. He will show me that any obedience to him will be worth it.



# Day 1 – Exodus 5:1-9

- 1 Read Exodus 5:1-9. Describe the various characters in the story and how they are interacting. Who wants what? What are their goals in the negotiations? Why?
- 2 Has there been a time when the prospect of obeying God’s command has seemed to lead to sure social hardship? If so, how did you proceed in following God’s command?
- 3 What does Pharaoh say in 5:2? How is his response thematic in the descriptions of the coming plagues? See 7:5, 7:17, 8:10, 8:22, 9:14, 9:29, 10:2, 11:7. Would you say that you “know” God? In what ways? In what ways do you not “know” God?

## Day 2 – Exodus 5:10-21

- 1 Read Exodus 5:10-21. Describe the social breakdown that is happening. Why is this community/nation not thriving?
- 2 Have you ever felt frustration with God because of something he commands? How have you processed or expressed that frustration?
- 3 Does God's presence and involvement guarantee immediate results? Explain the timeline these Israelites were dealing with even while God had been involved. Why is time such a challenge? Define patience. Why is patience so important, and how do you grow in being patient?

## Day 3 – Exodus 5:22-23

- 1 Read Exodus 5:22-23. What is Moses' perspective on how things are going? What is Moses' attitude towards God? Where does Moses go with these thoughts and emotions?
- 2 Have you ever prayed a similar prayer to Moses in these verses? How did God meet you in your prayer?
- 3 How would you help Moses if you were to talk with him in his discouragement of how things are going? What would you say? Is there someone in your life that is feeling similar to Moses? What could you say to them? Should you be intentional to talk with them?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled

to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Six

E X O D U S 6

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# The Sovereign Redeemer

N I C O L E G R A N O



# Exodus 6

But the LORD said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.”

God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. 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. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.’” Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

So the LORD said to Moses, “Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land.” But Moses said to the LORD, “Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?” But the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

These are the heads of their fathers' houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the clans of Reuben. The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the clans of Simeon. These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the years of the life of Levi being 137 years. The sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei, by their clans. The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, the years of the life of Kohath being 133 years. The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their generations. Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years. The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. Aaron took as his wife Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the clans of the Korahites. Eleazar, Aaron's son, took as his wife one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans.

These are the Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: "Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt by their hosts." It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron.

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?"

# The Sovereign Redeemer

## Nicole Grano

**D**o you ever experience seasons of life in which it feels like God is really trying to emphasize or remind you of some truth about himself? Perhaps it starts with a few sermons, articles, or Bible verses you stumble upon that refresh this truth for you, but soon enough, you see it everywhere. More “random” run-ins with the topic that progressively register in your brain as not-so-random. Soon enough you’re thinking, “*Okay God, I’m tracking. You want me to pay close attention to this. You want this to press deeper into my heart.*” I feel like I’m in one of those seasons.

God has been using the past several months to refresh and grow my heart in understanding the marvelous truth that he is completely sovereign over all things and fully committed to working all things together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28). So, when I read my assigned chapter for *The Quarterly* – Exodus 6 – I had to chuckle when this same theme of sovereignty and compassion showed up yet again.

So let’s dive into Exodus 6. God already gave Moses his charge to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Pharaoh was unsurprisingly opposed to this, and the Israelites were tasked with harder labor. The people hurled their frustrations at Moses and Aaron, and Moses, in turn, cried out to God with his own frustrations about how the plan was going so far.

God is aware of all of this. What’s more, he is in complete control. We don’t have to guess or assume that. He already said in Exodus 4:21 that he would harden Pharaoh’s heart so that Pharaoh would not let the people go. God then says in Exodus 6:1, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh...” So he told Moses that Pharaoh would be hardened and follows up with *now look what I’m going to do next*. It’s not an improvisation. It’s not a reflex or reaction. It’s a plan. He wasn’t looking at the situation with the Israelites increased labor and thinking, “Well...that backfired more than I was expecting.” Nothing catches God off guard. He begins and ends his speech in verses 2–8 with, “I

am the LORD.” He is telling Moses, “I am *Yahweh*, I have all authority. But that’s not all. I am also merciful and compassionate.”

Exodus 6:2–8 is a mini monologue from the Lord to Moses, recapping his historical relationship with the Israelite people. He reminds Moses (and the Israelites, and us) that he established a covenant with the forefathers of Israel. He holds himself accountable to his covenants—always. He then addresses the present situation with his people, and the language he uses should make our hearts swell: “I have heard the groaning of the people...and I have remembered my covenant...I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens...I will deliver you...I will redeem you...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...I will bring you into the land that I swore to give...I am the LORD.”

God has made big-picture promises to the Israelite people, and he has not forgotten them. Not only that, but he says that he has heard the groaning

of the people. He hears the individual cries and pleas and fears and frustrations. He has heard, and he has not forgotten. His response is tender as if to say, “*Hang tight. It may not feel like it, but I’m already at work.*” What a comfort for the Israelites’ weary hearts—and ours.

Thousands of years later, on this side of the life and death of Jesus Christ, these promises have been fulfilled and further fleshed out. God has established in Exodus 6 (as well as the rest of the Old Testament) that he is in control, he loves his people, and he keeps his promises. That’s more than enough to cling to. But he offers even more to us than the Israelites had so long ago under the rule of Pharaoh.

I’m not sure where Exodus 6 lands in your Bible, but in mine, it starts on page 48. My Bible contains 1042 pages, not including the maps, concordance, etc. We have hundreds and hundreds of years of God continuing to be faithful to his children and his glory. We have the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have the New Covenant. We have the letters from the apostles

further detailing what this all means for our lives. We now have the continuous story that we see condensed in Exodus 6 and the rest of Exodus: God is the sovereign, compassionate maker of all things, who is weaving together a story of rescue and deliverance, in which he is glorified and we are redeemed.

So, as I mentioned at the start of this article, God has been reminding me of his perfect sovereignty and perfect goodness *a lot* over the past few months. Eventually, I wrote a short note to myself – sharpie scrawled on a plain white sheet of paper – and taped it to the wall beside my bed. It is my reminder each morning when I wake up. It says,

GOD HAS BOUND HIMSELF, BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, TO DO GOOD TO YOU ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE. ALL YOUR PAIN AND ALL YOUR PLEASURES ARE MERCY. EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU, BOTH BIG AND SMALL, JOYFUL AND SAD, MUST FIRST PASS THROUGH THE HANDS OF GOD. HE HAS CHOSEN TO LOVE YOU, AND HE IS FIERCELY COMMITTED TO HIS CHILDREN AND HIS GLORY.

This is the God we see in Exodus 6. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

# Day 1 – Exodus 6:1-5

- 1 Read Exodus 6:1-5. Define “strong.” What does strength look like to you? What does God commit and promise in regard to what he will do with Pharaoh and the Israelites? What did God say to Moses?
- 2 In Exodus 6:3 God says, “I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.” Why do you think that is? Why was Moses the first one God told his name (YAHWEH) to?
- 3 Define “groan.” What were the Israelites groaning about and how did God react? See Exodus 2:23-24. What covenant is God referring to, and why is it important? What things do you groan about? What do you do with your groanings?

## Day 2 – Exodus 6:6-13

- 1 Read Exodus 6:6-13. What does God want Moses to say to the Israelites? How do the Israelites respond? What is a “broken spirit”?
- 2 God tells Moses to let the Israelites know he’s coming on a rescue mission to save them, and they don’t believe Moses “because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.” Is there a promise from God you’re not believing right now because of external or internal circumstances?
- 3 Describe the interaction between Moses and God about dealing with Pharaoh. How would you feel if you were Moses? Has God put you in a tough position this week to do a difficult task? How have you responded?

## Day 3 – Exodus 6:14-30

- 1 Read Exodus 6:14-30. The passage includes the genealogy of Moses and Aaron. It seems random – almost like an awkward interjection into the flow of the story – but we know that all scripture is breathed out by God, so it must be there for a reason. Why do you think it is included at all? And why might it be right there, specifically?
- 2 What details and what notes of emphasis does the author make in 6:26-27? Why is getting out of Egypt a massive ordeal?
- 3 The author picks up where they left off in verses 10-12. What details and what notes of emphasis does the author make in 6:28-30? Describe Moses' demeanor towards God. What does Moses mean by his statement?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Ephesians 6:10-13

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities,

against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

## Notes

A large grid of small dots for taking notes, consisting of 20 rows and 50 columns.



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

A large grid of small dots, arranged in approximately 30 rows and 40 columns, covering most of the page. This grid is intended for taking notes during a sermon.



Week Seven

E X O D U S 7 - 1 0

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Great Is Your  
Faithfulness

A S H L E Y V I E H A U S E R

## Exodus 7–10

And the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.” Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh.

Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’” So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs. Still Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. And you shall say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, “Let my

people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.” But so far, you have not obeyed. Thus says the LORD, “By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood. The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile.”” And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.’”

Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile.

Seven full days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs. The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. The

frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.””  
And the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!’” So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. But the magicians did the same by their secret arts and made frogs come up on the land of Egypt.

Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Plead with the LORD to take away the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” Moses said to Pharaoh, “Be pleased to command me when I am to plead for you and for your servants and for your people, that the frogs be cut off from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile.” And he said, “Tomorrow.” Moses said, “Be it as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God. The frogs shall go away from you and your houses and your servants and your people. They shall be left only in the Nile.” So Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to the LORD about the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses. The frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.’” And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. The magicians tried by their secret arts to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pha-

raoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself to Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. Or else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants and your people, and into your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall happen.”’” And the LORD did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies.

Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” But Moses said, “It would not be right to do so, for the offerings we shall sacrifice to the LORD our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? We must go three days’ journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as he tells us.” So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you must not go very far away. Plead for me.” Then Moses said, “Behold, I am going out from you and I will plead with the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow. Only let not Pharaoh cheat again by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.” So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. And the LORD did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants,



and from his people; not one remained. But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, behold, the hand of the LORD will fall with a very severe plague upon your livestock that are in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.”’” And the LORD set a time, saying, “Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land.” And the next day the LORD did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died. And Pharaoh sent, and behold, not one of the livestock of Israel was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.” So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians. But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and

your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. You are still exalting yourself against my people and will not let them go. Behold, about this time tomorrow I will cause very heavy hail to fall, such as never has been in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Now therefore send, get your livestock and all that you have in the field into safe shelter, for every man and beast that is in the field and is not brought home will die when the hail falls on them.”” Then whoever feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh hurried his slaves and his livestock into the houses, but whoever did not pay attention to the word of the LORD left his slaves and his livestock in the field.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every plant of the field, in the land of Egypt.” Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them, “This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God’s thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”

Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD’s. But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God.” (The flax and the barley were struck down, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the emmer were not struck down, for they are late in coming up.) So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine among them, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your grandson how I have dealt harshly with the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am the LORD.”

So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, “Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country, and they shall cover the face of the land, so that no one can see the land. And they shall eat what is left to you after the hail, and they shall eat every tree of yours that grows in the field, and they shall fill your houses and the houses of all your servants and of all the Egyptians, as neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day they came on earth to this day.’” Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?" So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. And he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. But which ones are to go?" Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old. We will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds, for we must hold a feast to the LORD." But he said to them, "The LORD be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Look, you have some evil purpose in mind. No! Go, the men among you, and serve the LORD, for that is what you are asking." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, so that they may come upon the land of Egypt and eat every plant in the land, all that the hail has left." So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts. The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt. Then Pharaoh hastily called Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. Now therefore, forgive my sin, please, only this once, and plead with the LORD your God only to remove this death from me." So he went out from Pharaoh and pleaded with the LORD. And the LORD turned the wind into a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea. Not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt. But

the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel had light where they lived. Then Pharaoh called Moses and said, "Go, serve the LORD; your little ones also may go with you; only let your flocks and your herds remain behind." But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must take of them to serve the LORD our God, and we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there." But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; take care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die." Moses said, "As you say! I will not see your face again."



# Great Is Your Faithfulness

Ashley Viehauser

I love the book of Exodus, particularly because it's so full of blatant expressions of God's power. From sending plague after plague throughout a nation, to parting an ocean, to raining down manna from heaven, God's power and his faithfulness to his people are undeniable. I had been working through the book of Exodus for some time, as well as reading a New Testament book simultaneously. I love to see both the consistency and the contrast of the "game-changing" impact of Jesus' resurrection in reading Old and New Testament books of the Bible. Recently I opened my Bible to begin reading where I had left off in 1 Corinthians, but I felt the Lord prompt me to turn to Exodus instead. I did so, turning to Exodus and finding where I had last read, about halfway through the book. As I began to read, I felt another prompting; *start from the beginning*. I turned to chapter one and began reading the book over again, wondering what the Spirit of God might intend to reveal to me.

As I read, I noticed a pattern of God asserting his authority. He sought Mo-

ses, spoke to him, and laid the tremendous call before him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses, consumed by fear and doubt, did not want to do what the Lord asked of him. Multiple times God proceeded to show Moses his power and command him to go, promising to be with him and to deliver his people out of Egypt. Moses continued to refuse God's command, and the word says that the anger of the Lord was kindled towards Moses—rightfully so, all authority belongs to him, and he most certainly has the right to tell us what to do. I continued to read of God's authority, as Moses traveled to Egypt with specific instructions from the Lord in what to do and say. On the road to Egypt, while traveling with his family, God met Moses and sought to put him to death for his lack of obedience in circumcising his son, but spared Moses once his son was immediately circumcised. I read of God casting plagues over the people and the land of Egypt, as God continued to instruct Moses' words. But Pharaoh's heart was continually hardened under God's authority,

just as he told Moses it would be, and Pharaoh continued to disobey God.

I read through the first plague of God turning the Nile River into blood, and through the second plague of God bringing frogs up to cover the land, and the third and fourth plagues of gnats and flies covering the houses of the Egyptians. I was amazed in a fresh way at the sheer power of God, and at the righteous judgment he could pour out against those who have disobeyed him. After four plagues, and after even Pharaoh's magicians recognized God's authority, Pharaoh asked Moses to plead with God on his behalf. I suddenly came to the verse that struck me and stopped me in my reading: "So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the Lord. *And the Lord did as Moses asked, and removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained*" (Exodus 8:30-31). I reread the beginning of verse 31 multiple times, "The Lord did what Moses asked."

I was rocked in a new way by the reality that God listened to Moses. The

previous chapters had been full of God instructing, asking, and commanding. He is God—he has the right to call the shots and owes us nothing. Who is Moses, to ask of God? Moses hadn't even listened to God or trusted him in the way he should have. But God *listened* to Moses. Not only did God do as Moses asked, he did it in full—not even one fly remained.

I was filled with amazement at a second pattern throughout the book of Exodus: God's faithfulness to his people. There was nothing that Moses did in his own power or authority to earn or command God's ear. Instead, God chose Moses. God revealed his beautiful character of love and faithfulness to his people through his pursuit of Moses. God saved Moses from Pharaoh's command that he and all Hebrew baby boys be killed. God's favor was evident when the queen found Moses in a basket in the river and decided to raise him as a son. When Moses grew and left Egypt, God didn't lose sight of him. God sought Moses and called him by name to be God's mouthpiece and lead his

people out of Egypt. Even in the midst of Moses' doubt, when God was more than enough to do what he promised he would, God allowed Moses to take his brother Aaron to do the talking that Moses was afraid to do. When Moses prayed and asked things of God, God chose to answer his request, despite Moses' displays of disobedience, doubt, and weakness along the way.

God is faithful. He has promised his faithfulness to those who belong to him, and his covenant and promises to his people will not be broken. We who are in Christ are his people. We share in the unearned favor and faithfulness from God that was displayed to Moses and the people of Israel. And how much more certain for us, being bought with the blood of Jesus? We know that Jesus has broken the dividing wall of hostility that our disobedience created, paying for it on the cross. We now have an open invitation to approach the throne of God with confidence and make our requests known to him. What an amazing reality that we have the ear of the all-powerful and most high God, and

the promise of his faithfulness to us. Let's trust in his promises to us, knowing he cannot and will not break them. And let's ask of God with assurance, knowing that we belong to him. Our Savior is interceding, we're sealed with the guarantee of the Holy Spirit, and our Father is listening—what are we waiting for?



# Day 1 – Exodus 7:1-25

- 1 Read Exodus 7:1-25. What does it mean that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? What is God planning to do with his people? What signs did Moses and Aaron perform, and what was the point of doing these signs?
- 2 God encourages Moses. How does God reaffirm Moses? Where can you see patterns of God's faithfulness in your life?
- 3 Define "plague." Describe the first plague (see Revelation 11:6). Why do you think Pharaoh's heart remained hardened towards God? In what ways is your heart hardened towards God? What can you do to help soften your heart towards God? See Psalm 95:7-8 and Hebrews 3:7-4:13.

## Day 2 – Exodus 8:1-9:35

- 1 Read Exodus 8:1-9:35. Describe the plagues in this section. What pattern or themes are happening with these plagues?
- 2 What thing deep in Pharaoh's heart is preventing him from giving his life to God and listening to him? Can you relate to Pharaoh in any way?
- 3 What did Moses ask of God in these plague events? Do you make a habit of communing with God and asking of him the things of your heart? In times that you don't, what keeps you from doing so?

## Day 3 – Exodus 10:1-29

- ① Read Exodus 10:1-29. What new plagues show up in this chapter? What is the purpose of these plagues? Describe how Pharaoh's demeanor and attitude change during these plague sequences.
  
- ② Describe the impact that Moses has when he prays and calls out to God. In what ways have you seen God graciously answer your prayers and move through your requests? How do you handle it when God doesn't give you what you think are answers to good and honorable requests?
  
- ③ Describe God's power and authority in these plague sequences. In what areas of your life do you need reminders of God's authority? In what areas of your life do you need reminders of God's faithfulness?


# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Ephesians 6:10-13

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called

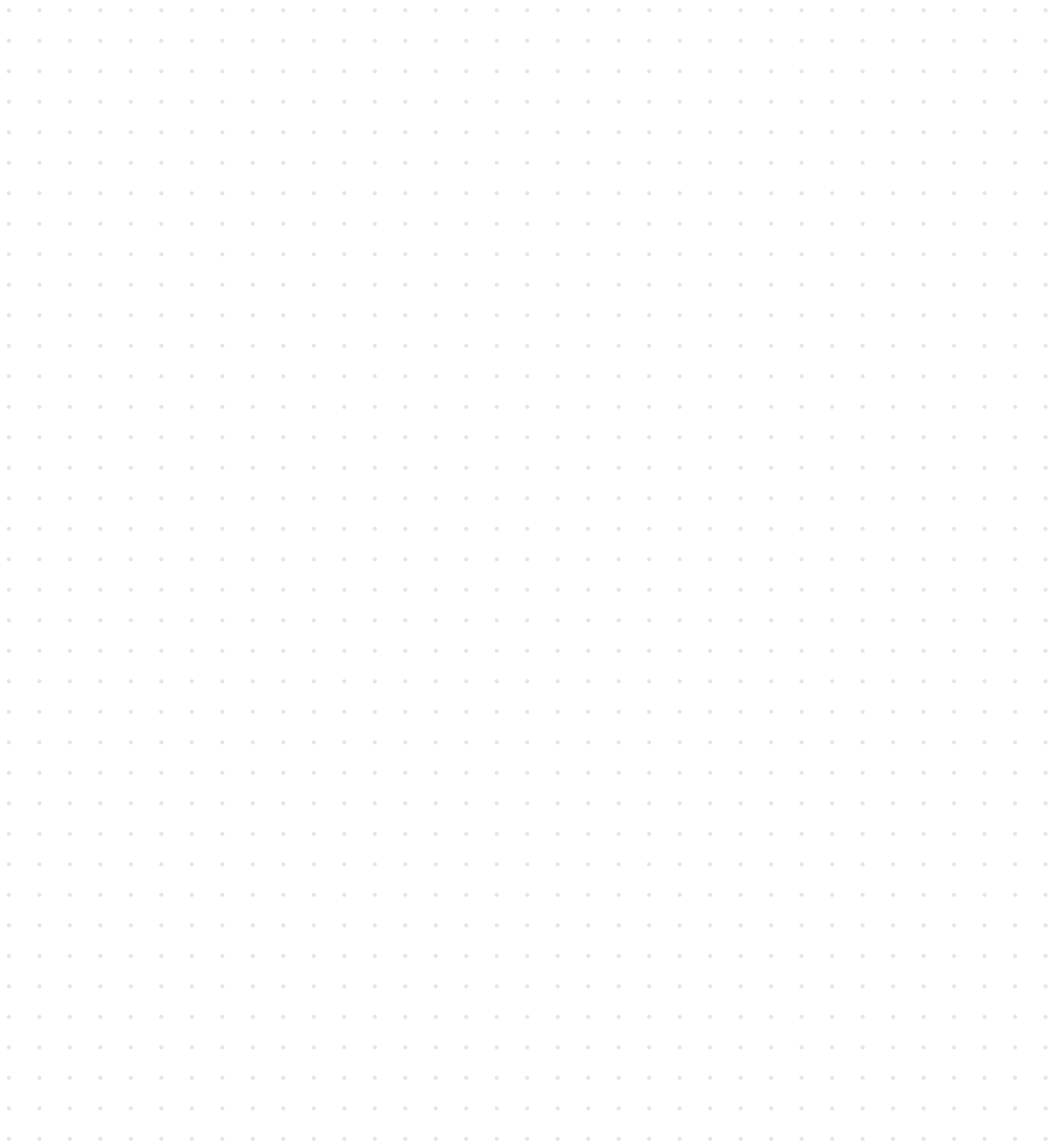
“today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Eight

E X O D U S 11 - 13

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So That We  
Remember That  
He Is the Lord

S H U A N G S U N D Q U I S T



## Exodus 11–13

The LORD said to Moses, “Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely. Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.” And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants and in the sight of the people.

So Moses said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle. There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.’ And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, ‘Get out, you and all the people who follow you.’ And after that I will go out.” And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”

Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for a lamb, then

he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those

days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread.”

Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. And when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ you shall say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the LORD’s Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.’” And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the first-

born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. And 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 someone was not dead. Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, “Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!”

The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, “We shall all be dead.” So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders. The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, but every slave that is bought for

money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. No foreigner or hired worker may eat of it. It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

The LORD said to Moses, “Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.”

Then Moses said to the people, “Remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand the LORD brought you out from this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten. Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. And when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory. You shall tell your son on that day, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ And it shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand the

LORD has brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this statute at its appointed time from year to year.

“When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you, you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your animals that are males shall be the LORD’s. Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. And when in time to come your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall say to him, ‘By a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the males that first open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ It shall be as a mark on your hand or frontlets between your eyes, for by a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.”

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, “Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.” But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here.” And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

# So That We Remember That He Is the Lord

## Shuang Sundquist

Reading the Old Testament, especially with all those details concerning how to present sacrifices to the Lord, makes me feel very connected, since I grew up in a traditional Chinese home. I am tremendously thankful for how the Lord revealed himself to me, so that I am not just following the patterns and ceremonies of how to worship a god, but I know whom I should worship—the one, true God who proclaimed his sovereignty over the earth and above the heavens, the One who said to Moses, “I am who I am!” Sadly, many traditional Chinese families who embrace the values of submissiveness, honesty, and selflessness have simply known how to act godly, but they’ve never dared ask the question about who is the true God.

Therefore, Chinese people have been very attracted by the power of ritual formalities for over five thousand years, believing that those complicated and outward acts of obedience can balance the inward afflictions and bitterness, yielding fruitful harmony. This quest

is shared by the most renowned scholars and the lowliest of farmers.

Humanity’s zeal and attraction for creating worldly patterns to satisfy the mystery of their spiritual thirst is not exclusive to the Chinese people. For example, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah copied the pattern of the altar from Damascus to sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, which had defeated him (see 2 Kings 16:10–16; 2 Chronicles 28:22–27)—because king Ahaz regarded that god as someone who should comply with his human desires. That is a man-made god instead of the real God, for the real God is who he is. He’s not submissive to anyone’s will, but only to himself.

It is very necessary for me to share this cultural background before I share Aaron’s testimony with the Lord. Aaron and I are college friends, and he founded a non-profit organization in China called *The Institute of Chinese Classics* (“国学会, guó xué huì”). He is a very devoted, disciplined, and traditional Chinese scholar, which means he has read and even recited many books

of Chinese classics, and part of them have included Buddhism and Taoism books. Aaron paid a visit to me in October 2015. Matt, my then boyfriend and now husband, and I took him to the Twin Cities Chinese Christian Church. When everyone was worshiping the Lord with praises, Aaron’s arm started aching to a degree that he looked pale and could not take the pain any more. Aaron was very touched by the real humility he saw from a Christian couple, Jim and Carol Chang, who brought me to Christ and showed me the way to follow Jesus and his commandments in daily life. Aaron desired that kind of pure love and connections among people in the church. And he sensed that the peace, joy, and security Christians have are not determined by worldly pursuits, social status, or educational intelligence.

I was very concerned by his pain and I was afraid of losing our friendship by telling him about the true God, but I was strengthened by the Holy Spirit that I needed to make Truth available to him. I suggested,

Aaron, I understand it is hard for you to believe that the true God you have been seeking is neither Buddha nor Tao, but Jehovah. You have known me for five years, and you know I have not harmed or lied to you, and all I have wanted for you is good. If you truly trust in our friendship, you should know I am being serious that there is only One God. If there are two gods on this earth, who should we listen to when they have conflicts? Yet, I truly understand it would be hard for you to right away forsake what you have believed true as not true, but may I suggest you at least put away your Buddhism books? If it were me, I would throw them away, which is exactly what I did after following Jesus.

I had shared with Aaron the details of a dream God revealed to me one night right after I confessed that Jesus is my Savior. Long story short, God revealed to me in a dream that I had unclean things in my bedroom where I grew up. I had that dream while I was

still in America, so about six months later when I got home, I threw away my old Buddhism book that were in my bedroom.

I continued explaining to Aaron,

Someday, at the appointed time, my God will enable you to throw away your Buddhism books too; but right now, as it is showing in your arm pain, maybe God is telling you something and you should move forward with a little bit of trust, and see what my God is going to do for you.

Aaron went back to China and asked his friend to take care of his Buddhism books, and he let me know of that. I started asking other Christians who also know Aaron to keep praying that the Lord works by his Mighty power to move Aaron's heart to return to the real God. One day, I heard from others that Aaron took a group of people to the Buddhism temple for a "cultural immersion trip," including my students from the non-profit organization I founded in China. I feared greatly and

knelt down to ask the Lord to forgive Aaron's hardened heart. I was also disappointed and angry for how quickly my hope was dejected (the Lord has been curing me from being judgmental, impatient, and weakened in trusting God's sovereignty). I knew the enemy was attacking and pursuing Aaron for his past attachments. I pleaded with the Lord that for the sake of his own name, he would pursue Aaron as his own so that he would not allow the enemy to destroy his plan, for the Lord does not share his glory with evilness.

Later, after I got married in 2016, I got a message from Aaron that he decided to give his life to Jesus. I jumped like a crazy person, filled by surpassing joy that overflowed in my body! My husband and I called him together, and the three of us knelt down to give praises to the Lord over the phone—for his mercy is real and new to whomever comes to him for life! Aaron's faith has been a great encouragement to me and whoever knows him. He loves getting his daily nutrition from the Word, and I think he spends at least one hour read-



ing the Bible every day, no matter how late his job delays him. God did not just cleanse his past attachments, but also uses Aaron's trained discipline to gain knowledge in Christ so that he can be equipped and protected against any spiritual lies. I saw him last time when Matt and I had our second marriage celebration in China. Aaron was sharing Jesus's story with my uncles and other friends.

When I read Exodus 11-13, the word *remembrance* stands out. In Chinese characters, we can use “纪念, jì niàn” to translate the word remembrance. The first Chinese character means “to record and engrave,” and the second Chinese character means “to use heart to read aloud and ponder over deeply.” It is just amazing to hear directly from Jehovah how he demonstrated his reasons for asking the people of Israel to follow the rite, concerning the exact details of how to dip the hyssop in the blood to touch the lintel and the two doorposts (Exodus 12:21-28). Jehovah took his people out of Egypt so that their children shall remember it as a real and historic event of salvation. God did it so that we all remember that he is the Lord. Sadly, many Chinese people where I grew up have only remembered the outward frame of many rites, but they have forsaken the one true God.

Therefore, when I was reading the Old Testament, many ceremonial details are very similar with the culture I grew up with, but I need to be cautious that it is not the frame of worship that saves, but the One who *took us out of Egypt*. “Such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God.

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:4-6).



# Day 1 – Exodus 11:1-10

- 1 Read Exodus 11:1-3. Write out all the roles/people who were involved. What are the relationships among all those roles?
- 2 Read Exodus 11:4-9. In what way did the Lord “make a distinction between Egypt and Israel”? How did God resolve the problem because of the distinction between holiness and unholiness? Study Ephesians 2:11-13.
- 3 Read Exodus 11:10. How do you understand “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart”? Describe Pharaoh’s responsibility in all this. In your life, how do you handle the truth that God is sovereign, and humans are still responsible?

## Day 2 – Exodus 12:1-51

- ① Read Exodus 12:1-20. How many days did the Lord give the people of Israel to prepare a lamb? What are the features of the lamb prepared to be sacrificed? Was the manner very loose when eating the sacrificed lamb? What was the essence of eating the lamb (See John 6:52-58)? What was the purpose of the blood on the doorposts?
  
- ② Read Exodus 12:21-36. What was the reason to keep the rite as a generational statute concerning dipping the hyssop in the blood and then touching the lintel and the two doorposts? Did Moses, Aaron, and the people of Israel have to create any manner or rite in order to be saved from the final plague? If not, what exactly did they do (see Isaiah 28:7-13 & Isaiah 30:15)?
  
- ③ Read Exodus 12:37-50. How many years did the people of Israel live in the land of Egypt? Can you use Moses as an example and count all his fathers back to Jacob? What was the purpose of circumcision (see Deuteronomy 30:6)?

## Day 3 – Exodus 13:1-22

- 1 Read Exodus 13:1-10. Describe how this event of God bringing his people out of Egypt could be used as a metaphor in a person's life. God wanted the people to remember the day when he brought them up out of Egypt. Describe the most significant event where God "brought you out of Egypt."
- 2 Read Exodus 13:11-16. In what way could you remind yourself of the fact that the Lord brought you out of Egypt?
- 3 Read Exodus 13:17-22. After the Lord took the people of Israel out of Egypt, did he leave them alone and let them figure out their future by themselves? In what visible way did the Lord accompany the people of Israel daily (see Isaiah 52:12)?

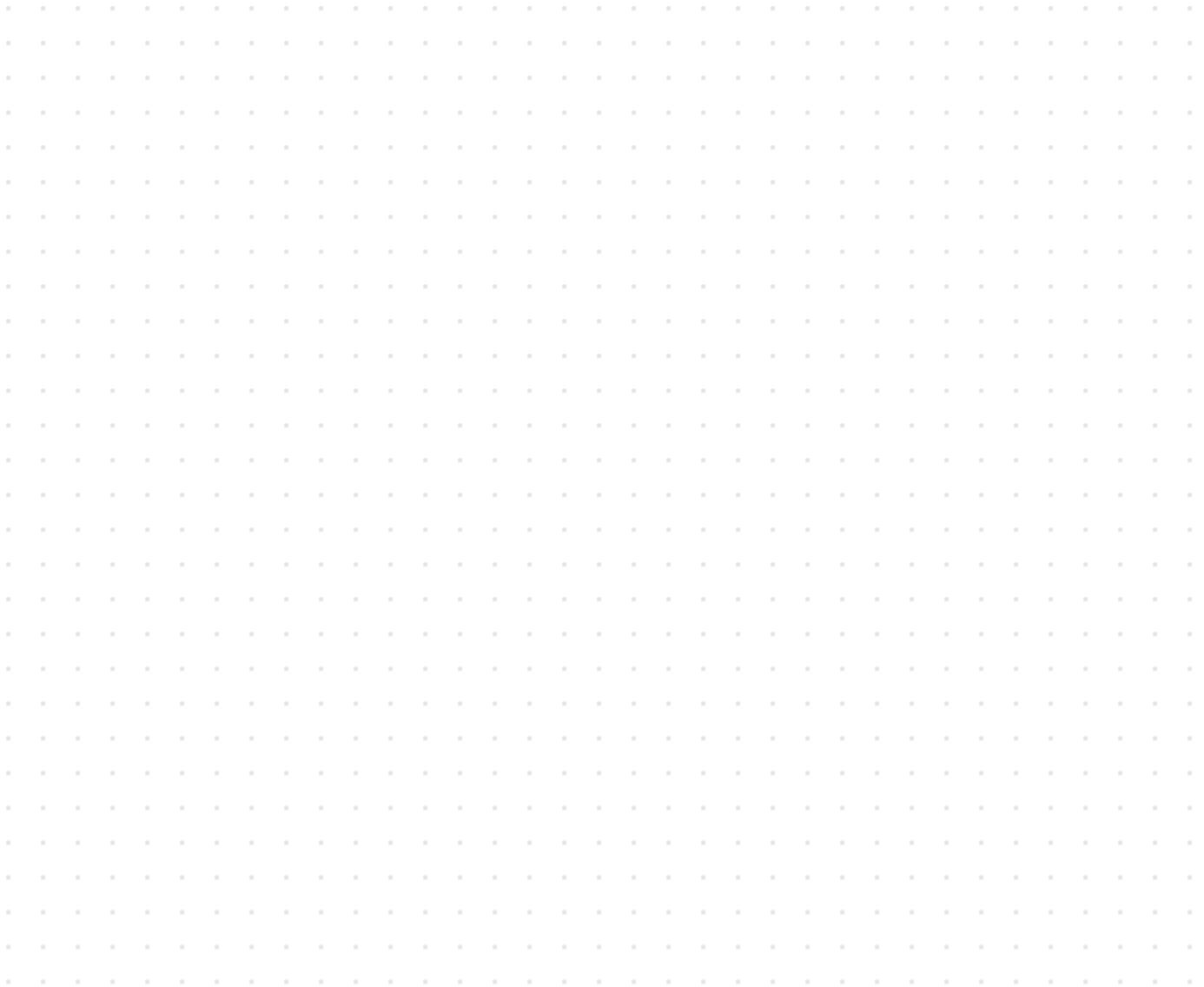
# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out

your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Nine

E X O D U S 1 4 - 1 5

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God Meets Us in  
Our Weakness

G A V I N B R O W N

## Exodus 14–15

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, ‘They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.” And they did so.

When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you

today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and

upon their horsemen.” So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying,

“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;

the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and my song,

and he has become my salvation;

this is my God, and I will praise him,

my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

The LORD is a man of war;

the LORD is his name.

“Pharaoh’s chariots and his host he cast into the sea,

and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

The floods covered them;

they went down into the depths like a stone.

Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,

your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries;

you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.  
At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up;  
the floods stood up in a heap;  
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.  
The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake,  
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.  
I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.'  
You blew with your wind; the sea covered them;  
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

"Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?  
Who is like you, majestic in holiness,  
awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
You stretched out your right hand;  
the earth swallowed them.

"You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed;  
you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.  
The peoples have heard; they tremble;  
pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.  
Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed;  
trembling seizes the leaders of Moab;  
all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.  
Terror and dread fall upon them;  
because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone,  
till your people, O LORD, pass by,  
till the people pass by whom you have purchased.  
You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain,  
the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode,

the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.  
The LORD will reign forever and ever.”

For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them, but the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea. Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;  
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.”

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water.





# God Meets Us in Our Weakness

Gavin Brown

In Exodus 14 we reach the climax of tension between Pharaoh and the people of Israel. As the people of Israel flee Egypt, God tells them to encamp next to the Red Sea. Now I'm certainly not a military expert, but I would likely be thinking "Seriously? This is the best plan God could think of? Why is he putting us in such a vulnerable place?"

The Lord's will continues to unfold. Once again, God hardens the heart of Pharaoh and the Egyptian army, and they set out in hot pursuit of Israel. Pretty soon Pharaoh and his army are on the heels of Israel, and great fear sweeps over them to the point that they turn to Moses and start to question God's power and plan. You can practically hear the sassy ridicule in their voices, "Is it because there weren't enough graves for us in Egypt that you'd bring us here to die? Didn't we tell you to leave us alone so we can serve the Egyptians? Don't you think serving the Egyptians is better than the certain death we are about to face?"

At this moment, Moses turns and says "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

When Israel's perceived reality was of weakness, vulnerability, despair, and hopelessness, God fulfilled his sovereign plan and carried it out in the most dramatic and unexpected way. Not only did He hold back the Egyptian army with a pillar of raging fire, but he also pushed back the Red Sea and allowed the people to walk across on land. I love the "cherry on top" of this story. Remember the water that God had just pushed back? He even made the land under Israel's feet entirely dry! Can you imagine witnessing a supernatural feat like that? God in that moment made himself known to the Egyptians and to Israel, tangibly demonstrating his truly deserved glory. Exodus 14:18 "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

We have all experienced moments in our lives when we were vulnerable or weak, yet God showed up in a way that can only be explained as "God did it." For myself, a significant moment like that took place at the end of my first week of college football. It was Friday evening and we had just finished a tough week of two-a-day practices. Walking back to the dorms with the other incoming freshman, all that was talked about was girls and the party that was going to take place that night. It wasn't long until I found myself sitting in my room, tired, abandoned, and alone. I had no friends, family, or Christian community around me. That week I had been asking the Lord for a friend. As I walked through the empty dorm that Friday night, there was only one door left slightly open. I poked my head in and met a huge guy by the name of Bruce. That night I met one of two other Christian men on the team of 100+ football players. Bruce and I shared our testimonies and became great friends. We fought for our faith side by side during our football career

together and to this day he is one of my dearest brothers in Christ. When I remember God fulfilling his plan at that time, all I can do is step back in awe and say “Thank you God, you deserve the glory and praise!”

The story of Exodus 14-15 makes me think about Paul’s pondering in Romans 11:33-36:

OH, THE DEPTH OF RICHES AND WIS-  
DOM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD! HOW  
UNSEARCHABLE ARE HIS JUDGEMENTS  
AND HOW INSCRUTABLE HIS WAYS! FOR  
WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE  
LORD, OR WHO HAS BEEN HIS COUNSEL-  
OR? OR WHO HAS GIVEN A GIFT TO HIM  
THAT HE MIGHT BE REPAID? FOR FROM  
HIM AND THROUGH HIM AND TO HIM  
ARE ALL THINGS. TO HIM BE GLORY FOR-  
EVER. AMEN.

When I reflect on the Lord meeting us in our weakness in the most unexpected ways, I think of Jesus. When you think about it, Jesus blows the parting of the Red Sea way out of the water (pun fully intended). Jesus was conceived by

the Holy Spirit, to the virgin Mary. He was born in a stable and worked as a carpenter. Then, having lived a perfect life, while we were dead in our trespasses, separated from God, and slaves to sin, Jesus humbled himself and covered our debt which we could never repay. He paid for our debt by His own blood, sweat, and tears while hanging on a Roman cross (Philippians 2:5-11).

Even after knowing and experiencing this salvation and grace, it’s amazing how quickly our sinful nature can prevent us from fully trusting in Jesus. We’ve seen this pattern with Israel, even with Jesus’ own disciples—and we are no different. But brother and sister, we have the hope of seeing Jesus face to face in Heaven one day. Paul, when he is writing from prison to the church in Philippi, starts his letter with remembrance of what God had done, encouraging the Philippian people to trust in the work that God was unfolding, “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). May we

remember the work he has done, rejoice in the unexpected ways he has met our needs, and trust in him to completely provide for us!

# Day 1 – Exodus 14:1-31

- ① Read Exodus 14:1-31. What was the main purpose of God saving Israel the way he did?
- ② What does the story of the Red Sea teach us about the character and person of God?
- ③ What was a circumstance in your life where the only explanation is “God did it”?

## Day 2 – Exodus 15:1-18

- 1 Read Exodus 15:1-18. What are the attributes of God that are described in worship by the people of Israel?
- 2 Of the attributes described in Exodus 15:1-18, which one surprises or stands out to you, and why?
- 3 When Israel realized the awesome power of God, they worshipped him in song. How do you praise and rejoice in the Lord? How can you publicly recall the things the Lord has done? In what ways can you teach the awesomeness of God to the next generation?

## Day 3 – Exodus 15:19-27

- 1 Read Exodus 15:19-27. Define “grumble.” After setting out from the Red Sea, how long did it take before Israel started to grumble? What are all the ways the Lord has worked on their behalf up until this point? What are things you grumble about, and should you?
- 2 How can you relate with the people of Israel in times of good and bad?
- 3 How can you protect yourself from not trusting and having faith in the Lord’s plan? What is a verse or two that can remind you of the Lord’s faithfulness to you?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Philippians 2:14-16

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among

whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

## Notes

A large grid of small dots for taking notes, consisting of 20 columns and 25 rows of dots.

# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Ten

E X O D U S 16

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Grace for  
Grumblers

C A I T E Y B E N N E T T

# Exodus 16

They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. And the LORD said to Moses, “I have

heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’” And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. And Moses said to them, “Let no one leave any of it over till the morning.” But they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.’” So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. Moses said,

“Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.”

On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. And the LORD said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See! The LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day.” So the people rested on the seventh day.

Now the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Let an 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 of the land of Egypt.’” And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations.” As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony to be kept. The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. (An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.)



# Grace for Grumblers

## Caitey Bennett

It was just another hot, summer day and I was driving out to meet a friend at the beach. It had been a long morning of running errands with my 2-year-old son, and we were both ready to get out of the car, run around, and splash in the cool beach water. We were finally on our way when suddenly I heard a thumping sound coming from the front of the car. I immediately pulled over, lifted up the car hood, and sure enough, the car's serpentine belt had shredded – we were not going anywhere. Here I was, just wanting to enjoy my day off at the beach, and instead, I was stuck with a car that could not run, a toddler who was ready for a nap, 30 minutes from home, and all this with no A/C in 90 degree weather.

I wish I could say my first response was thankfulness for our safety, or even prayer, but in reality, it was a steady stream of grumbling, “How can this be happening? I just took this car into the shop a couple weeks ago, how did they miss this? Haven't we been through enough car problems this year? Why did this have to happen on one of the hottest days so far this summer? There

goes my day off! Why does this always seem to happen to me!” I was surrounded by reasons to be thankful, yet I chose to complain. In fact, just days before I had been telling my life group the story of how God had miraculously provided for our financial needs the weeks before. Yet, in that moment, all I could think about was the present trial. I was right back to doubting and complaining.

Well, we see a similar situation in Exodus 16. The Israelites have just left the land of Elim, after receiving abundant provision from the Lord, and are headed into the wilderness to continue toward the promised land. It is not long into their journey that the Israelites are faced with trouble: hunger. Like many of us, they turned to grumbling,

WOULD THAT WE HAD DIED BY THE  
HAND OF THE LORD IN THE LAND OF  
EGYPT, WHEN WE SAT BY THE MEAT POTS  
AND ATE BREAD TO THE FULL, FOR YOU  
HAVE BROUGHT US OUT INTO THIS WIL-  
DERNESS TO KILL THIS WHOLE ASSEMBLY  
WITH HUNGER.

EXODUS 16:3

They were hungry, they were in the wilderness, and all they could think of was the meat and bread that was plentiful in the land of Egypt. In that moment, they had forgotten the many ways God had delivered them in the past—all they could think about was what they lacked. They became so wrapped up in their present circumstances, forgetting God's proven faithfulness in the past and leading them to doubt God's plan for the future.

Is not this how we often respond when trouble strikes? We look for someone to blame. We get caught up in the emotions of the moment, trying to make sense of what is going on, and find some explanation or cause. Sometimes, we reminisce on times before, often inflating the good times, and forgetting God's provisions and grace. Other times we throw ourselves a pity party, only remembering the worst things that happen. All of these responses take our eyes off of the Lord and cause us to forget all the reasons we have to be thankful.

As I continued my study through Exodus 16, I was blown away again by God's response toward his people in their sin. The Lord heard his people (v. 9), even in their grumbling, and gave them mercy and grace. The Lord was not stingy with his provision, but miraculously provided food for every day for the remaining forty years they spent in the wilderness (v. 35). When the people disobeyed the clear instructions of the Lord (v. 20) to only collect enough for each day, the Lord continued to provide food for them. Even when, in rebellion, the people of Israel went out on the Sabbath to collect food (v. 27), the Lord was faithful to his promises and sustained his people in the wilderness.

What a grace that God has given us this glimpse of his love for grumblers like you and me!

To go back to my story...there I was in a hot, broken-down car with a grumbling heart and a downcast soul. Just like with the Israelites, even in the midst of my grumbling, God gave grace. He provided a safe place to wait for help. He held the belt together so I was able

to limp the car to a car part store and wait at a next-door Chick-Fil-A with food, air conditioning, and entertainment for my son until help could arrive. My husband was able to leave immediately to meet me within the hour—a provision of an understanding manager and a servant-hearted husband. Finally, God's generous provision for our finances met my grumbling head on—a job that would cost hundreds in a shop ended up costing us nothing because of a warranty and borrowed tools.

Surely, these physical provisions are many evidences of God's grace, but that is not the only grace I received that day. The greatest grace I received was God himself. God drew near to my fearful, anxious, discontent heart and gave me peace. He took the punishment for my sinful, grumbling heart and put it on his Son on the cross. You see, even one grumbling word is enough to separate us from a holy God forever. Yet instead of stepping away and giving me what I deserve, he poured out the blood of his Son and covered me in his unending mercy, grace, and love.

When life's circumstances leave you tempted you to grumble, look to the God who is there for you! Remember his promises that are true for you in Christ. And when you, like me, fall into the sin of grumbling, repent and believe the gospel! We have a God who is "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." We have a God who is not waiting for us to trust bountifully in him before he deals bountifully with us. We have a God who replaces our grumbling with gladness and has already provided all we need and more through Jesus Christ, our Bread of Life.



# Day 1 – Exodus 16:1-12

- 1 Read Exodus 16:1-12. Describe the context of this passage. What has been happening and what is happening?
- 2 Define “grumble.” Define “complain.” Define “ungrateful.” Where have you been ungrateful, despite God’s blessing? Where have you been tempted to grumble at God? What would you say to yourself the next time you are grumbling to help your attitude? How is the gospel necessary to grow in that moment?
- 3 Where else in Scripture are there examples of people grumbling despite God’s blessing? What are the types of things that people around you complain about, and what might you be able to say to them to encourage them and correct them?

## Day 2 – Exodus 16:13-26

- 1 Read Exodus 16:13-26. What were the Israelites' needs and how did God provide for the Israelites? What were God's instructions to the Israelites for receiving his provision?
- 2 Where are you tempted to doubt God's promise for provision and take matters into your own hands? At home? At work? With neighbors?
- 3 Why were some tempted to disobey God's clear instructions? What was wrong on the heart level and how did it play out?

## Day 3 – Exodus 16:27-36

- 1 Read Exodus 16:27-36. What happened on the seventh day? What was supposed to happen? Where have you ignored God's instructions and "gone out on the seventh day to gather, but found nothing"?
- 2 Look again at verses 32-36. The LORD commands the Israelites to keep a jar of manna throughout the generations. What was the purpose of this? What are some ways we can keep God's provision in mind day to day?
- 3 How is Christ like manna? How can we see God's provision for us now through Christ? How does this affect our daily lives?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study John 6:25-34

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe

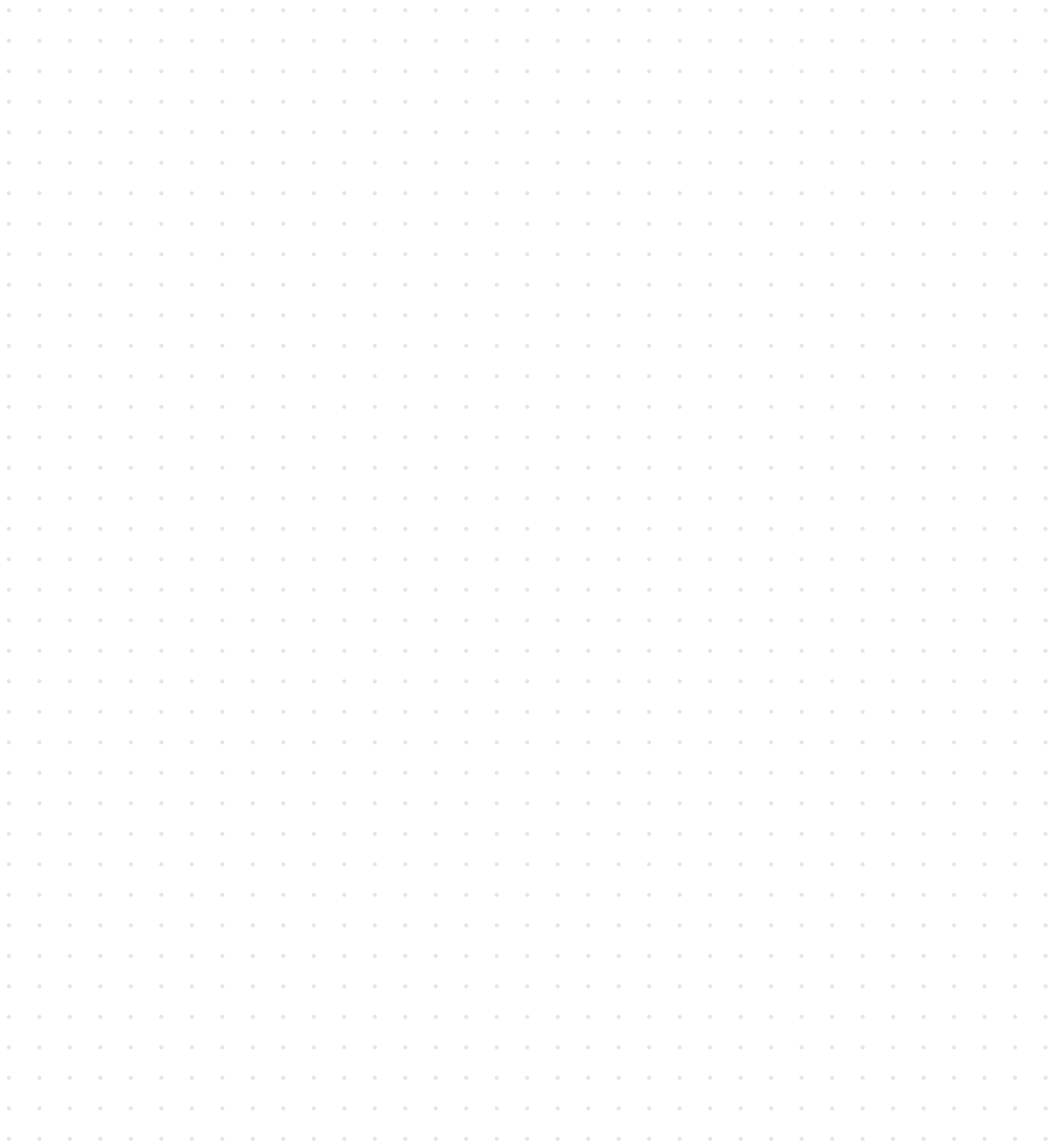
in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Eleven

Write This as  
a Memorial

A A R O N B R Y A N T



# Exodus 17

All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore 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 the LORD?” But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” So Moses cried to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” And the LORD said to Moses, “Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.” And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady un-

til the going down of the sun. And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner, saying, “A hand upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

# Write This as a Memorial

## Aaron Bryant

Here's a fun fact about Exodus 17 that you might find surprising: this is the first time that the writing of Scripture is explicitly mentioned in the Bible. After the Israelites defeat the Amalekites, God tells Moses to write the story down in a book *as a memorial*. Up until this point there have been various means by which God has called his people to remember an act of his covenant faithfulness to his people, such as setting up a large stone, building an altar, or even changing your name. Most notable in the context of this passage is the Passover Meal, an annual ritual by which Israel was to remember their deliverance from Egypt. But, up to this point, God has never told his people to write down their experience of his faithfulness. So, we might ask, why does God tell them to now?

In the first part of Exodus 17 the Israelites demonstrate a severe case of short-term memory loss. Having set up camp in the ancient Middle Eastern wilderness, they suddenly notice that there is no water for them to drink (which I feel is an obstacle they should have antici-

pated some time before). The obvious expectation at this point is that they would turn to God to provide for their needs. After all, just a few verses before he rained honey wafers down from the sky. Providing water would seem like no big deal, right?

Instead, the Israelites immediately turn on Moses, and accuse God of leading them up to this point only to kill them. It's a depressing, and frankly ridiculous, demonstration of thick-headedness. But, in his mercy and patience, God provides water for them in the middle of the desert.

From our perspective as outsiders reading the story it is easy to scoff at the Israelites' response. *If I had seen God part the Red Sea and rain manna from heaven, we think, I would have trusted God to provide something as simple as drinking water.* But of course, Scripture is a mirror into our own hearts. In it we see an honest reflection of ourselves. How often has God shown his faithfulness to us? How often has he met each of us in the dark and painful seasons of life? How often has he provided for us when finances

were tight? And yet how often have we worried? How often have we blamed him for our circumstances? Our memory is just as short as the Israelites' in the wilderness.

If I'm honest, this is a pattern that's very familiar to me. There have been many seasons for our family where we had a significant financial need, and we had no clue how that need would be met. Unfortunately, we have often responded like the Israelites did. We became consumed with anxiety. Our conversations become centered on trying to figure out how we're going to make things work. Often in these seasons there was a voice in my heart of bitterness. I wondered why God would lead me to this place and not provide for my family's needs. And I would forget. I would forget how time after time in my own story, God met me in spectacular ways. More than that, I would forget God's Word to me in Scripture. I would forget his promises: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 5:33).

God told Moses to write down the story of when he defeated the Amalekites to help them remember. This story was supposed to be an anchor for them whenever they found themselves facing enemies, drought, death, and suffering. This is, in fact, one of the many purposes of Scripture as a whole. For every saint, in every age, on every continent, these stories were written down so that we would remind ourselves that God is good and faithful and righteous, and that he is totally committed to those whom he has called his own.

If ever we have doubt that God is for us, that he will protect and provide for us, let us turn to the promises and examples of his faithfulness in Scripture, all of which culminate in the life of Jesus. He is the ultimate fulfillment and greatest example of God's faithfulness. He is the living water that was poured out for us in the wilderness of our sin. He is the one who gave us victory over the Great Enemy of our souls. The Word is rich with grace for us in the seasons where doubt and fear threaten our faith. Why would we not come to

it every day to restore our hope and to remind ourselves of the God whom we worship and serve?

# Day 1 – Exodus 17:1-7

- 1 Read Exodus 17:1-7. What words does the author use repeatedly to describe the Israelites in this scene? What image is he trying to portray of them?
- 2 What does this passage tell us about the character of God in relation to his covenant people? See John 4:13-14.
- 3 What have been the seasons in your life that you have found most difficult? How would you compare your response to the Israelites'?

## Day 2 – Exodus 17:8-13

- 1 Read Exodus 17:8-13. Why does Moses have to continue holding up the staff for the Israelites to win? What does this communicate about the significance of our actions under God's sovereignty?
- 2 Why did God favor the Israelites over the Amalekites? Is this a simple case of good guys vs. bad guys?
- 3 What does the support of Aaron and Hur say about our need for others to help bear our burdens? Who in your life has held you up when you were weary?

## Day 3 – Exodus 17:14-16

- 1 Read Exodus 17:14-16. Why do the Israelites need the story of God’s defeat of the Amalekites to be written down? What does this tell us about the purpose of Scripture?
- 2 Where does this prophecy that “The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation” come back up in the biblical story?
- 3 How might this shape your understanding of the importance of spending time in Scripture every day?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study 1 Corinthians 10:1-5

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, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.

For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

A large grid of small dots, arranged in approximately 30 rows and 40 columns, covering most of the page. This grid is intended for taking notes during a sermon.



Week Twelve

# Who Is Helped by Jethro?

M I K E P O L L E Y

# Exodus 18

Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. Now Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her home, along with her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land"), and the name of the other, Eliezer (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"). Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God. And when he sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her," Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him. And they asked each other of their welfare and went into the tent. Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them in the way, and how the LORD had delivered them. And Jethro rejoiced for all the good that the LORD had done to Israel, in that he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians.

Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, because in this affair they dealt arrogantly with the people." And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

The next day Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from morning till evening. When Moses' father-in-law

saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, “What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening?” And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because the people come to me to inquire of God; when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of God and his laws.” Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God and bring their cases to God, and you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do. Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure, and all this people also will go to their place in peace.”

So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And they judged the people at all times. Any hard case they brought to Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves. Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went away to his own country.

# Who Is Helped by Jethro?

## Mike Polley

Israel has recently left Egypt. They had originally entered into Egypt with 70 people and enjoyed favor from the pharaoh (see Exodus 1:5), but 400 years later, having been mistreated by the pharaoh and having grown large enough to become their own nation (Exodus 1:7–9), it was time to leave. The Lord had taken a family and made them into the nation of Israel, God’s people. He had provided for them and given them leaders, Moses and Aaron. Soon would be Sinai and the giving of the law.

But as Moses leads Israel in the wilderness, he is met by his father-in-law, Jethro, who has been caring for his wife and sons. Jethro has heard of the great works of the Lord and sits down with Moses to catch up. The next day, Jethro watches as Moses judges for the people, from morning till evening. After inquiring more, Jethro gives Moses some advice and implores him, with God’s help, to take it. The advice is meant to help Moses, but not only Moses.

Here’s what Jethro says in Exodus 18:17b-23:

WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS NOT GOOD. <sup>18</sup> YOU AND THE PEOPLE WITH YOU WILL CERTAINLY WEAR YOURSELVES OUT, FOR THE THING IS TOO HEAVY FOR YOU. YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO DO IT ALONE. <sup>19</sup> NOW OBEY MY VOICE; I WILL GIVE YOU ADVICE, AND GOD BE WITH YOU! YOU SHALL REPRESENT THE PEOPLE BEFORE GOD AND BRING THEIR CASES TO GOD, <sup>20</sup> AND YOU SHALL WARN THEM ABOUT THE STATUTES AND THE LAWS, AND MAKE THEM KNOW THE WAY IN WHICH THEY MUST WALK AND WHAT THEY MUST DO. <sup>21</sup> MOREOVER, LOOK FOR ABLE MEN FROM ALL THE PEOPLE, MEN WHO FEAR GOD, WHO ARE TRUSTWORTHY AND HATE A BRIBE, AND PLACE SUCH MEN OVER THE PEOPLE AS CHIEFS OF THOUSANDS, OF HUNDREDS, OF FIFTIES, AND OF TENS. <sup>22</sup> AND LET THEM JUDGE THE PEOPLE AT ALL TIMES. EVERY GREAT MATTER THEY SHALL BRING TO YOU, BUT ANY SMALL MATTER THEY SHALL DECIDE THEMSELVES. SO IT WILL BE EASIER FOR YOU, AND THEY WILL BEAR THE BURDEN WITH YOU. <sup>23</sup> IF YOU DO THIS, GOD WILL DIRECT YOU, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO EN-

DURE, AND ALL THIS PEOPLE ALSO WILL GO TO THEIR PLACE IN PEACE.

What’s initially striking to me is not how much this will help Moses, but how much it will help the people of Israel. In verse 18, not only will the current pace wear out Moses, but it will wear out the people of Israel too. Moses needs help and so do the people. Jethro again mentions the benefit to the people at the end. He says in verse 23 that if you follow my counsel God will direct Moses and “all this people also will go to their place in peace.” This is a big statement here. He doesn’t say that the people will be served faster or better, although that is certainly true, but he says the end result is that they will all go home in peace. Again, that doesn’t mean appeased or placated. They will go home with peace—with good welfare, in a favorable condition. It’s hard to think of a better result, especially when you are talking about judging a dispute.

Another striking result is that Moses will likely judge very few cases. He is to establish levels of leaders between him

and the people. Leaders over tens, fifties, hundreds, and of thousands. This could have meant that 90–95% of cases never made it Moses. Moses, I'd imagine, wanted to help the people by being judge over them, and he was also the most equipped. However, God, speaking through Jethro, tells Moses to focus on teaching the statutes of God and representing the people before God, and if any especially tough cases should arise, those are the ones he should judge. Jethro's advice honored the special position God had given Moses, but also helped all Israel be judged in the best way so that they, along with Moses, would go home in peace. It meant the most equipped leader and judge would only handle the toughest 5%. While it's easy to see how this benefits Moses, we're more likely to think this is a cost to the people—but it's not! They get peace!

The Lord was caring for Moses, and also his people. For Moses to burn out would not just hurt him, it would hurt the people. Knowing this, the writer of Hebrews calls us to:

OBEY [OUR] LEADERS AND SUBMIT TO THEM, FOR THEY ARE KEEPING WATCH OVER YOUR SOULS, AS THOSE WHO WILL HAVE TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT. LET THEM DO THIS WITH JOY AND NOT WITH GROANING, FOR THAT WOULD BE OF NO ADVANTAGE TO YOU.

HEBREWS 13:17

By delegating, leaders can protect their people as much as themselves, and by the people following peacefully, they can protect the joy and vitality of the leader, as well as their own heart. The most obvious application here is to leaders and members within a church, but Jethro's advice can also bear fruit in your employment or your home. We are called to guard the most important things, even if there are many good things we could do. We should seek to train others up, whether our co-workers or our kids, to share the load, participate in the work, and be developed. How we manage our workload and priorities will affect others, not just ourselves. God cares about both, and he

helps us through Jethro to guard our pace and our priorities.



# Day 1 – Exodus 18:1–9

- ① Where does Moses' father-in-law first appear in the Bible (he was called by a different name)?
- ② What role do the works of God play in this passage (including Exodus 18:10–11)?

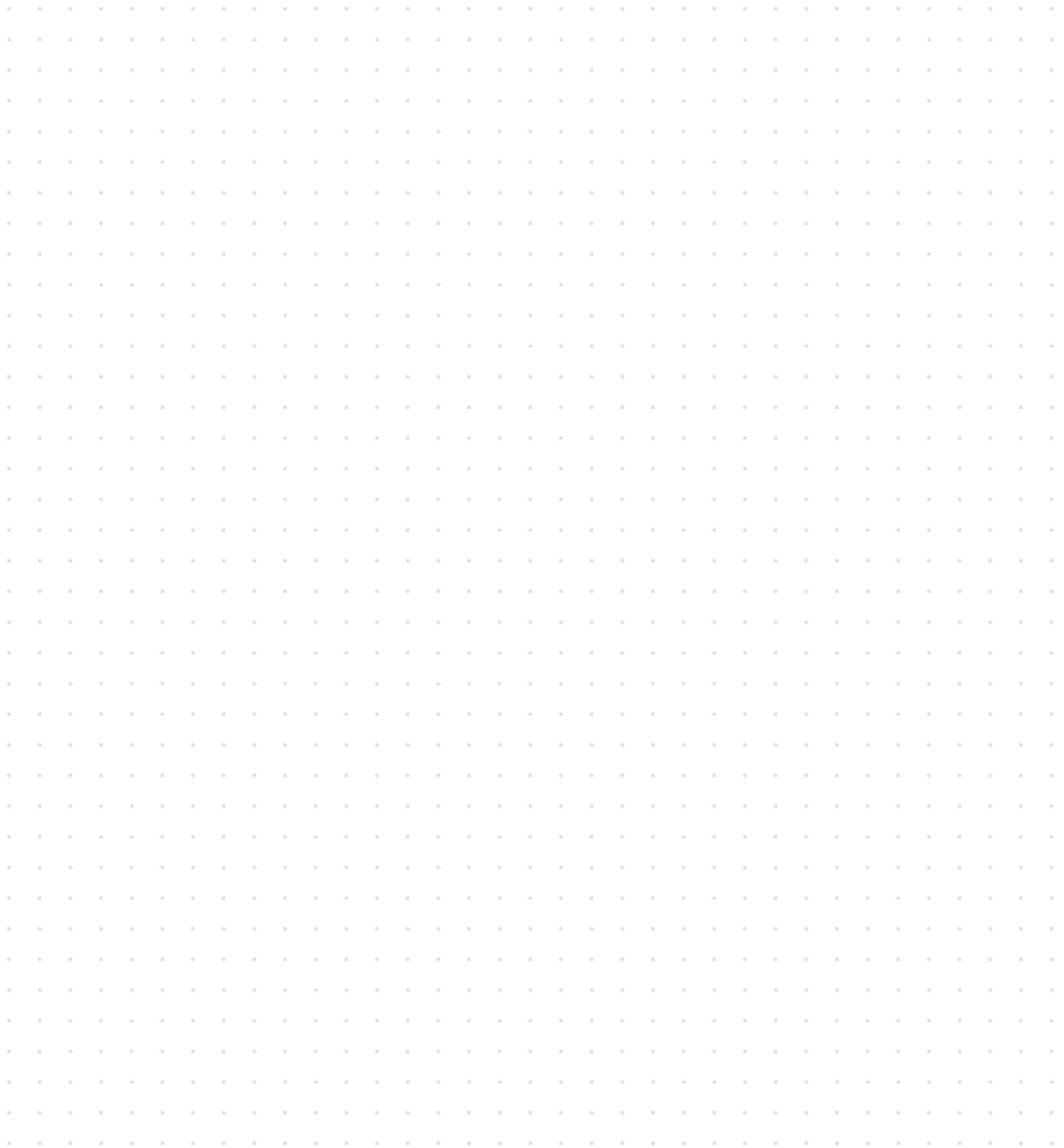
## Day 2 – Exodus 18:10–20

- ① How do Moses and Aaron respond to Jethro's confession? Are their actions significant?
- ② Who will be helped by Jethro's advice?
- ③ What does Jethro tell Moses to keep doing?

## Day 3 – Exodus 18:21–27

- ① Jethro tells Moses to delegate. Do you think this was hard for him? Would it be hard for you?
- ② Did Jethro's advice come from himself or God? What verses give us clues?
- ③ In what ways is Jethro's advice relevant for you? Are there principles in here that can apply to your work or family?

# Day 4 – Notes



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Thirteen

A Reminder to  
Remember: A  
Road to Rest

K E L I N A T O N E Y



# Exodus 19

On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 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.”

So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.”

When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD, the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, ‘Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death. No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.’ When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the

mountain.” So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. And he said to the people, “Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman.”

On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

And the LORD said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to look and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them.” And Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, ‘Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.’” And the LORD said to him, “Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest he break out against them.” So Moses went down to the people and told them.

# A Reminder to Remember: A Road to Rest

## Kelina Toney

In an unexpected twist, two summers ago it became clear that my husband, Brett, would need to step aside from pastoral ministry for a season. It wasn't our plan. We had moved to Michigan five years prior, and he had been serving as an associate pastor. All of our children were born there and we had developed a Michigan family. But now everything was changing. As difficult as the transition was, it was also very clear that it was God who was unfolding for us a new plan and a new direction. Brett began a new job, and there were floods of emotions as our lives shifted.

In the middle of the struggle God used Psalm 77 to reveal himself to me and give me a pattern to follow. The psalmist appeals to the Lord in the day of his trouble, pondering if the Lord has forgotten to be gracious and if he has shut up his compassion, but then in verses 10–11 it turns, “Then I said, ‘I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the most High.’ I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old.”

The psalmist addresses his heart and begins to recount some of the many wonders of the Lord, coming to verses 19–20 “Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen. You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.” The leading of the Lord struck me. I felt stuck between a rock and a hard place waiting for our future to unfold to see the Lord's direction. It was painful to have a role change; I hadn't realized how much of my identity had been placed in my capacity as a pastor's wife. I could see the choice now was if I was willing to humble myself and submit to whatever God had for me.

With the psalmist's example, I turned to the story of God's great rescue of his people and found comfort rehearsing to myself the past mighty deeds and goodness of God. He is a God who makes a way where there is no way. I didn't know where God was leading us, but I could trust his timeless, unchanging character and goodness, that he was caring for me as he

has cared for his people for thousands of years. I didn't need to understand or know what was next, but to be faithful to trust him and daily walk humbly, similar to daily manna gathering.

When the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, Moses was called to remind the people of God's marvelous rescue to give them confidence in the Lord for what was to come:

“YOU YOURSELVES HAVE SEEN WHAT I DID TO THE EGYPTIANS, AND HOW I BORE YOU ON EAGLES' WINGS AND BROUGHT YOU TO MYSELF. 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 19:4–6

Moses reminded the people that God had carried them along to bring them to himself. It wasn't their doing, and in

fact they would have turned around. But now they stand at the foot of an unapproachable mountain trembling with fear of this God in his glory, and they are called to be holy as he is holy. But they couldn't do it. They had been slaves, and now they would be God's people, his treasured possession. But they doubted his goodness. They failed to recount his faithfulness. They often complained, questioning Moses, "Did God lead us to the wilderness just to kill us here?" They needed to walk through the wilderness with him to learn who he was. To become his people. To know the sweetness of walking in faithful obedience. They have stood in his presence, have seen his glory, and have received his redemption from slavery in Exodus chapter 19, but many didn't yet understand the rich goodness of God, which becomes clear when we see them make a golden calf and refuse to take the promised land.

Even in the judgement of wandering for 40 years for their disobedience, God was a tender shepherd who cared for them in their wilderness time. Their

clothing didn't even wear out or their feet swell (Deuteronomy 8:4). God brought up a new generation to trust him, and he led them in obedience. He remade them into his people.

Likewise, when my life shifted from what I expected, God walked me through a different sort of wilderness to show me his goodness, that I would better know the pleasure of trusting God. That I would better understand how to live in great dependence on his word and to know the sweet obedience of faith. I didn't just know about the tender care of the Lord during struggle and grief, now I knew it richly from experience.

So I stand now in a different place physically and spiritually and offer a word of encouragement. God may be carrying you in a direction other than what you planned or expected, and there may be more shadow and doubt than you anticipated. His goodness remains the same. He is the same God who cared diligently for the Israelites, and who demands obedience. But we can rest our required obedience in

Christ and walk forward with the faith that he is our Rock and our Fortress, immovable, and he alone can overcome the darkness within and without.

Will you struggle against God and doubt his goodness when you encounter brokenness and darkness? Or will you bring your wrestling to him and recount the mighty deeds of the Lord to find peace in the constancy of his character? May God grant you the sweetness and rest of faith as you cling to him.

# Day 1 – Exodus 19:1-6

- 1 Read Exodus 19:1-6. What does it mean that God is a God who brings his people to himself? How has that impacted your life? How can you see his working in your life to draw you to himself through joy and sorrow?
- 2 In what ways are you required to obey God's voice that are the same as the Israelites? How is your obedience different now that we are in Christ?
- 3 As Christians we are grafted into the people of God, so in what way do we serve as a kingdom of priests today? How can you intentionally serve as a mediator of his righteousness to your world this week? See 1 Peter 2:4-10.

## Day 2 – Exodus 19:7-15

- 1 Read Exodus 19:7-15. Describe the people's attitude towards obeying God in verse eight. When have you had the experience of joyfully committing to obedience only to turn around and find yourself failing again? See Romans 7:21-25.
- 2 How does Christ's death and resurrection give you victory and encouragement to pursue obedience? How does it change your obedience in Christ to be an obedience of effort but not earning?
- 3 Define "consecrate." How does the symbolism of the Israelites' outward preparation to be in God's presence help you to better understand the holiness of God? What are ways that you can prepare your heart for coming into his presence for worship? See Hebrews 12:18-29.

## Day 3 – Exodus 19:16-25

- 1 Read Exodus 19:16-25. Look again at Hebrews 12:18-24. Mount Sinai was described by the writer of Hebrews as something that “may not be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and tempest” (v 18), but in Christ we come to another mountain, Mount Zion, where this same God is still shaking the earth and heavens. How should this sober reminder influence your worship, and what does acceptable worship look like?
- 2 Describe the events in the passage. How does the redemption and righteousness of Christ govern your approach to the holy throne of God?
- 3 What encouragement can you find in the power, majesty, and glory of God, knowing that he is working all things for your good in Christ Jesus? How does this impact your approach to suffering and grief? In what ways is it challenging to believe God is for your good in suffering?

# Day 4 – Cross Reference

## Study Hebrews 10:19-25

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed

with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

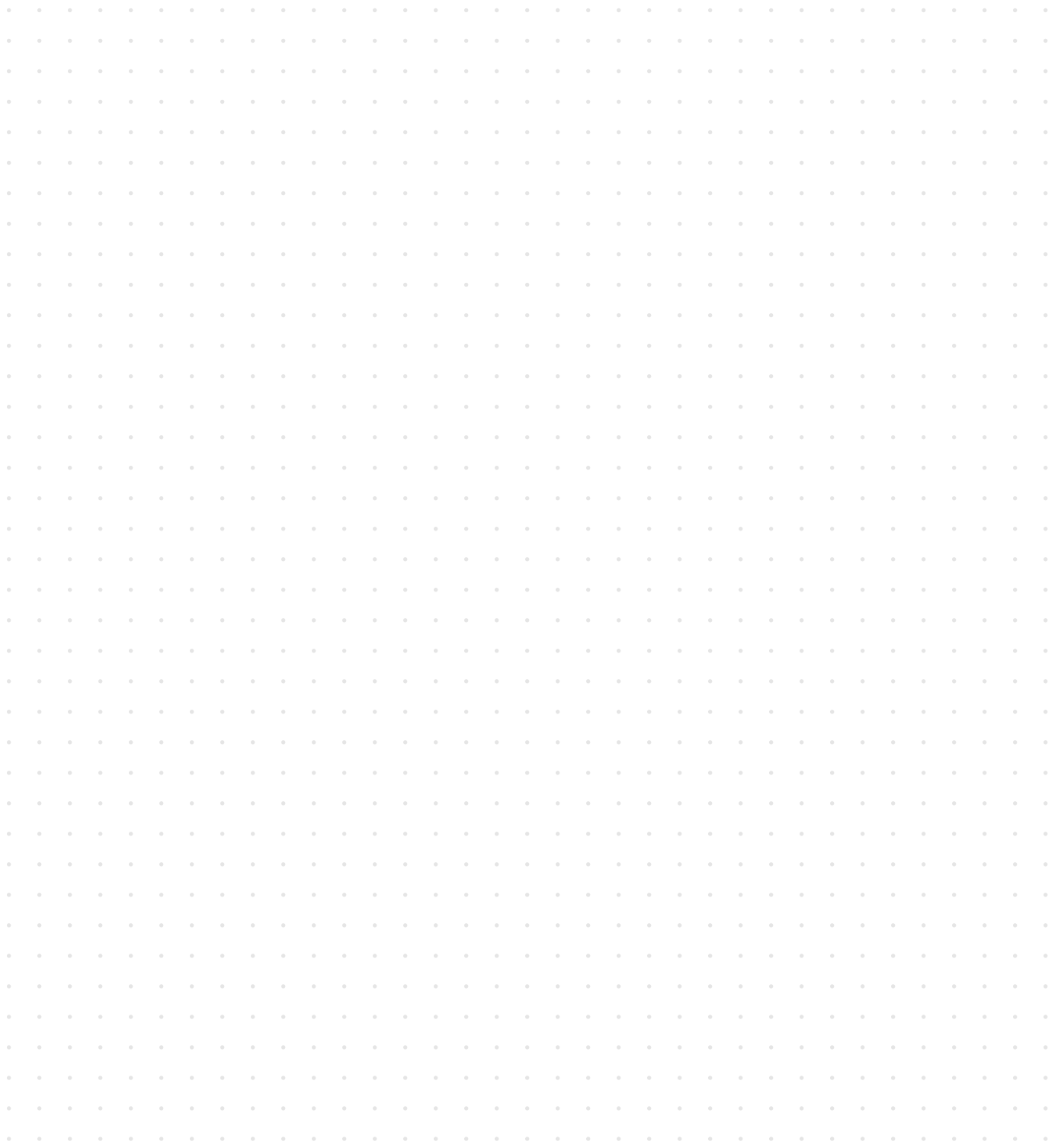
## Notes

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# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

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Week Fourteen

E X O D U S 2 0 - 2 3

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A New Way  
of Life

J O A N N A P O L L E Y

## Exodus 20–23

And God spoke all these words, saying,

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

“You shall have no other gods before me.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

“You shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

And the LORD said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. If you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it you profane it. And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.’

“Now these are the rules that you shall set before them. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out alone. But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ then his

master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

“When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

“Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

“Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

“Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

“Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

“When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

“When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money.

“When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman’s husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

“When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

“When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. If it gores a man’s son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

“When a man opens a pit, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, the owner of the pit shall make restoration. He shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

“When one man’s ox butts another’s, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share. Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall repay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.



“If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him, but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double.

“If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

“If fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he who started the fire shall make full restitution.

“If a man gives to his neighbor money or goods to keep safe, and it is stolen from the man’s house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s property. For every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case of both parties shall come before God. The one whom God condemns shall pay double to his neighbor.

“If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep safe, and it dies or is injured or is driven away, without anyone seeing it, an oath by the LORD shall be between them both to see whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s property. The owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence. He shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

“If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is injured or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hiring fee.

“If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

“You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

“Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

“Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction.

“You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

“If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. If ever you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

“You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

“You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

“You shall be consecrated to me. Therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

“You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

“If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

“You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

“You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

“For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

“Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

“Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.

“Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed.

You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

“You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

“The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

“Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

“But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

“When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. You shall serve the LORD your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and

possess the land. And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates, for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”



# A New Way of Life

## Joanna Polley

**T**hese four chapters are the first words of the law given to Israel. The people of Israel had just been rescued from slavery in Egypt, and Moses was given the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. At first, the Ten Commandments and the next few chapters seem almost common sense: don't murder, treat people fairly and with dignity, don't cheat each other, etc. But I've known and been taught solid, biblical teaching my whole life. The Israelites had just come out of unjust living where all kinds of unlawful acts were committed. They were not treated with basic human rights. They needed to relearn how to live and how to respect other people and treat them with dignity.

I can't imagine what must have been going through their minds as they heard all these words from Moses. I'm sure they must have felt great relief because of the ways they had been mistreated as slaves in Egypt. They had all grown up under the oppression of Pharaoh and didn't know there was another way to live. What sweet relief to hear that they should be treated with

dignity and respect, and they were to treat others in the same way. Even more so, those who harmed them should and ought to be punished. All they had ever known was being reformed and made new in many ways. How thankful they must have felt!

Right in the midst of all these laws for Israel, Moses says something very interesting:

DO NOT FEAR, FOR GOD HAS COME TO  
TEST YOU, THAT THE FEAR OF HIM MAY BE  
BEFORE YOU, THAT YOU MAY NOT SIN.

EXODUS 20:20

God says this to Israel right after he gives Moses the Ten Commandments and right before he details all the ways they are to treat other people. It's not just for their good that the Israelites should follow these laws, but God wants more for them. He wants them to fear him. I'm not a biblical scholar, but I think the first time Moses says "fear," it really does mean don't be afraid. There is this big cloud up on the mountain where God's presence dwells, but Moses

tells the Israelites it's not going to consume them.

But notice the second time Moses uses "fear" in verse 20. This doesn't seem to be the same sense of fear. This time Moses is speaking more about fear in terms of valuing God above all else. He wants it to become second nature for them to love others, to care for the poor, to not pervert justice—not just for their good, but because this brings glory to God.

But then Moses says those last five words, "that you may not sin." My first thought when reading that was, "Shoot! Good luck Israel!" Who in their life has ever been able to say, "Yeah, I never sin"—even for a day? Why would Moses say these words? Why are they in the Bible? I know, and I'm sure the Israelites know, or at least found out a few days later when they built the golden calf, that these words are impossible for them (and for us) to keep. So why say them?

At first they could probably reason themselves into comfort by thinking they could keep these laws, at least out-

wardly. They would make sure their oxen were well guarded so they didn't gore anyone. They wouldn't murder the person who annoyed them. They would be faithful to those who were their bondservants. They wouldn't steal or pervert justice, but they would treat each other fairly. This is all cool. They could probably do that, and if they messed up, there would be sacrifices they could make for atonement of their sins.

But then I remember the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. He takes the law and moves it from outward words and actions and moves it deeper. Deeper to our heart motives, our deepest thoughts, Jesus explains that all of these are known to God and judged by him. Israel got hints at this in Proverbs 16:2, which says, "All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the motives." As much as Israel might have thought they could keep the law outwardly, it was their hearts that counted, and everyone's heart is wicked to the core from the time they are born (see Genesis 8:21).

These chapters make me really thankful for Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. The law showed the Israelites their deep need for a savior. Their need went beyond animal sacrifices. They needed to be redeemed, made new, and forgiven—which is why they got the promise of a savior to come. We get the promise that the Savior has come, and we are forgiven. Both take a lot of faith. Both depend on Jesus.



# Day 1 – Exodus 20:1–26

①

Does the gospel (Jesus redeeming us from sin) affect the way we follow the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

## Day 2 – Exodus 21:1–22:33

1

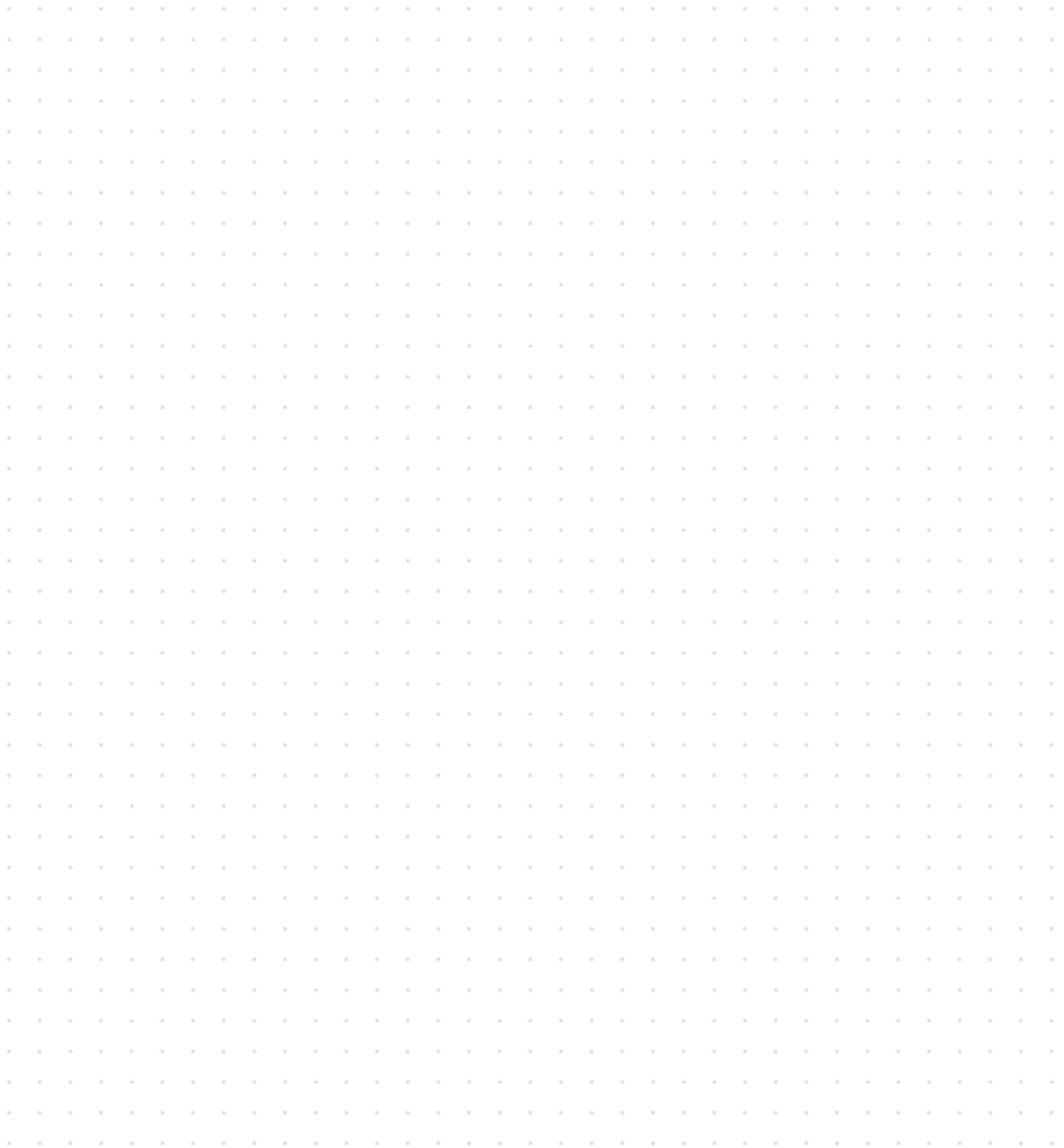
What do the laws on bondservants, theft, and social justice show you about the Israelites' hearts? What do they show you about God's heart for Israel?

## Day 3 – Exodus 23:1–33

1

What kind of life is God wanting for his people, the Israelites? Why do you think God gave the commands in verses 10–13?

# Day 4 – Notes



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

A large grid of small dots, arranged in approximately 30 rows and 40 columns, covering most of the page. This grid is intended for taking notes during a sermon.



Week Fifteen

E X O D U S 2 4 - 2 5

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Encountering  
the God Who  
Is There

J O S I A H B E N N E T T



## Exodus 24–25

Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against 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.” And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And

behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.”

Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

The LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats’ hair, tanned rams’ skins, goat-skins, acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

“They shall make an ark of acacia wood. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside shall you overlay it, and you shall make on it a molding of gold around it. You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark by them. The poles shall re-

main in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. And you shall put into the ark the testimony that I shall give you.

“You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.

“You shall make a table of acacia wood. Two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a molding of gold around it. And you shall make a rim around it a handbreadth wide, and a molding of gold around the rim. And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. Close to the frame the rings shall lie, as holders for the poles to carry the table. You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with these. And you shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me regularly.

“You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand shall be made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its

flowers shall be of one piece with it. And there shall be six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on one branch, and three cups made like almond blossoms, each with calyx and flower, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. And on the lampstand itself there shall be four cups made like almond blossoms, with their calyxes and flowers, and a calyx of one piece with it under each pair of the six branches going out from the lampstand. Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it a single piece of hammered work of pure gold. You shall make seven lamps for it. And the lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it. Its tongs and their trays shall be of pure gold. It shall be made, with all these utensils, out of a talent of pure gold. And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

# Encountering the God Who Is There

## Josiah Bennett

I remember reading through my Bible as a young believer and greatly struggling with certain Old Testament passages (genealogies, passages with lots of details, etc.) Many times, I would either just skip over these sections or bail on my “read through the Bible in a year” plan altogether. I think these types of sections of the Old Testament can sometimes feel irrelevant and hard to apply.

Exodus 24 and 25 are chapters in the Bible that focus on a lot of specific details regarding the construction of things inside the tabernacle. This is one of those passages where I think a lot of people can feel a little lost. After all, we do not worship in the tabernacle or temple anymore, so does this even relate to the Christian life today? Do all of the details and specifics really matter? I know I was tempted to think that way.

Yet, 2 Timothy 3:16 says, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable.” It is one thing to claim to believe that all Scripture is profitable and entirely another to actually believe it. For

too many of us, we tend to throw out (or just ignore) texts that are harder for us to understand. While we may never say that there are portions of Scripture that we ignore, sometimes we functionally do. Yet, the Old Testament is full of sweet, deep realities that are crucial for our walk as believers. If we fail to study this text, we miss out on some amazing realities. One of these realities is God’s presence with his people.

We can easily take God’s presence for granted, but God being with us is not the same thing as encountering God. In Exodus 24:10–11 and 17, when the people encounter God, he is described as having an appearance “like a devouring fire.” Truly, beholding God is an awesome experience. We see in this passage an example of a dramatic display of God’s glory, but how do we who come after the New Testament experience God?

I remember wishing to encounter God like how the people of old encountered him: in a dazzling array of glory. To be perfectly honest, I still do. Sometimes I think that if I could just see him,

then all my doubts would wash away. It is important to examine the lives of the Israelites – those that experienced the presence of God like a devouring fire. Pride tells us that we would respond better than they did, if we just saw God’s presence like they did. However, the Old Testament is full of miraculous displays of God’s power and presence with his people, yet we see constant examples of his people responding in rebellion. Nadab and Abihu, who were among those to behold God, later are consumed by God (Leviticus 10:1–2) due to their bold rebellion. We are all sinful like them. We are rebellious, and we take God’s presence for granted. We try to approach God on our terms, and not on his.

Sometimes we are tempted to believe that encountering God involves an emotionally-charged experience. Surely, there is nothing wrong with having our emotions stirred by a good biblical song. In fact, it is good for our emotions to be engaged. However, we must not base our definition of encountering God by the fervency or

frequency of these experiences. God is not more present with us in our “spiritual highs” than in our “spiritual lows.” God is always there; it is us who tend to be absent. Jude 21 tells us to “keep ourselves in the love of God,” and one of the main ways we can do that is by daily approaching God in his word.

The reality is that God has made a way for us to come to him. As we read the Old Testament, we may see some occasional dramatic displays of God’s glory. Yet, these were not normative. For the average Israelite, they really had no hope to behold God in such a way. In fact, most rightfully understood they could not be in God’s presence. Ever since the separation that came due to the fall, mankind has been unable to enter God’s presence...until God initiated a solution. In this text, we see the beginnings of the Mosaic Covenant, which would set the stage for much of the rest of Israel’s history. Before now, God came to specific people (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). Now, God is coming to an entire people. He has appeared as a pillar of flame and cloud previously

to the people of Israel. Yet, now something entirely new is happening. God is going to actually dwell with his people. His presence is going to travel with them and stay with them in a physical building.

We have the benefit of being able to fast-forward to the coming of Christ, in which Jesus came and dwelt with his people in a very different way. Whereas God previously dwelt in the wilderness by living in a temple, now he comes and lives with his people by being born as one of them. Jesus lived and faithfully obeyed God’s commands. He died for his people’s sins. He rose again, and before ascending to heaven, he sent his Spirit to indwell believers. He did all of this so that you and I could be near God. As 1 Corinthians 3:16 says, “you are God’s temple...and God’s spirit dwells in you.” The reality is that we are never far from God. In fact, he not only lives in our hearts, but he also speaks to us in his word.

As we desire to encounter God, and behold his glory, and truly emotionally engage with God, we need to look to

the gospel. It is there where we can behold the glory of God, that though we were and are sinners who have violated God’s commands, still he drew near to us, while we were far from him. It is this Jesus, who passionately loves us, who gave himself up for us, who calls us to follow him. We need to read our Bibles to know the God who really is there. It is not enough for us to claim to know God, yet not know him as he has revealed himself.

Oh, that we might long to hear from him and truly open his word! May we not merely desire to read the word to get a “quick fix” or “nugget of wisdom” in our most desperate times. But may we desire daily to open his word and read it because it is true and because we need it to know God. May we humbly approach every part of the Bible, ready to give up idols, but also primarily to behold the God who really is there.

# Day 1 – Exodus 24:1-18

- 1 Read Exodus 24:1-18. Describe the various aspects of God’s covenant with this people. Read Genesis 8:20-22 and Genesis 15. what similarities do you see with the covenants?
- 2 Describe how God encounters his people in this passage. Think through and give examples of the other times in the Bible where God has allowed people to encounter his presence in a similar way.
- 3 Read Hebrews 9. What do you learn about covenants and sacrifices and how they link to Jesus? Describe how you personally fit into this story in Exodus.

## Day 2 – Exodus 25:1-22

- 1 Read Exodus 25:1-22. It's really tempting to skirt over the "details" when reading through the descriptions of the covenant and the sanctuary. Read through the text again, and think through what type of imagery the various objects invoke. There's a lot of gold and other precious metals in this text. Read Genesis 2:12. What is the imagery reflecting?
- 2 Define "sanctuary." Define "dwell." Study Exodus 25:8. What does it mean?
- 3 Read Exodus 25:19-20, then read Genesis 3:24. The imagery is designed to reflect the Garden of Eden. Why is this significant? What was destroyed at the Garden of Eden, and what is God trying to restore? In what ways has your relationship with God been broken, and in what ways has it been healed?



## Day 3 – Exodus 25:23-40

- 1 Read Exodus 25:23-40. Define “worship.” Think about and describe what “worship” in Exodus looked like. How does thinking about the Old Testament worship of God help you as you worship God now, through Christ?
- 2 How does Christ’s sacrifice fulfill these Old Testament commands? Study Matthew 5:17-20.
- 3 How does Christ’s presence with us now affect our everyday lives? Study Hebrews 9:24.



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

A large grid of small dots, arranged in approximately 30 rows and 40 columns, intended for taking notes. The dots are light gray and spaced evenly across the page.



Week Sixteen

Unless the Lord  
Builds the House

M A T T S U N D Q U I S T

## Exodus 26

“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall be the same size. Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and the other five curtains shall be coupled to one another. And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set. Likewise you shall make loops on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. Fifty loops you shall make on the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be a single whole.

“You shall also make curtains of goats’ hair for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make. The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. The eleven curtains shall be the same size. You shall couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and the sixth curtain you shall double over at the front of the tent. You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set.

“You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together that it may be a single whole. And the part that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. And the extra that remains in the length of the curtains, the cubit on the one side, and the cubit on the other side, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and

that side, to cover it. And you shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and a covering of goatskins on top.

“You shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood. Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each frame. There shall be two tenons in each frame, for fitting together. So shall you do for all the frames of the tabernacle. You shall make the frames for the tabernacle: twenty frames for the south side; and forty bases of silver you shall make under the twenty frames, two bases under one frame for its two tenons, and two bases under the next frame for its two tenons; and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side twenty frames, and their forty bases of silver, two bases under one frame, and two bases under the next frame. And for the rear of the tabernacle westward you shall make six frames. And you shall make two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear; they shall be separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring. Thus shall it be with both of them; they shall form the two corners. And there shall be eight frames, with their bases of silver, sixteen bases; two bases under one frame, and two bases under another frame.

“You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward. The middle bar, halfway up the frames, shall run from end to end. You shall overlay the frames with gold and shall make their rings of gold for holders for the bars, and you shall overlay the bars with gold. Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain.



“And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy. You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place. And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table, and you shall put the table on the north side.

“You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework. And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.



# Unless the Lord Builds the House

## Matt Sundquist

**H**ave you ever questioned whether God will provide? Whether you are really hearing his voice to do something for him? If you are living a vocational life of ministry, have you ever worried about having the necessary resources to fulfill the work you are doing? When I first read Exodus 26, I did not expect to find help to those questions. However, the more I meditated on these words, the more this one resounding truth became clear to me—God is the one who will build the house.

### The Setting of Exodus 26

When reading Exodus 26, it was very helpful for me to put it in the context of the broader narrative going on here in Exodus. Moses is on Mount Sinai in God's presence, and from chapter 19–33 he receives commands from God that range from obedience, the Ten Commandments, other laws for Israel, the covenant, instructions for the sanctuary and tabernacle, clothing for the priests, and a number of other things. Moses documents all of these words to

be able to lead the people of Israel in the way that God commanded.

After receiving all the commandments from the Lord, Moses comes back down to the bottom of the mountain to find that the people of Israel were worshiping the golden calf, yet again breaking covenant with the Lord to pursue their own desires and idols. Yet God knew this while he was giving Moses all these commandments on the mountain. He knew the heart of Israel and continued to always keep his covenant with them.

When I first read this passage without this broader context, it was difficult to see the whole meaning and importance of God's direction for how to build the tabernacle. This overall background helped me read this passage with more understanding about God's heart toward Israel and his dwelling with them.

### Our Role in God's Work

An area of encouragement for me in reading this passage is seeing how perfectly God had planned all the details

for the work that he asked his people to do for him. It truly is God's work, and he is inviting us in partnership and covenant to serve him and be a part of his kingdom.

At the beginning of Exodus 25, God tells Moses to tell the people to give as they felt led. At the same time, he goes on in chapter 25 through chapter 26 to give extremely specific directions to Moses about what to build.

THE LORD SAID TO MOSES,<sup>2</sup> "SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY TAKE FOR ME A CONTRIBUTION. FROM EVERY MAN WHOSE HEART MOVES HIM YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE CONTRIBUTION FOR ME.<sup>3</sup> AND THIS IS THE CONTRIBUTION THAT YOU SHALL RECEIVE FROM THEM: GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE,<sup>4</sup> BLUE AND PURPLE AND SCARLET YARNS AND FINE TWINED LINEN, GOATS' HAIR,<sup>5</sup> TANNED RAMS' SKINS, GOATSKINS, ACACIA WOOD,<sup>6</sup> OIL FOR THE LAMPS, SPICES FOR THE ANOINTING OIL AND FOR THE FRAGRANT INCENSE,<sup>7</sup> ONYX STONES, AND STONES FOR SETTING, FOR THE EPHOD AND FOR THE BRESTPIECE.<sup>8</sup> AND LET THEM MAKE

ME A SANCTUARY, THAT I MAY DWELL IN THEIR MIDST. 9 EXACTLY AS I SHOW YOU CONCERNING THE PATTERN OF THE TABERNACLE, AND OF ALL ITS FURNITURE, SO YOU SHALL MAKE IT.

EXODUS 25:1-9

A human way to respond to this may be to question where all the resources would come from or whether the people would give enough for what was actually needed. However, at the end of the day, God already prepared all the resources that would be needed. He already knew exactly what each Israelite would contribute. He is sovereign, and his work will be fulfilled. What is amazing is that he wants us to participate in building his kingdom. For Moses and the Israelites, the Lord wanted them to be a part of building a dwelling place for him. God had already prepared everything ahead of time and knew it would prosper.

What does this mean for us? This is another example we can lean on to have confidence that if God has called us to do something, the Lord will certainly prepare the way for it. As Solomon says in Psalm 127, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” God was the one who built the tabernacle and prepared everything ahead of time. All we need to do is step out in faith, trusting that he will provide and following his commandments.

### Our Obedience

Knowing that God certainly will provide and that his work will prosper

ought to strengthen our faith and be something that we lean on. This sovereign nature of God also ought to lead us to obedience to his commands and to true repentance when we break covenant with him. I see this lesson of obedience demonstrated very clearly in this passage.

The Lord didn’t expect Moses or the Israelites to know exactly what to do or how to do it. That is why he revealed his commands for the tabernacle and his laws to them. He did, though, command obedience to follow the words he spoke. When Moses received the directions for the tabernacle, he didn’t question or try to add his own ideas of ways the tabernacle designs could be improved or tweaked here and there. Rather, Moses followed exactly as God directed.

This is the attitude we ought to have in following the Lord. We should all pray for increased faith and for help to follow his words in obedience, no matter the cost. And if we feel like the path forward is uncertain, he will make it clear. As God promises in James 1:5-6 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.”

### Our Response

I often battle to believe in my heart what my mind knows is true through the reading and meditation of the word. I know the fact that God is in control, and he is the one doing the work. How-

ever, when walking in the midst of a trial, it’s so tempting to try to reach out and grasp onto something I feel like I can control. I believe this is one of the reasons that God gives us these trials and also why God invites us to participate with him in kingdom work. Time after time, God is faithful. My heart needs to be reminded of this, and it becomes more real to my heart little by little every time God’s faithfulness is displayed. I’m encouraged by the words that James wrote just prior to God’s promise about asking for wisdom:

COUNT IT ALL JOY, MY BROTHERS, WHEN YOU MEET TRIALS OF VARIOUS KINDS, FOR YOU KNOW THAT THE TESTING OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES STEADFASTNESS. AND LET STEADFASTNESS HAVE ITS FULL EFFECT, THAT YOU MAY BE PERFECT AND COMPLETE, LACKING IN NOTHING.

JAMES 1:2-4

My encouragement to us as a church is that we would trust that God will provide, that he will be the one who builds the house, and to know that he invites us into partnership with him in that work.

# Day 1 – Exodus 26:1-10

- 1 Read Exodus 26:1-10. Skim over the headings from Exodus 1-25. Where does chapter 26 fit in the broader narrative of Exodus?
- 2 What is the tabernacle? What was the purpose and significance of the tabernacle? Read John 1:14 and Philippians 2:6-7, and note that Jesus built his tent (tabernacle) among us.
- 3 What are the Cherubim, and what role do they play in God's kingdom? Genesis 3:24 and Ezekiel 10:1-20 are good places to start.

## Day 2 – Exodus 26:11-25

- 1 Read Exodus 26:11-25. What materials were used for the inside of the tent vs. the outside of the tent? What is the significance of the fine materials only being used on the inside (gold vs. bronze, fine linens vs. goat hair)?
- 2 Verses 15 to 25 describe the frames and base of the tabernacle. What materials were used? Read Luke 6:46-49. Why do you need for a firm foundation in your life? Are there any areas in your life that don't have a firm foundation?
- 3 Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6:19 that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. What can you learn from this passage in Exodus about how you ought to prepare your body as a temple?

## Day 3 – Exodus 26:26-37

- 1 Read Exodus 26:26-37. Verse 33 describes the separation of the Holy Place from the Most Holy with the veil. Reflect on the significance of the veil being torn when Christ was crucified. Look at Luke 23:44-49.
- 2 Verse 35 describes the lampstand and where it should be placed in the tabernacle. What is the significance of the lampstand? Read Revelation 1:20. What does the lampstand represent in the vision? What can we learn from this to apply in our lives?
- 3 Read Hebrews 9. How does this passage help us better understand Exodus 26?

# Day 4 – Notes

## Study John 1:9-14

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right

to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

## Notes

A large grid of small dots for taking notes, consisting of 20 columns and 25 rows.



# Day 5 – Sermon Notes

A large grid of small dots, arranged in approximately 30 rows and 40 columns, intended for taking notes. The dots are light gray and spaced evenly across the page.



