

Exodus Overview

Belcroft Bible Church: (lesson 8)



Lesson Numbers	Wednesday Night Pentateuch Lesson Titles	Class Dates
1	Pentateuch Introduction: From Paradise to the Promised Land	2/11
2	Primeval Period: Genesis 1-11 and the Noahic Covenant	2/18
3	Primeval Period: Genesis 1-11 and the Noahic Covenant	2/25
4	Patriarchal Period: Genesis 12-25	3/4
5	The Abrahamic Covenant	3/11
6	Genesis 26-50 and God's Faithfulness	3/18
7	Q & A with Pastor Matt	3/25
8	Exodus Overview	4/15
9	Leviticus Overview	4/22
10	Numbers Overview	4/29
11	Deuteronomy Overview	5/6

This class begins a *Bible Overview Series* where the elders will be systematically teaching us through the Old Testament over the next few years during the Wednesday night winter/spring semester. The goal for this semester will be to gain a clear overview of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Thus, we will seek to understand the foundational nature of the Pentateuch while also seeing the purpose, main theme, some interpretative issues along with the historical setting of each individual book. This teaching time will also seek to help you better understand the critical nature of some of the primary Biblical covenants and how they fit into God's overall plan for His people in Christ. Have you ever wondered what all those sacrifices were about and why God gave all those laws to Israel? Have you ever been perplexed by God's covenant with Abraham or wondered how God's covenant with Noah fits into God's plan for the ages? Well, it is the goal of this class to wrestle with those questions and many more as we work through the Pentateuch together!

Introduction to Exodus¹

~ **Hebrew Title:** The Hebrew title is “Names” and comes from the first word (shemoth) in the first verse of Ex 1:1 in the Hebrew Bible, “And now these are the names...” (see also Gen. 46:8)

~ **English Title:** The English title comes from the LXX (Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) and the word “Exodus” meaning exit or departure (LXX, 19:1) which is the major event of the first half of the book.

~ **Key Word:** The key word to summarize Exodus is “**Redemption**” as this book really is a dramatic retelling of Israel’s sovereign deliverance by God from the oppressive kingdom of Egypt. The “Exodus” event is the greatest and clearest illustration of man’s gracious redemption by God in Christ as the Lord sovereignly pulls man from the kingdom of darkness and places him in the kingdom of His Beloved Son where there is utter forgiveness of sin and freedom from the tyranny of Satan (Col 1:13-14; 2:13-15).

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Genesis	Exodus
Human Effort and Failure	Divine Power and Triumph
The Word of Promise	The Work of Fulfillment
A People Chosen	A People Called
God’s Electing Mercy	God’s Electing Manner
Revelation of Nationality	Realization of Nationality

~ **Date of Events:** The events in Exodus cover essentially a 430-year time span (Ex 12:40) which goes from Jacob’s entrance into Egypt (1876 B. C.) to the building of the Tabernacle (1445 B. C.). These notes take an **early date (1446 B.C.) for the exodus from Egypt** which is calculated from 1 Kings 6:1 which says that Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, 480 years after the exodus from Egypt. Most scholars and extra-biblical resources point to 966 B.C. as the fourth year of Solomon’s reign. (The World and the Word, 195). Furthermore, Jephthah’s statement in Judges 11:26 about Israel being in possession of the land for 300 years that used to belong to the Ammonites also points strongly to an early date for the Exodus (Ibid, 195). Counting forward from 1445/6 BC 430 years which is the amount of time Scripture says Israel sojourned in Egypt (Ex 12:40) also gives us a rough date for the entry of Jacob into Egypt at 1875 BC. For further discussion on dating the Exodus see the MSB (MacArthur Study Bible) 91 and ESVSB (English Standard Version Study Bible) 33.

~ **Authorship:** The MacArthur Study Bible (MSB) is helpful here as and exclaims that, “Mosaic authorship of Exodus is unhesitatingly affirmed. Moses followed God’s instructions and “wrote all the words of the LORD” (24:4), which included at the least the record of the battle with Amalek (17:14), the Ten Commandments (34:4, 27–29), and the Book of the Covenant (20:22–23:33). Similar assertions of Mosaic writing occur elsewhere in the Pentateuch: Moses is

¹ I am indebted to my seminary notes and faithful professors whose diligent work and investment into my life serve as the foundation to all the material presented in this class. I want to publically acknowledge one of my favorite teachers Dr Keith Essex as his course notes in *Old Testament Studies* serve as my outline for this class material.

² *Jensen’s Survey of The Old Testament*, Irving L. Jensen; Moody Press (1978); 78.

identified as the one who recorded the “starting points of their journeys” (Num. 33:2) and who “wrote this law” (Deut. 31:9).

The OT corroborates Mosaic authorship of the portions mentioned above (see Josh. 1:7, 8; 8:31, 32; 1 Kin. 2:3; 2 Kin. 14:6; Neh. 13:1; Dan. 9:11–13; and Mal. 4:4). The NT concurs by citing Ex. 3:6 as part of “the book of Moses” (Mark. 12:26), by assigning Ex. 13:2 to “the law of Moses,” which is also referred to as “the law of the Lord” (Luke 2:22, 23), by ascribing Ex. 20:12 and 21:17 to Moses (Mark 7:10), by attributing the law to Moses (John 7:19; Rom. 10:5), and by Jesus’ specifically declaring that Moses had written of Him (John 5:46, 47).” (MSB, 91)

Some Important Dates from Genesis to Exodus

2166 B.C.	2066	2006	1915	1805	
Abraham born	Isaac born	Jacob & Esau born	Joseph born	Joseph dies	
1805 B.C.	1526	1486	1446	1446	1406
Joseph dies	Moses born	Moses flees Egypt	God calls Moses	The Exodus	Moses Dies ³

~ **Outline of Exodus:** The literary structure of Exodus is interesting depending on which way you want to outline it as numerous oppositions have been presented by different scholars. I prefer the more geographical structure as it follows the flow of Israel’s flow from Egypt to Sinai and then their time while encamped at Sinai.

1. Israel in Egypt (1:1-12:36)
2. Israel on the Road to Sinai (12:37-18:27)
3. Israel at Sinai (19:1-40:38)

~ Others have adopted to follow the genre in the literary structure like this...

1. Exodus of Israel from Egypt (1:1-18:27) = Narrative and deals with *Deliverance*
2. Covenant at Sinai (19:1-40:38) = Legislative and deals with *Worship*

³ Easley, K. H. (2002). *Holman QuickSource guide to understanding the Bible* (p. 19). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

The Journey to Mount Sinai

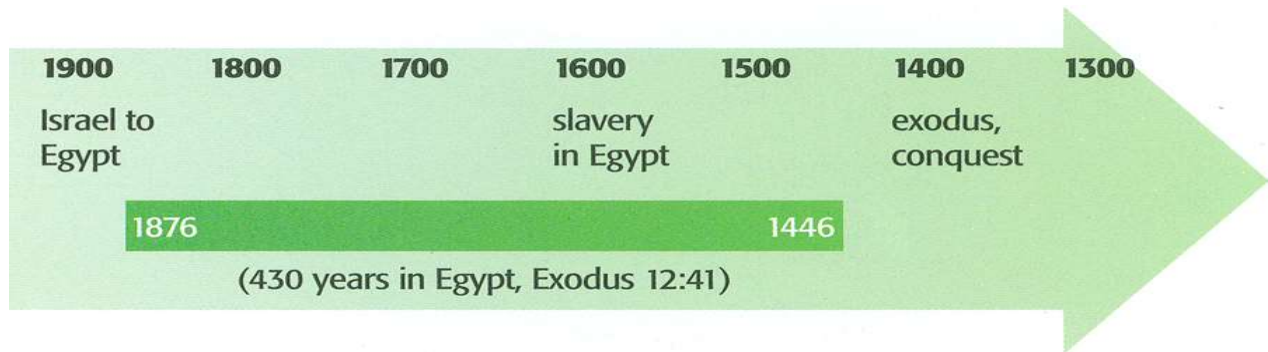
1446/1260 B.C.

Among the many theories regarding the route of the exodus, the traditional route to Jebel Musa is considered by many scholars to be the most plausible. Beginning at Rameses, the Israelites journeyed to Succoth, but these two sites are the only ones on the route identified with certainty. From there they traveled to Etham and Pi-hahiroth, where they crossed the Red Sea. From there they traveled to Marah, Elim, Rephidim, and finally Mount Sinai.⁴



⁴ Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 143). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

CHRONOLOGY FOR EXODUS



Correlating the chronological data with the chapter divisions yields the following breakdown: Chapter 1 covers 350 years, from the Eisodus [the coming in] to the birth of Moses; chapters 2–6 cover eighty years, from the birth of Moses to the plagues. The plagues (chs. 7–12) occupied about a year. Chapters 13–18 cover forty-five days, from the Exodus to Mt. Sinai. In chapters 19–34 Moses was in the mount for eighty days. About seven months were required for Israel to construct the Tabernacle (chs. 35–40). The chronological setting of Exodus is displayed in Chart 19 (below).⁵

CHRONOLOGY OF EXODUS 1877-1446 BC											
1877	1850	1800	1750	1700	1650	1600	1550	1500	1450	1400	
PROSPERITY (1:7) 150 Yrs.				PERSECUTION (1:8-6:30) 280 Yrs.							
EXODUS 1-6											
↓ FOCUS ON TWO YEARS 1446-1447 BC											
PLAGUES ON EGYPT		PATH TO SINAI		PRECEPTS FROM THE MOUNT			PALACE FOR THE KING				
Ex 7:12		Ex 13-18		Ex 19-34			Ex 35-40				
1 Year		45 Days		80 Days			7 Months				

The Man Moses:

Moses, the first and preeminent leader of the Israelites, who led the people out of Egypt to the threshold of the promised land; he is also the lawgiver and the archetypal prophet. He is the

⁵ Smith, J. E. (1993). *The Pentateuch* (2nd ed., pp. 239–240). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.

dominant individual character in the OT narrative from Exodus through Deuteronomy. The text speaks of him in superlatives: ‘And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face’ (Deut. 34:10). For all his greatness, however, Moses never loses his humanness, displaying anger, frustration, and lack of self-confidence in addition to his leadership abilities, humility, and perseverance.⁶

MOSES/JOSHUA

The impact of Moses on Joshua cannot be overstated as just a cursory glance at the life of Joshua reveals that he was much like Moses in many ways. God greatly used Moses to move His chosen people from hard slavery to joy filled servitude which went beyond the life of the man Moses but not without the impression of his training on his intern Joshua. He had the presence of Yahweh (1:5) and was obeyed like Moses (1:17). He was sanctified before Israel like Moses (3:7; 4:14). Specific examples include:

	<u>Moses</u>	<u>Joshua</u>
1. Encounter with Yahweh	Exodus 3:5	Joshua 5:15
2. Miraculous Water Crossing	Exodus 14	Joshua 3-4
- water in a heap	Exodus 14:22	Joshua 3:16
- dry ground	Exodus 14:22	Joshua 3:17
3. Intercession for Sinning People	Deut. 9:25-29	Joshua 7:7-9
4. Written Law on Stones	Deut. 10:1-2	Joshua 8:32
5. Yahweh Listened to his Voice	Deut. 9:19	Joshua 10:14
6. Enemy’s Heart Was Hardened	Exodus 9:12	Joshua 11:20

Three Stages of Moses’ Life

Location	Age	Reference
Egypt	0–40	Ex. 2:11; Acts 7:23
Midian	41–80	Ex. 2:15; 7:7; Acts 7:29–30
The wilderness	81–120	Deut. 31:2; 34:7; cf. Num. 14:33–34; Deut. 29:5 ⁷

⁶ Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). In *Harper’s Bible dictionary* (1st ed., p. 655). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

⁷ Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 148). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The Major Themes in Exodus:

1. Redemption [*ga'al*, redeem, deliver, ransom – (6:6; 15:13); [*padah*, ransom, redeem, deliver (13:13, 15; 21:8; 34:20) & Deliverance [*natsal*, deliver, rescue, save –, 3:141-7] (2:19; 3:8; 5:23; 6:6; 12:27, 18: 4, 8, 9, 10); [*yashah*, deliver, help , 2:556-62] (2:17; 14:[13], 30; [15:2]); [*yatsah*, go out] (3:10-12; 6:6, 7; 12:17, 42, 51; 13:3, 9, 14, 16; 16:6, 32; 18:1; 20:2; 29:46; 32:11) ['*alah*, bring up] (32:1, 4; 33:1)
2. Yahweh [either: a) He is or will be; or, b) He causes or causes to be.
 - a. The Name of Yahweh (3:13-15; 6:2-8; 9:16; 15:3; 20:7, 24; 23:21; 33:12-34:9,14)
 - b. The Knowledge of Yahweh (5:2; 6:3, 7; 7:5, 17; 8:10, 22; 9:14, 29, 30; 10:2; 14:4, 18; 16:6, 12; 18:11; 29:46; 31:13; 33:12, 13) [GTS, 323-39]
 - c. The Fear of Yahweh (1:17, 21; 9:20, 30; 14:31; 18:21; 20:20)
 - d. God's Sovereignty (Chap.2,3,4,6,7,11,12,14,19,36)
 - e. God's Providence (Chap.2,3,6,12,13,14,16,17)
 - f. God's Power (Chap.3,4,6,7-14,17,19)
 - g. God's Faithfulness to His Covenant (Chap.2,3,6,24,32,33,34)
 - h. God's Patience (Chap.3,4,5-11,14,15,16,17,32)
 - i. God's Holiness (Chap.3,19-34,40)
3. Holiness (3:5; 12:16; 13:2; 15:11, 13; 16:23; 19:6, 10, 14, 22, 23; 20:8, 11; 22:31; 26:33, 34; 28:2, 3, 4, 29, 35, 36, 38, 41, 43; 29:1, 6, 21, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 44; 30:10; 31:10; 35:2)
4. The Patriarchs (2:24; 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5; 6:3, 8; 32:13; 33:1)
5. The Covenants
 - a. The Abrahamic (2:24; 6:4, 5)
 - b. The Sinaitic [Mosaic; Israelite # 1] (19:3-6; 20-23; 24:7, 8; 31:16; 34:10-27)
6. The Sabbath (16:23, 25, 26, 29; 20:8-11; 23:10-12; 31:13-17; 35:2, 3)

7. The Passover (12, 34) & Unleavened Bread (12, 13, 23, 34)
8. The Decalogue (20:3-17; 31:18; 32:15-19; 34:27-29)
9. The Tabernacle (25-31; 34-40)
10. The Wilderness (3:1, 18; 4:27; 5:1, 3; 7:16; 8:27, 28; 13:18, 20; 14:3, 11, 12; 15:22; 16:1, 2, 3, 10, 14, 32; 17:1; 18:5; 19:1, 2; 23:31)
11. Man's Rebellion and Sin (Chap.5,7-12,14,15,16,17,32)

The Purpose of Exodus: To Explain how Yahweh (the God of Creation, the God of the Patriarchs) redeemed/delivered the Sons of Israel from bondage in Egypt and entered into a Covenant with the Nation of Israel at Sinai. The Purpose of Exodus is to further reveal God's character as He sovereignly delivers His people from Egypt and details His righteous requirements for them while making a covenant with them so that He can fulfill His promises to them.

The Overview of Exodus:

The book of Exodus is a fascinating study for the student of the Word of God as it unfolds before his eyes in a vivid fashion much like a modern Hollywood movie with all its drama, action, and suspense. The reader of this second section of the Pentateuch also finds himself captivated, at times, by that monumental patriarch Moses, who plays such a pivotal role, not only in the book itself, but also in the heritage and traditions of the Israelite nation. Unlike most biblical characters, the life of Moses, from birth to 120 years old, is put on display for all to see and learn within Exodus. Yet this is not the main focus of the book or the greatest lesson to be gleaned from its pages because the main character is God and the main purpose is found in grappling with His deliverance and subsequent dealings with Israel. Therefore, if one is to understand the big picture of Exodus and how it fits into the grand scheme of the Torah he must fine tune his search by seeking to comprehend how and why Yahweh magnificently delivered His special, chosen people.

How God Delivers His Special People

While contemplating the truths found within the book of Exodus concerning Israel's deliverance, it seems natural to begin with how God delivered them since that is, basically, what is elucidated throughout the first eighteen chapters. It is there, in the first portion of this book that the reader learns about the powerful nature of Israel's redemption as God rescues His people from their deplorable circumstances through seemingly impossible events. Consider how Israel was set free from her Egyptian bondage without the aid of an army or implements of war. Furthermore, contemplate how Egypt, at that time, was a dominating power within that region of the world as they continued expanding their kingdom through concurring other kingdoms but they could not inhibit the liberation of their personal slaves. Yet, this powerful and personal revelation of God Himself, as seen through His deliverance of His people, would be a whole new

experience for the people of Israel. Though God had appeared to Abraham and others as God Almighty the full experience and blessing of that reality was never truly understood by those men of old but would be vividly realized by this generation beginning with their miraculous deliverance (Ex.6:3).

The powerful nature of Israel's redemption from bondage is seen in multiple ways throughout their journey from Egypt to Sinai but seems most vivid in God's display of His mighty character illustrated in the ten plagues. With just a cursory glance at Israel's deliverance one clearly notices three ways in which God's power is revealed for all to see and learn (Ex.7:4-6,17;9:16). First, God's power over creation is declared as He orchestrates and controls nature to accomplish His plans and though this truth is clearly seen in every plague, it will only be explained here in three of them. In the first plague God turns all the water in Egypt into blood even the water stored in jars and pots and though Pharaoh's magicians could duplicate it they could not reverse it which only served to illustrate their lack of power (Ex.7:14-25). Then in the fourth plague He sends swarms of flies which literally cover Egypt but Yahweh in His omnipotence protects Goshen where Israel dwells so that no swarms enter there (Ex.8:20-24). On the seventh plague God sends hail with fire from Heaven to destroy the people, livestock and land of Egypt but again protects the livestock, land and people of Goshen (Ex.9:18-26).

Another way in which the power of God was revealed through the deliverance of Israel is seen in how God orchestrates His control over the nations. Remember that Egypt was seen as a mighty nation with great military strength and yet, the unseen God that is, controls Pharaoh and his people as if they are puppets on a string (Ex.3:20-22;7:3;9:15-16). Also consider how God miraculously protects and provides for the nation of Israel who are probably over two million in number and yet they are not harmed by the plagues, they are financially blessed by Egypt as they leave, and they are able to prosper while in the desert. Finally, consider how God's power is on display in Egypt through His control and use of death. In the fifth plague God declares when and who will die as He strikes down all the livestock of Egypt but preserves the livestock of Israel. Then He escalates the ramifications of His divine power in the final plague as all first born, both animal and human not covered by the blood of the Passover, are killed. This pattern of God displaying His power continues throughout the book of Exodus as God almost completely destroys the Egyptian army with the Red Sea. Moreover, God sovereignly orchestrates and provides adequate sustenance for a whole nation through "heavenly" bread, and water that comes from a rock in the middle of the desert.

However, the way in which Israel was delivered illustrates more than just the powerful nature of God as it also declares His personal nature as well. Though God used Moses and Aaron to act as His messengers in delivering His people it was ultimately God Himself that was sovereignly and intimately involved controlling the whole process from start to finish. This important reality of God's personal involvement in rescuing His people is first seen in Ex.2:23-24 and then clearly declared in 3:8 where God exclaims that He has come down to deliver his people. His interactions with the people of Israel were far more intimate than His involvement with the patriarchs as God would personally deliver His people and eventually, personally dwell within their midst (Ex.6:3). The individual involvement of God on behalf of His people would be a recurring theme throughout the deliverance of Israel (Ex.6:5-8; 7:15, 17; 8:2; 9:14; 10:1; 11:1;13:21-22;14:13-31;15:16:4) which actually started with the divine protection of Moses

(Ex.1:19-2:10). This important reality about God's character would also instantly distinguish Yahweh from all the other gods on the face of the earth who were anything but personal.

Why God Delivers His Special People

After evaluating how Israel was delivered one is ready to consider Yahweh's purpose for the sons of Israel which is found in answering the all-important question of why they were delivered. There are two major reasons which are revealed in Scripture for Israel's deliverance which ultimately flow out of the previously established Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant which is ratified within the book of Exodus. The first purpose that God declares for His chosen people is that He would be known by them experientially and intimately (Ex.6:3). This reality is reiterated by God as He exclaims that He has personally come down to deliver them so that they can be His treasured people who serve Him and He can be their revered God who sustains them (Ex.3:7-12; 6:7-8). Furthermore, God clarifies this purpose for his people through the vivid nature in which they were personally delivered by Him (Ex.6:1-7:19:4) so that they might rightfully know Him and properly worship Him in His very presence (Ex.19-40). All of this finds its foundation in God's desire to be faithful to the covenant he made with Abraham and is a primary part of the process of fulfilling the promises already made (Ex.3:8,17;6:3-8).

However, God's personal involvement in the national plans of Israel was not the ultimate purpose for the sons of Israel but instead it would be the means by which his ultimate desire for global glorification would be fulfilled. From the very beginning God has had a plan and purpose for the nations of the world where He would be known and glorified by them (Gen.1,2;8:20-9:17). Therefore, God's covenant with and deliverance of Israel is simply the way by which all the nations of the world would be blessed by ultimately having a relationship with Yahweh the one true God (Gen.12:2-3; Ex.9:16). This truth is clarified in two ways. First in the way God delivered His people as He rescues them from a superpower through supernatural means so that all the world would know the name of the Lord (Ex.9:15-16). Secondly, in the way God dwells among His people and how that directs the way His people dwell among Him. This is the ultimate foundation behind God giving the Law so that His people would know how to live in the presence of a holy God and therefore, properly reflect Him to an unholy world thus being a light to the nations (Ex.19:5-6; 33:16; Josh.1:11-14; Ps.67; Isa.49:6).

Mosaic Covenant⁸

I. Introduction the Mosaic Covenant (MC)

A. The Exodus event and the establishing of the MC at Sinai are based on God's covenant to Abraham and the patriarchs (Deut. 4:36-38).

B. The Mosaic Covenant was given to Israel on the heels of her exodus from Egypt (Exod. 19).

II. Nature of the MC

A. MC is different from the AC

1. "The difference between the two covenants is seen first of all in Moses' statement that the covenant made at Horeb (Sinai) was *not* made with the patriarchs (Deut. 5:3)" (Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 142).

2. "Second, the two covenants have different forms. Whereas the covenant with Abraham was a grant covenant, the Mosaic covenant follows the form of a Suzerain-vassal treaty, that is, a treaty between a king (Suzerain) and his subjects (vassals). This kind of a covenant is not a grant to a particular subject but a bilateral agreement between the king and the nation subject to him in which the king promises to allow his subjects to enjoy life under his beneficent reign in return for their loyal service to him. Conversely, he threatens to punish those who disobey his laws. The Mosaic covenant follows this treaty form" (Blaising and Bock, *PD*, 142-43).

3. "Thus, when the Mosaic Covenant was established at Mt. Sinai, it did not nullify the Abrahamic Covenant. The apostle Paul made this point emphatically in Gal 3:17" (William D. Barrick, "The Mosaic Covenant, *TMSJ*, vol. 10, no. 2, Fall 1999).

B. The MC is a conditional covenant; the AC is an unconditional covenant "It is important to note that the blessings of a Suzerain-vassal treaty are *conditioned* on the fulfillment of the stipulations. Also cursing is a real possibility should the laws be transgressed" (Blaising and Bock, *PD*, 143).

⁸ I am indebted to my seminary notes and faithful professors whose diligent work and investment into my life serve as the foundation to all the material presented in this class. I want to publically acknowledge that these notes come from my professor Dr Michael Vlach who taught *Theology 4 Class* where he greatly helped me understand the importance of the Biblical Covenants.

III. The essence of the law of the Mosaic Covenant

A. Defined “The law of Moses was a divinely instituted rule of life mediated through Moses to govern God's covenant people, Israel *in* Canaan. It regulated their common, everyday conduct.... The Mosaic code of laws included the commandments (Ex. 20:1-17), the ordinances stipulating the Israelites' social life (21:1--23:33), and those directing Israel's worship (25:13-18)” (Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 760).

B. References in the New Testament

1. The injunctions of the Mosaic Law “This is Paul's most frequent meaning of the law-the ‘legal’ sections of the Torah. Examples abound of this usage by Paul (e.g., Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:20; Gal. 5:3; 6:13).” (Wayne G. Strickland, “The Inauguration of the Law of Christ with the Gospel,” in *The Law, the Gospel, and the Modern Christian*, ed. Strickland, p. 246).

2. The Pentateuch The first five books of the Old Testament are often referred to as “law” (ex. Matt. 5:17). Also, each of the five books of the Pentateuch is quoted and identified as being “law.” (e.g., Luke 10:26-27 with Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 12:5 with Numbers 28:9-10; and 1 Cor. 9:9 with Deuteronomy 25:4).

3. The Old Testament Scriptures as a whole Jesus quoted Psalm 82:6 as “law” in John 10:34. Paul quoted Isaiah 28:11-12 as “law” in 1 Corinthians 14:21.

C. Number of laws “According to orthodox Jewish tradition, there are 613 commandments in the law of Moses. These are divided into 248 affirmative laws and 365 negative laws” (Roy L. Aldrich, “Has the Mosaic Law Been Abolished?” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 116 #464, Oct. 1959, p. 323).

The Ten Commandments, then make up a small fraction of the total number of commandments given by God.

D. The unity of the Mosaic Law It is common to divide the Mosaic Law into three parts--moral (Ten Commandments), ceremonial, and civil. These divisions, though, helpful for study, have no scriptural authority. The Mosaic Law is one Law and is an indivisible *unity*.⁹

II. The Mosaic Law does not save anyone

A. Galatians 2:16 “By the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”

⁹ <https://thecripplegate.com/schreiner-the-threefold-division-and-the-law-of-god/>

- B. Galatians 2:21 “If righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”
- C. Galatians 3:11 “Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident.”
- D. Romans 3:20 “By the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight.”
- E. Abraham Abraham was saved by faith and not by works of the Law (compare Romans 4:3 with Genesis 15:6).

III. The Mosaic Law in relation to Israel

A. The Mosaic Law was given to Israel alone.

Prior to the giving of the Law the Lord said, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel” (Exodus 19:3). Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel” (Ex. 34:27).

“It was to Israel that the Decalogue was primarily addressed, and not to all mankind.” (John R. Sampey, “The Ten Commandments,” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, v.5, p. 2944 B).

B. The Mosaic Law revealed God's character to Israel.

“I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy” (Lev. 11:45). God's character is the basis for the entire law.

C. The Mosaic Law signified Israel's special relationship to God.

“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:5-6).

“The giving of the law itself demonstrated God's graciousness to Israel. The fact that God had given Israel a set of guidelines for the affairs of life, such as government and worship, constantly reminded them of God's concern for them as his special nation” (Strickland, p. 236).

D. The Mosaic Law provided instruction for living acceptably before God.

“The law defined the responsibility of the covenant nation to God, marking out the requirement for fellowship and communion with him. It gave specific instructions to them concerning appropriate behavior within the covenant relationship” (Strickland, p. 237). This instruction included how to worship God and how the theocracy was to be organized and managed.

E. Mosaic Law a rule of life not a means of salvation.

Being under the law in the Old Testament era did not mean that salvation was by means of keeping the law (Rom. 3:20). "Under law" for Old Testament saints meant they were under it as a rule of life. They followed the Mosaic Law not for salvation but for sanctification.

F. The Mosaic Law included penalties for breaking the Law

"It should be remembered that the Ten Commandments were part of the legal system of Israel as a theocracy. In the Mosaic economy 'every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward' (Heb. 2:2b). A law without penalty is only good advice. The Mosaic penalty for violation of each of the first four commandments was death. . . . Only a theocracy could enforce such laws" (Aldrich, p. 332).

G. The Mosaic Law did not replace the Abrahamic Covenant.

"The Law which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant [Abrahamic] previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise" (Galatians 3:17).

"Obedience to the Mosaic Covenant was the means through which the people of Israel could remain connected to the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. If Israel wanted to experience the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant one must heed the commands of the Mosaic Covenant."¹⁰

"In order to receive the promised blessings contained in the Abrahamic Covenant, Israel would have to obey the stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant. In other words, obedience to the Mosaic Covenant would be the means by which the Israelites would manifest their faith in the Abrahamic Covenant (cf. Jas 2:14-26). The nation did not need to keep the Law to be freed from their bondage; they were freed from their bondage that they might live for God in the midst of the crooked and perverse Gentile nations."¹¹

IV. The purposes of the Mosaic Law

A. The Mosaic Law revealed and exposed sin

1. Romans 3:20 "For through the Law comes knowledge of sin." "Its purpose was to inform humankind of their sinfulness" (Strickland, p. 241).

2. Romans 5:20 "And the Law came in that the transgression might increase." As Moo says, "The Mosaic Law specified in detail God's will for his people

¹⁰ *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, Michael J. Vlach; Lampion Press. Silverton Oregon. 2017, pg 96.

¹¹ William D. Barrick, "The Mosaic Covenant, *TMSJ*, vol. 10, no. 2, Fall 1999, 225.

Israel, thereby increasing their responsibility and the seriousness of the matter when they failed to meet that responsibility” (Moo, p. 340).

3. Romans 3:19 “Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be, closed, and all the world may become accountable to God.” The Law of God establishes that everyone in the world is not only guilty of sin but deserving of God's wrath because of their sin.

4. Romans 7:7-13 “In this remarkable passage the Holy Spirit shows us that although the law was something wholly good, nevertheless the sin of man is of such a terrible character that it actually works through the law, so that the good and holy commandment of the law not only fails to eliminate sin but actually stimulates sin!” (McClain, p. 26)

"The law functioned in Paul's own life to force him to come to grips with the ugliness and pervasiveness of sin. It produced not merely a recognition that he was sinning, but accompanying that knowledge was an inner conviction of sin" (Strickland, p. 242).

5. Galatians 3:19 “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions.” The giving of the Law is related to man's sin.

6. 1 Timothy 1:8-9 “But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious.” Law reveals to the unrighteous that they are sinners.

B. The Mosaic Law acted as a temporary guardian for Israel until Christ came (Galatians 3:23-25) “But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

The tutor in Paul's day was the equivalent of a guardian who temporarily took care of all a child's needs. When the child reached maturity the tutor was no longer needed. As Homer Kent says, "When Paul chose this term [tutor] for his illustration, he was emphasizing the temporary character of the law and its inferiority. The law was Israel's guardian and trainer until Christ. When the Christian era arrived, justification by faith was made clear, and the inability of the law to provide justification was demonstrated (see Acts 13:39 for another Pauline statement to this effect)" (Homer A. Kent, *The Freedom of God's Sons*, p. 105).

THE FIVE COVENANTS OF SCRIPTURE

A Divine Biblical Covenant is a promise from God, formalised in a legal framework, solemnised by sacrifice and guaranteed by oath.

The five Covenants are stepping stones through time as God brings history to a climax in the Millennium in the restoration of all things that were lost through man's sin in Eden's garden.

(The word "Unconditional" below refers to the promise within the Covenant, not necessarily the individual enjoyment of its blessing)

The COVENANTS	Refs	Type	Duration	Sign Symbol	Sacrifice	Timing	Beneficiary	Purpose
Noahic 2,348 BC	Genesis 6:18 8:20-22 9:8-18	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Rainbow (Gen 9:13-17)	Genesis 8:20-22	Inaugurated just after the cataclysmic worldwide destruction of the flood.	Made with Noah and his seed (with all of humanity and the animal kingdom).	To secure the earth as a STAGE for the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) when all will be administered by Christ in Millennial Kingdom (Eph 1:10-11).
Abrahamic 1,913 BC	Genesis 12:1-3 15:13-18 17:9-11, 19 22:15-18	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Circumcision (Gen 17:11)	Genesis 15:8-21	Inaugurated just after the disaster of Nimrod's rebellion, the sin of "the sons of God" and the Tower of Babel.	Made with Abraham and His seed (Israel). Its spiritual blessings are enjoyed by believers now by faith.	To secure an innumerable SEED to enjoy the land and blessing (and the world through them). Not yet fulfilled but will come to pass in the Millennial Kingdom at Christ's second coming (Luke 1:71-75, Rom 4:13)
Mosaic - Old - Sinaitic 1,491 BC	Exodus 19:5-8 24:3-8 31:13-17	Suzerain Two-way Bilateral Conditional	Temporary (BC 1,500 to AD 32). Renewed 7x (eg. "Land Covenant" of Deut 29)	The Sabbath (Exod 31:13)	Exodus 24:4-8	Brought in just after the dramatic birth of Israel as they left Egypt. Abolished in the death of Christ (Heb 7:12-18, 8:13, 10:13)	Made with Israel. On stone. No connection with the church.	Added as a temporary supervisor to teach righteous STANDARDS and magnify sin until Christ came (Gal 3:22-26). No longer in force (2 Cor 3:9-11).
Davidic 1,042 BC	2 Samuel 7:11-16 Psalm 89:3-37	Royal grant One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Christ's resurrection and enthronement (Acts 2:30-33)	2 Samuel 6:17-18	Inaugurated between the past chaos of the "Judges period" and the future apostasy of Israel and Judah in the post-Solomon era of a divided Kingdom of Israel.	Made with King David and his Royal seed.	Secures a son of David as SOVEREIGN , to sit on a throne and reign for ever (Luke 1:32). Currently "dormant" but remains in place to be taken up when the Son of David (Christ) ascends David's throne in the Millennium.
Messianic - New - Second - Better - Everlasting 33 AD	Isa 59:20-21 Jer 31:31-34 Eze 36:24-31 37:26-38 Heb 8:8-12 10:15-18	Royal grant, One-way Unilateral Unconditional	Everlasting	Bread and cup (Matt 26:28, 1 Cor 11:25)	Hebrews 10:8-25, 29 13:24, 13:20	Announced in 606BC at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Then Inaugurated on the darkest day in human history, the day when the Lord Jesus was crucified.	Enjoyed by believers spiritually now. To be nationally enjoyed by ethnic converted Israel at Christ's return, both spiritually and physically (Jer 31:31-34, Eze 36:24-31, 37:14-28, 39:25-29).	Replaces Old Covenant (Jer 31:31, Heb 7:18-19, 8:13). Secures SALVATION , a new heart and forgiveness for all of God's people (Heb 8:10-11). Includes a return to the land and peace for future converted Israel, ensuring they never again lose it through disobedience.

The above Covenant programme contains "Biblical covenants" only. It is not to be confused with what is popularly known as "Covenant Theology", which is a framework constructed by Reformed theologians in the 16th and 17th Centuries. "Covenant Theology" posits three "theological covenants", namely the "Covenant of Redemption" (made between the Father and the Son before creation), the "Covenant of Works" (made with Adam in the Garden of Eden) and the Covenant of Grace (promised in Gen 3:15 just after the fall), none of which are actually called 'covenants' in the Bible. Furthermore, Covenant Theology does not distinguish between Israel and the Church, nor does it see a literal 1,000 year future Kingdom on earth. For these reasons, Covenant Theology is seen to present an inadequate framework for understanding the true Biblical "covenant programme".

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