

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Journey to Freedom
Introduction

Setting the Stage

In the Greek language, *exodus* means “the way out.” This book begins by looking back some 400 years to Genesis, to the time when Jacob relocated his family to Egypt when his son Joseph ruled as second in command. This relocation was part of a master plan that God had revealed to Abraham in Genesis 15:12-21.

During the centuries that Israel was growing from a family into a nation, Egypt was in transition from the Middle Kingdom into a New Kingdom. A group of foreigners called the Hyksos were ruling, and helped unite the country. At this time, Egypt would attain a high-mark of its ancient history. The nation's new Pharaohs embarked on ambitious building programs and they recruited the minority Israelites as workers. Before long, the Hebrews had become slaves of the Egyptian taskmasters, and they cried out to God for deliverance. Exodus tells us that God responded to their pleas. First, he raised up a leader, Moses, to whom He revealed Himself by His name, I AM WHO I AM. Then He showed His power to the Egyptians through a series of ten plagues which must have devastated the economy of Egypt.

Finally, Pharaoh gave permission for the Israelites to leave, but then changed his mind and pursued them as far as the Red Sea. In a miraculous display of power, God parted the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross, but released the waters to drown the Egyptian charioteers and secure His peoples freedom.

Now God was ready to implement a new covenant, an agreement that would define Israel as a nation and set in place the expectations that would govern their life as God's people descending upon Mount Sinai. The Lord would now give Moses the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Law, as well as instructions for a form and place of worship.

In all these situations, God was demonstrating His right to make the claim on which the first commandment is based: “*I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other God's before Me.*” (Exodus 20:2-3)

Author

There is no reason to doubt that Moses wrote this book. The unity of the book suggests that there was one author, and the eyewitness accounts indicate that the author was present at those events. Exodus covers a time span of a little more than 80 years, beginning with the birth of Moses and ending with the early portion of the Israelites journey to the Promise Land, sometime around 1400 B.C. Christ affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the book in John 5:46–47; 7:19.

Purpose

What Genesis is as the book of beginnings; Exodus is as the book of redemption. It records the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and presents the basic historical facts about the origins of the Hebrew nation and its religious ceremonies. These accounts are also picturing of Christ and the redemption He purchased at the cross. There are many types and symbols of Christ and the believer in Exodus, especially in the tabernacle furnishings and ceremonies. Exodus also records the giving of the Law. It would be impossible to understand much New Testament doctrine apart from an understanding of the events and symbols in Exodus.

Why Study This Book

- To understand where we came from as the people of God. Especially the background surrounding our redemption and freedom from the bondage of sin. Exodus means “the way out” and tells the story of redemption by blood and by power.
- To learn to trust God in difficult times since He acts in response to our prayers and out of His compassion and love. He works according to His timing, in His own way, and for His glory.
- To show the essential connection between deliverance and worship. We have been called and saved with a purpose.

- To see the importance of God's name and reputation. He wants Pharaoh and the surrounding nations to know that He is the sovereign Lord.
- To learn lessons about Christ from the many Messianic types and symbols in this book.

What You Will Find In Exodus

<u>Event</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
The Egyptians oppress the Israelites as slaves	Exodus 1
Moses mother hides him in the bushes	Exodus 2:1-10
Moses encounters the burning bush	Exodus 3:1-6
Moses and Aaron call down ten plagues on Egypt	Exodus 7-12
The first Passover is observed	Exodus 12
God enables Moses to part the Red Sea	Exodus 14-15
God sends manna from heaven	Exodus 16
God gives the Ten Commandments	Exodus 19-20
Aaron and the people make and worship a golden calf	Exodus 32
Israel builds the Tabernacle	Exodus 35-40

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A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 1 - Exodus 1-2
Journey to Freedom
Birth Pains

Chapter One

The bondage of Israel in Egypt had been predicted in Gen. 15:13–16. The fourth generation would be equal to 400 years, since Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. The Jews went down to Egypt and lived in the best of the land, but this luxury later turned into trial and suffering. How like the path of the lost sinner today; sin promises pleasure and freedom, but it brings sorrow and bondage.

The king's plan now to kill all the male babies would have met with great success except for the intervention of God. We also see in this chapter, Satan's attempt to bring the people of God into bondage. Verse 1 calls the Jews "*the Children of Israel*" and Israel means "a prince with God." The prince of the world (Satan) defying the prince with God! But God's people are not of this world and will be delivered from Satan's bondage!

Chapter Two

It seemed as though God was doing nothing. The Jews prayed and cried out for help and wondered where God's deliverance was. During these years, God was preparing his people, but He was also waiting in mercy and giving the wicked nations of Canaan time to repent. God is never in a hurry, He had His leader chosen for the Hebrews and was preparing him for his mighty task.

Moses was forty years old when he made his great decision to leave the palace and become the deliverer of Israel. His life is divided into three equal periods: forty years as a prince in Egypt; forty years as a shepherd in Midian; and forty years as leader of Israel. Moses spent forty years as a faithful servant in Midian, and here God prepared him for the difficult tasks that lay ahead.

Whenever God works, He chooses the right worker, uses the right plan, and acts at the right time. Moses was taking care of a few sheep; soon he would be shepherding a whole nation. The shepherd's crook would be exchanged for the rod of power, and he would be used of God to help create a mighty nation. Because he was faithful to do the humble job of shepherding, God used him to accomplish greater tasks as liberator, lawgiver, and leader.

Read Exodus 1:1-22 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What were the names of the 12 sons of Jacob?
2. Over the span of 400 years, Jacob and his twelve sons and their wives all died. What happened to their descendants who were left in Egypt?
3. What was the new Pharaoh afraid of? What did the rulers of Egypt decide to do?
4. What shrewd tasks did Pharaoh implement in his attempt to control the growth of the Hebrew people? What were the results of these measures? (See Ex. 1:11-22)
5. Why did the descendants of Jacob flourish even though they were treated badly? What does that tell you about God?
6. How did God protect the descendants of Jacob? We are told in Exodus 1:21 that the Hebrew "*midwives feared God*" (Ex.1:21). How did their actions show it and how did God reward them?

Read Exodus 2:1-25 and Answer the Following Questions:

7. Exodus 2 gives details of a baby son (Moses) being born to a son of Levi. Throughout the Bible we see an importance placed on the genealogy of the children of Israel. Why do you think this genealogy is so important?
8. What did Moses' mother do to try to save her baby?
9. What part did Moses' mother play in his childhood? What part did Pharaoh's daughter play?
10. How did Moses try to demonstrate his commitment to his own people? Did he accomplish it? (See Ex. 2:11-14)
11. Moses lived with the Midianites for forty years before God put into motion His next plan for his life. He became a shepherd. How was this great training for what was coming next? Who else in the Bible trained for leadership as a shepherd?
12. What action did the people of God finally take which opened the doors for Him to act?

The Value of Preparation

Have you ever felt as if you've been spending your life ready for something important, but have never quite arrived at doing it? Perhaps you're a college or graduate student, an apprentice, an entry-level employee, or a junior executive. You may feel impatient and frustrated in a lower level of responsibility, wondering whether your life is stuck in a permanent holding pattern. "Not Yet!"

If so, you might benefit from considering the example of Moses and several other people in the Bible. They illustrate the value of preparation and the truth that God never wastes a person's time. He is always leading toward a purpose, if we are willing to be led.

Joseph had God given abilities in leadership and management, as well as wisdom to interpret dreams. But he spent several years as a household servant and an unjustly sentenced inmate in prison before being given responsibility as Pharaoh's second in command.

Moses spent two thirds of his life being shaped for the last third. During the first third, he was growing up in Egypt, where Scripture tells us he was learning "all the wisdom of the Egyptians" and becoming "mighty in words and deeds." Apparently, Moses thought that this training and experience was enough to qualify him for leadership of his people, the Israelites. But this first attempt at taking charge ended in disaster. He was not yet ready to assume the responsibilities that God had in mind for him.

Daniel submitted to a course of study which included "the language and literature of the Chaldeans." As a Hebrew, he probably found much of this curriculum to be opposed to his upbringing. Yet he experienced it without succumbing to the pagan Babylonian culture. Over the years he rose higher and higher in the government, until he was advising the kings of empires.

No matter where you are in life, God has purpose and direction for you. Right now, things may seem slow, perhaps even boring. But as a follower of Christ, you have reason to make today count. Today is the foundation on which tomorrow will be built. What a tragedy it would be if, when opportunity knocked, you were found unprepared to accept it because you had squandered the time of preparation.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 2 – Exodus 3-4
Journey to Freedom
Who God Calls and Why

A new day dawned and everything had to change for Moses. When he went out with his sheep that morning, he had no idea that he would meet God. It pays to be ready, for we never know what God has planned for us.

The burning bush had a threefold significance. 1. It was a picture of God. 2. It was a picture of Israel going through the fire of affliction, but not consumed. 3. The bush illustrated Moses, a humble shepherd. Note that Moses was brought to the place where he bowed before God and adored Him in wonder, for this is the true beginning of Christian service. Moses often had wondered about the condition of his beloved people, and now he was shown that God had been watching over them all the time. There had been eighty years of preparation for Moses; now it was time to act.

Moses did not immediately agree with God's plan to send him. He had God's Word, the miraculous signs, and the assistance of his brother Aaron; yet these verses make it clear that he still was not ready to walk by faith. The people who wanted to slay Moses were dead, and God wanted Moses to trust Him and not be afraid. How patient God is with His own. How encouraging are His promises.

In 4:14 God had promised that Aaron was coming, and now He fulfilled that promise. While both Moses and Aaron had their weaknesses, and each failed God and each other more than once, it was a great help to Moses to have his brother at his side.

As we see chapter 4 come to a close, it's sad to say these same Jews who received Moses and bowed their heads to God, later hated him and criticized him because of their increased labor. It is wise not to fix our hopes on the reactions of people, for people often fail to live up to their commitments.

Read Exodus 3:1-22 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. God got Moses attention with a burning bush. What was so unusual about this bush? Why do you think it was necessary for Moses to remove his sandals?

2. What was God's plan for the people of Israel?

3. The Lord revealed what He intended to do about Israel's suffering, and Moses' part in the plan. What five objections did Moses raise? (See 3:11, 3:13, 4:1, 4:10, 4:13)

4. How did God respond to the false humility of "Who am I" in 3:11-12?

5. In verse 14, what does the name "I AM WHO I AM" apply to? What other name does God give Moses to use?

6. How did God deal with Moses' second objection in 3:13-22?

Read Exodus 4:1-31 and Answer the Following Questions:

7. In his third objection, Moses attributes unbelief to Israel. How does God deal with this third objection? (See 4:2-9)

8. How would you put in your own words the Lord's response to the fourth excuse?

9. What are your thoughts on Moses' fifth excuse? (See 4:13)

10. Why do you think God made the concession in 4:14-17? What does this say about His character?

11. Moses takes his family with him to go to Egypt. What does this tell you about his plan for the future?

12. How did the people of Israel respond to Moses' and Aaron's leadership?

Crises of Confidence

Exodus 3:11

When Moses asked, “Who am I” he appears to have had an answer already firm in his mind. “I’m nobody”! Three aspects of Moses’ background may have caused him to feel inadequate for the task. First, he was a Hebrew by birth, but the Hebrew’s were slaves to Pharaoh. Furthermore, why should his people accept him now, when 40 years earlier they had rejected his help? Second, Moses was an Egyptian by upbringing, but he had left behind a reputation for murder and perhaps rebellion. He no longer had influence among Egyptian royalty. Third, Moses was a Midianite shepherd by vocation, but the Egyptians despised shepherds. Nor was Midian of any importance to Egypt.

Perhaps Moses was like many people today that struggle to integrate their ethnic or cultural heritage into a larger society. Often, they go through a crisis of identity and self-doubt.

But God reassured Moses by giving him two strong promises. The promise of His presence and the promise to bring Moses back to the very spot where he was standing. In like manner, God gives His people today the same strong word of encouragement: “*He will not leave you or forsake you.*” Hebrews 13:5-6

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 3 - Exodus 5-6:27
Journey to Freedom
The Word and Name of the Lord

Seven times in these chapters, God says to Pharaoh, "Let my people go!" This command reveals that Israel was in bondage, but God wanted them to be free that they might serve Him. This is the condition of every lost sinner: enslavement to the world, the flesh and the devil.

"Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" was Pharaoh's response to God's command. The world has no respect for God's Word; it is "vain words" to them. Moses and Aaron presented God's command to Pharaoh, and the result was more bondage for Israel! The sinner will either yield to God's Word, or resist it and become hardened. In one sense, God hardened Pharaoh's heart by presenting His claims, but Pharaoh himself hardened his own heart by resisting God's claims. The same sun that melts the ice also hardens the clay.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel looked to Pharaoh for help rather than to the Lord who had promised to deliver them. No wonder the Jews were unable to agree with Moses and accused him instead of encouraging him. Believers who are out of fellowship with God bring grief to their leaders instead of help. Moses certainly was discouraged, but he did what is always best—he took his problem to the Lord. God encouraged Moses in chapter 6 by reminding him of His name, His covenant, His personal concern, and His faithful promises. God's *"I Am"* and *"I Will"* are enough to overcome the enemy! God's purpose in allowing Pharaoh to oppress Israel was that His own power and glory might be known to the world.

Read Exodus 5:1-23 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. The Lord's message is: "*Let My people go.*" What challenge to Pharaoh's authority does this imply?
2. What happened to Moses and Aaron when they obeyed the Lord and went to Pharaoh?
3. What happened to the Israelites as a result of this obedience of Moses and Aaron? (See 5:10-19)
4. What happened to Moses and Aaron when the Israelites realized life was going to be very hard? What did Moses and Aaron do next? (See 5:20-23)
5. Have you ever taken a step of faith and had this type of thing happen to you? What did you do about it? What was the final outcome?

Read Exodus 6:1-27 and Answer the Following Questions

6. God repeats “*I am the Lord*” 4 times in 6:2-8. Why do you think He does this?

7. God reminds Moses that He knows He made a covenant with the Israelites and that He hadn’t forgotten that covenant. Do you think Moses was encouraged by this? If so, why?

8. Notice these words in 6:6-8 (*I will bring, I will rescue, I will redeem, I will be your God, I will give*). What do these phrases tell you about the Lord’s heart for His people?

9. What does God promise to do again? Has He added anything to this promise that they had never heard before? (See 6:6-8)

10. God tells Moses again to go to Pharaoh and ask to be let go. How does Moses respond? How does God respond to Moses after that? (See 6:10-13)

11. This genealogy proves that Moses and Aaron are direct descendants of Levi. It proves that Moses and Aaron are actually the same two men that God spoke to in Midian. Why do you think God cares so much about detail? (See 6:14-27)

Spiritual Authority

Exodus 6:13

Authority can be used in ways that bring liberty to people, not just limitation. Sometimes people think of authority as nothing more than telling others what they can and can't do. But in God's instructions to Moses we are reminded that authority can bring freedom to others when it is applied wisely and under the Lord's direction.

For example, a judge can use authority to release an innocent person from jail. A high school principal can use authority to obtain resources so teachers are able to teach effectively. A manager can use authority to reward a worker's performance and encourage creativity and excellence. So, in its best use, authority can be affirming and supportive rather than controlling and correctional. How are you inclined to use authority?

2 Corinthians 13:10

If you exercise leadership among other believers, you will want to carefully study Paul's comment about his authority. Like many of us, Paul liked to be in charge, and he felt frustrated when people failed to follow his lead, as the Corinthians had. As an Apostle, he had spiritual authority over them, which at times led him to deal severely with them.

But it's important to notice how Paul exercised his authority, especially as he grew older in the faith. He didn't lord it over others or try to use his authority to personal advantage. Nor did he abuse his power by using it to work out his own anger. Instead, he recognized that spiritual authority is given "*for edification and not for destruction*" (2 Cor. 10:8), for building others up, not tearing them down.

Is that how you see your position and authority? Do you exercise leadership in order to accomplish the best interests of those that follow you? As they carry out your directions, are those around you built up in Christ, or torn down?

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 4 - Exodus 6:28-10:29
Judgments on Egypt
Part One

The stage is set: Pharaoh refused God's command, and now God would send His judgments on Egypt. He would fulfill His promise in Genesis 12:3 to judge the nations that persecute the Jews. He would reveal His power showing that the gods of Egypt were false gods, and that Jehovah alone is the true God.

The ten plagues of Egypt accomplished several things: 1. They were signs to Israel, assuring them of God's power and care. 2. They were plagues of judgment to Egypt, punishing the people for persecuting Israel and revealing the vanity of their gods. 3. They were prophecies of judgments to come.

These plagues were actually a "declaration of war" against the gods of Egypt. The Nile River was worshiped as a god since it was their source of life, and when Moses turned it into blood, God showed His power over the river. The goddess Heqet was pictured as a frog, the Egyptian symbol of resurrection. The lice and flies brought defilement to the people, for Egyptians could not worship their gods unless they were spotlessly clean. The gods and goddesses that controlled health and safety were attacked in the plagues of boils, hail, and locusts. The plague of darkness was the most serious, since Egypt worshiped the sun god Ra, the chief of the gods. When the sun was blotted out for three days, it meant that Jehovah had conquered Ra. The final plague (the death of the firstborn) conquered Meskhemit the goddess of birth, and Hathor, her companion, both of whom were supposed to watch over the firstborn. All of these plagues made it clear that Jehovah was the true God!

Pharaoh is a type of Satan: he was the god of Egypt; he had supreme power (except where limited by God); he was a liar; he was a murderer; he kept people in bondage; he hated the Word of God and the people of God. Pharaoh did not want to release the Jews, so he offered four subtle compromises 1. Worship God in the land (8:25–27) 2. Do not go too far away (8:28) 3. Only the men should go (10:7–11) 4. Keep your possessions in Egypt (10:24–26).

Read Exodus 6:28-10:29 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What part is Aaron going to play? What is the job in a prophet's life?
2. What does the Lord mean when He says He is going to "harden Pharaoh's heart"? Did Pharaoh even have a chance to believe? (Rom. 2:4-6; 9:14-22)
3. In Hebrew thought, the heart is the core of the person, the seat of intellect, emotions, and will. What do you think it means to have a hard heart?
4. What lessons of leadership do you think Moses learned through his experience mediating between God and Pharaoh?
5. List the nine plagues in order, noted in chapters 7-10.
6. How did God show His care for Israel in the midst of the plagues? (See 8:22-23; 9:4-7; 10:23)

7. Why do you suppose that God raised up a hardhearted Pharaoh at this time? (See 9:16)

8. What do you learn from the fact that under the first five plagues it is said that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, but under the next four plagues it is said that the Lord hardened it?

9. What compromises does Pharaoh eventually start offering? (See 8:25-28; 10:8-11)

10. How did Moses respond to each case?

11. What was Israel supposed to learn from the plague judgments, and how was she suppose to respond?

Did Pharaoh Have A Chance?

Exodus 9:12

If God hardened Pharaoh's heart, did the ruler really have a fair chance to heed God's command to "let My people go"? Or was he a helpless pawn in God's plan to liberate His chosen people?

Pharaoh had a fair a chance as any other person to hear and obey the Lord, but he used his encounter with the living God as a singular opportunity to prove his determination and might. This becomes plain when we understand that the "hardening" means the "strengthening" of his heart or will.

God did not intervene in Pharaoh's decisions in any way that took control of Pharaoh's will. Pharaoh kept complete control and responsibility over his choices. Apparently, God had made him to be what we would call a strong-willed individual. So, it's not surprising that he was determined to resist God's plan. When the text says that God hardened or strengthened his heart, it is a way of saying that Pharaoh became even more determined, he was acting even more like the strong-willed person that God had made him to be.

It's interesting that not every Egyptian had the same response to the plagues as Pharaoh did. A number of them joined the Hebrews and left in the Exodus. Even some of Pharaoh's own magicians confessed that the miracles of Moses and Aaron were "*the finger of God.*"

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 5 - Exodus 11
Journey to Freedom
Judgments on Egypt
Part Two

The key to these next few chapters is the lamb. The Passover marks the birth of the nation of Israel and its deliverance from bondage. This great event also pictures Christ and His work on the cross.

“One plague more!” God’s patience had run out and His final judgment (death to the firstborn) was about to fall. Note that death was to come to all, unless they were protected by the blood of the lamb. “*All have sinned*” (Rom. 3:23) and “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23). God specifies that the “firstborn” will die, and this speaks of God’s rejection of our first birth. All people are “firstborn” who have not been “twice-born.” “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh...you must be born again*” (John 3:6–7). People cannot save themselves from the penalty of death; they need Christ, the Lamb of God.

For years, the Jews had slaved for the Egyptians without pay, so now God permits them to ask for their just wages. From a human point of view, there was no difference between the firstborn of Egypt and the firstborn of Israel. The difference was in the application of the blood. All are sinners, but those who have trusted Christ are “under the blood” and saved. This is the most important difference in the world!

Read Exodus 11:1-10 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What does God promise will happen with the tenth plague?
2. What would Pharaoh do after one more plague?
3. Why would the Egyptian people have given valuable things to the Israelites as they prepared to leave Egypt?
4. What firstborns in Egypt were to die? (See Ex. 11:5)
5. What would be worse in Egypt than ever before? (See Ex. 11:6)
6. What choices and actions did Moses take that made him able to receive God's instructions?
7. What is going to happen to the Israelites during this plague?

8. What should the Egyptian people have learned from the plague judgments? How does this demonstrate God's mercy?

9. Why did Pharaoh harden his heart and refuse to listen to Moses?

Tightening the Screws Carefully **Exodus 11:1**

Even with someone as stubborn as Pharaoh, God showed incredible patience. God could have brought the final plague, the death of the firstborn immediately after Pharaoh's first refusal to free the Hebrews. Instead, God began a systematic plan of attrition, as if to wear down the ruler's resistance. Yet Pharaoh remained steadfast. He was not easily influenced to change his mind. As Moses and Aaron negotiated with him, he became increasingly difficult to deal with.

Finally, after the last plague, an agreement was reached. What a long, intense, and hard process it took to get to that point. Even then, Pharaoh's true colors resurfaced as he and his armies pursued the fleeing Hebrews.

Sooner or later, most of us will confront someone who seems as stubborn as the king of Egypt. It may be a coworker, a boss, the government, or even one of our own children. When the moment comes for you, will you handle it with patience? God's treatment of Pharaoh shows the value of "tightening the screws" slowly rather than suddenly.

So, as you deal with resistance, can you devise a carefully graduated sequence of consequences that might help the other person understand what is happening and perhaps have a change of heart? Discipline and correction need to help the recipient discover the problem and provide a chance to make changes. There's no point in jumping immediately to the harshest outcomes.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 6 – Exodus 12-13
Journey to Freedom
Christ, the Slain Lamb

The Jews have a religious and a civil calendar, and Passover marks the beginning of their religious year. The death of the lamb makes a new beginning, just as the death of Christ makes a new beginning for the believing sinner. Selected on the tenth day, and slain “between the evenings” of the fourteenth and fifteenth days, the lamb was set aside for death. So, Christ was the Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world. The lamb was to be a male without blemish, a picture of the perfect Lamb of God in whom there was no spot or stain.

From the tenth to the fourteenth days, the people watched the lambs to make sure they were satisfactory; similarly, Christ was tested and watched during His earthly ministry, especially during the last week before He was crucified. It is not enough to call Christ a Savior among many. Each of us must be personally able to say, “He is my Savior!”

The blood of the lamb was sufficient to save from death, but the people had to feed on the lamb to get strength for their pilgrim journey. Salvation is just the beginning. We must feed on Christ if we are to have the strength to follow Him. Too many people receive the Lamb as their salvation from death, but they do not feed on the Lamb daily.

Exodus 13

The lamb had died for the firstborn; now the firstborn would belong to God. The Jews were a “purchased people” just as we are God’s purchased people. The nation would forever honor the Lamb by giving their firstborn to the Lord. The hands, eyes, and mouth would be given to Him for His service.

God led His people, not on the nearest way, but on the way that was best for them, just as He does today. The pillar was a cloud by day and a fire by night. God always makes His will clear to those who are willing to follow. He saves us, feeds us, guides us, and protects us, and yet we do so little for Him. Joseph knew what he believed and where he belonged. His tomb in Egypt was a reminder to the Jews that one day God would deliver them.

Read Exodus 12:1-51 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What are the steps the Children of Israel should follow in order to be ready for the 10th plague? (See 12:3-11)

2. Why was this event called the “Passover”?

3. What protected the Children of Israel from this plague? What is the significance of this for us today?

4. What two feasts were the Children of Israel told to celebrate from this time on? Why? (See 12:14-27)

5. When the 10th Plague took place at midnight, what happen?

6. How fast did the people have to leave Egypt? How many Israelites left? How long had they been in Egypt?

7. Who delivered the Children of Israel from Egypt? How does that encourage you today?

Read Exodus 13:1-22 and Answer the Following Questions:

8. What does the Lord ask Moses to do now that Israel is freed from slavery?
(Consecrate Means: Dedicate to a purpose)

9. What else does He ask them to do? (See 13:3-10)

10. What did the Israelites do with the animals first born? (See 13:11-16)

11. Which way would have made the most sense for the people of Israel to travel?
What didn't God send them that way? What does that tell you about your own life?

12. What did Moses make sure they took with them? Why? (See Gen. 50:25)

13. What was the sign of God's presence with His people, and what did He do for them? How does God lead us today?

The Leading of the Lord

Do you ever wish that God would lead you the way He led Israel through the Wilderness, with a miraculous pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Those must have been very reassuring signs to the people that their God was present with them and actively intervening to lead them through the wilderness.

God adopted a kind of communication well known to large groups of travelers in the ancient world. When armies marched long distances, with their lines sometimes drawn out for miles, they needed a way for the troops at the front to communicate with troops at the rear. So, the leaders lighted an open fire of burning coals to carry to the front of the march. At night the flames provided a fire that could be seen for miles. During the day, water poured on the coals produced an easily recognized cloud of smoke and steam. When marching through unfamiliar terrain, the rear-guard troops only had to march toward the cloud to stay on course.

In the case of Israel, God Himself was in the cloud and in the fire, which He produced supernaturally. But how does He lead believers today? The most direct way is through the Bible. His written revelation to humanity. (Basic-Instructions-Before-Leaving-Earth). The vast majority of what we need to know about God will be revealed in Scripture. If we keep aiming toward that, we'll tend to end up in the right spot.

Does God lead His people today? Yes, He does. But we need not look to the skies for His will when we have it written right here in front of us. It's called His Word!!!!

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 7 – Exodus 14-15
Journey to Freedom
Crossing the Sea

Exodus 14

God specifically directed Israel to their place of encampment by the Red Sea, and He told Moses that the Egyptians would pursue them. Sad to say, the Jews were walking by sight, not by faith; for when they saw the Egyptian army coming, they gave up in despair and cried out in fear. Fear and faith cannot dwell in the same heart; if we trust God, we need not be afraid.

Moses knew that the way of victory was through trusting the Lord. Note his three commands: “Fear not” for God is on your side; “stand still,” for you cannot win this battle in your own strength; “see the salvation of the Lord,” for He will fight for you.

God protected His people by coming between Israel and the Egyptian armies. God kept the army at a distance that whole night. The entire nation walked through the Red Sea on dry land. Pharaoh reaped what he had sown, for he had drowned the Jewish infant boys, and now his own army was drowned.

Exodus 15

This is the first recorded song in the Bible, significantly coming after redemption from bondage. Only the Christian has a right to sing songs of redemption. Exodus began with sighing, but because of redemption, we now see the nation singing. Note that this song exalts God, for the Lord is referred to at least forty-five times in these eighteen verses. Too many songs exalt men instead of the Person and holy character of God, and His wonderful works of power.

Life is a combination of the bitter and the sweet, triumphs and trials. However, if we are following God, we never need fear what comes our way. We must accept the bitter waters with the sweet, knowing that God knows what is best for us.

Read Exodus 14:1-31 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What does the Lord tell the Israelites to do next? Why does He tell them to do this?
2. Why does the Pharaoh change his mind? What life lesson has Pharaoh not learned?
3. How did the Israelites react when they see Pharaoh coming? What life lesson have they not learned?
4. How does Moses react to all of this? What life lesson does he learn?
5. Describe next, how God is going to save His people? (See Ex. 14:15-28)
6. What does Israel do while God is providing this protection? (See Ex. 14:21-22)
7. What does God do to the Egyptians? How many survive?

8. What have the Israelites just learned about God? Did they really trust Him? Why did they have to learn this again?

Read Exodus 15:1-27 and Answer the Following Questions:

9. The song of Moses (Israel's song of praise) can be divided into two parts: 15:1-12 and 15:14-18, with verse 13 serving as a transition between them. Describe how God is pictured in each of these parts.

1-12:

14-18:

10. As you think about this song of praise as a whole, what things jump out at you?

11. What else did the Lord want to teach the Israelites as they started out their life of faith?

What is God Like?

Exodus 15:6-12

Some people see two Gods in the Bible. According to this view the “God of the Old Testament” is violent and cruel, while the “God of the New Testament” is a God of love and peace. However, the whole of Scripture clearly reveals one God who is good, true, powerful, pure and compassionate, but never vindictive or brutal.

Without question, the Old Testament story is at times cruel and ugly. But the ugliness does not come from God, it comes from the sin and rebellion of people. Nor does the New Testament tell only a peaceful and pleasant tale. Jesus’ voluntary death on behalf of guilty sinners is as brutal account as it can be.

Overall, Scripture does not avoid the dark and dismal story of a fallen humanity. Instead, it does add a bright light of hope, because a powerful, holy, and compassionate God has reached out to us and provided a way to come to Him. Thanks be to God.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 8 – Exodus 16
Journey to Freedom.
The Bread of Life

This chapter should be read in connection with John 6, for the manna from heaven is a type of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life. It also illustrates the written Word of God on which God's pilgrim people feed from day to day. The Hebrew word *manna* means "What is it?", the statement of the Jews when they could not explain this new food that God had sent. "Great is the mystery of godliness," writes Paul in 1 Timothy 3:16. "God was manifest in the flesh." Consider how the manna pictures Jesus Christ: 1. It came from heaven. 2. It came at night. 3. It came on the dew. 4. It fell in the wilderness. 5. It came to a rebellious people. 6. It fell right where they were.

The dew kept the manna from being defiled by the earth. This is a type of the Holy Spirit for when Jesus came to earth, it was through the miracle ministry of the Spirit. Had Jesus not been born of the virgin, He could never be called "*the Holy One.*" How easily accessible the manna was to the Jews. They did not have to climb a mountain or cross a deep river, the manna came where they were. Jesus Christ is not far away from sinners. They can come to Him at any time.

The hungry Jews were not fed by looking at the manna, admiring it, or watching others eat it; they had to pick it up and eat it themselves. Christ must be received inwardly by faith if the sinner is to be saved. This is what Christ meant in John 6:51–58 by "*eating His flesh and drinking His blood.*" John 6:63 makes it clear that Christ was not speaking about literal flesh and blood, and John 6:68 tells us that it was His Word that He was referring to. When we receive the Word inwardly, we are feeding on Christ, the Living Word.

Note that the spiritual manna (Christ) accomplishes more than did the physical manna that God sent to the Jews. The Old Testament manna sustained physical life, but Christ gives spiritual life to all who receive Him. The Old Testament manna was for the Jews only, but Christ offers Himself to the whole world. It did not cost Moses anything to secure the manna for Israel, but to make Himself available to the world, Christ had to die on the cross. How sad it is that most of the people in the world walk on Christ as if he were unused manna on the ground, rather than stooping to receive Him that they might live.

Read Exodus 16:1-36 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. When the children of Israel depart from Elim, where does the Lord lead them? What is their situation and what is their reaction?
2. How was God intending to solve this problem, and what was the “test” he was going to give them? (See 16:4-5)
3. What were God’s instructions (rule) about manna? (See 16:4-5)
4. How did Moses react each time the people complained and argued with him? (See 16:6-7; 17:2-3)
5. How does the Lord react to the people’s grumbling? In what ways might you be grumbling against the Lord in your life right now, and how can you change your attitude?
6. What should Israel have learned about the Lord from the experiences in 16:7-12?

7. Why did the Lord instruct the Israelites to gather only a day's portion of manna at a time? What happened when they disobeyed?

8. What does the Israelites disobedience in storing manna tell us about human nature?

9. Why is it important for the Israelites to remember their time of eating manna in the wilderness? What does the manna represent in the Christian life today?

10. What other (rule) did Israel need to learn to keep now that they were free? (See 16:27-30)

11. What commandment does the Lord give to His people in Exodus 16:32-33? Why does He give this commandment?

Manna **"Food from Heaven"**

Manna, basically a word that means "what is it?" is a bread-like substance that fell from heaven, and tasted like honey. The Israelites would go and collect a daily portion of manna each day, ensuring to get a double portion before the Sabbath (so they didn't work for their food on the Sabbath). If they grabbed too much or too little, they suffered the consequences. An exercise in trusting God's provisions, the Israelites ate this bread of heaven throughout their several-decade stay in the wilderness.

Where is Manna Mentioned in the Bible?

We first see manna introduced here in Exodus 16. Right before this, the Israelites complained to Moses, saying he brought them out to the desert to die, with no food supply. While they grumble and say their days in slavery in Egypt were better, God provides food and doesn't let them go hungry.

Numbers 11:8, describes what the Israelites did with this bread from heaven. They made it into cakes, boiled it, and ground it into flour. Deuteronomy 8:3, which Jesus later quotes when tempted by Satan, mentions these provisions from God, although it also mentions that man does not live by bread alone. Even if we fulfill our physical needs, we have spiritual needs as well. John 6:58, makes mention of manna as well. It says that even though manna filled the physical needs of the Israelites, it didn't prevent death. On the other hand, the bread of life (Jesus) prevents spiritual death.

Psalm 78:23-25, calls manna "the bread of angels," since this manna appeared to fall from the sky like snow. Another psalm, Psalm 105:40, talks about how God cared for the needs of the Israelites in the wilderness.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 9 – Exodus 17-18
Journey to Freedom
War & Peace

As Israel followed the leading of the Lord, they experienced tests and trials which helped them understand themselves better and see more fully the power and grace of God. The congregation had thirsted before and God had met their needs, but, like people today, they forgot God's mercy. They were trying His patience by their repeated complaints.

Moses illustrates what the trusting Christian does in the hour of trial; he turned to the Lord and asked for guidance. The Lord instructed him to take his rod and to smite the rock and water would come out. The order here is wonderful: in chapter 16 we have the manna, illustrating Christ's coming to earth; in chapter 17 we see the smiting of the rock, which pictures His death on the cross. The water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who was given after Christ had been glorified (John 7:37–39).

The new Christian sometimes is amazed that the Christian life is one of battles as well as blessings. Up to this point, Israel had not had to fight; the Lord had fought for them. But now, the Lord chose to fight through them to overcome the enemy. As Christians we must always be ready for battle both "*In season and out of season.*" (2 Timothy 4:2)

Believers face open and obvious attacks of the flesh, as with Amalek (17:8–16), but also subtle ideas of the flesh, as with Jethro. Certainly, Moses could have done whatever work God called him to do, for "God's commandments are His enablements." How easy it is for us to pity ourselves, to feel that nobody else cares and that God has given us too great a burden! We see God's solution to this problem in Isaiah 40:31; "*But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*"

Read Exodus 17:1-16 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What was the next problem the children of Israel encountered as they got to Rephidim?
2. Exodus 17:1-4 shows a total breakdown of trust between Israel and Moses, to the point that the people were ready to stone him. How did God go about restoring the nation's respect for Moses authority? (See 17:5-6) What do you think the Israelites were supposed to learn from this?
3. Who fought against Israel as they approached Sinai? How did the children of Israel do in their first battle? (See 17:8-16)
4. What does the support of Aaron and Hur for Moses, symbolize in our Christian journey?
5. How does God's command to Moses to record the victory over Amalek speak to the importance of remembering God's deliverance in our lives?

6. What does “*The Lord is my banner*” (vs. 15) personally mean to you? How does this verse challenge your understanding of God’s provision, protection and promise?

Read Exodus 18:1-27 and Answer the Following Questions:

7. Who comes to see Moses? Why does he come?

8. What was Jethro’s reaction to hearing all that the Israelites had been through? (See 18:7-12)

9. What does verse 18 reveal about Moses’ motives and leadership abilities?

10. What did Jethro realize about what Moses was doing? What advice did Jethro give to Moses? Was this good advice? (See 18:14-27)

11. What do we learn from the respectful and loving relationship between Moses and Jethro?

Jethro Preforms an Intervention

Moses was a classic case of a workaholic heading for burnout. Fortunately, he had in Jethro a clever father-in-law who could see what Moses could not. Jethro recognized that Moses failure to delegate authority would wear himself and his people out. Jethro had the courage to speak up and warn his son-in-law about the looming danger.

Such drastic action is often necessary with workaholics because they are often the last to see the damage their compulsive work habits are doing to themselves and to others around them. When things are not working out, their tendency is to work harder, making the problem even worse. This is where intervention may be a matter of life or death.

God may have you be a Jethro in someone's life by taking the person aside and explaining the damage that excessive work is causing. You might offer some strategies for change, or perhaps suggest some resources for getting help. On the other hand, perhaps you are the one that tends to work too much. We might ask the question: Is there already a Jethro in your life who is asking you to slow down? Maybe your Jethro is a spouse who you haven't spoken to at length for days or weeks. Maybe it's a son or daughter who long ago gave up expecting you to take time just to relax and play. Maybe it's a friend you have been avoiding, who always seems to nag you about working too hard. Moses responded right away to Jethro's suggestions and corrected the problem. How long will it take you?

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Lesson 10 – Exodus 19-20:21
Journey to Freedom
Laws for a Priestly People

No topic has been more misunderstood among Christians than the Law of Moses and its application to the New Testament believer today. Beginning with Exodus 19 and continuing to the cross of Christ, the people were under the Mosaic system. God did not give the Law to save anybody, because it is impossible to be saved by the keeping of the Law. He gave the Law to Israel for the following reasons: 1. To reveal His glory and holiness. 2. To reveal man's sinfulness. 3. To mark Israel as His chosen people, and to separate them from the other nations. 4. To give Israel a standard for godly living so that they might inherit the land and enjoy its blessings. 5. To prepare Israel for the coming of Christ.

The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. There is obviously a contrast between the legalistic system of Moses for Israel and the gracious position the Christian has in the body of Christ. The New Testament makes it very clear that the Christian is not under the Law, but lives in the gift of His grace. The Law no longer separates Jew and Gentile, for in Christ we are one in the church.

Being free from the Law does not mean being free to sin. Our liberty in Christ is not license to sin. We have been called to liberty, and we must use that liberty for the good of others and the glory of God.

Chapter 20

All of the Old Testament Law is but an amplification and application of the Ten Commandments. The "New Commandment" of love is the basic motivation for the Christian today. This love is shed abroad from our hearts by the Spirit, so that we love God and others, and therefore should need no external law to control our lives. The old nature knows no law, and the new nature needs no law. 1. *Have no other gods before Me* 2. *Make no idols or images* 3. *Do not take His name in vain* 4. *Remember the Sabbath Day* 5. *Honor father and mother* 6. *Do not murder* 7. *Do not commit adultery* 8. *Do not steal* 9. *Do not bear false witness* 10. *Do not covet*. The Sabbath, the sacrifices, the dietary laws, the priesthood, and the tabernacle services were all done away in Christ.

Read Exodus Chapter 19 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. Where does Israel arrive now? How long has it been since they left Egypt?

2. In verses 4-6 we see several phrases describing how much God loves the Children of Israel. Describe what each of the following phrases mean to you:
 - a. *“I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself”*

 - b. *“You shall be a special treasure to Me above all people”*

 - c. *“You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation”*

3. What is the covenant that God wanted them to keep? (See vs. 5)

4. How did the people respond to God’s instructions? What if anything is important that they responded together?

5. What things does God insist the people do before He comes to talk to Moses on the top of the mountain? Why does God insist on these things? (See vs. 10-15)

6. How do the people react to the coming of God to this mountain? (See vs. 16-20)

7. In verses 21-25 what does God tell Moses to do again? Why does God want Moses to repeat this one more time? How does Moses respond to God's request?

Read Exodus Chapter 20 and Answer the Following Questions:

8. What gracious act is the basis of the Lord's right to be Israel's King? (See vs. 2)

9. What does the commandment "*You shall have no other gods before Me*" mean to you personally?

10. Paul refers to the commandment to honor one's parents (20:12) as the first one with a promise. Why do you think this is? (See Eph. 6:2). How do we honor our parents?

11. How does the ordinance of the Sabbath day promote physical and mental well-being? How can we practically honor the Sabbath day in our current world?

12. What does the commandment against murder, adultery, theft, false testimony, and covetousness tell us about God's views on personal integrity and respect for others?

13. What lessons can we learn from the Israel's fear of God speaking directly to them? (See vs. 18-21) How does God speak to His people today?

Keep It Holy **Exodus 20:8-10**

What was God's will for the Sabbath day as the term literally means "a day of rest"? The fourth commandment is straightforward "*keep it holy.*" But, what does it mean to keep the Sabbath holy?

The forward to the ten commandments provides a clue. All ten rest on the close relationship that God has to His people. a. He is the Sovereign One. b. He is their Almighty God. c. He is their Deliverer. d. He is their Savior. e. They are his children.

If God's people keep in mind their relationship to the Lord and value it in their hearts, they will exhibit the kind of behaviors outlined in the Ten Commandments. For example, if they would set aside a day a week in order to consciously emulate what the Lord did on the seventh day of creation.

God rested or ceased from His creation labors on the seventh day. He did not stop sustaining, maintaining, and redeeming the world, but He did from creating, shaping, and forming it. And that is what He asks His people to do. To set a day apart for Him in order to do whatever He loves and desires, everything except the routine labors that are normally carried out six days of the week.

Christians today have a degree of latitude in how they fulfill God's intentions for the Sabbath. But the spirit of "keeping the Sabbath holy" still means to honor God, to focus on the needs of others rather than ourselves, and to pursue fellowship, unity, and concern for other believers.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 11 – Exodus 20:22-23:19
Journey to Freedom
Life Under God's Leadership

Having given Israel the Law of God in the Ten Commandments, Moses then explained and applied that Law to various aspects of human life. Wherever there is law, there must be interpretation and application; otherwise the law is impractical and not at all helpful. In the beginning, it was the priests who taught and applied the Law in Israel, but in later years, it was the scribes and rabbis who became the professional teachers of the Law. Unfortunately, their interpretations became as authoritative as the original Law, and it was this error that Jesus exposed through His teachings, especially the Sermon on the Mount.

In chapter 21 we see that the Jews were allowed to buy and sell servants, but they were forbidden to treat them as slaves. Sometimes people had to sell themselves into service because of their poverty, but their service was limited to only six years. Then they had to be freed.

The judicial system in Israel, like our system of courts today, depended on just laws, honest judges, and faithful witnesses. God's laws were just, but they could be deliberately misinterpreted by an unjust judge, or a lying witness could give false testimony. When it comes to applying the law, God does not want the wicked to be justified. But when it comes to saving lost sinners, God in His grace justifies the ungodly. He can do this because the penalty for our sins was embraced on the cross by His Son.

The worship of God and the working of the land were bound together. Israel's religious festivals were tied to the agricultural year in a series of "sevens." The seventh day was the Sabbath and the seventh year was the Sabbatical Year. The weekly Sabbath not only reminded the Jews that they belonged to God, but it also showed God's care for the health of man and beast and the "health" of the land. The Sabbatical Year gave even more opportunity for rest and restoration.

Passover speaks of the death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The Feast of First Fruits is a type of His resurrection, and the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us of His coming again and the future kingdom of joy and fullness.

Read Exodus 20:22-23:19 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. What does the instruction for building an altar tell us about God's desire for sincerity in worship? (See 20:22-26)

2. In other Near Eastern cultures, a slave was the total, permanent property of his or her master. What humanitarian limits did God place on slavery in Israel? (See 21:1-11, 20-27)

3. What does the principle of releasing a Hebrew servant in the seventh year teach us about God's view of freedom? How might the practice of a servant choosing to serve their master for life relate to our commitment to God?

4. How might the laws in this section be applied in shaping the convictions of a believer today? Why do you think God included such specific laws for living among the Israelites?

5. How do the laws about protecting foreigners, widows, and orphans challenge our society today? (See 22:22-24)

6. What does 22:21-27 tell you about God's character and priorities?

7. What does it mean that you "*shall not follow a crowd to do evil?*" Why do you think it is so easy to follow the crowd? (See 23:1-3)

8. What is the principle taught in verse 23:9?

9. Think about the purposes of the Sabbath year and Sabbath day. What do they say about God's character and priorities? (See 23:10-12)

10. What are the 3 feasts? What was the purpose of each one? What effect would the 3 times a year required, have on the people? (See 23:14-19)

The Human Machine

Exodus 23:12

The law made provisions for people and animals to have one day of rest each week. God knew the makeup of His creatures. Neither human or beast was capable of working endlessly like a machine.

Yet today, when more people work with machines than with animals, there's a tendency to start seeing people as machines rather than human beings with a need for rest and refreshment. This trend is accelerated by a common view of the world that reduces everything to the material and ignores the spiritual side of life.

The law's amplification of the fourth commandment, which concerns the Sabbath, reflects not only a godly view of work, but a godly view of humanity. We are more than just sophisticated pieces of technology. We are living souls made in the image of God. Therefore, as He rested from His work, so should we.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 12 – Exodus 23:20-24
Journey to Freedom
Covenant Confirmed

God promised His people victory because His angel would go before them and help them defeat their enemies, if the nation faithfully obeyed God's commandments. Their ownership of the land was purely by God's grace, but their enjoyment of the land depended on their faith and faithfulness. Once in their land, the people were warned not to imitate the idolatrous practices of the other nations. God promised His people health, prosperity, and safety if they obeyed Him, for these blessings were a part of His covenant. Israel did conquer the Promised Land and destroy the cities and idols of the godless inhabitants. But unfortunately, God's people began to make peace with their heathen neighbors and learn to worship their false gods and goddesses.

Exodus 24

Moses is about to receive from God the divine pattern for the tabernacle and the priesthood. Whenever God calls us to do a work, He gives us the plans and expects us to follow His will. Before Moses and the leaders of the nation could ascend the mountain to meet with God, the people had to enter into a covenant relationship with God. Moses shared the Word of God with the people, and they agreed to obey it.

The covenant was confirmed with sacrifices and the sprinkling of the blood on the altar and on the people who agreed to obey it. The blood on the altar spoke of God's gracious forgiveness of sin, while the blood sprinkled on the people committed them to a life of obedience. Believers today have been sprinkled by the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense and are committed to obey His will.

It is possible to believe in God and be a part of His covenant and yet not be close to God. What a privilege it is to fellowship with God, and what a tragedy it is that we too often fail to spend time in His presence. Unfortunately, many come near to God and still go away and sin. How important it is that our personal worship of the Lord result in a clean heart and a right spirit, for great privileges bring with them even greater responsibilities.

Read Exodus 23:20-33 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. God gives some promises to the Israelites. What was the condition for these promises? What would be the result of obedience to these promises? (See 23:20-31)

2. What other specific benefits would the Israelites experience as a result of obeying the Lord? (See 23:25-26)

3. Why didn't the Lord drive out all of Israel's enemies at once?

4. Why should the children of Israel not make any covenant with the people? Did they? Is there any lessons we can learn from this is regards to making covenants today? (See 23:32-33)

5. What is the difference between an unconditional and conditional promise? Give some Biblical examples.

Read Exodus 24:1-18 and Answer the Following Questions:

6. The Lord tells Moses to come up again to the mountain to meet with Him. Who else is supposed to go with him? What is the Lord teaching Israel about Himself through his instructions? (See 24:1-2)

7. Why did Moses write down what God said since he had already relayed it to the people? What is the advantage of written Scripture as compared to just oral?

8. Why could the elders along with Moses now go up and meet with God? What was the purpose of this meeting? What does it mean that they saw God? (See 9-11)

9. Who went upon the mountain? Who was left in charge while Moses was on the mountain?

10. Why did a cloud cover the mountain? What is the glory of God called? When and why does it appear?

11. What do you think Moses was doing during his first 6 day stay?

12. How can we apply the principles of sacrificial offerings to our lives today?

What is the Shekinah Glory of God? **Exodus 24:15-17**

The word (Shekinah) does not appear in the Bible, but the concept clearly does. The Hebrew rabbis used this extra biblical expression, a form of a Hebrew word that means “He caused to dwell,” signifying that it was a divine visitation of the presence of the Lord on this earth. The Shekinah was first evident when the Israelites set out from Succoth in their escape from Egypt. After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the promise land. By day, the Lord went ahead of them as a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night as a pillar of fire to give them light and warmth. God spoke to Moses out of the pillar of cloud, assuring him that His presence would be with the people.

The visible appearance of God’s presence was not only seen by the Israelites but also by the Egyptians. During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off which caused them to malfunction. Exodus 14:25 says “ *And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty, and the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians.* ”

In the New Testament, Jesus is the dwelling place of God’s glory. Colossians 2:9 tells us “*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*” In Jesus, we see the visible presence of God Himself in the second person of the Trinity. Although, His glory was also veiled, Jesus is nonetheless the presence of God on earth. Just as the divine Presence dwelled in a relatively plain tent called the tabernacle before the Temple was build, so did that Presence dwell in the relatively plain man who was Jesus. When we get to heaven, we will see both the Son and the Father in all their glory, and the Shekinah will no longer be veiled. “ *Beloved, now we are children of God: and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*” 1 John 3:2

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 13 - Exodus 25-31
Journey to Freedom
The Tabernacle Described

Chapter 25 - In the Book of Genesis, it is recorded that God walked with His people. But in Exodus, God said that He wanted to dwell with His people. The tabernacle built by Moses is the first of several dwellings that God blessed with His glorious presence. However, when Israel sinned, the glory departed. The second dwelling place is the temple of Solomon. The prophet Ezekiel saw that glory depart. The glory of God returned to earth in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ, and men nailed Him to a cross. God's people today are the temple of God, universally, locally and individually.

Chapter 26, 27 - Within the tabernacle, seen only by the ministering priests, were colorful curtains of linen, hung upon the wooden framework. God built beauty into the walls and ceiling of the tabernacle, not only with the colors used but also with the images of the cherubim on the curtains. The commandment against making graven images did not prohibit the people from engaging in artistic work and making beautiful things, for they did not intend to worship these things they made for God's glory.

Chapter 28, 29 - Chapter 28 focuses on the clothing of the priests, while chapter 29 deals primarily with the consecration of the priests. As you study these two chapters, keep in mind that all of God's people are priests; therefore, the Aaronic priesthood can teach us much about the privileges and obligations we have as God's priests. Note that the priests ministered first of all to the Lord, even though they also ministered to the Lord's people. The priests represented the people before God and ministered at the altar, but their first obligation was to serve the Lord. If we would serve the people rightly, we must serve the Lord acceptably.

Chapter 30 - God wanted His people to be "a kingdom of priests." Today, all of God's people are a priesthood, but in Old Testament days, the nation of Israel had a priesthood that represented them before God. What the priests were, the whole nation should have been.

Chapter 31 - Whenever God calls us to do a job for Him, He gives us the enablement we need and the helpers we need. This He did for Bezalel and Aholiab. Bezalel means “in God’s protection”; his grandfather Hur we have met before. God gave these men the ability they needed to follow the heavenly pattern and make the things necessary for the tabernacle. Their wisdom and skill came from the Lord, and they used their abilities in obedience to God’s command.

Artistic skills can be dedicated to God and used for His glory. Not everybody is called to be a preacher, teacher, or missionary. There is also a need for Christian writers, artists, musicians, architects, doctors, gardeners in fact, in every legitimate vocation we can serve the Lord.

There is a time to labor for the Lord and a time to rest, and both are a part of His plan for His people. Bezalel and Aholiab were constructing the holy tabernacle, but they were instructed to be careful not to violate the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not given to the Gentile nations but only to Israel as a sign of their special relationship to the Lord. The Sabbath commandment is not given to the church, for the church honors the first day of the week, the Lord’s Day, the day of His resurrection from the dead. The Sabbath belonged to the old creation, but the Lord’s Day belongs to the new creation.

Read Exodus Chapter 25 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. How does the detailed construction of the Sanctuary, reflect the character and holiness of God? In today’s world, how can we create a “Sanctuary” for God in our own lives?
2. What is described in Exodus 25:10-22? What is the purpose of the ark of the covenant?
3. The mercy seat was the lid of the ark. What was its purpose? What happen here in Exodus 25:22?

Read Exodus Chapter 26 and Answer the Following Questions:

4. What does the detailed design and instruction of the Tabernacle tell us about God's nature?

5. How does the construction of the tabernacle highlight the importance of individual and team roles in building God's kingdom?

Read Exodus Chapter 27 and Answer the Following Questions:

6. What do the specific instructions for the construction of the altar tell us about the importance of worship in our own spiritual lives?

7. How does the command to use pure, pressed olive oil for the lamps symbolize the purity and quality of our devotion to God? In what ways can we keep our lamps burning continually in today's world?

Read Exodus Chapter 28 and Answer the Following Questions:

8. The garments of the High Priest and the rest of the priests are described in this chapter. What are the five pieces of the priest's garments? (28:1-43)

9. What can this section teach us about the seriousness with which we should approach our calling to serve God?

Read Exodus Chapter 29 and Answer the Following Questions:

10. How does the ritual of washing before putting on the holy garments reflect that of the modern-day Christian life? How can the symbol of wearing holy garments be seen in our daily lives?

11. How does the strict adherence to these ancient instructions seen in chapter 29, challenge your commitment to obey God's Word today?

Read Exodus Chapter 30 and Answer the Following Questions:

12. What is described here in 30:22-33? How is this symbolic to believers today?

13. How does this passage help us to better understand the importance of rituals (a ceremony performed in a certain order) and symbols in our spiritual life and how we can personally apply them?

Read Exodus Chapter 31 and Answer the Following Questions:

14. What was the Holy Spirit's role in the construction of the tabernacle? (31:1-11)

15. Why was it so important to God for the Israelites to keep the Sabbath holy? (See 31:12-17)

16. Who used His finger to write out the Ten Commandments on the tablet of stone? Thoughts on why? Today, how does God use that same finger of grace to write His purpose and will upon the hearts of believers?

A Worship Center in the Wilderness

Exodus 25:8

Sometimes people speak of a sanctuary, or place of worship, as “God’s house.”

That can be a bit misleading, for the Lord does not need a house to live in. He is Spirit, and His presence is everywhere.

Why then did God instruct His people to build a worship center? “*That I might dwell among them*” Ex. 25:8. Perhaps it was not because He needed a place to live, but because they needed a place to worship. The sanctuary or tabernacle, was for their benefit more than His. This becomes apparent when we look at the construction details noted in Ex. 25-31.

The Lord’s worship center was approximately, 45 feet long by 15 feet wide by 15 feet high. It consisted of a sectionalized wooden frame covered by four layers of material (embroidered linen on the inside, layered by woven goat hair, ram skin leather, sea cow hide). On the inside it was divided into two compartments: The Holy Place, (about 30 feet x15 feet), and the (Most Holy Place (15 feet by 15 feet). The Most Holy Place was a perfect cube.

The tabernacle was erected on the west side of a surrounding courtyard, except for an entry way on the eastern side that had a curtain almost eight feet high.

The believer today can learn a number of lessons about worship from Israel’s experience with the tabernacle. One of the most important is that if everyone participates in the financing and construction, then everyone will have a greater sense of participation in the worship that takes place there. Everyone can know that like Israel, they have built a sanctuary for God and He has come to dwell among them.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 14 – Exodus 32-33:6
Journey to Freedom
Idolatry and Intersession

While Moses was having a “mountaintop” experience with the Lord, the people were sinning in the valley below. No matter how you look at this sin, it was a great offense against God. The Jews were God’s people, chosen by His grace and redeemed from Egypt by His power. He had led them, fed them, protected them from the enemy, and made them a part of His covenant. He had given them His holy laws and the people had agreed to obey. Here at Sinai, the people had seen the awesome display of God’s glory and had trembled at His power. Yet, in spite of all these marvelous experiences, they disobeyed the Lord and lapsed into idolatry and immorality.

The Lord knew what was going on in the camp of Israel. Note how God seemed to “blame” Moses for what had happened, but Moses was quick to remind the Lord that Israel was His people. It was God’s glory that was at stake and not Moses’ reputation, so Moses reminded the Lord of His promises. Twice during Moses’ lifetime, God offered to destroy Israel and use Moses to start a new nation, but he refused. The Jews never knew the price Moses paid to be their leader. How much they owed to him, and yet how little they showed their appreciation.

In His grace, God forgave their sins, but in His sovereignty, He had to discipline the people. Moses had a right to be angry and to humble Aaron and the people. By breaking the two tables of the Law, written by God, Moses dramatically showed the people the greatness of their sin. Instead of confessing his sins, Aaron made excuses. He blamed the people for their depravity and Moses for his delay. After dealing with the people, Moses returned to the Lord on the mountain and offered to give up his own life that the people might be spared.

As intercessor, Moses stood between the nation and their past sins. As mediator, he stood between the nation and their future blessings. Moses was not content just to have the nation forgiven; he wanted to be sure that God would go with them as they continued their march to the Promised Land. When the people heard that God would not go with them, they humbled themselves and mourned. It is one thing to mourn because of God’s discipline of our sins and quite something else to mourn because of God’s distance resulting from our pride.

Read Exodus 32:1-35 and Answer the Following Questions

1. What happened down in the Israelite camp when Moses was up on the mountain? What do you think the people were thinking by doing this?
2. Why do you think Aaron would even consider this request? Why did the people think they needed a “god” made out of gold?
3. What happened next? What did this gathering turn into? (See vv. 7-8)
4. When Moses came back down from the mountain what was the first thing he did?
5. Who joined Moses on the trip down the mountain? Where had Joshua been all this time? What does that tell you about him? (See vv. 15-18; 24:13)
6. What are eight things Moses did when he arrived back at camp and saw what they had done? (See vv. 19, 20, 21, 26, 29)
7. What did Moses do next?

8. What was Moses willing to lose in order to save God's people? Can you think of anyone else in the bible who was willing to do the very same thing?
(See 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 9:1-3)

9. In Exodus 15:26 the Lord made a promise to His people: If they would live by His laws, He would make sure none of the diseases of Egypt would be part of their lives. What had these people just done to themselves?

Read Exodus 33:1-6 and Answer the Following Questions

10. Is the Lord still going to keep His promise of a land for the children of Israel? What is going to change?

11. How do God's instructions in the next few verses show His righteousness and holiness? How does this compare to His mercy shown later in this section? (Mercy: Getting what you don't deserve)

12. Why did the people take off their jewelry? What does this represent?

I Would Believe in God if Only I Could See Him

Exodus 32:1-4

How many times have you heard people say words to the effect of, “I would believe in God if only I could see Him.”? According to this common excuse, a person’s unwillingness to put wholehearted trust in God is actually His fault: He hasn’t revealed Himself plainly. If He would, such people would instantly believe in God and start following Him.

In truth, the experience of the people of Israel at Mount Sinai refutes this sort of reasoning. If ever there was an occasion on which God revealed Himself to human beings, it was at Mount Sinai. For many days, God’s presence descended on the mountain, producing a spectacular display of thunder, lighting, trumpet sounds, and smoke. In fact, the signs were so overwhelming that the people trembled with fear. Clearly, they were convinced that they were standing before God Himself.

Yet, did that cause them to believe in Him? No, it may have verified His existence for them, but it did not change their hearts. In fact, while the Lord’s presence was still hovering over the mountain, the Israelites fashioned an idol (golden calf) and began worshipping it. What an incredible rejection of God.

History contains plenty of evidence of God’s revelation of Himself to humanity. The creation reveals His existence, The Bible reveals His will, and Jesus has revealed His person. If these and countless other signs are not enough to persuade someone to turn to the Lord in faith and obedience, probably nothing else will.

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 15 – 33:7-40:1-38
The Glory of The Lord

The tent described in verses 7–11 is not the tabernacle, for the tabernacle had not yet been constructed. This was the tent where God met with Moses and shared His plans with him. Moses asked for God's grace to bless the people and God's presence to go with the people, and the Lord granted his request. Other nations had laws, priests, and sacrifices. Only Israel had the presence of God among them.

Moses knew what many in the church today have forgotten that the most important activity of God's people is worship. Moses had been given a guarantee of God's presence with His people, but that was not enough; he wanted a new vision of the glory of God. Moses returned for another forty days with God on the mountain, and God gave him new tablets of Law. God now reminds Moses that the people of Israel were to be different from the people living in the land of Canaan, and He warned Moses against the sin of idolatry. God gave Israel His Law so that they might live godly lives and manifest His glory.

Moses had already told the people that God wanted their willing gifts so that the tabernacle could be built. These were to be willing gifts from the heart, for the Lord loves a cheerful giver. It was "the Lord's offering," and therefore, they wanted to give their best. In fact, they gave so generously that Moses had to stop them from bringing more.

In chapters 35-39, Moses names the various parts of the tabernacle one by one, as well as the garments of the priests. God is concerned with every detail of our work and does not minimize any aspect of it. The smallest hook for the curtains was as important to Him as the brazen altar. If we are faithful in the small things, God can trust us with the bigger things. Scholars have estimated that in the construction of the tabernacle, the people used nearly a ton of gold, about three and a quarter tons of silver, and two and a quarter tons of bronze. It was not an inexpensive structure!

Israel had arrived at Sinai three months after their exodus from Egypt, and it was now the first day of the second year of their pilgrimage, so nine months transpired from the giving of the Law to the dedicating of the finished tabernacle. Nearly three months of that time, Moses had been with God on the mountain. We see then that the construction of the tabernacle took about six months.

As he was setting up the tabernacle this first time, Moses put up the tent, and then, working outward from the holy of holies, he put the pieces of furniture in place. When that was done, he set up the outer court. With everything in its proper place, Moses then anointed the structure and its contents and set it apart for the Lord. His final act of dedication was the consecration of Aaron and the priests, which was followed by their presenting the sacrifices to the Lord.

The high point of the tabernacle dedication service, was the revelation of the glory of God in the fire on the altar and the cloud in the tent. No matter how expensive the tabernacle was, without the presence of God it was just another tent. The glory not only resided in the tabernacle, but it guided the Israelites on their journey.

Read Exodus Chapters 33:7-40 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. Where did Moses put his tent now? Where was it before? Why did Moses move his tent? (See 33:7-11)

2. Moses appears to be grieving that he may not know God in the same way ever again because of this great sin of the people. What does God do for Moses? (See 33:18-23)

3. How can the reality of God's presence not only be with us, but also shape our decisions and actions in today's world?

4. As Moses brings two new tablets of stone up the mountain for the Lord to again write on, he is still mourning that God will not be with them in the same way as before. What does the Lord do in 34:5-7 to ease Moses' pain?

5. What does God do in 34:10-28?

6. What happened to Moses in the presence of God? What did this prove to the people? (See 34:29-35)

7. How does the ordinance of the Sabbath seen in this section, practically relate to our understanding of life application for us today? (See 35:1-3)

8. In your life, when have you seen an example of everyone's unique skill and contribution coming together for a greater purpose, similar to the construction of the Tabernacle? How can we use our personal talents and skills in the service of the Kingdom and our communities? How can we ensure that our skills and contributions are not used for self-glory but for glorifying God? (See 35:5, 20-29) Note the word: "Heart"

9. In what ways does the Israelites willingness to contribute freewill offerings reflect their relationship with God? How can this be applied to our lives today? (See 36:2-7)

10. In what ways can the idea of a "Tabernacle or Sanctuary" be modeled in our own lives and homes? (See 36:1-38)

11. What is the importance of Bezalel's craftsmanship in the construction of these sacred items seen in Exodus 37-39?

12. What does the construction of all these holy items teach us about the importance of devotion, skill, and detail in our service to God?
13. How does the journey of the Israelites mirror our own spiritual walks?
14. In our present-day world, how can we create spaces that are “holy” or set apart for God?
15. How does the tabernacle setting and anointing process relate to the importance of order and holiness in our present-day world?

Excellence Starts at the Top

Moses set an excellent example for his work force by doing his own job “*According to all that the Lord had commanded Him*” Exodus 40:16. That kind of dedication set the pace for everyone else and reaped valuable rewards.

For example, the management team for the construction of the tabernacle modeled Moses’ example by performing their tasks with “*wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship*” so that they completed the project “*according to all the Lord had commanded.*” Likewise, all of the workers under them carried out their tasks “*as the Lord had commanded.*”

Excellence in Israel began with Moses. It spread to the group of managers helping to supervise and coordinate the project. Then, the workers followed suit. Do you model excellence and quality for others in all that you do?

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in the Book of Exodus
Journey to Freedom
Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
1/6		Men's Breakfast	
1/14		Introduction / Potluck	Exodus 1-40
1/21	1	Birth Pains	Exodus 1-2
1/28	2	Who God Calls and Why	Exodus 3-4
2/3		Men's Breakfast	
2/11	3	The Word and Name of the Lord	Exodus 5-6:27
2/18	4	Judgments on Egypt Part One	Exodus 6:28-10:29
2/25	5	Judgments on Egypt Part Two	Exodus 11
3/4 (Mon)		Men's Steak & Study	
3/10	6	Christ, the Slain Lamb	Exodus 12-13
3/17	7	Crossing the Sea	Exodus 14-15
3/24		Resurrection Trail (No Study)	
3/31		Easter (No Study)	
4/6		Men's Breakfast	
4/14	8	The Bread of Life	Exodus 16
4/21	9	War & Peace	Exodus 17-18
4/28	10	Laws for a Priestly People	Exodus 19-20:21
5/4		No Men's Breakfast (Due to Steak & Study 5/19)	
5/5	11	Life Under God's Leadership	Exodus 20:22-23:19
5/12		Mother's Day (No Study)	
5/19		Men's Steak & Study (Santos)	
5/26		Memorial Day Weekend (No Study)	
6/1		Men's Breakfast	
6/9	12	Covenant Confirmed	Exodus 23:20-24
6/16		Father's Day (No Study)	
6/23	13	The Tabernacle Described	Exodus 25-31
6/30	14	Idolatry and Intersession	Exodus 32-33:6
7/6		4 th of July Weekend (No Study)	
7/14	15	The Glory of the Lord	Exodus 33:7-40