



EXODUS

LEADER GUIDE



WEEK 1

SLAVERY & A SAVIOR

DAY 1: GENESIS 15

Today's reading describes the first hints about Israel's captivity in Egypt. God called Abram (later renamed Abraham) to leave his home country and enter a covenant relationship. God promised to protect and bless Abram and his numerous descendants (see v. 1, 5-7). In this covenant ceremony, God's presence passes between sacrifices laid out by Abram. This means that God promises to keep both ends of the agreement, bearing the consequences for a broken covenant. This reminds us of the gospel - we are saved by God's grace, not our own merit.

In verses 13-14, God gives Abram a hint about the future of his descendants. They will be foreign residents in another land (Egypt), where they will be severely afflicted. But God will keep the covenant agreement by rescuing them and bringing them back to the promised land to dwell. Everything we see happening in Exodus is not an accident, but part of God's perfect plan.

DAY 2: GENESIS 46:1-15

Today's reading picks up with Abraham's grandson Jacob. Earlier, God renamed Jacob Israel, meaning "wrestles with God" (Gen 32:22-31). This became the name of the nation of Jacob's descendants.

In Genesis 46, Jacob relocates his family to Egypt to dwell under the protection of his son Joseph. For three generations, Abraham's descendants had lived as nomadic herders in Canaan. But now they will live in Egypt for more than three hundred years. In these verses, we are told the names of the 70 family members who traveled to Egypt. Over the centuries, these people would multiply into a great nation.

DAY 3: GENESIS 49:28 - 50:26

In today's reading, we see the death and burial of Jacob and his son Joseph. Both burials are instructive. First, Jacob chooses to be buried in the land of Canaan, in the burial land of his grandfather Abraham. This is a symbolic gesture that shows the family's future is not in Egypt. He has faith in God's promises to bring them back to the promised land someday.

Second, Joseph provides instructions to preserve his remains and to move them to the promised land when the people eventually return. Joseph is confident that God will "visit you and bring you up out of [Egypt] to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob" (50:24). Genesis sets the stage for the book of Exodus and leads us to wait with anticipation for God to rescue the people of Israel.

DAY 4: EXODUS 1

The book of Exodus opens 430 years after the ending of Genesis (Exod 12:40-41). In those years, the descendants of Jacob grew into a large nation. However, the Pharaohs no longer remembered Joseph's prosperous rule and began to view the Israelites (aka Hebrews) as a threat. They were enslaved and forced to perform difficult labor and construction. Pharaoh also tried to stop their population growth by murdering Israelite children after birth. Two heroic midwives are described who risked Pharaoh's wrath to protect these children. Still, many children are killed, and the nation suffers.

The idea of a firstborn son will be important throughout the book of Exodus, and it begins here in chapter 1. Pharaoh attacks the firstborn sons of Israel, casting them into the Nile to drown.

DAY 5: EXODUS 2

In chapter 2, we begin to see God's response to this crisis. God will send a representative to act as a savior to the nation, a man named Moses. He will speak and act on God's behalf.

Threatened by the Egyptians, Moses' mother protects her son by concealing him in a waterproof basket, which is hidden among the reeds along the Nile under the watch of her daughter Miriam. In a sense, she is casting him into the Nile, but with a protective basket. By God's providence, Pharaoh's daughter finds the child and draws him out of the water (hence the name Moses). She determines to adopt the child, and even hires Moses's mother to nurse the baby. God protected Moses and allowed him to grow up in the safety of Pharaoh's palace.

We jump 40 years later when an adult Moses strikes an Egyptian who is beating an Israelite, killing him. Fearing repercussions, Moses flees Egypt and settles in Midian, where he marries. During this time, Israel continued to suffer. Still, God is not absent. He sees and hears and knows, and will soon arrive to rescue his people (2:23-24).



WEEK 1

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The book of Exodus continues the story of God's covenant people that began in Genesis. God called Abraham to follow Him and enter a covenant relationship. In this agreement, God promised to bless Abraham's descendants, grow them into a great nation, and give them the land of Canaan. Through this nation, Israel, God would bless the nations and undo the effects of sin's curse (Gen 3:12). By Genesis 46, Abraham's descendants had grown into a family of seventy people who relocated to Egypt under Joseph's protection and provision.

When we catch up with the Israelites in Exodus, more than 400 years have passed, and they have grown into a numerous people. However, Centuries after Joseph's death, the Israelites are no longer protected in Egypt. The Egyptians enslaved Israel, using them for hard labor. They eventually began to slaughter their children to prevent further population growth, throwing male infants into the Nile River.

Yet even this oppression was not unexpected to God. In Genesis 15, centuries earlier, God told Abraham that his descendants would experience oppression in a foreign land. But God would bring judgment on this nation and bring the people back to the promised land with great possessions (Gen 15:13-15). God never forgot his covenant promises, and He saw, heard, and deeply knew the suffering of His people (Exodus 2:2-25). Rescue was coming soon.

Exodus 1-2 also tells of the arrival of a savior. Moses is rescued from death in the Nile by his mother's ingenuity, the compassion of Pharaoh's daughter, and God's providential protection. Moses undergoes an exodus journey of his own, being rescued from the waters of death, and departing Egypt into the wilderness.

Exodus shows us a pattern of God's saving action. Like Israel, we are enslaved to sin and death, unable to rescue ourselves (Rom 6:16; Eph 2:1-2). We need God the redeemer to draw near to us and bring us a savior.



WEEK 1

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- *LIKE ISRAEL, WE ARE UNABLE TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM SLAVERY.*
- *THE LORD IS A GOD WHO SEES, HEARS, AND UNDERSTANDS THE SUFFERING WE EXPERIENCE.*
- *THE LORD RESCUES HIS PEOPLE THROUGH A PROMISED SAVIOR.*

BIG IDEA

AS DISPLAYED BY ISRAEL, EGYPT, AND MOSES, GOD RESCUES HIS PEOPLE FROM SLAVERY TO SIN BY SENDING THEM A SAVIOR.



WEEK 1

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What do you know about the story of Moses? What are you hoping to learn about Moses and the book of Exodus?

Review Exodus 1-2 with your group. Then watch the Week 1 YouTube Video Lesson with your group.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Describe Israel's troubles in your own words. What similarities do you see between Israel's enslavement to Egypt and the Bible's description of our enslavement to sin? (see Romans 6:15-23)
2. What might be some reasons why the Bible describes sin as slavery?
3. Look at Exodus 2:23-24. What do these verses teach us about God's character? How can these verses encourage those who are suffering?
4. How does God protect Moses in these chapters? In what ways is Moses' life similar to other stories in scripture?
5. In what way does God begin a plan to rescue His people in these chapters? What similarities do you see with the arrival of Jesus?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Pray for God's direction as we study the book of Exodus.
- Praise God for saving us when we were unable to save ourselves.



WEEK 2

YAHWEH THE REDEEMER

DAY 1: EXODUS 3

After years of keeping sheep in the wilderness, God encounters Moses on Mt Sinai. The burning bush is a manifestation of God's presence and identity. The fire that does not consume represents God's power and his imminence - He is Holy and all-powerful, yet he draws near to be close to His people. God is completely self-sufficient, which explains the covenant name he gives his people: Yahweh. Written as "LORD" in our Bibles, this name means "I am who I am." It tells us that God is completely consistent and trustworthy, relying on no one, the source of all power and goodness. God allows Moses to enter His holy presence, where he receives a call to rescue Israel.

God declares His intention to rescue Israel because of the covenant promises made to Abraham (3:15). He will bring them out of Egypt with "His mighty hand" (3:19-20) and bring them to the bountiful promised land. Moses will be able to do this, not because of anything special about him, but because God will be with him!

DAY 2: EXODUS 4:1-17

Moses is terrified by what God asks him to do! He doubts his ability to speak, his ability to lead, and that Pharaoh could possibly agree to let Israel go! So God provides Moses with a series of assurances.

First, God promises to authenticate Moses' message with divine signs. He turns the staff into a snake, then makes a hand leprous to show His unique power as the only true God. These signs will convince some, and act as divine condemnation for those who ignore them. Second, God assures Moses of personal presence and help. It was God who created Moses, who equipped his mouth, and will empower his words. Moses can rely on God, not on himself. Finally, God sends Moses human help. His older brother, Aaron, will help Moses speak and lead the people. This is a good reminder that God is not slowed by our limitations.

DAY 3: 2 COR 3:1-6, 12:9-10

In these New Testament passages, the apostle Paul confesses his own weakness for ministry. His authority does not come from letters of recommendation or an impressive resume of accomplishments (3:1-3). His sufficiency comes from God and His calling on Paul's life (3:4-6). Similarly, in chapter 12, Paul describes a continual affliction and reminder of weakness in his life - a "thorn in the flesh." God did not remove this, no matter how many times Paul asked. But eventually Paul learned that reminders of his weaknesses were also powerful reminders of God's strength. Our confidence should rest in God alone, so much so that we can be content in our weakness.

DAY 4: EXODUS 4:18-31

Moses begins his return to Egypt, arranging his departure with his father-in-law and family. In an additional message from God, the theme of the firstborn son returns. God refers to Israel as his firstborn son, who receives the first inheritance and the greatest honor. Pharaoh is holding God's son captive, and if he will not release Israel, then God will kill Pharaoh's son as punishment (23).

The next section (v24-26) is one of the most strange and difficult to understand in Exodus. On his journey back to Egypt, the Lord comes to put Moses to death. Zipporah, Moses' wife, responds quickly by circumcising their son, saving Moses' life. The best explanation is that Moses was disobedient by not circumcising his firstborn son, identifying him as part of God's covenant people. Even as a leader, Moses is not exempt from obedience to God and must consider God's commands with deadly seriousness. Moses's firstborn son is delivered from death, a recurring idea that we will see again in Exodus.

Finally, in verses 29-31, Moses and Aaron arrive in Egypt. They informed the Israelite leaders that God would rescue them from Egypt. To their credit, the elders believed Moses and trusted God's promises. In response, they worshiped.

DAY 5: GENESIS 22:1-19

In Genesis 22, God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his firstborn son, Isaac. Abraham trusted God's promises - that through Isaac God would build a great nation. He trusted that God could raise Isaac from the dead if need be (Heb 11:19). Even as they approached the altar, Abraham trusted that God would provide a sacrifice (Gen 22:8), and God delivered - giving a ram as a substitute for Isaac.

This story tells us how God redeems, or buys back, the firstborn son of Abraham from death. The same will happen in the Exodus rescue from Egypt, and years later (on the same mountain Abraham climbed), Israel would build the temple when God provides sacrifices to cover Israel's sins. All of these point forward to the final and greatest redemption - when God redeems us from death by offering His own son, Jesus Christ, to save us from death.



WEEK 2

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

We have seen Israel's suffering in Egypt. We have met Moses and seen his providential birth and rescue. Now the stage is set, and we are given a detailed introduction to Exodus' main character - God himself. These two chapters are essential for understanding who God is and how He acts within our world. Since God does not change but remains faithful to His perfect character, these chapters help us to understand God in our own lives as well.

God is the mighty redeemer and savior of His people. Redemption is a key idea in scripture, and especially in Exodus. It means buying back, or paying the price to rescue someone. God acts powerfully and miraculously to redeem Israel out of slavery, saving them to be His own nation. Moses receives this information about God in three ways as he encounters God at the burning bush.

First, God reveals His character through His covenant name. God identifies himself to Moses as the God of his ancestors - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (also named Israel). This means He is the same one who made the covenant promises to Abraham, to multiply, bless, and deliver the people of Israel into the promised land (3:6, 15-18). Along with this description, God gives His people a covenant name by which they will know Him. He calls himself "I Am Who I Am" (3:14). In Hebrew, this was the name Yahweh, but the name was considered so holy that it was never spoken aloud. Instead, the Israelites simply said "Lord." In our English Bibles, the name is written LORD. It signifies God's unchanging faithfulness. He has no beginning and no end; He needs nothing to exist; He simply is and always will be. This name is represented by the burning bush - a fire burning constantly but consuming nothing. Yahweh, the covenant name, will forever be tied to God's great act of redemption.

Second, God reveals His character through His covenant promises. The LORD promises to do exactly what he promised to Abraham. He will bring Israel out of their afflictions in Egypt, defeat their enemies in Canaan, and provide them with a bountiful promised land. He can be relied upon to complete his promises! God promises that Moses will return to this mountain with the nation so that they all can worship the LORD together (3:12).



WEEK 2

LEADER GUIDE

Finally, God reveals His character through His mighty actions. God has the power to back up His promises. Pharaoh will be compelled to release Israel by God's "mighty hand." Moses understandably doubts his ability to lead Israel out of Egypt, so God provides a series of signs that demonstrate His power. First, God transforms Moses' staff into a snake and then back into a staff. Second, God turned Moses' arm leprous before healing it again. Thirdly, God will turn the waters of the Nile into blood (4:2-9). These are signs of God's mighty power as the only true God, the creator of all things.

God is Yahweh, the almighty redeemer, who remembers His covenant promises and will rescue His people. The stage is set, and Yahweh is about to act!

KEY IDEAS

- *GOD'S COVENANT NAME REVEALS HIS CHARACTER.*
- *GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES REVEAL HIS CHARACTER.*
- *GOD'S MIGHTY ACTIONS REVEAL HIS CHARACTER.*

BIG IDEA

GOD SHOWS HIMSELF TO BE THE MIGHTY REDEEMER AND SAVIOR OF HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS COVENANT NAME, COVENANT PROMISES, AND MIGHTY ACTIONS.



WEEK 2

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

How would you define the word “redemption”? What are some ideas or stories that you associate with redemption?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Describe Moses' response to encountering God in these chapters. Why do you think he reacted in this way? In what ways is his response relatable?
2. What does God tell Moses that He is going to do? What do these promises tell us about who God is?
3. What does God's name Yahweh tell us about God's character?
4. What do you think it means to describe the miracles in chapter 4 as “signs” (4:8-9)? What are the signs pointing toward? What do they reveal about God?
5. How can God's name, promises and actions build our faith in God? In what ways do we see them in Jesus' saving work for us?
6. What do you think it means for God to be our redeemer?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Pray for a greater understanding of God's character as we study Exodus.
- Praise God from His mighty acts of redemption in our lives.



WEEK 3

MOSES & AARON BEFORE PHARAOH

DAY 1: EXODUS 5:1-14

Moses and Aaron make their first appeal to Pharaoh, declaring the LORD has commanded Israel's release. Their meeting did not go well. Instead of releasing Israel, Pharaoh increases their workload. In Egyptian construction, bricks were made from clay mixed with straw. Now the Israelites were given the added work of collecting straw needed to meet their daily quotas.

Pharaoh's response is instructive. He replies that he does not know the LORD (5:2), and sets his word against God's (5:10). In doing so, he denies the power of the LORD's word, and asserts his authority. Over the next few chapters, God will ensure that Pharaoh and the people of Egypt truly know the LORD and his power.

DAY 2: EXODUS 5:15-23

The Israelites are suffering under their increased burdens, so their leaders approach Pharaoh asking for an explanation. Pharaoh blames Moses and Aaron! If they had not demanded Israel's release, he would not have leveled these burdens on the people. The Israelites are now in worse trouble than before, and begin to blame Moses and Aaron as well. They have made Israel stink to Pharaoh.

This adversity is instructive for Israel. They also must learn who the LORD really is and come to trust in His provision and protection.

DAY 3: EXODUS 6:1-13

In the first half of Exodus 6, the LORD reassured Moses after Moses' initial request failed. Once again, the LORD reaffirms His covenant promises, His concern for the suffering Israelites, and His dedication to bring them out of Egypt. This repetition is important. Moses is learning how to trust God. It is easy to doubt God's promises in the face of adversity. But even if God's timing is different from ours, He always delivers on His promises.

Verse 7 is important. This is known as the "covenant formula," God's promise to enter into a special relationship with His people. In response, the people are to show allegiance and faithfulness to God alone.

DAY 4: DEUTERONOMY 7:6-11

This passage is from one of Moses' sermons given near the end of his life, decades after the exodus. He wants to remind Israel of God's covenant faithfulness as they prepare to enter the promised land. God chose Israel and made them His treasured possession, a holy nation - meaning they are set apart for God's particular purposes. Crucially, this was not because of anything extraordinary or special about Israel. They were chosen not because of their greatness, but because of God's great love (v8). God's covenant promises are not meant to make His people prideful, but to make them humble and grateful, leading them to respond in obedience to God's incredible love and forgiveness (v11).

The New Testament relates these promises to the church - God's people from both the nation of Israel and members of all nations who place their trust in Christ. Christians must also avoid pride and complacency in light of these promises. Instead, they give us assurance of God's goodness and a grateful desire to follow God's commands.

DAY 5: EXODUS 6:14-30

In these verses, the narrative pauses to include a genealogy. Beginning with Jacob (Israel)'s oldest son, Reuben, the list proceeds until Levi (7:14-16), and then stops to give a detailed listing of Levi's descendants (7:17-25). The purpose of this listing is to show Moses and Aaron's place within Israel, along with several significant relatives, like Aaron's sons, who would become the priests. It also reminds us that we are reading about real people in real history (7:26-27).

God steps into history to shape it for his purposes. He is not distant but draws near to rescue His people.



WEEK 3

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Having arrived in Egypt and spoken with the Israelite leaders (4:29-31), Moses and Aaron approach Pharaoh. At the time, Pharaoh was the most powerful leader in the known world! Demanding that he release a large part of his workforce was not easy! But Moses and Aaron followed God's instructions, demanding the release of God's people. This section contains three sections: rejection (5:1-23), promise (6:1-13), and history (6:14-30).

First, Moses and Aaron experience Pharaoh's rejection (5:1-23). At their first meeting with Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron convey God's command: release God's people so they may serve the Lord (5:1). However, Pharaoh refuses to obey it. In fact, he does the opposite. To spite Moses, Pharaoh increased the Israelites' workload. Going forward, they would have to make bricks without all the provided materials, which would make it nearly impossible for them to meet their quotas. The people cried out in frustration and anger against Moses (5:20-21). All he has done is make things worse!

Pharaoh rejects Moses and Aaron, but really, he rejects the LORD. His response in key, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go" (5:2). Pharaoh does not know God or His power, but he will learn soon enough.

Second, Moses receives God's renewed promise (6:1-13). After being denied by Pharaoh and rebuked by the Israelites, Moses cries out to the LORD. God graciously responds with assurance. He remembers his promises to their ancestors and is committed to being Israel's covenant partner. Despite Pharaoh's best effort, God will deliver Israel out of Egypt (6:8-9). No matter how bad things look, we can trust God's promises to save.

Finally, the third section reminds us of God's work in history, sharing the genealogy of Moses and Aaron (6:14-30). This listing shows the sons of Jacob and then specifies the descendants of Levi down to Moses and Aaron. Why? To show that it was this specific, historical Moses and Aaron whom God used to deliver Israel. This is not a fable or legend. God is really acting in real history to accomplish His promises for His people.



WEEK 3

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- *PHARAOH REPRESENTS THE ENEMIES OF GOD, THOSE IN A FALLEN WORLD WHO SET THEMSELVES AGAINST GOD AND HIS PEOPLE.*
- *GOD'S MIGHTY POWER OVERCOMES ALL OPPOSITION, ALLOWING HIS PEOPLE TO TRUST HIS COVENANT PROMISES.*
- *GOD WORKS IN HISTORY TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOOD PURPOSES.*

BIG IDEA

DESPITE REPEATED OPPOSITION FROM THE FALLEN WORLD, GOD'S PEOPLE CAN TRUST IN HIS COVENANT PROMISES.



WEEK 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

How do you usually respond to rejection? What makes facing rejection difficult?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Describe Pharaoh's and Israel's response to Moses' message in chapter 5. What do you think Moses felt when facing these responses?
2. How does Pharaoh position himself as an enemy of God and his people? What are other examples of similar figures and forces in the Bible?
3. When faced with increased opposition against Israel, God's first response is not relief but a reminder of his covenant promises (6:1-8). What do you think this response is meant to teach God's people?
4. How might remembering God's promises help us when we are facing opposition and rejection for following Jesus?
5. Read aloud John 15:18-25. What kind of response does Jesus tell his followers to expect from the world? In what ways does this prepare us for what we will face?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Ask for God's encouragement and help in the face of the world's rejection.
- Praise God for His unchanging faithfulness.



WEEK 4

THE PLAGUES

DAY 1: EXODUS 7

The passage begins as the LORD instructs Moses once again. God explains what will happen over the next five chapters and His purpose behind these events. He will bring mighty plagues on Egypt in order to force Pharaoh to release Israel (7:4-5). The end result will be the name of the LORD being known - they will learn who God truly is. Moses will speak God's authoritative words (7:1-2), and Aaron will help him to communicate.

The first plague involves turning the Nile river into blood (7:14-25). Egypt only survived because of the Nile River and the farming that is made possible. The loss of drinking water was catastrophic for this desert nation.

With both the snake sign (7:8-13) and the Nile plague, Pharaoh instructs his magicians to mimic the sign through their "secret arts." These could describe demonic power from occult practice, or mere deceptive tricks. Either way, Pharaoh is determined to match power with Moses' God, which will not end well for either Pharaoh or Egypt.

DAY 2: EXODUS 8

In this chapter, we see the second, third, and fourth plagues - frogs, gnats, and flies. These plagues afflicted the people of Egypt by overrunning them with these pests. The magicians can mimic the frog plague but cannot match the third and fourth plagues. Amazingly, the pagan magicians urge Pharaoh to heed the plagues, correctly recognizing that "this is the hand of God." But Pharaoh refuses to listen.

In this chapter, Pharaoh begins bargaining with Moses, even promising to release Israel if God will remove the plagues. But after each reprieve, Pharaoh goes back on his word and refuses to release Israel. By the fourth plague, God directs the flies only at the Egyptians, sparing his people in Goshen.

DAY 3: EXODUS 9

This chapter describes the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues - death of Egyptian livestock, boils, and hail. The boils directly afflicted the health of the Egyptians, while the livestock and hail affected their agriculture. Losing valuable livestock and having crops destroyed by hail would cripple their economy and cause widespread famine. But in all of these plagues, Israel is set apart and spared from the destruction.

Part of the reason Pharaoh is unwilling to relent is the crops that were not yet in harvest (9:31). The barley harvest was still salvageable, and so Pharaoh believed he could outlast God. He still believes he can battle against God and win.

The purpose of these plagues is summarized in 9:15-17. Although God could have destroyed Egypt in an instant, God instead wants to show Egypt who He is. This is an opportunity to know their creator and choose to worship Him (v. 20).

DAY 4: EXODUS 10

Chapter 10 describes the eighth and ninth plagues - locusts and darkness. The locusts consume crops, further devastating the economy. The three days of darkness would have been terrifying. Egyptians worshiped Ra, the sun god, who was believed to rule the powers of Egypt and was supposedly the first Pharaoh. Blotting out the sun shows that their greatest god and their powerful Pharaoh are no match for the God of Israel.

Pharaoh is growing desperate and angry, yet unwilling to humble himself before God and admit defeat. He attempts to bargain with Moses, offering to release some of the Israelites. His plan is to keep their children and livestock in Egypt so they would be forced to return. But Pharaoh learned that you cannot bargain with God. Mercy comes from humbling ourselves before the almighty, not bending Him to our will.

DAY 5: EXODUS 11

In a final meeting with Pharaoh, God threatens the final plague - the death of every firstborn son in Egypt. This is the fulfillment of God's warning from Exodus 4:21-23. Pharaoh has captured and oppressed God's firstborn son, Israel. Since Pharaoh refuses to release Israel after numerous warnings, God will take his firstborn. Still, Pharaoh refuses this final warning. It is these terrible final plagues that will lead to Israel's release.

Although Pharaoh refused to honor God, many of the Egyptians had come to fear the LORD and respect Moses as God's prophet (11:3). God's purpose had been accomplished, and we will learn that many Egyptians honored Israel with gifts as they departed, and some even went with Israel to become part of God's people. The name of the LORD was glorified!



WEEK 4

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

In these chapters, God brings ten plagues upon Egypt in order to convince Pharaoh to release Israel from captivity. These are miraculous events and show the creator's mastery over nature, animals, and life itself! After many promises, God is acting powerfully and miraculously!

What is the purpose of these plagues? We are told in the first verses of chapter 7. God is once again instructing Moses and tells him in advance what is going to happen. God will bring judgment upon Egypt to show that he is the LORD, the one true God (Exod 7:4-5). This will show who God is to both Israel and to nations like Egypt.

But crucially, we are also told that Pharaoh will not listen! By both God's will and Pharaoh's own sin, he will ignore the signs until the tenth and final plagues.

Remember that Pharaoh represents the embodiment of God's enemies. He is following the way of Satan and Cain and the many who choose their way (sin) over God. In one final encounter before the plagues begin, Pharaoh sets up a struggle between the God of Moses and the power of Egypt. Although they mimic the sign of turning a staff into a serpent, Aaron's serpent swallowed up theirs! Pharaoh chooses to fight God and is going to learn how foolish that is.

These plagues reveal the LORD's power as God, his superiority over the so-called gods of Egypt, and teach us something about God's judgment in general. We can question acts of judgment in the Bible, wondering how a loving God can do such things. But these acts show us that judgment always accomplishes both rescue for God's people and just punishment against God's enemies. To punish sin is to love and protect good. God shows anger against Pharaoh because he loves Israel.

Judgment shows both God's justice and mercy, to punish evil and to rescue those who receive his mercy. In every act of judgment until the final judgment at the end of history, God provides an opportunity for repentance, a chance to really know and follow Him.



WEEK 4

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- *GOD'S WORK IN PHARAOH AND THROUGH THE PLAGUES REVEALS HIS POWER AND DIVINITY.*
- *THE PLAGUES DISPLAY GOD'S DIVINITY AND SHAME THE SO-CALLED GODS OF EGYPT.*
- *GOD USES THE PLAGUES TO DISPLAY HIS GLORY, BRINGING JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT AND REDEMPTION UPON ISRAEL.*

BIG IDEA

GOD'S JUDGMENT DISPLAYS HIS GLORY, RESCUES HIS PEOPLE, AND PUNISHES EVIL. ALL THREE ELEMENTS ARE SIGNS OF GOD'S POWER AND CHARACTER.



WEEK 4

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What do you think is the ultimate purpose of God's judgment? Where do we see this taught in scripture?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Read aloud Exodus 7:1-5. What does this tell us about God's purpose for the upcoming plagues?
2. Review Pharaoh's response to God's directions in this chapter. What do his actions reveal about his attitude toward the LORD? What do you think he can show us about sin and its effects on us?
3. How do the plagues display God's unique power over creation? How might this affect your daily attitude to the world around you?
4. The plagues shame the false gods worshiped in Egypt. Although we do not worship idols like RA, we do worship things other than God. What are some modern-day idols, and how does God show his superiority over them?
5. Why might God's acts of judgment be difficult for someone to accept? What do these acts of judgment tell us about who God is and what he cares about?
6. How are God's wrath and love connected? Why do you think this is important?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for His unique and unrivaled power.
- Praise God for His justice to punish evil and His mercy to rescue sinners.



WEEK 5

THE PASSOVER

DAY 1: EXODUS 12:1-28

God instructs the people to sacrifice an unblemished (perfect) lamb and then to mark the doorways to their homes with the blood. The sacrifice acts as a substitute for the death of the firstborn son, and marks the homes that fear God and heed His commandments. The homes with the blood are spared, and the other homes will be struck with the LORD's judgment. This foreshadows the atonement sacrifice of Jesus, the lamb of God. When we are marked with the blood of Jesus, we are spared. Jesus becomes our substitute.

This sacrifice is so significant that it was established as a central annual celebration for Israel. Each year, they were to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, which led into the Passover feast. As they sacrificed the lamb and shared the ritual meal together, the parents would explain its significance to their children (12:25-27). By this, each generation would learn about the exodus and about the sacrifice of atonement provided by God.

DAY 2: EXODUS 12:29-32

The final plague, threatened in chapter 11, is completed. Throughout Egypt, from the lowest family to Pharaoh himself, the firstborn son of each family was killed. Finally, Pharaoh relents and releases Israel to leave Egypt.

Pharaoh's sin brought terrible suffering onto the nation of Egypt. Despite promising freedom and power, sin always delivers death and suffering. God patiently endured rebellion and defiance from sinful people like Pharaoh, and He provided many opportunities to repent. But the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23).

DAY 3: EXODUS 12:33-42

After generations of captivity, Israel's release comes suddenly. Anxious to remove God's judgment, the Egyptians rush the Israelites out of Goshen. This haste is commemorated by the feast of unleavened bread. With no time to allow their bread to rise, the people were forced to bring flat, unleavened bread to eat, a generational reminder of their departure from slavery. With no time to make detailed preparations, they will learn to rely on the LORD for provision.

Egypt also sends Israel out with gifts of silver and gold (12:37). These were meant as a sacrifice to honor Israel's God, and are another way that God richly provided for His people. This is sometimes referred to as the "plundering" of Egypt and is a sign of the LORD's complete and total victory over Egypt.

The small family that entered Egypt leaves as a great multitude (12:40-42) and likely included some Egyptians who had come to fear and worship the LORD (12:38).

DAY 4: EXODUS 12:43-51

These verses describe the regulations for the annual Passover celebration. All members of Israel must participate in the feast. It was central to their identity as God's people. Foreigners (non-Israelites) were strictly prohibited from participating. However, if a foreigner wishes to worship the LORD and become a member of God's people, they could be included in the Passover feast.

From the very beginning, God clearly marks out those who are truly His people with rituals like the Passover and circumcision. But the intention always was to extend the knowledge of the LORD to all nations, including them in His people. This would ultimately happen through Christ's work and death on the cross.

DAY 5: MATTHEW 26:17-29

At the Last Supper, just before the crucifixion, Jesus celebrated the Passover feast with his disciples. After the meal, Jesus reinterpreted the meal in light of what he was about to accomplish on the cross. The unleavened bread represents his broken body, and the wine represents his shed blood. He would be the Passover lamb, unblemished by sin and with bones unbroken (Exodus 12:46; John 19:36). He is the atoning sacrifice that causes God's wrath to pass over our sin, and deliver us out of slavery to sin. At the Last Supper, Jesus shows that the Passover pointed to him from the beginning.

The Lord's supper is a marker of Christian identity. It marks those who belong to Jesus, those who follow him as savior and lord. Any person, from any tribe, tongue, or nation who comes to follow Jesus can become a member of Jesus' church and share in the supper.



WEEK 5

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The final plague results in the death of every firstborn in Egypt. This terrible penalty is the result of Pharaoh and Egypt's sin and refusal to repent in the face of the previous plagues. However, it is striking that without help Israel would share in this plague. God graciously provides a covering or atonement for his people to protect them from this judgment. This is called the Passover.

Following God's instructions, Moses told the people to sacrifice a spotless, perfect lamb, and then to mark the doorposts to their homes with the lamb's blood. The sacrifice was a substitute, taking the place of the firstborn and marking those who fear and obeyed God.

The rest of the chapter shows how this deliverance was to be commemorated annually in the Passover celebration. Each year every household would repeat the sacrifice and share a meal together, explaining the significance of the lamb and retelling the story of the exodus. This was a defining part of their identity as God's people - they were those rescued from slavery in Egypt by God's great power and atoning sacrifice.

The Passover teaches three important truths to God's people. First, the Passover shows how God provides deliverance through an atoning sacrifice. All people are deserving of death because of our sinful rebellion against God (Rom 6:23). We are all unable to approach the holy God. Therefore, God provided a means of atonement, a covering to provide for his people. On the cross, Jesus provides the final, perfect atoning sacrifice.

Second, the Passover provided instruction for the identity of God's people. The annual Passover celebration reenacted the unleavened bread, sacrificial lamb, and family meal providing an opportunity to teach the next generation the Exodus story and shaped their identity. They were a people because of God's redemption and were saved by the sacrifice He provided.



WEEK 5

LEADER GUIDE

Finally, the Passover points us forward to Jesus and his atoning sacrifice on the cross. The Exodus and the Passover were powerful examples of God's saving work. But they were always meant to point forward to the greatest salvation. Jesus showed his disciples that the Passover celebration was preparing the way for him, and what he would accomplish on the cross. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice, unblemished by sin, who atones for his people's sin.

KEY IDEAS

- *THE PASSOVER SHOWS HOW GOD PROVIDES DELIVERANCE THROUGH AN ATONING SACRIFICE.*
- *THE PASSOVER PROVIDED INSTRUCTION FOR THE IDENTITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE.*
- *THE PASSOVER POINTS US FORWARD TO JESUS AND HIS ATONING SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS.*

BIG IDEA

GOD REDEEMS AND REFORMS HIS PEOPLE THROUGH THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF JESUS, WHICH IS MARKED BY THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.



WEEK 5

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Does your family have any long-running traditions? How have these impacted you over the years?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Why do you think Israel was not automatically spared from the tenth plague? What does this tell us about God and salvation?
2. Define atonement. How is atonement connected to the Passover? Why is atonement needed?
3. What similarities do you see between Jesus' sacrifice and the Passover sacrifice? Read John 19:36 and 1 Peter 1:18-19 for more information.
4. Why do you think it was important to commemorate the Passover in a yearly ceremony? What effect do you think this practice had on subsequent generations?
5. Read Matthew 26:17-29. How does Jesus connect the Passover to himself? How does he adapt the ceremony for a new purpose?
6. How does the Lord's supper shape the identity of Christians? What truths does it help us remember?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Thank God for the atonement sacrifice of Jesus.
- Ask God to continue to shape our identity through the Lord's Supper.



WEEK 6

THE EXODUS

DAY 1: EXODUS 12:51-13:10

“The LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt” (12:51). After years of brutal captivity and after the lengthy plagues, the titular exodus has begun. “Exodus” comes from the Greek title of the book, meaning “going out” or “departure.” It is the fulfillment of God’s promises to His people.

Immediately, 13:3-10 describes the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Meant to be observed in the promised land, this festival required seven days of eating only unleavened bread, followed by a feast at the end of the seventh day. This practice memorialized the manner of their hasty departure and the LORD’s powerful rescue. Through festivals like Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, future generations would come to know God’s mighty saving acts (13:8-9).

DAY 2: EXODUS 13:11-16

In Exodus 13:2, the LORD commanded that every firstborn (both human and livestock) be consecrated to Him. This is further explained in 13:11-16. When Israel came to dwell in the promised land, every firstborn animal would be offered as a sacrifice (13:13, 15). This memorialized the final plague, the killing of the firstborn in Egypt, which prompted Israel’s release. It also recognized that life itself belongs to God, and it was His provision that spared Israel from this fate as well.

The firstborn children were (of course) not sacrificed, but redeemed (v13b). This required an animal sacrifice offered as a substitute. This reminded Israel that the people themselves belonged to God. The firstborn represented the entire family and the future leader and primary heir. So all God’s people needed His gracious provision and a substitution to receive life. One day, God would offer His own Son as a final substitutionary sacrifice for His people.

DAY 3: PSALM 135:5-14

This psalm uses the Exodus history to lead God's people into worship. The LORD is great above all other so-called gods, doing whatever He pleases (v5-6). We see this power in His control over nature (v7) but especially in His saving actions in history.

The author mentions the plagues, and specifically the death of the firstborn in Egypt, as demonstrations of God's superiority over all other powers (v8-9). God has defeated human powers as well - mighty kings in the wilderness and Canaan (v. 10-11). All of this is to vindicate His chosen people by delivering them, and to bring glory and renown to the LORD's mighty name (v12-14). We can praise the God who far surpasses any rival and who rescues His own.

DAY 4: EXODUS 13:17-22

This section records the first of many travel logs of Israel's journey. Having rescued Israel from slavery, God must now teach them how to be His people and trust in His provision. So God leads Israel into the wilderness rather than the more direct route to Canaan through the Philistine lands. Israel is not ready for a direct military conflict (v17-18).

Moses honors his ancestor Joseph's request, taking his bones with them to be buried in the promised land. Joseph's faith in God's promise is validated (Gen 50:25).

Throughout their journey, God led the people with a visible manifestation of His presence. By day, a pillar of cloud and by night, a pillar of fire guided their travel (v21-22). God accommodates Israel's infant faith by appearing visibly to lead them. God will not abandon His people.

DAY 5: PSALM 105:23-45

Psalm 105 also uses the Exodus history as an occasion for public worship. The psalm declares God's praise and calls upon the worshipers to proclaim His mighty acts among the nations (105:1). It then recounts God's many wonderful acts in Israel's history.

Beginning in verse 23, the psalm describes Israel's time in Egyptian captivity, including Joseph's reign (v23-25), the plagues (v26-36), and the exodus (v37-38). Remembering and rehearsing God's past faithfulness fuels the people's present-day worship! Seeing what God has done reminds us of God's unchanging faithfulness and helps us to trust Him in our present circumstances. It leads us to "praise the LORD" and proclaim the good news of His salvation to all peoples!



WEEK 6

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The long-awaited Exodus is one of the signature examples of God's saving work and reveals so much about the salvation God provides to His people. In chapter 13, we can see several truths about salvation and its effects on God's people, both ancient Israel and the church.

First, salvation requires a radical departure from sin as we begin to follow God. The Feast of Unleavened Bread reminded the Israelites of their hasty departure. There was no time to plan a route, make detailed preparations, or even bake provisions. When redemption was available, it meant leaving immediately. In the coming chapter, we will see that it was relatively easy to get Israel out of Egypt, but very difficult to get Egypt out of Israel. We are deeply influenced by the fallen world of sin all around us. It is very difficult to leave it all behind. Thankfully, God is patient and gracious. The LORD steps down to nurture the infant faith of His people, leading them step by step as they leave the old world of death and step into the new life with Him.

Second, salvation reshapes our daily rhythms. The newly formed nation of Israel needed new patterns of living, new celebrations, customs, and rituals. That is why immediately after rescue from Egypt, God institutes the festivals of Unleavened Bread (13:3-10, Passover (12:43-49), and the consecration of the firstborn (13:11-16). These repeated practices would shape the coming generations, showing their history, shaping their priorities, and orienting them to the LORD. These even shape their sense of time! Everything God's people do should be shaped by their identity as God's people.

Finally, salvation consecrated us to the LORD. We are set apart to serve and follow God. By requiring the consecration of the firstborn, God shows Israel that they belong to Him, both body and soul, in life and death. Their very life belongs to God! They have been rescued from slavery, but this redemption required a substitutionary sacrifice. Therefore, they are no longer their own but owe their very existence to God. The greater sacrifice, Jesus Christ, provides an even greater salvation for God's people. Those who trust in Christ are redeemed by his blood, united with him, and consecrated as a holy people.



WEEK 6

LEADER GUIDE

Taken together, we learn that salvation is a radical departure, an exodus away from our old manner of living (Eph 5:8-20). With sudden haste, we leave behind the old slavery to sin, experience the transformed life as God's people, and are dedicated to following Jesus wholeheartedly. This is all because Jesus saved us first!

KEY IDEAS

- *SALVATION REQUIRES A DEPARTURE FROM SIN AS WE COME TO FOLLOW GOD'S DIRECTION.*
- *SALVATION RESHAPES OUR DAILY RHYTHMS.*
- *SALVATION CONSECRATES US TO JESUS AS THE LORD OF OUR LIVES.*

BIG IDEA

GOD'S SALVATION TRANSFORMS EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES, AND WE COME TO FOLLOW JESUS.



WEEK 6

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Think of a time when you experienced a sudden change. What was challenging about this experience?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. What does the sudden departure from Egypt communicate to Israel? Why do you think Israel struggled to leave behind the influence of Egypt?
2. What do you think followers of Jesus are called to depart from? What are some ways that we can do this?
3. Look at Exodus 13:9-10 and 14-16. How were these practices meant to instruct? Why do you think these kinds of teaching examples are effective? What are some modern-day examples for Christians?
4. How does the consecration of the firstborn point forward to Jesus? What does it teach us about our relationship to God?
5. How should the teaching that we are consecrated to God impact our daily lives? What might make this a challenging truth to accept?
6. Read Ephesians 5:8-20. What are some things this passage shows us about the departure and transformation God's salvation brings to our lives?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for his mighty acts of salvation.
- Ask God to help us leave sin behind and follow Jesus wholeheartedly.



WEEK 7

CROSSING THE SEA

DAY 1: EXODUS 14:1-14

After only a short time, Pharaoh changed his mind and mustered his army to pursue Israel (14:5-9). The mighty army of Egypt must have been a terrifying sight to the former slaves who had no ability to defend themselves. The people panicked, wishing they had never left Egypt (14:11-2)!

As bad as the situation seemed, God was firmly in control. God directed Israel into a vulnerable position blocked by the sea (14:1-3), and hardened Pharaoh's heart to once again oppress Israel (14:4, 8). Even after the devastation of the plagues, Pharaoh again challenges the God of Israel. The LORD commanded both Egypt and Israel to display His might once again. As Moses told the people, "the LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent" (14:14).

DAY 2: EXODUS 14:15-31

The LORD once again tells Moses the purpose behind His mighty actions. God will defeat Pharaoh's forces so that the Egyptians will know "that I am the LORD" and that He would be glorified (14:18). God will decisively defeat Pharaoh on behalf of His holy name and His chosen people.

Through Moses, His mediator, the LORD parted the sea, forming a dry path through two walls of water (14:29). Israel passed through the sea to safety on the far shore. The Egyptian army pursued Israel through the sea, but the LORD slowed their chariots, trapping them between the waters. After Israel safely passed through, God returned the waters to their normal flow, destroying the Egyptians (14:27-28).

God saved Israel, revealing His great power to them. They learned not to fear Egypt or any other nation (14:13), but to fear the LORD alone (14:31).

DAY 3: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-6

The parting of the Red Sea is mentioned in many other Biblical passages, often to show God's mighty power and faithfulness to save. But Paul's mention of the sea crossing in 1 Corinthians 10 is particularly interesting. Writing to the Corinthian Christians, Paul warns against returning to idolatry (worshiping false gods), and uses the Israelites of Exodus as an example. These Israelites experienced God's amazing power but still struggled to leave behind the idolatry of Egypt (as we will see more of in the coming chapters).

As part of this warning, Paul compares crossing the sea to Christian baptism. Both Israel and believers pass from death to life through the water, leaving slavery for a new life of freedom with God. Christians need to learn from Israel's experiences of God's salvation, but avoid the mistakes they made. Passages like these show us how God intentionally worked in patterns that pointed forward to Jesus, and to instruct believers (10:6).

DAY 4: EXODUS 15:1-21

The narrative breaks in chapter 15 to include a song expressing praise to the LORD for His saving actions. The first 18 verses are called the Song of Moses, followed by a shorter report of Miriam's song with the women of Israel. The songs emphasize God's mighty acts of deliverance and unquestioned power to rule. The LORD has acted as a divine warrior, defeating the supposedly mighty Egyptian army with ease. Therefore, the LORD has shown that He is unrivaled in His power and holiness (15:11-13) and completely trustworthy to keep the covenant promises (15:13-18).

Scripture includes other similar songs of deliverance, such as Deborah's song of victory (Judges 5:1-31), Hannah's song at the birth of her son (1 Samuel 2:1-10), and Mary's response to the angel's promise of Jesus' birth (Luke 1:46-55).

DAY 5: REVELATION 15:2-4

The Song of Moses is a model of praise for God's deliverance. One interesting example of its influence is found in Revelation 15. In the midst of God's judgment on evil, and especially on those who persecute His people (expressed here as "bowls full of the wrath of God" and as "plagues"), those in God's presence who have overcome the beast and his followers sing praise to God with the Song of Moses (15:3). Like Moses, these members of God's people praise God for defeating the armies of evil with His amazing deeds. God displays his glory and justice in these saving actions and is therefore worshiped by His people.

This song of praise is also called the song of the Lamb. The ultimate expression of God's salvation is Jesus Christ, who defeated sin and evil definitively through his death and resurrection. In the Song of the Lamb, the Song of Moses is completely fulfilled.



WEEK 7

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Israel's peaceful exit from Egypt proved short-lived. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would seek to recapture Israel (14:1-4). And after learning that Israel was encamped in the wilderness, Pharaoh mustered his military forces to pursue the escaping Israelites and blocked them with the Red Sea to their backs (14:5-9).

Terrified by the approaching army, the Israelites despaired and prepared to return to slavery. However, Moses encouraged the people to stand firm and fear not - for the LORD would fight for them. All they had to do was watch (14:14). What they would see is one of the signature miraculous events in all of scripture. God parted the sea into two walls of water with a dry path between, leading to safety on the opposite shore. He then blocked the Egyptian army from pursuing while the Israelites crossed the sea. Finally, God allowed the Egyptians to enter the pathway, only to collapse the walls of water and drown the entire army. Israel witnesses the LORD's might and reverently feared Him (14:31). Finally, chapter 15 records a song, praising God as a mighty warrior who rescued His people from slavery in Egypt (15:1-21).

The crossing of the Red Sea and the song of Moses inspired many psalms and passages that praise God for His saving power. These events teach us about God and the proper response that His actions should elicit from His people. They are types or patterns that foreshadow the ultimate salvation in Christ.

The crossing and scripture's references to it also teach us several lessons. First, they show an example of God demonstrating his mighty power through salvation. He is mighty to save, and no power in nature, humanity, or the spiritual realm can prevent Him from delivering His people. Second, it reveals that God's mighty power is also seen in judgment. God will not let evil go unpunished. As He did with Pharaoh, God will one day destroy all forces that are determined to rebel against Him and oppress His people. Finally, the crossing shows us that both God's salvation and judgment should produce worship. We can use Moses' song as a model for our own praise, recognizing God's unstoppable power, and learning to approach God with reverence. All God's actions should lead us to worship!



WEEK 7

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- *GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS MIGHTY POWER THROUGH SALVATION.*
- *GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS MIGHTY POWER THROUGH JUDGMENT.*
- *BOTH GOD'S SALVATION AND JUDGMENT SHOULD LEAD HIS PEOPLE TO PRAISE HIM.*

BIG IDEA

GOD DISPLAYS HIS MIGHTY POWER TO SAVE AND TO JUDGE EVIL, WHICH LEADS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP.



WEEK 7

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What is a personal experience that you often tell others about? Why do you think you repeat this story?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Describe Israel's initial reaction to seeing Pharaoh's army. Why do you think they reacted in this way?
2. In verses 13-14, Moses responds to Israel's fears. What do these verses show us about the proper response to God's salvation? What is our role in salvation?
3. How is God glorified by his saving acts? How is he glorified by his acts of judgment against evil? How are these two related to each other?
4. Look at Israel's response in 14:31. How do they respond to the events of chapter 14? How have they changed since the beginning of the chapter?
5. Chapter 15 pauses the narrative to include a song of praise. Why might Moses have included this song here? What does it teach about the proper response to God's acts?
6. What lessons about worship does the Song of Moses show us?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for His victory over all His enemies.
- Use Exodus 15:1-3 as a model for a prayer of praise.



WEEK 8

IN THE WILDERNESS

DAY 1: EXODUS 15:22-27

Immediately after crossing the sea and responding in worship, Israel goes off track. Traveling through the wilderness, the people ran out of drinking water and began to panic. Their praise turns to grumbling and complaining. God graciously provides drinkable water through a miracle, but the people's attitude is concerning. They are quick to doubt God's willingness and ability to care for them. God warns the people that they must diligently obey His voice. If they do, God will be their healer. But if not, they will experience the consequences of their disobedience (15:26).

DAY 2: EXODUS 16

In chapter 16, the people once again doubt God's provision, this time when they run out of food. They begin to grumble, even suggest that they would be better off back in Egypt (16:3)! Once again, God miraculously provides by raining down bread - called manna - each day. But this bread comes with specific instructions. The people are only to collect what they can eat each day. Anything they try to store will rot overnight. Naturally, many tested these instructions. They struggled to trust that God would indeed provide each day.

Despite Israel's doubt, God faithfully provides manna every day throughout their wilderness travels. He wanted to teach Israel how to look to Him for their daily bread, recognizing that every good gift comes from God.

DAY 3: EXODUS 17:1-7

Again, Israel found itself without drinking water in the desert. Again, they rumbled against God and Moses. They still have not learned to trust God. But God is both gracious and faithful, providing water through another miracle.

The structure of these chapters is intentional. God provides water (15:22-27), provides food (16), and again provides water (17:1-7). Israel is slow to learn, and we are. Sinful people naturally doubt God's goodness and power. Although they think they are testing God, in reality God is testing Israel. God uses these adversities to show us power and teach His people to turn to Him in trust to meet their needs.

DAY 4: EXODUS 17:8-16

In the second half of chapter 17, Israel experiences their first of many encounters with the Amalekites. These people were descendants of Esau, a nomadic tribe dwelling in the Northern part of the Sinai Peninsula. They immediately became perpetual enemies of Israel. In this first encounter, God allowed Israel to defeat Amalek in combat. Moses represents God's involvement: when his hands were raised, Israel prevailed; when his arms were lowered, Amalek began to win. Moses' obedience was a sign of faith in God's ability to save the nation.

The Amalekites represent one of two responses to Israel as God's chosen people. Gentile nations, like the Amalekites, could reject God's work and choose to oppress Israel. They chose the way of Egypt by determining to challenge God by attacking his people. Amalek shows the ultimate fate of rejecting God and his saving work (17:14).

DAY 5: EXODUS

In this chapter, Moses' father-in-law Jethro arrives. At some point, Moses sent his wife and children to stay with Jethro, and he is now returning them safely. Jethro is a Midianite, a gentile group dwelling on the Sinai peninsula. He had heard of God's saving work in Egypt (18:1), and now learns the details from Moses (18:8-9). Unlike Amalek, Jethro rejoices and praises God for His amazing works! Jethro honors the LORD over all other gods and offers burnt offerings in worship (18:10-12). While it is not clear if Jethro becomes a member of God's people - he leaves and goes back to Midian - he clearly responds appropriately to God's work.

Jethro represents the Gentiles who will see what God is doing and saying through His people and respond in worship and honor. He foreshadows the Gentiles' inclusion in the church through Christ. Finally, Jethro also offers wise counsel to Moses about delegating responsibility and establishing elders among the people (18:13-26).



WEEK 8

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

After experiencing the plagues in Egypt and God's deliverance at the sea, Israel began a long journey through the wilderness. These chapters describe several incidents from their travels through the harsh desert. Whether Israel faced a lack of water or food, or even a military attack, the LORD provided for their needs. However, the people constantly doubt God and complain about the conditions (15:24; 16:2-3; 17:1-3).

We learn three lessons from Israel's travels in the wilderness, each connected to the LORD's provision. First, the LORD provides for His people despite their faithlessness. Although they have experienced God's power and deliverance over and over. Still, they grumble and question God's power and willingness to save. The sin and slavery of Egypt are so ingrained in them that they need continual correction and rebuke because time and again they return to sin.

God patiently provides for these faithless people. He does not care for them because they are faithful to Him or even grateful, but because of his perfect character and abundant grace. If we are honest, we are just as faithless and slow to learn. But our membership within God's people is not grounded on our performance or faithfulness, but on God's

Second, we see the LORD provide for His people in order to teach them to trust Him. God allows them to experience moments of testing, wondering where their food and water will come from. God does not want to make them comfortable - he wants to teach them how to rely on Him in all things. By providing manna to be collected daily, God wants the people to learn to rely on Him for their daily provisions and to believe that he will be faithful to keep his promises. GOD was working toward their sanctification, removing sin and growing them in righteousness.



WEEK 8

LEADER GUIDE

Finally, the LORD provides for His people in order to reach the nations. In Amalek and Jethro, we see two opposite responses to God's work among His people. Amalek represents the nations that set themselves as enemies of God and His people, just like Cain and Egypt. In contrast, Jethro the Midianite responds by honoring and worshiping the LORD for His great works. One gentile rejects God's work, and the other embraces it. These remain the two responses to God's work through the church. Although God's people will often face rejection by proclaiming the gospel, some will embrace the message and turn to worship God.

God's provision continues even through the most trying circumstances. We must learn to trust God to keep His promises and use those trials for His good purposes.

KEY IDEAS

- *THE LORD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE DESPITE THEIR FAITHLESSNESS.*
- *THE LORD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN ORDER TO TEACH THEM HOW TO TRUST HIM.*
- *THE LORD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN ORDER TO REACH THE NATIONS.*

BIG IDEA

DESPITE OUR SINFUL FAITHLESSNESS, THE LORD FAITHFULLY PROTECTS AND PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE. HE DOES THIS FOR HIS PURPOSES, TO SANCTIFY HIS PEOPLE AND PROCLAIM HIS GOSPEL.



WEEK 8

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What is something that often causes you to grumble and complain? Why do you think that happens?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Describe in your own words the people's attitude in 15:22-17:7. What is their attitude so surprising, given their previous experiences with God?
2. Why do we struggle to trust God's provision in times of adversity? In what ways are we similar to Israel in these chapters?
3. Look at the provision of manna in chapter 16. How did God use this provision to teach Israel? What lessons can we take from this chapter?
4. Why does God remain faithful to His people? What is the foundation of His provision?
5. What is sanctification? Why is sanctification such good news? Why is it so difficult at times?
6. Amalek and Jethro illustrate the two responses that Gentiles can have to God and His people: rejection or embrace. What does this show us about the bigger picture of God's work? How should this change our attitude toward times of trial?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for His faithfulness and provision.
- Praise God for His sanctifying work in your life.



WEEK 9

THE COVENANT AT SINAI

DAY 1: EXODUS 19:1-15

The nation arrives at Mt. Sinai after a long journey through the wilderness. This is the same location where Moses met God through the burning bush. The rest of the book will unfold here as Israel receives God's instructions (the Law) and enters into a covenant relationship with God.

The LORD invites the nation to be His "treasured possession" among the nations, a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:5-6). They are chosen for God's purposes, to communicate God's word and presence to the nations of the world, as priest ministers to the people. But to do this, they must be in a covenant relationship with God. This requires careful obedience to his word and a three-day consecration to enter his presence (10-15). The language of Exodus 19:5-6 will later be applied to the church as the new covenant people of God (1 Peter 2:9).

DAY 2: EXODUS 19:16-25

After the three-day preparation period, God manifests His holy presence on Mt. Sinai to meet with the people. Although God is omnipresent (meaning He is not absent from any part of creation), He reveals His holiness in a special way here. This appears as a powerful storm, fire, and a thunderous voice on the mountain. God's holiness is terrifying and dangerous to sinful humans. They cannot approach Him without great care and require protective boundaries around the mountain. Moses will approach God on behalf of the people to receive the covenant instructions (detailed in Exodus 20-23) and bring them to the people.

Without God's gracious help, sinful people are unable to enter God's holy presence without being destroyed. It is like standing in the sun; they are unable to withstand such blazing energy and perfection because of their sin.

DAY 3: EXODUS 24:1-8

After receiving the covenant instructions, Moses returns to confirm the covenant between God and the nation. First, the people receive God's instructions and agree to keep them. Moses reads God's words to them and invites them to respond. These are the rules that define their relationship with God. Because they belong to Him and have been rescued by grace, they need to live by His perfect standards. They are agreeing to the terms of the covenant.

Next comes a covenant confirmation ceremony. Moses makes several sacrifices and offerings. These point to the atonement necessary to approach God. They need their sin to be covered by a substitute. These sacrifices don't take away their sin, but point forward to Jesus as the final and perfect covenant sacrifice who removes our sin and brings us into a relationship with God. The people are sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices, pointing forward to the blood of Jesus, which covers our sin.

DAY 4: EXODUS 24:9-18

The covenant ceremony is completed through a meal shared in God's presence (24:11). Moses, Aaron, and the elders travel up the mountain to eat a covenant meal. This was a common practice in ancient covenants. Sharing a meal represented peace between the two groups. But this meal points us forward to the Lord's supper, when God would share a meal with His followers through Jesus, representing His death on the cross. The new covenant is sealed through this meal.

God has entered into a covenant relationship with Israel, promising to care for them and be with them. However, Israel will be unable to keep the covenant rules and will need God to graciously provide a covenant-keeper for them.

Following the ceremony, God called Moses and Joshua to ascend the mountain for more instructions (24:12-13). For the next forty days, they would receive instructions for constructing the Tabernacle, a place of worship where God's holy presence could dwell among His sinful people.

DAY 5: HEBREWS 12:18-24

The covenant at Sinai was good news for Israel, but it was still a limited and temporary measure. A better covenant was still to come. Hebrews 12 shows us that the Mosaic covenant left the people terrified by God's awesome presence. Verses 18-21 describe Israel's experience at Sinai, as described in Exodus. God's presence was frightening, and the people rightly feared that God's holiness could destroy them!

However, God's people no longer live under such fear. Although we must still show God proper reverence and honor, Jesus brings us into God's presence because we are united with Him. Since we are with Jesus, His holiness is given to us, and we may enter God's presence without terror. We approach God through a different mountain, Mt Zion. This mountain is the promised new creation, the city in which God will dwell with His people in eternal joy. Here we are, the firstborn sons of God, sharing in the full inheritance of Jesus. This is all possible because Jesus is the greater mediator, bringing us fully and finally into the presence of our holy creator.



WEEK 9

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

After enduring so much in Egypt and the wilderness, Moses and Israel arrive at Mount Sinai. This fulfills God's promise to Moses to bring His people out of Egypt to worship on this very mountain (Exod 3:12). Sinai is a crucial location where the rest of the book unfolds. Here, God will give them instructions for being His people, living in His presence, and entering into a covenant relationship with Him.

Chapter 19 tells us how the nation is prepared for God's holy presence. God's presence appears as a cloud with lightning and fire covering the mountain. It is awesome and terrifying! God's holiness is like the sun or a nuclear reactor! It cannot be approached without caution and reverence.

Three times Moses ascends the mountain to enter into God's presence (19:3-8a; 19:8b-15 and 19:16-25). The first time God warns that the nation must carefully listen to and obey His word if they are to enter His presence. The second time, Moses returns with detailed instructions. The people must consecrate themselves and prepare for three days to approach the LORD. Finally, the third time, Moses and the people approach the LORD. God's presence is the entire point of their rescue from Egypt, the restoration of what was lost in Eden. Humans were created to dwell with God, our creator, but sin separates us from Him. Through redemption, we begin to approach His presence again.

Chapter 24 resumes the narrative after several chapters of God's instructions (Exodus 20-23). It tells us that God's people only enter His presence through a covenant relationship. A covenant is a binding agreement that establishes a relationship between two parties, including promises, stipulations, and consequences for breaking it. As He did with Abraham centuries before, God called Israel to form a covenant with them, promising to be with them and entrusting His word to them. The people received the covenant through Moses and agreed to live according to its instructions. A ceremony and a meal seal the covenant relationship.

Crucially, we must remember the covenant order. Keeping the covenant rules did not make them God's people. We do not obey God so that he will love us and accept us. Redemption and salvation come first! We obey because of our new identity received by grace.



WEEK 9

LEADER GUIDE

Both of these chapters show that God's people need a mediator to stand between them and the Holy God. God made a way for His newly chosen and redeemed people to enter into his presence, but their sin made this difficult. The nation was unable to climb the mountain itself (19:23-24) and needed someone to go on their behalf. They needed a representative to speak on their behalf and to deliver God's word.

Moses was a good mediator, but he was not enough. We need a perfect mediator. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 tells us that Jesus is the perfect mediator because he is himself fully God and fully human. He can take us where Moses never could. In Jesus, we enter into the very presence of God and receive his Holy Spirit. And one day, we will dwell with God face to face. It will not be in a flaming, thunderous mountain, but in a shining, glorious city.

KEY IDEAS

- *GOD'S PEOPLE MUST BE PREPARED FOR GOD'S HOLY PRESENCE.*
- *GOD'S PEOPLE ENTER HIS PRESENCE THROUGH A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP.*
- *GOD'S PEOPLE NEED A MEDIATOR TO STAND BETWEEN THEM AND THE HOLY GOD.*

BIG IDEA

JESUS, THE PERFECT MEDIATOR, BRINGS US BY GRACE INTO GOD'S HOLY PRESENCE THROUGH THE NEW COVENANT.



WEEK 9

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What does a mediator do? Think of some situations in which a mediator is necessary.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. How is God's presence described in Exodus 19 and 24? How do you think Israel might have responded to this? Why?
2. What separates human beings from God's presence? What is the solution to this separation?
3. A covenant is a binding agreement that establishes a relationship. It includes promises, stipulations, and consequences for breaking it. What stands out to you about this definition? What are some examples of covenants in scripture?
4. What comes first: God's redemption, or human obedience? Why is this important?
5. What do we need as a mediator between God and ourselves? In what ways was Moses a good mediator? In what ways does he fall short?
6. Read 1 Timothy 2:5-6. What does this tell us about Jesus as a mediator? Why is he a better mediator than Moses?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for bringing us back into His presence.
- Thank Jesus for being our perfect mediator.



WEEK 10

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

DAY 1: EXODUS 20:1-6

Having prepared the nation to meet with Him (Exod 19), the LORD now provides the covenant guidelines that will shape their relationship. These foundational instructions teach Israel about God's character (what He values) and what it looks like to live as His people. These laws are not exhaustive rules but guiding principles that shape all of life. This is the purpose of the Ten Commandments.

The chapter begins by noting that the Ten Commandments are God's very words (20:1). Before giving instruction, God reminds Israel of their redemption (20:2). He is Yahweh, who redeemed them from Egypt. In light of this salvation, Israel should respond by honoring God's word. The first two commandments (20:3-6) teach exclusive and proper worship to Yahweh alone. There are no other gods, and certainly no other saviors, so believers must not give their allegiance or worship to anyone else. Furthermore, worshiping the true God must be done correctly. To worship through carved images - as other nations did - dishonors God. Believers must worship the right God in the right manner.

DAY 2: EXODUS 20:7-11

The third commandment prohibits taking, or bearing, the LORD's name in vain. This refers to much more than swearing. In scripture, a name represents a person's character and actions, especially the divine name of Yahweh (see Exod 3:14). As God's people, Israel represented Yahweh's character and power in their words and actions. It is as if they were wearing God's name on their forehead each day. Therefore, they must not speak in a way that profanes God's character or act in a way that profanes God's reputation.

The fourth commandment establishes the Sabbath day. One day out of each week was set aside as holy, or dedicated for a particular purpose. The Sabbath provides rest for Israel following the pattern established by God in Genesis 1. This rest taught believers to trust the LORD, not themselves, for their provision. It also reminded them to build worship and service to God into their weekly rhythms of life. While the Sabbath day is not binding for new covenant believers, we still honor this commandment by practicing regular rest and worship in our daily rhythms.

DAY 3: EXODUS 20:12-14

Beginning with the Fifth Commandment, God provides instructions for our relationships with other people. These are based on our relationship with God. Worshipping God leads us to love our neighbor.

The fifth commandment instructs believers to honor their parents. This is not primarily a command to children but to adults. We honor our parents by respecting them into our adulthood, and caring for them as they once cared for us. More broadly, the command teaches us to honor the God-given authorities over us, including civil and spiritual leaders.

The sixth and seventh commandments prohibit murder and adultery. Each of these harms others who are made in God's image. Jesus shows that these commands apply more broadly to all our thoughts and actions toward others (Matt 5:21-30). We must not murder, and we must not seek to harm or hate others. We must not commit adultery, and we must not look lustfully or mistreat our spouse. Believers are to seek the welfare of others in all avenues of life.

DAY 4: EXODUS 20:15-17

The final three commandments continue describing our relationships with other people. The eighth commandment prohibits theft. Believers must honor what belongs to others, including their possessions, their time, and the respect they are due. We must work hard for our provision rather than stealing or swindling it from others. The ninth commandment prohibits false witness, or speaking lies about another person. This command recognizes the power words possess to harm others and their reputation. Believers are to be people of the truth, not lying in order to benefit themselves or harm others.

Finally, the tenth commandment prohibits coveting what others have. Unlike the other commandments, we cannot tell when others are coveting. Coveting is a sin occurring within our hearts, leading to other sins. God instructs His people to be content with what they have, not longing for what others appear to have. Coveting could lead us to lie, steal, or murder if allowed to continue. Rather, believers are to learn the secret to contentment (Phil 4:11-13), trusting God to provide what we need.

DAY 5: EXODUS 20:18-21

God personally delivered the Ten Commandments to Israel. This was a terrifying experience! The holy creator of the universe spoke to His people, showing them what He values and how they should live. This instruction was an invaluable gift, but hearing from God in this way was more than the people could bear. Going forward, God would speak to Moses, who would then communicate to the nation.

As the new covenant believers, we receive a better revelation of God's word. In Jesus Christ, God came to us in a way we could understand, delivering God's good instruction.



WEEK 10

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

After carefully preparing to meet with the LORD, the nation received its first instruction: the Ten Commandments. These famous statements come from God directly and provide a foundation for the covenant relationship with His people.

The Ten Commandments are based upon the covenant relationship that God established by grace. Before giving commands, the LORD reminds Israel who He is and what He has already done for them (20:1-2). They are saved by God's grace first. The same applies to Christians. Through faith in Christ, we are transformed from enemies to children of God. At the same time, we also receive a new relationship with others by entering the church.

However, a relationship with God also comes with rules. In fact, every relationship requires (formal or informal) rules that define the boundaries of the relationship, what we can and cannot do. These rules are beneficial because they reveal the way to experience the blessings of a healthy relationship. Similarly, God provides the commandments for our benefit. They teach us how to live in healthy relationships with God and with other people.

The first half of the Ten Commandments shapes the relationship between the believer and God. The people must give the LORD exclusive worship since He is the only true God. They must not worship using carved images (idols) since God cannot be depicted by a mere creature. They must honor God's holy name in their words and actions, and they must dedicate the Sabbath each week to God. All of these help sinful people recognize and honor the perfect power and holiness of God.

The second half of the Commandments shapes believers' relationships with other people. The people must honor their parents and other God-given authorities. They must harm each other through murder, adultery, or theft. They must not harm another through false witness against another. Each of these would dishonor someone made in God's image. Finally, they must not sin against each other in their minds by coveting what others have. The commandments not only cover our actions, but also our thoughts and dispositions.



WEEK 10

LEADER GUIDE

The Ten Commandments are not exhaustive, but foundational principles that summarize God's moral law. They teach the key principles of the relationship with God and others that can be applied in any circumstance. They are God's gifts, allowing us to experience the blessings of fellowship with God and His people.

KEY IDEAS

- *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE BASED UPON THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP THAT GOD ESTABLISHES BY GRACE.*
- *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS SHAPE THE BELIEVER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH OTHER PEOPLE.*
- *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES, NOT EXHAUSTIVE RULES, FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.*

BIG IDEA

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS PROVIDE FOUNDATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR LIVING RIGHTLY WITH GOD AND WITH OTHER PEOPLE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SAVED BY GOD'S GRACE.



WEEK 10

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Try to name the Ten Commandments from memory. Why do you think these commandments are significant?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. What is the relationship between God's grace and human obedience? How is this relationship demonstrated in Exodus and the giving of the Ten Commandments?
2. How do the Ten Commandments show us the kind of relationship we are meant to have with God? Where do you see this in the passage?
3. What do the Ten Commandments reveal about God's character? What do they show us about what God values?
4. How do the Ten Commandments inform our relationships with other people? What do they reveal about human behavior apart from God's instruction and intervention?
5. How can the Ten Commandments act as foundational principle

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Thank God for providing life-giving instruction for us.
- Ask for God's help to live according to His law through our union with Christ.



WEEK 11

THE LAW

DAY 1: EXODUS 20:22-26

The final verses of chapter 20 begin a section called “the Book of the Covenant.” It includes God’s instructions given to Moses on Mt. Sinai for Israel. These instructions are part of the civic laws which were meant to govern Israel as a nation. They are much more detailed than the Ten Commandments, including regulations particular to Israel’s time, place and context. However, they are founded on principles which are applicable to God’s people in all times and places.

First, God instructs Moses on worship. God’s people are not to worship Him as the surrounding nations worship their gods. Yahweh tells His people how to worship correctly. The same applies in the church today. We are not free to base worship on our preferences or the practices of the surrounding culture. Rather, our worship is founded on God’s instruction in scripture.

DAY 2: EXODUS 21:1-22:17

The next section governs the treatment of indentured servants or slaves (21:1-11). Slavery in Israel operated very differently than the slavery we think of in American history. Israelites could sell themselves into wealthy households for employment and provision. They were included in the household under the leadership of its patriarch. This came with a contractual obligation to work for the agreed time or until the debt was paid. These laws protected slavery from abuse at the hands of their master, and preserved their dignity as those made in the image of God.

The next section regulates capital crimes (21:12-17) and bodily injuries (21:18-36). These provide governance for a nation with no police force or prison systems, protecting the community against serious offences. Note the insistence that an unborn child is a human being with legal rights in 21:22-24. The final section (22:1-17) outlines rules for damage to personal property. These laws operate on the principle of restitution based on the seventh commandment - that damage to another person must be repaid proportionately.

DAY 3: EXODUS 22:18-23:9

These assorted laws can appear random, but all describe the just community God desires in contrast to the nations around Israel. First, three capital crimes are listed: sorcery, bestiality and idol worship (22:18-20). All mimic Canaanite worship (see Lev 20:22-26) and draw the people away from the LORD.

Next, God prohibits the abuse of the poor and vulnerable (22:21-28). The LORD promises to defend these groups from mistreatment, showing His care for the “least of these” (Matt 25:40). God’s people should follow His example and embody His values. Similar commands occur in 23:1-9, along with a call to actively aid the marginalized.

Taken together, these laws instruct Israel to act with holiness since they worship a holy God, and were saved by His grace when they were vulnerable and oppressed.

DAY 4: EXODUS 23:18-19

The LORD once again returns to the topic of proper worship (as in 20:22-26). Here God reminds the people to observe the sabbath (23:10-12) and provides instruction for three annual festivals. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was previously outlined in chapter 13. The feasts of Harvest and Ingathering included gathering as a nation at key times for worship (see also Lev 23:9-22). Finally, several Canaanite practices were prohibited (23:18-19).

Worship and ethical living are inseparable in the book of the covenant. God’s people must correctly know and worship their creator if they are to live ethical lives according to His standards.

DAY 5: EXODUS 23:20-33

The final section provides the covenant promises for Israel. If they keep the covenant agreement (23:20-22), God will guide them through the wilderness and deliver the promised land of Canaan. This fulfills God’s promise to Abraham centuries earlier to deliver the land to his descendants. Entering the land will involve a conquest, in which God exercises judgment on the Canaanite peoples for centuries of wickedness (see Gen 15:16). Crucially, Israel must not become allies with the Canaanites, so that God’s people are not enticed into idolatry and immorality (23:32-33).

These verses reaffirm God’s covenant faithfulness and His holy character. Those who reject God’s holy standards will experience judgment. While those saved by grace are required to live holy lives in response.



WEEK 11

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the Ten Commandments, God provides further instruction through Moses. These detailed instructions are examples of Torah, or instructions for Israel. Exodus 21-23 contains many laws that would govern the new nation. After years of living in Egypt as slaves, God's people needed to learn to live according to God's standards.

The Law (Torah) is usually divided into three categories: civil, ceremonial, and moral. Civil laws establish the laws and legal precedents for the nation of Israel. Ceremonial laws set up religious festivals and sacrifices. Moral laws established general ethical principles.

These chapters mostly contain civil laws that give specific instructions for ancient Israel. Many of these laws are quite strange to modern readers, since they were given in a radically different time and place. Some prohibit common Canaanite customs that no longer exist (see Exod 23:19). Others, like the slavery laws, regulated common practices to prevent potential abuse. Without banks, social security, or government aid, indentured servitude was the only means for many farmers and herdsman to survive. These laws do not apply directly to our time since we live in very different circumstances. However, these laws also reveal general principles that inform all believers. These are still God's word, and we can learn much from them.

The Law continues to speak today because it reveals God's unchanging character and values. While the specific circumstances change, God does not. From these laws, we learn God's concern for the vulnerable in society (22:21-27), the seriousness of false worship (20:21-26), and His perfect justice (21:33-22:16). The lives of believers are meant to reflect the God they worship.

One of the timeless principles revealed in the Law is that worship and morality are inseparable for God's people. The LORD demands both proper worship and holy living. This means it is unacceptable to live a dual life, pretending to worship God on Sunday, followed by immoral living during the week. Being God's people transforms and governs all of life.



WEEK 11

LEADER GUIDE

God provides these laws as a gift to His people, showing them how to experience His presence and build a society according to godly standards. Keeping these instructions, along with the Ten Commandments, would result in God's continual blessings. However, we will soon see that Israel will be unable to keep the covenant.

KEY IDEAS

- *THE CIVIL LAWS GIVE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANCIENT ISRAEL'S TIME AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR BELIEVERS IN ALL TIMES.*
- *THE LAW REVEALS GOD'S UNCHANGING CHARACTER AND VALUES TO HIS PEOPLE.*
- *THE LAW SHOWS THAT WORSHIP AND MORALITY ARE INSEPARABLE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.*

BIG IDEA

THE CIVIL LAW INSTRUCTS BELIEVERS TO DISPLAY GOD'S HOLY CHARACTER IN BOTH WORSHIP AND DAILY LIVING.



WEEK 11

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Describe your impressions from reading Exodus 21-23. What aspects of these chapters did you find challenging?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. Define the three categories of Old Testament Law in your own words. How can these categories help us to understand and apply the laws in these chapters?
2. How are the civil laws specific to ancient Israel? What differences exist between their context and ours today?
3. How do these laws communicate timeless principles? What do these chapters reveal about God's character and values?
4. Read Matthew 5:17-20. What do these verses tell us about Jesus' view of the Law? How should this impact our approach to Exodus 21-23?
5. These chapters teach us that worship and daily living are inseparable. Why must worship shape daily behavior? What are some ways believers might fail to reflect this connection?
6. What could you do in the future to try to gain a better understanding of Old Testament Law?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for His Word and His unchanging character.
- Ask for His help in understanding and applying difficult passages of scripture.



WEEK 12

THE TABERNACLE

DAY 1: EXODUS 25

Having received the covenant expectations (Exod 20-23), Israel agreed to the covenant relationship with the LORD (Exod 24). Now Moses and his assistant Joshua ascend Mt. Sinai once again to receive further instruction (24:18). Uniting the Holy God with His flawed people will continue to be a problem, so the LORD provides a means of dwelling among the nation: the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle was a portable tent where God promised to dwell. There, the priests offered the people's sacrifices. It was the location for worship until the construction of the Jerusalem temple around 500 years later. The instructions are detailed by design. They show the importance of this structure and the gravity of entering God's holy presence.

Chapter 25 describes the contributions needed to construct the Tabernacle (1-9), and the objects to be stored inside it (10-40). The Ark of the Covenant represented God's throne and the place where He would meet with Moses. It would contain the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments. The table would help with sacrifices within the holy place, and the lampstand provided light. The lampstand was meant to represent the tree in the Garden of Eden. Much of the tabernacle's design contained imagery from Eden.

DAY 2: EXODUS 26-27

Chapter 26 describes the Tabernacle itself. Its structure was formed by a frame and bases, which were overlaid with gold. This was covered by a durable outer covering of curtains and animal skins. Since Israel had not yet arrived in Canaan, everything in the Tabernacle needed to be portable. The tent was divided into two sections. First, the Holy place contained the table and lampstand and was accessible to the priests. Next, the Holy of Holies contained the Ark. Only the high priest could enter once per year (Lev 16). This communicated the seriousness of human sin and the Holiness of God.

Chapter 27 describes the courtyard around the Tabernacle. This area contained the altar for sacrifices. Members of the nation could enter the courtyard to worship and offer sacrifices.

DAY 3: EXODUS 28-29

Chapter 28 describes the priests. A priest serves as a mediator between God and the people. They facilitated worship through the sacrificial system, taught God's law, and cared for the Tabernacle. Priests came from Aaron's family line in the tribe of Levi.

The priests' clothing communicated their special role in worship. The breastplate and ephod (an apron-like garment) contained precious stones inscribed with the names of Israel's twelve tribes. This symbolically represented bringing the tribes of Israel into God's presence. The priests' robes were blue and purple, signifying their proximity to God, the ruler of Israel. They also wore a gold-plated headcovering with the inscription, "Holy to the LORD" (28:36-37). The priests were literally marked with God's holy name, showing they were set apart for His service. This is a literalization of the third commandment, to bear the LORD's name rightly.

Chapter 29 describes the consecration ceremony for the priests and their clothing. After a time of preparation (1-9), Aaron and his sons offer a sin offering (10-14) followed by two burnt offerings - one to the LORD and the other for ordination (15-28). Finally, God gave instructions for ordaining future generations of priests (29-37).

The work of priests points forward to Jesus. As the perfect mediator, he unites God and His people. As the perfect sacrifice for our sin, Jesus concludes the sacrificial system. As new covenant believers, we no longer need priests because Jesus has completed their work.

DAY 4: EXODUS 30

Chapter 30 describes the other elements needed for worship at the Tabernacle. An Altar of Incense (1-10) placed in the holy place continually burned oils and incense (22-38). On a practical level, this helped with the smell of animal sacrifices. The incense also represented the prayers of God's people (Ps 141:2). A Bronze Basin (17-21) located in the courtyard was used for washings before and after a sacrifice.

The tax described in 30:11-16 calls the people to support the Tabernacle and the priests. This offering was a form of worship and recognized God's rule over their lives. Since they owed their lives to God, they must care for His holy space.

DAY 5: EXODUS 31

In chapter 31, we learn the names of the people responsible for the Tabernacle construction. The LORD prepared and called Bezalel and Oholiab, who were skilled Israelite craftsmen. God will fill them with His Spirit and has given them the ability and intelligence to lead this construction. This passage shows us the value of craftsmanship and artistry. Both are gifts from God that are meant to be used in his service. God blesses His people through these men to build a meeting place for worship.

The final set of instructions emphasizes the Sabbath rules from the fourth commandment (31:12-17). The Sabbath reminds the Israelites of the Tabernacle's purpose, allowing them to enter God's presence for rest and worship. After these instructions, Moses possessed stone tablets with God's handwritten commandments (31:18) and was ready to travel down the mountain to rejoin the nation.



WEEK 12

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The LORD rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt (Exod 1-15), brought them to Sinai (Exod 16-18), and entered into a covenant relationship with the new nation (Exod 19-24). Among all these incredible gifts, the greatest promise was that God would dwell with His people (Exod 25:8). Humans lost this privilege in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, God's redemptive work centers on restoring this fellowship. However, it is not easy for a Holy God to dwell among imperfect and sinful people. God must graciously provide the means for dwelling with Israel without destroying them. This is the purpose of the Tabernacle.

For forty days, the LORD instructed Moses on Mt Sinai for the construction of a portable place of worship and meeting with God. The name tabernacle means "dwelling," and here God promises to manifest His presence among Israel. The meeting place required multiple objects to facilitate sacrifices for worship, and a dedicated priesthood to conduct the ceremonies. All these elements serve as a mediation between God and His people. These chapters are extremely detailed. Israel must not construct God's sanctuary carelessly or according to their own preferences. Following these plans reflected their devotion and reverence for YAHWEH.

The Tabernacle communicated several important ideas. First, the Tabernacle represented the dwelling place of the almighty and holy King. Materials like gold, precious stones, and blue fabric were used to honor royalty. God is worthy of honor and total allegiance as Israel's king. In addition, the separating curtains leading to the holy of holies, showed God's perfect holiness. He is with peers, complete in his perfection! Together, the Tabernacle communicates God's greatness!

Second, the Tabernacle points back to the Garden of Eden and the human need for fellowship with our creator. The decorations within the Tabernacle all reference a garden. Furthermore, the purpose of the tent was to meet with God. These are meant to remind Israel of Genesis 1 and 2, when humans walked and lived with God unhindered by sin. It reminds us of our fundamental need to know and fellowship with our creator, which our sin disrupted. Ultimately, the Tabernacle is only a temporary solution to this problem.



WEEK 12

LEADER GUIDE

However, the Tabernacle also points forward to Jesus, the final and perfect bridge between God and humanity. In Jesus, the holy God took on real humanity and dwelt (in Greek, he “tabernacled”) among us. He is the final solution to the separation between God and humanity. As fully God and fully human, he is able to remove our sin and bring us into our creator’s presence once and for all.

KEY IDEAS

- *THE TABERNACLE REPRESENTED THE DWELLING PLACE OF THE ALMIGHTY AND HOLY KING.*
- *THE TABERNACLE POINTS BACK TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN AND THE HUMAN NEED FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH OUR CREATOR.*
- *THE TABERNACLE POINTS FORWARD TO JESUS, THE FINAL AND PERFECT BRIDGE BETWEEN GOD AND HUMANITY.*

BIG IDEA

THE TABERNACLE ALLOWED GOD’S SINFUL PEOPLE TO ENTER HIS PRESENCE FOR WORSHIP AND ANTICIPATED THE COMING OF CHRIST, WHO WOULD FINALLY UNITE GOD WITH HIS PEOPLE.



WEEK 12

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

What are some images and objects that you associate with royalty? What emotions or expectations come to mind when imagining an audience with a king?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. List as many items from the Tabernacle as you can remember. What was the function of each item? How was Israel's worship different from modern worship practices?
2. What do the detailed instructions for the Tabernacle reveal about God's character? How should these instructions shape our own attitude toward worship?
3. What was the purpose of the Tabernacle (see Exodus 25:8-9)? What purpose did the priests serve? Why do you think Israel needed both the Tabernacle and priesthood?
4. Define holiness in your own words. How does the Tabernacle's design teach God's people about His holiness?
5. What are some similarities between the Tabernacle and the Garden of Eden? What do you think these similarities are meant to teach us?
6. How does the Tabernacle relate to Christ? Why is Jesus better than the Tabernacle?

PRAY TOGETHER:

- Praise God for His Majesty and Holiness!
- Thank God for coming to dwell with us in Christ.