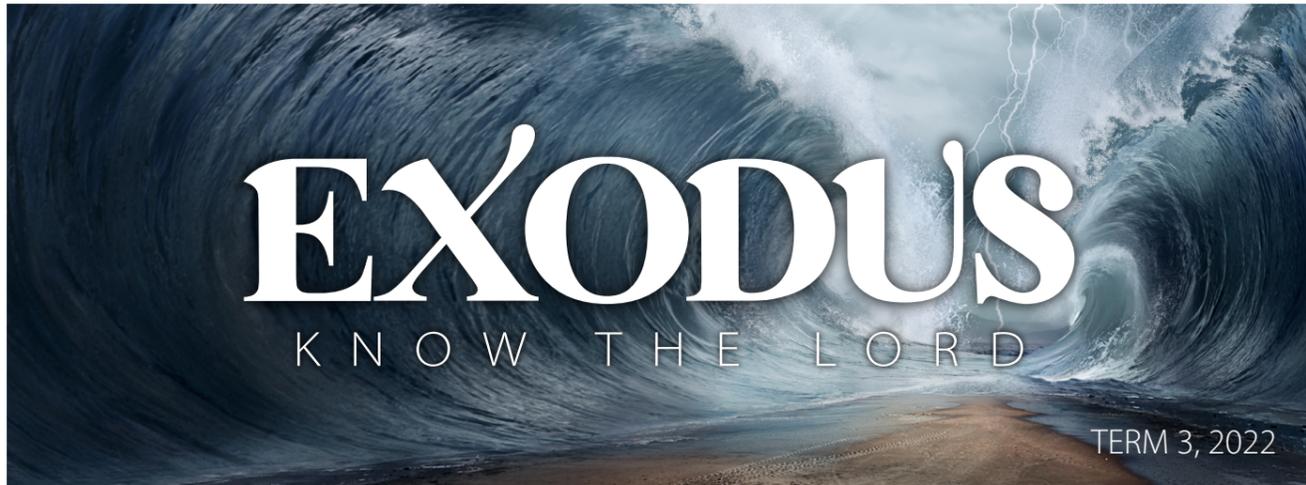


EXODUS

KNOW THE LORD

**WEEKS
1-10**

rockypc SERIES COMPANION



Exodus is one of the most well-known books of the Bible...

Well, at least the first half is! The action packed part that can be made into feature films.

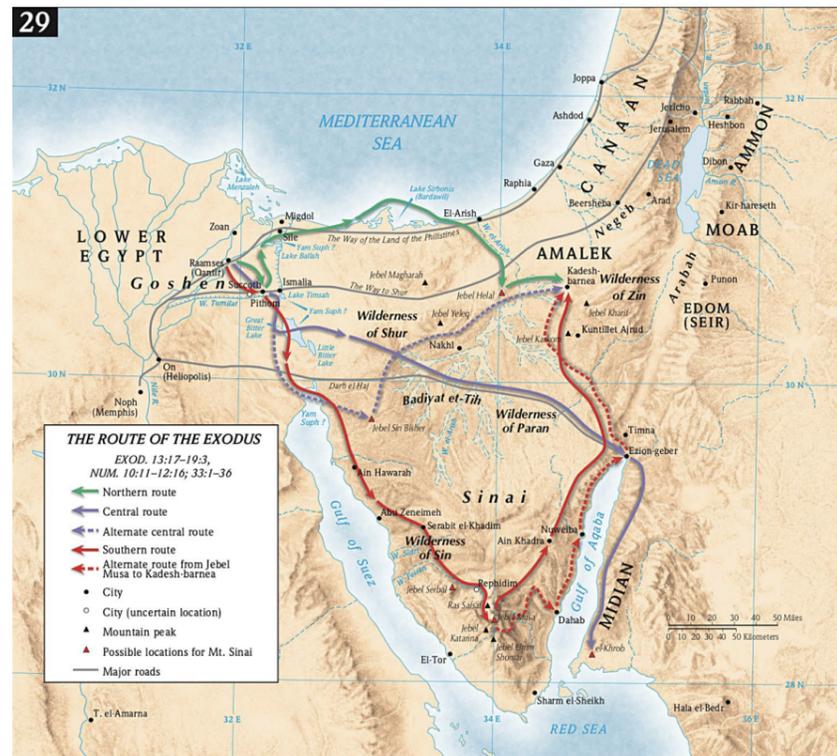
It tells the fast-paced story of the nation of Israel's escape from the tyrannical clutches of a Pharaoh who hates them. Ten dreadful plagues are quickly followed by an escape through towering seas as an army of chariots plunges after a helpless crowd. The action then slows to a snail's pace once the people are free. The Israelites arrive at Mt Sinai and receive the Ten Commandments from the LORD, plus some strange instructions about an ancient tent. It's no surprise that modern movies don't worry about anything after chapter 15.

However, as we'll see, Exodus is about far more than miracles and marvels. This story reveals the God who is behind all these events, along with the rest of human history, in a way that displays his power and makes him known like never before. His personal name, YHWH, is unveiled, inviting us into a more intimate relationship with him. He shows kindness, compassion, faithfulness, generosity and mercy. He also proves he's just, righteous and supremely powerful and worthy of worship. The later chapters of Exodus are just as important for us to KNOW THE LORD as the first 15.

Exodus starts where Genesis finished, by reminding us that Joseph's family had joined him in Egypt to escape the famine. Genesis 46 tells the story — God told Jacob (aka "Israel"),

"I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again."

From there, Jacob's family travelled to Egypt and settled in the land of Goshen.



To make the most sense of Exodus, we'll need to keep some key passages and themes from Genesis in mind.

1. GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM AND HIS FAMILY

In Genesis 12v1-7, God made an amazing promise to Abraham. He said he would make Abraham's name great, he would make Abraham's family into a great nation. He would give him the land of Canaan for his family to enjoy and he would bless the whole world through Abraham's family line. Genesis tracks the story of God's fulfilment of his promises. However, they take time and generations to develop.

In Genesis 15v1-20, God reiterates his promises to Abraham but he says it won't happen immediately. Of particular importance are vv.13-16 which say,

"The LORD said to him, "Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure."

These verses build expectation for what we see in Exodus as Abraham's family leave Egypt and also for the events that follow after as they take possession of the Promised Land.

In Genesis 17v1-8, God reminds Abraham of his promises, particularly that Abraham's family will become a great nation, and that is exactly what causes Pharaoh to oppress the Israelites into hard labour at the start of Exodus.

2. CREATION & DECREATION

Genesis 1-2 tells God's story of creating the world. Chapter 3 describes the deception of the serpent, the fall of Adam and Eve, and the subsequent cursing of humanity and the world and our separation from the Holy God who made us. Genesis 6-9 marks a turning point from creation when God "decreates" what he has made and begins afresh with Noah's family line.

In Exodus, God's interactions with Pharaoh, Egypt, Moses and Israel show echoes of the creation and decreation themes along with the separation from God.

In your discussions, you might find it helpful to notice the links between the story of Moses and the opening chapters of Genesis.

So, when did the Exodus take place?

The Bible text doesn't name which Pharaoh's were in power during Joseph's life or afterwards, and this makes precise dating difficult. Typically two dates are proposed for the Exodus — either the 15th or 13th century BC.

Both biblical and archaeological support can be given for each date, but the general, current consensus is that RAMESES II was the king who came to power when Moses was in Midian (Exodus 3). One piece of support for a 13th century date is that the Israelites were building Rameses as a store city for Pharaoh (Exodus 1v11), and no Pharaoh had that name before the 14th century BC.



From Holman Bible Atlas — Temple of Rameses II at Abu-Simbel

Timeline

- c. 1570 BCE - 1544 BCE**
Reign of Ahmose I, founder of 18th Dynasty.
- c. 1570 BCE - c. 1069 BCE**
The **New Kingdom of Egypt**.
- c. 1541 BCE - 1520 BCE**
Reign of Amenhotep I in **Egypt**.
- c. 1520 BCE - 1492 BCE**
Reign of Thutmose I in **Egypt**.
- 1492 BCE - 1479 BCE**
Reign of Thutmose II in **Egypt**.
- 1458 BCE - 1425 BCE**
Reign of **Thutmose III** in **Egypt**.
- 1458 BCE - 1425 BCE**
Reign of **Thutmose III**, the Warrior-King, who expands **Egypt** into an **empire**.
- 1425 BCE - 1400 BCE**
Reign of Amenhotep II in **Egypt**.
- 1400 BCE - 1390 BCE**
Reign of Thutmose IV in **Egypt**.
- c. 1386 BCE - c. 1353 BCE**
Reign of **Amenhotep III** of **Egypt**.
- 1386 BCE - 1353 BCE**
Opulent reign of **Amenhotep III** in **Egypt**.
- 1353 BCE - c. 1336 BCE**
Reign of **Akhenaten**, **Tutankhamun**'s father, 'Heretic King' of **Egypt**.
- c. 1336 BCE - c. 1327 BCE**
Reign of **Tutankhamun** with **Ankhsenamun** as queen.
- c. 1324 BCE - c. 1320 BCE**
Possible reign of the **pharaoh** Ay in **Egypt**.
- 1320 BCE - 1295 BCE**
Horemheb rules **Egypt**, restores the old **religion** and temples.
- 1292 BCE - 1290 BCE**
Ramesses I, founder of 19th Dynasty, reigns in **Egypt**.
- 1290 BCE - 1279 BCE**
Seti I revitalizes **Egyptian economy** and strengthens the **empire**.
- 1279 BCE - 1212 BCE**
Reign of **Ramesses II** (The Great) in **Egypt**.
- 1213 BCE - 1203 BCE**
Merenptah reigns in **Egypt**, stele records first evidence of **Israel** as a people.

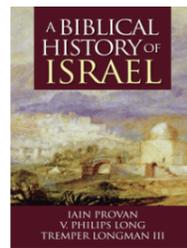
Either way, this time frame in Ancient History is the era of Egyptian History called THE NEW KINGDOM (1570-1069). This was the most prosperous time for Egypt, when the nation became an EMPIRE. Egypt was at the peak of its powers.



From <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/538/map-of-the-new-kingdom-of-egypt-1450-bce>

It is the most popular era for modern study with Pharaoh's like Hatshepsut, Thuthmoses III, Amenhotep III, Akhenaten and his wife Nefertiti, Tutankhamun, Seti I and Rameses II (aka Rameses the Great).

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH IN THIS AREA

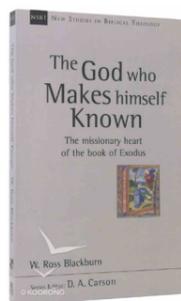


Available as an ebook or hard copy, **A BIBLICAL HISTORY OF ISRAEL** provides some helpful data and interesting discussion about the Biblical and Archaeological accounts

of the history of the nation of Israel from earliest times until the coming of Jesus.

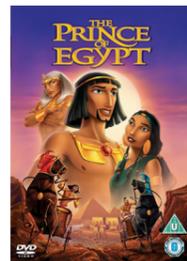


THE BIBLE PROJECT app, website and podcast provides helpful discussion, videos and other visuals for many books of the Bible. They are currently working through the Old Testament. The podcast episodes on the Exodus Scroll are particularly interesting.



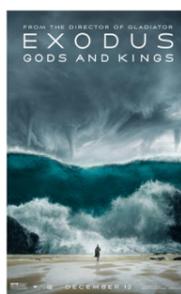
Also available as an ebook or hard copy, **THE GOD WHO MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN** takes a more focused look at the way the Lord acts to reveal himself and draw people into a relationship.

FOR FUN



Check out Dreamworks **THE PRINCE OF EGYPT**. A compelling animated story, but watch out for the inconsistencies and inaccuracies from the Biblical account.

DON'T BOTHER!



Despite its spectacular special effects, **EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS** is truly horrible from a Biblical perspective. That shouldn't surprise us when it was produced by an Atheist-cum-Agnostic who reportedly needed a 'more scientific'

explanation for the supernatural parts of the story, and when the main actor said that Moses was 'most likely schizophrenic' and was 'one of the most barbaric individuals' he'd ever read about.

EXODUS

1-18 EXODUS FROM EGYPT

1-7 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

8-12 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

13-14 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

15 SONG OF THE SEA

16-18 IN THE WILDERNESS

19-40 COVENANT AT MT. SINAI

19-21 GODS COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

21-23 TERMS OF THE COVENANT: THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

24-31 MOSES COMPLAINS ABOUT LEADERSHIP & SOCIAL JUSTICE

32-34 ISRAEL BREAKS THE COVENANT

35-40 MOSES BUILDS THE TABERNACLE

40 MOSES CAN'T ENTER

41-50 GODS COVENANT PROMISES ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12, 15, 17): GOD'S BLESSING TO ALL NATIONS ISRAEL (EXODUS 17: 1-6) KINGDOM OF PRIESTS TO THE NATIONS RESTORATION OF GOD'S PRESENCE

51-55 MOST HOLY SPACE

56-60 TABERNACLE'S BLUEPRINT

61-67 LEAVE ME ALONE THAT I MAY DESTROY THEM.

68-74 REMEMBER YOUR COVENANT PROMISE TO ABRAHAM!

75-81 MAKE ISRAEL A SANCTUARY FOR ME AND I WILL DWELL AMONG MY PEOPLE. (25: 8)

82-88 THE LORD IS MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, SLOW TO ANGER, ABUNDANT IN COVENANT FAITHFULNESS, HE FORGIVES SIN, BUT WILL NOT LEAVE THE SINNER UNPUNISHED. (31: 9-7)

89-95 HERE ARE YOUR GODS WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF EGYPT.

96-102 MAKE ISRAEL A SANCTUARY FOR ME AND I WILL DWELL AMONG MY PEOPLE. (25: 8)

103-109 THE LORD IS MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS, SLOW TO ANGER, ABUNDANT IN COVENANT FAITHFULNESS, HE FORGIVES SIN, BUT WILL NOT LEAVE THE SINNER UNPUNISHED. (31: 9-7)

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705-711 THE POINT

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726-732 PASSOVER

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754-760 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

761-767 SONG OF THE SEA

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796-802 PASSOVER

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810-816 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

817-823 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

824-830 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

831-837 SONG OF THE SEA

838-844 IN THE WILDERNESS

845-851 THE POINT

852-858 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

859-865 GOD VS PHARAOH

866-872 PASSOVER

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908-914 IN THE WILDERNESS

915-921 THE POINT

922-928 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

929-935 GOD VS PHARAOH

936-942 PASSOVER

943-949 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

950-956 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

957-963 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

964-970 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

971-977 SONG OF THE SEA

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992-998 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

999-1005 GOD VS PHARAOH

1006-1012 PASSOVER

1013-1019 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1020-1026 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1027-1033 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1034-1040 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1041-1047 SONG OF THE SEA

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1062-1068 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1069-1075 GOD VS PHARAOH

1076-1082 PASSOVER

1083-1089 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1090-1096 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1097-1103 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1104-1110 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1111-1117 SONG OF THE SEA

1118-1124 IN THE WILDERNESS

1125-1131 THE POINT

1132-1138 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1139-1145 GOD VS PHARAOH

1146-1152 PASSOVER

1153-1159 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1160-1166 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1167-1173 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1174-1180 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1181-1187 SONG OF THE SEA

1188-1194 IN THE WILDERNESS

1195-1201 THE POINT

1202-1208 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1209-1215 GOD VS PHARAOH

1216-1222 PASSOVER

1223-1229 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1230-1236 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1237-1243 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1244-1250 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1251-1257 SONG OF THE SEA

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1265-1271 THE POINT

1272-1278 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1279-1285 GOD VS PHARAOH

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1293-1299 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1300-1306 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1307-1313 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1314-1320 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1321-1327 SONG OF THE SEA

1328-1334 IN THE WILDERNESS

1335-1341 THE POINT

1342-1348 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1349-1355 GOD VS PHARAOH

1356-1362 PASSOVER

1363-1369 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1370-1376 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1377-1383 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1384-1390 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1391-1397 SONG OF THE SEA

1398-1404 IN THE WILDERNESS

1405-1411 THE POINT

1412-1418 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1419-1425 GOD VS PHARAOH

1426-1432 PASSOVER

1433-1439 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1440-1446 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1447-1453 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1454-1460 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1461-1467 SONG OF THE SEA

1468-1474 IN THE WILDERNESS

1475-1481 THE POINT

1482-1488 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1489-1495 GOD VS PHARAOH

1496-1502 PASSOVER

1503-1509 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1510-1516 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1517-1523 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1524-1530 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1531-1537 SONG OF THE SEA

1538-1544 IN THE WILDERNESS

1545-1551 THE POINT

1552-1558 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1559-1565 GOD VS PHARAOH

1566-1572 PASSOVER

1573-1579 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1580-1586 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1587-1593 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1594-1600 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1601-1607 SONG OF THE SEA

1608-1614 IN THE WILDERNESS

1615-1621 THE POINT

1622-1628 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1629-1635 GOD VS PHARAOH

1636-1642 PASSOVER

1643-1649 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

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1657-1663 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1664-1670 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

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1685-1691 THE POINT

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1699-1705 GOD VS PHARAOH

1706-1712 PASSOVER

1713-1719 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1720-1726 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

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1769-1775 GOD VS PHARAOH

1776-1782 PASSOVER

1783-1789 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1790-1796 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1797-1803 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1804-1810 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1811-1817 SONG OF THE SEA

1818-1824 IN THE WILDERNESS

1825-1831 THE POINT

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1846-1852 PASSOVER

1853-1859 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

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1881-1887 SONG OF THE SEA

1888-1894 IN THE WILDERNESS

1895-1901 THE POINT

1902-1908 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1909-1915 GOD VS PHARAOH

1916-1922 PASSOVER

1923-1929 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

1930-1936 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

1937-1943 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

1944-1950 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

1951-1957 SONG OF THE SEA

1958-1964 IN THE WILDERNESS

1965-1971 THE POINT

1972-1978 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

1979-1985 GOD VS PHARAOH

1986-1992 PASSOVER

1993-1999 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2000-2006 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2007-2013 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2014-2020 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2021-2027 SONG OF THE SEA

2028-2034 IN THE WILDERNESS

2035-2041 THE POINT

2042-2048 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2049-2055 GOD VS PHARAOH

2056-2062 PASSOVER

2063-2069 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2070-2076 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2077-2083 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2084-2090 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2091-2097 SONG OF THE SEA

2098-2104 IN THE WILDERNESS

2105-2111 THE POINT

2112-2118 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2119-2125 GOD VS PHARAOH

2126-2132 PASSOVER

2133-2139 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2140-2146 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2147-2153 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2154-2160 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2161-2167 SONG OF THE SEA

2168-2174 IN THE WILDERNESS

2175-2181 THE POINT

2182-2188 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2189-2195 GOD VS PHARAOH

2196-2202 PASSOVER

2203-2209 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2210-2216 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2217-2223 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2224-2230 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2231-2237 SONG OF THE SEA

2238-2244 IN THE WILDERNESS

2245-2251 THE POINT

2252-2258 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2259-2265 GOD VS PHARAOH

2266-2272 PASSOVER

2273-2279 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2280-2286 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2287-2293 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2294-2300 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2301-2307 SONG OF THE SEA

2308-2314 IN THE WILDERNESS

2315-2321 THE POINT

2322-2328 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2329-2335 GOD VS PHARAOH

2336-2342 PASSOVER

2343-2349 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

2350-2356 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

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2371-2377 SONG OF THE SEA

2378-2384 IN THE WILDERNESS

2385-2391 THE POINT

2392-2398 CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD & PHARAOH

2399-2405 GOD VS PHARAOH

2406-2412 PASSOVER

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2420-2426 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

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2448-2454 IN THE WILDERNESS

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2476-2482 PASSOVER

2483-2489 PHARAOH HARDENS HIS HEART

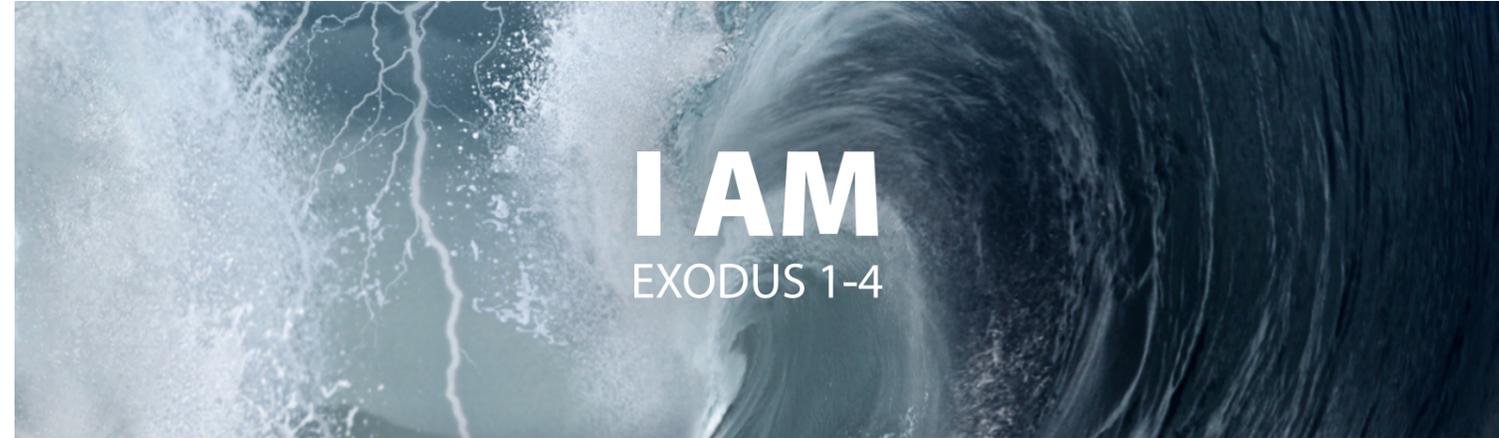
2490-2496 PHARAOH TRIES TO DESTROY ISRAEL

2497-2503 PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER ADOPTS MOSES

2504-2510 MOSES ESCAPES FROM EGYPT

2511-2517 SONG OF THE SEA

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I AM

EXODUS 1-4

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)



HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS SERIES COMPANION

ON YOUR OWN — Take your time reading through the passage. We will be doing the studies BEFORE the Bible Talks this term, to help aid group discussions and understanding on Sunday. If you have time, work through the questions before your GROWTH GROUP so that you've started thinking about the topic before you arrive. There are a few weeks where there is a table asking you to compare similarities and variations to patterns. On these weeks in particular it will be helpful to prepare before.

WITH YOUR GROWTH GROUP — As you talk through the questions, see how we can know the compassionate, rescuing God.

ON SUNDAY — Make sure you bring your series companion along with you, so that you can keep track of any questions you have and record the way God's Spirit is helping you to understand His Word and grow in your love for Jesus!

These series companions are designed to be used as either a print version, or interactively on a device. Use whichever method is most helpful for you.

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

GETTING STARTED

If someone asked 'Who are you?', how would you answer (beyond just saying your name)?

Exodus is the second book of the Bible, and it picks up the story of Jacob's family where it finished at the end of the book of Genesis.

READ EXODUS 1

1. How does God bless Jacob's family, the Hebrews, despite Pharaoh's wickedness?

2. Why is this an important opening for the Exodus story? (see Genesis 1v26-28; Genesis 3v1; 12v1-3)

READ EXODUS 2v1-10

3. What ironies do you see happening in Moses' story?

READ EXODUS 2v11-25

4. Moses is on the run in a foreign land to escape being murdered, like his forefather Jacob. He even impresses his wife at a well.

Why do you think the author wants us to notice the similarities with Moses' forefathers (see Genesis 28v13-15)?

A covenant is a living, binding, relational agreement that God makes, with promises and blessings on his part and obligations for the human part. God made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 and reinforced with his sons. God doesn't 'remember' his covenant now as though it slipped his mind and he'd forgotten. Remembering means he about to act on it, in line with his promises made on his end of the agreement.

READ EXODUS 3v1-4v17

5. Why is Moses curious and then afraid in v1-6?

6. Why does the LORD send Moses back to Egypt, from v7-10? What does this show about him?

7. Fill in the table below with Moses' questions and God's answers.

verses	Moses' question	The LORD's response
3v11-12		
3v13-22		<p>God said to Moses:</p> <p>Say to the elders:</p> <p>Say to Pharaoh:</p> <p>I will:</p>
4v1-9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
4v10-12		
4v13-17		

8. What do we learn about God's character in his interaction with Moses?

I AM WHO I AM is 'YHWH' in Hebrew, which we might pronounce as Yahweh (there are no vowels in classical Hebrew writings). Our Bibles follow a tradition of not saying this name and instead, indicate God's personal name by writing in uppercase 'THE LORD'. It is good to notice when you're reading the Old Testament when 'THE LORD' is used rather than 'God' or 'the Lord' because God's personal name carries with it the powerful ideas of his covenant faithfulness and rescue of the Exodus.

READ EXODUS 4v18-4v31

9. How is Moses received by Aaron and the people when he returns?

We will think more about the way God will harden Pharaoh's heart next week. So save your questions about this until then!

v24-26 is a strange little section. It appears that Moses had not followed God's command to Abraham to circumcise his sons at 8 days old (Genesis 17) and was perhaps raising him as a Midianite. When about to act as Israel's leader, Moses needs to demonstrate obedience to God's covenant. Furthermore, God has just told Moses that Israel is his firstborn son, and of the punishment to fall on Pharaoh's firstborn son. And now, Moses' firstborn son is rescued with the shedding of blood. All of this may be foreshadowing the Passover in Exodus 11.

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE Can we really know the Lord? How? (John 14v6-7)

ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION

DENY YOURSELF

SEEK GOD

CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE God revealed to Moses that he is the I AM who sees his people's misery, remembers his promises and rescues them. How do we see his character even more fully/beautifully in Jesus?

HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK What confidence can we have to cry out to God in our groaning? (See Hebrews 4v14-16)

TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE

TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise God that he reaches out to us so that we can know him, both as he loved and rescued Israel, but even more clearly as he rescues us at the cross. Thank him that we can know him through Jesus, the way, the truth, the life.
- Praise God that he is eternal, powerful, holy, and worthy of worship. Praise his patience, faithfulness to his promises and his abounding blessing.
- Cry out to God in your misery. Pray for confidence that he sees and knows us, and draws us near. Pray that he'd comfort us and help us in our need.

WHO IS THE LORD?

EXODUS 5-10

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Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

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GROWTH GROUP STUDY

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

GETTING STARTED

Have you ever experienced a plague? Tell the group about it?

READ EXODUS 5v1-21

1. How does Pharaoh react to Moses and Aaron's message?

READ EXODUS 5v22-6v9

Verse 3 seems to suggest that the LORD's name (YHWH in Hebrew) was not revealed until Moses met him at the burning bush in Exodus 4. However, theologian Frank Andersen (late husband of our very own Margaret from SOUTHSIDE) says that a better translation of this verse is 'I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as El Shaddai and my name is the LORD. Did I not make myself known to them?' *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew, 1974*
The LORD was known to the patriarchs in a covenant relationship, but now, he is going to reveal his character even further.

2. What will Israel learn about God's character in the coming story?

READ EXODUS 6v10-12; 6v26-7v6

3. What is Moses concerned about? (note that 'faltering lips' could be translated 'uncircumcised lips' cf 4v10)

Moses' and Aaron's genealogy seems out of place here. We would usually see it at the start of the story. However, the narrator seems to place it here to highlight Moses' weaknesses. His extended family includes incest and murder (see Genesis 49v3-5), and Moses' own parents had an incestuous relationship also (v20).

4. How does the LORD respond to Moses' concerns in 7v1-5?

Fill in the table below and make notes of patterns and phrases that you see repeated (or perhaps varied) throughout the plagues/strikes that God brings against Egypt.

7v8-24	7v25-8v15	8v16-19
8v20-32	9v1-7	9v8-12
9v13-35	10v1-20	10v21-29

5. When you look at the patterns you've found, what does it show you about the LORD?

6. What is the relationship between the LORD hardening Pharaoh's heart and Pharaoh hardening his own heart? (see Paul's reflection on this in Romans 9v14-24)

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

- SACRIFICE** How do you respond to God's word - with hardness, or fear and obedience?
- ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION** How can you recognise the LORD's rule over all the earth?
- DENY YOURSELF**
- SEEK GOD**
- CONFESS/REPENT**

SERVEHUMILITY BEFORE
HONOUR

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT
JESUS

What can you delight in from what you've learned about the LORD today?

How can we delight in the God who makes himself know in judgment as well as salvation? (see also Acts 17v24-31 and 2 Peter 3v8-13)

SPEAKTO GOD ABOUT
PEOPLETO PEOPLE ABOUT
GOD

What confidence do we have in speaking to friends and family who have hard hearts? (see 2 Corinthians 4v3-6)

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise God that he is lord over all the earth Thank him that we can know him as the LORD who is faithful and rescues us through Jesus, who died and rose again.
- Praise him for his certain judgment that is powerful and just towards his enemies.
- Pray that you would have soft hearts towards the LORD and his word - fearing him and obeying.
- Pray for those you know who are hard hearted towards Jesus - that you would keep speaking of the LORD's mercy and grace for those who repent. And that he would compassionately bring them to know Jesus.



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GETTING STARTED

If your growth group were to have an arm wrestle, who would win? You don't actually have to wrestle - just hypothesise about who is strongest!

READ EXODUS 11

Israel had cried out to the LORD in their slavery and God has been acting in line with the promises he made their forefathers. He has raised up Moses to lead them and begun to act in judgment on the oppressors, Egypt with 9 nine plagues. The plagues culminate in the final 10th plague.

1. What will be the result of the death of all Egyptian firstborn sons and animals?

READ EXODUS 12v1-13

2. What will Israel need to do to avoid the death of their firstborn sons?

READ EXODUS 12v14-28

3. What does this ceremony mean to Israel as they commemorate each year to come?

READ EXODUS 12v29-42

4. How do the Egyptians respond to this plague?

READ EXODUS 12v43-13v16

5. Who can/should commemorate the Passover?

6. How should Israel treat firstborns after the Passover? (see also Numbers 8v17-18 and 18v15-16)

READ EXODUS 13v17-14v31

7. This is a famous story. What stood out to you while you were reading it again?

READ EXODUS 15v1-21

8. How do Israel describe the God who has saved them in their song of praise?

growing disciples

At **rockypc** we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE How do we know and celebrate the LORD's passover redemption of us? (see 1 Corinthians 5v6-8; 11v23-26)
 ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION

DENY YOURSELF How are the cross and resurrection the LORD's ultimate, powerful triumph over his enemies? (see Hebrews 2v14-17 and Ephesians 1v19-23)
 SEEK GOD

CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE How do you express your praise to the LORD for his salvation? Is this something you want to grow in?
 HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR
 How can you do that?

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK What is unique about our God? How can you share this with others?

TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE

TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise the LORD for making himself known as the God who rescues and who judges.
- Praise God for his powerful salvation at the cross and resurrection - defeating his enemies and saving his people. Praise him for Jesus our passover lamb whose sacrifice redeems us and makes us his people.
- Pray that would glorify the LORD for saving us - to him and to others. Ask for his help to declare his praises to friends and family. Pray that they would see how there is no one else like him, and turn to him for salvation.



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GETTING STARTED

Share a time that you've been in need and the LORD has provided.

Throughout the Exodus story, the LORD has been making himself known as the one who heard the cries of his people in slavery, and the God who rescued them with power and glory with 10 plagues and a miraculous sea crossing. Now, Israel are in the desert on their way to the bountiful land that the LORD has promised.

READ EXODUS 15v22-27

1. What problem do the Israelites immediately face? How does the LORD provide for them?

2. How will the LORD test them?

3. Why do you think the LORD tests them? What is his purpose? Is he just being cruel?

READ EXODUS 16

4. What do the people grumble about next?

5. What is the test here?

6. What does this story show about the LORD?

7. Do the people pass or fail?

READ EXODUS 17v1-7

8. Who is being tested now?

9. What are the people testing God on? Is this a good or bad idea? Why?

growing disciples

At **rockypc** we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE All throughout the Bible, from Adam and Eve, to Abraham, to numerous generations of Israelites, everyone fails the test of loyalty to the LORD. Who is the only one who passes the test? (see Luke 4v1-13)

ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION

DENY YOURSELF How does Jesus' demonstration of loyalty to the LORD (all the way to the cross) help failures like us? (see Hebrews 4v14-16)

SEEK GOD

CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE What is the LORD like? Can we trust him to provide? Can we trust that his commands are good to us? How can tests from God give us an opportunity to grow in trust and obedience? (see 1 Peter 1v6-9)

HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT JESUS

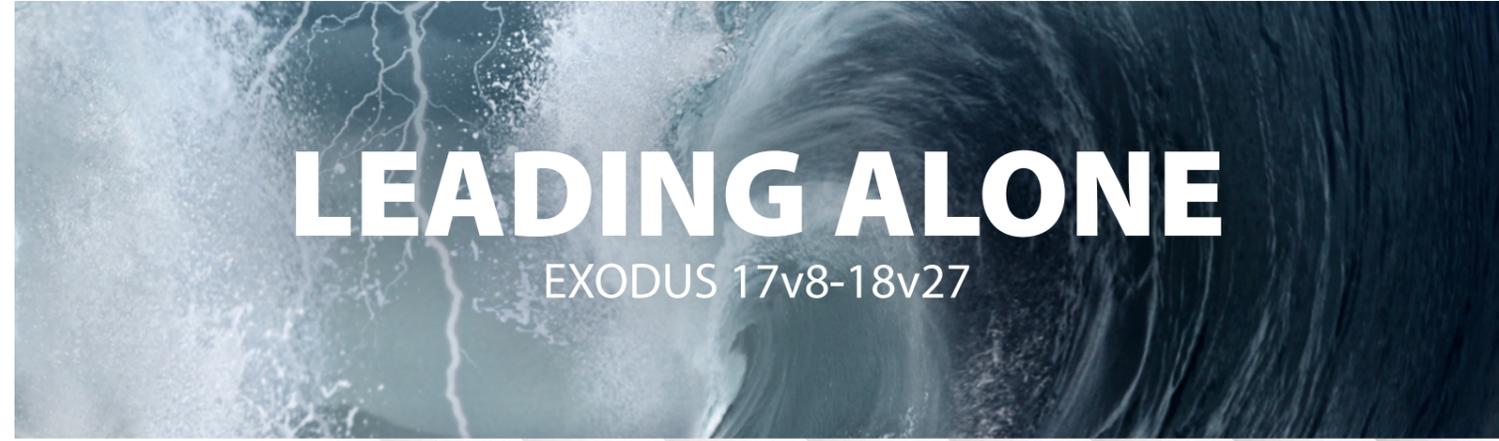
SPEAK When you speak to the LORD, does he hear you grumbling? Do you grumble to others instead? How can we learn from Israel's example? (1 Corinthians 10v1-13)

TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE

TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Confess your grumbling and quarreling with the LORD now. Ask his help to learn from Israel's example, to stand firm and endure.
- Praise him for Jesus, who passed the test, even though we fail to trust and obey. Thank him that we can come to him for grace and mercy in our time of need.
- Thank the LORD for his generous provision for us in so many ways. Ask his help to see how he is always good to us, even in testing and trials that refine and prove our faith.



LEADING ALONE

EXODUS 17v8-18v27

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GETTING STARTED

What's the best advice you've ever been given?

Israel have been delivered from slavery in Egypt by the LORD. They find themselves in the wilderness, having to trust him for food and water. They ask 'Is the LORD among us or not?' (17v7)

READ EXODUS 17v8-16

1. Who are the Amalekites? (see Genesis 36v12)

READ GENESIS 12v1-3

2. Why does God deal with Amalek so severely?

3. What does the staff of God represent? (see 4v14-17; 7v8-13,19; 8v5,16; 9v23; 10v13; 14v15-16; 17v5-6)

4. How does the LORD rescue Israel despite the Moses' weakness?

READ EXODUS 18v1-12

5. How many times is the LORD's rescuing action mentioned here? Why do you think there's so much repetition?

6. What does Jethro conclude from this wondrous story?

7. Who are the Midianites? (see Genesis 25v1-4)

8. Why is there a different outcome for this foreign priest in his dealings with Israel, compared with the outcome for Amalek? (cf Gen 12v1-3 again)

READ EXODUS 18v13-27

9. What is Moses' weakness here?

10. What advice does Jethro give Moses?

11. We shouldn't read this passage as leadership advice, because we're always looking for how an Old Testament passage points us to Jesus. Instead we want to pay close attention to Moses' role and see how Jesus is the leader and representative God's people really need. Compare Moses' role with Jesus' in Hebrews 7v26-28.

growing disciples

At **rockypc** we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE What does it mean to have Jesus interceding for you? How does he teach you God's ways? How does he judge justly?
ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION
DENY YOURSELF Do you ever worry that your problems are too big for Jesus? How can you remember that he can carry our load? (Matthew 11v28-30; 27v50-54)
SEEK GOD
CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE If we just read the story of the Amalekites, we might think that God hates non-Jewish people. How does combining it with the story of Jethro (and the promises to Abraham) show God's purposes? (Ephesians 2v11-21)
HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR
SERVE GOD
SERVE OTHERS
SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK How will you praise the LORD who is greater than all other gods, the one who rescues, the one who leads us?
TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE
TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise the LORD that he is greater than all other gods, the one who rescues, the one who leads us.
- Praise him for Jesus who is not a weak saviour. He saves us completely, always living to intercede for us. He is holy, pure and blameless. Thank God that he is strong enough to bear our burdens and that his arms remained outstretched on the cross as the king, the Son of God.
- Thank God for including us in his plan to save. That through Jesus, the whole world can be blessed.

WHO IS THE LORD?

EXODUS 19-23

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GETTING STARTED

What is the most important rule at your house?

The LORD has kept his promise to Moses in rescuing Israel and bringing them to his mountain. Now he's going to outline their relationship with a covenant (a living, binding, relational agreement).

READ EXODUS 19v1-8

1. What has the LORD done and what will he do in this agreement?

2. What is Israel's part of the deal?

READ EXODUS 19v9-25

3. Israel scrub up on days 1-2 for the covenant ceremony, what happens on day 3?

READ EXODUS 20v1-17

4. In one sentence summarise how God wants Israel to treat him.

5. How is coveting the root problem behind commands 5-9? (cf Genesis 3v6)

READ EXODUS 20v18-21

6. God invited Israel to come close when the trumpets blasted in 19v13. Do they pass the test? Why/why not?

READ EXODUS 20v22-26

7. Who determines how the LORD should be worshiped?

8. Read the following groups of laws and summarise each section in 1 sentence.

READ EXODUS 23v20-33

9. How will the LORD ensure Israel reach their new homeland and bless them?

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE How does the Jewish law demonstrate the inability of humanity to faithfully obey God? (see Romans 3v10-20)
 ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION
 DENY YOURSELF
 SEEK GOD
 CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE How are we able to draw near to the LORD under a new covenant? (see Hebrews 10v14-17 and 12v18-29)
 HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR
 SERVE GOD Does the LORD still care about holiness in the new covenant? How can we demonstrate this?
 SERVE OTHERS
 SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK How can the new people of God be priests to the rest of the world? (see 1 Peter 2v9-12)
 TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE
 TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise the LORD for his holiness in desiring justice and truth. Praise him even more that he comes near to us to enter relationship with us. Thank him that Jesus' blood brings us to the heavenly city of the living God.
- Praise him for the new covenant we have in Jesus. That despite our unfaithfulness and rebellion towards him, and despite our mistreatment of each other, he forgives our sins and remembers them no more. Pray that he would write his law on our hearts so that we might obey him joyfully.
- Pray that we'd be priests to the world as God's new covenant people, who declare his praises for showing us his mercy. And ask that the purity of our lives would stand out so that others would glorify God.

FAQs about the 10 commandments

1. Why don't Christians keep the Jewish law?

See this article by Matt Smethurst about this question at the Gospel Coalition here:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-dont-christians-keep-jewish-law/>



2. Is 'taking the LORD's name in vain' just about swearing?

Listen to this podcast from the Bible Project, with scholar, Carmen Imes from March 19 2020:

<https://bibleproject.com/podcast/taking-gods-name-vain/>



3. Should Christians keep the Sabbath?

Check out this article by Scott Hubbard from Desiring God:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/should-christians-keep-the-sabbath>



4. Is God ok with the slave trade?

See this article by Andrew Judd at the Gospel Coalition Australia

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/bible-slavery/>



ACCORDING TO PLAN

EXODUS 24-31

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GETTING STARTED

Where is your ideal place to pitch a tent? Why do you love it?

Having rescued Israel and brought them to the mountain, God has entered into a covenant with Israel. They will obey him and he will make them a kingdom of priests, his holy nation.

READ EXODUS 24v9-18

1. What is the picture of God here?

2. Why is v11 surprising?

READ EXODUS 25v1-9

3. What do you notice about the sanctuary offerings?

The next few chapters detail the LORD's instructions about the tabernacle (or tent of meeting) that Israel are to make, so he can dwell with them. It is laid out in this structure:

Chapter 25 - Tabernacle furnishings

Chapter 26-27 - Tabernacle, curtain and more furnishings

Chapter 28 - Priests' clothing

Chapter 29 - Consecration of Priests and tent

Chapter 30 - Tabernacle furnishings

Chapter 31v1-11 - Skilled artists for tabernacle

Chapter 31v12-18 - Holy resting

We won't have time to read this whole section during Growth Group - but you can get a better sense of the detail and extravagance if you can read it all at home. During this study, we're going to see some of the purposes of different parts of the tabernacle and get the big picture of why this tent is necessary. Perhaps your group can break into smaller groups and report back about the different aspects of the tabernacle and its priests.



ARK OF THE COVENANT (25v10-22)

READ EXODUS 25v17-22

4. What is the purpose of the ark and the atonement cover?



TABLE (25v23-30)

READ EXODUS 25v28-29

5. What is the purpose of the table?



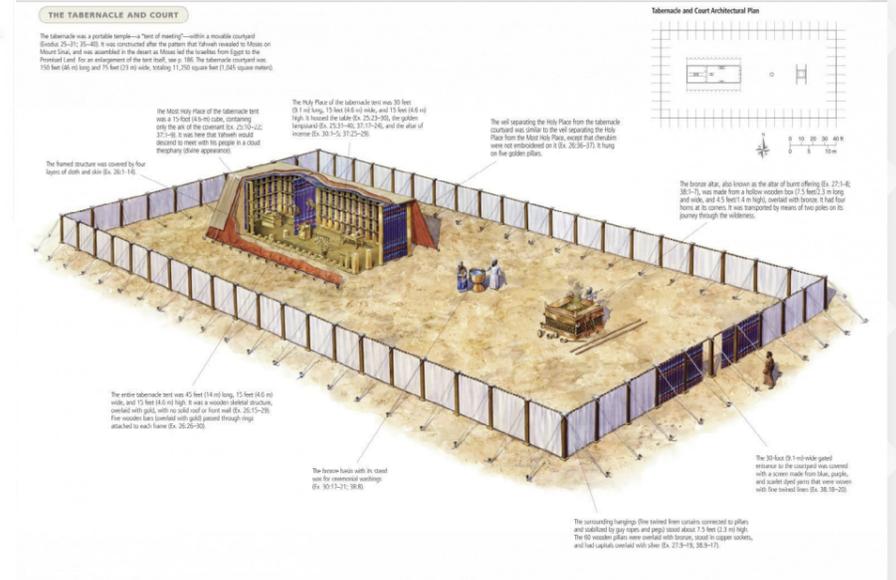
OIL (27v20-21)

READ EXODUS 28v1-5

7. What will the priests' clothes do for them?

ALTAR (27v1-8)

COURTYARD (27v9-19)



LAMPSTAND (25v31-40)



TABERNACLE (26v1-30)

THE TABERNACLE TENT

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15-29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26-30).

The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10-22; 37:1-9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1-14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23-30)

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

CURTAIN (26v31-37)

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31-33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1-5; 37:25-29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31-40; 37:17-24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36-37).

READ EXODUS 26v30-35

6. What is the purpose of the curtain?

TURBAN (28v36-41)

READ EXODUS 28v36-38

1. What is the purpose of the turban inscription?



EPHOD (28v6-14)

READ EXODUS 28v11-12

8. What is the purpose of the ephod?



BREASTPIECE (28v15-30)

ROBE (28v31-35)

UNDERGARMENTS (28v42-43)

CONSECRATION OF PRIESTS

- 1 BULL for a sin offering (29v10-14)
- 1 RAM for a food offering (29v15-18)
- 1 RAM for consecration of clothing and ordination and BREAD for a wave offering (29v19-34)

CONSECRATION OF TENT OF MEETING (29v35-41)

Daily sin offerings, food and drink offerings to make atonement for the altar and to please the LORD.

READ EXODUS 29v42-46

9. Why are all these elaborate rituals necessary? What do they signify?

ALTAR OF INCENSE (30v1-10)

ATONEMENT MONEY (30v11-16)
BASIN FOR WASHING (30v17-21)
ANOINTING OIL (30v22-33)
INCENSE (30v34-38)

SKILLED ARTISTS (31v1-11)

SABBATH (31v12-18)
READ EXODUS 31v12-13

10. What is the purpose of the Sabbath? (Think about the context of the tent of meeting too)?



NOT THE LORD

EXODUS 32

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE **READ HEBREWS 9v1-14; 23-24**

ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION Israel needed a tent built according to a specific pattern. What is the greater reality that this tent points to?

DENY YOURSELF What does Jesus' sacrifice mean for us?

SEEK GOD

CONFESS/REPENT

SERVE Do you picture the LORD as the glorious and dangerous consuming fire of Mount Sinai? How can we draw near to a God like that? (See Hebrews 10v19-22)

HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK What can you praise the LORD for as you reflect on the tabernacle of the Exodus and the God who draws near to dwell with us? (See John 1v14-18; 14v15-19; Revelation 21v1-4; 22-27)

TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE

TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise God that he draws near to us, wanting to dwell with us as he makes us his people. He isn't dangerous or distant. But the holy God who makes us holy.
- Thank him that Jesus brings us to the greater and more perfect tabernacle to cleanse us with his blood, to intercede for us and bring salvation when he returns.
- Praise God that he dwelt with us when Jesus walked on earth and he is with us by his Spirit. And one day we will live in his splendour as we see him face to face.

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

GETTING STARTED

What DIY project are you most proud of?

Israel have a special relationship with the LORD — he made promises to their forefathers to bring them to a wonderful new land, he rescued them from slavery, he provided for them in the desert and he gave them his commands as he made them his treasured, holy people with a covenant. But things sour before the honeymoon has even begun.

READ EXODUS 32v1-6

1. What's worrying the people?

2. What's Aaron's response?

3. What is perverse about the people's declaration in v4?

READ EXODUS 32v7-10

4. Which commands have Israel quickly broken? (See Exodus 20)

5. How does God describe the people?

6. How does he react to their unfaithfulness?

READ EXODUS 32v11-16

7. What reasons does Moses give for why the LORD should relent?

8. Does it surprise you that the LORD does seem to change his mind? Why/why not?

READ EXODUS 32v17-29

9. How does Moses react to what he hears and sees when he comes down the mountain?

10. What do you think of Aaron's defence? (cf Genesis 3v11-13)

11. How does Moses bring further judgment on the wild and idolatrous people?

12. Do you think the LORD's threatened judgment and Moses' actual judgment are fair and warranted? Tell the group your reasons for thinking this.

READ EXODUS 32v30-35

13. What is Moses' proposal to God to provide atonement for Israel's great sin?

14. How does God respond?

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

- SACRIFICE** Despite their special relationship with the LORD, Israel were stubborn and prone to idolatry. How is the whole of humanity facing God's wrath for the same kind of foolishness? (see Romans 1v18-23)
- ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION**
- DENY YOURSELF** How do you see this tendency at work in your own life?
- SEEK GOD**
- CONFESS/REPENT**

- SERVE** God refused to accept Moses as a substitute for the people of Israel. Instead he punishes them for their great sin. How can we escape God's wrath towards us? Is there any suitable substitute? (see Romans 3v21-26; 5v6-11)
- HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR**
- SERVE GOD**
- SERVE OTHERS** Are you ever tempted to atone for your own sin? How does this play out? How can you rely on God's character and promises in these moments?
- SHARE & EXALT JESUS**

- SPEAK** How can you talk to friends and family about their idolatry? Or the unpopular idea of God's anger and human sin? How can it lead to a conversation about the substitute we need?
- TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE**
- TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD**

PRAYER IDEAS

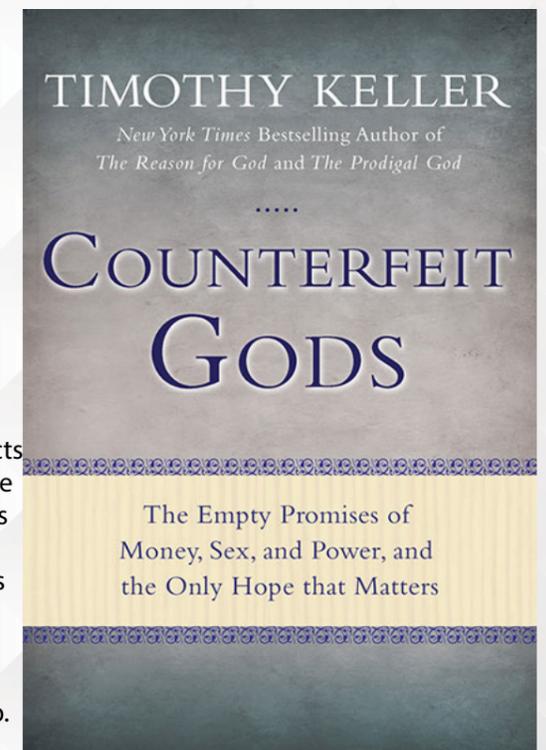
- Confess your tendency to idolatry that worships creation, not the Creator. Acknowledge that we all deserve the LORD's anger.
- Praise the LORD that he provided an acceptable substitute for us in the sacrifice of Christ which atones for our great sins. Thank him for the great demonstration of his love that means the unrighteous are justified. Praise God that we can trust his character and promises despite our failings and unfaithfulness.
- Pray for friends and family who need to hear of their standing before God and that they can be reconciled to him through Jesus.

If you want to think further about idolatry, grab a copy of *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex and Power and the Only Hope That Matters* by Tim Keller.

See an excerpt from the Introduction below as Keller explains the concept of idolatry (pages xi-xviii). Notice how it's relatable for someone who is not yet a Christian. Could it be helpful to you in your conversations with friends and family?

A Culture Filled with Idols

To contemporary people the word *idolatry* conjures up pictures of primitive people bowing down before statues. The biblical book of Acts in the New Testament contains vivid descriptions of the cultures of the ancient Graeco-Roman world. Each city worshiped its favourite deities and built shrines around their images for worship. When Paul went to Athens he saw that it was literally filled with images of these divinities (Acts 17:16). The Parthenon of Athena overshadowed everything, but other deities were represented in every public space. There was Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty; Ares, the god of war; Artemis, the goddess of fertility and wealth; Hephaestus, the god of craftsmanship. Our contemporary society is not fundamentally different from these ancient ones. Each culture is dominated by its own set of idols. Each has its "priesthoods," its totems and rituals. Each one has its shrines—whether office towers, spas and gyms, studios, or stadiums—where sacrifices must be made in order to procure the blessings of the good life and ward off disaster. What are the gods of beauty, power, money, and achievement but these same things that have assumed mythic proportions in our individual lives and in our society? We may not physically kneel before the statue of Aphrodite, but many young women today are driven into depression and eating disorders by an obsessive concern over their body image. We may not actually burn incense



to Artemis, but when money and career are raised to cosmic proportions, we perform a kind of child sacrifice, neglecting family and community to achieve a higher place in business and gain more wealth and prestige.

After New York's governor Eliot Spitzer destroyed his career because of his involvement in a high-priced prostitution ring, David Brooks noted how our culture has produced a class of high achievers with "rank-link imbalances." They have social skills for vertical relationships, for improving their rank with mentors and bosses, but none for genuine bonding in horizontal relationships with spouses, friends, and family. "Countless presidential candidates say they are running on behalf of their families, even though their entire lives have been spent on the campaign trail away from their families." As the years go by they come to the sickening realization that "their grandeur is not enough and that they are lonely."⁴ Many of their children and spouses are alienated from them. They seek to heal the hurt. They get into affairs or take other desperate measures to medicate the inner emptiness. Then comes family breakdown or scandal or both they had sacrificed everything to the god of success, but it wasn't enough. In ancient times, the deities were bloodthirsty and hard to appease. They still are.

Idols of the Heart

It would have been hard to make this case convincingly during the era of the dot-com boom and of the real estate and stock bubble of the last twenty years. However, the great economic meltdown of 2008–2009 has laid bare what is now being called "the culture of greed." Long ago, Saint Paul wrote that greed was not just bad behavior. "Greed is idolatry," he wrote. (Colossians 3:5) Money, he advised, can take on divine attributes, and our relationship to it then approximates worship and obeisance.

Money can become a spiritual addiction, and like all addictions it hides its true proportions from its victims. We take more and greater risks to get an ever diminishing satisfaction from the thing we crave, until a breakdown occurs. When we begin to recover, we ask, "What were we thinking? How could we have been so blind?" We wake up like people with a hangover who can hardly remember the night before. But why? Why did we act so irrationally? Why did we completely lose sight of what is right?

The Bible's answer is that the human heart is an "idol factory."⁵

When most people think of "idols" they have in mind literal statues—or the next pop star anointed by Simon Cowell. Yet while traditional idol worship still occurs in many places of the world, internal idol worship, within the heart, is universal. In Ezekiel 14:3, God says about elders of Israel, "These men have set up their idols in their hearts." Like us, the elders must have responded to this charge, "Idols? What idols? I don't see any idols." God was saying that the human heart takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things. Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives, because, we think, they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them.⁶

The central plot device of *The Lord of the Rings* is the dark Lord Sauron's Ring of Power, which corrupts anyone who tries to use it, however good his or her intentions. The Ring is what Professor Tom Shippey calls "a psychic amplifier," which takes the heart's fondest desires and magnifies them to idolatrous proportions.⁷ Some good characters in the book want to liberate slaves, or preserve their people's land, or visit wrongdoers with just punishment. These are all good objectives. But the Ring makes them willing to do *anything* to achieve them, anything at all. It turns the good thing into an absolute that overturns every other allegiance or value. The wearer of the Ring becomes increasingly enslaved and addicted to it, for an idol is something we cannot live without. We must have it, and therefore it drives us to break rules we once honored, to harm others and even ourselves in order to get it. Idols are spiritual addictions that lead to terrible evil, in Tolkien's novel and real life.

Anything Can Be an Idol

Cultural moments like the one we are in provide us with an opportunity. Many people are now more open to the Bible's warning that money can become much more than money. It can become a powerful life-altering, culture-shaping god, an idol that breaks the hearts of its worshipers. The bad news is that we are so fixated on the problem of greed, which we tend to see in "those rich people over there," that we don't realize the most fundamental truth. Anything can be an idol, and everything has been an idol.

The most famous moral code in the world is the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments. The very first commandment is "I am the Lord your God . . . you shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). That leads to the natural question—"What do you mean, 'other gods'?" An answer comes immediately. "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them. . . ." (Exodus 20:4–5) That includes everything in the world! Most people know you can make a god out of money. Most know you can make god out of sex. However, *anything* in life can serve as an idol, a God-alternative, a counterfeit god.

I recently heard the account of a field army officer who so exorbitantly pursued physical and military discipline with his troops that he broke their morale. That led to a communication breakdown during combat that resulted in fatalities. I knew a woman who had experienced periods of poverty as she grew up. As an adult she was so eager

for financial security that she passed over many good prospective relationships in order to marry a wealthy man she did not really love. This led to an early divorce and to all the economic struggles she feared so much. It appears that some major league baseball players, in a quest to play not just well but at a Hall of Fame level, took steroids and other drugs. As a result, their bodies are more broken and their reputations more sullied than if they had been willing to be good rather than great. The very things upon which these people were building all their happiness turned to dust in their hands *because* they had built all their happiness upon them. In each case, a good thing among many was turned into a supreme thing, so that its demands overrode all competing values.⁸ But counterfeit gods always disappoint, and often destructively so.

Is it wrong to want disciplined troops, or financial security, or athletic prowess? Not at all. But these stories point to a common mistake people make when they hear about the biblical concept of idolatry. We think that idols are bad things, but that is almost never the case. The greater the good, the more likely we are to expect that it can satisfy our deepest needs and hopes. Anything can serve as a counterfeit god, especially the very best things in life.

How to Make a God

What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.⁹

A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living. An idol has such a controlling position in your heart that you can spend most of your passion and energy, your emotional and financial resources, on it without a second thought. It can be family and children, or career and making money, or achievement and critical acclaim, or saving "face" and social standing. It can be a romantic relationship, peer approval, competence and skill, secure and comfortable circumstances, your beauty or your brains, a great political or social cause, your morality and virtue, or even success in the Christian ministry. When your meaning in life is to fix someone else's life, we may call it "co-dependency" but it is really idolatry. An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, "If I have that, then I'll feel my life has meaning, then I'll know I have value, then I'll feel significant and secure." There are many ways to describe that kind of relationship to something, but perhaps the best one is *worship*.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

EXODUS 33-34

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

IN THE SPACES BELOW YOU CAN RECORD YOUR ANSWERS. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

GETTING STARTED

What makes face to face conversations different from other types eg phone, Zoom, text, email etc? How do you decide when a face to face is needed?

READ EXODUS 33v1-6

1. What is the plot tension here? Why might the LORD destroy the people of Israel? (see Ch 32)

READ EXODUS 33v7-11

2. How do the people react to Moses' intimate relationship with the LORD? What's your reaction?

READ EXODUS 33v12-17

3. What reasons does Moses give for why the LORD's Presence needs to go with Israel?

READ EXODUS 33v18-23

4. How will the LORD deepen the intimacy of his relationship with Moses?

READ EXODUS 34v1-9

Verses 6-7 is the most quoted passage within the Old Testament. At least 27 times other Old Testament authors reference this proclamation of God's character. It is often to ask God's forgiveness in line with his character eg Numbers 14v17-19; or in praise to him eg Psalm 103. We have already heard echoes of these words several times in Exodus too (eg 20v4-6; 22v26-27; 23v7; 33v19)

5. How does God's character mirror the tension in the story of Israel?

READ EXODUS 34v10-28

6. The LORD listens to Moses, and in his forgiving nature, he decides to renew the covenant with Israel. What is the focus of these laws? Why do you think the LORD reiterates these? (cf Exodus 20v1-8; 23v10-33)

READ EXODUS 34v29-35

7. How do the Israelites know that Moses has been in God's presence?

growing disciples

At **rockypc** we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

SACRIFICE	Exodus 34 raises a question for us of how the LORD can forgive sin and yet doesn't leave the guilty unpunished. But we know the end of the story! How does Jesus bring the answer we need? (1 John 4v9-21)
ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION	
DENY YOURSELF	How does Jesus give us confidence on the day of judgment, despite our great sin?
SEEK GOD	
CONFESS/REPENT	

SERVE	Moses had a beautiful intimacy with the LORD, chatting with him as to a friend. Do you wish for that kind of closeness? What kind of relationship can we have with him? (John 14v6-21)
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HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR

SERVE GOD

SERVE OTHERS

SHARE & EXALT JESUS

SPEAK	Moses radiated God's glory after speaking with him. What makes our day even more glorious? (2 Corinthians 3v7-18)
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TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE

TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD

How will you praise and glorify the faithful, loving, merciful, forgiving, just God this week?

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise the LORD that he is the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Thank him that his character never changes.
- Praise him for his justice which meets his mercy at the cross. Thank him that Jesus bore our punishment so we might be forgiven. Praise God for his love that overflows to us.
- Praise the LORD that we can see him through Jesus, that we are united to him and receive his Spirit. Pray that we'd know how close he draws us.
- Pray that we'd reflect his glory, beauty and majesty as we are transformed into his image.

A GOOD START, BUT...

EXODUS 35-40

IN THE SPACE BELOW YOU CAN TAKE NOTES FROM THE BIBLE TALK. (IF YOU'RE USING THIS ON A DEVICE YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLICK AND START TYPING.)

Something I Never Knew:

Something I Was Reminded About:

A Question I Still Have:

Something I Was Challenged To Think Differently About / Do Differently:

Something I Can Share:

A Key Verse:

My prayer in response to God's word:

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GETTING STARTED

Are you a details or big picture person? How do you react when the details don't go to plan?

The LORD rescued Israel from Egypt and made them his people by establishing a covenant - if they would obey him, he would bless them. So he gave them a plan for a tent where he would set up his home with the people. But Israel fail in the obedience test immediately - crediting a golden calf with their redemption. Because of his forgiving nature, the gracious, compassionate God resolves to continue on with his people to the promised land. But first, the people need to construct the tabernacle and priestly garments that God commanded in Ch 25-31.

READ EXODUS 35v20-29; 36v2-7

1. How does Israel's offerings differ from 32v1-6?

Chapters 36-38 detail the making of the tabernacle and its furniture by skilled workers. Three times we are told that they did this work as the LORD had commanded them through Moses. Israel are passing the obedience test!

This emphasis continues with the priestly garments in Chapter 39. For each part of the outfit, we are told that it was made as the LORD commanded. This happens 6 times - for the sacred garments, ephod, breastpiece, robe, turban and underwear, sacred emblem. The 7th repetition comes in 39v42 as the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting is completed and 2 further repetitions come with a blessing (v42-43). Notice 6 moments of God's command being obeyed, followed by a moment of completion and blessing.

READ EXODUS 40v1-33

2. v1-16 detail how Israel are to arrange all of the tabernacle furnishings and dress and anoint the priests. v17-33 detail Moses carried out these commands. In this latter section, how many times did Moses work to carry out the LORD's commands? What happened last in v33?

READ GENESIS 1v1-2v3

3. What similarities do you see here between the setting up of the tent of meeting with the first pages of the Bible?

4. What is the significance of these similarities? What does it mean for the priests? The tent? The people of Israel?

READ EXODUS 40v34-38

5. What good thing happens after the tabernacle is complete?

6. What is not good? Why?

READ HOSEA 4v1-13

7. As Israel's story continues, the LORD does bring them to the promised land and they settle there. But generations later, after persistent sinfulness, the LORD brings a charge against them. What has happened to Israel's willing hearts, obedient priests and special tent/temple for sacrifices?

Israel's disobedience finally leads the LORD to evict them from his presence. His glory departs the temple (Ezekiel 10). Israel are left asking whether the LORD will return to restore his blessing on his creation (Malachi 4v5-6).

growing disciples

At rockypc we want to be growing disciples **who sacrifice, serve and speak for the sake of others**, so we want to consider how this part of God's word helps us grow.

- SACRIFICE** Even Moses couldn't approach the LORD's holy presence by the end of Exodus. Is that your experience? Is Jesus approachable? How? By whom? (see Luke 7v36-50)
- ATTITUDE BEFORE ACTION**
- DENY YOURSELF** How is God making a new people to dwell with? (see 1 Peter 2v4-10)
- SEEK GOD**
- CONFESS/REPENT**

- SERVE** Do you struggle to obey God willingly and wholeheartedly? How does remembering the new creation that we're part of help re-orient us? (see Colossians 3v1-17)
- HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR**
- SERVE GOD**
- SERVE OTHERS**
- SHARE & EXALT JESUS**

- SPEAK** As you think over what we've learned from the book of Exodus, what is one thing you want to share with a friend? What's one thing you want to say to the LORD?
- TO GOD ABOUT PEOPLE**
- TO PEOPLE ABOUT GOD**

PRAYER IDEAS

- Praise the LORD that he wants to dwell with us. That despite our numerous sins and failures, he determined to make a way. Praise him for the forgiveness and reconciliation we have through Jesus. That Jesus welcomes sinners and outcasts to approach him.
- Thank God that he has made us to be his new people, built together on the cornerstone of Jesus. Pray that we'd declare his praises and his mercies to the world.
- Ask forgiveness for the times that we've disobeyed or obeyed begrudgingly. Pray for willing hearts that are transformed as new creations, for Jesus' glory.