

# EXODUS

*MEET YOUR REDEEMER*

# INTRODUCTION

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Exodus tells the most important story in the world. God's people oppressed by a dominating tyrant, then gloriously redeemed from death by taking shelter under the blood of a lamb, brought out of the house of slavery by the LORD's mighty hand and outstretched arm, led and fed through the wilderness, with the precious gift of his law to obey and his glorious presence with them to enjoy. This is the Bible's message of salvation in a nutshell. What a story -- and we discover in Christ it's our story too!

## **A CONTINUING STORY...**

Within the narrative of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), Exodus continues where Genesis ended. We track the ongoing story of Jacob's descendents, still in Egypt. In one sense, God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) is being partially fulfilled -- as we see his offspring multiply greatly. But there is also an aching sense of unfulfilment -- as Jacob's descendants are far from the land God promised, not blessed but enslaved. Zooming out we also see the two-fold consequence of life 'east of Eden' after Genesis 3: a growing ignorance of God and alienation from his presence.

## **STRUCTURE**

Wonderfully, the story of Exodus shows how God provides a provisional solution to both aspects of this problem .

- Ch 1-15: revealing the **KNOWLEDGE of the LORD** through the dramatic plague-signs, Passover and escape from Pharaoh's clutches >> **He is the redeeming LORD who judges evil and rescues his people.**

- Ch 16-40: enjoying the **PRESENCE of the LORD** through the giving of the covenant law and building of the tabernacle >> **He is the covenant LORD who delights to dwell among his people.**

## **KEY THEMES**

Within this story arc we see a portrait of human stubbornness and hostility towards God and his people, yet we see up close the **mighty**

**acts** of the LORD in **judgment and redemption**. We are left in no doubt that **the LORD alone is God -- Creator of heaven and earth** (controlling frogs, gnats and rivers) and also **King over all the gods** (the gods and magicians of Egypt are no match for him). And crucially -- we see fleshed out that the purpose of **“let my people go!”** was always so **“that they may worship me”**. Far from being dull or pointless, the giving of the law and building of the tabernacle give us a window into what life with God is supposed to look like -- the **obedience of faith** and the **enjoyment of his dwelling presence**. Life as it was meant to be. In fact, as Exodus closes with the **glory of the LORD** descending to dwell among his people again it is a fitting bookend to the story of Genesis-Exodus so far, though Moses is unable to enter. We long for something better, which will ultimately only come at the very end of the Bible’s story...

### **FULFILLED IN CHRIST**

As we read the details of this remarkable book we will find it clearly points to a **greater fulfilment** to come. We find **One greater than Moses** who will bring the **ultimate Exodus** through his own **shed blood** and exit not just from Egypt but **from death** itself. He is the true and **greater tabernacle**, the meeting place between God and humanity, the One who **reveals the name and glory of God** and enables us to **enjoy his presence forever**. We find, as with the whole Old Testament, ‘every story whispers his name’!

### **FOR GOD’S PEOPLE TODAY**

Far from being just ancient history, we know these things were written as warnings and instructions for us (1 Cor 10) -- so we will keep asking not only **how is this fulfilled in Christ?**, but what does this mean **for God’s people today?**

So as we study these passages together: *Let us pray earnestly that the same Christ would feed and lead us today as we journey on by faith and obedience through the wilderness of this life towards the land God has promised. May we too grow in our knowledge of the LORD our redeemer and in our enjoyment of his glorious presence, leaving behind the idols and slavery of sin and death.*



## 1 | EXODUS 1-2

EGYPT: The LORD's people enslaved

### EXODUS 1-2:21

**1. 1:1-8 What clues do you notice in the opening verses that this is a sequel to Genesis?**

*(What details or phrases assume a prior knowledge of the back story?)*

**2. 1:9-22 How does life get harder for God's people?**

*(What do you notice about the hostility they face? How do you think they might have felt?)*

**3. What is the evidence that God is still looking after his people?**

*(How does the narrative highlight God's faithfulness to past promises? You may wish to have a quick look at Genesis 12:1-7)*

**4. Does God's faithfulness make his people's lives easier or harder in the short term?**

*(What details in the text connect what happened to God's people with God's blessing?)*

**5. 2:1-22 How does this section demonstrate the LORD's protection and provision**

- of **Moses**?
- of **others through Moses**?
- anticipating any **future elements of the Exodus story**?

**6. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(Can you think of ways Jesus's life parallels Moses's? How is Jesus the ultimate rescuer who faces the ultimate hostility of God's enemies?)*

**7. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(How does this passage train us to expect opposition as God's people? What might it look like for us to fear God more than 'Pharaoh'? How can we rejoice in (and not reject) the One greater than Moses?)*





## 2 | EXODUS 3-4

### MOSES: The LORD's mediator called

#### EXODUS 2:23-3:22

**1. 2:23-25 How do these verses offer hope for God's enslaved people?**

*(What do you notice about how the different characters are described? How might this challenge what people might have felt at the time?)*

**2. 3:1-6 Given how chapter 2 ends, why is it surprising that the scene shifts far away to a man looking after sheep in the wilderness? What clues are there that this is a very important moment?**

*(What might this suggest about the significance of Moses within God's concern for his people?)*

**3. 3:7-10 How will Moses be involved in God's plan?**

*(What does the text say the Lord has done/will do? What does it say Moses will do? How are the two related?)*

**4. 3:11-15 What do you think is the significance of the LORD revealing his name through Moses?**

*(Is v13 surprising? For a sense of the importance of this theme, see 5:2, 6:6-8, 7:5, 15:1-6, 11)*

**5. 3:16-21 How do these verses show us the LORD's total understanding and control over what will happen next?**

*(What specific promises do we see that are fulfilled by the end of the story? See also 4:21-23. Why might this be important to know when the Israelites encounter set-backs?)*

**6. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(How does the NT show us Jesus as the perfect mediating rescuer? In what ways does Jesus reveal the name of the LORD? See e.g. John 1:14-18)*

**7. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(What would it look like today to have a right reverence for the LORD whose name we now know in Christ? How practically might such reverence play out in our group life? In what situations do we need to be reminded that our LORD will rescue us completely and not leave us 'empty-handed' in the end? How might we respond differently to set-backs in the details of our lives? Can you think of any current examples?)*

**Before next time:**  
Read Exodus 5-10,  
if you have time.





## 3 | EXODUS 5-10

*SIGNS: The LORD's supremacy displayed*

**EXODUS 5:1-6:8, 7:1-13, 8:16-24**

**1. 5:1-3 Why does Pharaoh refuse Moses' request in v2?**

*(Consider how this will change by chapter 12/15!)*

**2. 5:4-21 What are the consequences of Pharaoh's opposition?**

*(How do v8-9 echo the word of the Serpent in Genesis 3?)*

**3. 5:22-6:8 How does this section show us God's overall purpose in Pharaoh's hard-heartedness?**

*(How does the LORD respond to Moses in v1? What is the significance of 'the LORD's name' in v2-5 and then v6-8? How does this teach us to understand God's coming redemption and judgment?)*

**4. 7:1-13 In what ways does this passage show us again the sovereign LORD's power?**

*(Do you notice any familiar words and phrases in this section? What does the repetition from previous sections show us about God's control over what's going on?)*

**5. 8:16-24 Why do you think it is important to know in v18 that the Egyptian magicians could not perform this plague, unlike the previous ones?**

*(What does this new plague show us about the LORD compared to the so-called gods of Egypt?)*

**6. Skim ahead to 10:27-29, what do you think we are supposed to learn from Pharaoh's response after all these plagues?**

*(Is he responsible for his stubbornness? Is the LORD sovereign? Are the plagues 'fair'?)*

**7. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(How does Jesus reveal the LORD's power over creation and all other gods? How do the plagues foreshadow an even greater judgment to come against human hard-heartedness?)*

**8. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(How can we take comfort that our God is sovereign over nature and all idols? In what particular situations of human stubbornness and evil do we need to be reminded of the one who says "I am the LORD"? Does the example of Pharaoh help us?)*





## 4 | EXODUS 11-12

### PASSOVER: *the LORD's redemption achieved*

#### EXODUS 11:1-12:51

1. 10:27-11:10 What clues suggest that we are heading for a climax in the battle between the LORD and Pharaoh? Can you think of any details that were predicted earlier in the story?

2. Why is it significant that the LORD tells Pharaoh in advance all that will happen?

3. 12:1-11 What do you notice about the details given for the Passover meal?

*(Why so precise about the choice of animal? Why is it important to apply the blood to the doorposts? What do you make of the instructions in v11?)*

4. 12:12-13 What is the point of the Passover?

*(What will the LORD do and why? What will this demonstrate?)*

5. Skim 12:14-20 and v24-28 **What will be the ongoing significance of Passover for God's people in the future?**

*(In what ways can we see this is really important?)*

**6. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(What are the key parallels with the Passover lamb? The blood on the doorposts? The call to commemorate?)*

**7. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(What does it look like in practice for us to take refuge under the blood of Jesus? How can we commemorate his death in our lives? Can you think of any ways our group life might change if we took this to heart?)*





## 5 | EXODUS 13-18

*WILDERNESS: the LORD's people  
rescued & tested*

### EXODUS 14:1-15:27

**1. 14:1-15** How will this dramatic story bring glory to the LORD and reveal who he is to Egypt?

*(Why do you think God's people are afraid in v5-12? How does Moses's words in v13-14 offer a different perspective on power?)*

**2. 14:16-30** How do we see v18 come true in the rest of the chapter? Why might this be important given the story so far?

**3. 14:31** What do you think is the significance of Israel's response?

*(How does this vindicate God's purpose in the Exodus so far? How is this reinforced in the song of 15:1-21? How would you summarise the song's key message?)*

**4. 15:22-27 Given what has just happened, what do you make of the people's behaviour in v24?**

*(What do you think would have been the appropriate way to respond to this trial in light of 14:31? See 16:2-3, 17:2-3 to see how this pattern repeats)*

**5. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(See Col 1:13-14 How does Christ's death and resurrection bring the ultimate 'crossing over'?)*

**6. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(What does 14:31 look like in practice for us today? Moses and the people paused on their journey to praise God. What will help us to regularly pause to remember our salvation and praise God for it? In what ways are we tempted to grumble against the LORD? See 1 Cor 10:1-6 to see the warning for us. How can we help one another resist this temptation?)*





## 6 | EXODUS 19-24

*SINAI: the LORD's covenant established*

### EXODUS 19:1-25

**1. 19:1-6 How does this section help us understand the relationship between the LORD and his people?**

*(How does this give us the right perspective on the Exodus from Egypt? How might you feel as one of God's people hearing these words?)*

**2. What do you make of this connection between the identity of God's people and their expected obedience?**

*(How is this different from legalism [that seeks to earn God's favour] or antinomianism [that says there's no need to obey]?)*

**3. 19:7-25 What are the clues that what is happening is of utmost importance?**

*(If this were a movie scene how would you convey the drama? How do you think the Israelites would have felt as this was taking place?)*

**4. How are we shown that Moses is the unique mediator between God and the people? What do you think this is designed to teach God's people?**

*(Look at where Moses is/goes at various points. See v3, 7, 9, 14, 19-21, 24, 25. Why might it be significant that Moses keeps going up and down the mountain?)*

**5. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(See 1 Tim 2:5. How does Exodus 19 help us understand the wonder of Christ's office as mediator?)*

**6. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(Read Hebrews 12:18-29 How does this train us to respond to the teachings and warnings of Jesus? How might this challenge our approach to obedience in the Christian life? What would you say to someone who says 'As Christians we're saved by grace so we don't need to follow God's instructions'?)*





## 7 | EXODUS 25-31

**TABERNACLE:** *the LORD's dwelling prepared*

### EXODUS 25-26

1. **Do you know anyone who has done building or renovation work on their home? Why do they usually care about the details and want to talk about them?**

2. **Be honest: how do we feel when we come across the detailed instructions for the tabernacle which take up most of Exodus 25-40?**

3. **25:1-8 Ch. 24 contains a covenant confirmation ceremony followed by the remarkable appearing of the glory of God up on the mountain with Moses. Why do you think it is so special that the LORD now seeks to dwell among his people?**

*(How can we see that this tabernacle really matters? Do you think the people would have felt excited or scared that the LORD was now going to dwell among them?)*

**4. (In pairs) Look at the instructions for any of the following:**

- a. sanctuary (25:1-9)
- b. ark (25:10-22)
- c. table & lampstand (25:23-40)
- d. tent of meeting (26)

**In each case what does this reveal about**

- God?
- what it looks like for God to dwell among his people?
- the future ministry of Christ?

**5. Overall, how does the building of the tabernacle point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(What is the significance of John 1:14 introducing us to Jesus? How does John 2:19-22 help us understand the dwelling place of God? How do the individual details of this section point to the Christ who has now come?)*

**6. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(Think back over the past week. Was there a time when you were/weren't conscious that the living God dwells with you because of Jesus? In what concrete situations do we struggle to appreciate the majesty of God's presence? What practical difference could it make to know we have access to God in Christ wherever we are (not just in a particular building)? In reality, how do we feel about the prospect of a new creation enjoying God's presence forever? How can this passage excite and inspire us?)*





## 8 | EXODUS 32-34

*GRACE: the people's idolatry overcome*

### EXODUS 32:1-34:7

1. **31:18** After God's wonderful instructions to dwell among his people in chapters 25-31, what do you think we might hope for when we read this verse?

2. **32:1-6** What exactly do the people do? Why is this so shocking? (What are they implying about God and Moses in v1? Why might it be especially shocking to turn the gold into an idol and speak as they do in v4 and 5?)

3. **32:7-14** How does the LORD respond to his people's idolatry? On what basis does Moses appeal to the LORD for mercy?

4. Skip ahead to **33:12-17** Why do you think Moses is so insistent that the LORD's Presence should go with the people? (See the contrast of 33:3. What is Moses's reason for asking? How does this fit with the purpose of Exodus so far, e.g. 19:6?)

**5. 33:18-34:7 How do we see the graciousness of God demonstrated in these verses? Why is this especially comforting in light of the people's shocking idolatry?**

**6. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(John 1:14 How does Jesus reveal the LORD of Exodus 34:6? In what way does the cross resolve the 'tension' of God's mercy and justice expressed in Exodus 34:7? On what basis can we be confident of the LORD's gracious presence with us despite our failings?)*

**7. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(In light of the golden calf, how should we think about our own 'idols'? In what ways are we tempted to glorify other things instead of the god who has actually save us? How can we help one another see how offensive and horrible idolatry is? How could our group life look different if we took to heart the awfulness of idolatry but also the overwhelming grace of the LORD? Can you think of a practical thing we can do or pray differently?)*





## 9 | EXODUS 35-40

**COMPLETED:** *the LORD's glory fills the tabernacle*

### EXODUS 39:42-40:38

In chapters 35-39 we get many of the detailed instructions for the tabernacle repeated as it is now constructed.

**1. 39:42-43 Given what this building project signified how do you think God's people must have felt when they got to this point?**

*(Compared with the situation at 33:4-6 what does this show us about God's grace?)*

**2. Skim 40:1-33 Why is it so encouraging to see all the elements finally in place and put to use?**

*(Can you remember the significance of the various items? What does this now mean for God's people?)*

**3. 40:34 How would you describe the significance of what happened here?**

*(Compared to how God's glory was manifest at Sinai in ch. 19-24 how is this a huge step forward for God's people enjoying his presence? Does it feel like a return from the exile of Genesis 3?)*

**4. 40:35 How should we feel about Moses not being able to enter? Is this a surprise?**

**5. 40:36-38 Compared to the start of Exodus what has now changed for God's people?**

**6. How does this passage point to a greater fulfilment in Christ?**

*(In John 1:14 how do we see the tabernacle fulfilled in Christ? How does Christ provide better access to God's presence than Moses could achieve?)*

**7. In what ways does this section shape the way we live as God's people today?**

*(Imagine the wonder for God's people after all they'd been through as his glory filled the tabernacle. In day to day life, how much do we celebrate God's glorious presence with us in Christ by the Spirit? Can you think of a concrete situation in your life that you can approach differently because the LORD is with you and leading you? How practically can we help each other look forward to fully and finally enjoying God's presence in the new creation? Is there one thing we could seek to do differently or more regularly as a group in light of this passage?)*



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**EXODUS TAKE-AWAYS: What key things has the LORD been showing you from his word in this series?**

## NOTES 1 | EXODUS 1-2 EGYPT: the LORD's people enslaved

**Despite deadly opposition, the LORD sovereignly multiplies and protects his chosen people as promised.**

### THEMES:

The **implacable hostility** of evil towards God's chosen people

The **constant faithfulness** of God even in trials

The **strange providence** of God to rescue

1. We see names (Jacob/Israel interchanged, 11 sons), place (Egypt), Joseph's backstory assumed (1:5.;8). The promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-7, many offspring) show God keeping his word even after the Patriarchs died BUT Israel not yet in the promised land, rather in Egypt (1:1,5,8).

2. New king 'to whom Joseph meant nothing' -- views their fruitfulness as a threat. See harsh language in 1:11-14: oppress, dread, ruthless, bitter. Horrible & terrifying (death threats).

3. God blesses them so they multiply despite oppression (1:12), midwives spare the baby boys (1:17), God is kind to them (1:20-21).

4. Israel's blessing makes the Egyptians dread them more and treat them worse (1:12-14). God blesses the midwives who fear him but then Pharaoh escalates his violence (1:22). God is blessing them & they are suffering more at the same time (paradox/mystery of God's providence for his people in a hostile world - waiting for final and ultimate deliverance from evil).

5. **Moses:** miraculously delivered from death as baby, raised in the palace by his own mother - God's providence over smallest details of who turns up to bathe when! Later escapes Pharaoh's attempts (2:14) **Through Moses:** the man being beaten by the Egyptian is rescued (2:11-12), Reuel's daughters and their flocks.

**Anticipating future events:** 2:10 Moses name anticipates the journey of the nation. 2:12 He will deliver many more Hebrews from Egyptian tyranny. 2:14 God will appoint him judge and ruler over them (though they will consistently grumble against him). 2:19 He will rescue and protect God's flock too. 2:22 He will wander round 'as a foreigner' for 40 years and die in the wilderness!

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

- Christ is the ultimate seed of the woman (Gen 3) against whom the seed of the Serpent's implacable hostility comes to a climax.
- He is the true Israel, who brings the multiplying blessing promised to Abraham (Gen 12).
- His cross ultimately demonstrates God's faithfulness in trials and strange providence to rescue his people through the mediator he has appointed.
- He is One greater than Moses: an evil king tries to kill him too as a baby, he also is rescued through Egypt, a foreigner in a foreign land, his own enslaved people reject him as their ruler, yet he will rescue and provide living water for his flock.

### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

- >> **Expect opposition:** the world will hate you!
- >> **Fear God** more than Pharaoh
- >> Rejoice in the **One greater than Moses**

## 2 | EXODUS 3-4 MOSES: the LORD's mediator called

**The LORD calls Moses to rescue his people by revealing his name & power through him.**

THEMES:

**Moses' call** and commission as mediator

**The LORD's name** revealed

**Rescue promised** (& demonstrated through powerful signs)

1. The king of Egypt died. God (who is still alive!) heard their cry, remembered his covenant and 'was concerned' about them. Great news! NB it flips the script of the assumed power dynamic: the Egyptian king must have seemed omnipotent, Israel invisible & God seemingly deaf. In reality, the king is dead, no-one even remembers his name. The LORD is alive, and soon everyone will know his name as the one who redeems his enslaved people.

2. On the one hand it feels odd for the camera to pan far away from Egypt (from where God's people need to be rescued), to someone tending sheep who has fled from Egypt himself! An unlikely rescuer, perhaps. Yet the presence of the angel, burning bush, need to remove shoes etc shows this is a big deal. The scene change to Moses implies he will somehow be the way God demonstrates his concern to his groaning enslaved people.

3. The Lord has seen, heard, come down to rescue his people and bring them out to a good land. (3:7-9). Their cry has reached him (3:9). How will he perform the rescue? By sending Moses to bring the people out (3:10). Moses will do what God is committing himself to do. He will perform the very deeds of God!

4. The revelation of God's name is central to the whole story: the key question that Exodus will answer is "who is the LORD?" Pharaoh asks it dismissively in 5:2 and the other references show how central this is. Moses, as so often, experiences in advance what the rest of the people will come to know through him. V13 is surprising since if he is the God of their fathers, why do they not know who he is? This shows the general rising ignorance of God as a consequence of the Fall and part of the downward spiral in Genesis.

5. God is in control of everything: where he will go, how the elders will respond, what the king will do, how and when he will finally let Israel God, and even do so plundering the wealth of Egypt. Every last detail will come true. (A reminder, however things appear on the surface of the story: don't doubt who's really in control)

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

- Jesus is the **ultimate mediator** called and commissioned to rescue's God's people
- In Christ we see **God's name fully revealed** (John 1:14, 18) (& power demonstrated through even greater signs)

### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

- >> **Reverence for the name of the LORD** (revealed at the burning bush and fully in the incarnate Son)
- >> **Wonder and confidence in the rescue of the LORD** (promised ahead of time in Egypt, every detail fulfilled, ultimately pointing to the greater Exodus of Easter)

### FURTHER STUDY: 4:1-31

- How does this passage show us Moses' imperfection? How does the LORD respond graciously despite Moses' stubborn unbelief?
- How does v6-9 and 21-23 help prepare us as we read through the rest of the story? What does this teach us about the LORD?
- What do you make of the puzzling episode in v24-26?
- Look at v29-31 and consider how this might compare with what happens next.

### 3 | EXODUS 5-10 SIGNS: the LORD's supremacy displayed

**The LORD reveals who he is by demonstrating his power (over creation and over all 'gods' of Egypt) but Pharaoh's heart remains hard.**

#### THEMES:

The signs show us: - **The LORD's power** (over creation & over the idols of Egypt) >> he alone is the LORD  
- **Pharaoh's hard heart** >> human stubbornness runs deep  
- **The LORD's righteous judgment** >> those who oppose the LORD will lose (foreshadowing an even worse judgment to come)

1. He asks dismissively "who is the LORD?" - claiming not to know (or respect) the one in whose name Moses approaches him. By the time this story ends, he and all Egypt will be in no doubt as to who the LORD is (e.g. 12:31-32, 15:25).

2. Pharaoh turns against Moses and the people, accusing them of being lazy and (unreasonably) increasing their burden by no longer providing straw but requiring the same quota of bricks produced. Like the serpent in Genesis 3 he casts doubt on the truthfulness of the word from the LORD (calling it 'lies' in v9, when of course Moses is declaring the truth). This sets up a battle between Pharaoh (and implicitly the gods of Egypt) and the LORD as to whose word is powerful & true. The Israelite overseers turn against Moses (v21) even though he has done what the LORD commanded and instead of killing will rescue them from death.

3. Against the backdrop of Pharaoh's hard heart we see more clearly the sovereign power of the LORD. Exodus will reveal the LORD's 'mighty hand' (v1) and prove beyond all doubt "I am the LORD" (6:6,8 which bookends the paragraph explaining what the LORD will do) -- this is all to reveal his name and faithfulness to his covenant. Although there remains an element of mystery in understanding how divine sovereignty and human responsibility operate (God hardens P's heart and P hardens his own heart, both emphasised at different points) it is hugely helpful to see the purpose in all this -- the vindication and revelation of who the LORD is. Whether in judgment or rescue, God is revealing his glorious character. Even P's stubbornness must serve this agenda. It drives us away from a man-centred view of reality to an appropriate God-centred view (in humble, reverent awe at this LORD). We may struggle with this but let us seek to be shaped by the LORD's values and priorities in the passage and pray for soft hearts to love what he loves and hate what he hates.

4. He can make Moses 'like God to Pharaoh' (v1) & predicts perfectly what will happen next (v3-5). We see his miraculous power over nature (v8-10) as well sovereign insight into Pharaoh's heart (v13). The repetition of what will happen when & why - 'just as the LORD had said' - are all ways the narrative reinforces for us who is really in control.

5. It proves that the LORD alone is creator of heaven and earth (in the various ways the signs demonstrate control over nature) but crucially that he is also king over all the gods. These signs are set up as a 'battle of the gods' (represented by Pharaoh's magicians on one side & Moses on the other). Their inability to match Moses proves v19: 'this is the finger of God'. Whatever limited powers these magicians may have had, it is nothing compared to the sovereign LORD.

6. Pharaoh's stubbornness and deceit (repeatedly going back on his word) is almost comical throughout this section, were it not so egregious and evil defying the LORD and causing such misery for God's people. We see that even this extreme example of human

rebellion is ultimately within, and not beyond, God's sovereign control. Human tendency to 'side' with Pharaoh (the arch-villain) in our hearts and doubt God's justice (and goodness) reveals how deep human pride and rebellion often runs. Will we let the Scriptures shape our moral sensibilities, rather than the other way round? Of course, this can be deeply pastorally and intellectually challenging, requiring much patience -- but in the end we are left with the choice either to rejoice in the 'godness' of God or resist it (cf. Rom 9:14-26). Moreover, for those who have suffered at the hands of human evil, what comfort to know the LORD truly is sovereign & will bring righteous judgment against all 'Pharaohs' - as well as showing mercy to all who repent..

#### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

Jesus is the true LORD with power over creation and over all idols. He will execute the ultimate righteous judgment over hard-hearted humanity.

#### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

>> **Be sure of the LORD's power** (Jesus is LORD over creation and king over all the 'gods')

>> **Rejoice in the LORD's judgment** (Jesus will judge all like Pharaoh who are stubbornly hard hearted and refuse to repent)

FURTHER STUDY: As you read through Chapters 5-10 what big lessons do we see about:

- Pharaoh's stubbornness?
- The LORD's sovereignty?
- Moses' work as mediator?

## 4 | EXODUS 11-12 PASSOVER: the LORD's redemption achieved

**The LORD redeemed his people through the blood of the lamb - to be commemorated forever.**

THEMES:

**Climactic** judgment

**Redemption** through the prescribed blood of the lamb

**Commemoration** through a meal of remembrance

1. 10:28-29 suggests we're approaching a final battle scene, confirmed in 11:1. Notice this is all about what the LORD will do (v1, 4). V2-3 reminds us what was promised as far back as 3:21-22 when the LORD first called Moses to this ministry. As well as the warning to Pharaoh about the death of the first-born in 4:22-23. Yet again, we can be left in no doubt as to who is in control and working out his sovereign purposes.

2. Remember the goal is that everyone will know that "I am the LORD". So he doesn't just overcome Pharaoh's resistance, it all takes place 'just as the LORD said'. No one can say this was an accident or co-incidence. The heart of the king is in the hand of the LORD, who reigns over all. The reader of this account (as well as the initial Israelite generation) is being formed to know and trust (and warned not to resist) this LORD too.

3. This is clearly a momentous day (shaping the calendar, v1). The details of the lamb emphasise that it is to be a fitting substitute, sufficient and appropriate for each household. Unblemished, killed and feasted on just as the LORD commands. The blood must be 'applied' as a visible sign that the household has been 'covered' by the blood of the lamb -- a death has already occurred. This is a sign for the people that this is the reason the LORD has passed over them while judging Egypt. Each of these parallels salvation in Christ beautifully. They are to eat in haste in the eager expectation that the LORD will fulfil his promise, get ready to move - not stay in Egypt one moment longer than necessary!

4. The purpose of Passover is to judge the gods of Egypt - thereby proving who is the LORD as well as 'passing over' his people and sparing them from death (making a distinction between Egypt and Israel, v8, based on the saving power associated with the blood of the lamb). This will demonstrate both who the LORD is & who his people are (& the utter impotence of the so-called gods of Egypt).

5. This will forever shape the calendar of the LORD's people -- to celebrate and commemorate their great redemption. This is something to teach children too so that they too may know (v26-27) -- from one generation to the next. The weight of ceremony, ritual and tradition is intended to form a deep impression on the whole nation forever.

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

- Christ is the true Passover lamb who "takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:19)
- His death will be commemorated forever by the redeemed.

### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

- >> **take refuge** under the blood of the lamb
- >> **remember & celebrate** his perfect sacrifice forever

FURTHER STUDY: Read 12:43-49. How do these "restrictions" also find their fulfilment in Christ?

## 5 | EXODUS 13-18 WILDERNESS: *the LORD's people rescued & tested*

***The LORD powerfully rescues his people from Pharaoh, crossing over through the sea, but they grumble as soon as testing comes***

THEMES:

**Crossing over** (Pharaoh judged & Israel delivered)

**The LORD vindicated** (in his enemies & his rescued people)

**Grumbling** by God's people when testing comes 'in the wilderness'

1. When he dramatically delivers his people from Pharaoh's chasing army he will prove, yet again, that he is the LORD. We see details of his military might (chariots, horsemen etc) compared to the weak and wandering refugee people of Israel. They are terrified and even wish they had remained in slavery! But Moses tells the people to 'stand firm and you will see' the LORD's deliverance. They may have no real army or power, but 'the LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still'. What must this mean about the LORD's power?

2. The LORD gains glory through Pharaoh and his chariots as they all dramatically pursue God's people (v23) but then are turned to confusion and failure. The Egyptians themselves realise "the LORD is fighting for [Israel] against Egypt" (v25). The sea parts for God's people to cross safely, but all his enemies are drowned (v28-30). It's hard to think of how v18 could be fulfilled more comprehensively than this.

3. "The people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant". It is clear that the LORD has done this awesome deed of judgment and rescue - so it is right to fear him. But he has clearly done it through the hand (and staff) of Moses, so it is right to trust him too. Here again we see the purpose fulfilled: then you will know that I am the LORD. The song triumphantly celebrates this LORD whose mighty act of judgment against the power of Egypt is at the same time salvation for his people.

4. Given all they've seen and sung of the LORD's deliverance and provision it is stark that they 'grumble' against Moses. How quickly things turn for the worse after the high point of 14:31. It is not to downplay their need for water, nor the real challenge of going without it for 3 days. But should the assumption be that the LORD/Moses has somehow failed them or humbly to ask for what they need? This is clearly a test to see if they trust the LORD and have learned who he is (and yet, tragically, they consistently fail and grumble. It is striking that they easily think life was somehow better in Egypt and that the LORD has let them down). In the context of the story this is shocking and yet disturbingly revealing of the human heart, even among God's redeemed children. Do we feel the same temptation to grumble and doubt the LORD's goodness?

**FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:**

- Christ brings the ultimate Exodus through his death and resurrection.
- He brings his people out from Satan's kingdom into his own kingdom of light.

**GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:**

**Fear the LORD & trust his servant Jesus** (14:31)

**Sing to the LORD** for he is highly exalted (15:1-6)

**Don't grumble against the LORD** when testing comes

## 6 | EXODUS 19-24 SINAI: the LORD's covenant established

**The LORD who has graciously redeemed his chosen people gives them his law to obey through his unique mediator**

THEMES:

**Covenant obedience:** those whom the LORD has graciously redeemed must obey his good law

**Unique mediator:** there is one man who goes up and down between the people and the LORD; he is their only hope!

1. The LORD has already rescued them from Egypt, now he calls them to obey him wholeheartedly. Grace and relationship is already established, law and obedience is the appropriate response and way to live as a distinctly holy nation. God's people ought to have felt the sheer wonder of his gracious and mighty rescue from Egypt, as well as the undeserved privilege of being his people, kindly given his good law to obey. The purpose of rescue wasn't just to get them out of Egypt, but to bring them to the LORD and ultimately to send them out into the world as a uniquely holy, priestly nation (elsewhere described as a 'light to the nations').

2. Their identity is secure in his already-accomplished rescue from Egypt. They don't earn his love; they should respond to it in obedience. Both legalism and antinomianism get this completely wrong as they misunderstand the relationship between grace and obedience. His redeemed people can't earn their status as redeemed nor can they safely ignore his righteous commands. Legalism misrepresents the character of God as someone who can or must be 'bought off'. But equally antinomianism misrepresents the character of God as someone whose 'grace' is cheap and whose commands can be disregarded with impunity. Gospel obedience opposes both errors and offers the way to live as God's uniquely chosen saved people (though sadly they, like us, will dramatically and repeatedly fail).

3. Everything communicates how significant this is: Moses repeats God's words and the people all agree to obey (v7-8). The drama of the dense cloud and call to consecration and zoning off of the mountain at pains of death all reflects the importance of this event. The thunder, lightning, trumpet blast and smoke would have been a terrifying multi-sensory experience never to be forgotten (v17-19)!

4. Throughout this section the LORD speaks to Moses and Moses speaks to the people as well as reporting their words back to the LORD. He is clearly the go-between. And we are shown he literally goes up and down the mountain multiple times - a repeated spatial demonstration of a key theological reality: he is the unique mediator. The enforced distance and fear for the rest of the people highlights how Moses seems to be their only hope of a communicative relationship with the LORD.

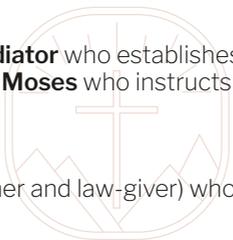
**FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:**

- Christ is the **true and better mediator** who establishes a new covenant in his blood.
- He is the **law-giver greater than Moses** who instructs us about obedient life in God's kingdom.

**GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:**

**Obey Christ** (our gracious redeemer and law-giver) who now speaks to us from the heavenly Mount Zion! (Heb 12:25)

**FURTHER STUDY:** Skim chapter 24, when Moses and the people confirm the covenant after the Law is given. As Christian believers, what clues are there about where the Bible story is going? In what ways can we look back and see Christ fulfilling chapter 24?



## 7 | EXODUS 25-31 TABERNACLE: the LORD's dwelling prepared

**The LORD gives detailed instructions so that he might dwell with his covenant people on Earth as in heaven**

THEMES:

**God's majesty** (see how amazing this structure is!)

**God's dwelling** (he desires to be present with his covenant people)

1. The more a project means to us, the more we usually care about (and often talk about) the details! Our eagerness (or indifference) is revealing of our underlying attitude to what's going on...

2. Honestly, most of us usually find the minute details and seemingly repetitive elements of the following chapters hard work. This is where many bible reading plans fall off the wagon! And yet, it may be that we've not grasped the significance and wonder of this building project and all it represents. Remember: all Scripture is God-breathed, making us wise for salvation and thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:15-17). So we can approach this section with prayerful, eager, expectation!

3. Before the glorious presence of God on the mountain was distant, terrifying and seemingly momentary -- but now is the prospect that 'I will dwell among them' (v8). They can enjoy his presence safely and continuously, in the context of his prescribed patterns of worship. This will be a physical representation of the very presence of God among his people. This was always the goal of getting them out of Egypt -- to bring them to himself. We see this is important because of Moses's 40 day preparation beforehand & the valuable offerings from all people with various precious materials.

4. a. **Sanctuary**: God is majestic and worthy of all precious offerings from the heart. It requires a 'sanctuary' (sacred) space, furnished just as he requires, for him to dwell with his people. Christ's body is the ultimate sacred space by which God can dwell with his people. b. **Ark**: God is the glorious king for whom gold everything is uniquely fitting! His presence will be symbolised through the Law (to instruct), the mercy seat (to forgive). Through the ark he will lead his people in battle. Christ will fulfil the law (Rom 10:4) and be the ultimate law-giver (Matt 5-7), he himself is our propitiation (Rom 3:25) and the fearsome rider who will defeat all the enemies of God's people (Rev 19:11-16). c. **Table & lampstand**: The LORD provides the bread of Presence and perfect illumination (seven representing perfection/completeness). The priests will feed on the bread and be illuminated by his perfect light. Christ is the true bread (Jn 6) and the true light (Jn 1:5, 8:12). His people are now called to be the light of the world, a city on a hill (Matt 5:14, 1 Pet 2:9). d. **Tent of meeting**: God is holy and so the various divisions and curtains are needed to mark out the holy and most holy place and to make it possible for the LORD to dwell among his people. Christ reveals the holy God perfectly & also makes it possible and safe for his people to have access into the most holy place through his own sacrifice. After his death the temple curtain was torn (Mark 15:38), he has opened up the way into the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 10:19-20) where he has already entered on our behalf (Heb 6:19-20).

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

- Christ is the LORD of the covenant
- He has come to dwell among his people, as the true and better tabernacle/place of meeting between God and man.

### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

**Enjoy the privilege** of access to the majestic God in Christ (even greater than the tabernacle, and one day face to face in the New Creation!)



## 8 | EXODUS 32-34 GRACE: the people's idolatry overcome

**The LORD graciously forgives his people's idolatry and keeps going with them because of Moses**

THEMES:

**Idolatry & the LORD's overwhelming grace**

**Forgiveness because of the mediator**

**The LORD's name revealed** (not just "I AM" but "gracious and compassionate")

1. They've been rescued from Egypt, led/fed in the wilderness, renewed the covenant at Sinai and Moses has the law written by God himself. Surely the good times are coming from now on!

2. While Moses is up the mountain with the LORD they make 'gods', melting their gold into an idol. The whole point of Exodus was to reveal the LORD as the true God. Now his own people make an idol instead even before the ink is dry (as it were) on the 10 commandments which clearly forbid this.. How offensive to suggest these 'gods' brought them out of Egypt (though they've acknowledged Moses did). This is insane and wicked behaviour. And to somehow think the LORD will be pleased with this in v5 is remarkable.

3. The LORD is rightly angry and would have every reason to destroy them. However, Moses, as the favoured mediator, appeals to God on the basis of 1) his own glory/reputation as the one who has redeemed this people from Egypt. 2) his promise to Abraham to multiply the nation. In a sense it's an appeal to who God is, which has now been bound up graciously in relationship to this redeemed people.

4. Moses knows that only if the LORD is with his people will they be any different from anyone else, and fulfil their calling as a light for the nations. Moses himself has nothing to offer unless the LORD goes with him (and teaches him his ways to ensure he finds favour). Moses wants God's people to live up to their status as his chosen people, treasured possession, royal priesthood (Exod 19:6) -- for which God redeemed them in the first place.

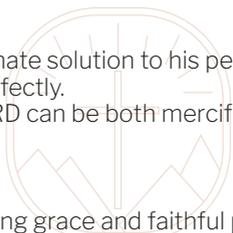
5. Amazingly the LORD agrees to have his goodness pass by Moses, and provide him shelter in the rock so that he may see his back. He also provides replacement tablets for the smashed ones. Most wonderfully of all, he declares his name in 34:6-7. Despite their heinous idolatry, the LORD is still this God and so his wayward people have hope. And at the cross we will see how he can be both gracious and justly punish evil.

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:

- In Christ we find the LORD's ultimate solution to his people's idolatry, full forgiveness and the name of God revealed perfectly.
- At the cross we see how the LORD can be both merciful and punish wickedness.

### GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:

- >> See the horror of idolatry
- >> Rejoice in the LORD's overcoming grace and faithful presence



## 9 | EXODUS 35-40 COMPLETED: the LORD's glory fills the tabernacle

**The LORD glory fills the completed tabernacle established by Moses (who cannot enter)**

THEMES:

**Tabernacle established** & ready

**God's glorious presence** descends

**Moses unable** to enter

1. What amazing sense of relief that despite how catastrophically they blew it with the golden calf God has still fulfilled his purpose to dwell among them. No longer just with Moses far away at the top of a mountain, but God is present within the cultic ritual system of tabernacle worship.

2. Like getting a tour round a finished, fully furnished, building we are reminded and excited that everything is there in exactly the right place and doing exactly what it should. The provision of God's Law, his illuminating presence, the place of sacrifice and cleansing, the priests to serve there etc.

3. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle - what a dramatic and precious moment. That's what this structure was for (as opposed to the darkness, dread and gloom of the mountain in Ch.20 of which the people were rightly terrified). God is no longer distant from his people, nor are they unable to approach his gracious presence but can do so through the priests and sacrificial system (which will be outlined in Leviticus).

4. This is something of a shock given how close Moses's communion with the LORD had been before (see e.g. 33:9-11, 34:33-35). It feels like a dampener on the celebration. However, perhaps it is designed to remind us that even the tabernacle is not the 'finished article', there is something (someone) greater still to come...

5. Now the glorious presence of the LORD symbolised in the glory cloud leads the whole people on their journey. Cloud by day, fire by night, in the sight of all the people. Crucially, no longer just something Moses can see, but all the people. It's hard to overstate how dramatic the turn-around is from the start of the book as slaves, in Egypt, groaning under their oppression with little knowledge of God or confidence that he heard their cries. Now they both know the LORD (their mighty and gracious redeemer) and they can enjoy his presence (with the gift of the law and the sacred dwelling of the tabernacle). Not yet perfected in glory, but on the way...

**FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST:**

- Jesus is the ultimate tabernacle (John 1:14) revealing God's glory (John 1:18).
- (Unlike Moses then) He has now entered the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 1:3)

**GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY:**

>> **Celebrate and enjoy God's glorious presence** with us in Christ









# STRUCTURE

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