

# Exodus

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## I AM

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS



SUMMIT VIEW CHURCH

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...then Joseph said to his brothers,  
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...Joseph made the sons of Israel  
...an oath and said, "God will  
...come to your aid, and then you  
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...Joseph died at the age of a  
...ed and ten. And after they  
...ined him, he was placed in a  
...in Egypt.

### *The Israelites Oppressed*

**1** These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his wife: Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; Zebulun and Benjamin; Naphtali; Gad and Asher; and their descendants of seventy<sup>a</sup> in all; Joseph and his two sons went to Egypt.

**6** Now Joseph and all that generation of Israelites were dead, but Joseph was buried in Egypt. His sons Ephraim and Manasse buried him in Egypt with his fathers, as he had commanded. Joseph's bones were buried with his fathers. And when Joseph died, he said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of Egypt and bring you back to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When you come to the land, you shall bury my bones there. And when God visits you, you shall bring my bones up from Egypt with you."

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# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

*The baby in the basket. The burning bush. The plagues. The parting of the Red Sea. Manna from heaven. Mt. Sinai. The Ten Commandments. The Ark of the Covenant. The Tabernacle. The Golden Calf.*

All these images pop up within our minds when we think about the book of Exodus. While this mental imagery may be strong, we can often overlook the actual story going on. The title of the book Exodus is derived from the Greek word *exodos*, which means “exit” or “departure.” The book of Exodus gives us an account of the birth of the nation of Israel. The book of Exodus describes to us a story of salvation. In our study we will see how God fulfills His promise to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation. Yet the way God responds to His people takes us through many twists and turns along the path of deliverance from the greatest superpower in the ancient world. The character, nature, and power of God is put on full display in the book of Exodus. Throughout our study we will come to see God as a sovereign, redeeming, faithful, powerful, and personal God. Our story ends with hope and assurance as God’s presence dwells with His people.

## AUTHOR

When we ask “Who wrote Exodus?” we’re really asking the question, “Who wrote the Torah/Pentateuch?” The Torah/Pentateuch is the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. While reading through these books, you will notice that the author is technically anonymous as there is no claim to authorship. However, as you read through the Pentateuch, you will see many references to Moses’ writing activity and God’s instruction to Moses to write certain things down (see Ex. 17:1, 24:4, 34:27; Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:22). Outside of these first five books, elsewhere in the Old Testament we find references to “The Book of Moses” (see Josh. 1:7-8; 2 Chron. 25:4; Neh. 13:1). In fact, Jesus himself accredits the first five books to Moses in Matthew 22:24, Mark 7:10, and John 1:17. The Bible itself points to Moses as the author.

## DATE

Exodus was most likely written shortly after Genesis during Israel’s sojourn in the wilderness. There is much scholarly debate as to the exact time frame. Some scholars date the book back to 1260 B.C., while others have set an even earlier date of 1446 B.C. The 1446 date is based upon the working figure of 480 years as found in 1 Kings 6:1, while the 1260 date is based upon the Exodus 1:11 mention of the city of Raames, meaning their exodus possibly took place during the reign of Raameses II in Egypt.

# INTRODUCTION

## JOURNEY OF THE EXODUS



Map provided by Crossway ESV Study Bible

## OUTLINE OF EXODUS

### II. God Rescues Israel from Egypt - Exodus 1-18

- A. Setting of the Story (1-6)
- B. Plagues (7-12)
- C. The Exodus (13-15)
- D. Journey to Sinai (16-18)

# INTRODUCTION

## OUTLINE OF EXODUS CONT.

- II. God gives Israel the Law - *Exodus 19-24*
  - A. Preparation for the Covenant (19)
  - B. The Ten Commandments (20:1-17)
  - C. The Book of the Covenant (20:18-23:33)
  - D. The Covenant Ratified (24:1-18)
- III. God's Instruction on the Tabernacle - *Exodus 25-40*
  - A. Instructions on the Worship & the Tabernacle (25- 31:18)
  - B. Israel breaks the Covenant (32)
  - C. Moses Intercedes for the People (33)
  - D. God restores the covenant (34-35)
  - F. Building and Construction of the Tabernacle (35-40)

## SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

### BOOK



*ESV Scripture Journal - Exodus*

Take extended notes alongside passages of Scripture, with lined blank pages interspersed throughout complete books of the Bible.

### VIDEOS



*Bible Project: Exodus Part 1*

<https://bibleproject.com/learn/exodus-1-18/>

*Bible Project: Exodus Part 2*

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/torah-exodus-2/>

### INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS COURSE



This introductory course is designed to provide key insights into the book of Exodus by pulling together a number of key resources: overview videos from The Bible Project, helpful contextual information from The ESV Study Bible, commentary recommendations from The Gospel Coalition, a single sermon that sums up the book from beginning to end by Mark Dever, and much more. By watching, listening to, and reading these resources, you'll be well equipped to read, study, teach, or preach the book of Exodus.

The Gospel Coalition - <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/introduction-to-exodus/#overview>

# INTRODUCTION

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been specifically prepared with you in mind. There are two main ways to use it—in a group setting and for personal devotion.

***In a group setting***, you will have a chance to dig deeper by looking directly at Scripture, hear stories from real people in our church, and together answer questions, discuss God's truth, and grow in our faith.

We truly believe that studying the Scriptures together will help develop deep roots in relationship with God and one another. Each week's study begins with conversation starters, followed by questions for discussion based on the text, and wraps up with personal applications and prayer prompts to help you grow spiritually.

Use this resource as a guide, not as a straitjacket. We realize you may not be able to get to every question. Pick the ones that would best work for your group. If you think of a better question, ask it! If you approach each gathering time with prayer and preparation, this guide will be easy to use. Obviously, you are welcome to pull in other resources, or highlights from the sermons each week. Our hope is that by participating in this study, you will have a firmer grasp on the Scriptures and a stronger connection with Christ.

***For personal devotion***, consider using this guide to direct your mind and heart in your times with God throughout the week, to help you reflect upon the previous week, or prepare yourself for the coming weekend.



## 1

# AN UNCHANGING PROMISE

## EXODUS 1-2:22

### INTRODUCTION

God makes promises and He keeps His promises, even in the most unlikely of circumstances. In the early pages of Genesis, God promised to provide a home and make a nation from one man, Abraham, and that through him all the inhabitants of the earth would be blessed (*see Genesis 13:14-17*). But there's one thing we tend to overlook when reading this passage; God tells Abraham that his people will be sojourners in a foreign land and would be afflicted for 400 years before He sets them free (*see Genesis 15:13-15*). As we look at the first two chapters of Exodus, Israel is in the midst of this brutal captivity. We see evidence of a faithful few, continuing to put their trust in God, despite increasing hostility from their captors, and God's apparent absence. Where is God; had He forgotten His promise? Or did God set the stage for a brilliant display of His providential sovereignty, fulfilling the promise made to a people more than 400 years earlier?

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q How do you describe faithfulness?

### MAIN IDEA

Even when we cannot see how, God is always faithful to fulfill His promises.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 1-2:22

#### READ GENESIS 1:28, 15:13-15

Q How do you determine if a promise is worth trusting? God gives a command followed by a promise and reiterates that promise to Abraham. A lot of time has passed since God made this promise! How do you practice faithfulness to God while you wait to see His promise to us, the return of Christ, fulfilled?

#### READ EXODUS 1:1-7

Q Notice the words *fruitful, increase, and multiply*. What do you think the author, Moses, is trying to highlight to the reader?

**Follow Up:** Why would Moses want you to know who started out living in Egypt? Read ahead to Exodus 12:37-38. How does this additional bit of information help you understand God's faithfulness? How will you use this proof of God's faithfulness to further develop your trust in God?



# AN UNCHANGING PROMISE

## EXODUS 1-2:22

1

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 1-2:22

**Q** Exodus 1:8-14 paints a dreadful picture. Israel desperately needs deliverance; they cannot save themselves. How is this situation similar to our own need for deliverance?

**Follow Up:** Notice the use of harsh words like, *deal shrewdly, afflict, oppress*, etc. Yet, despite this abuse, the text says Israel multiplied, revealing that no person nor institution can oppose God's plan and win. How do you need this reminder today?

**Follow Up:** This section of Scripture presents us with a problem: God's chosen people who were to bring blessing to the world are being oppressed in slavery. Israel may wonder, "Where is God's blessing now?" How do you deal with seasons of life that *feel* contrary to God's promise?

**Q** Instead of relief, we read on in Exodus 1:15-22 to find even more resistance and abuse. In fact, Pharaoh moves from oppressive slavery to government sponsored murder. However, we witness how the fear of the true King leads to the bold faithfulness of two Hebrew women. Where might God be calling you to step out of your comfort zone and fear Him alone? (*Remember, bold faithfulness can be small acts of obedience.*)

**Q** A son is born! Exodus 2:1-4 points back to God's promise in Genesis 3 of a Son who will ultimately deliver us from our sin. Moses is not the Savior, but he will save these people. Exodus 2:1-4 presents a mother who puts her faith in God to preserve her son, literally putting her baby in God's hands. How can Jochebed's trust in God be a model for you (see Exod. 6:20)? What does it reveal about God? What do you need to put into God's hands?

### READ EXODUS 2:5-10

**Q** A baby in a basket floating in a crocodile-infested river is not a happy ending in the making. But God is still at work! Through the boldness of a little girl and the pity of a princess, God worked significantly through the insignificant. Take a moment to reflect on your life. Do you live like you expect God will work through you, or do your actions reveal a belief that He is limited by your position and influence (or lack thereof)? Take some time to confess this to God and ask for His strength to establish the work of your hands (remember, it's the work *He* called you to do).

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 1-2:22

#### READ EXODUS 2:11-15

**Q** Good things rarely happen when we take matters into our own hands. Moses may have been right to intervene, but he crossed the line of justice in committing murder. While your own impulsive reactions may not be as extreme as murder resulting in exile, the consequences can still hurt. What happened the last time you took matters into your own hands instead of waiting and trusting God? What did you learn and what will you do differently next time?

#### READ EXODUS 2:16-22

**Q** If you were reading Exodus for the first time, your heart would be heavy; deliverance is surely impossible. Exodus 2:22 closes with the phrase, “sojourner in a foreign land,” which sounds like a downer, but should actually remind us of Genesis 15:13-14. Take a moment to read that portion of Scripture now (even if you’ve already done so during this study). What do you see? How should remembering God’s promises impact our choices? What practices can you implement today to help you be more mindful of God’s faithfulness to fulfill His promise?

## APPLICATION

God faithfully keeps His covenant promise in spite of external “threats” and opposition. No one can thwart His purpose; in fact, God overturns opposition by His sovereign will. Take some time to reflect on your life, evaluating where you may feel like giving up. Where does the opposition just seem to be too much, even for God? Where, like Moses did in Egypt, are you tempted to take matters into your own hands? Confess your impatience or lack of trust to God, asking Him to be your strength and help you in your doubt. Close your time thanking God for hearing you and reminding you that nothing is out of His control.

## NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes, spanning the width of the page below the 'NOTES' header.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## GOD PREPARED THE WAY FOR A LEADER

Our passage for this first week is a great narrative account starting at the beginning of Moses' story.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 1-2:22

- Q** What was the other name for Joseph's dad, Jacob? \_\_\_\_\_ . As his family grew, the descendants of Jacob were called "the people of \_\_\_\_\_" or Israelites. In this Bible passage, they are also called "Hebrews."
- Q** At the end of Joseph's story, Jacob, Joseph's brothers, and their families moved to Egypt. How many did Jacob's family number when they moved? *(Spoiler Alert!)* There were at least 1 million people when they followed Moses out of Egypt!
- Q** In Exodus 1:7, we read Joseph's family had grown! What was the new Pharaoh worried about? Because of this, Pharaoh first made the Hebrew people to be slaves. When they continued to grow, what did Pharaoh do next?
- Q** A Hebrew baby boy was born, and his mom hid him for three months. Then, what did she do? *(Hint: It involved bulrushes, pitch, and a river.)* What did his sister do at first? Who found the baby, and then what did his sister do after? What was this baby named? Why?
- Q** Moses grew up with his mom as his nurse in his early years. Pharaoh's daughter raised him as her son. God placed Moses in the house of Pharaoh. Why do you think this was important?
- Q** Why did Moses flee Egypt? Where did he go? What happened there? What did he call his son? Why?

## MAIN IDEA

Even when we cannot see how, God is always faithful to fulfill His promises.

# AN UNCHANGING PROMISE

## FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

1

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- In Genesis, we saw how God moved His plan through the good deeds and bad deeds of people and through certain events to place Joseph where he needed to be (in Egypt) to save God's people. Can you retell the story of Joseph?
- How is God again setting things up to save His people?  
*(Hint: Who do the Hebrews need to be saved from? Why?)*
- Ultimately, it is through God's people that the Messiah comes. Who is this Messiah?
- The title of this week's study is called "God Prepared the Way for a Leader." Who do you think that leader will be?



# 1

## AN UNCHANGING PROMISE YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

### GROUP DISCUSSION

Q Think about something that you have waited a long time for. Describe how it felt to wait for that item, experience, or freedom?

Q In Exodus 1:8-11, what emotion drove the actions of the Egyptians? In 1:17, what emotion drove the actions of the midwives? Is the emotion demonstrated by these two groups of people the same or different?

Q What is the result of the midwives' fear of the LORD?

Q What does a reverent fear of the LORD look like today? How do you demonstrate your reverence for the LORD?

#### MAIN IDEA

Even when we cannot see how, God is always faithful to fulfill His promises.



### NOTES

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**AN UNCHANGING PROMISE**  
YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

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# 2

## OUR WEAKNESS, HIS STRENGTH EXODUS 2:23-4:31

### INTRODUCTION

God's plan all along has been to bless the world through the family of Abraham. In this part of Exodus, we see God call one man to serve and save this family. The book of Exodus is not a story of Moses' might and wisdom, or even about the people of Israel, but about God's great steadfast covenant love. We see God's pre-eminent power displayed through the most unlikely individual. Moses is called by God while in exile for murder; in all honesty, he wouldn't be our first pick to save anyone. God is undaunted by our past or our weakness and uses our "disqualifiers" to showcase His might.

Moses knows he's not a great first pick. We see Moses wrestle with his calling—he asks, why him; how; and what if they don't listen? Moses is like each of us, uncertain that God can or even should use us. All too often we're willing to sit out and hope someone else will step in. God doesn't answer Moses by building him up, but by pointing to who HE is. It is because of who God is and His great love for us that He uses us for the good of others and His glory.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q When was the last time you tried to do something new? What was it and what happened?

### MAIN IDEA

God works in and through unlikely individuals to display His glory to the world.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 2:23-4:31

#### READ EXODUS 2:23-25

Q Life just kept getting worse for poor Israel. The "many days" referenced in 2:23 was actually 40 years! Yet, Israel continued to cry out to God, who made a covenant with Abraham 400 years prior. What do you think helped them cling to this covenant promise? What do you do when you're waiting to see God move?



## COVENANT PROMISE



### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 2:23-4:31

#### READ EXODUS 3:1-6

**Q** Moses was minding his own business, living his life. In 3:4 we see clearly that God called Moses. What does this reveal to you about God's character?

**Follow Up:** God called Moses and then gave him instructions on how to interact with Him (see 3:5); why does God do this? What does this tell you about God? About Moses? How should this impact the way you approach God?

**Follow Up:** In 3:6, God tells Moses who He is. Why do you think God says this (see Gen. 15:13-15)? What does this tell you about God?

#### READ EXODUS 3:7-10

**Q** We see here that God has intimate knowledge of Israel's affliction (notice the words *seen, heard, know*) and that He says He will rescue them (notice the phrase *'come down to deliver and bring them up'*). Why does God start with Himself in this interchange? How does this enhance your understanding of who God is?

**Follow Up:** What challenges are you facing right now that need this application of truth? What happens when you forget it?

**Q** We all have self-doubt. Even Moses. He questioned God five times! Read Exodus 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13. What common themes do you notice in Moses' argument? How does God answer Moses' disbelief (see *Exodus 3:12, 14; 4:2, 11, 14*)? What common answer does God give? Why do you think this is so?

**Follow Up:** God emphasizes that His presence will be with Moses. It is God's power that enables a person to carry out their calling. Why is this truth vital to remember in the life of a believer?

**Q** In Exodus 3:12, God gives Moses a sign that He is with him. What is it? When will it take place? Why do you think God would give this as the sign? What has God promised to us that we wait for now? What are we to do in the meantime?

**Follow Up:** God often asks us to act before we see Him deliver. Can you think of other instances in the Bible where God called someone to move before He delivered/provided (*hint, Joshua and the Israelites crossing the Jordan, Jericho, Esther, David, etc.*)?

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 2:23-4:31

### READ EXODUS 4:1-20

**Q** God puts up with a lot of questions before He gets angry with Moses (see Exodus 4:14). During their dialogue, God gives Moses three signs that represent the power God will display later through the ten plagues. Fill in the signs below.

4:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ = creatures of the earth

4:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ = people

4:9 \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ = elements of nature

**Follow Up:** Why do you think God chose to reveal His power to Moses in this way, at this time?

**Follow Up:** Why might God get angry with Moses for his continued doubt? Do you struggle with thinking of God as angry? How does this Scripture challenge your understanding of God?

### READ EXODUS 4:21-23

**Q** What does God instruct Moses to do? What does God say will happen? Why do you think God tells Moses what to do and what the results will be before he goes to Egypt?

**Follow Up:** What does this show you about God? What does this reveal about the human heart?

**Follow Up:** Is there a time where you were following God's commands and things didn't go the way you expected them to? What did you do?



## APPLICATION

Moses' hesitancy is normal. Anyone who is called by God wonders, why me, how will I, will they believe? God takes time to show Moses who He is to build trust with and strengthen Moses. Where do you find it hard to trust God? Take some time in prayer confessing this doubt (God already knows, but telling Him builds your trust!), and ask Him to help your unbelief, and reveal Himself to you through the study of His word.

## NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## GOD CALLED A LEADER

Moses spent 40 years in Egypt. Our passage for this week picks up after Moses fled Egypt to Midian. He then spent 40 years as a shepherd. Read Exodus 2:23-4:21 out loud to your family.

## MAIN IDEA

God works in and through unlikely individuals to display His glory to the world.

- Q When the Hebrew slaves cried out to God, He heard them and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Abraham's son, Isaac, and Abraham's grandson, Jacob. Covenant is a fancy word for promise. This promise God made with Abraham can be found in Genesis 12:1-3. What was it? Did God make Abraham into a great nation? What was this people group called? (*Hint: Look at Week 1*)
- Q Moses learned how to live as a nomad in the desert. What is a nomad? It took many years from the time he fled Egypt to his time in Midian to be ready to serve God.
- Q Think about Moses' life as an Egyptian prince compared to his life as a shepherd. What are some of the differences? Being both an Egyptian prince and a nomad shepherd will help Moses later in this story! We already see God preparing Moses to be part of God's plan to free the Hebrews (God's people) from Pharaoh.
- Q What was different about the bush Moses saw burning in the desert? Why did Moses take off his sandals and hide his face?
- Q God told Moses that He was going to deliver His people out of the hand of the Egyptians. The word "deliver" could be replaced with "rescue" or "free." How are these words different than the phrase "helping them escape?" (*Hint: Think about how the person with the power is indicated or implied by each of these words.*)
- Q God described the place to where He would deliver His people by naming the six tribes that lived there. How else did God describe it? The land was not literally flowing with milk and honey—what did God mean by this description?
- Q God prepared Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. What does Moses do in response (*see Exodus 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13*)? Is Moses humbling himself under God's power or expressing disbelief?

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

- Q Moses asked God what he should say if the Hebrews didn't believe him. God responded by telling Moses who He was and what name to use. What did God tell Moses (see *Exodus 3:14*)?
- Q God is all powerful. He is all we need. He will give us what we need. When He said, "I AM," Moses said, "I am not." Moses should have been looking to God, but who was he looking at instead?
- Q Though Moses should have trusted and obeyed right away without excuses, God responded to all of his excuses, gave him signs, and encouraged him. What promises did God give Moses as he stepped out in faith and began his return to Egypt (see *Exodus 3:18-23*)?
- Q Who did Moses request (and God send) to help Moses?

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- There were 400 years between the time Jacob and his family moved to Egypt to be with Joseph and time of Moses. The Hebrew people were slaves for a long time. Did God promise to rescue His people (see *Genesis 15:16; 46:3-4*)? Does God rescue us the moment we want it? God knew what time was best for Joseph, and now we see that God knew when to rescue His people, and He knows what time is best for us.
- The people of Israel were slaves in Egypt, were treated harshly, and cried out to God for help. Did God hear them? Does God hear us today? Is there a difference between God hearing us and answering us? Is there a difference between God answering us and getting what we asked for?
- When God identified Himself as I AM WHO I AM, He stated that, no matter when or where, He is there. Remember, God is. It's that simple. He just is. He was, He is, and He will continue to be. God is eternal. He is constant. He is unchangeable. How does knowing this help us trust in God?
- God called Himself, "I AM." Jesus would add to that name. Look at John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7,9, 10:7,9,11,14; 11:25; 14:6; and 15:1 to see how.

# 2

## OUR WEAKNESS, HIS STRENGTH YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

### GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What is one thing about yourself that you wish you could change?
- Q How is God's heart towards His people described in these chapters? What does God do in response?
- Q What is Moses' initial response to God's call to save the Israelites (*see Exodus 3:11*)? How does God respond?
- Q In the past, have you felt inadequate to do what God has called you to? What was your response?
- Q Who is the Aaron in your life that excels in an area where you are weak? How can you lean on them to live a life of obedience to God?

### MAIN IDEA

God works in and through unlikely individuals to display His glory to the world.

## APPLICATION

We sometimes get wrapped up in saying yes to the next grand gesture that we feel God calling us to while missing the everyday opportunities. What can you do to say yes to the next everyday opportunity to demonstrate your obedience to God's call in your life?



# 3

## GOD IS NEVER LATE EXODUS 5-7:5

### INTRODUCTION

Moses is stuck between a rock and a hard place. God called him to deliver the people of Israel, but Pharaoh has given an emphatic NO, and Moses' community is upset because his attempt to set them free has become a burden to them. Have you ever tried to help someone, only to make the situation appear worse? What's a called-but-not-yet-successful deliverer to do? Moses is a lot like us; he forgot that God called him and therefore it was God who would deliver Israel. The deliverance of Israel wasn't about Moses, or even Israel, but about God keeping His word. God had put His reputation on the line; would He deliver? Moses, like us, is an instrument in God's hand to serve God and His people, all to reveal His glory. God told Moses He would bring Israel out of Egypt in a most impressive way. God's "delay" by means of human opposition gives both Moses and Israel an opportunity to know God and build trust with Him as He reveals He is God, He will deliver, He keeps His promises, and He will share His glory with no one.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q When was the last time you were disappointed? How did you react?

### MAIN IDEA

God's delays set the stage for an even bigger display of His glory.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 5-7:5

Q We're going to take a short detour before we dive into this week's text. Knowing who God is helps us withstand opposition, and the Israelites are about to encounter it in a fierce way. Read Psalm 33:6-11. What do these verses tell us about God (keep in mind, a Pharaoh was treated as a god in the flesh)?

**Follow Up:** Now read Exodus 6:7 and 7:5. What is it that God wants both Israel and Egypt to know? Keep this in mind as we study this week's section of text.

### READ EXODUS 5:1-9

Moses speaks for God ("Thus says the LORD") and asks Pharaoh (*who thinks he is god*) to let Israel go. Look at Pharaoh's response in 5:2; you can almost hear the indignation in his reply. However, Moses doesn't relent. What is Pharaoh's response to Moses' repeated plea?

**Follow Up:** Have you encountered opposition when trying to live in obedience to God? How do you react?



## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 5-7:5

**Q** As the world strives to assert its power, followers of Christ naturally face opposition and challenges. Just as God warned Moses about Pharaoh's hard heart, Jesus warned His disciples that they would face trouble (*see John 16:33*). How does knowing this in advance help you remain faithful?

**Q** The Word never glosses over the shortcomings of God's people; instead it often highlights failures to draw our attention to the sufficiency of God. Read Exodus 5:22-23. Use your sanctified imagination to describe the emotion you think Moses experiences here. Who does he turn to?

**Follow Up:** Look back at Exodus 5:15, 20. Who do the Israelites cry out to?

**Follow Up:** Where do you tend to turn when you're desperate for relief?

**Q** God doesn't shy away from our questions. Read His response to Moses in 6:1-8. God promises three things. What are they (*see Exodus 6:6-8*)?

**Follow Up:** How many times does God repeat the phrase, "I will..."?

**Follow Up:** What statement bookends this passage?

**Follow Up:** What is God communicating to Moses? Where do you need to apply the reminder of the power and protection of God in your life?

**Q** God just gave Moses a most inspiring pep-talk (*see Exodus 6:1-8*)! He essentially says, "Look at Who I am, Moses; I will deliver, you belong to me, I am enough." How do Moses and the people of Israel respond (*see Exodus 6:9-12*)? Before you critique the Israelites too much, remember their circumstances: by all accounts they are stuck in their present circumstances. What does God do in 6:13? Why do you think He does this? Are there times in your life you need a reminder to focus on what God has called you to do?

**Follow Up:** Moses' response in 6:12 reveals he doesn't feel qualified; Israel won't listen, and neither will Pharaoh—after all, Moses is a nobody. Have you ever felt unqualified for the task God has given you? Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. What does it say?

HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

# 3

## GOD IS NEVER LATE EXODUS 5-7:5

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 5-7:5

Q Exodus 6:14-25 is everyone's favorite part of the story: genealogy! Why would a genealogy appear here, after God reaffirms the calling He has given Moses and Aaron (see 6:26-28)?

**Follow Up:** There are lots of people who share the same name—now, and even in biblical times—this can get confusing! This specific genealogy reminds the reader just exactly which Moses and Aaron the author is talking about. Why is this important?

Q Who affirms the call on Moses in 6:28-29? In light of all that Moses has just gone through, why does this matter?



## APPLICATION

Our lives are filled with delays, opposition, and disappointment. Spend some time in prayer seeking clarity on where you turn in adversity. Do you seek control, do you complain, do you turn to food, substance, or people to ease your pain? Confess to the Lord that He God, He is enough, and that you need His strength in your weakness. Ask for eyes to see the delays, opposition, and disappointments as opportunities to watch His hand provide, to sense His presence, and grow in your trust of Him.

### NOTES

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### FAMILY DISCUSSION

#### GOD SENT MOSES TO PHAROAH

God called Moses to deliver the Hebrews (God's people). God is working out His plan through Moses. Who would be better to approach Pharaoh than a previous member of the royal household?

#### MAIN IDEA

God's delays set the stage for an even bigger display of His glory.

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 5:1-6:10, 6:13-7:5

**Q** God told Moses how Pharaoh would respond when Moses relayed God's message to him. What did God say Pharaoh would say and do (*see Exodus 3:19; 4:21*)? When Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh, what was Pharaoh's response the first time? What did Pharaoh say the second time? What did Pharaoh command of the slaves in response?

**Q** Why do you think Pharaoh did not believe in the "God of the Hebrews"?

**Q** Why did Pharaoh make the slaves' job harder (*see Exodus 5:8, 17*)?

**Q** The Hebrews blamed Moses and Aaron. This was Moses' chance to show his absolute trust in God and God's plan! What was Moses' response to this opposition (*see Exodus 5:22-23*)?

**Follow Up:** Did God promise to rescue His people? Did God rescue His people when Moses thought He should? Will God rescue His people?

**Q** God's response to Moses here (*see Exodus 6:2-8*) is pretty much the same as when He first called Moses (*see Exodus 3:6-10, 15-17*): Who He is, that He will keep His covenant, that He will rescue His people, and that He will give them the land He promised. Did the people of Israel listen? Why?



## TRUST HIM

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- We learned in James that trials and suffering will occur in our lives. They are for our good and God's glory. Trials will grow our patience and teach us to trust that God will do what is best for us, help us seek ways to honor God in our trials, remember that God will not leave us, and watch for God's plan for us. Remember, God's power "is made perfect in our weakness" (*2 Corinthians 12:9*).
- In Exodus, we see how God prepares His people to trust Him. God will deliver His people out of Egypt. Do we know that God is faithful to deliver His people (us) from what controls and threatens us?
- Life is a constant test of one's belief in God. These trials are no accident. God asks, "Will you trust Me to deliver you from \_\_\_\_\_?" And, if He doesn't deliver us in the way we want, will we trust Him that He knows what's best for us?

### WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to deliver you from making bricks without straw? From slavery? From the Egyptians? From Pharaoh?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who kept a baby safe from the Egyptians, who delivered him into the hands of the Egyptian princess to be raised as her son. I am the one who kept him safe when he fled Egypt and delivered him to a nomad shepherd and his family. I am the one who called him to deliver my people safely to the Promised Land. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

# 3

## GOD IS NEVER LATE YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### MAIN IDEA

God's delays set the stage for an even bigger display of His glory.

- Q Reflecting on Exodus 5, does the situation seem to get better or worse for the Israelites? What does Pharaoh say about God in 5:2?
- Q What was your response to these events if you were:
- The Israelites?
  - The Egyptian slave masters?
  - Pharaoh?
  - Moses or Aaron?
- Q There is a turning point in Exodus 6:7; what is so significant about this moment?
- Q What does it mean to have a hard heart as described in Exodus 7:3? Also see Romans 11:8 and Ephesians 4:18.
- Q Why would God harden Pharaoh's heart to hearing Moses' message? Does God still harden hearts today?
- Q How do you continue sharing the gospel with someone when they openly express opposition to it? Should you continue sharing it with them anyways? Can their attitude towards God ever change? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, how should your mindset change?



I am the LORD your God



## 4

# DELIVERANCE IN DISGUISE

## EXODUS 7:6-11:10

### INTRODUCTION

It's the moment God's people have been waiting for—deliverance! But deliverance doesn't come how anyone would expect. A series of plagues demonstrate God's sovereign power—so that Pharaoh, Egypt, and Israel might know He alone is the Lord. God leaves no room for doubt that He is the Deliverer, that He is God of creation, not just of a people. In doing so, God not only displays His miraculous power, but mercifully builds trust with the family of God, who will look back on these triumphs for years to come as they learn over and over to trust the one who brought them out of Egypt.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q What's your go-to to relax and unwind after a hard day?

### MAIN IDEA

God's deliverance reveals that He is Lord.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 7:6-11:10

Q For many of us, we are about to enter a very familiar Bible story: The Plagues of Egypt. Let's read with caution and intent, studying each moment as the story unfolds, not rushing to fill in what we already know. Notice carefully the repetition in the plagues, and the differences as they progress.

### READ EXODUS 7:6-12

Q In this interaction with Pharaoh God gives Moses and Aaron very specific instructions; what are they (*see Exodus 7:8-9*)? What surprising thing occurs? What was the result?

**Follow Up:** Read 7:13, paying special attention to the last phrase, "as the LORD said." Why is this important to remember? What does the author want us to see?

Each plague that God will bring upon Egypt makes a statement about an Egyptian god or goddess.

1. First Plague: Nile into blood. *Hapi—Egyptian god of the Nile, a water bearer.*
2. Second Plague: Frogs. *Heket—Egyptian goddess of fertility, water, and renewal; she had the head of a frog.*
3. Third Plague: Gnats (or lice). *Geb—Egyptian god of the earth; the Egyptian god Geb, was over the dust of the earth.*



# DELIVERANCE IN DISGUISE

## EXODUS 7:6-11:10

# 4

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 7:6-11:10

4. Fourth Plague: Flies. *Khepri*—Egyptian god of creation, movement of the sun, rebirth; *Khepri*, the Egyptian god had the head of a fly.
5. Fifth Plague: Death of Livestock. *Hathor*—Egyptian goddess of love and protection. Usually this Egyptian goddess was depicted with the head of a cow.
6. Sixth Plague: Boils. *Isis*—Egyptian goddess of medicine and peace.
7. Seventh Plague: Hail. *Nut*—Egyptian goddess of the sky.
8. Eighth Plague: Locusts. *Seth*—Egyptian god of storms and disorder.
9. Ninth Plague: Darkness. *Ra*—The sun god.
10. Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn. *Pharaoh*—The ultimate power of Egypt.

(For more information and to study further visit: <https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/what-the-bible-tells-us-about-the-10-plagues-of-egypt>)

**Q** What is God's purpose in directly attacking each of these revered gods and goddesses?

Pharaoh's responses vary from plague to plague, but they have a theme. What is it (see *Exodus* 7:13; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34; 10:20, 27)?

**Follow Up:** Is there an area of your life you continually refuse to submit to the Lordship of Christ?

**Q** Did Pharaoh harden his heart, or did God? In the first five plagues we see the phrase, "Pharaoh hardened his heart"; in the last five, his wrath reaches a point of no return! Think of all the opportunities he had to repent and do what was right! In this narrative, we see God bend Pharaoh's wicked intentions to His purpose, the redemption of Israel, and He allows Pharaoh's sinful desires to lead him to his own destruction.

**Follow Up:** Read Proverbs 14:12. How does this verse help explain the condition of Pharaoh's heart?

**Follow Up:** Read Romans 1:18-25. How does this passage inform your understanding of the nature of our own hearts?



# 4

## DELIVERANCE IN DISGUISE EXODUS 7:6-11:10

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 7:6-11:10

Q God spares Israel from the fourth plague, setting them apart in the land of Goshen (see *Exodus 8:22*). Why does God separate them?

**Follow Up:** As Israel watched these plagues, what do you think was going through their minds? What was God revealing to them about Himself through the plagues? Why?

Q Repeatedly, we see Pharaoh “relent” and plead for mercy, which Moses and God repeatedly grant him (see *Exodus 8:8-12, 28-30; 9:27-33; 10:16*). What does this reveal to you about the heart of God? How do Moses’ prayers for Pharaoh, his enemy, challenge or encourage you? (Remember, God told Moses that Pharaoh would have a hard heart, but Moses didn’t know when God would release Israel, until right before the tenth plague.)

**Follow Up:** In some instances, we read that Pharaoh admits his sin, but as soon as the plague is removed, he returns to business as usual. How might your life sometimes reflect this attitude?

Q At first glance, Exodus 11:4-10 can feel harsh. But do not be deceived! All of Egypt and Israel have witnessed nine terrible plagues, in succession! Each one was an opportunity for repentance; each person had time to respond in humility. God never acts unjustly (see *Psalms 89:14; Romans 2:6-11; Colossians 3:25*). How do you see this passage differently by understanding God’s heart and attitude of justice? What do you learn about God?

*Dig Deeper – This passage speaks greatly to the sovereignty of God and His role in our lives and the decisions we make. To learn more, consider reading: <https://bibleproject.com/blog/pharaohs-heart-grew-harder/>*

### NOTES

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APPLICATION

God is sovereign over all of human life and creation, not merely the large-scale events such as we read about in Exodus. Does the way you live reflect confidence in God's sovereignty, or are there areas in your life where you give your allegiance to someone or something else? Spend time reflecting on where you might put your trust. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and give you proper awe and reverence for the Lord. Where specifically in your life do you need to remember God is the Lord and there is no other?

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# 4

## DELIVERANCE IN DISGUISE FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

#### PLAGUES 1-9

As we start our study today, picture Moses and Aaron in your mind—how old do you think they are? Today’s passage begins by letting us know that Moses is 80 years old and Aaron is 83! What follows are the first nine plagues God sent down on the Egyptians.

#### MAIN IDEA

God’s deliverance reveals that He is Lord.

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 7:6-13

- Q God told Moses and Aaron to give Pharaoh the first proof of His power (*see Exodus 7:8-13*). What was it? Was Pharaoh amazed by this; what happened next? Did this mean that God is not the most powerful? What happened next to prove He is?
- Q The Hebrew word for “plague” means “slaughter, a disease, or a strong blow.” God sent powerful blows in judgement on the people, the ruler, and the gods of Egypt. Fill in the chart **on the following page** as you read Exodus 7:14-10:29 out loud to your family.
- Q Why do you think the plagues varied in seriousness or severity? How does this show God’s mercy?
- Q After the seventh and eighth plagues (*see Exodus 9:27-35; 10:16-20*), Pharaoh said he was a sinner. Sincere confession is demonstrated in repentance (turning away from sin) and leads to obedience. Was Pharaoh repentant and obedient; did he let God’s people go?

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 11:1-10

- Q How many more plagues did God tell Moses were coming? What would the plague be (*see Exodus 11: 4-5*)? What did God say would be the result of that plague (*see Exodus 11:1*)?



HIS DELIVERANCE

# DELIVERANCE IN DISGUISE

## FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

# 4

	What was the plague?	Did the magicians copy it? Could they reverse it?	Did Pharaoh say he would let God's people go? Did he?	What does the Bible say about Pharaoh's heart?	What does the Bible say about why God sent the plague?	Plague Seriousness or Severity
1	Water turned to blood	Yes, but only over well water. No.	No. No.	Pharaoh's heart remained hardened.	"By this you shall know that I am the LORD" (7:17)	Distressful
2						Distressful
3						Distressful
4						Distressful
5						Painful and costly
6						Painful and costly
7						Dangerous and destructive
8						Dangerous and destructive
9						Dangerous and destructive

Family Discipleship Continues on page 36.

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The three signs God gave Aaron and Moses, and some of the plagues, were copied or counterfeited by Pharaoh's magicians. The Bible tells us that Satan attacks God's truth by imitating the works of God. If the magicians were as powerful as they claimed, they could have prevented the plagues or reversed them, but they could not. Each time, Pharaoh had to wait for God to stop the plagues.
- There were over 80 gods in Egypt that were supposed to protect different areas of life. Just like with the magicians, if the gods could have, they would have prevented the plagues or reversed them, but they could not. God is the one true God.
- God told Moses that Pharaoh would harden his heart (*see Exodus 4:21; 7:3-4*). We see the progression of Pharaoh's hardened heart during the plagues. "Harden one's heart" means that when a person sees clear proof of God's power, he still refuses to believe, and he continues to resist God.
- When God called Moses, and during the plagues, God repeatedly said, "That they might know..." The Egyptians would learn that God is the one true God. What do you think the Hebrews (God's people) learned from witnessing God's power?

### WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to deliver you from worshipping false gods? From the plagues? From Pharaoh?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who will rescue My people in a way no one expects. I am the one who will use a series of plagues to demonstrate my power, that all might know I am the Lord. I am the one whose people will learn to trust Me—the one who will bring them out of Egypt and will deliver them to the Promised Land. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.


### MAIN IDEA

God's deliverance reveals that He is Lord.

### GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What are the ten plagues that we see in this section of Scripture?
- Q What do all these plagues have in common?

- Q If Pharaoh was considered a god among his people, what is God (Yahweh) proving through His actions?
- Q Do you see God through a lens of having power over creation? If so, how does it impact the way you interact with God?
- Q How has God revealed to you that He is the LORD over all? Have you shared your story with anyone?



HE IS LORD

## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever asked why something is done the way it is? How many times has the answer been, “That’s just the way it’s always been done”? Truth be told, that isn’t a satisfactory answer because it gives no resolution. As we watch the tenth and final plague unfold, we see God institute new customs into the lifeblood of Israel. As God instructs Israel in the celebration of the Passover, He tells them why: to remember that it was God who delivered; He did the unthinkable and saved them from their slavery. Remembering this truth would sustain them for years to come. God knows where we focus our time and energy. The things we celebrate shape our hearts, minds, and actions. God wanted His people to be marked by their dedication to remembering His faithfulness to His promise throughout all the generations, for their good and His glory.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

Q What is your favorite holiday tradition?  
Why?

## MAIN IDEA

The intentional act of remembering God’s grace builds perseverance and hope in trials.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 12-13:16

Q Read Exodus 12:1-6, paying specific attention to the detailed instructions given here. What does God tell Moses and Aaron to do? Make sure to cover the who, what, and when.

**Follow Up:** What is the significance of this month, the month when Passover would be celebrated, becoming the first month of their calendar year? (*Think about traditions we have surrounding January and New Year’s Resolutions.*)

Q God is very specific in His instructions on how Israel will participate in this new ritual. Looking at Exodus 12:7-11, 14-20, 43-49, what specific instructions does He give them?

**Follow Up:** What are they to do (*see Exodus 12:3, 6, 7-9, 21-22*)?

**Follow Up:** How are they to eat (*see Exodus 12:11*)?

**Follow Up:** How long are they to eat unleavened bread (*see Exodus 12: 15, 18-19*)?

**Follow Up:** What are they to remove from their homes (*see Exodus 12:15*)?

**Follow Up:** Who is supposed to participate (*see Exodus 12:43-49*)?

**Follow Up:** What happens if they don’t obey (*see Exodus 12:19*)?



## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 12-13:16

READ EXODUS 12:12-13

- Q What does God say He will do in response to their obedience?
- Q What is significant about the Israelites' participation in preparation of the tenth plague? Up until this point, God Himself had separated the Israelites from the Egyptians during the plagues, but now He calls on them to act; to distinguish themselves. Why might this be? What happens when we have to step out and trust God in a new situation? Why might He be calling the Israelites to step out in trust now?

**Follow Up:** When have you had to step out in faith and trust that God would do what He said He would do?

- Q Notice the repeated command “to keep,” and “to observe” in Exodus 12:14, 17, 24-26 and 13:3, 5, 8-10, 14 (*remember, repetition should focus our attention on a specific point God wants us to grasp!*). God wants this celebration of His faithfulness to continue throughout the generations. How do the Israelites benefit by taking time to remember their redemption from Egypt?

**Follow Up:** How should meditating on God's redemption in their lives shape everything the Israelites do (*see Exodus 13:16*)?

- Q Symbolism is a very important aspect of Passover; each element represented something specific to the people. The command to sacrifice an animal would not have been strange to Israel like it is to us today. It was a common practice in their society as a response of thanks, appeasement, or atonement. The specific requirements of the lamb highlight the sacred nature of the sacrifice and symbolize the imputed cleanliness of the person, or people, covered by the sacrifice (*see Exodus 12:5*). Whose death does the lamb represent; in other words, who is the lamb dying for?

**Follow Up:** What does the blood on the door symbolize?

**Follow Up:** What does the leaven represent?



# 5

## REMEMBERING SUSTAINS EXODUS 12-13:16

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 12-13:16

READ EXODUS 12:21,28

Q What significance do you see in these verses? Where in your own life do you take God's Word this seriously? Where do you tend to just live as you please, taking God's Word as more of a suggestion?

**Follow Up:** Read 12:24-25. God's commands are never arbitrary, they serve to give God the glory He deserves, and are for our good. What is the promise given to the Israelites for their obedience? How does understanding the weighty reverence with which we should hold God's commands impact the way you approach those areas of life you identified above, where you tend to see God's Word as a suggestion?

Q In Exodus 12:29 we see that God struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. This might seem harsh, but turn back a few pages in your Bible and read Exodus 1:16, 22 and 4:22. How do these verses impact your understanding of what God is doing through this plague? How does it enhance your understanding of God's character?

**Follow Up:** Are there areas in your life where you know what God has commanded, yet disregard it because you haven't experienced the consequence yet? Thank God for His grace! How might you use this conviction to transform your thinking?

READ EXODUS 13:1-2, 11-13

Q God gives another command to Israel. What is it? Why does He instruct them to do this (*see Exodus 13:14-16*)? Read Psalm 24:1. How does this psalm inform your understanding of what God wants Israel to remember here?

### NOTES

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## APPLICATION

“The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”

Psalm 24:1

Spend some time reflecting on the Lordship of our God. He is Creator and King of the universe. Let the truths you've seen in your study soak into your heart and stir up awe and wonder as you thank God for His Word which helps us remember His works, His sovereignty, and His promises.

## NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

THE TENTH PLAGUE, PASSOVER,  
THE EXODUS

Passover is a Jewish holiday that originated with God's deliverance of His people from Egypt, as we read in this part in Exodus. God gives directions to the Israelites for the preparation of, the purpose behind, and the remembrance of Passover. Read Exodus 12:1-28 out loud to your family and note the following:

vs. 1-6 – selection of the lamb

vs. 7-11 – preparation of the lamb and instruction on eating

vs. 12-13, 25-27 – purpose of Passover

vs. 14-20 – the remembrance of Passover

Q What were God's people to do with the blood of the lamb? What would the blood prevent? What is significant about the name "Passover"?

## MAIN IDEA

The intentional act of remembering God's faithfulness helps us persevere and have hope in trials and suffering.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 12:29-32

Q Why was there a "great cry in the night"? Finish the chart:

	What was the plague?	Did the magicians copy it? Could they reverse it?	Did Pharaoh say he would let God's people go? Did he?	What does the Bible say about Pharaoh's heart?	What does the Bible say about why God sent the plague? ( <i>Look in 11:1, 7b</i> )	Plague Seriousness or Severity
10						Dangerous and destructive

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 12:33-42; 13:3-6

Q This passage of Scripture is known as "The Exodus" and is also the name of this specific book of the Bible. What word does "exodus" sound like? What do you think "exodus" means?

Q God's people took and baked unleavened bread. "Leaven" is an ingredient used to make bread dough rise. Why did their bread not rise?

Q The Feast of Unleavened Bread is another day of remembrance. What are the Israelites called to remember?

## FAMILY DISCUSSION

- Q God promised to rescue His people. From the first chapter on, God repeatedly says:
- Who He is (Who is He?)
  - He will keep His covenant (What was the covenant/promise?)
  - He will rescue His people (Did He?)
  - He will give them the land He promised (This is next!)

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- God introduced and established new celebrations and days of remembrance for the people of Israel. Why was it important for the Hebrews (God's people) to remember? Why do they need to be reminded of God's faithfulness?
- At Passover, the focus is on the lamb; believers would remember the Hebrews' deliverance from captivity in Egypt by the blood of the lamb. Who is called the lamb in the New Testament (see John 1:29)? We are delivered from our captivity to sin by the blood of the Lamb of God.
- How long did the Hebrews live in Egypt? For most of those years, they suffered in slavery. Trials and suffering are for our good and God's glory. They teach us to:
  - trust God to do what is best for us
  - look for ways to honor God in our trials and suffering
  - remember that God will not leave us
  - and watch for God's plan for us

### WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to deliver you from slavery? From the Egyptians? From Pharaoh?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who has rescued my people in a way no one would expect. I am the one who did the unthinkable and saved them from their captivity. I am the one whose people will look back for years to come and they will be marked by their dedication to remembrance. I am the one who brought them out of Egypt and will bring them to the Promised Land.  
Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

## MAIN IDEA

The intentional act of remembering God's faithfulness helps us persevere and have hope in trials and suffering.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

Q What is an event that has happened during your lifetime that has had a significant impact on you or the people around you? How has it impacted people?

READ EXODUS 12:29-32

Q How did God's actions affect the two different groups of people?

Q How did God instruct the Israelites to prepare themselves for the Passover event?

Q As Christians, we no longer observe Passover in the same way as the Israelites did; how do we remember what Jesus has done for us?  
(Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-30).

Q When you take communion, do you do it in a manner that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30? Why or why not?

## APPLICATION

Stop to take an accurate examination of your life before partaking in communion, asking for forgiveness from anything that has kept you from being completely obedient to God.



NOTES

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### INTRODUCTION

The parting of the Red Sea is a story familiar to many, and we must take care not to allow its familiarity to dull our senses. Throughout this portion of Scripture, God declares to Moses that He will make His glory known. Nothing like this had happened before in the sight of humanity, nor has it since. We see God reveal His unrivaled power over both nature and nation as He releases Egypt's grasp on Israel once and for all. Even so, try to put yourself in the Israelites' sandals for a moment: they were in a desert, heading to literally only God knows where, with the most powerful nation on earth coming straight toward them; they were stuck between an army and a sea. They were afraid; surely, they would die or be taken back into captivity. But God's very presence was with them! When we face our greatest fear, it is all too easy to slip back into old mindsets and forget that God never leaves or forsakes His own. The Lord, in His kindness, used even the Israelites' apparent dire circumstance to bolster their reverential trust and confidence in the Lord. Israel now knew there is no one like the Lord! For generations to come they would look back on this moment, praising God's glorious deeds and wonders.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q When planning a trip, what's the first thing you do?

### MAIN IDEA

God's glory is on full display through His presence, protection, and praise.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 13:17-15:21

Q God knows what is best for us and will even take us where we would never go on our own in order to show Himself to us in a way we might never see otherwise. Read Exodus 13:17-18. What was God's plan here?

**Follow Up:** What does this show you about God's character and the way He cares for His people? Where specifically in your life do you need to apply this truth?

### READ EXODUS 13:21-22

Q We've seen God protect Israel through specific directions (see *Exodus 13:17-18*) and now we see Him do so by His presence. Both are very good. Today, we have the benefit of God's protection through His word (direction) and the Holy Spirit (presence). Which do you tend to rely on more? Why is it important that we utilize both?



## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 13:17-15:21

- Q** Oftentimes we think if we follow God's lead, we will live trouble-free lives. However, we see in 14:1-4 that this isn't the case. Why does God say He will allow trouble to come into Israel's path? Why does this matter so much to God?

**Follow Up:** How will Israel benefit from witnessing this take place?

### READ EXODUS 14:10-11

- Q** Fear can cause us to act irrationally. Who was Israel afraid of? Who are they supposed to fear? Notice who the Israelites blame for their present affliction, and how quickly they've idealized their past. How often do we likewise confuse what is trustworthy? What happens when our fears are out of alignment?

**Follow Up:** Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 and 1 Timothy 1:17. How can these two sections of Scripture help you fight your fears and keep them properly aligned?

### READ EXODUS 14:13-14

- Q** Moses responds to the Israelites' complaints by redirecting their attention to God. What four things does Moses instruct Israel to do? What does Moses say God will do? What differences do you observe?

- Q** In 14:15-18 we see that God doesn't respond to Israel's fear by immediately delivering them from their threatening situation, but by taking them through it. Why does He act this way?

**Follow Up:** Where have you seen God do this in your life?

**Follow Up:** Read Romans 8:28. How does seeing God bring Israel through this trial for His glory inform your understanding of this Scripture passage?

### READ EXODUS 14:19-20

- Q** God saves Israel by putting Himself, the pillar of cloud, between His people and their enemy, Egypt. Who is our enemy, and how does God protect us?

- Q** In 14:21-29 we see the outcome for those who walk in obedience to the Lord's command, and of those who walk in opposition to Him. How is God glorified in obedience? How is He glorified in opposition?

APPLICATION

“The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”  
Psalm 24:1

Spend some time reflecting on the Lordship of our God. He is Creator and King of the universe. Let the truths you've seen in your study soak into your heart and stir up awe and wonder as you thank God for His Word which helps us remember His works, His sovereignty, and His promises.

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**GOD'S GLORY DISPLAYED**  
*EXODUS 13:17-15:21*

6

NOTES

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### FAMILY DISCUSSION

#### MAIN IDEA

God's glory is on full display through His presence, protection, and praise.

#### THE PILLARS OF CLOUD AND FIRE TO THE RED SEA

Throughout this portion of Scripture, God declares to Moses that He will make His glory known. We see God reveal His power over both nature and people as He releases Egypt's grasp on the Israelites once and for all.

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 13:17-14:30

- Q When Pharaoh let the people go, was Moses ultimately in charge? If not, who was? How did He look? God's people did not take the quickest route away from Egypt, why?
- Q When everything happened as God said: Pharaoh had second thoughts, he pursued God's people with his army, and thought he'd trapped them with no escape—did the people trust God? What did they say? Did Moses trust God? What did he say?
- Q God's people appeared to be trapped—the Egyptian army was coming toward them and the Red Sea was behind them—but God had a plan to keep His people safe and deliver them to the promised land. What was His purpose: (see *Exodus 14:4 ESV and fill in the blanks*) "I will get \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ and all his host, and the \_\_\_\_\_ shall \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ am the \_\_\_\_\_."
- Q What does God tell Moses to do and what will be the result?
- Q Where did the pillar of cloud that had been leading the Israelites move?

God wants His people to trust Him. Moses was learning to trust, for he said that God would fight for them (see *Exodus 14:14*). The cloud that housed God's presence had moved to "have their back." Now God's people had to step out in faith and cross the Red Sea. God had parted the water and the ground was dry, but what still would have been scary about stepping out in faith here (see *Exodus 14:22-23*)?

- Q What happened when the Egyptians began to cross the Red Sea in pursuit of God's people?

FAMILY DISCUSSION



Write Exodus 14:30a and 14:31 below, substituting “Israel” with “God’s people.”

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THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- What God promises, He will do. When the right time comes, God delivers. He always plans the best way for His people (*see Psalm 23:3; 25:4-5*). Can you imagine if that had been us leaving Egypt—arguing with each other and with God about the best way to go?
- The Hebrews had the pillar of cloud and fire; we have the Word of God. What does Psalm 119:105 and Jeremiah 23:29 tell us?
- God’s people believed. In this passage, we see the three key ways God will continue to teach the Hebrews as they journey to the promised land:

**- Following God - Trusting in God - Praising God -**

They will have to learn to trust in God no matter what, and know He will remain faithful to His promises.

- The same can be said for us. God delivered us from sin, but that is just the beginning. We have to learn to trust in God no matter what, and know He will remain faithful to His promises.
- The song of praise we read in Exodus 15 can be broken down into the following four stanzas. Read it aloud to your family and categorize each stanza:
  - Verses 1b-5: *God’s victory is described*
  - Verses 6-10:
  - Verses 11-16a:
  - Verses 16b-18:

*Family Discipleship Continues on page 52.*

**WILL YOU TRUST ME?**

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to guide you away from Egypt? Along the route I know is best? And though it seems like there is no escape, do you trust that I will protect you?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who plans the best way for my people. I am the one who guides their way. I am the one who brought them out of Egypt and will bring them to the Promised Land. I am the one whose people will learn to follow, to trust, and to praise—no matter what. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

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### GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q** What would be going through your head if you experienced the events described in Exodus 13:17-22?
- Q** Describe the three different ways we see God's glory on full display according to the following passages:
1. Exodus 13:17-22:
  2. Exodus 14:19-29:
  3. Exodus 15:1-18:
- Q** In this section of Scripture, we see that God not only leads but He also protects. How have you felt God leading you in your life? Where have you experienced His protection?

### MAIN IDEA

God's glory is on full display through His presence, protection, and praise.

### READ HEBREWS 13:5-6

- Q** Can you confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" (*If not, check out Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5.*)
- Q** Where does the power come from to be able to live life as Hebrews 13:6 describes?
- Q** We are called to be God's light, displaying His glory in this dark world (see *Matthew 5:14-16*). What changes do you need to make in order to live life remembering that we serve a God who provides His presence and protection to you, and is worthy of all praise?



HIS GLORY ON DISPLAY

## INTRODUCTION

God is unchanging in His character. What He says, He will do, albeit in His timing. Complaints reveal our lack of faith and doubts that exist in our hearts. At the core of every grumble is the question, “Can I really trust God?” This is Israel’s problem in this passage. We witness four instances where the people question God’s care for them. Even though they are barely out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, they quickly turn to doubt as thirst and hunger become very real problems. But we also see God provide, urging them to build their trust in His character, not in their circumstance. In His constant care and provision, God not only provides for their physical well-being, but for their spirits as well. As the people of Israel grow in their trust of the Lord, they discover true satisfaction is found in Him.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

Q Generally speaking, what is your disposition and response to life when things don’t quite go the way you planned?

## MAIN IDEA

God provides for all our physical and spiritual needs.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 15:22-17:7

### READ EXODUS 12:12-13

Q What is the Israelites’ problem? Their lack of potable water is the obvious answer, but let’s look deeper to the root issue. Think back; what has Israel literally just walked through? They have witnessed first-hand God’s deliverance, and seen Him keep His promises, but don’t yet know Him as provider. Before judging Israel too harshly, what do you know to be true about God cognitively, but are still trying to figure out experientially?

**Follow Up:** The stunning speed at which Israel forgets God’s faithfulness can be amazing; His act of splitting the sea should have been evidence enough that He could give them water to drink. But, instead of chastising them, God uses this moment to build their faith (*see Exodus 16:25b*). What circumstances cause you to question God’s faithfulness to you? How might knowing God sees you, is your deliverer, provider, and healer, change your view of life’s challenges?

**Follow Up:** How does God respond in 16:26? What does this response teach you about Him?



## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 15:22-17:7

Q More complaining! Israel is quickly becoming the proverbial disgruntled child in the back seat of a road trip. There's always something to whine about! This time? They're hungry. Read Exodus 16:2-3. Who do they blame for their situation?

**Follow Up:** Israel doesn't see what God is doing. Instead of reminding themselves of God's miraculous deliverance, they focus on the misfortune in front of them: their empty bellies. What causes you to forget God's past deliverances and faithfulness? What can you do to improve your spiritual vision?

Q God uses physical tests to help us develop our spiritual endurance. Look at Jesus' responses to hunger in Matthew 4:1-4; 7:25-26, and John 4:31-34. What does this teach you about God and hunger? What other areas of "hunger" do you have in life that this principle can apply to? Where is God testing your spiritual endurance today?

Q When the Israelites complained of hunger, what was God's response (*see Exodus 16:4*)? As you read through Moses' response to them found in verses 16:6-12, what aspect of God's identity does He indicate they will they know as a result? Why is that significant?

Q God provides food, Israel trusts God, and all is well...for the moment. People are slow to learn and trust. Read God's instructions in 16:4-5,16. What does Israel do in response (*see Exodus 16:20*)? Before allowing yourself to condemn their slothful trust, take a moment to examine your own life; where do you hear God's word, but not obey it?

## READ EXODUS 16:22-30

Q How were the people disobedient this time? What aspect of their behavior exhibits a lack of trust?

Q God commands Israel to take a day of rest—the Sabbath. The institution of this day sets Israel apart from all other nations (*as the five-day work week had not been instituted yet by labor unions, and they lived in an agrarian society where you don't eat if you don't work!*). How does resting reveal trust? What does it teach you about God?

Q God gives another command in 16:32. What is it? Why would God want this particular act remembered?

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 15:22-17:7

**Follow Up:** Do you have a special memento in your home to remind you of God's faithfulness during a specific time? If not, consider finding one. It could be a great conversation starter.

### READ EXODUS 17:1-13

**Q** Haven't we read this already? Israel is back at it with the grumbling and complaining. What does God instruct Moses to do, and what does He say He will do (see *Exodus 17:5-6*)?

**Follow Up:** For a deeper look, consider what Paul says is happening here in 1 Corinthians 10:1-5 and then re-read what God tells Moses in Exodus 17:5-6. What differences stand out to you?

## APPLICATION

It's easy to look down on Israel for allowing their physical needs of hunger or thirst to overshadow their spiritual need to know and trust God, when we are able to go to the sink or fridge to quickly relieve our discomfort. Read Psalm 42:1. Think about being in a heat that would make a deer pant. That's got to be hot! Have you ever longed for God this way? Have you ever found yourself in a season of difficulty but chose to address your own needs without giving God a chance to work? Take some time to sit with those memories; how might you have experienced God differently if you'd waited on Him instead? Keeping God's faithfulness to Israel in mind, what could those situations looked like if you'd allowed His faithfulness to take the place of self-sufficiency? Read the rest of Psalm 42.

Note how the psalmist encourages himself to remember God's faithfulness when life is hard. Spend some time in prayer asking for forgiveness for your doubt, acknowledging that God is steadfast and faithful. Spend some time praising Him for the times you have seen His faithfulness in your life.



## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## COMPLAINTS IN THE DESERT

God's people will have to learn to trust in Him no matter what, and know that what God says, He will do. As the Israelites complain, their words show what is in their hearts: a complete lack of trust.

## MAIN IDEA

God provides for all our physical and spiritual needs.

In this passage, we will see God test His people four times. Remember that tests and trials are for our good and God's glory. They teach us to: trust God to do what is best for us, look for ways to honor God in our trials, remember that God will not leave us, and watch for God's plan for us.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 15:22-27

- Q How many days after the great miracle of the parting of Red Sea, did the people grumble? What did they grumble about? Should they have grumbled (*three days without water is a long time*)? Why or why not?
- Q When they found water, they could not drink it—why? What did God tell Moses to do? Was it the log that made the water sweet? Why or why not?
- Q God made a rule for the people—what was it?

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 16:1-36

- Q What did the people complain about in verses 2-3? In their complaining, they said that it would have been better to die in Egypt where they “sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full.” What detail are they leaving out about their time in Egypt? How are they exaggerating?
- Q What will rain from Heaven (*verses 4-5*)? What were God's instructions about it?
- Q God explains again that He is doing this that “they might know” and adds that “they might see”—what is it He wants them to know and see (*verses 6-7*)?
- Q God gave His people bread in the morning and what at night? When they first saw the bread, what did they say and why (*verse 15*)? What did they call it (*verse 31*)? How does the Bible describe it (*verses 14, 31*)?
- Q Moses reminded them of God's instructions with the bread (manna)—to gather a day's portion and then He specified to not leave any over ‘til morning (*verses 16-20*). Did everyone listen? What happened?

### FAMILY DISCUSSION







Q What day could they gather more than a day's portion and save it 'til morning (verses 22-30)? Why? Did everyone listen? What happened?

Q God commanded another "remembrance"; what was it (verses 32-36)? Why?

### READ ALOUD EXODUS 17:1-7

Q Again, the people complained and quarreled with Moses about having no water to drink. What should they have done?

Q Moses did what they should have done. What did God tell Moses to do (vs. 5-6)? Moses called the place "Massah and Meribah," or "the place of testing and quarreling"! How did God's people do? Fill out the score card below:

	Circle one:		
Following God		OR	
Trusting in God		OR	
Praising God		OR	

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Tests and trials will come. We should:
  - Trust God to fill the need.
  - Obey God's instructions.
  - Remember the lessons God teaches us.
- God's people were focused on "What shall we eat?" and "What shall we drink?" What did Jesus teach about this from the Sermon on the Mount (see *Matthew 6:21, 25-33*)?

*Family Discipleship Continues on page 60.*

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The day after Jesus fed the five thousand, he taught on the “bread of life” (see *John 6:30-59*). The people listening wanted more food, but also wanted Jesus to give them a sign or do another miracle. What did Jesus say about where manna came from (*verse 32*)? What did Jesus say was better than manna (*verses 33-35*)?
  - When Jesus taught, He used words that meant more than they seem to. Jesus wasn’t talking about physical bread. He was talking about spiritual satisfaction in our hearts and souls. Just as our physical bodies need food to live, our souls need Jesus.
  - God gave manna to the Hebrew people, but He sent Jesus for the whole world.

## WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In this week’s passage we see how God asked His people: will you trust me to provide for your physical needs? Do you know that I will provide for your spiritual needs?

Will you trust Him? Hold onto this promise this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who gives tests and trials for your good and my glory. I am the one who provides for My people. I am the one who understands that you cannot live on bread alone. I am the one whose people will learn to trust, obey, and remember. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

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GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What are some of your most basic needs? How are these needs met?
- Q In what way did God provide for the Israelites' needs in our passage today?

MAIN IDEA

God provides for all our physical and spiritual needs.

READ EXODUS 16:3 & 17:2-3

- Q What attitude did the Israelites have towards God up until this point in their journey? Where would they rather be?
- Q Does it seem odd that the Israelites would want to return to slavery in order to have their needs met, rather than rely on God to meet their needs?
- Q When was the last time you remembered God as the provider of your needs?

READ MATTHEW 6:25-34

- Q What does Jesus command His followers to do? How could this look in your own life?



### INTRODUCTION

The book of Exodus is often viewed as the story of one man (*Moses*) leading God's people. Yet littered throughout the book, we see members of his family and community play a key role in his life, impacting the larger story of the people of God. This week we see on full display the benefits of shared ministry and plurality in leadership. One person can't do it all. Leading, teaching & caring for God's people requires a collection of gifted and committed individuals seeking the well-being of the people. The same is true for us today. The community that God is building through His people is to be marked by every member ministering. When all members step up and play their part, we see the community flourish and the collective forward movement toward God's intended destination.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

Q Many of us have heard the popular idiom “There's no 'I' in team”—a principle that illustrates an important concept found in this week's study. What does the saying mean? Can you think of an example in your life where it took a variety of people to accomplish a task?

### MAIN IDEA

God uses the community of faith to bring deliverance, wisdom, and care to His people.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 17:8-18:27

#### READ EXODUS 17:8-10

Q What did Moses' staff represent or symbolize? For a refresher, revisit Exodus 4:1-5 and consider its use in bringing about the plagues in Egypt (*Exodus 4:17, 20; 7:17; 8:5, 16; 9:23*), parting the Red Sea (*Exodus 14:16*), and God's miraculous provision of water (*Exodus 17:5*).

**Follow Up:** What was the correlation between Moses holding the staff above his head and the Israelites winning the battle?

Q What appears to be the role of Aaron and Hur within this story? How can we translate these roles into a modern application in our church, workplace, or home? What do the roles of the “Aarons” and “Hurs” look like today? What happens in the church without this type of support?

**Follow Up:** What about Joshua? What was his role in this story? What is the role of the “Joshuas” of today? What happens when the church lacks alignment and engages in spiritual battles today?



## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 17:8-18:27

**Q** Many commentaries and scholars consider Moses' upheld rod as a form of intercessory prayer—the act of praying on behalf of someone. Moses is well known for this, as we will discover in Exodus 33. Do you see yourself as an active intercessor? Do you pray faithfully for others that they might experience victory in the spiritual battles of their lives?

### READ EXODUS 18:1-12

**Q** Some may see their extended family as a source of frustration, pain, or nuisance. What can we learn from the relationship dynamics taking place between Moses and Jethro in this passage?

**Q** In Exodus 18:8-12, Moses shares with Jethro the wondrous deeds of God's faithfulness to His people. Moses was making efforts to convert his father-in-law! Was he successful (*see verse 11*)?

**Follow Up:** Is there anyone in your family that wouldn't consider themselves a follower of Jesus? How can Moses' approach of respect, love, and truth-telling impact the way you share Jesus with them?

### READ EXODUS 18:13-22

**Q** In your own words, summarize the situation surrounding Moses leadership structure that prompted Jethro to tell him that it was “not good”?

**Q** Jethro recognized that overwork would wear out Moses, which, in turn, would ultimately wear out the people (*verse 18*). How does a leader's workload impact those under their leadership?

**Follow Up:** Why do you think some leaders resist delegating or empowering others to lead?



COMMUNITY OF FAITH

# 8

## MINISTRY IN A COMMUNITY OF FAITH EXODUS 17:8-18:27

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 17:8-18:27

Q What advice does Jethro give his son-in-law (verse 21)? Describe the implications of these character traits in the people we look to for wisdom, advice, and leadership today?

**Follow Up:** When you look to others for leadership, do you take into consideration the characteristics described in verse 21 (*able, God-fearing, trustworthy, hating bribes*)?

## APPLICATION

In this passage, we see a variety of roles and responsibilities depicted through the interactions of God’s people. A healthy community will practice what some call an “every-member ministry”. This concept is illustrated throughout Scripture. Followers of Jesus are given the title of “priest” and called to use their gifts for the good of the faith community (*Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:5-10; 4:10; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 4:11-16*). Healthy communities reflect members actively serving, loving, and praying. As you reflect on your current involvement in the local body, are you actively contributing to the betterment of your faith community? Or are you simply receiving, depriving the body of your priestly gifts?

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### FAMILY DISCUSSION

#### GOD DEFEATS ENEMIES

God chose Moses to lead the people of Israel, but Moses did not do it all alone (*even though at times he tried...not very well!*). As you read this passage, notice who God used to help Moses.

#### MAIN IDEA

God lovingly gives us relationships to help us through hard times.

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 17:8-16

- Q Who did Moses tell to lead God's people when fighting the Amalakites?
- Q Who went up the mountain with Moses? Why do you think it was important for them to go with him?

#### READ ALOUD EXODUS 18:1-27

- Q What were the names of Moses' sons? What did their names mean?
- Q How did Jethro feel when Moses told him about all the wonderful things God had done?
- Q What advice did Jethro give Moses? Do you think it was good advice? Why?

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- God wants us to fully depend on Him. However, God also uses other people to help us when we are in need. Isn't that amazing?! Sometimes God uses us to help encourage others or lighten their load. Other times, God gives us people to help us in our time of need. Who has God given you to help you through hard times?
- God did an incredible thing by rescuing His people from slavery. He could have done it all in one day, but He didn't. Why? Because He wants to be known! He wants everyone to know that He is the one true God. And it worked! Moses told Jethro all about their troubles and how God rescued them. What great things have you seen God do in your life? Who can you share that story with?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Imagine there was no Bible, and just one person was in charge of telling everyone God's commands and how He wants us to live. Not only that, but anytime you wanted to know what God wanted you to do, you had to wait on the phone on hold all day just to talk to the one guy who can give you an answer. What a pain! That's kind of what it was like when Moses first started leading God's people. Aren't you glad God had people write the Bible down for us? Isn't it amazing that God gave us His Word so that we can read and study it for ourselves? Not only that, but He also gave us the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us when we just aren't sure what to do.

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

This week's passage reveals God asking:  
Will you trust Me to deliver you from your enemies?

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps my promises. I am the one who defeats the enemies of My people. I am the one whom My people fully depend on, for I provide in their time of need. I want all people to know Me, for I am the one true God. I want My people to tell others about Me. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

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# 8


## MINISTRY IN A COMMUNITY OF FAITH YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

### GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q Describe a friend who you can count on no matter the circumstances.
- Q What leadership principle can we learn from Exodus 17:8-18:27? How did Moses receive help from others?
- Q What did Jethro do for Moses?
- Q Do you have someone in your own life who provides you with wisdom or correction when you need it? Why is it important to have people like that in your life? How should we as the church be like the people that Moses leaned on for assistance?

### MAIN IDEA

God uses the community of faith to bring deliverance, wisdom, and care to his people.



DELIVERANCE . WISDOM . CARE

### NOTES

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### NOTES

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# 9

## ENCOUNTER AT THE HOLY MOUNTAIN EXODUS 19:1-20:21

### INTRODUCTION

We have reached a key point in the Exodus story. The first eighteen chapters tell us how God worked to rescue and redeem His people from slavery, delivered them through the sea, and led them through the wilderness to His holy mountain. God has remained true to His promise made back in Exodus 3:12 (*"I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."* - ESV) Through all that we have studied, it is clear God has been with His people. God brings Israel and communicates to them what it means to dwell within His presence. His holiness and glory are put on display for everyone to see. Often when we approach this part of the Exodus story, we quickly want to run to the "rules" that are set out. However, when we do that, we miss out on seeing the beauty, power, and majesty of our God and the relationship He invites us into with Him. These words God gives Israel are not simply rules to obey, but they reflect God's character.

### CONVERSATION STARTER

- Q You've got three choices: to be a rule-follower, a rule-bender, or a rule-breaker. Which best describes you? Why types of rules/laws do you appreciate? Which are you tempted to disregard?

### MAIN IDEA

God builds a community that reflects His character and nature.

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 19:1-20:21

#### READ EXODUS 19:1-24

- Q What does Exodus 19:4-6 tell us about the promise God makes to the people of Israel? How do you think these words would have been received by people who had only known slavery in Egypt?

**Follow Up:** What do the terms "treasured possession", "kingdom of priests", and "holy nation" say about God's heart and intent for His people?

**Follow Up:** Why might this be important for the Israelites to understand before God gives them the law and requirements of what it means to follow Him?

- Q In 19:9-15, what were the people instructed to do as they prepared to hear from God? Why do you think these preparations were necessary?



### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 19:1-20:21

**Q** In 19:5 God invites His people to hear and obey His voice. In 19:8 we see God's people respond with "all that the Lord has spoken we will do." Do they remain faithful to that promise?

**Follow Up:** What does it mean to "obey God's voice"? How do we know what His voice sounds like?

### READ EXODUS 20:1-21

**Q** Read the preamble to the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:2; why do you think God reminds Israel of this fact before giving them the law? How does the preamble shape our reading and understanding of the Law? (*Hint, obedience to the law is based upon being a recipient of God's grace, not vice-versa. We don't obey to be in relationship, we obey because we are in relationship with God.*)

**Q** As you read through the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20: 3-17), do you notice any patterns? Is there a logical progression? (*Hint: Commandments 1-4 are "vertical," meaning they speak to our responsibility to love and be loyal to God, while 5-10 are "horizontal," speaking to the treatment of fellow man.*)

**Q** Take some time to go through the Ten Commandments and answer the following questions:

First Commandment – Exodus 20:3	Sixth Commandment – Exodus 20:13
Second Commandment – Exodus 20:4-6	Seventh Commandment – Exodus 20:14
Third Commandment – Exodus 20:7	Eighth Commandment – Exodus 20:15
Fourth Commandment – Exodus 20:8-11	Ninth Commandment – Exodus 20:16
Fifth Commandment – Exodus 20:12	Tenth Commandment – Exodus 20:17

- 1) What does this command mean?
- 2) What does this command teach me about God?
- 3) Which of these is hardest for you to maintain?

For further reading and reflection on the Ten Commandments, consider reading: [crossway.org/articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-the-ten-commandments/](http://crossway.org/articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-the-ten-commandments/)

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 19:1-20:21

Q Do you know anyone who is able to keep all ten of these commandments?

Follow Up: What is the purpose of the law if we cannot keep the law ourselves?

Follow Up: Why is it important to remember that the law given here should ultimately point us to our Savior?

Follow Up: What does the New Testament tell us about Jesus' involvement with the law? (*Hint: Paul tells us in Galatians 4:4-5, that Jesus was born under the law, to redeem those under the law. He has paid the penalty of the law and bore the curse of the law on our behalf (see Galatians 3:10-14; Colossians 2:13-14). Jesus has fulfilled the law perfectly (see Matthew 5:17-18).*)

## READ EXODUS 19:1-24

Q What do we learn from this passage as it relates to the Ten Commandments?

## APPLICATION

Tim Keller summarizes the Christian's approach to the law this way:

*"Do it because he is your Lord and Savior and you are not. Do it because it is the law of the Lord. And if you do it—if you obey him even in the little things—you will know God, know yourself, find God's grace, love your neighbor, and simply honor him as God. Not a bad deal."*

While the Ten Commandments are given to instruct us on how to live, they should also increase our adoration and appreciation for what Christ has done for us. As we close, take some time to confess ways you may have fallen short this week surrounding these commands. Ask for God to help you grow in your obedience in these areas.



## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

It has been 45 days since the Passover and Moses is about to have another encounter with God. God is going to honor the promise He made to Moses in Exodus 3:12. God's people are encamped at the base of Mount Sinai and God calls Moses up to the mountain to meet Him. There He gave Moses the Ten Commandments. The perfect 10. Ten simple rules for His people to live by.

## MAIN IDEA

God builds a community that reflects His character and nature.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 19:1-20:21

- Q What was the promise God made to Moses in Exodus 3:12 that is now coming true?
- Q In Exodus 19:4-6, what does God tell Moses to tell His people? What do you think He is preparing them to hear?
- Q In Exodus 19:16-20, we learn that after three days, God descended on the mountain in fire and the mountain trembled greatly because of His presence. Can you think of another story in the Bible where the Lord showed himself to His people after three days?
- Q Read the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17. Do you think the Ten Commandments are still important today? Why or why not? How would your life be different if all the people around you perfectly followed the Ten Commandments?

## CHART OUT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

What's the Commandment?	Who is it about?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

FAMILY DISCUSSION

6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Q Commandments 1-4 are all about honoring and respecting who? Why do you think those commandments are first?

Q Commandments 5-10 give us direction on how to treat who?

READ MATTHEW 22:34-40

Q How does what Jesus said in Matthew 22:34-40 echo what the 10 Commandments tell us?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The Ten Commandments give us insight into the character of God. Read them again. What does God value? What things make God sad?
- How well did God’s people do in following Him?

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people, Will you trust Me to deliver you from being captive to sin?

Will you trust Him?

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the King and Law-Giver. I am the one who rescued and redeems My people. I have established a covenant with My people. I am the one to whom My people can draw near, for I claim them as My own. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

# 9

## ENCOUNTER AT THE HOLY MOUNTAIN YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

### GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q When you hear the words “Ten Commandments,” what comes to mind?
- Q We often forget that the Ten Commandments are a part of the way God is setting apart a people for Himself. Read Exodus 6:7. What is the significance of this moment?
- Q God’s instructions set the Israelites apart from the rest of the nations. What are the benefits and dangers of not looking like everyone else?

### MAIN IDEA

God builds a community that reflects His character and nature.

### READ MATTHEW 22:34-40

- Q What does Jesus say sets His people apart from the rest of the world?
- Q How does your obedience towards Jesus’ commands set you apart from your peers who don’t know Jesus? What has been your experience when you live a gospel-centered life?

## TEN COMMANDMENTS

### NOTES

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## NOTE ON COVENANTS & EXODUS 20:22-23:19

### NOTE

+ As we approach the middle of Exodus, we reach the point of the story where God establishes and enters into a covenant with Israel. We find in the Mosaic Covenant, God used a contemporary cultural institution to communicate His will to His people, Israel. Chapters 19-24 of Exodus cover the key components of this. The covenant begins with an introduction of the two parties. It then launches off into what is considered a historical review, looking at the past relationship between the two parties. After that, there is the establishment of the law, that the great king imposes. After this there are blessings and curses: blessings if you follow the law; curses if you disobey the law (*see the book of Deuteronomy*). There is also the mention of witnesses. Because of all these factors, many scholars today are convinced that idea of the covenant is really like an ancient Near Eastern treaty. God enters into a covenant with Israel and it is ratified at the mountainside in Exodus 24.

*To learn more about Biblical Covenants throughout the Scriptures consider reading: <https://bibleproject.com/blog/covenants-the-backbone-bible/>*

+ The verses found within this section are often seen as case laws or judgements, commonly titled as the "Book of the Covenant." Essentially, these laws are the practical implications of the Ten Commandments, applying not only to worship, but also situations that could come up in everyday life for the Israelites. They were written to deal with specific situations. These commands expand upon the basic stipulations presenting punishments, examples, and applications. These detailed stipulations set forth the legal procedures which were designed to enforce the policy. As you read these verses, keep in mind that these instructions were given to inform God's people how to live in a way where they honored God, loved Him, and their neighbors.

The following is a brief breakdown of the case law provided:

- Worship (22:22-26)
- Slaves (21:1-11)
- Social Behavior (21:12-32)
- Restitution (21:33-22:15)
- Holiness (22:16-20)
- Social Justice (22:21-23:9)
- Sabbath & Festivals (23:10-19)





NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

Like all stories, it's important to understand the proper context to get a correct picture of what is being communicated. Without proper context, what God instructs to happen in the land of Canaan in this section of Exodus can seem extremely harsh, violent, and downright unfair. However, if we look back in redemptive history, the land of Canaan was promised to God's people all the way back in Genesis 12. It was in that passage that God told Abraham all his descendants would inherit the promised land—the land of Canaan. They would be His people; He would be their God. At this point in the history of God's people, it may appear as if God has failed to deliver. But God has not forgotten His promise, He reaffirms what He is going to do. Within this, God instills in His people that who and how we worship matter.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

- Q We all have a wide variety of relationships, yet there are a few that we prize and value over others. What makes those relationships so special? What are some ways you cultivate those relationships?

## MAIN IDEA

God is dedicated to securing His people's dwelling place and their worship.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 23:20-24:18

## READ EXODUS 23:20-33

- Q In the beginning of this section, God speaks to His people stating that He is sending someone to lead, guide, protect, and deliver victory to Israel. In this interaction, God states that if there is any straying from His word, it would not end well for them. Despite God clearly communicating the consequences of our sin, why do you think we still fail so frequently, knowing of the heartache that comes when straying from God?
- Q What seems to be God's primary concern for His people as they enter the land? (see *Exodus 23:24, 32-33*)
- Follow Up:** Why would this be a problem? Can you think of any correlation to our time and our relationship with God?
- Q What kind of confidence does it give you to know that God fights on behalf of His people?
- Follow Up:** How do we keep this promise in proper context by not applying it to battles that God did not intend for us?

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 23:20-24:18

*In this section of Exodus, we hear about the Angel of the Lord. This messenger was distinguished from God, yet at the same time had uniquely divine attributes. Many Christians have identified him as the second person of the Trinity, the pre-incarnate Son of God. We have encountered this phenomenon before, back at the burning bush and at the place where the water came from the rock. Long before His incarnation, long before He was born in Bethlehem, Christ was with His people on their way to salvation. To learn more about the Angel of the Lord, read: <https://bibleproject.com/blog/who-is-the-angel-of-the-lord/>*

### READ EXODUS 24:1-18

**Q** Take some time to reflect upon verses 6-8. Imagine what this scene must have looked like; what it must have smelt like; what it must have felt like. Blood is being thrown upon the altar and God's people. What does this action communicate to you about your own personal sin and the corporate sin of God's people?

**Follow Up:** What does being covered in the blood signify about our ability to follow God?

**Q** As God's people enter into the covenant with God, God's word is read to them. Why is listening to God's word an important part of establishing a relationship with God?

**Follow Up:** Upon the completion of reading the Word, God's people responded with a declaration of intent to follow Him. Why is this an important part of establishing a relationship with God?

**Q** While this chapter illustrates the culmination and ratification of the covenant that God was making with His people, it is also to be seen as a worship service. We see a call to worship, the reading of God's word, a confession of faith along with a commitment to obedience, and finally the sharing of a meal. This is what helps set the tone for what worship looks like for believers for ages to come. Considering God intentionally crafted this worship outline for His people, are there any of these four areas that you may be neglecting?

## APPLICATION

The idea of God being a "covenant making God" is one that carries itself through all of Scripture. In the covenants with Abraham, Noah, David, and the one with Israel that we see here in Exodus 24, we see that God delights in establishing relationship with His creation.

All the covenants found within the Old Testament are there to point to the New Covenant that Jesus establishes with us in the New Testament. It was the shedding of Jesus' blood that ratifies this covenant between God and His people. The significance of His blood surpasses the blood of oxen as we saw in the passage we studied. Consider ending your time this week by turning to Hebrews 8:8-13 and giving thanks to God for the way He has brought us into relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.

## NOTES

NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE COVENANT CONFIRMED

God promised His people that He would prepare the way to the Promised Land and confirmed a covenant with His people.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 23:20-24:14

- Q** Who does God send to prepare the way?
- Q** God tells His people that He will send an angel to prepare the way. What does God tell His people to do next?
- Q** God says a series of things He will do to provide for His people. What are those things?
- Q** Is God fulfilling what He promised His people in this passage? If so, how? (*Hint: What was God's promise?*)
- Q** Who was told to approach the Lord by themselves?
- Q** Moses told the people what God had said. How did God's people respond to it? Did they respond in a way that brought glory to God?
- Q** What did Moses and the people do to confirm the covenant God had made? (*see Exodus 24:4-8*)
- Q** Where did Moses go at the end of the passage? What was he going to do there?

## MAIN IDEA

God does what  
He says and  
always fulfills His  
promises.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- God's people were told that they would be delivered from slavery and would go to a land that God had promised them. How is God following through on His promise?
- Moses goes to the Mountain of God to receive the commandments. Why might God have given His people the commandments?
- God prepared the way for His people as they travelled to the promised land. How was God preparing the way for the Messiah, Jesus?

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to deliver you to the Promised Land?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who prepares the way for My people. I am the one who provides for them with land, food, water, and the Messiah. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

NOTES

Ruled area for taking notes, consisting of multiple horizontal dotted lines.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What is something that you are very dedicated to in your life?
- Q What does Yahweh commit himself to do for the people if they uphold their side of the covenant?
- Q What is God's primary concern for them as they enter the land (*see Exodus 23:24, 32-33*)? Why is that a problem? How does it translate to our time and our relationship with the Lord?
- Q What does it mean for you that God is dedicated to you and securing your space to worship?

## MAIN IDEA

God is dedicated to securing His people's dwelling place and their worship.



## NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

People subscribe to magazines such as Architectural Digest, spend countless hours watching HGTV shows, and visit historic cities on vacations to tour classic buildings all due to a fascination of beautiful buildings. We have reached the third part of the book of Exodus. Chapters 1-18 spoke of God's salvific work that freed Israel from Egypt and the giving of God's law. Chapters 19-24 addressed establishing God's covenant. We've now reached the third and final section concerning the tabernacle. This was the place where God would dwell with His people. What was remarkable about the tabernacle was that it wasn't something that Moses put together a building committee to do, nor did Moses outsource its design to the latest architectural firm. God is the one whom initiated its building, provided the building plans, and even provided the materials necessary for its construction. All of this was because the tabernacle, the way it was built, and all its contents were a foreshadow of what God would do in Christ.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

- Q What is the most impressive thing you have ever built, crafted or created?

## MAIN IDEA

God delights in bringing His Presence to His people.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 25-27

- Q Briefly go through these chapters and consider listing or calling out all the supplies needed to construct the tabernacle. Where do you think they were to get all these materials? (see *Genesis 15:13-14; Exodus 3:21-22; 12:35-36*)

**Follow Up:** In Exodus 25:2, it mentions that every person who is moved in their heart should give toward the contribution of the building of the tabernacle. What might this teach us about our own wealth and possessions and how God builds His church today?

- Q Earlier in our study, we have seen the interactions God had with is people (see *Exodus 19:9-25; 20:18-21; 24:1-2*). When God gives the task of building the place that He may dwell with them (*Exodus 25:8*), what do you think went through their minds?
- Q Even by skimming over these chapters, we see God give His people an exhaustive to-do list. How do you think they would have responded to this, considering they were still in the wilderness and had many other needs? What does this tell you about God's commitment to care and provide for His people?

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 23:20-24:18

- Q God is a God of details. Why do you think God is so specific in the detail and measurements of the tabernacle? Not only that, why do you think God would have these things recorded within the Scriptures for us to read?
- Q The first thing mentioned to be built is the Ark of the Covenant (*see Exodus 25:10-16*). What exactly is the ark and what is its purpose? (*see Numbers 10:35; 1 Samuel 4:1-8; Psalm 132:8*). Does this give any indication of what the tabernacle was to be for the people?
- Q One of the beautiful things about the building of the tabernacle was the imagery and meaning of God dwelling with His people. Read Genesis 3:8 and Genesis 3:22-24. Look at Exodus 25:17-22. What loss does the tabernacle restore?
- Q Looking ahead to the New Testament, turn to the book of Hebrews and see how the author describes the tabernacle, its contents, and what happens there in the following verses: Hebrews 8:5; 9:23; 10:1.
- Q What is the significance of the curtains that separated the courtyard from the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place? (*see Exodus 26:33*) What did it mean when the curtain was torn in two (*see Matthew 27:51*)?

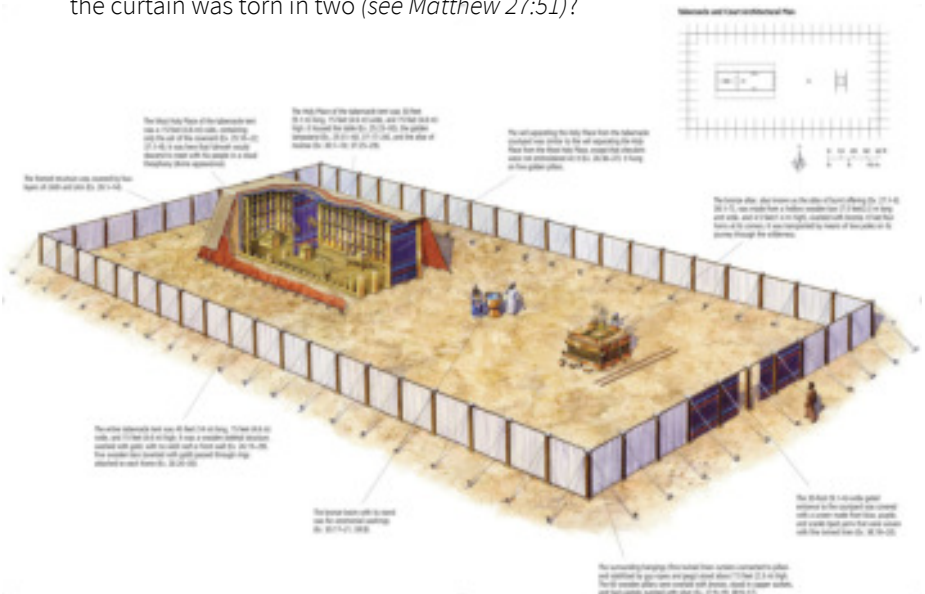


Image courtesy of Crossway & ESV Study Bible

## NOTE

*To see how God's people ended up building and putting the tabernacle together, head to the note at the end of our study that covers Exodus 35-40. It shows how all of what was commanded was fulfilled.*

## APPLICATION

The tabernacle that Moses built was a portable structure, one that would be taken down and carried with them. While this tabernacle was extremely important, it was never meant to be a permanent sanctuary. 17th century Puritan pastor John Owen, in his book titled *The Glory of Christ*, comments that "Everything Moses did in erecting the tabernacle and instituting all its services was intended to testify to the person and glory of Christ which would later be revealed (Hebrews 3:5)." In the Gospel of John (John 1:14), it is written that Jesus "took up residence" and "tabernacled" among us. On this side of history, we no longer need a tent in the desert to connect and meet with God, to have our sins forgiven. In Christ, all these things are possible for us now, wherever we may be. God has met us face-to-face in Jesus. Consider taking time as you close reading Hebrews 10:19-22 and hear the invitation to draw near to God.

## NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE TABERNACLE

After entering into a covenant with His people, God now wanted to take their relationship a step further by dwelling among them. In the read-aloud passage, see what His people needed to do for God to come and dwell among them.

## MAIN IDEA

God desires to dwell among His people

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 25-27

- Q Did God say everyone had to give an offering for the tabernacle? Who did God want offerings from? (see *Exodus 25:2*)?
- Q What were some of the materials that God wanted for building His Tabernacle?
- Q Where exactly was God's Presence going to dwell? (see *Exodus 25:22*)
- Q What was the lampstand designed to look like?
- Q What was the altar made out of?
- Q Who did God put in charge of the lamps to make sure they remained burning for the Lord from evening until morning?

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- God commanded Moses and His people to use some pretty expensive materials to make and build His Tabernacle and everything along with it. Where do you think they got everything they needed? How do think God provided all these things for His people?
- God didn't just pick random materials He liked. Each material had a specific purpose and meaning. For example, bronze represented judgement. It also withstood heat. Why do you think God chose bronze for the altar?
- For God to come and dwell among His people, they had to do quite a lot. While in the desert, the people had to build and carry the tabernacle around with them. Later, God had them build a temple for the altar and Ark of the Covenant (*His Presence*).

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- When Jesus died for us, all that changed! We no longer need a tabernacle or a temple (see *Matthew 27:51*).
- Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice to save us from our sins, and we have the Holy Spirit to dwell among us. How does it make you feel knowing that Jesus paid it all and we don't have to sacrifice on an altar anymore? How does it make you feel to know that you can have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you instead of having to go to the tabernacle for God's Presence?

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to provide the means to be close to you?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one God who dwells amongst My people. I bring atonement to My people through sacrifice, and they can come close to Me. I will provide the ultimate sacrifice. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

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## GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What is a tabernacle?
- Q In what order does God give Moses the plans for the tabernacle in Chapters 25-27? What is emphasized by this order?
- Q What is different between how people had access to God's Presence then, versus now?

## MAIN IDEA

God delights in bringing His Presence to His people.

## READ HEBREWS 10:19-25

- Q After reading the above passage, describe how we now have access to God.
- Q What confidence does it give you that we now have direct access to God's Presence?

## DWELLING PLACE

## NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

It is frequently said that the church isn't the building, but the people. It is the people that love God, worship God, and serve one another. You can have a building, but without the people, it's just a structure. This concept rings true today, as well as in the community that God was forming in the wilderness. Last week, we examined the construction and the contents of the tabernacle, this week we turn our attention to those who worked in the tabernacle: the priests. Just as there was great attention to detail given for the elements, contents, and construction of the tabernacle, the same care was given with the priests. The selection, consecration, and garments of the priests were all details that had been carefully crafted and directed by God. Similar to the tabernacle, the role of the priests was to point us to something greater that would be further revealed in redemption history: Jesus Christ, our great high priest.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

- Q Do you have an item that you own that reminds you of a greater reality or deeper meaning? It could be a wedding ring, tattoo, piece of jewelry, etc. What is it?

## MAIN IDEA

God provides priests to intercede for His people.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 28-31

- Q Similar to the construction of the tabernacle, as we studied last week, this week we see God gives great detail in the clothing and act of consecration of the priests. Why do you think that is?

**Follow Up:** How should that impact the way we worship God?

- Q The priest carried with him the names of each of the twelve tribes in two places, the shoulder piece and the breast plate (see *Exodus 28:12, 21, 29*). What is the significance of this?

**Follow Up:** By wearing the names of the people, Aaron represents God's people as he comes before the Lord. How does this foreshadow the work of Jesus (see *Romans 8:33-34; Hebrews 7:23-25*)?

- Q Notice the repetition of the word "sanctifying" and "consecrating" within this section (see *Exodus 28:41; Exodus 29:1, 9, 21, 34, 36, 43, 44*). What exactly does this mean? (*Hint - It is the act of cleansing someone or something from sin and ritual impurity, and then to dedicating the person or thing for a specific purpose.*)

DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 28-31

Follow Up: Why is consecration necessary?

Follow Up: How has God called you to be set aside for His use? What do you need to do to be consecrated to the Lord?

READ HEBREWS 4:14-5:10 & HEBREWS 7:23-28

Q Compare and contrast what you read in the passages above with what you've read in Exodus 28-29.

Follow Up: Why is it important that Jesus' holiness surpasses that of the holiness of the priests in Exodus?

Q While God called all of Israel to be His "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (*Exodus 19:6*), He still appointed a small group of people to be a formal priesthood. How does this idea carry forward to the church today?

Q In chapter 31, God is very specific in who He calls and what He tasks them with. Bezalel and Oholiab are called to work with gold, silver, and bronze. What does He say about these men in Exodus 31:3-6?

Follow Up: Sometimes hard work and manual labor are overlooked or not as celebrated as other types of work. How does this section challenge this?

Follow Up: How are you using your God given gifts to serve?

Q At the conclusion of this section (*Exodus 31:12-17*), God commands Israel to keep the Sabbath three times. What are the reasons given for this?

Follow Up: Why do you think God ends it with these commands?



APPLICATION

The priests of Israel not only offered sacrifices for the people, they also offered prayers of intercession for the people. The book of Hebrews stresses the fact that Jesus is our Great High Priest and has made a way for us in His sacrifices, as well as makes intercession for us today. While we sometimes overlook this fact, or can sometimes be left wondering what exactly this looks like, we may have a hint from how Jesus prays for us in John 17. He prays for our unity, asks God that we may share in His glory, our ability to display God to an unbelieving world, and that we would increase in our knowledge and love of God. As we close, take some time to share in that prayer with our Great High Priest.

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE PRIESTS, THE ALTER, AND THE SABBATH

God's people were commanded to serve and worship God in specific ways to bring glory to Him. It was required of them to be able to be in God's presence and to be right with God.

## MAIN IDEA

God is worthy  
of our praise  
and worship.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 28-31

- Q In Chapter 28, there are instructions for making garments. Who are the garments for?
- Q What were the various garments that the priests wore called (*Exodus 28:4*)? (*An ephod is an elaborate garment that the high priest would wear.*)
- Q What were the elaborate garments for the priests meant for? (*Hint: It explains the purpose for the garments in the description Chapter 28*)
- Q What animals did Aaron have to sacrifice to God?
- Q God gave His people two craftsmen to help them build the things that were required of them. What were the craftsmen's names (*Exodus 31:2-6*)? What did they help God's people build?
- Q "You shall keep the \_\_\_\_\_, for it is \_\_\_\_\_ for you." Exodus 31:14a ESV

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The priests in Chapter 28 and 29 had to do certain tasks to be presentable before God. It is no longer necessary to do those things to go before God. Why is that? (*see Hebrews 8*)
- We see that Aaron had to wear the right garment and do the sacrifice and offering the right way to be in God's presence and receive his acceptance. We are so broken, and God is so Holy that we cannot be with God by our own will. What happened so that believers today can come close to God?
- In Chapter 28-29 we see all that Aaron did to serve and worship God. What does this say about the worthiness of our God?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

God made the heavens and earth in six days and rested on the seventh. He called this the Sabbath and commanded His people to do the same? Why might the Sabbath be important for God's people?

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to set you apart as a nation, even in how you worship Me?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who is worthy of your praise and worship. I am the one who has your best interests in mind, even when you cannot see it. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

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## GROUP DISCUSSION

## MAIN IDEA

God delights in bringing  
His Presence to His  
people.

- Q When you think of a priest, what do you think of?
- Q What was the priests' role and how were they selected? (See *Leviticus 10:10-11; Hebrews 5:1-2*)

## READ HEBREWS 4:14-16

- Q After reading the above passage, discuss the implications of Jesus being our High Priest.
- Q The entirety of Exodus chapter 29 describes in detail how Aaron and the other priests were to be consecrated or set aside for God's use. How has God set you aside for His use?
- Q In chapter 31, God is very specific in calling Bezalel and Oholiab to work in gold, silver and bronze. What does He say about these two men in verse 3? How are you using your God given gifts to serve God?

## NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most surprising things that regularly presents itself in the Scriptures, and in our own lives when we are honest, is the fickleness of the human heart. We can go from a moment of pure joy and satisfaction in God, expressing thankfulness for what He's done, to immediately questioning, doubting, and abandoning God altogether. It's remarkable to think about all that we've seen God do for His people here in Exodus, yet they still betray Him. God has been at work in supernatural ways to provide, guide, and protect them, yet they quickly forget about it all and turn to an idol for worship. In this act of idolatry, we see God's response when the people turn toward lesser gods. Towards the end of this experience, we see Moses yet again act in a way which brings deliverance for God's people. However, this time it was deliverance from God Himself, not any other enemy. While it is easy to judge the actions of the Israelites here, this story invites us to examine our hearts more closely to see where we are guilty of a similar fickleness of heart.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

- Q What is one of most recent mistakes that you've made? How did you go about responding to the repercussions/consequences?

## MAIN IDEA

Our hearts are susceptible to worship the lesser things in life.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 32-33:17

## READ EXODUS 32:1-6

- Q What seems to drive the people of Israel to make an idol?
- Follow Up:** Aaron was supposed to keep watch over the people (*see Exodus 24:14*), but how did he respond to their request? How was this a failure on his part?
- Follow Up:** Look at Exodus 32:7-10. How does God respond to the Israelites Rebellion?

- Q Look back at the posture God's people had in response to his instructions in Exodus 24:3 and 24:7, what was it? How was the true attitude of their hearts exposed in their actions in the incident at the mountainside?

## READ EXODUS 32:11-13

- Q What seems to be Moses' primary concern? What do you think has led him to say this about God?

DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 32-33:17

Q The Israelites often get a bad rap due to this decision at the mountainside. It's easy to see the wrong they did in this story, however, if we are not careful, we can often find ourselves in this same position as well. In what ways are you similar to the Israelites in this story?

**Follow Up:** Idolatry can be defined as anything that occupies the space in your life/heart/mind that is reserved for God alone. Based on that definition, what are some common idols in our culture?

**Follow Up:** Most Westerners wouldn't offer a burnt sacrifice to their current idols, what actions do we do as an act of worship to idols?

Q Moses responds very with severity and anger to the sin of the people (see *Exodus 32:19-20*). Do you take sin as seriously as Moses did when you see it in your life?

READ EXODUS 32:22-24

Q When Aaron is confronted by Moses how does he respond? What has resulted for you when you have attempted to lie/shift blame to cover up something that you did?

READ EXODUS 33:1-6

Q The writers of the Scriptures often used repetition to drive home a point. In these six verses, what phrase is often repeated?

**Follow Up:** Now read Exodus 33:7. What is repeated here three times? What is the significance of this, especially in light of what we read in verses 1-6?

READ EXODUS 33:11

Q Exodus 33:11 states that Moses would speak with God face to face. What an amazing statement! God is one who delights in communication with His people. Do you experience that reality in your spiritual walk? Does your prayer life reflect that?

Q Moses confesses his and Israel's great need in Exodus 33:15, stating "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here" (ESV). Here, Moses realizes we need God's presence more than any of His blessings and provisions. Do you agree with this sentiment?

**Follow Up:** When have you been tempted to seek the things of God, but not actually seek God?

# 13

## FAILURE AT THE MOUNTAIN EXODUS 32-33:17

### DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 32-33:17

*Dig Deeper – In our section covered today, there is an interaction between God and Moses where it appears that Moses helps change God's mind. To learn more about this consider reading: <https://radical.net/does-prayer-change-gods-mind/>*



## APPLICATION

One of the biggest problems Israel had, which was revealed this week, was their impatience. Impatience often leads us to sin and make rash decisions. As we continue in our study of Exodus and see a greater vision of His goodness and glory, we see the patience of God on full display. In Romans 2:4-5 the Apostle Paul tells us how God's kindness and patience with us is meant to lead us to repentance. Take some time to confess and repent of the ways in which you have crafted idols in your life and the ways your impatience has led you to sin. Rejoice in the fact that we worship a God who is faithful and just to forgive us.

### NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE GOLDEN CALF AND INTERCESSION

In our last lesson, Moses was on the mountain receiving instruction from God about the priests and specific ways the people are to serve and worship God. This passage fills us in on what the people up to in the meantime, as well as the aftereffects: God's reaction, Moses' reaction, and the consequences for disobedience.

## MAIN IDEA

Our hearts are inclined to worship the lesser things in life.

As we study Exodus, it is easy to ask, "What is wrong with God's people? With everything God has done for them, why can't they just have faith and trust?" As you read and discuss this passage, consider the comparison between the people and us. They complained, disbelieved, and were rebellious; God was their guide. We also can complain, disbelieve, and be rebellious; God and His Word are our only guides.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 32:1-6

- Q Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. What did God's people do during this time? Who was their leader in this? Were they worshipping God?
- Q Look back at Exodus 19:8, 20:19, 24:3, and 24:7—what is happening in these verses? Looking at your answers from above—are they doing it? Which of the 10 Commandments are they breaking (*see Week 9 or Exodus 20:1-17*)?
- Q Are God's people living by faith and trusting in Him—regardless of where or who their earthly leader is?

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 32:7-14

- Q God knew what His people were doing and told Moses. How did God describe His people in verse 9? What does this mean? What was God going to do in response (*see Exodus 32:10*)?
- Q Moses interceded (or pleaded) for the people. What were some reasons that Moses gave God for why He should not destroy them? What was God's decision after Moses interceded?

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 31:18 &amp; 32:15-35

- Q Moses came down from the mountain with two tablets written by God. What was on those tablets?

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

- Q When he got back to the camp, what did Moses see? What were the people doing? What did Moses do then? What did he do with the calf?
- Q Moses was very angry with Aaron’s leadership of the people that led to the golden calf. What was Aaron’s version of what happened (*specifically in verse 24*)? What really happened (*see Exodus 32:3-5a*)?
- Q What were the consequences of the people’s sin?
- Exodus 32:20: Exodus 32:27-29:  
Exodus 32:34: Exodus 32:35:

### READ ALOUD EXODUS 33:1-17

- Q One of the consequences of the Israelites’s sin was that an angel would go before them as they went through enemy lands on their way to the Promised Land. Why is this a consequence; who went before them prior to this? What was the people’s response (*see Exodus 33:4*)?
- Q Moses set up a tent of meeting to meet with God. How did the people know when God was there speaking to Moses? What is so amazing about how God spoke to Moses (*see Exodus 33:11*)?
- Q Moses again interceded for the people—this time asking God to again dwell with the people and go before them as they traveled. What were some of Moses’ reasons? What did God decide and why?

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Exodus contains many instances where we see God’s people move from fear and unbelief to faith and trust, but each time, it is only temporary. At the beginning of this passage was there anything to be afraid of (i.e., enemies, starvation, sickness)?
- Even with much firsthand evidence of God’s glory and majesty, God’s people still committed an evil act. They were impatient for Moses to return, and impatience often leads to impulsive acts.
  - When the right time comes, God delivers. We should never worry about what we see as a delay.

*Family Discipleship Continues on Page 110*

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- When God's people came to Aaron, he and the other leaders could have followed Moses' example and immediately turned to God for help. They could have warned the people what would happen.
- The people thought they needed an idol, but what/who did they really need? Think about it: they had the one, true, living God amongst them and they exchanged that for an animal made from gold!
- Moses sought deliverance for God's people, from God Himself not any other enemy. Moses pleaded for God to spare the people (see *Exodus 32:11-14*) and to dwell among them/go before them (see *Exodus 33:12-17*).

## WILL YOU TRUST ME?

In our study this week, we see how God asked His people: Will you trust Me to deliver you from false gods?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the one who speaks to My people. I am the one who works in My people when they elevate Me above all things. I am the one whose people may deserve My anger and wrath, but I forgive and restore them to Myself. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you. I am with you always.

## NOTES

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GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q What are some things that you really love? Whether that be a person, place, object, sport, etc., what do you love about that thing?
- Q What did the manufacturing of the golden calf demonstrate about Aaron and the people? Why did the people demand the making of something physical to worship?
- Q While the Israelites were constructing the golden calf, what was happening on the mountain?
- Q What is your golden calf? What is the thing that you often put in place of God?
- Q How can you combat your idolatry and turn your worship towards Jesus?

MAIN IDEA

Our hearts are susceptible to worship the lesser things in life.

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## INTRODUCTION

What is one of the biggest requests you have ever made of God? Provision in a season of scarcity? Healing in a time of sickness? Deliverance from a difficult, trying time? It can be quite revealing to see what is truly important to someone based on what types of prayers they make to God. After all that has transpired with Moses and the people of God, we find Moses alone with God in the tent of meeting and making a big ask of God: to see His glory. Out of all the experiences Moses had and all the things he had been through, the thing that he wanted the most was to see God for who He really is. Moses wanted to see the radiance, splendor, and beauty of God. At this point in Moses' life, he had plenty of prior experiences with God, but it wasn't enough. What he had tasted before left him hungry for more. While God doesn't fully give Moses what he asks for, He discloses Himself in such a way that sticks with Moses, and what He says becomes one of the most quoted passages in all of Scripture.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

Q People give God countless nicknames like "The big man upstairs" or the "cranky old man in the clouds". If you were to describe God to someone, what would you think and what words would you choose?

## MAIN IDEA

The Lord is God—merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

## DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 33:18-34:34

Q What did Moses mean when he requested God to show him "His glory"?

**Follow Up:** What are some of the habits that you have that help you regularly recognize and behold the glory of our God?

Q At the end of Exodus 33 (verse 18-23), Moses has a powerful experience with God. While Moses' experience with God here was unique, some of us have experienced the presence of God in a powerful way. Have you ever felt the presence of God in your life? What were the circumstances?

Q When Israel broke the covenant in Exodus 32, Moses broke the tablets that had the law written on them, what is the significance about God's command in Exodus 34:1?

DIG INTO THE TEXT - EXODUS 33:18-34:34

- Q** In Exodus 34:6-7, God declares something about Himself, what exactly is it?
- If we consider John 3:16 to be the most popular verse in the Bible, it may surprise you that Exodus 34:6-7 is the most popular verse in the Bible for the writers of the Bible. These verses contain the first description found in Scripture given to us by God Himself and are the most referenced passage within the Hebrew Scriptures. They are referenced more than 27 times, often by people coming to God and seeking his forgiveness. *For more study on this, consider reviewing: [https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Study%20Notes/CoG\\_Exodus\\_VN\\_final.pdf#page=8](https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Study%20Notes/CoG_Exodus_VN_final.pdf#page=8)*
- Follow Up:** At the beginning of this week, we talked about how we would describe God to others, do those descriptors line up with how God discloses Himself?
- Follow Up:** How might your faith change if you saw God in the same way He describes Himself in Exodus 34:6-7?
- Follow Up:** The gospel message is often represented as something that simply helps someone avoid hell and obtain blessing. How might your witness to others change if you were to present God the way He presents Himself?
- Q** In Exodus 34:10-28, God reinforces His role as Law-Giver. How do we reconcile this tension with what we just learned about God being "merciful and gracious"?
- Q** What was God's first instruction to His people about what they were to do upon entering the Promised Land? (see Exodus 34:11-16).
- Follow Up:** Why do you think God once again stressed the importance of this? What was He trying to protect His people from?
- Follow Up:** Is there conformity to the surrounding culture within your life that God would want you to take more seriously?
- Q** Our section this week ends with a comment about how Moses' face would shine after he met with God. The Apostle Paul tells us it was God's glory that cause him to shine. How can we live with that same boldness, knowing that God's presence is with us permanently, not fleeting in our lives? (see 2 Corinthians 3:7-18).

## APPLICATION

This week we saw five expressions of God's glory and goodness on full display. God is:

1. Merciful and gracious
2. Slow to anger
3. Abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness
4. Keeping steadfast love for thousands
5. Forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin

As we close out our study, give praise and thanks to God that He is a perfect representation of all these things. Praise Him that each of these things are on full display in the life and ministry of our savior, Jesus Christ. Ask God to make these truths more evident in your life every day. Ask that as you experience these truths, you would also shine, like Moses. Ask that you would also be able to help others find God's mercy in the wilderness of their lives.

## NOTES

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION

## THE COVENANT RENEWED

God's people quickly forgot all that God had done for them: how He saved them from slavery and how He would lead them to the Promised Land. But even with their bad choices, God still loved them. He forgave them and gave them another chance to obey and have a relationship with Him.

## MAIN IDEA

God is steadfast and faithful.

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 33:18-23

- Q What is the biggest thing you have ever asked for? Why did you ask for it? Were you given what you asked for? Was the response good or bad for you?
- Q A conversation takes place in Exodus 33:18-23. Who is the conversation between? What is the big ask? What answer is given? Is this the first time that Moses has been in the presence of God like this? Why is God's response good or bad for Moses? Which other times in this story has God shown Himself?
- Q In Exodus 34:6-7. God describes himself to Moses. What does this description tell you about who God is?

Fill It In! Knowing that God is \_\_\_\_\_ tells me that I am\_\_\_\_\_.

- Q Quick review: Moses brought the Israelites the 10 commandments, but they didn't trust God's plan and made themselves a golden calf to worship. Moses got mad at them and broke the tablets that had the 10 commandments written on them! However, the story doesn't end there because our God is a God of second chances. How was Moses receiving the 10 commandments a second time different? How was it the same?

## READ ALOUD EXODUS 34:29-35

- Q Moses spent time with God on the mountain, and it showed! What sticks out to you about God's interaction with Moses?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Moses was observably transformed by the time he spent with God. What can we do to spend more time with God and make His glory known to the people around us?
- What new thing did you learn about the character of God this week?
- Knowing God gives us second chances, is there someone in your life who you need to forgive and give a second chance to?

WILL YOU TRUST ME?

Will you trust Him? Hold on to this truth about God this week:

I am the mighty God. I am the God who keeps My promises. I am the God of love. I am slow to anger. I am the one who disciplines My people out of love. I am the one who gives assurance of My presence. I am the one whose glory is shown in My love, grace, and mercy. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. I want the best for you.  
I am with you always.

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God is asking you, “Will you trust Me?”

*(Go back to Week 3 and flip through the boxes at the end of each week.  
Read the underlined parts one after the other.)*

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## GROUP DISCUSSION

- Q If you were to describe God and list different characteristics of Him, what would you say?
- Q What is the significance of God only revealing a little bit of Himself to Moses? (see *Isaiah 6*)
- Q Moses asked to see God's glory and God showed His goodness, what does that indicate to you?

## READ EXODUS 34:6-7

- Q In God's description of Himself, which characteristic have you seen most evident in your life recently?
- Q How have you lived out these characteristics in your own life?
- Q Do you believe God is good? Why or why not?

## MAIN IDEA

The Lord is God—merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

## NOTES

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## NOTE ON REMAINDER OF EXODUS

### EXODUS 40:34-38 (ESV)

*Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. <sup>35</sup>And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. <sup>36</sup>Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. <sup>37</sup>But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. <sup>38</sup>For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.*

### NOTE

The book of Exodus concludes with the actual building and construction of the tabernacle. God's people took the instructions received in Chapters 25-31 and executed His plan for the tabernacle. The book ends with a glorious picture of God descending upon it. Consider reviewing this chart that comes from the New American Commentary on Exodus which reminds us of all of what God commanded and how it was ultimately fulfilled.

Command		Fulfillment
25:1-7	Call for offerings and various materials	35:4-9; 35:21-29
25:10-22	The ark	37:1-9
25:23-30	The table	37:10-16
25:31-39	the lampstand	37:17-24
26:1-37	The tabernacle proper	36:8-38
27:1-8	Bronze altar for burnt offerings	38:1-7
27:20-21	Oil for lampstand	renewed in Lev 24:1-3
28:1-5	priests' dress summary	renewed in 35:19; fulfilled in 39:1, 41; cf. 40:13-14; Lev 8:7-8
28:6-14	ephod	39:2-7
28:15-30	breastpiece	39:8-21; Lev 8:8
28:31-43	remaining priests' garments	39:22-31

## NOTE ON REMAINDER OF EXODUS



Command		Fulfillment
29:1-37	consecrating priests	Lev 8:1-36
29:38-43	daily offerings	command renewed in Num. 28:1-8
29:44	consecration of tabernacle consecration of altar	command renewed in 40:9  command renewed in 40:10 fulfilled in Lev. 8:11
29:44	consecration of priests	command renewed in 40:13
30:1-5	incense altar	37:25-28
30:6	incense altar placement	command renewed in 40:6 fulfilled in 40:26
30:7-9	rules for incense burning	40:27
30:10	atonement for incense altar	command renewed in Lev. 4:7
30:22-33	anointing oil for objects, priests	35:28; 37:29; 40:9; Lev. 8:10-12, 30
30:34-38	incense	35:28; 37:29; 39:38; 40:27
31:1-11	Bezalel and Oholiab/work overview	35:30-35; 36:1-7
31:12-17	Sabbath	command renewed in 35:1-3; Lev 23:3; cf. Num. 15:32-36; Deut. 5:12-15



*The baby in the basket. The burning bush. The plagues. The parting of the Red Sea. Manna from heaven. Mt. Sinai. The Ten Commandments. The Ark of the Covenant. The Tabernacle. The Golden Calf.*

All these images pop up within our minds when we think about the book of Exodus. While this mental imagery may be strong, we can often overlook the actual story going on. The title of the book Exodus is derived from the Greek word *exodos*, which means “exit” or “departure.” The book of Exodus gives us an account of the birth of the nation of Israel. The book of Exodus describes to us a story of salvation. In this study we will see how God fulfills His promise to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation. Yet the way God responds to His people takes us through many twists and turns along the path of deliverance from the greatest superpower in the ancient world. The character, nature, and power of God is put on full display in the book of Exodus. Throughout this study we will come to see God as a sovereign, redeeming, faithful, powerful, and personal God. Our story ends with hope and assurance as God’s presence dwells with His people.

This guide has been *specifically prepared with you in mind*. There are two main ways to use it— in a group setting and for personal devotion.

We truly believe that studying the Scriptures together will help develop deep roots in relationship with God and one another. Each week’s study begins are conversations starters, followed by questions for discussion based on the text, and wraps up with personal applications and prayer prompts to help you grow spiritually.

Our hope is that by participating in this study, you will have a firmer grasp on the Scriptures and a stronger connection with Christ.

