

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

# EXODUS

**BOB WINTON**



**GOSPEL  
BROADCASTING  
NETWORK**

This material is the intellectual property of The Gospel Broadcasting Network. It is not to be altered, posted online, or printed without written permission. Questions about use can be sent to [info@gbntv.org](mailto:info@gbntv.org).

© 1989, Revised 2003, 2008, 2014, 2017. Enlarged and Updated 2022.



## Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers. How sad!

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches.

Bob Winton

December 23, 2021

[bwint38@hotmail.com](mailto:bwint38@hotmail.com)

(931) 728-7610 \* (931) 639-0317

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
Exodus

Contents	Page 1		
Introduction	Page 5	Chapter 19	Page 140
Chapter 1	Page 16	Chapter 20	Page 148
Chapter 2	Page 20	Chapter 21	Page 163
Chapter 3	Page 26	Chapter 22	Page 171
Chapter 4	Page 37	Chapter 23	Page 176
Chapter 5	Page 47	Chapter 24	Page 182
Chapter 6	Page 52	Chapter 25	Page 187
Chapter 7	Page 59	Tabernacle Info.	Page 194
Chapter 8	Page 66	Chapter 26	Page 210
Chapter 9	Page 71	Chapter 27	Page 214
Chapter 10	Page 78	Chapter 28	Page 218
Chapter 11	Page 85	Chapter 29	Page 226
Chapter 12	Page 90	Chapter 30	Page 231
Chapter 13	Page 100	Chapter 31	Page 238
Chapter 14	Page 107	Chapter 32	Page 242
Chapter 15	Page 117	Chapter 33	Page 250
Chapter 16	Page 122	Chapter 34	Page 256
Chapter 17	Page 131	Chapters 35-40	Page 262
Chapter 18	Page 136	Bibliography	Page 275

## INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS

### A. Name of Book.

1. It is known in our English translations as "Exodus" after the principle event related in the book: the departure of the Israelites from the land of bondage.
2. The Jews identify it by the first words of the book: "These are the words," or sometimes simply as "Shemoth" (names).
3. "Though this book is a continuation of the book of Genesis, with which probably it was in former times conjoined, Moses thought it necessary to introduce it with an account of the names and number of the family of Jacob when they came to Egypt, to show that though they were then very few, yet in a short time, under the especial blessing of God, they had multiplied exceedingly, and thus the promise to Abraham had been literally fulfilled" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft].

### B. Author.

1. The book itself identifies Moses as the author.
  - a. Exodus 17:14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."
  - b. Exodus 24:4: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel."
2. Jesus said Moses was its author.
  - a. Mark 1:44: "And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."
  - b. John 7:19-22: "Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumsise a man."
3. Paul taught that Moses was the writer: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23). Exodus is part of the Pentateuch which includes Deuteronomy.
  - a. Deuteronomy 18:15-19: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him."
  - b. Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
4. Jewish tradition attributed authorship to Moses. There is nothing in the book which contradicts the claim of Mosaic authorship; and the assertions of biblical critics to the contrary are without proof.

### C. The Date of the Exodus.

1. Calculations based on a plain declaration given in I Kings 6:1 leads to the date of approximately 1450 B.C. for the Exodus: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." Solomon's reign covered 40



years (1 Kings 11:42), from 974 to 934 B.C. He began construction on the temple in the fourth year of his reign, which was 480 years after Israel departed from Egypt. This places the beginning of the temple at 970 B.C., thus the Exodus took place about the year 1450 B.C. The dates are approximate.

2. The book was written sometime during the forty years Israel spent in the wilderness, and prior to the death of Moses.
3. It is likely that the exodus occurred while Amenhotep II was on the Egyptian throne. He ruled from approximately 1450 to 1420 B.C. If this is correct, then Thothmes III was the great oppressor of Israel, commanding the slaughter of their male infants. It would have been his sister who drew Moses from the river and reared him as her own son. This sister was the famous queen, Hatshepsut (Pledge, p.209).
4. "**Hatshepsut** (circa 1520-1483BC), Egyptian ruler of the 18th Dynasty, daughter of Thutmose I. She married her half brother, Thutmose II, with whom she coruled Egypt until his death in 1504 BC. His successor, Thutmose III, a son by a concubine, was a child at the time and was married to Hatshepsut's daughter by Thutmose II. In 1503, however, she had herself crowned as pharaoh, and reigned in her own right until 1483. Her nominal coruler was Thutmose III, who ruled alone after her death. Hatshepsut built a great temple at Dayr al Barî near Thebes, approached by a lane of sphinxes and huge, colonnaded terraces. A second wife of Thutmose III, named Meryetre Hatshepsut but not related to the queen, was the mother of the next pharaoh, Amenhotep II (reigned 1453-1419 B.C.)" [Encarta, 1999].
5. Some scholars and liberal writers allege the date for Exodus to be about 1200 B.C. However, the evidence presented above establishes the early day firmly.
6. Coffman gives other specific evidences which offer additional cumulative proof of the early date for Exodus: The date of the Exodus was approximately 1440 (1446) B.C., based upon declarations of the Bible itself (See the Introduction to Genesis). And the calculations based upon Egyptian history, some of which would favor a date of approximately 1290 B.C., are simply not trustworthy. Even today, Egyptologists do not even know under what dynasty, much less under which Pharaoh, the Exodus occurred. By far, the most acceptable date of the Exodus is that which places it at or near 1446 B.C. If the Pentateuch is received as one book, Moses being its human author, and if in it Moses included his farewell addresses in Deuteronomy, then the Book of Exodus was written at or near the end of the fifteenth century B.C., in round numbers, about 1400 B.C. This refers actually to the conclusion of the Pentateuch, since it would appear most likely that Moses worked on the book throughout the forty years of his leadership of the Chosen Nation. Of special interest in Exodus are those certain words, expressions, and events that reveal the book as a product of the second millennium B.C., as positively distinguished from any later era in the first millennium. Note the following:
  - a. The syllable "man" in the word "manna" is not Hebrew at all, but it is found in the Tel El-Amarna Letters, which are dated prior to 1375 B.C.
  - b. The covenant with Israel (Exo. 19—24) is presented in Exodus in the pattern that distinguishes covenants of the era of 1500 B.C., and not in the pattern that marked covenants after 1000 B.C.
  - c. The language of Exo. 21 is impossible of having been written in the ninth century B.C. or later, because, as Noth said: "The technical terms appearing in it, including [~'ibriy] and [~hopsi], describe a legal and social status within the framework of ancient oriental community life in the second millennium B.C."
  - d. [~Yam] [~Cuwp], meaning "Sea of the End," not "Reed Sea," is the name of that body of water crossed by Israel in the Exodus, as it was known throughout the ancient world prior to the fifteenth century B.C.
  - e. The burnt-offerings and peace-offerings of Exo. 32, offered by Israel to the golden calf are distinguished by words which identify them, absolutely, with second millennium texts from Ugarit, absolutely forbidding the nonsense of dating the passage from the days of Jeroboam.
  - f. The remarkable repetition encountered in Exo. 36—40, most of which are verbatim repetitions of instructions previously given, only with the imperatives changed to declarations, is a characteristic of second millennium B.C. literature. Objections to this, as well as allegations based on it regarding a late date for Exodus are unscientific, and, as Cassuto said, "are based on ignorance of the methods employed in the composition of books in the Ancient East." No writer during the first millennium

B.C. could possibly have composed such a book as Exodus.

- g. "The Song of Moses (Exo. 15) is not like the Hebrew poetry written in the times of David, or later. It is more like the poetry of Canaan in the period from 1700 B.C. to 1500 B.C."
- h. The use of the name Abib for the month of the Passover, forbids the postulation of a post-exilic date, because after the Exile, the Hebrews used the name of Nisan for that month. All of these evidences, and others, are fully elaborated in the following notes on the Sacred Text....
- i. Cumulatively, the weight of these and many other considerations secures and corroborates the conclusion followed in this series that Moses indeed is the author whose work we are studying and that Exodus, like all the Pentateuch, must be identified, in time, with the mid-second millennium B.C., circa 1400 B.C., during the times when the Great Lawgiver lived. [pp.xiv-xvii].

#### D. The Importance of Exodus.

1. "The forty chapters of Exodus may be considered, in some ways, as the most remarkable book ever delivered to mankind. It contains the constitution and charter of Judaism, including their great national festivals and all of their distinctive institutions; and, at the same time, it contains *embryonically* the complete pattern of the New Israel in Christ Jesus that was destined to succeed the Old Israel. This is a mountain fact! It is equivalent to the appearance in an ancient book dating back to the mid-second millennium B.C. of a *complete set of blueprints* for the construction of the CVB-41, *The USS Midway*, constructed in first half of the 20th Century A.D.!" (Coffman, p.xiii). [The *Midway* was 1001 feet long and 121 feet wide; the ark was about 450 feet long and 75 feet wide—comparable in relative dimensions].
2. Exodus records the beginning of the Hebrew nation. It shows how God caused it to increase from the small group of seventy-five souls to a great nation numbering several million in only about 400 years.
3. It relates how God delivered Israel from Egypt and brought them to Sinai where he revealed to them his Law.
4. The Book of Exodus gives details regarding the building of the tabernacle and all of its furnishings.
5. "The book of Exodus is the world's greatest epic of deliverance, the story of the most remarkable people in all history. The aim is to give the first stage of the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, God's covenant with him that in the fourth generation God would give to his descendants all of the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:12-21)" (Frank J. Dunn, p.50).
6. Someone has worked up the daily logistics for three million people as they lived in the wilderness:
  - a. Moses and the people were in the desert, but what was he going to do with them? They had to be fed, and feeding 2 to 3 million people requires a lot of food.
  - b. The people needed 2,000 tons -- four million pounds -- of food each day.
  - c. To bring that much food each day, would require three freight trains each a mile long!
  - d. In the desert they needed firewood to cook and keep warm. Each day this would take 4,000 tons -- eight million pounds -- of wood and a few more freight trains, each a mile long.
  - e. Of course, they needed water. If they only had enough to drink and wash a few dishes, it would take 11 million gallons each day, and a freight train with tank cars 1,800 miles long, just to bring water!
  - f. So, there had to be an opening in the Yom Suf 3 miles wide so that they could walk 5,000 abreast to get over in one night.
  - g. Each time they camped at the end of the day, they needed a campground two-thirds the size of the State of Rhode Island, about 750 square miles.
  - h. They journeyed in the desert forty years.
  - i. Do you think Moses worked all this out before he left Egypt? [These are the unknown author's calculations].

#### E. Types and Analogies of Exodus.

1. Types of the Messiah are given:
  - a. The Passover Lamb (Ex. 12:1-46).
    - 1) John 19:36: "For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."



- 
- 2) 1 Corinthians 5:7-8: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth."
  - b. Aaron.
    - 1) Hebrews 4:14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
    - 2) Hebrews 5:4-5: "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee."
  - c. The Manna.
    - 1) Exodus 16:15: "And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, It *is* manna: for they wist not what it *was*. And Moses said unto them, This *is* the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat."
    - 2) Psalms 78:23-25: "Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full."
    - 3) John 6:32-35: "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."
    - 4) John 6:50: "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die."
    - 5) 1 Corinthians 10:3: "And did all eat the same spiritual meat;"
  - d. Mercy Seat.
    - 1) Exodus 37:6: "And he made the mercy seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof."
    - 2) Romans 3:25: "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."
    - 3) Hebrews 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
2. Moses is presented as a type of Christ.
    - a. Both Moses and Jesus were sent by God.
    - b. Moses forsook the palaces of Pharaoh, and Christ left heaven (Heb. 11:24-25; Phil. 2:3-11).
    - c. Both were saved in infancy from a brutal slaughter of innocents.
    - d. Both were rejected by their brethren (Ex. 2:14; John 1:11-12).
    - e. Both succeeded in their assigned missions.
    - f. Jesus and Moses were workers of great miracles.
    - g. Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine; Moses' first miracle was to turn water into blood.
    - h. When the Law was given through Moses, 3000 people perished; when the Law of the gospel was first published, 3000 souls were saved.
    - i. Both Jesus and Moses were transfigured, Moses on Sinai, Jesus on Mount Hermon; and they both appeared together in this latter incident (2 Cor. 3:13; Ex. 34:29ff; Mt. 17:1-5).
    - j. They both offered themselves to die for others, Moses in Ex. 32:32, and Christ for all people (John 10:17; 3:16).
-

- 
- k. Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and Christ was lifted up upon the cross (John 3:14-16).
  - l. God built the tabernacle through Moses, and established the church through Christ.
  - m. Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant, and Christ is of the mediator of the New.
  - n. Moses delivered Israel from physical bondage; Christ delivers us from the bondage to sin.
  - o. Moses led the people through the wilderness toward the ultimate goal of the land of Canaan; Christ leads us through the wilderness of life toward the ultimate goal of Heaven.
3. The Tabernacle is a type of the church.
- a. The three divisions of the tabernacle symbolized the world, the church and heaven.
  - b. The progression from the altar to the holy of holies pictures our progress from sin to heaven, by the sacrifice of Christ, through the church unto glory.
  - c. The altar symbolizes the sacrifice of Christ.
  - d. The laver pictures New Testament baptism into Christ.
  - e. The holy place represents the church and our service in it.
  - f. The Golden Candlestick symbolizes the word of God which illuminates our way.
  - g. The Showbread represents the Lord's supper (Luke 22:30).
  - h. The Golden Altar (incense) symbolizes prayer (Rev. 5:8).
  - i. The Veil symbolizes many things, including the way into heaven which was covered during Old Testament days, but which is opened to all under Christ (cf. Heb. 6:18-20; Matt. 27:50-51).
4. The Types and Analogies of the Exodus.
- a. There was a deliverer (Moses); there is a Deliverer today (Christ).
  - b. Israel's servitude in Egypt represents the servitude of all men to sin.
  - c. Pharaoh is a type of the devil, our oppressor and enemy.
  - d. Egypt is a type of the sinful world.
  - e. Israel was baptized in crossing the Red Sea; we are baptized to enter Christ.
  - f. Those who were not baptized then remained under Pharaoh's control; those who are not baptized today remain under Satan's control.
  - g. Israel was proved in the wilderness; we are proved in going through the wilderness of life.
  - h. Israel was nourished in the wilderness by bread from heaven, and water which God provided; we are nourished by God in receiving the necessities of life and the spiritual blessings which he gives in Christ.
  - i. God's presence and guidance accompanied Israel during their wanderings; he also accompanies us as we make our journey.
  - j. The River Jordan had to be crossed by Israel in order for them to enter finally into their Promised Land; the river of death we must cross to enter into our ultimate goal of heaven.
5. The Passover details prefigure the sacrifice of Christ.
- a. The passover lamb was to be a perfect male in the prime of life; Christ was all of these.
  - b. The passover lamb was the very picture of innocence; there was nothing blameworthy about Christ.
  - c. As the lambs were lead meekly to the slaughter, so Christ offered no resistance.
  - d. The passover lamb was slain between the two evenings, at about three in the afternoon; so Christ died at that hour.
  - e. Scholars have thought that since the passover lamb was slain on the 14th day of Nisan, that this was the same day of the month on which Jesus died. This is based on the overall relationship between the type and the anti-type.
  - f. No bone of the passover lamb was to be broken; no bone of Christ was broken.
  - g. Israel was to eat the passover with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, reminding them of the haste and hardship accompanying their deliverance, being in this respect retrospective; but it was also prospective in that it promised their final entry into the promised land. These correspond exactly with
-



the Lord's Supper, which is retrospective in that it looks back to the death of Christ, and is prospective in that it looks forward to Christ's second coming.

F. Outline of the Book of Exodus. (See Pledge, pp.209-215)

1. The oppression in Egypt: 1:1-22.
2. The birth, training, and call of Moses: 2:1—7:7.
3. The plagues, the passover, and the exodus: 7:8—15:21.
4. The journey to Horeb: 15:22—18:27.
5. The giving of the Law at Sinai: 19:1—24:18.
6. The divine plan for the tabernacle: 25:1—31:18.
7. The idolatry of Israel and Moses' intercession: 32:1—33:23.
8. The renewal of the covenant: 34:1-35.
9. The construction and erection of the tabernacle: 35:1—40:38.

G. Reports of Strange Reptiles Israel Faced During their Wilderness Experiences.

1. The Greek historian Herodotus wrote: “There is a place in Arabia, situated very near the city of Buto, to which I went, on hearing of some winged serpents; and when I arrived there, I saw bones and spines of serpents, in such quantities as it would be impossible to describe: ...It is reported, that at the beginning of spring, winged serpents fly from Arabia towards Egypt; but that ibises, a sort of bird, meet them at the pass, and do not allow the serpents to go by, but kill them: ...The form of the serpent is like that of the water-snake; but he has wings without feathers, and as like as possible to the wings of a bat” (Herodotus, 1850, Book II, LXXV, pp. 75-56).
2. In his third volume Herodotus goes on to tell how these animals could sometimes be found in the Arabian spice groves. He describes their size, coloration, and reproduction. It seems flying serpents were infamous for hanging in frankincense trees. When workers wanted to gather the tree's incense, they would employ putrid smoke to drive the flying reptiles away (Herodotus, 1850, pp. 107-108).
3. Josephus' account is particularly lucid. He tells of Moses leading the Egyptian army against Nubia: ...but Moses prevented the enemies, and took and led his army before those enemies were apprised of his attacking them; for he did not march by the river, but by land, where he gave a wonderful demonstration of his sagacity; for when the ground was difficult to be passed over, because of the multitude of serpents, (which it produces in vast numbers, and indeed, is singular in some of those productions, which other countries do not breed, and yet such as are worse than others in power and mischief, and an unusual fierceness of sight, some of which ascend out of the ground unseen, and also fly in the air, and so come upon men at unawares, and do them a mischief,) Moses invented a wonderful stratagem to preserve the army safe, and without hurt; for he made baskets, like unto arks, of sedge, and filled them with ibes, and carried them along with them; which animal is the greatest enemy to serpents imaginable, for they fly from them when they come near them; and as they fly they are caught and devoured by them, as if it were done by the harts; (Josephus, Flavius, Book II, Chapter X, as translated by Whiston, 1960, p.58).
4. Flying Reptiles: Article by Eric Lyons:
  - a. We know that nearly all birds can fly. Many kinds of insects can fly. Even mammals, such as the bat, can soar through the air. But reptiles? Who has ever heard of a flying reptile? Aren't all reptiles “ground bound”? Some people may be surprised to learn that flying birds, insects, and mammals once shared the sky with flying reptiles.
  - b. Flying reptiles, known as pterosaurs, were some of the largest creatures ever to fly through the air. Although they are not considered dinosaurs (because, by definition, dinosaurs are land animals), pterosaurs were fearsome-looking creatures that lived together with the dinosaurs and all the rest of the animals God created during the Creation week. Like bats, the wings of true flying reptiles were made from skin. On a bat, the skin spreads over all the fingers, but on pterosaurs the leathery skin joined to one very large “pinky” finger. The rest of the claw was free to hold and grip things.
  - c. Some pterosaurs were very small—about the as Rhamphorhynchus, were about two feet long (from head to tail) and had a wingspan of about 4 feet. [Wingspan is the distance between the tips of an animal's wings.] Rham-phorhynchus (meaning “beak snout”) had short finger bones, a tail with a flat

patch of skin on the end, and strong teeth that pointed toward the front of its mouth. Fossils of this pterosaur have been found in Europe and Africa.

- d. Pteranodon, another flying reptile that had a small body (about the size of a wild turkey or a goose), enjoyed a wingspan of over 23 feet. The name Pteran-odon means “winged without teeth.” This flying reptile had a very long, toothless beak with which he probably caught fish. Pteranodon bones have been found in Kansas, Texas, Delaware, and along the coasts of the country of Japan. This reptile also had a long, bony crest on the back of its skull that likely was used to counterbalance the long beak and to help steer while in flight. Even though it was not a dinosaur, Pteranodon and the other flying reptiles of the past are often pictured with the dinosaurs.
- e. The largest known creature that once soared above the Earth was the pterosaur identified as Quetzalcoatlus (named after the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl). The fossil bones of one of these flying reptiles were unearthed in 1972 at the Big Bend National Park in Texas. This Quetzal-coatlus had a wingspan of 48 feet, which is longer than some small airplanes. You have to wonder if there were flying reptiles that grew even larger than this particular Quetzalcoatlus.
- f. Evolutionists tell us that pterosaurs lived millions of years ago—supposedly long before humans were on the Earth. The evidence tells us differently, however. According to one Bible writer and two well-known ancient historians, flying reptiles once lived alongside man. Twice in the book of Isaiah, the writer mentioned “fiery flying serpents” (14:29; 30:6). Notice also the following quotation taken from Herodotus, a respected Greek historian who lived in about 450 B.C. He wrote:
  - 1) There is a place in Arabia...to which I went, on hearing of some winged serpents; and when I arrived there, I saw bones and spines of serpents, in such quantities as it would be impossible to describe. The form of the serpent is like that of a water-snake; but he has wings without feathers, and as like as possible to the wings of a bat.
  - 2) Herodotus knew of flying reptiles. He knew these creatures were not birds, mammals, or insects—but reptiles with wings.
- g. Notice also what the Jewish historian Josephus wrote 2,000 years ago about Moses and his army having a difficult time passing through a particular region because of the presence of snakes.
- h. When the ground was difficult to be passed over, because of the multitude of serpents (which it produces in vast numbers...some of which ascend out of the ground unseen, and also fly in the air, and do come upon men at unawares, and do them a mischief)... [Moses] made baskets like unto arks, of sedge, and filled them with ibes [birds], and carried them along with them; which animal is the greatest enemy to serpents imaginable, for they fly from them when they come near them; and as they fly they are caught and devoured by them.
- i. Although Herodotus and Josephus did not mention the extremely large flying reptiles, they did record that snake-like winged creatures (which could fly) lived in the distant past.
- j. We cannot be sure how well ptero-saurs flew. The biggest ones may not have been very good fliers. Likely, they did not dart and dash about like a swallow or a hawk. They might have glided for a long time on winds and hot air rising from the ground as large birds like the albatross or condor do today. What we can know is that they were created by God during the Creation week. [Copyright © 2014 Apologetics Press, Inc. All rights reserved. \*Please keep in mind that Discovery articles are written for 3rd-6th graders. Note: *This document may be copied, on the condition that it will not be republished in print unless otherwise stated below, and will not be used for any commercial purpose, as long as the following stipulations are observed: (1) Apologetics Press must be designated as the original publisher; (2) the specific Apologetics Press Web site URL must be noted; (3) any references, footnotes, or endnotes that accompany the article must be included with any written reproduction of the article; (4) textual alterations of any kind are strictly forbidden; (5) Some illustrations (e.g., photographs, charts, graphics, etc.) are not the intellectual property of Apologetics Press and as such cannot be reproduced from our site without consent from the person or organization that maintains those intellectual rights; (6) serialization of written material (e.g., running an article in several parts) is permitted, as long as the whole of the material is made available, without editing, in a reasonable length of time; (7) articles, excepting brief quotations, may not be offered for sale or included in items offered for sale; and (8) articles may be reproduced in electronic form for posting on Web sites*



*pending they are not edited or altered from their original written content and that credit is given to Apologetics Press, including the web location from which the articles were taken. Further, documents may not be copied without source statements (title, author, journal title), and the address of the publisher and owner of rights, as listed below. Apologetics Press.*

---

## A Brief Review of Old Testament Hebrew History

### A. Abraham entered Canaan about 2172 B.C.

1. This date differs from the commonly-accepted view; it is derived from the author's calculations.
2. After he entered Palestine, he spent the rest of his life in that land, except for a brief and troublesome sojourn in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20).
  - a. His son Isaac spent his whole life in the land of promise, and like his father before him, he actually possessed only a small parcel of land which was used as a burial place.
  - b. Isaac's son, Jacob, spent most of his life in Canaan. In his old age, Jacob moved to Egypt at the invitation of his son Joseph, after that illustrious young man rose to prominence there.
  - c. Jacob and all of his twelve sons likewise died there; and their descendants were enslaved to the Egyptians.
3. After four hundred years of bondage, God raised up Moses, and trained him for the great work of delivering the Israelites from their Egyptian taskmasters.
  - a. After a series of harsh measures directed against the idols of Egypt, Pharaoh was forced to permit Israel's departure from the land.
  - b. They soon came to Sinai, where God delivered his Law to Israel through Moses. It contained provisions for governing their civil, societal, religious and spiritual needs.
  - c. Due to sin, the Israelites were forced to remain in the wilderness for forty years, until the rebels had died.
4. Under the leadership of Joshua, Israel entered into the land of promise, taking it from the ungodly Canaanites.
  - a. For the next 450 years (Acts 13:20), the nation was governed by a series of judges, whom God raised up to meet certain emergencies. God was their king, and the judges were selected by the Lord to carry out his will. "And after that he gave *unto them* judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet" (Acts 13:20).
  - b. But the time eventually came when the people were no longer content to continue under this arrangement. They wanted to imitate the other nations. When God's people try to compete with the world, they always come up a poor second.
  - c. When Israel insisted on a king, God selected the man for the job (1 Sam. 8-10).

### B. For 120 years, Israel existed as a United Kingdom.

1. Saul reigned for forty years.
2. David succeeded him, and he also reigned for forty years.
3. At his death, Solomon ruled in David's place, again for forty years.

### C. Then followed the period of the Divided Kingdom: 975-721 B.C.

1. At Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam reigned. He was so unwise that he heeded the counsel of young men, while refusing to listen older and wiser men. His policies were so stringent that a rift occurred in the nation. 1 Kings 12.
2. The ten northern tribes, plus elements of the tribe of Levi, united under Jeroboam to form the Northern Kingdom, also called *Israel* and *Ephraim*. Jeroboam quickly saw that his throne would be secure only if he could keep his subjects from going to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Hence, he established idols at Dan and Bethel, with an attendant religious system.
  - a. 1 Kings 12:25-33: "Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense."
  - b. The Northern Kingdom went farther and farther into apostasy, rejecting the warnings of the prophets, until they were finally conquered by the Assyrian Empire in 721 B.C.

- c. They then lost their identity as a separate nation.
3. Meanwhile, the Southern Kingdom, also called *Judah*, existed side-by-side with its idolatrous brothers to the north. It was comprised of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and elements of Levi.
  - a. When Israel fell in 721 B.C., the Assyrians also tried to take Jerusalem, but were soundly defeated by the miraculous work of an angel (Isa. 37; 2 Kings 19).
  - b. But over the years, Judah also fell into idolatry and apostasy, and was overcome by the Babylonians in 606 B.C., and many were taken to Babylon: "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon" (2 Kings 24:1-4).
  - c. In 597 B.C., more of them were carried into Babylonian bondage: "Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, *those* carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, *even* seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon" (2 Kings 24:8-16).
  - d. The final stroke came in 586 B.C., when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and all but a remnant of the Hebrews were taken away (2 Kings 24:17—25:30; Jer. 39:1-10).
4. After seventy years of bondage (606-536 B.C.), the Israelites were permitted to begin their return to Palestine (2 Chron. 36:21). They were carried to Babylon in three deportations, and they returned to their own land in three operations.
  - a. The first return was under the direction of Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. (2 Chron. 36:14-23; Ezra 1:1-11; 3:1-13; Isa. 44:28; 45:1ff). They had rebuilt the temple by 516 B.C. See Ezra 6:15.
  - b. The second return was led by Ezra in 457 B.C. This *ready scribe* in the Law of Moses (Ezra 7:6) fulfilled the great work of restoring the Law in the lives of the people (Ezra 7:1—10:14).
  - c. The third return was under Nehemiah in 445 B.C. This devout man led in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Book of Nehemiah). With the work of Nehemiah and Malachi, who were contemporaries, the inspired record of Old Testament history came to an end. Four hundred years later, the inspired New Testament record began.
5. The following passages furnish data which helps establish the time for important events of Old Testament history:
  - a. Genesis 12:4: "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."
  - b. Genesis 21:5: "And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."
  - c. Genesis 25:7: "And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years."
  - d. Genesis 25:26: "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them."
  - e. Genesis 35:28: "And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years."
  - f. Genesis 47:8f: "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
  - g. Genesis 47:28: "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years."
  - h. Genesis 50:26: "So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put

in a coffin in Egypt."

- i. Genesis 37:2: "These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."
  - j. Genesis 15:13: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."
  - k. Exodus 12:40-41: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
  - l. Galatians 3:17: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."
  - m. I Kings 6:1: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD."
  - n. Genesis 41:46: "And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
6. Some fact which are show by the above verses:
- a. Abraham entered Canaan when he was 75 years old.
  - b. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old.
  - c. Isaac was 60 when Jacob and Esau were born.
  - d. Joseph was 17 years old when he got into trouble with his brothers, who sold him into slavery.
  - e. Joseph was 30 years old when he was exalted as Pharaoh's right-hand man.
  - f. Jacob died after living 17 years in Egypt.
  - g. The 7 years of plenty passed (Gen. 41:53-54).
  - h. During the first year of famine, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt (Gen. 42:1-5).
  - i. During the second year of famine, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers (Gen. 44).
  - j. Joseph was 39 or 40 when his father learned he was still alive, and Jacob was 130 when he moved to Egypt.
  - k. Since Joseph was about 40 when Jacob was 130 (Gen. 47:9), Jacob was about 90 when Joseph was born.
  - l. Israel spent 430 years in Egypt: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:40-41).
  - m. The Exodus took place 480 years before Solomon began to build the temple, during his 4th year.
  - n. Solomon reigned from 974-934 (according to other studies).
  - o. Giving 970 B.C. as the beginning year of the temple's construction, the Exodus occurred in 1450 B.C.
7. The following chart lists some important events and dates in Israelite history [the dates are the author's deductions]:
-



## EXODUS 1

### A. Exodus 1:1-6: A Recapitulation of the Names of the Children of Israel.

1. Verse 1: "Now these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob."
  - a. It is the purpose of Moses just here to bridge the gap between Genesis and this present book which continues the history of Israel. What better way than by identifying the principals involved in the latter stage of Genesis. The story continues into Exodus but deals with the descendants of Jacob and his twelve sons. It is very obvious that there is one continuous story being told by the one author of the Pentateuch. Of course it is God who is the real author of the Bible, but it is equally clear that there was just one human writer of the Pentateuch. A computer study done in Israel recently concluded that only one author was involved in writing the Pentateuch: that one author is Moses (being inspired by God in his work of writing).
  - b. This verse states that when Jacob came into Egypt he was accompanied by his sons and each of their households. While there were seventy in the family circle which made that journey, there was obviously a great number of servants also. Abraham's household included 318 trained fighting men (Gen. 14:14). It therefore appears that Jacob's entourage probably numbered into the hundreds or more.
2. Verses 2-5: "Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*."
  - a. The names of eleven of the patriarchs are given, with Joseph mentioned as being in Egypt already. We remember that Joseph had been exalted to second-in-command in the Egyptian government.
  - b. These all died: Joseph, his brethren, and all of that generation. This is how God sees the passage of humanity. He is there when a generation comes on the scene; he is there as they live out their lives; he is still there and witnesses their passage from earthly environs.

### B. Exodus 1:7-14: An Unfriendly King Gains the Throne of Egypt.

1. Verse 7: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them."
  - a. This verse gives a summary of the results of about four centuries of numeric growth of Jacob's descendants. Two multiplied by itself, times the result, becomes a great figure only after a few operations. By the time Israel left Egypt the number of their fighting men of twenty years old and upward numbered 603,550 (Num. 2:32). If the fighting men were so large in number, the entire nation including women, children, and old men would likely number two million or more. Goshen was filled with Israelites.
  - b. The Bible emphasizes their numeric growth by using five different descriptions: they were fruitful, they increased abundantly, they were multiplied, they waxed exceeding mighty, and they filled the land. Genesis closed with Israel being established in the land as a minority; Exodus begins with them being great in number. As Genesis closed, they were in pharaoh's favor and free; in Exodus they are out of Egyptian favor and are under cruel bondage. But one significant factor remained unchanged: God was intending to give them freedom in a land of their own.
    - 1) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
    - 2) Genesis 15:13-16: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet

full."

2. Verse 8: "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph."
  - a. A new king had taken the throne in Egypt, one that knew not Joseph, Jacob's favorite son. The implication is that had he "known" Joseph he would not have acted as he subsequently did. The phrase "knew not Joseph" may not necessarily mean he knew nothing about that good man, but may mean that he took no interest in what he had done for Egypt, that he was not impressed with his good deeds. The new pharaoh could not see anything that Joseph could now do for him, even if he was aware of this young man's earlier deliverance of Egypt.
  - b. It is unclear whether this was an entirely different dynasty of kings, or whether it was another in the same line. The point of interest is that he was unwilling to show Israel any favor due to their great numbers.
3. Verses 9-10: "And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land."
  - a. This new king took counsel with his people and announced that Israel had grown so great in number that they posed a potential threat to the Egyptians. He said that they were more and mightier than the nation of Egypt itself. We must deal shrewdly with them lest they unite with some invading enemy and make war against us.
  - b. The route of an invading army would take them through or near Goshen. The potential threat was perceived to be real, so the proposed plan to subjugate Israel met with the approval of the king's auditors.
4. Verse 11: "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses."
  - a. Taskmasters were set over the Israelites. These were individuals who saw to it that the work demanded of them was done. The burdens given them to do were harsh, being described as afflictions. Verse 14 says they were forced to serve "with rigour." Paintings from the tomb of Rekhmire at Thebes, dated in the 15th century B.C. show slaves doing back-breaking labor in the field and structural work.
  - b. "The significant thing about the paintings is that they show the Israelites working practically naked, clad only with small loin cloths; and when this is considered in the light of the daily temperature outdoors at certain seasons of more than 130 degrees it must be considered a marvel that they survived at all" (Coffman, p.6).
  - c. They built the treasure cities of Pithom and Raamses. "These are cited as examples of the forced labor of the people. Josephus says that the Egyptians required the Israelites to 'cut a great number of channels for the river, and to build walls for their cities and ramparts, that they might restrain the river, and hinder its waters from stagnating, upon running over its own banks; they set them also to build pyramids'" (ALC, 1960, p.146).
  - d. "NOW it happened that the Egyptians grew delicate and lazy, as to pains-taking, and gave themselves up to other pleasures, and in particular to the love of gain. They also became very ill-affected towards the Hebrews, as touched with envy at their prosperity; for when they saw how the nation of the Israelites flourished, and were become eminent already in plenty of wealth, which they had acquired by their virtue and natural love of labor, they thought their increase was to their own detriment.
    - 1) "And having, in length of time, forgotten the benefits they had received from Joseph, particularly the crown being now come into another family, they became very abusive to the Israelites, and contrived many ways of afflicting them; for they enjoined them to cut a great number of channels for the river, and to build walls for their cities and ramparts, that they might restrain the river, and hinder its waters from stagnating, upon its running over its own banks: they set them also to build pyramids, (17) and by all this wore them out; and forced them to learn all sorts of mechanical arts, and to accustom themselves to hard labor.
    - 2) "And four hundred years did they spend under these afflictions; for they strove one against the

other which should get the mastery, the Egyptians desiring to destroy the Israelites by these labors, and the Israelites desiring to hold out to the end under them” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, Chapter 9).

5. Verses 12-14: "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour."
  - a. But the greater the afflictions, the more Israel multiplied and grew. One purpose of the rigorous servitude was to hinder their growth; they were using this means not only to erect cities and farm the land, but to kill off the Israelites and to stymie their ability to produce offspring.
  - b. But God saw to it that this evil intent was not accomplished. Since the Bible describes their lot as "bitter with hard bondage" we may be sure their treatment was cruel indeed. Whatever the job assigned to them, it was rigorous. The world is comprised of those who serve God and those who do not. In almost every case, those who rebel against God far outnumber those who are his servants.
  - c. Sooner or later, those who try to serve him must reckon with the savage hatred of those who oppose the will of God. We peacefully co-exist with the world only if the world so wills it. In one way or another, and to one degree or another, they oppose us.

#### C. Exodus 1:15-22: The Second Phase of Pharaoh's Evil Plan.

1. Verses 15-17: "And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive."
  - a. Pharaoh spoke to the Hebrew midwives, commanding that they are to kill all the male babies as soon as they are born. The names of two midwives are given, but this does not mean they were the only two of that profession.
  - b. It may be that they were the ones in charge of the overall profession, or were used as messengers to the rest. These women feared God and did not do as they were commanded. "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29; cf. Eccl. 12:13-14).
2. Verses 18-19: "And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them."
  - a. Pharaoh called them in again to demand why they had not followed his orders. Their answer was that the Hebrew women were stronger than Egyptian women; by the time they were called, the Hebrew wives had already given birth.
  - b. Coffman cites ancient pictures dating back to about 1400 B.C. which depict Egyptian women as delicate and small. Hebrew women are shown as big boned and wearing heavy garments. Did these women lie to pharaoh? If so, why did God bless them? Is this a case for "situation ethics"? It is not stated that they lied.
3. Verses 20-22: "Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "And God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them households. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."
    - 2) NKJ: "Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them.

So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

- b. God blessed the midwives and caused them to have houses (households—cf. 2 Samuel 7:11, where the same phrase is used): "And as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house" (2 Sam. 7:11).
  - c. The very plan Pharaoh enacted brought Moses into the palace, as part of the king's family. God's ways are past finding out!
  - d. Jamieson: This represents God as rewarding them for telling a lie. This difficulty is wholly removed by a more correct translation. To "make" or "build up a house" in *Hebrew* idiom, means to have a numerous progeny. The passage then should be rendered thus: "God protected the midwives, and the people waxed very mighty; and because the midwives feared, the Hebrews grew and prospered."
  - e. Barnes: "[Made them houses] i.e. they married Hebrews and became mothers in Israel. The expression is proverbial. See the margin reference. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive. The extreme cruelty of the measure does not involve improbability. Hatred of strangers was always a characteristic of the Egyptians (see Gen 43:32), and was likely to be stronger than ever after the expulsion of an alien race."
-



## EXODUS 2

### A. Exodus 2:1-10: The Birth and Early Years of Moses.

1. Verse 1: "And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi."
  - a. The birth story of Moses is given so casually that one might overlook the part providence had in the events, but the only way to account for the "coincidences" of the story is to attribute them to God's actions. The story begins by simply stating that a man of the tribe of Levi took a wife of his own tribe. Their names are not here given, but in 6:20 they are identified as Amram and Jochebed. Jochebed is identified as Amram's father's sister. Such marriages were permissible in the early part of man's history, but in the new law soon to be given Israel, marriages to close of kin was forbidden (Lev. 18).
  - b. While Pharaoh was executing an evil plan by which to limit the growth and freedom of Israel, God was developing a plan by which Israel would be liberated. Thus the entrance of Moses into Amram's family.
2. Verse 2: "And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was a goodly child*, she hid him three months."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months."
    - 2) NKJ: "So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months."
  - b. Because this son they had was a "goodly child," he was hidden for three months so that the evil decree of Pharaoh could not be executed on him. "In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months" (Acts 7:20). The beauty of this baby may have been taken by his parents as a token of God's special endowment upon him. We might also speculate that his parents were given some heavenly message regarding his being the deliverer of Israel. It is clear that in some way Moses had learned he was to fill this role: "For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" (Acts 7:25).
  - c. Hebrews 11:23: "By faith Moses when he was born was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." They showed faith by this action because they knew the decree was contrary to God's will; and faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). It is possible that God had given them information about what their son would become, although nothing is directly said about such in the divine record.
  - d. Bible critics assert that this account in Exodus of Moses' birth implies that he was the firstborn of the family, and that this contradicts what is later reported. But this passage does not say Moses was the firstborn, neither does it imply such. It simply reports the birth of this boy. Other passages show that he had at least one older brother and sister. Miriam is prominently mentioned in the sacred text, and it is no doubt she who is spoken of in Exodus 2:4-8. This sister was old enough to be of service by the time Moses was three months, but her age is not given. Aaron is said to be three years older than Moses in Exodus 7:7: Moses was 80 and Aaron was 83 when they stood before Pharaoh with their demand for Israel's freedom.
3. Verses 3-4: "And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him."
  - a. NKJ: "But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. 4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him."
  - b. After three months, it was no longer possible to keep their beautiful baby hidden from the Egyptians. The strong lungs of a healthy three-month old baby, plus the "clothesline" would soon give his presence away. His mother took an ark made of bulrushes, daubed it with slime and pitch, concealed inside it her baby, and put it among the flags growing at the river's edge. The use of the descriptive term "ark" calls to mind the means of Noah's deliverance.

- c. "Papyrus was widely used in the manufacture of such things as baskets, boats, mats, ropes, sails, and even paper" (Coffman, p.15). "It had a triangular stalk about the thickness of a finger, which grew to the height of ten feet; and from this the lighter Nile boats were made whilst the peeling of the plant was used for sails, mattresses, mats, sandals, and other articles, but chiefly for the preparation of paper" (Keil, pp.427f).
  - d. The slime was bitumen (asphalt) and held the papyrus stalks together, while the pitch made the ark water tight. The sister of Moses was most likely Miriam, named in Numbers 26:59. She was given the job of seeing what became of Moses.
4. Verses 5-9: "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it."
- a. The ark had been wisely located at the place where Pharaoh's daughter came to wash herself on occasion. This would have been a safe place, but one which could have been known to the Israelites. "The Nile was worshipped; and bathing in its waters was supposed to enrich, protect, and/or heal such bathers. It was probable that special secluded areas along the river were prepared, protected from sharks, and set aside for the private use of such persons as Pharaoh's daughter. Evidently Jochebed knew, not only *where* the princess would bathe, but *when*. In this connection, it is interesting that Cook affirmed that sharks are never found in that area of the Nile river" (Coffman, p.16).
  - b. On seeing the little "boat" in the river, the princess sent one of her maids to bring it to her. When it had been opened, she saw the baby crying, and had compassion on him. If the wrong party had found Moses, he might have been immediately slain, but when the compassionate princess saw him, her heart was touched, even though she very quickly perceived that the baby was an Israelite. She would have known about her father's edict regarding the killing of these babies, but she did not let that evil law keep her from giving shelter to the infant.
  - c. Moses' sister saw this transaction, and offered to obtain a nurse from the Hebrews. To Pharaoh's daughter this was a fortuitous suggestion which she quickly accepted. In this manner was the very mother of Moses able to nurse her own child. And she was given wages to do so! It seems to have been common for a child to be in his mother's special care until about three or four years of age, at which time he was weaned. This does not mean that he partook of his mother's milk for all that time for nursing involved more than just feeding.
5. Verse 10: "And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water."
- a. Hitchcock's Dictionary of Bible Names says *Moses* means "taken out; drawn forth." [Biblesoft].
  - b. We are not told how long Jochebed cared for Moses, but when he had grown, she brought him to the princess. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22). We are not told what he was called by his mother, but the Egyptian princess named him Moses because she had drawn him from the water.
  - c. Moses received the powerful influence of two women during his growing up years: this princess and Jochebed. In his case, his mother had the greater impact on his life. His name is almost exactly the same in both Hebrew and Egyptian.
  - d. Josephus says that the Ethiopians had invaded Egypt and subdued part of the country; this uninspired historian asserts that Moses was made a general, and led the Egyptian army in a successful assault against the invading army, driving them into the city of Saba where they were besieged and captured (Ant., ii, chap. 10). Some scholars think Stephen's words in Acts 7:22 alludes to such a career.

B. Exodus 2:11-22: Moses Flees to Midian.

1. Verses 11-12: "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his

brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand."

- a. After Moses had grown to manhood, he went among his own people and observed them in their burdens. Stephen says he was a full forty years old at the time (Acts 7:23).
  - b. When he saw an Egyptian abusing one of the Hebrews, Moses looked to see if anyone else was around; on seeing no one, he slew the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand.
  - c. Clark opines: "
    - 1) [When Moses was grown] Being full forty years of age, as Stephen says Acts 7:23, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, i.e., he was excited to it by a divine inspiration; and seeing one of them suffer wrong, by an Egyptian smiting him, probably one of the task-masters, he avenged him and smote—slew, the Egyptian, supposing that God who had given him commission, had given also his brethren to understand that they were to be delivered by his hand; see Acts 7:23-25. Probably the Egyptian killed the Hebrew and therefore on the Noahic precept Moses was justified in killing him; and he was authorized so to do by the commission which he had received from God, as all succeeding events amply prove.
    - 2) Previously to the mission of Moses to deliver the Israelites, Josephus says, "The Aethiopians having made an irruption into Egypt, and subdued a great part of it, a divine oracle advised them to employ Moses the Hebrew. On this the king of Egypt made him general of the Egyptian forces, with these he attacked the Aethiopians, defeated and drove them back into their own land, and forced them to take refuge in the city of Baba, where he besieged them. Tharbis, daughter of the Aethiopian king, seeing him, fell desperately in love with him, and promised to give up the city to him on condition that he would take her to wife, to which Moses agreed, and the city was put into the hands of the Egyptians."—Jos. Ant. lib. ii., chap. 9 . Stephen probably alluded to something of this kind when he said Moses was mighty in deeds as well as words. [Biblesoft].
2. Verses 13-14: "And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known."
- a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "And he went out the second day, and, behold, two men of the Hebrews were striving together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely the thing is known."
    - 2) NKJ: And when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, "Why are you striking your companion?" Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"
  - b. The next day, again walking among the Hebrews, he saw two of them striving against each other. He rebuked the offending party for smiting his fellow Hebrew. This aggressor asked, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?" This was a shock to Moses for he had thought this had been done in secret.
  - c. Again, Stephen gives additional insight: "And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" (Acts 7:24-25). This inspired comment indicates that Moses somehow knew he had been selected by God to deliver Israel from bondage. We not told how he knew this, but we do know that he had acted prematurely.
  - d. God was not going to deliver Israel immediately, or by the means Moses had chosen. Moses was to be the deliverer, but he was forty years too soon in his efforts. And God would not use criminal acts to effect the deliverance. But in his own way and at the proper time God would bring Israel forth with a mighty hand!
3. Verse 15: "Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face

of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well."

- a. When Moses saw that his killing of the Egyptian was known, he fled to Midian. Pharaoh had learned of the killing, and intended to slay Moses for this crime. Verse 14 speaks of Moses being afraid; but Hebrews 11:27 declares that he was not afraid of the wrath of Pharaoh. Clarke suggested (p.300) that the writer of Hebrews describes the fearless manner in which Moses, with his brother Aaron, confronted Pharaoh and brought about Israel's release. At any rate, in the present instance, he took no chances; he fled from Egypt and came to Midian where he was to dwell for the next forty years.
  - b. Keil states that the faith of Moses (Heb. 11:27) was manifested by leaving Egypt: "By renouncing his position in Egypt, where he might possibly have softened down the king's wrath, and perhaps even have brought help and deliverance to his brethren the Hebrews. By the fact that he did not allow such human hopes to lead him to remain in Egypt, and was not afraid to increase the king's anger by his flight, he manifested faith in the invisible One as though he saw Him, commending not only himself, but his oppressed nation, to the care and protection of God" (p.432).
4. Verses 16-17: "Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock."
- a. While sitting at a well (vs. 15), the seven daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, came to draw water for their father's flock. There were other shepherds who came and drove them away after the girls had filled the troughs with water. These were cruel individuals who had no concern for others. Moses took the part of these girls and evidently drove off these other shepherds.
  - b. The Midianites had descended from Abraham through Keturah (Gen. 25:2,4). Keil says that the branch of the Midianites with which Moses settled lived in the southern half of the peninsula of Sinai (p.432).
  - c. Reuel is also called Jethro ("Excellency") in Exodus 4:18. It appears that his name was Reuel and Jethro was his official designation (Coffman, p.22). Reuel was a servant of God. His name is given as Raguel in Numbers 10:29, but in Hebrew is the same as Reuel.
5. Verses 18-21: "And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to day? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? why *is it that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter."
- a. Reuel asked his daughters why they got home earlier than usual. They told him how an Egyptian (Moses) had assisted them with the insolent shepherds. Their father sent them to invite Moses to eat with them.
  - b. Moses was content to dwell with this family, and eventually married one of the girls—Zipporah. Despite the fact that he was content to live in Midian, he still saw his life there as a banishment from his own people. Thus, he gave his first son the name of Gershom ("banishment). The birth of the second son is not recorded but we are told about him in Exodus 18:4. He is named Eliezer which means, "The God of my father is my help, and has delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh." (Keil, p.435). "And the name of the other *was* Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he, was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh" (Exod. 18:4)
  - c. "In the names of his two sons, Moses expressed all that had affected his mind in the land of Midian. The pride and self-will with which he had offered himself in Egypt as the deliverer and judge of his oppressed brethren, had been broken down by the feeling of exile. This feeling, however, had not passed into despair, but had been purified and raised into firm confidence in the God of his fathers, who had shown himself as his helper by delivering him from the sword of Pharaoh" (Keil, *ibid.*).
  - d. It would be another forty years from the time of Exodus 2:11-14 before Moses would be fully prepared and readied for the great task of delivering Israel. Men, in our short sighted point of view, often want to do things too quickly; we lack patience; we are not able to see things as God sees them. God knew the mettle of Moses, and he also knew that he was ill-prepared to do the job at the present time.
  - e. A farmer can see by the presence of large weeds that the land is rich; if it will grow weeds it will
-



produce a good crop also. Moses had demonstrated that he had the courage and will to do the job at hand; but he did not have the background. He had been educated in the wisdom of Egypt, but he also needed the wisdom which only God could teach him. And God could instill this wisdom in him only by means of hardship and trial. Hence, he was banished from his own people for forty long years.

- f. Peter had the courage and will to defend Christ with a sword (Matt. 26:51), but needed hardship to develop his full spiritual strength. The Lord recognized his strength and will, but saw also the need for hardship and instruction before he could be developed into the stone after which he was named by Christ. Both Moses and Peter tried to accomplish a work they thought ought to be done, but they chose methods not in keeping with God's will, but after the purifying and strengthening of time and trial, they both became great servants of God.

### C. Exodus 2:23-25: God Begins to Execute His Plan to Deliver Israel.

1. Verse 23: "And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage."
  - a. The oppressing king of Egypt went the way of all men—in the process of time. With his death Israel might hope for relief from the heavy burdens imposed on them. They were doomed to be disappointed if this was their hope.
  - b. "This allusion to the complaints of the Israelites, in connection with the notice of the king's death, seems to imply that they hoped for some amelioration of their lot from the change of government; and that when they were disappointed, and groaned the more bitterly in consequence, they cried to God for help and deliverance" (Keil, p.436).
2. Verse 24: "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."
  - a. This does not imply that God had forgotten them. "These words express in human terms God's determination to relieve the suffering of Israel and to deliver them from their shameful and oppressive bondage....What is indicated is that the time had almost arrived when God would act decisively to aid and deliver them....'This is a classic example of the attribution of human terms and attributes to God, who, in fact, never forgets a promise'" (Coffman, p.23).
  - b. "God is said to 'hear' the prayers which he accepts and grants; to 'be deaf' to those which he does not grant, but rejects. He now 'heard' (i.e. accepted) the supplications of oppressed Israel; and on account of the covenant which he had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—a covenant always remembered by him—he looked upon his people, made them the objects of his special regard, and entered on a course, which was abnormal, irregular, miraculous, in order to carry out his purposes of mercy towards them.
    - 1) "It is observed that anthropomorphic expressions are here accumulated; but this is always the case when the love and tenderness of God towards man are spoken of, since they form the only possible phraseology in which ideas of love and tenderness can be expressed so as to be intelligible to bureau beings.
    - 2) "And God regarded them. Literally, 'and God knew.' God kept the whole in his thoughts—bore in mind the sufferings, the wrongs, the hopes, the fears, the groans, the despair, the appeal to him, the fervent supplications and prayers—knew all, remembered all—counted every word and sigh—gathered the tears into his bottle—noted all things in his book—and for the present endured, kept silence—but was preparing for his foes a terrible vengeance—for his people a marvellous deliverance" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
3. Verse 25: "And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*."
  - a. The holy heart of the Almighty was touched by the predicament of his people. It was likewise painful for him to see his only begotten Son suffer and die on Calvary. But certain things are necessary in order for good things to result.
  - b. It was necessary for Moses to suffer in various ways in order to be strengthened for his great mission; it was necessary for Israel to suffer so that they would be bonded together for all time.
  - c. Clark offers this extensive comment:

- 1) [And God had respect unto them.] [And God had respect unto them.] *Wayeeda Elohiym*, God knew them, i.e., he approved of them, and therefore it is said that their cry came up before God, and he heard their groaning. The word *yaada* to know, in the Hebrew Bible, as well as *ginooskoo* in the Greek Testament, is frequently used in the sense of approving; and because God knew—had respect for and approved of, them, therefore he was determined to deliver them ....
- 2) The further we proceed in the sacred writings, the more the history both of the grace and providence of God opens to our view. He ever cares for his creatures, and is mindful of his promise. The very means made use of to destroy his work are, in his hands, the instruments of its accomplishment. Pharaoh orders the male children of the Hebrews to be thrown into the river, Moses, who was thus exposed is found by his own daughter, brought up as her own son, and from his Egyptian education becomes much better qualified for the great work to which God had called him; and his being obliged to leave Egypt was undoubtedly a powerful means to wean his heart from a land in which he had at his command all the advantages and luxuries of life. His sojourning also in a strange land, where he was obliged to earn his bread by a very painful employment, fitted him for the perilous journey he was obliged to take in the wilderness and enabled him to bear the better the privations to which he was in consequence exposed.
- 3) The bondage of the Israelites was also wisely permitted, that they might with less reluctance leave a country where they had suffered the greatest oppression and indignities. Had they not suffered severely previously to their departure, there is much reason to believe that no inducements could have been sufficient to have prevailed on them to leave it. And yet their leaving it was of infinite consequence, in the order both of grace and providence, as it was indispensably necessary that they should be a people separated from all the rest of the world, that they might see the promises of God fulfilled under their own eyes, and thus have the fullest persuasion that their law was divine, their prophets inspired by the Most High, and that the Messiah came according to the prophecies before delivered concerning him.
- 4) From the example of Pharaoh's daughter (see note at Ex 2:4) and the seven daughters of Jethro (Ex 2:16), we learn that in the days of primitive simplicity, and in this respect the best days, the children, particularly the daughters of persons in the highest ranks in life, were employed in the most laborious offices. Kings' daughters performed the office of the laundress to their own families; and the daughters of princes tended and watered the flocks. We have seen similar instances in the case of Rebekah and Rachel, and we cannot be too pointed in calling the attention of modern delicate females, who are not only above serving their own parents and family, but even their own selves: the consequence of which is, they have neither vigour nor health, their growth for want of healthy exercise, is generally cramped; their natural powers are prematurely developed, and their whole course is rather an apology for living, than a state of effective life. Many of these live not out half their days, and their offspring, when they have any, is more feeble than themselves; so that the race of man where such preposterous conduct is followed (and where is it not followed?) is in a state of gradual deterioration. Parents who wish to fulfil the intention of God and nature, will doubtless see it their duty to bring up their children on a different plan. A worse than the present can scarcely be found out.
- 5) Afflictions, under the direction of God's providence and the influence of his grace, are often the means of leading men to pray to and acknowledge God, who in the time of their prosperity hardened their necks from his fear. When the Israelites were sorely oppressed, they began to pray. If the cry of oppression had not been among them, probably the cry for mercy had not been heard. Though afflictions, considered in themselves, can neither atone for sin nor improve the moral state of the soul, yet God often uses them as means to bring sinners to himself, and to quicken those who, having already escaped the pollutions of the world, were falling again under the influence of an earthly mind. Of many millions besides David it may truly be said, "Before they were afflicted they went astray." [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved].

## EXODUS 3

### A. Exodus 3:1-6: The Call and Commission of Moses.

1. Verse 1: "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb."
  - a. Forty years had passed since Moses fled from Egypt following the slaying of the Egyptian (2:11-15). The time was now right for God to take action to begin the deliverance of Israel from their bondage. God, being infinite in all his attributes, does not operate as men do. His plans are perfect in their design, operation, and timing. He makes no mistakes. Compare: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4).
    - 1) The wickedness of the Amorites was now full (Gen. 15:16), and the time was approaching for the sword of justice to fall upon them. God not only would bless Israel, but he would by the same operation punish the sinful nations now occupying Palestine. "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Gen. 15:16).
    - 2) We are in a position to perceive God's wisdom in allowing his people to undergo the long centuries of cruel bondage in Egypt, for had they not had that unifying experience they would likely have disintegrated into many warring factions, and then have been eradicated by enemies or absorbed by them. Even with the unifying bond with which their Egyptian oppression sealed them, they almost failed the further tests of the wilderness journey.
  - b. This chapter begins with a statement that Moses kept the flock of Jethro. There was evidently nothing spectacular about the forty years he spent in Midian. However, it was during these years of obscurity and toil that he was developed into the mighty man of spiritual strength, able with God's help to accomplish the impossible: bringing about the freedom of Israel, and leading them into the Promised Land. Just any man would not do; God prepared the right man for the job. Compare: "Now the man Moses *was* very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth" ( Num. 12:3).
  - c. Some commentators speculate that Jethro was the son of Reuel, and was Moses' brother-in-law. Clarke says that the term (*chothen*) translated "father-in-law" in this place is translated "sons-in-law" in Genesis 19:14, and that it seems to be a general term denoting a relative by marriage and that the exact meaning must be determined by the context. This might help explain the difference in the name of his father-in-law.
  - d. Since forty years have passed, it is possible that Reuel was now dead, and Jethro, son of Reuel, was now priest (says Clarke, pp.302f). But this would require changing the Bible in too many places (cf. Ex. 18). As suggested under Exodus 2:16-17, one name might be his title as priest, the other his given name. Anyway, many Bible people had more than one name (cf. Peter; Paul; Dorcas; Abraham; Sarah; Jacob). Therefore, it appears that Reuel and Jethro are different names for Moses' father-in-law. Nothing is otherwise said about Reuel having any sons, only the seven daughters.
  - e. In the process of tending to Jethro's flock, Moses led them to the backside of the desert to the mountain called Horeb, known also as the mountain of God. This latter designation is likely by anticipation. Moses penned these words while he was leading Israel to Canaan, and the nation would understand this reference to indicate Sinai where the Law was given. This mountain is in a chain located in the southern end of the peninsula bordered on the east by the Gulf of Aquaba and on the west by the Gulf of Suez, both of which are the "ears" of the Red Sea. Keil reports that this region was the most elevated part of the peninsula, had fertile valleys in which even fruit trees grow, and water abounded (p.437). "Horeb" and "Sinai" are used as equivalents; Sinai is thought to be a peak in a chain then known as Horeb; others suggest that there was also a peak known as Horeb.
2. Verse 2: "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed."
  - a. The angel of the Lord appeared in a burning bush which was afire but was not consumed by the flame. "This [*Lord*] is merely another name for God, of which there are many in the Bible. Although this verse does not indicate it, there is reason to believe that the Angel of Jehovah should be identified with our Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Godhead; he is also called the Angel of the Covenant" (Coffman, p.27).

- 
- b. The next verse says that it was God who called to Moses from the burning bush, a fact which lends credence to Coffman's view. Another view ought to be mentioned, namely, that what an angel said while acting on a God-given mission can be attributed equally to God or the messenger: the messenger simply relays what God has said.
  - c. "Taking the whole narrative altogether, we are justified in concluding that the appearance was that of 'the Angel of the Covenant' or 'the Second Person of the Trinity himself'; but this is not stated nor implied in the present verse. We learn it from what follows" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
3. Verses 3-4: "And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I."
    - a. Bible critics call this a myth, and others may tend to make it some kind of imaginary episode, but the New Testament speaks of this incident as a real occurrence.
      - 1) "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). Our Lord referred to the incident as a real event.
      - 2) "And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush" (Acts 7:30). The inspired Stephen affirmed the reality of the episode.
    - b. To this point in his life, as far as the Record speaks, Moses had never seen any supernatural event, and he was eighty years old. Yet people today think that miracles are going on all around us constantly. Moses could quickly see that the bush was afire but was not being consumed, something that no one before or since has beheld. He turned aside to investigate this "great sight." One of the purposes of this sign was to attract Moses' attention.
    - c. God called to him from the burning bush. The power which preserved the bush from burning would later preserve Israel as she traveled through the wilderness. During their time in the wilderness, the clothing and shoes of the Israelites did not wear out as they would normally. "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot" (Deut. 29:5).
  4. Verses 5-6: "And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground. Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."
    - a. God warned Moses not to draw too close and instructed him to remove his shoes. "The place of the burning bush was holy because of the presence of the holy God, and putting off the shoes was intended to express not merely respect for the place itself, but that reverence" which man owes to Almighty God (Keil, pp.439f).
    - b. The initial move God made after getting Moses' attention was to teach him the important lesson of proper reverence for God. There is no greater lesson needed in today's world. There is too little respect for God and his word (2 Sam. 12:9-10). Our nation, and the Western World in general, has lost reverence for God and respect for the word of God. The Bible is shunned and ridicules and Holy Names are very commonly used profanely—even by little children.
    - c. When the Speaker identified himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses was so awed that he hid his face out of fear. This was the common reaction on man's part when he came into the presence of deity. *Reverence* is respectful awe toward God. It is a pious caution and carefulness.
      - 1) Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
      - 2) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."
      - 3) Daniel 5:5-6: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand
-



- that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another."
- 4) Mark 2:12: "And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all **amazed**, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion." Thayer: NT:1839: "to be amazed, astounded: Matt 12:23; Mark 2:12; Luke 8:56; Acts 2:7,12; 8:13; 9:21; 10:45; 12:16" (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, PC Study Bible).
  - 5) Mark 4:41: "And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"
  - 6) Hebrews 12:19-21: "And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake)."
    - a) So fearful was this sight that even Moses feared and trembled. "For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also" (Ex. 9:19; cf. Daniel 5). Moses was not simple-minded, uneducated, or superstitious. He was well-trained and experienced in Egyptian knowledge and practice (Acts 7:22).
    - b) He clearly and easily saw his utter insignificance in contrast with God's majestic presence. How completely insignificant is any man or woman, regardless of their worldly knowledge, wealth, or position, in the presence of the Almighty, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe! How totally unfit is any one of us to stand in his holy presence!
  - 7) The Christian Age was ushered in by powerful miraculous demonstrations. Miracles were present during the crucifixion, death and resurrection of the Lord: the darkness; the earthquakes; the rending of the veil of the temple; the resurrection of Christ; his appearances to certain people.
  - 8) Miracles were present on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 when the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the kingdom was established. Miracles continued for a period of time afterward until the gospel was fully revealed, communicated to that generation, confirmed as God's truth, recorded for future generations, and the church was firmly established on earth.
- d. Christ made a great argument in behalf of immortality by appealing to the very words God spoke on this occasion. He said that God had affirmed that he continued to be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob even though they were dead and gone from earth; this implied that these three Old Testament worthies were still alive in the spirit realm. "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mt. 22:32). J. W. McGarvey's comments on these verses are wonderfully perceptive [*Commentary on Matthew and Mark*]:
- 1) "Having refuted he objection of the Sadducees, Jesus next furnished a proof of the resurrection. The major premise of his argument is the proposition that 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' Here the term *dead* is used in the sense attached to it by the Sadducees. If he had been disputing with Pharisees, they could have answered, He *is* the God of the dead; for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were dead when he said, 'I *am* their God.' But to the Sadducees a dead man was *non est*—he had ceased to exist, he was nothing; and to say, in their sense of the term, that God is the God of the dead, is to say he is the God of nothing. It would be nonsense. But God did say, hundreds of years after the death of the three patriarchs, 'I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' (Ex. 3:6.)
  - 2) "The conclusion follows, that these patriarchs were not dead in the Sadducean sense of the term; and as the conclusion applies only to their spirits, it proves that spirits continue to be alive after the bodies which they inhabited are dead.
  - 3) "The thoughtful reader may have observed that the conclusion of this argument falls short in its terms, of the demands of the subject. This subject is the resurrection of the dead, while the conclusion affects only the question whether the spirits of the dead are still alive. We can not

escape the difficulty by supposing, as some have done, that the resurrection spoken of is that of the spirit, not that of the body; for there is no such thing as a resurrection of the spirit.

- 4) "The spirit does not die, and therefore it does not rise from the dead. It leaves the body as the latter dies, its departure is the immediate cause of death, and it departs in the full possession of life. Resurrection is always spoken of in the Scriptures with reference to the body. How, then, does the Savior's proof that spirits continue to live apart from the body, include proof of a resurrection? It seems quite certain that the argument appeared conclusive to the Sadducees; for Jesus assumed that it was so, and they tacitly admitted the fact, while the bystanders who knew the view of the party 'were astonished at his doctrine.' (Verse 33.)
  - 5) "In other words, the Sadducees admitted that if the existence of human spirits apart from the body were proved, the necessity for a resurrection would follow. The argument, then, was conclusive at least to them; but was it no more than an *ad hominem* argument? We think not; for human spirits, having been originally created for the exercise of their powers through the organs of the body, must, unless their original nature be changed, which is an inadmissible supposition because unsupported by evidence, be dependent for their highest enjoyment on the possession of a body. This being so, the continued existence of spirits after the death of the body creates a demand for the resurrection of the body, and the Sadducees were philosophical enough to see this" (pp.191f).
- e. Many who have a liberal bent today look on the Bible, not as a book which is to be studied and interpreted closely, but as a message of general principles. Many have the notion that one cannot so interpret the Bible as to reach a conclusion that is any more than an opinion. But the Lord had the highest confidence in the Bible, even the Old Testament, which he quoted. His argument hinged on the difference between the present and past tenses of a verb: I am the God of..." Paul made similar use of Bible text in Galatians 3:16, his argument turning on the difference between the singular and plural of the word "seed." The Bible is trustworthy; it was written to be understood, and when we all understand a Bible text, we will understand it alike; it was meant to be final authority for all our spiritual and religious activities; we must study it diligently, and often in minute detail, to obtain the message it has for us.
- 1) 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
  - 2) 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."
  - 3) 1 Timothy 4:13: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."
  - 4) 1 Timothy 4:15-16: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."
  - 5) Acts 17:11-12: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."
  - 6) John 5:39: "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me" (ASV).
- f. "The astonishment of the multitude arose from two circumstances: first, that Jesus was at all able to answer the boasted objection of the Sadducees; and second, that he found the answer in the writings of Moses, where it was supposed then, and has been supposed since, that the doctrine of a future life is not taught" (ibid.).

#### B. Exodus 3:7-10: Moses is Commissioned to Return to Egypt as Israel's Deliverer.

1. Verse 7: "And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."
  - a. God next points out to Moses that he is concerned about Israel's welfare; he has heard their cries and has been fully aware of their sorrows.
  - b. Sometimes we may think that God is far away, unaware of our problems, and unconcerned about us.

This is false.

- 1) Psalms 7:9: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."
  - 2) Psalms 139:7-10: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."
  - 3) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
  - 4) Romans 5:6-9: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
  - 5) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
2. Verse 8: "And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites."
    - a. The expression "I am come down" is one of many "anthropomorphisms" in the Bible in which attributes of man are attributed to God. It was not necessary for God to personally be present in order to accomplish some action, but to put it so that man can properly grasp the matter, God expressed it that way. God stated his intention of delivering Israel from their Egyptian bondage: there is no doubt about the outcome!
    - b. He was going to bring them into a land which is good, large, and flows with milk and honey. Compared to the constricted territory of their Egyptian sojourn, Canaan would be large (broad); it would be a good land. It was blessed with natural resources, was fertile, had sufficient water, and an abundance of fruit trees. "Flowing with milk and honey" was a metaphor depicting the richness and goodness of the land. Cf. Numbers 13:23: "And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs." [One bunch of grapes required two men to carry it!].
    - c. Six different nations are named. "Canaanite" is used to describe all of the seven nations occupying Canaan in the ancient times, and was applied to one of these in particular. "The 'Canaanites' mentioned here are sometimes called the 'seven nations.' All of them were settled in Canaan (Palestine) centuries before Israel.
      - 1) "The word Canaanite applied to all of these related groups, and also to one of the specific divisions. They were in Canaan 1900 years B.C.
      - 2) "The Hittites came much later during the era of 1800-1450 B.C. (Genesis 23:10).
      - 3) "The Amorites were the most numerous of these nations, having been in the area from 2300 B.C. (Numbers 21:26).
      - 4) "The Perizzites are not identifiable.
      - 5) "The Hivites dwelt around Shechem, Gibeon, and the region about 5 miles NW of Jerusalem (Joshua 9:3-7, 11:19, Genesis 34:2). They were in Canaan by 2000 B.C.
      - 6) "The Jebusites occupied Jerusalem (Judges 1:21; 2 Samuel 5:6; Joshua 15:63). (7) The Girgashites (Joshua 24:11, Deuteronomy 7:1) are obscure" (Coffman, p.30).
  3. Verses 9-10: "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt."
    - a. Coming quickly to the point, God said he had heard the cry of Israel and had seen the oppression heaped upon them, therefore "I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people

the children of Israel out of Egypt."

- b. Similarly, heaven is interested in the physical and spiritual welfare of his offspring today.
  - 1) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
  - 2) Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."

C. Exodus 3:11-18: Moses Begins to Offer Objections to God's Choice of Deliverer.

1. Verses 11-12: "And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."
  - a. Moses' first objection is: "Who am I?" At the age of forty, Moses thought he was able and ready to deliver Israel; he was neither at that time. Now at the age of eighty, although God had now readied him for the mission, Moses had self-doubts. One who would serve God acceptably and well, needs to have a proper balance of (1) humility, which causes him to realize how weak and deficient he is to be undertaking such a task, and (2) confidence, knowing that whatever talents and knowledge he has can, with God's help, accomplish much. If we have no confidence we will not be useful; but if we are over-confident, we will be able to do little more.
  - b. Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more **highly than he ought to think**; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Self-confidence is essential for faithful service; but pride can destroy our soul.
  - c. In response to Moses' objection, God assures him that he will be with him. That ought to be sufficient reason for him to accept the mission and persevere. God does not speak to us directly today, but he does reveal his will to us through his Word. In that Word, he announces our obligations, and assures us that he will be with us (Heb. 13:5; Rom. 8:31). In Moses' case, God would assist him miraculously; in our situations, he will assist us with his providence and guide us by the Bible.
  - d. What is **the token** mentioned in verse 12? Some say it was the burning bush; the text indicates it was the fact that Israel would come to this locale and worship God after their release from Egypt. The burning bush would be a sign to Moses, but would only be a second-hand sign to Israel. But when they were released and had journeyed to Sinai and there served God, that would be a sign to all that God had truly been with Moses.
  - e. "This sign, which was to be a pledge to Moses of the success of his mission, was one indeed that required faith itself; but, at the same time, it was a sign adapted to inspire both courage and confidence. God pointed out to him the success of his mission, the certain result of his leading the people out: Israel should serve Him upon the very same mountain in which He had appeared to Moses. As surely as Jehovah had appeared to Moses as the God of his fathers, so surely should Israel serve Him there. The reality of the appearance of God formed the pledge of His announcement, that Israel would there serve its God; and this truth was to fill Moses with confidence in the execution of the divine command" (Keil, p.441).
  - f. Moses was not the only one to make excuses. The one-talent man of Matthew 25:24-30 tried to avoid his duty by making excuses: "Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing

of teeth.”

2. Verses 13-15: "And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations."
  - a. Moses offered a second objection: If I go, how shall I answer when they want to know the name of the God who sent me to them? The reply has both thrilled and baffled Bible students down through the centuries: *I Am That I Am*. It is evident that two things are being expressed: the self-sufficiency and eternal nature of God. He has always been, he is now, and he will ever continue to be.
  - b. Deity is described in the New Testament as being the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.
    - 1) Revelation 1:8: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."
    - 2) Revelation 1:18: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
    - 3) Revelation 4:8: "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."
  - c. "This name precluded any comparison between the God of the Israelites and the deities of the Egyptians and other nations, and furnished Moses and his people with strong consolation in their affliction, and a powerful support to their confidence in the realization of His purposes of salvation as made known to the fathers. To establish them in this confidence, God added still further: '*This is My name for ever, and My memorial unto all generations;*' that is to say, God would even manifest Himself in the nature expressed by the name *Jehovah*, and by this He would have all generations both know and revere Him" (Keil, p.442).
    - 1) Keil and others think that the memorial name of God intended to be for all generations is "Jehovah." But this name is given in earlier chapters of the Bible, in Genesis; it was already known and used by some of earlier times.
    - 2) Also, the name "Jehovah" is a reconstructed name; only the four consonants have come down to us; the vowels have long since disappeared from human memory. The vowels of our English term "Jehovah" have been supplied by uninspired men; we have no way of knowing whether this is the exact original name. Nor is it important, for had it be indispensable, God would have seen to it that the name was transmitted infallibly down through the ages. "The true pronunciation was lost; and it was not until 1520, the time of the Reformation, that the modern pronunciation came into use" (ALC, 1960, p.152).
  - d. It appears that the name God is emphasizing here is that which is given in the preceding verse: "I AM THAT I AM." And in verse fifteen, he is simply identifying himself as the God who dealt with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, men who had long since departed from the earth; though these mortals had died, yet their God was still alive and powerful!
  - e. Pulpit Commentary: I AM THAT I AM. No better translation can be given of the Hebrew words. "I will be that I will be (Geddes) is more literal, but less idiomatic, since the Hebrew was the simplest possible form of the verb substantive. "I am because I am" (Boothroyd) is wrong, since the word *asher* is certainly the relative .... The Vulgate, *sum qui sum*, has absolute exactness. The idea expressed by the name is, as already explained, that of real, perfect, unconditioned, independent existence. I AM hath sent me to you. "I am" is an abbreviated form of "I am that I am," and is intended to express the same idea. [Biblesoft].
3. Verses 16-18: "Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you,

and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God."

- a. Giving practical directions, God instructs Moses that he is to gather the elders of Israel when he arrives in Egypt and assure them that God is fully aware of their awful situation. It would be impractical, if not impossible, for Moses to gather all the people, hence he was to deal with the elders who in turn would pass on the information to the people.
- b. God said that he had "visited" them. This is a figure of speech indicating God's full awareness of their condition. He further instructed Moses to announce to Israel that God would bring them out of their affliction into the land of Canaan, again stressing the beauty and richness of the Promised Land. Compare: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" (Gen. 50:24).
- c. God next promises Moses that Israel will heed him, and that the elders would go with him to Pharaoh. Their first appeal to the king was that he might allow them to go three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to God. Pharaoh had no right to keep Israel in the land, but inasmuch as a predecessor had given permission for them to sojourn in the land, he ought to be consulted to give assent for their departure. No intention to deceive the king is inherent in this initial request; they were not trying to get his permission to leave the land temporarily and then flee on into Canaan. Rather, this request was to give Pharaoh an opportunity to show kindness. It made sense to make a smaller request at the outset.

D. Exodus 3:19-22: Further Instruction and Information About the Forthcoming Exodus.

1. Verses 19-20: "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go."
  - a. NKJ: "But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians" (Verses 19-22).
  - b. God knew the heart of Pharaoh but gave the king an opportunity to make the proper choice. Pharaoh would be unwilling for Israel to depart even though God showed some awesome miracles of a judicial, punishing nature. Even after he consented following the tenth plague, he changed his mind and pursued Israel. God promised beforehand that he would severely smite Egypt, which would result in Israel's deliverance.
2. Verses 21-22: "And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians."
  - a. Egypt had benefitted from the forced labor of Israel for centuries; it was right that they should receive remuneration for this slavery, to say nothing of the cruelty and injustice they had suffered. God provided in some way a favorable attitude on the part of the Egyptian people toward Israel. We are not told here how this was accomplished. Perhaps it was through pity that many would have toward Israel; maybe it was out of respect for the awesome miracles they had seen. The "borrowing" was to be done, not with the implication that the goods involved would be returned, but as a willing gift to the children of Israel.
  - b. "And under these circumstances no Egyptian could have cherished the thought, that the Israelites were only borrowing the jewels they asked of them, and would return them....What they gave under such circumstances, they could only give or present without the slightest prospect of restoration. Still less could the Israelites have had merely the thought of borrowing in their mind, seeing that God had said to Moses, 'I will give the Israelites favour in the eyes of the Egyptians; and it will come to pass, that when ye go out, ye shall not go out empty'....From the very first the Israelites asked without intending to restore, and the

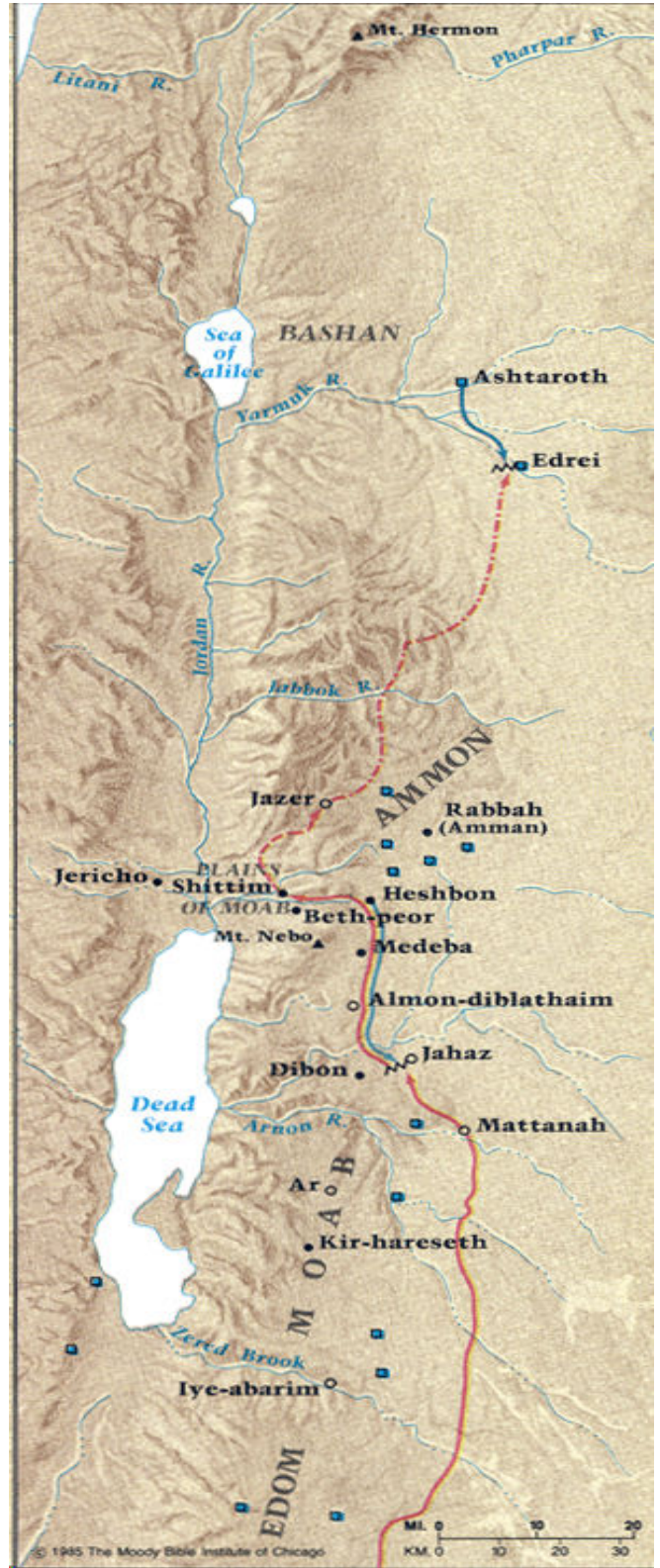


Egyptians granted their request without any hope of receiving back, because God had made their hearts favorably disposed to the Israelites" (Keil, pp.446f).

- c. "The loading of the Israelites with treasures on the occasion of their departure was prophesied by God himself in a promise made to Abraham (Genesis 15:24) where it was related that they would go out of the land of their sojournings 'with great substance.' Here the same meaning is stated in, 'Ye shall despoil the Egyptians.' In the history of the world, there was never another *coup* exactly like this one! The very uniqueness of Exodus is an unqualified marvel" (Coffman, p.38).
  - d. What was eventually taken from the Egyptians was given willingly, and was justly deserved by Israel. They had been forced into slavery, during which time they had built two treasure cities, and if Josephus is correct, some of the pyramids also.
  - e. But this information was given before the fact; there was a period of time during which Moses would be dealing with Pharaoh, trying to get him to release Israel. God knew the outcome of this endeavor, and thus could speak with certainty about the future.
-

Left: Journey of the Spies

Right: Conquest of TransJordan







## EXODUS 4

### A. Exodus 4:1-5: Moses Claims That Israel Will Not Believe Him.

1. Moses had already offered two objections to his being sent as Israel's deliverer: (1) Who am I, that I, a lowly shepherd, an outcast from Egypt, a man who has already been rejected as deliverer in my first attempt forty years ago, should be sent on such a great mission, and (2) I do not even know your name. Now he asserts that if he should appear suddenly in Egypt with the claim that God had sent him to deliver the Israelites, they would have no reason to believe him.
    - a. God had already assured Moses that he would be with him (vs. 12), and had identified himself to Moses (vv. 14ff). Under the same circumstances we would likely have done just as Moses did; the objections he first raised seem to be logical, although each is overridden by the fact that God would be directing the actions Moses would be taking. If God was behind him, there could be no failure!
    - b. In the verses of this chapter, Moses, the inspired recorder of these events, reports his own weaknesses and sins just as faithfully and fully as if he were giving details about some other person. This is another of a long line of reports in the Bible which shows the full impartiality of the inspired record; this impartiality is one of many evidences of biblical inspiration.
  2. Verse 1: "And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee."
    - a. From the viewpoint of human wisdom, Moses' objection appears very logical. It is very likely that the Israelites would have doubts about his claims to be the deliverer. But God was sending him, and he never gave any one a job to do without providing the means for successfully completing the mission. Moses could be sure that God would give sufficient verification for his commission; his part was to trust God to so provide.
    - b. It was necessary for Moses to have some confirmatory evidence. In the next several verses God illustrated what those "signs" would be. It is important to notice that as far as the Record is concerned, no Israelite had spoken with God since the days of Jacob, more than four centuries in the past. And, again as far as is reported, no one had seen a miracle from those ancient days to this burning bush incident. Moses' doubts are understandable.
    - c. The task of leading some two million or more people to freedom from their Egyptian masters, thus depriving the nation of its primary workforce, would be a truly monumental undertaking. And think of the logistics of such a maneuver! How could one man, without money, without an army, without any precedent, and without any supplies, hope to accomplish such a mission? No wonder Moses was incredulous.
  3. Verses 2-3: "And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it."
    - a. God asked him what it was he had in his hand. It was a rod, a staff; no doubt a shepherd's crook with which the sheep were controlled. God was not asking for information, but to call attention to the staff. There is no evidence or indication that this rod suddenly had appeared in Moses' hand miraculously; rather this was a tool that Moses used daily in his work as shepherd.
    - b. God instructed him to cast the rod upon the ground; on complying, the rod miraculously turned into a serpent. We are not told what kind of snake it became, but since Moses ran from it, it was doubtless poisonous.
  4. Verse 4: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand."
    - a. Moses' trust in God is now put to the test. He is told to put forth his hand and pick up the snake—by the tail! Snake-handlers pick up snakes, but by the neck, where they cannot be bitten. If one wanted to be bitten by a snake, the best place to take hold is the tail.
    - b. Moses had already shown he was fearful of snakes, so this test was a significant test of his trust in God. As soon as he had taken up the snake, it was miraculously turned back into his staff again.
  5. Verse 5: "That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of
-

Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee."

- a. This miraculous sign was to be one of the means by which Israel would be convinced that God had sent him as deliverer. It would also have a strong evidential value to Moses.
- b. When this sign was wrought before Israel, they would be fully persuaded that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had appeared to Moses.

B. Exodus 4:6-9: Two Other Signs Given To Moses.

1. Verse 6: "And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow."
  - a. To further persuade Moses, and to give an additional sign for Israel's benefit, God told Moses to put his hand into his bosom (to place his hand on his chest, under his garment). He followed his instructions, and when he had pulled his hand out again, it was covered with leprosy, as white as snow.
  - b. Clarke cites a report from a doctor of his time, "I have seen a remarkable case of this in a countryman, whose whole body was so miserably seized with it, that his skin *was shining as if covered with snow*; and as the furfuraceous [*fur-fu-ra-ceous*: consisting of or covered with flaky particles] scales were daily rubbed off, the flesh appeared *quick* or *raw* underneath" (p.309).
  - c. "The disease here called leprosy was definitely not the same as Hansen's disease, now called leprosy, because the whiteness here mentioned (and elsewhere in the Pentateuch) is not found in Hansen's disease" (Coffman, p.42).
  - d. "The first sign is followed by a second, equally simple and easy of performance, and perhaps, in the eyes of the Israelites, even more marvellous. Leprosy in a developed form was regarded as absolutely incurable. (Celsus, 'De Re Medica,' 5:7-8.)
    - 1) "Its instantaneous production and removal were contrary to all experience, and in themselves thoroughly astonishing. Further, while the first miracle was simply a sign of supernatural power—a credential, the second was a warning and a lesson. What might not he do to smite or to save on whom God had bestowed such power over the human organism? Each man would naturally fear to resist or disobey one so dangerously gifted.
    - 2) "*Leprous as snow*. The Greek name for the worst form of leprosy...was based on this fact of whiteness. The loathsome disease is thus described by Kalisch:—"It begins with mealy crusts and scurfy scabs, originally not larger than a pin's point, a little depressed in the skin (Lev 13:3,30), and covered with white hairs (ib. 3, 20). These spots rapidly spread (ib. 8), and produce wild [proud?] flesh (ib. 10, 14).
    - 3) "The leprous symptoms appear most frequently on the hairy parts of the body, and also on members which have been ulcerously affected. When the leprosy has gained ground, the whole skin appears glossy white at the forehead, nose, etc., tuberculated, thickened, dry like leather, but smooth; sometimes it bursts, and ulcers become visible.
    - 4) "The nails of the hands and feet fall; the eyelids bend backwards; the hair covers itself with a fetid rind, or goes off entirely (Lev 13:42). All external senses are weakened: the eyes lose their brightness, become very sensitive, and are continually blurring; from the nostrils runs a fluid phlegm." ('Comment. on Exodus,' p. 50)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database].
2. Verses 7-9: "And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*."
  - a. God had him go through this action again, and when he had removed his hand the second time, the flesh had returned to normal again. If Israel did not accept the first sign, the second was to be presented.
  - b. In case they rejected both of these signs, God gave Moses a third sign which would surely convince them. Moses was to take water from the river (the Nile), and when he poured it on dry land, the water

would be turned into blood. The first of the ten plagues would be the turning of Egyptian waters into blood; the first of Christ's miracles was the turning of water into wine at a marriage feast.

- c. "This power of Moses to turn the waters of the great Nile into blood should be understood in the light of the status held by that river in Egyptian culture. It was honored as divine, and its waters were held to be source of all that was good and desirable in Egyptian life. Through Moses, God showed his power and superiority above the pagan gods of Egypt" (Coffman, p.43).
- d. If Moses could show this power over the Nile, this implied he had the power from God to overcome any and all opposition directed toward them from Pharaoh and his people.

### C. Exodus 4:10-12: Moses' Fourth Objection.

1. Verse 10: "And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."
  - a. Moses claimed an inability to speak with any eloquence, neither before nor since God had first spoken to him; he claimed to be a man slow of speech and of a slow tongue. This is contradictory to the description given of him by Stephen in Acts 7:22: "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty **in words** and **in deeds**."
  - b. Stephen is probably describing Moses in his early Egyptian years; after forty years of tending to sheep, and conversing with his wife and her relatives in a tongue not his native language, it is possible that he had lost much of his former ability. Or Stephen could have been describing Moses' activities as he delivered Israel from Egypt and led them to Canaan. However, the former position seems to be the better explanation [to this writer].
2. Verse 11: "And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?"
  - a. God did not propose a miraculous operation on Moses' speech-making ability. He simply reminded Moses that it is God who has made man's mouth. "From this, we must conclude that Moses' objection here was a miserable excuse. God refused to honor it. Furthermore, such examples as that found in Exodus 32:11-13 show that Moses actually was an able speaker.
    - 1) "The whole book of Deuteronomy consists of eloquent speeches by Moses" (ibid., p.45).
    - 2) "All men, whatever their status or condition, owe their origin and natural circumstances to God; and he is able to make any whom he chooses for any mission effective in that undertaking" (ALC, 1966, p.271).
  - b. God provides the natural talents, gives opportunities for their development, and issues instruction and motivation in his written word for their use to his glory and for the benefit of mankind. He holds each individual responsible for the use, misuse, or disuse of those talents and opportunities. God has never sent anyone on a mission without providing the necessities for the accomplishment of the work at hand (cf. Ph. 4:13; Matt. 10:19; Mark 16:15-20).
    - 1) Matthew 10:19: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." [This was spoken to the apostles, who would be miraculously-empowered].
    - 2) Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." [The miraculous aspect of the passage had application only to special ones during the first century].
    - 3) Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." [Christ strengthens his faithful ones without having to resort to supernatural means].
  - c. "It is not difficult for any true child of God to learn his duty; and if he sincerely wants to discharge



it faithfully, he can always depend upon the Lord to do that for him which human effort is unable to accomplish" (ALC, p.272).

- d. "The question that rises here is, 'Does God purposely make some people to be dumb (mute), deaf, or blind, and others *with* all such abilities?' In some instances, this is surely true, as in John 9:1-3; but we agree with Fields that, 'God is not responsible for all the cases of blindness and deafness.' Many human handicaps are clearly the result of sin and/or the violation (whether knowingly or not) of God's eternal laws. The great lesson here is that one should not depreciate or despise the gifts which God has given, nor refuse to use those gifts which men may deem less perfect. Even the most gifted can find no grounds for pride and egotism; because, as Paul stated it, 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' (1 Corinthians 4:7). The answer to that question, of course, is Nothing!" (Coffman, p.45).
3. Verse 12: "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."
    - a. With these words, God rejects Moses' latest excuse. "You do your part in this great work, and I will take care of your mouth, and teach you what needs to be said."
    - b. Jesus made a similar promise to his apostles:
      - 1) Matthew 10:19: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."
      - 2) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
      - 3) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
      - 4) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
      - 5) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
    - c. The words which Moses was to speak would actually be God's words. The Bible speaks of the Law as being God's and Moses'. It speaks of the words given through Moses as being God's words (Ex. 3:6; Mt. 22:31-32). Moses recorded it, but God spoke it.
      - 1) Exodus 3:6: "Moreover he said, *I am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."
      - 2) Matthew 22:31-32: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

#### D. Exodus 4:13-17: Moses' Offers His Final Excuse.

1. Verse 13: "And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send."
  - a. His appeal now is for the Lord to send someone else on this mission: "by the hand of him whom thou wilt (shouldest—margin) send." He seems to be saying, "Send anybody but me." Forty years earlier this same man was eager to be the deliverer, but he had chosen the wrong time and method; now that he had been prepared to do the job, and was being enabled to get it done, he was balking. God was seeking to show Moses that the power behind the deliverance would be God's, not Moses."
  - b. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9: "What then is Apollos? and what is Paul? Ministers through whom ye believed; and each as the Lord gave to him. I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building" (ASV),



- c. "When this plea was overruled, and all his excuses were answered, he begged that God would send somebody else on this errand and leave him to keep sheep in Midian (v. 13): 'Send by any hand but mine; thou canst certainly find one much more fit.' Note, An unwilling mind will take up with a sorry excuse rather than none, and is willing to devolve those services upon others that have any thing of difficulty or danger in them" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
2. Verse 14: "And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.*"
  - a. The Lord's patience had been tried, so he spoke with anger in responding to this latest excuse. He mentions Aaron, the Levite, Moses' brother, whom God knew to be an able speaker. Even now Aaron was enroute to meet with Moses. God had foreseen all these developments and had planned accordingly. Even before speaking with Moses, he had possibly instructed Aaron to depart from Egypt to meet his younger brother at Horeb (see verse 27).
  - b. The Lord gave Philip instruction to leave Samaria and journey southward in order to meet with the Ethiopian (Acts 8). This required the evangelist to leave a great gospel meeting and begin his journey even before the eunuch left Jerusalem. God is all-wise and all-knowing, and his operations are well-planned and marvelous.
  - c. Aaron was to share in the great work of delivering Israel. Moses became a very great man for his work as deliverer and lawgiver; but had it not been for his reluctance at the beginning, perhaps he would have been even greater, since he would not have shared with Aaron the task of convincing Pharaoh to release Israel. God even knew the gladness his brother would have to see Moses again after so many years!
3. Verses 15-16: "And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God."
  - a. NKJ: So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. 15 Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. 16 So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. 17 And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs" (Verses 15-17).
  - b. The procedure God now proposed was this: He would speak to Moses; Moses would give the words to Aaron who would in turn speak the words. Compare: "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet" (Exodus 7:1). These verses provide a description of what the work of a prophet was: a spokesman for God. The subject might deal with the past, present or future; but the words were God's in either case.
  - c. One false view of inspiration is refuted by this truth: the idea that God only gave the idea and left it to the prophet to express it in his own words. God gave the very words he wanted used.
    - 1) Matthew 22:31-32: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." [The argument depended on the tense of the verb].
    - 2) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." [The argument turned on the difference between the singular and plural].
4. Verse 17: "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs."
  - a. God reminds Moses that he is to take this rod, his shepherd's staff, with which the miracles are to be done. As noted in the story of Israel coming to settle in Goshen during Joseph's time, the Bible shows that the Egyptians considered sheep herders as an abomination: "And Joseph said unto his brethren,

and unto his father's house, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation? That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians" (Gen. 46:31-34).

- b. It is worthy of notice that God chose a shepherd's staff as the implement by which to bring certain miracles of judgment against the Egyptians.

E. Exodus 4:18-23: Moses Asks Jethro's Permission to Leave, and Receives Further Instructions.

1. Verse 18: "And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace."
  - a. Rather than leave unexpectedly and without Jethro's blessing, Moses requests permission from his father-in-law to return to Egypt. Nothing is said about whether he told him anything about the mission he was undertaking; possibly he did. He stated he wanted to see if his brethren were still alive. He is referring to the whole nation for he only had one brother.
  - b. We can see why one could have a question in his mind, for his people had been facing a most difficult time of hardships. However, the very fact that God had selected him to deliver the people showed that they were still alive. Jethro graciously permitted him to leave, and to go with his blessing.
2. Verses 19-21: "And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand. And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go."
  - a. God gave him further encouragement to go, telling him that those who had earlier sought to kill him were no longer alive upon earth. He was still in Midian at the time.
  - b. Moses put his wife and sons on an ass. Nothing has been said to this point about any son besides Gershom, but another had been born: Eliezer (Ex. 18:1-6). These boys may still have been small, or it could be that more than one animal was meant: that he put each one on an ass.
  - c. The staff is said to belong to God: he was going to use it in Moses' hand as an instrument of judgment against the idolatrous Egyptians. God told him that he would harden Pharaoh's heart that he would refuse to release Israel at the first.
    - 1) There was nothing supernatural about the staff, no more that there was magical power in the River Jordan in which Naaman dipped seven times and had his leprosy cleansed (2 Kings 5).
    - 2) The Ark of the Covenant possessed no innate magical power. The waters of baptism contain no supernatural power of themselves to cleanse the guilt of sin: "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21, ASV).
  - d. God was intending full punishment upon Egypt for their atrocities: "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go" (Exod. 3:19-20).
  - e. The same sun that melts wax, hardens clay. When God made certain demands of Pharaoh which the king did not want to allow, the king steeled himself against the demands. God did not directly, miraculously harden Pharaoh's heart.
    - 1) Romans 1:21-25: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to

dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

- 2) 2 Corinthians 2:15-16: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?"
  - a) 2 Corinthians 2:15-16: "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one *we* are the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the *other* the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who is sufficient for these things?" (NKJ).
  - b) 2 Corinthians 2:15-16: "For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" (ASV).
3. Verses 22-23: "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel *is* my son, *even* my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn."
  - a. Moses is to tell Pharaoh that God considers Israel as his firstborn son, that he is to let his son go; and if he refuses to warn him that God would slay the king's firstborn son.
  - b. Here is an allusion to the tenth plague. After this final judgment against Egypt Pharaoh would be willing for Israel to depart.

#### F. Exodus 4:24-26: God Seeks To Kill Moses.

1. Verse 24: "And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him."
  - a. NKJ: "And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. 25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me!" 26 So He let him go. Then she said, "You are a husband of blood!" — because of the circumcision" (Exod. 4:24-26).
  - b. This is a very strange event which has puzzled Bible students for centuries. But the essential details are plain enough. Moses and his family had begun their journey to Egypt, and had come to an inn. It was at this place that the Lord sought to kill Moses.
  - c. We are not to suppose that God was unable to do so, but rather that the circumstances changed and he did not follow through with his initial intention. Many scholars think that some kind of disease took Moses, at God's direction, but about this there is no certainty. The next two verses give an insight as to why God was angered at Moses.
2. Verse 25: "Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me."
  - a. His wife took a stone knife and circumcised her son. We are not told which of these boys is meant, but likely it was Eliezer. It is obvious that she was displeased with her husband because of the need for the circumcision. That she did the surgery implies that Moses was unwilling or unable to do it. The fact that this function had not been done already explains why God was angry with Moses.
  - b. In Genesis 17:9-14, God gave an order that Abraham and all his male descendants be circumcised:
    - 1) "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant."
    - 2) A penalty was imposed on the one violating this law. "And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken

my covenant." The male who was not circumcised would be cut off from his people; by this omission he came to be in violation of the covenant. The initial responsibility for circumcising an infant was with the father, but after that child had grown to know about the covenant, it became his obligation. A failure to comply resulted in being separated from the holy descendants of Abraham.

- c. This boy was at least eight days old, and perhaps was several years old, and had not received the operation. It is plainly evident that God held Moses responsible for this omission, and it is equally clear that Zipporah did not like the ordinance and blamed her husband for this distasteful task. She cast the excised foreskin at Moses' feet and called him a "bloody husband."
3. Verse 26: "So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision."
    - a. God did not slay Moses following the circumcision of the lad. God meant what he had said to Abraham about this matter. Even great men are obligated to be obedient to God as well as the men of lesser degree. Nothing is said here about Zipporah and the two boys returning to Jethro, but from Exodus 18:1-6 they did return, and this must have been the occasion of their retreat. A good time later, after the departure from Egypt, Jethro brought them back to Moses when he came to meet with him.
    - b. There is a likely comment in Pulpit Commentary on Verses 24-26:
      - 1) "The transition is abrupt from the promise of triumph over Pharaoh to the threat of instant death. But we must bear in mind that some days may have elapsed between the two, and that the sin which provoked the menace was probably not committed at the date of the promise. The narrative of verses 24-26 is obscure from its brevity; but the most probable explanation of the circumstances is, that Zipporah had been delivered of her second son, Eliezer, some few days before she set out on the journey to Egypt. Childbirth, it must be remembered, in the East does not incapacitate a person from exertion for more than a day or two.
      - 2) "On the journey, the eighth day from the birth of the child arrived, and his circumcision ought to have taken place; but Zipporah had a repugnance to the rite, and deferred it, Moses weakly consenting to the illegality. At the close of the eighth day, when Moses went to rest for the night, he was seized with a sudden and dangerous illness, which he regarded, and rightly regarded, as a God-inflicted punishment, sent to chastise his sin in breaking the Divine command (Gen 17:10-12).
      - 3) "Zipporah understood the matter in the same way; and, as her husband was too ill to perform the rite, she herself with her own hand cut off her boy's foreskin, and, still indignant at what she had been forced to do, cast it at her husband's feet, with the reproach—"Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.' The rite once performed, however reluctantly, God remitted his anger, and allowed Moses to recover his health, and pursue his journey."
    - c. Consider Jamieson:
      - 1) "The Lord met him, and sought to kill him—that is, he was either overwhelmed with mental distress or overtaken by a sudden and dangerous malady. The narrative is obscure, but the meaning seems to be, that, led during his illness to a strict self-examination, he was deeply pained and grieved at the thought of having, to please his wife, postponed or neglected the circumcision of one of his sons, probably the younger.
      - 2) "To dishonor that sign and seal of the covenant was criminal in any Hebrew, peculiarly so in one destined to be the leader and deliverer of the Hebrews; and he seems to have felt his sickness as a merited chastisement for his sinful omission. Concerned for her husband's safety, Zipporah overcomes her maternal feelings of aversion to the painful rite, performs herself, by means of one of the sharp flints with which that part of the desert abounds, an operation which her husband, on whom the duty devolved, was unable to do, and having brought the bloody evidence, exclaimed in the painful excitement of her feelings that from love to him she had risked the life of her child [Calvin, Bullinger, Rosenmuller]."

#### G. Exodus 4:27-31: Aaron and Moses Are Reunited; Together They Meet With the Elders.

1. Verses 27-28: "And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who

had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him."

- a. Their meeting took place at Horeb (Sinai), before Moses began his journey. The meeting was joyful, as one might well imagine, for they had not seen each other for 40 long years. Moses had spent that time in the solitude of Midian, while Aaron had been in Egypt, no doubt working alongside his fellow Hebrews in the bondage.
  - b. How was Aaron able to depart from Egypt? No doubt he simply fled away. God had spoken to Aaron and told him to go meet Moses; and Moses filled in all the details about what God had said and the signs which he had been given to use.
2. Verses 29-30: "And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people."
- a. The return to Egypt must have taken a considerable amount of time, but the author merely sketches the facts. On their arrival, they gathered the elders of Israel together. This was the logical method to follow since it would have been impractical and doubtless impossible for all of Israel to be brought together in one place.
  - b. Aaron spoke all the words to Israel as God had directed. The text implies that it was also Aaron who did the signs before the people.
  - c. "Aaron was spokesman, and Moses performed the appointed miracles, through which "the people," i.e. the elders who represented them, believed (1 Kings 17:24; John 3:2), and received with devout thanksgiving the joyful tidings of the errand on which Moses had come. Formerly they had slighted the message and rejected the messenger. Formerly Moses had gone in his own strength; now he goes leaning on God, and strong only through faith in Him who had sent him. Israel also had been taught a useful lesson; and it was good for both that they had been afflicted" (JFB). Compare the following passages:
    - 1) 1 Kings 17:24: "And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth."
    - 2) John 3:2: "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."
3. Verse 31: "And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped."
- a. The result of these words and signs caused the people to believe the message they had heard. This was what they had been awaiting all their lives; their nation had been suffering cruel bondage for centuries; at last they learn that God had heard their many cries, had seen their affliction, and had resolved to deliver them. What a great and joyful occasion this must have been! They were so filled with gratitude that they bowed their heads and worshipped God.
  - b. With this great beginning, one would think and hope that this great faith which Israel manifested at the first would be sustained as they struggled for their release and as they journeyed toward the promised land. But this was not to be. Men are so short-sighted and impatient. They may have expected an instant release from bondage, and a quick, painless trip to Canaan. But neither was in the offing. It is not enough to have a good beginning; one must also continue faithfully (Heb. 12).
    - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 9:24-27: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
    - 3) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

- 4) Acts 14:22: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."
  - 5) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
4. The picture presented in this section shows the purpose of miracles and their relationship to faith. Miracles were not designed to produce faith in and of themselves; but they accompanied messages from God and were intended to confirm the messages as being truly from the Almighty (Mark 2; Acts 3).
- a. Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
  - b. Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
  - c. Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
-

## EXODUS 5

### A. Introduction.

1. This chapter relates briefly the first encounter of Moses and Aaron with Pharaoh, making the initial request that Israel be allowed to go into the wilderness to sacrifice unto God. More importantly, this revealed the attitude which Pharaoh adopted at this demand. Sacrificing a *sacred* animal (such as a sheep) would have been very offensive to the Egyptians, thus the request to make the sacrifices away from Pharaoh's people.
2. It also shows that Israel was ill-prepared to depart from Egypt. When the release was not instantaneous and painless, they turned against Moses and Aaron, which reveals their lack of trust and dedication to God. Before they were ready to go, they must have a much stronger bond between themselves, and must have a greater respect for God. They also must learn that the price of freedom is often dear.
3. To provide for this, they had to endure a period of even greater hardship, for the Egyptians made their burdens more severe. God sent ten plagues upon Egypt by which he brought about a willingness of Pharaoh to release Israel; these judgments gave Israel the incentive to brave the hazards of the wilderness and the bond which would help hold them together for centuries. "For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11).
4. It is apparent that Israel had been well-fed in Egypt, and had the time to grow gardens, to fish, etc., since they later yearned to return to those "delicacies."
  - a. Exodus 16:3: "And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."
  - b. Numbers 11:5: "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic."

### B. Exodus 5:1-14: Moses and Aaron's First Confrontation With Pharaoh.

1. Verse 1: "And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness."
    - a. The request is made to the king which God had specified in Exodus 3:18, and included in verse three the rest of the demand. One might wonder how these Hebrew men could have so easily and quickly gained an audience with Pharaoh. The answer is likely found in the fact that Moses had been adopted into the royal family eighty years earlier, and must have been known and remembered.
    - b. These events took place after the grain harvest since the Hebrews are subsequently made to go into the fields and gather stubble for the brick-making process. The time of this harvest would be about May or June.
    - c. The request made was not unreasonable. "There was nothing in that request that was the basis of any legitimate objection on Pharaoh's part. Work-journals belonging to overseers of employees in the times of the Pharaoh's listed, among other allowable reasons for absenteeism, 'the offering of sacrifices by workmen to their gods'....By asking something that was legitimate enough, as presented, Pharaoh, had his heart been right, would have granted it....By refusing the first reasonable and lawful request, Pharaoh himself opened the door for all that followed" (Coffman, pp.58f).
  2. Verse 2: "And Pharaoh said, Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go."
    - a. The regal response was a resounding "No." Pharaoh wanted to know who this God was that he should obey him. "Although as a heathen he might naturally measure the power of the God by the existing conditions of His people, and infer from the impotence of the Israelites that their God must be also weak, he would not have dared to refuse the petition of the Israelites, to be allowed to sacrifice to their God or celebrate a sacrificial festival, if he had any faith in gods at all" (Keil, p.463).
    - b. "It appears to us as extremely unlikely that Pharaoh did not know of Jehovah, because the action of Jehovah in the life of Joseph, elevating him to the throne (as deputy), was no secret. If Pharaoh was
-



- ignorant, he was wilfully ignorant. His response in denying that he knew Jehovah is very similar to that of Sennacherib's haughty response in 2 Kings 18:35" (Coffman, p.59). "Who *are* they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?" (2 Kings 18:35).
- c. Pharaoh did not recognize the right of Israel's God to make this demand of him to allow Israel to go into the wilderness to worship him.
3. Verse 3: "And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword."
    - a. Again Moses and Aaron made their request, stating it more precisely. We have met with God; he requests that you allow us to go three days' journey into the wilderness to worship him; we make this request of you so that we will not fall victim to a judgment from God.
    - b. It was reasonable for them to go into the wilderness in order to sacrifice to God, since the Egyptians objected to the sacrifice of sheep, which were worshiped by the Egyptians. This sacrifice was not to be offered near them.
    - c. If God had visited Israel with pestilence or sword, the Egyptians of necessity would have been also significantly affected. "Pestilence" refers to disease; "sword" refers to an invading army waging war against them.
  4. Verses 4-5: "And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now *are* many, and ye make them rest from their burdens."
    - a. The king knows the representatives by name; he asks them, by name, why they were loosing the people from their work. He adamantly refused the request. "He believed that the wish was simply an excuse for procuring holidays for the people, or days of rest from their labours, and ordered the messengers off to their slave duties: '*Get you unto your burdens*'" (Keil, p.464).
    - b. "The people of the land" evidently is a reference to the Hebrews as "common people," in distinction to the upper classes of Egyptian society. The people had grown in number. The evil edict of Exodus 1:15-16 had no doubt been repealed. "As Pharaoh possessed neither fear of God...nor fear of the gods, but, in the proud security of his might, determined to keep the Israelites as slaves, and to use them as tools for the glorifying of his kingdom by the erection of magnificent buildings, he suspected that their wish to go into the desert was nothing but an excuse invented by idlers, and prompted by a thirst for freedom, which might become dangerous to his kingdom, on account of the numerical strength of the people" (ibid.).
  5. Verses 6-9: "And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. and the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words."
    - a. Speaking to the taskmasters, Pharaoh gave instructions which would increase dramatically the work load of the Hebrews. This was also addressed to the "officers" of the people, Israelite men who had been elevated to positions of authority over the rest of the slaves.
    - b. Heretofore, the straw used to make bricks had been supplied to the slaves; but now they must gather the straw for themselves. The straw (or stubble) was mixed with the clay and water; it would make it easier to mix the ingredients together and also give greater strength to the brick. The mixture was formed into bricks which were placed in the hot Egyptian sun to be baked-dried by the heat. "Sun-dried mud brick is a cheap and favourite building material in Africa and Asia today: when reinforced, and where protected by overhanging eaves from direct rain, it lasts very well. Bricks of all sorts have been found in Egypt, some with regularly chopped straw, some with rough roots and oddments, some without straw at all" (Cole, pp.81f).
    - c. The tale of the bricks shall not be diminished. "To tell" in Old English meant "to count." One who
-

counted votes in the English Parliament is still called "The Teller." Bank "tellers" are called that because they "count" money. The "tale" of bricks is the "number" of bricks (Cf. tally, tallybook). Pharaoh operated on the principle that if the slaves complained it was because they did not have enough to do.

- d. Therefore, to remove the complaints, all one need do is give them more work. Pharaoh ordered that the slaves were to be told to ignore any more "vain words." The ASV renders this phrase as "lying words." Pharaoh is saying that God did not even speak to Moses and Aaron; that their request to go and sacrifice was a contrived excuse to get the people away from their labors.
  - e. It appears that Moses and Aaron have failed in this first confrontation, but keep in mind what God had foretold in Exodus 4:19-20: "And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand." It would only be after God had brought some very severe judgments against Pharaoh that Israel's release would be obtained.
  - f. God's plan was working! Only the shortsightedness of Israel would make this a failure. God does things according to infinite wisdom, not by the shallow thinking of finite men. When God makes a move, he must weigh all the effects and implications, not only for the people directly involved, but all others who would be affected, not only for the given time and locality, but for all time and every other place where this move will be felt. Compare: "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).
6. Verses 10-12: "And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw."
    - a. The taskmasters and officers are quick to carry out Pharaoh's instructions. This information was a blow to Israel; they had been expecting release from their bondage after Moses went before Pharaoh, but instead their burdens are increased. They are compelled to obey, and soon they are scattered over the countryside searching for and collecting the stubble.
    - b. The straw would soon be exhausted, and the stubble is said by some scholars to include pieces of different kinds of material. The manner of harvesting wheat then is also said to be to cut off the heads near the top of the stalk, so a great deal of the straw remained, but that was not without limit.
  7. Verses 13-14: "And the taskmasters hastened *them*, saying, Fulfill your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to day, as heretofore?"
    - a. NKJ: And the taskmasters forced them to hurry, saying, "Fulfill your work, your daily quota, as when there was straw." Also the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, "Why have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before?"
    - b. They had a great deal more work to do now, and the number of bricks assigned to them to make did not diminish at all. This proved to be an impossible task.
    - c. The officers which had been selected by the Egyptian taskmasters from among the people were beaten, and they were demanded to show why they had not produced the quota. The only answer could be that they were unable to comply because of the extra work.
- C. Exodus 5:15-23: The Officers Approach Pharaoh, Complain to Moses; Moses Approaches God.
1. Verses 15-16: Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants *are* beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people."
    - a. They made their plea to Pharaoh for relief from the extra burdens placed upon the slaves. They claimed that the people did all that was possible; the fault for the shortfall in production is not theirs.
-

- If it was Pharaoh's purpose to set these men against Moses and Aaron, it succeeded, as is seen in verse 21: "And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us."
- b. It is probably the case that the people of Israel were sympathetic toward the officers since they had been beaten; if so, this was an important step in unifying the people better.
2. Verses 17-19: "But he said, *Ye are idle, ye are idle*: therefore ye say, Let us go *and* do sacrifice to the LORD. Go therefore now, *and* work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. And the officers of the children of Israel did see *that* they *were* in evil *case*, after it was said, Ye shall not minish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task."
    - a. NKJ: But he said, "You are idle! Idle! Therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.' Therefore go now and work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks." And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in trouble after it was said, "You shall not reduce any bricks from your daily quota."
    - b. Pharaoh's reply was that the Hebrews were idle, did not have enough to keep them busy, thus he had added to their burdens.
    - c. The officers then perceived clearly that no relief was to be expected from the king; they would have to do the job or face the consequences.
    - d. "It seems to him clever, witty, humorous, to tax overworked people with idleness; and equally clever to say to religious people—'Your religion is a mere pretence. You do not want to worship. You want a holiday.' We may remark further that idleness and hypocrisy were two sins of the deepest dye, according to Egyptian notions. Go therefore now and work—i.e. 'Off with you to the brickfields at once, and get to your own special work of superintendence, which you are neglecting so long as you remain here. It is useless to remain. I reject both of your requests. Straw shall not be given; and the tale of bricks required shall be no less'" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
  3. Verses 20-21: "And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us."
    - a. NKJ: Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them. And they said to them, "Let the Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."
    - b. These officers met Moses and Aaron as they came forth from this latest interview with Pharaoh. "...It is apparent that Moses had anticipated the outcome of this ill-advised maneuver on the part of some of the Israelites themselves, and appropriately was awaiting their return from Pharaoh's presence" (Coffman, p.64).
    - c. They began to upbraid Moses and Aaron for the increase of evil on the people. They claim that all these "deliverers" had done was to make them stink before Pharaoh. "Moses and Aaron, they imagined, through their appeal to Pharaoh had made the king and his counselors suspect them of being restless people, and so had put a weapon into their hands for their oppression and destruction....They call upon God to judge, whilst by their very complaining they show that they have no confidence in God and His power to save" (Keil, p.466).
    - d. "These were hasty and unkind expressions; but the afflicted must be allowed the privilege of complaining; it is all the solace that such sorrow can find; and if in such distress words are spoken which should not be justified, yet the considerate and benevolent will hear them with indulgence" (Clarke, p.317).
  4. Verses 22-23: "And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou *so* evil entreated this people? why *is* it *that* thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all."
    - a. Moses approached the Lord again, evidently in prayer, for there is no reason to think that he had turned away from the Lord.
-

- b. "These are tragic words indeed. Not only were the people discouraged by the disastrous situation in which they found themselves, but Moses also was sorely oppressed by the thoughts which crowded into his mind. In that dark moment, however, Moses did what every child of God should do in like moments of frustration and doubt. He went straight to God with the problem" (Coffman, p.64).
  - c. "The protest of Moses is one of the most human documents in the whole Bible. God has not yet kept His promise: so far from being delivered, the Israelites were worse off. All Moses' forebodings about his own lack of success seem to be confirmed by events" (Cole, p.83).
  - d. The people had been disappointed to learn that not only were they being retained in slavery, but their burdens had been dramatically increased; the officers (foremen) had turned against Moses; and Moses could see no progress, only a greater problem. Thus his complaint to God. None of these could see that any progress had been made; none could perceive that God's plan was going right. This simply shows how shortsighted men are wont to be. We have a way worked out in our minds as to how and when God should do thus and so; but his wisdom is infinite and he often chooses ways and means that we comprehend not. However, it is the outcome that matters, and God's ways are invariably shown to be the best.
  - e. Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
  - f. "There had been no deception whatever in Moses' first request for the mere 'three days' into the wilderness. God already knew what Pharaoh would do, and therefore allowed him to hang himself on the short rope instead of the long one! This first confrontation, therefore, set the stage and paved the way toward the ultimate, final achievements of the purpose of God" (Coffman, p.65).
-

## EXODUS 6

### A. Introduction.

1. "In the last chapter, despite developments which in no sense could be understood as a failure of God's purpose, the people, nevertheless, who had probably expected some immediate and miraculous delivery, but who instead had been rebuffed and loaded with heavier burdens than ever by Pharaoh, were greatly distressed and vented their disappointments by angry remarks to Moses. Moses too was powerless to answer their objections, being in fact himself very much discouraged and doubtful" (Coffman, p.67).
2. "Moses prays to God and asks of him why this was. He reminded God that since they had returned to Egypt all that he had accomplished was to bring more misery upon the people. God assures Moses that he is going to deliver Israel from Egypt with a strong hand, but there must first be a strong resistance before the strong hand of God can be shown. Therefore, continue to obey my voice, was the instruction" (Pledge, p.222).
3. This chapter contains a renewal of Moses' commission which was called for by the circumstances of this early discouragement. In order for Moses to successfully complete his mission his confidence must be rebuilt. Perhaps the error he made on the way to Egypt (4:24-26) had eroded his confidence. It is essential that a person have full confidence in God if the job at hand is to be done; but it is also essential that we have a sufficient measure of confidence in ourselves to do our part.
4. Destructive Bible critics have tried to use this renewal of Moses' commission as evidence for their documentary theory: that the information in Exodus was amassed by an unknown redactor from many different and differing sources, and written many years after the so-called events occurred. But, "The unity of thought here demonstrated (throughout this chapter) is a protecting wall against the flood-tide of the documentary theory" (Coffman, p.68).

### B. Exodus 6:1-9: Jehovah's Reassurance to Moses That All Will Be Well.

1. Verse 1: "Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."
  - a. In response to the prayer uttered by Moses in which the great man, out of a very discouraged heart, offers a complaint to God, the Lord assures him that he will indeed force Pharaoh to release Israel. After God does what he has planned to do in Egypt, the king will be only too glad to see them go; in fact, he will drive them forth from the land. God does not directly answer his question, "Wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people?"
  - b. Compare: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:7). "If, even after the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and their glorious march through the desert, in which they had received so many proofs of the omnipotence and mercy of their God, they repeatedly rebelled against the guidance of God, and were not content with the manna provided by the Lord, but lusted after the fishes, leeks, and onions of Egypt (Num. 11); it is certain that in such a state of mind as this, they would never have been willing to leave Egypt and enter into a covenant with Jehovah, without a very great increase in the oppression they endured in Egypt" (Keil, p.466).
  - c. The strong hand which would be used against Pharaoh refers to the sovereign power which would suddenly, miraculously, and powerfully be exerted. God's power was to be shown in such ways that even this mighty Pharaoh would be brought to his knees.
  - d. "For the fact that the first visit paid by Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh was simply intended to bring out the attitude of Pharaoh towards the purposes of Jehovah, and to show the necessity for the great judgments of God, is distinctly expressed in the words, 'Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh'" (ibid., p.467).
2. Verses 2-3: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I *am* the LORD: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them."
  - a. ASV: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am Jehovah: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah I was not known to them."
  - b. NKJ: And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and

to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Lord I was not known to them.

- c. "This passage must be hailed as one of the most difficult in the Bible, the difficulty being in the statement that, 'as Jehovah' God was unknown to the patriarchs; whereas, it is a fact that the patriarchs most assuredly *did know* God by that name!" (Coffman, p.69). As shown before, the name "Jehovah" (English) is a manufactured name growing out of the Hebrew consonants JHWH (JHVH—English letters).
- d. "The Jews never pronounced this name; and whenever it occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, they substituted for it, in reading, the word ADONAI, *Lord*, or ELOHIM, *God*....Its ancient pronunciation is by many thought to have been *Yahveh*, but this is not certain. Its meaning is *He Is*, the same as *I AM*, the person only being changed. Thus it denotes the self-existence, independence, immutability, and infinite fulness of the divine Being, which is a pledge that he will fulfil all his promises" (*International Bible Dictionary*, p.217). If the exact spelling of this name was essential for us to know, God would have preserved it intact.
- e. The name "Jehovah" was used in earlier parts of the Old Testament. "When Abraham offered Isaac and God provided a ram as the sacrifice, Abraham called the name of the place *Jehovah-jireh*" (Gen. 22:14). Moses' own mother was named Jochebed (6:20), which means 'Jehovah is glory!' Abraham knew Jehovah in the land of Ur, for God told him, 'I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur' (Gen. 15:7); and Abraham used 'Jehovah' in addressing God: 'Oh Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit...!' (Gen. 15:8). The mother of all living in the gates of Paradise itself said, regarding the birth of Cain, 'I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah' (Genesis 4:1)" (Coffman, pp.69f). His quotations are from the American Standard Version. Compare:
  - 1) Genesis 9:26: "And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."
  - 2) Genesis 18:13: "And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?"
  - 3) Genesis 18:17: "And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do."
  - 4) Genesis 26:2: "And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of."
  - 5) Genesis 27:20: "And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought *it* to me."
- f. Bible critics say that these above-stated quotations are at variance with the statement of the present text which says, "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." These critics say that this situation is contradictory and proves that the Book of Exodus is uninspired and was not written by Moses. If "Jehovah" was not revealed until this time to Moses, why does the name appear in the above-mentioned verses?
- g. To remove this "difficulty" we must come to understand just what the meaning of verse three truly is. Various logical solutions have been offered by the scholars:
  - 1) That the statement is interrogative and not declarative. No punctuation was given in the original Bible manuscripts. Our modern "periods," "colons," "semi-colons," "question marks," etc., were all supplied by the translators. Scholars say that the point in verse 3 could just as logically be translated as a question: "By my name JEHOVAH was I not made known unto them?" This solution would recognize that God had used that name in his dealings with Abraham, et al. The drawback to this solution is that it makes the statement as given in our common English versions in error in the translation. [Coffman thinks this solution is the best.]
  - 2) Another solution says that the name "Jehovah" had not been used by God in his dealings with Abraham and others, but that it was revealed to Moses. Since Moses was inspired to write the first five books of the Old Testament, he was simply guided into using the name "Jehovah" in reporting the ancient stories; the name "Jehovah" was not used by the ones directly involved in the events he recorded. However, this solution encounters a problem when it comes to the name Jochebed, which means "Jehovah is Glory." Did Moses change the name of his own mother, putting in the mouth of those who named her a word they had never heard?

- 3) Another solution is that God meant here (Exod. 6:3) that, while the ancients knew the name, they did not know the significance of the name. "Supporting this view is the fact that, long centuries after the name *Jehovah* was well known, God said, 'I will cause them to know that my name is Jehovah' (Jeremiah 16:21). Thus, knowing God, as indicated by the scriptures themselves, certainly means more than merely knowing how to pronounce God's name" (Coffman, p.72). In support of this view, brother Pledge says: "God speaks to Moses and reminds him that he had not appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name *Jehovah* but had been known to them by the name God Almighty. The name *Jehovah* is a proper noun and implies character. It involves the character which is associated with the covenant with his people. It indicates that the Patriarchs had not known the characteristics of God Almighty which now would be revealed to the people of Israel. The characteristics implied by the name Jehovah had not been revealed to the Patriarchs because there was at that time no need for them to be revealed. Jehovah was the same God and Moses, by inspiration, in writing the book of Genesis, used the name *Jehovah* in connection with some of the very earliest matters in the history of mankind" (p.222). This seems to this writer to be the best solution.
- h. "The explanation of this passage is by no means easy. God himself, according to Gen 15:7, revealed himself to Abraham as Jehovah before declaring his name to be El-Shaddai (God Almighty); and again revealed himself to Jacob as Jehovah-Elohim (Gen 38:13). Abraham named the place where he had been about to sacrifice Isaac, 'Jehovah-jireh' (Gen 22:14). That Moses regarded the name as known even earlier, appears from Gen 4:1. It was probably as old as language. The apparent meaning of the present passage cannot therefore be its true meaning. No writer would so contradict himself. Perhaps the true sense is, 'I was known to them as a Being of might and power, not as mere absolute (and so eternal and immutable) existence.' This meaning of the word, though its etymological and original meaning, may have been unknown to the patriarchs, who were not etymologists. It was first distinctly declared to Moses at Sinai (Ex 3:14,15)" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
- i. The name "God Almighty" is from the Hebrew *El Shaddai*.
3. Verses 4-5: "And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant."
- a. God reminds Moses that he had established a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which included the promise that he would give to them (their descendants) the land of Canaan; these three patriarchs had been strangers in Canaan, never possessing it in any real sense.
- b. God also told Moses that he was aware of the ordeal Israel was now undergoing, and that he had not forgotten the covenant made centuries earlier to their ancestor, Abraham. What God is presently bringing about is the release of Abraham's descendants so that the ancient promise can be fulfilled. There is no reason for Moses and the people to dismay; all is well; God will do what he has promised to do.
4. Verses 6-8: "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I *am* the LORD."
- a. Moses is instructed to relay to Israel God's promise given here that he will bring about their release from their slavery. He will redeem them with a "stretched out arm, and with great judgments." These great judgments turn out to be the plagues with which God assailed the Egyptians. These great events would be miraculous judgments. The purposes of these wonders would be: (1) To convince Israel that God is worth serving; (2) To prove to the Egyptians (and all others who would learn about these judgments) that God is greater than all the "gods" of men; and (3) To be acts of righteous punishments on an ungodly king and his people.
- b. God would do what he had already promised to do: bring his people out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
-



- 1) Genesis 15:13-16: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full."
  - 2) Exodus 3:19-20: "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go."
  - c. He would make this fledgling nation his own special people; he would adopt them as his own, which took place at Sinai in the giving of the Law: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (Exod. 19:5).
  - d. He would bring them into the promised land and give it to them for an heritage. All of these things are to be so because he is the Lord (Jehovah).
5. Verse 9: "And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage."
- a. Moses spoke these words to Israel but because of the anguish of spirit and the cruel bondage, they did not believe him. Their spirits were crushed; as far as they could tell this deliverer had succeeded only in producing an intolerable increase in their burdens.
  - b. They were worse off, not better, from his efforts so far. Their despondency was communicated also to Moses' spirit, as seen in the following exchange with God.
  - c. "The children of Israel, hard-driven by their taskmasters, and sunk in misery, were so stupefied with sorrow, as to have no longer any heart for their cheering tidings brought to them by Moses. Their despair had its ground in unbelief. They judged Moses a deceiver. They had trusted him before, and they reflected that the only outcome of it had been this unprecedented aggravation of their wretchedness. His fine promises must now go for what they were worth; they were past deriving comfort from them!" (Pulpit Commentary).
- C. Exodus 6:10-13: Moses is Told to Return to Pharaoh.
1. Verses 10-11: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land."
    - a. God saw the need to instruct Moses to return to Pharaoh. Good results are not always achieved at the first attempt.
    - b. In spite of the earlier refusal of the first request, and even though the people and Moses were sorely depressed, the Lord was now going to demand that Pharaoh release the Israelites so they could leave his land.
    - c. The importance of importunity is shown in Luke 18:1-6: "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith."
  2. Verse 12: "And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips?"
    - a. NKJ: And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, "The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?"
    - b. Moses speaks to the Lord and reveals the despondency into which he has plunged. He had believed what God told him from the burning bush; he left his wife and family in Median, journeyed to Egypt, encouraged the Israelites with the promise that God was now going to bring about their freedom and guide them into the promised land; but on the first interview with Pharaoh, the king had flatly rejected the request that the people be allowed to go into the wilderness to worship.
-

- 
- c. This refusal has discouraged Israel so that they will not give heed to Moses' words. Therefore, Moses asks God how could he expect Pharaoh to hearken to this second demand. If he had rejected the request to let them go worship God, he would surely scorn the demand that Israel be given their freedom to forsake Egypt. We can sympathize with Moses' question for if Israel would not listen to him, how could this heathen king be expected to heed his words?
  - d. Uncircumcised ears are those who cannot listen and uncircumcised hearts are those which cannot understand and believe (Acts 7:51; Jer. 6:10; 9:26). Uncircumcised lips, which Moses says he has, are lips which cannot speak the proper words.
    - 1) Jeremiah 6:10: "To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear *is* uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it."
    - 2) Jeremiah 9:26: "Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all *that are* in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all *these* nations *are* uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel *are* uncircumcised in the heart."
    - 3) Acts 7:51: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye."
  - e. Moses considers that he is a failure because his first attempt met with rejection. But God's plan was working according to schedule. He never said that Israel would be released at the first effort, or that it would be an easy, painless task. Pharaoh must be given his opportunity to reveal the condition of his heart, and having done so, God's power must be exalted above all the gods of Egypt. The great plan God had would exalt his people in the eyes of the heathen world, and exalt him in the eyes of Israel and the other nations so that faith in God would be promoted, and hope to the lost might be extended.
3. Verse 13: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt."
- a. God gives Moses and Aaron a charge to be revealed to Israel and delivered to Pharaoh, that God's people are to be given their freedom. It was wise to make a simply request of the king at the first, that Israel be allowed to go into the wilderness to worship God, in order for Pharaoh to have a fair chance to do good; if he agreed with the request, he would be showing that his heart was right.
  - b. But now, since he had turned down the request, a strong demand was to be made to unconditionally release Israel from their bondage.
  - c. Notice Rahab's statement in Joshua 2:9-11: "And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."
- D. Exodus 6:14-27: A Brief Genealogy of Moses and Aaron's is Given.
1. "The main story will continue in verse 28. At this point the narrator breaks off, in order to identify and particularize Moses and Aaron more precisely. The Hebrew method of identification was to give a genealogy, in this case the genealogy of the founding fathers, beginning with Reuben, the senior tribe. It is repeated from the beginning up to the mention of Levi, the required tribe" (Cole, p.86).
-

## 2. The sons of Levi and their descendants:

<b>Gershon</b>	<b>Kohath</b>	<b>Merari</b>
Libni	Amram	Mahali
Shimi	Ishar	Mushi
	Hebron	
	Uzziel	

## 3. The sons of Kohath's sons:

<b>Amram *</b>	<b>Izhar</b>	<b>Uzziwl</b>	<b>Hebron</b>
	Korah	Mishael	
	Nepheg	Elzaphan	
	Zichri	Zithri	

\* 1 Chronicles 6:16ff give a detailed listing of this genealogy. Numbers 3:27-28 gives the number of Kohath's descendants as 8,600 males one month old and older. "According to Num. 3:27,28, the Kohathites were divided (in Moses' time) into the four branches, Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites, who consisted together of 8600 men and boys (women and girls not being included). Of these, about a fourth, or 2150 men, would belong to the Amramites. Now, according to Ex. 18:3,4, Moses himself had only two sons. Consequently, if Amram the son of Kohath, and tribe-father of the Amramites, was the same person as Amram the father of Moses, Moses must have had 2147 brothers and brothers' sons (the brothers' daughters, the sisters, and their daughters, not being reckoned at all). But as this is absolutely impossible, it must be granted that Amram the son of Kohath was not the father of Moses, and that an indefinitely long list of generations has been omitted between the former and his descendants of the same name" (Keil, p.470).

## 4. The sons of Aaron and their sons:

<b>Nadab (Lev. 10:1-2)</b>	<b>Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2)</b>	<b>Eleazar</b>	<b>Ithamar</b>
		Phinehas	

## 5. The sons of Korah:

<b>Assir</b>	<b>Elkanah</b>	<b>Abiasaph</b>
--------------	----------------	-----------------

- Amram begat Aaron and Moses, and Miriam (Num. 26:59). Amram married Jochebed, his aunt, his father's sister. This kind of marriage was permitted prior to the Law of Moses, but forbidden in that Law.
- "The fact that just four generations are mentioned here, whereas there were actually ten, is perhaps due to the promise in Genesis 15:16, where the delivery of Israel from the land of their oppression was prophesied to happen in the 'fourth generation.' Significantly, there were people in each of four

generations (embracing the whole period) with life spans of more than a hundred years each, thus giving two ways of reckoning the count. It was four generations as counted by the lives of successive patriarchs whose lives of over a hundred years touched each other; and also, in the meantime, actually ten successive generations had been born. 'Joshua, who was a younger contemporary of Moses, was of the tenth generation from Joseph (1 Chronicles 7:20-27).' This may very well explain why the ages of certain people are given in this passage" (Coffman, p.78).

8. Verses 26-27: "These *are* that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies. These *are* they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these *are* that Moses and Aaron."
  - a. The purpose of this abbreviated genealogy is indicated by the point that the Aaron and Moses named are the very two men who were now being used by God to deliver Israel from their slavery. Aaron is named first because he is older (7:7).
  - b. "The genealogy being concluded as a separate document, its author appends a notice that the Aaron and Moses mentioned in it (ver. 20) are the very Aaron and Moses who received the Divine command to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, and who appeared before Pharaoh, and 'spoke to him' on their behalf. As the heading of the document was kept upon its insertion into the narrative of the Exodus (see the comment on ver. 13), so its concluding sentences were kept, though (according to modern ideas) superfluous. According to their armies. The term 'armies' had not been previously used of the Israelitish people; but it occurs in Ex 7:4, which was probably in the mind of the writer who drew up the genealogy" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].

E. Exodus 6:28-30: God's Command to Moses Restated for Emphasis.

1. Verses 28-29: "And it came to pass on the day *when* the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt, That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I *am* the LORD: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee."
  - a. In order to have a smooth transition from the genealogy, the inspired writer gives a restatement of the instruction God had given to Moses earlier discussed in verses 10-13. God also emphasizes the fact that he is the Lord (Jehovah). Moses is instructed that he is to speak everything to Pharaoh which God gives him to say.
  - b. This is what a prophet is—one who receives God's message and relays it unchanged to those for whom it is intended. "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land" (Ex. 7:1-2).
2. Verse 30: "And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?"
  - a. The hesitation of Moses which was stressed in verse 12 is again restated. Human wisdom would say that another request would be fruitless, and more so since the request was now turned into a demand for full and unconditional release of the slaves!
  - b. Our common experiences teach us that persistence is necessary if a worthwhile goal is to be gained. This is also true regarding the worthy goals of Christianity. We are taught to persevere in our prayers, not that God is hard of hearing, but for our own growth and strength.
    - 1) Luke 18:1-6: "And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith."
    - 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."

## EXODUS 7

### A. Overview of the Ten Plagues.

1. First—The waters of the Nile turned into blood: 7:14-25.
    - a. This showed the superiority of God over the supposed divine nature of the Nile and the deities associated with it. The Nile was valued so highly by the Egyptians that over time they had elevated it as an object of reverence. Without this river, Egypt would have been a wasteland, but they over-exalted it.
    - b. By turning the waters of the Nile into blood, God showed that even the most revered and special power of Egypt was nothing in comparison to the might of Jehovah.
  2. Second—The plague of frogs: 8:1-15.
    - a. Frogs are said to have been an object of worship to the Egyptians, whether out of devotion or abhorrence is unclear.
    - b. God made frogs an instrument of punishment.
  3. Third—The plague of lice: 8:16-19.
    - a. The Egyptians thought that it was very irreverent to offer worship if there was some kind of insect infestation on their body or clothing. For this reason the people, especially the priests, wore only linen garments as these were less likely to become infested with lice.
    - b. The plague of lice made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to worship their idols while the plague was upon them.
  4. Fourth—The plague of flies: 8:20-32.
    - a. Scholars say that this occurred during the winter instead of the summer when flies are usually a bother. The Egyptians worshipped a god which they thought would help relieve the problem of flies during the summer.
    - b. But when flies appeared during cold weather, this indicated that their god was powerless in the presence of the Almighty.
  5. Fifth—The plague of murrain among the cattle: 9:1-7.
    - a. The Egyptians had as living objects of worship the sacred bull, cow, heifer, ram, and goat. When this plague struck, these animals died. When they saw these objects of their idolatrous worship die in large numbers, the preeminence of Jehovah was demonstrated.
    - b. But God protected the cattle of the Israelites from this affliction.
  6. Sixth—The plague of boils: 9:8-12.
    - a. What their deities could not avert, the Egyptians thought that their vaunted medical science could remedy. But their gods could not avert this plague and their physicians could not heal it.
    - b. Ashes were taken from the furnace, which is used in Deuteronomy 4:20 to symbolize the Israelites' bondage in Egypt, and cast into the air to be spread over Egypt; it caused boils to appear on man and beast. Horne reports (Vol. IV, p. 12) that the Egyptians offered human sacrifices by burning the victim and scattering his ashes, thus presumably bringing blessings to the land. God used ashes to bring a great curse which they were neither able to prevent nor cure.
  7. Seventh—The plague of hail and fire: 9:13-35.
    - a. This plague "demonstrated that neither Osiris, who presided over fire, nor Isis, who presided over water, could protect the fields and the climate of Egypt from the thunder, the rain, and the hail of Jehovah. These phenomena were of extremely rare occurrence, at any period of the year: they now fell at a time when the air was most calm and serene" (Horne, *ibid.*).
    - b. The effects of this miraculous demonstration were disastrous to the Egyptians. What an awesome display of the limitless power of the Almighty!
  8. Eighth—The plague of locusts: 10:1-20.
    - a. "The Egyptians had gods, in whom they trusted to deliver their country from these terrible invaders. They trusted much to the fecundity [fertility] of their soil, and to the deities, Isis and Serapis, who
-

were the conservators of all plenty. But by this judgment they were taught that it was impossible to stand before Moses the Servant of God. The very winds, which they venerated, were made the instruments of their destruction; and the sea, which they regarded as their defence against the locusts, could not afford them any protection" (ibid.).

b. A locust invasion was one of the most feared of all ancient disasters. Feeble man was defenseless against it.

9. Ninth—The plague of three days of darkness: 10:21-27.

a. "The Egyptians considered light and fire, the purest of elements, to be proper types of God. They regarded the sun, the great fountain of light, as an emblem of his glory, and salutary influence on the world. The sun was esteemed the soul of the world, and was supposed with the moon to rule all things" (ibid.).

b. When God caused darkness to fall upon the land for three days, the utter vanity of the Egyptian religious system was shown. There was no power in the great land of Egypt which could stand against the Creator of the universe.

10. Tenth—The death of the firstborn in Egypt: 11:1-8; 12:29-31.

a. The Egyptians had afflicted Israel with a most cruel punishment: the killing of all male babies. While this law had evidently been repealed, yet the guilt of this sin was held in remembrance by God, and fully punished in this final plague in which all the firstborn among man and beast died during one tragic night.

1) "We learn from Herodotus, that it was the custom of the Egyptians to rush from the house into the street, to bewail the dead with loud and bitter outcries: and every member of the family united in the bitter expressions of sorrow.

2) *How great, then, must their terror and their grief have been, when, at midnight, the Lord smote all the firstborn of the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle: and when Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead!*" (ibid.).

b. God had raised up Joseph to be a deliverer to the Egyptians in an earlier time; all that God did for Egypt through Joseph was now forgotten, and Israel had been terribly treated for many years. This was the crowning plague and broke Pharaoh's will.

B. Exodus 7:1-7: Final Instructions to Moses Prior to the Start of the Plagues.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land."

a. Moses had just told God again that he was ill-equipped to speak to Pharaoh with proper results (6:30). The Lord reminds Moses that he will stand in relationship to Aaron as God stands in relationship to Moses: God speaks to Moses who as God's prophet communicates God's message. Moses speaks to Aaron who as Moses' prophet communicates that message on to Pharaoh.

b. This is the Lord's way of telling Moses that he need not worry about his shortage of talent (as Moses saw it); God would tell him what was to be said, Moses was to tell it to Aaron, who in turn would speak to Pharaoh.

c. In the first interview with Pharaoh, Moses stood as a humble supplicant, asking that the king allow Israel to go and worship God. Now he would be speaking to Pharaoh in demanding tones: "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me!"

d. The fact is not always stated, but when Moses is said to speak to Pharaoh, it is actually Aaron who speaks the words. Since Aaron and Moses are acting as a unit in delivering God's word, what one is said to do, it can properly be said that the other is also involved.

2. Verses 3-6: "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the

children of Israel from among them. And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they."

- a. God stated that Pharaoh's heart will be hardened so that he will not let Israel go. God had raised up the right man to be Pharaoh; he had seen what this man would do, and therefore used that man's stubbornness as the means by which he would demonstrate to Egypt and the world, for all time, His infinite power. It was in keeping with God's plan that Pharaoh would refuse the demands placed on him.
  - b. There is no reason for Moses and Israel to be discouraged when Pharaoh denies their demands. All is working according to God's plan. Verse six reports that Moses and Aaron did as God had said.
3. Verse 7: "And Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh."
- a. It seems that an incidental piece of information is inserted here, but actually this is an important part of the whole story. When Moses is said to be 80 years old, and Aaron's age is put at 83, the Divine Author is announcing that it was not by the power of these elderly gentlemen that Israel's freedom was obtained.
  - b. These men were in good health and strength, especially Moses, but only the power of God could have effected the release of Israel. Both of these men were well past the age when such exploits were attempted.

#### C. Exodus 7:8-13: The First Miracle Done Before Pharaoh.

1. Verses 8-10: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent."
  - a. Following the Lord's instructions, Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh, and apparently in response to the king's request for them to show a miracle, Aaron cast down his staff before the throne and it turned into a serpent. This was one of the original signs God had given Moses to demonstrate that his call and mission were truly from God.
  - b. The original word for serpent here (*tannin*) is translated by various other English words elsewhere:
    - 1) Job 7:12: "*Am* I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?"
    - 2) Psalms 74:13: "Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters."
    - 3) Isaiah 27:1: "In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that *is* in the sea."
    - 4) Isaiah 51:9: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. *Art* thou not it that hath cut Rahab, *and* wounded the dragon?"
  - c. Some scholars think the animal meant was crocodile, however the terms translated "serpent" in Exodus 4:3 and here are probably used as synonyms. In Hebrew as in English, a word is often given different meanings in different contexts: Cf. rake (a tool, a bird, a cad).
2. Verses 11-12: "Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods."
  - a. The sign did not impress Pharaoh since his "magicians" were able also to produce serpents. These magicians, using their enchantments, also threw down their rods which became serpents. God's superiority overrode the Egyptians when Moses' snake was able to swallow up all the other snakes. But how did these men produce snakes? Was a miracle involved? Or did they use deceptions to accomplish this feat?
  - b. The Bible gives us no details as to how they did this. Some think that they really duplicated the miracle; but if so, who was the source of the miraculous power? Not God for he would have been



working against himself, and there is no indication of any shock on the part of the magicians as was the case with the witch of Endor (1 Sam.28:7-14), when a miracle was wrought before her very eyes. There is no proof that Satan could perform such miraculous feats.

- c. Keil and others describe the ancient Egyptian cult of snake-charmers known as Psylli. In more modern times it is reported that they had the ability to press the neck of a snake and induce a state of paralysis on the reptile, causing it to become stiff and immovable, as a stick. By throwing down this "stick" they could "turn" it into a snake. This is the explanation given by some of the earlier commentators.
  - d. "On the whole, we regard it as most probable that the Egyptian 'magicians' of this time were jugglers of a high class, well skilled in serpent-charming and other kindred arts, but not possessed of any supernatural powers. The magicians of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments. The magicians, aware of the wonder which would probably be wrought, had prepared themselves; they had brought serpents, charmed and stiffened so as to look like rods (a common trick in Egypt: 'Description de l'Egypte,' vol. 1. p. 159) in their hands; and when Aaron's rod became a serpent, they threw their stiffened snakes upon the ground, and disenchanting them, so that they were seen to be what they were—shakos, and not really rods" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
  - e. The Bible speaks of "lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:8-10). This is the most obvious explanation of the magicians' "miracle." It was a magician's trick which was no miracle at all. How they were able to produce snakes is not as important as the outcome: Moses' serpent swallowed up all these other snakes, a miracle in and of itself!
  - f. Paul in 2 Timothy 3:8 identifies these magicians who withstood Moses as Jannes and Jambres. The New Testament therefore gives names to these men, showing the story was real. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 Tim. 3:8).
3. Verse 13: "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."
- a. God is said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart. If God did it directly by the use of his supernatural power, then the king had no choice in the matter. Therefore, he was not at fault for his refusal to let Israel go. Why, then, did God punish the man for not doing what he was powerless to do?
  - b. God is infinitely impartial (Acts 10:34-35). He wills the salvation of all men (1 Tim. 2:4-5) and desires that every sinner repent (2 Pet. 3:9). But he will not force any man to obey him (Rev. 22:17; Rom. 6:16-18; Heb. 3:7-15; Matt. 7:21-28). Neither will he force any man to disobey his will (1 John 3:4; Jas. 1:13-17).
    - 1) James 1:13-17: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
    - 2) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
  - c. When God gave Pharaoh a demand the king did not want to obey, he hardened his own heart so that he would not take into account the significance of the miracle he had just seen. We can say that God hardened his heart only in this sense.
  - d. But the magicians contributed to this hardening when they, by their trickery, produced serpents which seemed to annul the effect of Moses' miracle. But the king hardened his own heart for it was his choice whether to release Israel. If he did not have any choice, why did God send Moses and Aaron to make the request? More discussion on this will be given in considering other verses.

#### D. Exodus 7:14-25: The First Plague.

1. Verse 14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart *is* hardened, he refuseth to let the people go."
  - a. God, knowing the condition of Pharaoh's heart, said that it was "stubborn." Because of this stubborn-

ness (hardness), he would not let the people go.

- 1) 1 Samuel 6:6: "Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?"
  - 2) 2 Kings 17:14-15: "Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them."
  - 3) Acts 7:51: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do ye*."
  - 4) Hebrews 3:7-15: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."
- b. Despite the supremacy of God's power as shown by the miracle he had just observed, Pharaoh held to his evil intent.
2. Verses 15-18: "Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come; and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand. And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear. Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that *is* in mine hand upon the waters which *are* in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that *is* in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river."
  - a. In these verses God gave Moses and Aaron the instructions regarding the next move. In the morning, before Pharaoh goes out to the river, Moses (and Aaron) are to be there having the shepherd's staff with them. They are to remind him of the demand that had been given him, that Israel be released so they may serve God in the wilderness; to this demand Pharaoh had not assented.
  - b. Because of this refusal, a severe penalty was to be visited upon Egypt: the waters of the Nile were to be turned into blood so that even the Egyptians would loathe to drink from it. Also, the fish, which represented a major source of their food supply, would die. The blood and dead fish would contribute to the inability of Egypt to drink the river's water.
3. Verses 19-21: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *vessels of* wood, and in *vessels of* stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that *was* in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt."
  - a. Moses did as he was instructed, and the waters of the river, the water in the ponds and pools, and even the water in the vessels of wood and stone, were turned into blood. The vessels may have been the large containers located at various places in the city where water was kept for those who needed it.
  - b. "The death of the fishes was a sign, that the smiting had taken away from the river its life-sustaining power, and that its red hue was intended to depict before the eyes of the Egyptians all the terrors of
-

- death; but we not to suppose that there was any reference to the innocent blood which the Egyptians had poured into the river through the drowning of the Hebrew boys, or to their own guilty blood which was afterward to be shed" (Keil, p.479).
- c. By the reference to the "rivers" of Egypt, the canals, channels, and streams into which the Nile divides before it enters into the sea, is meant.
  - d. This was a great blow to the Egyptians for it meant, not only the loss of their main water source, but it demonstrated the great power of God over the supposed divine nature of the river and the idols associated with it.
  - e. Clarke reports that the water of the river was much liked by many of the ancients. He speaks of some who would eat salt so as to intensify their thirst in order to be able to drink more of it (p.325).
  - f. Bible critics and modernist theologians discount this miracle, and try to find suitable explanations for it so as to remove the miraculous element from the story. Cole says, "We must reject, however, the suggestion that what is meant [by the water turning into blood] is the light of the setting sun, reflected on water. While it might alter the appearance of the flood waters temporarily, it would not affect the taste or smell. Either the red clay washed down from Ethiopia (which causes the annual phenomenon still called the 'red Nile' by the Arabs) or the multiplication of red plancton (as at times off the Queensland coast) would seem to be the best explanation" (p.90). These "explanations" do not account for the death of the fish or the awful taste and smell of the water. Also, the water the people had in their vessels of wood and stone were turned into blood. The miracle was genuine.
4. Verse 22: "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said."
- a. The magicians were able, in some unexplained way, to produce the same kind of result, at least in appearance. Two important questions arise out of this statement: Where did they get the water to use in this "miracle?" And how did they produce the effect described in the verse?
  - b. Concerning the first question, the verse 24 gives a plausible answer: When the men dug wells near the river they were able to obtain potable water. Also, the text above does not demand that we understand that every drop of water in the land was turned into blood: some commentators think that the water stored in bottles in the homes was spared. The text indicates that Pharaoh stayed at the river until after his magicians had performed their "miracle." Hence, the latter explanation might be the better of the two, or else there were some fast well diggers in the land! [Of course, digging in the soft soil near the Nile would be easy and would not have to be deep to get water].
  - c. The magicians likely were well able to give clean water an appearance of blood by the use of special chemicals to which they had access. The text does not tell how large or how small an amount of water was turned red. The fact that water was at a premium would dictate the conclusion that that amount was small.
5. Verses 23-24: "And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river."
- a. We are told that Pharaoh's heart was hardened again against the demand which God had made of him. The cheap trick of the magicians had influenced him to remain in, or return to, that stubborn state.
  - b. The Egyptians began to dig wells near the Nile river. The underground waters were not affected by the plague, apparently. Also, the water of the Nile would seep through the sand and be cleaned in the process so that drinkable water could be obtained from the wells.
6. Verse 25: "And seven days were fulfilled, after that the LORD had smitten the river."
- a. The waters of the river were affected for only seven days. One can go without water for about a week, so God placed a limit on the plague. It was not his desire to kill off the Egyptians. The fact that the plague lasted only seven days shows that the annual inundations of the Nile, which produce changes in the quality and color of the water, was not the cause of this plague.
  - b. Those floods last for much longer than seven days. That a marvelous miracle had taken place cannot be denied by those who respect what the Bible says. To deny the miraculous element of this story is to repudiate the integrity of the Bible itself.
-

- c. All the facts in evidence in the text demands that we understand that a notable miracle had indeed taken place. If we cannot accept as fact the miraculous element of the story, we have no reason to believe the story itself. And if we deny this story, we have no reason to believe any other part of the story of Moses in Exodus. If we deny Exodus, we have no reason to believe Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, or any of the other Old Testament books. And since the New Testament affirms that the Old Testament is the word of God, and truthful, doubt is thereby cast on the entire New Testament. But it all is Truth! It is all accurate! It is all the inspired revelation of God!
  7. “The plagues grew generally more severe as they progressed. The plagues of the locusts and the darkness were particularly severe. The darkness was severe in that it exposed the greatest god of Egypt, its sun-god, Re, as being nothing. The plagues increased to a climax of terror at the death of Egypt’s firstborn” (Fields, p.170).
-

## Exodus 8

### A. Exodus 8:1-15: The Second Plague, the Plague of Frogs.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs."
  - a. In a bid to show mercy to Pharaoh and his nation, God announced beforehand what the penalty next would be if he refused to allow Israel to depart from Egypt. He thus was given ample warning of this plague, but was also provided with the opportunity to avoid it. God demanded that Pharaoh let Israel go so that they may "serve me." They had been forced to serve the Egyptian throne for generations; they should now be allowed to serve Jehovah.
  - b. If the king maintained his obstinacy, God would send a plague of frogs to smite "all thy borders." The affliction would not be limited in scope but would affect the whole land, apparently inclusive also of Goshen.
2. Verses 3-4: "And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs: And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants."
  - a. The miraculous aspect of this plague would not be merely in the presence of the frogs since they were plentiful in the Nile already. The supernatural features involved the appearance of frogs simultaneous with Aaron's stretching the rod over the waters, the overwhelming numbers of these creatures, and what they did when they emerged from the Nile and its canals. They would invade the living quarters of the people, intruding even into the bedrooms, ovens, and the kneading-troughs; they would even get on the people themselves.
  - b. God could have sent ferocious beasts, such as lions or crocodiles, or he could have used poisonous snakes; but he chose frogs. His ways are not as man's ways (Isa. 55:8,9; 1 Cor. 1:18-31). In his wisdom he chose the lowly, despicable, and insignificant frog as the means of punishment.
  - c. There was more involved in his choosing frogs as the creatures for this penalty than their relative insignificance. The frog was the symbol of the goddess of fertility in Egypt, being associated "both with the god Hapi, and also with the goddess Heqt, who assisted at childbirth" (Cole, p.91). "That such a respected element of Egyptian paganism should suddenly become a curse instead of a blessing was evidently incorporated into the basic design of this miracle....'The popularity of the goddess Hekt must have dropped to near zero after this plague!'" (Coffman, p.96).
  - d. Since the Egyptians used the frog in their pagan religious system, God showed his exalted nature and power to be vastly superior to this phase of Egyptian idolatry.
3. Verses 5-7: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt."
  - a. God now instructed Moses to have Aaron stretch the rod over the waters of the land and bring about this great plague. Just as the Lord had warned Pharaoh, frogs came forth in such abundance that the land was covered with them. Taken singly, frogs are not without attraction, although far from cuddlesome. But in such numbers as in the present case, they would be very loathsome.
  - b. In some undescribed way the Egyptian magicians were also able to produce frogs. There is no proof that they did so miraculously; but if so, did God give them the power? If he did, then he was working against himself! Did Satan give them the power? There is no proof that he performed genuine miracles, but the Bible speaks of "lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9; but compare Deut. 13:1-2).
    - 1) Deuteronomy 13:1-2: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them."

- 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:9: "*Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.*"
- c. The most reasonable explanation, and most consistent with the entire Bible, is that these men produced frogs by means of their trickery.
  - d. To produce more frogs in the presence of a great abundance of frogs would have no great meaning. "A little juggling or dexterity of hand might have been quite sufficient for the imitation of this miracle, because frogs in abundance had already been produced; and some of these kept in readiness might have been brought forward by the magicians, as proofs of their pretended power and equality in influence to Moses and Aaron" (Clarke, p.328).
  - e. To bring forth more frogs would not have been any aid to Pharaoh! The last thing he needed was more frogs! These magicians had already "produced" snakes and blood when there were already more than was wanted. If these tricksters wanted to help the cause, and perform a genuine miracle, they should have suddenly caused the frogs to vanish.
  - f. The king asked Moses and Aaron to entreat God to remove the frogs; he knew his court magicians could not do so. This implies that he had no great confidence in their "sign." "One cannot resist the conclusion that their act was nothing but a pretense; for it certainly would have been no miracle to produce a few frogs *anywhere* from the abundance of frogs *everywhere*! 'The king would never have applied to Moses and Aaron for help if his charmers could have charmed the plague away'" (Coffman, p.97).
4. Verse 8-11: "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, *that* they may remain in the river only? And he said, To morrow. And he said, *Be it* according to thy word: that thou mayest know that *there is* none like unto the LORD our God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only."
- a. Other translations:
    - 1) "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat Jehovah, that he take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice unto Jehovah. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Have thou this glory over me: against what time shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, that the frogs be destroyed from thee and thy houses, and remain in the river only? And he said, Against to-morrow. And he said, Be it according to thy word; that thou mayest know that there is none like unto Jehovah our God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only" (ASV).
    - 2) "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, 'Entreat the Lord that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the Lord. And Moses said to Pharaoh, 'Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, that they may remain in the river only. So he said, 'Tomorrow.' And he said, 'Let it be according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God. And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only'" (NKJV).
  - b. Pharaoh made his appeal here for Moses to entreat God for the removal of this plague. He also promised that he would release Israel if this request was granted. This showed that Pharaoh believed that the plague was sent by the God of Israel. This was the first sign of weakening on the king's part, and clearly shows that he knew his magicians were powerless to relieve the curse.
  - c. Moses told Pharaoh that he had the choice of naming the time for the destruction of the frogs. Moses thus gave him the "glory," or advantage of naming the time. This would serve to enhance the miracle. Notice that he did not promise the sudden removal of the frogs, but the destruction of the frogs. Pharaoh was willing to spend one more night with the frogs, but he could have gotten rid of them sooner.
-

- d. Pharaoh named the morrow as the time. Moses told him it would so be, that the king might know that there is none like unto the God of Israel.
  - e. The frogs would no longer plague the Egyptians as at present, but would be limited to the river as before.
5. Verses 13-15: "And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields. And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."
- a. After Moses and Aaron had cried unto the Lord, the frogs died. In keeping with the statement of verse, the frogs were destroyed; they were not suddenly removed. The dead frogs were gathered in heaps, and caused a great stench throughout the land. This latter case was just as bothersome as the former, but the end of this plague was in sight for after a few days, the carcasses would be dried up.
  - b. When the relief from the plague was obtained, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to honor the promise he had made (verse 8).
- B. Exodus 8:16-19: The Third Plague, the Plague of Lice.
1. Verses 16-17: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt."
    - a. "If the vermin commonly designated by this name be intended, it must have been a very dreadful and afflicting plague to the Egyptians, and especially to their priests, who were obliged to shave the hair off every part of their bodies, and to wear a single tunic, that no vermin of this kind might be permitted to harbour about them" (Clarke, p.329). Various scholars have tried to make this gnats, or fleas, or sand flies, or even mosquitoes. Clarke thought that ticks were meant.
    - b. Aaron stretched out the rod over the dust of the earth, and lice came forth. The expression, "all the dust of the land became lice," is to be taken as a figure, for the sake of emphasis. "No one who endured the plague could possibly have found any fault with this statement of the extent of it" (Coffman, p.100).
    - c. In addition to the physical discomfort this caused man and beast, it also interfered with the worship of the Egyptians. According to scholars, the priests were not to worship if they were infested with lice, thus they wore linen garments which were not as hospitable to vermin.
    - d. The choice of lice as the source of this plague was for the purpose of striking yet another blow against the idolatrous system followed by the Egyptians.
  2. Verses 18-19: "And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This *is* the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."
    - a. The magicians assayed to produce lice as did Moses and Aaron, but were unable. Even they had to admit defeat, confessing that the plague was caused by "the finger of God."
    - b. "'But they did not make this acknowledgment for the purpose of giving glory to God Himself, but simply to protect their own honour, that Moses and Aaron might not be thought to be superior to them in virtue or knowledge. It was equivalent to saying, it is not by Moses and Aaron that we are restrained, but by a *divine power, which is greater than either*'" (Keil, pp.483f). They seem to be saying, "This thing is beyond our capabilities; it is beyond the capability of Moses and Aaron; it was done by the finger of deity."
    - c. "At last they know that Moses and Aaron are not producing conjuring tricks, by sleight of hand, as presumably they themselves have been doing all along. They admit that this is God at work. Henceforth they cease to compete; but their rout is not complete until in Exodus 9:11 the plague of boils strikes them too" (Cole, p.93).
    - d. But Pharaoh rejected the demand in keeping with the earlier statement by the Lord, who clearly announced to Moses that the exodus would not be granted by the king until all the great plagues had been poured out upon that idolatrous land. God knew the heart of this ruler, and knew how much
-



would be needed to bring him down.

C. Exodus 8:20-25: The Fourth Plague, the Plague of Flies.

1. Verses 20-21: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms *of flies* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms *of flies*, and also the ground whereon they *are*."
  - a. God directs Moses and Aaron to position themselves early in the morning near water in order to intercept Pharaoh as he goes forth. Again the demand is to be issued, "Let my people go, that they may serve me." This ultimatum contained the penalty of a plague involving swarms of flies.
  - b. "As the Egyptian magicians saw nothing more than the finger of God in the miracle which they could not imitate [in the third plague], that is to say, the work of some deity, possibly one of the gods of the Egyptians, and not the hand of Jehovah the God of the Hebrews, who had demanded the release of Israel, a distinction was made in the plagues which followed between the Israelites and the Egyptians, and the former were exempted from the plagues: a fact which was sufficient to prove to any one that they came from the God of Israel. To make this the more obvious, the fourth and fifth plagues were merely announced by Moses to the king. They were not brought on through the mediation of either himself or Aaron, but were sent by Jehovah at the appointed time; no doubt for the simple purpose of precluding the king and his wise men from the excuse which unbelief might still suggest, viz. that they were produced by the powerful incantations of Moses and Aaron" (Keil, p.484).
  - c. Notice the italicized phrase, "of flies," in the KJV. There is a degree of uncertainty as to the content of the "swarms." The LXX gives "dog-flies" as the insects intended. Dog-flies were flies possessed of a sharp bite, said to be capable of killing animals when attacking in great numbers, and which also inflict painful bites on man (see Coffman, p.103). Psalm 78:45 poetically describes this event: "He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them, and frogs, which destroyed them." It appears that the swarms may have contained different kinds of biting insects.
  - d. Scholars say that this occurred during the winter instead of the summer when flies are usually a bother. The Egyptians worshipped a god which they thought would help relieve the problem of flies during the summer. But when flies appeared during cold weather, this indicated that their god was powerless in the presence of the Almighty.
2. Verses 22-24: "And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms *of flies* shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I *am* the LORD in the midst of the earth. And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be. And the LORD did so; and there came a grievous swarm *of flies* into the house of Pharaoh, and *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm *of flies*."
  - a. "By this plague, in which a separation and deliverance was established between the people of God and the Egyptians, Pharaoh was to be taught that the God who sent this plague was not some deity of Egypt, *but, 'Jehovah in the midst of the land' (of Egypt)*" (Keil, p.485).
  - b. "Here is the first mention of 'preferential treatment' or special providence for Israel, in connection with the plagues, and also a deliberate justification of such preferential treatment. The purpose is to show by this setting apart that the plague is no mere accident, but instead God's judgment upon Egypt....Note however that God does not always deliver His people from suffering (Heb. 11:35), but through suffering" (Cole, p.94).

D. Exodus 8:25-32: Pharaoh's First Attempt at Compromise

1. Verses 25-27: "And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us."
  - a. Pharaoh proposes a compromise: you may sacrifice to your God, but do so in the land. That is, "There is no need for you to go on a long journey into the wilderness; sacrifice right here in the land."

- 
- b. Moses could not accept the compromised proposal for to sacrifice in Egypt was to incur the wrath of the people. The Egyptians held as sacred certain animals which the Israelites were wont to sacrifice. The Egyptians would consider the sacrifice of a sacred animal as blasphemous; to sacrifice sacred animals before the Egyptians would create greater trouble for Israel.
  - c. "A bull with certain marks was sacred to Apis, cows to Isis, rams to Amon, and so forth, covering nearly every possible sacrificial animal. The Persians unfairly won a battle against the Egyptians in the days of Cambyses by driving a 'screen' of sacred animals ahead of them, at which no Egyptian bowman would shoot, just as ruthless modern man will use women, children, or prisoners of war as a 'screen'" (Cole, p.95).
  - d. Moses held on to the original demand that they be permitted to leave the land of Egypt completely, going three-days journey into the wilderness where they could offer to God the sacrifices he appointed.
2. Verses 28-32: "And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: entreat for me. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the LORD that the swarms of *flies* may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to morrow: but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD. And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of *flies* from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go."
    - a. Pharaoh appears to consent to Israel leaving Egypt in order to worship God in the wilderness, however he adds the condition that they "shall not go very far away." He also asks Moses and Aaron to entreat the Lord for the removal of the plague of flies. This latter request seems to be a condition for letting Israel go but not very far.
    - b. Moses fulfilled the promise to entreat the Lord; the Lord removed all the swarms from Egypt. But Pharaoh reneged on his promise, hardening his heart so that he would not permit Israel to leave. Notice that it was the Lord who removed the curse since it was he who had brought it in the first place. Moses and Aaron were mere instruments in his hands.
-

## EXODUS 9

### A. Introduction.

1. Plagues five, six and seven are detailed in this chapter.
2. "As the record unfolds, the student should note the graduation in the severity of the plagues, the decreasing ability of the magicians to stand before Moses, the gradual erosion of the adamant position of Pharaoh, and the increasing numbers of the Egyptians themselves who were led to believe in the reality and supremacy of the God of the Israelites" (Coffman, p.107).
3. Bible critics find fault with the Biblical reference to camels in this chapter, asserting that this is an anachronism, for camels [they say] were not present in ancient Egypt. However, camels were used by Jacob in his return to Canaan: "Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels" (Gen. 31:17). The Arabs in the region used them and no doubt made trips into Egypt. Egypt was a world power, having a far-flung empire. To say that they had no camels is a baseless assumption.

### B. Exodus 9:1-7: The Fifth Plague, the Plague of Murrain.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still, Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: *there shall be* a very grievous murrain."
  - a. The Lord again made the demand that his people be released so that they could serve God. He did not lessen the demand. The people did not belong to Pharaoh, nor to Egypt; the Egyptians had seized control over the children of Israel in a former time, and had enslaved and abused them for generations. It was time for them to be released, and time for Egypt to be judged.
  - b. If Pharaoh still refused their release, God would punish him and his people by destroying a part of their great wealth—their livestock. The animals named were the cattle in the field, horses, asses, camels, oxen and sheep. Upon these would come a very grievous murrain. According to Clarke, our English word "murrain" comes either from the French word "mourir" (to die), or from the Greek word "maraino" (to grow lean, to waste away). The affliction, a pestilence or disease, would cause the death of a very great many of the valuable animals belonging to the Egyptians.
  - c. Notice the limiting phrase used in regards to the cattle: those cattle which are in the field would be affected; those which were under shelter would not be affected. This limits the extent of the pestilence to the Egyptian cattle, and shows that only a majority of their cattle died, and not all of them, as apparently reported in verse six. This explains why there were still some cattle in Egypt when the sixth plague struck (vs. 19).
  - d. "Camels are not represented on any Egyptian monument; but they are occasionally mentioned in the inscriptions (Chabas, Etudes, pp. 400-13). They are called kauri or kamaru. There is no doubt of their employment by the Egyptians as beasts of burthen in the traffic with Syria and with the Sinaitic peninsula" (Pulpit Commentary).
2. Verses 4-6: "And the LORD shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all *that is* the children's of Israel. And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land. And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one."
  - a. The Lord even showed beforehand the time when this plague would strike, to preclude the idea that it was only a natural disaster. He also limited the area wherein the animals would be affected: it would not affect those belonging to Israel; only those belonging to the Egyptians.
  - b. That the disaster was truly miraculous is seen by (1) the fact God announced ahead of time when it would commence; (2) by the fact that it did not invade the territory where Israelite cattle were; (3) by the severity of the plague which exceeded one of purely a natural kind; and (4) by the fact that different kinds of animals were affected: cattle, horses, camels, asses, oxen, and sheep.
  - c. The disaster struck exactly when, how, where, and with what effects the Lord had promised. That the king had rejected the demand of verse one is seen in the coming of the plague.

3. Verse 7: "And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go."
    - a. When the plague struck, learning that his cattle and those belonging to his people, had been killed according to Moses' word, he sent to discover whether the animals belonging to the Israelites were spared. Not one of those pertaining to Israel was harmed. Pharaoh's heart was hardened so that he still refused freedom to Israel. Egypt's economy was many-sided, thus even the loss of such a great number of valuable animals would not of itself destroy the country. If Israel had suffered such a tragic loss, they would have been destroyed since they were a pastoral people.
    - b. This plague, like all of the others, struck a severe blow at the religious establishment of Egypt. "The goat, the serpent, the bull, the cow, the lion, the cats (especially female cats), crocodiles, scarab beetles, the ape, the ibis, the hawk, the vulture, the jackal, etc....The sacred animals were in the eyes of the people more or less gods....*Ra* was the sun god; *Shu* was the wind god; *Nut* was the sky goddess; *Geb* was the earth god; *Thermouthis* was the goddess of childbirth and of crops; *Nepri* was the corn god; *Tait* was the goddess of funerary vestments" (See Coffman, pp.109f). Their sacred animals, the bull, cow, heifer, ram, and goat, were killed by this plague. When they saw these objects of their idolatrous worship slain, the preeminence of Jehovah was demonstrated. And there was nothing that these supposed sacred animals could do for themselves, and nothing the supposed deities could do, to prevent this grievous plague.
  4. "It is also of great interest that this plague seemed to impress Pharaoh less than some of the previous ones, despite the fact of its inflicting very heavy property damage upon his nation. Rawlinson commented thus: 'The plague affected him less than the others had done, rather than more. He was so rich that an affliction which touched nothing but property seemed a trivial matter. What cared he for the sufferings of the poor beasts, or the ruin of those who depended upon the breeding and feeding of cattle' (Coffman, p.110).
- C. Exodus 9:8-12: The Sixth Plague: The Plague of Boils.
1. Verses 8-9: "And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt."
    - a. Nothing is said about Moses and Aaron going before Pharaoh prior to the start of this plague, but perhaps they did, and for brevity's sake, the author omitted reference to it. Moses is instructed to take ashes from the furnace and sprinkle it toward heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. If this plague had been done without a prior announcement and without a definite connection between Moses and the event, the plague could have been ascribed to a natural occurrence. So the act of sprinkling the ashes was to be done in sight of the king. The Lord said that the ashes would be spread abroad and would be used by the Lord to bring forth boils on both man and beast in all the land of Egypt.
    - b. "The critics make a big thing out of the variations as to who threw down the rod, or stretched it out, or sprinkled the ashes, alleging different documents, etc., but the real meaning of these variations is that God ordered all the details and that he required the minutest observance of them. When God told Moses to sprinkle the ashes, it was Moses who did it. This prevented either Moses or Aaron from supposing that any of the power belonged to them personally. The reason for the sprinkling of the ashes appears to have been that of visually connecting Moses and the word of God which he spoke, with the onset of the plague" (Coffman, p.111).
    - c. These boils were the first of the plagues which could directly endanger the lives of the Egyptians. "If a single boil on any part of the body throws the whole system into a fever, what anguish must a multitude of them on the body at the same time occasion!" (Clarke, p.334).
  2. Verses 10-11: "And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man, and upon beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians."
    - a. Moses and Aaron followed the Lord's instructions fully, and God did that which he had promised to do. The magicians had been able to imitate, by means of their enchantments, the first three plagues, howbeit in a very limited way. They had failed utterly in the fourth, and apparently had not even
-

made an attempt in the fifth. In this sixth plague, they themselves fell victim to the affliction of boils. From this plague onward, they are not mentioned.

- b. "Whether they perished in this plague we know not, but they are no more mentioned. If they were not destroyed by this awful judgment, they at least left the field, and no longer contended with these messengers of God" (ibid.). These magicians could not help Pharaoh, either in preventing the spread of this affliction, or in removing it when it struck. They could not even help themselves! Their charlatan ways were uncovered and exposed for the fakes they were.
3. Verse 12: "And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses."
    - a. It is reported once again that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that he refused to let Israel go. Notice once more, that the Lord never forces any man to obey his will; neither does he force any man to disobey his will. Such conduct on his part would make him a respecter of persons, and unjust in his dealings with man. Instead, he desires the salvation of all and the condemnation of none.
    - b. Deuteronomy 5:29: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"
    - c. Ezekiel 18:31-32: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye."
- D. Exodus 9:13-35: The Seventh Plague: The Plague of Hail.
1. Verses 13-15: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth."
    - a. God instructs Moses and Aaron to call on Pharaoh yet another time to release Israel. He is to be told that the plagues of God will be directed upon the heart of the king. Pharaoh had seemed to weaken his resistance to God's demand, but only temporarily and insincerely. But now, as the severity of the plagues increased, an impression would be made by them on his heart. The plagues up to this point had been mostly directed against things and beings other than himself, although he may have indeed suffered from the boils, as well as from the lice, flies, and frogs. Yet there had been no grave danger to his own life. He was less afflicted by the foregoing plagues than his people had been.
    - b. As the plagues intensified in their severity, nature, and impressiveness, he was to become more directly involved in their bitter fruit. God therefore promised to smite Pharaoh and his people with pestilence, and "thou shalt be cut off from the earth." Historians report that Egypt never recovered the height of power and glory in the world following the ten plagues, that they had enjoyed prior to the coming of the plagues.
  2. Verses 16-17: "And in very deed for this *cause* have I raised thee up, for to show *in* thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?"
    - a. NKJ: "But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go."
    - b. Here God reveals something of his involvement with worldly rulers: he had been responsible for this man coming to the throne of Egypt.
      - 1) Daniel 4:32: "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."
      - 2) Romans 13:1-5: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which

- is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."
- c. He had caused to sit on the throne the kind of man who would not be responsive to the demands God would make of him. This is the kind of man God wanted to occupy the throne so that his divine power might be demonstrated for the benefit of earth's people of that time, and of all time to come.
  - d. "God had 'raised up' Pharaoh precisely for the purpose of glorifying God's name, which purpose would indeed be fulfilled; but it was entirely up to Pharaoh as to just how that would happen. If he had obeyed God, that would have declared God's name throughout the world; but Pharaoh chose instead to oppose God to the bitter end that led to his perishing in the Red Sea. That even too caused God's name to be declared throughout all the earth" (Coffman, pp.112f).
  - e. Even though God had done all that was necessary to bring Pharaoh to the throne, and to sustain him there, yet the ungrateful king refused God's demands relative to releasing Israel. Keil renders verse fifteen as, "If I had now stretched out My hand and smitten thee...thou wouldest have been cut off" (p.490).
  - f. He then states, in giving a different view from our foregoing comments, that the reason God had not destroyed Pharaoh was twofold: (1) That Pharaoh might experience the might of Jehovah, and (2) that the name of Jehovah might be shown throughout the earth (ibid.).
3. Verses 18-19: "Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, *and* gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; *for upon* every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die."
    - a. God forewarns the Egyptians that they should bring in their cattle and other animals in the fields, and the men, so that they could be protected from the next fearsome plague, a great hailstorm, such as had never been seen since the foundation of the nation of Egypt. In giving this warning, the Lord was exhibiting mercy for the people.
    - b. It was not his intention to slay them if they would heed the warning. The grievousness of this plague exceeded the previous ones in that the lives of men were at stake. The time of this plague's commencement is given as "about this time tomorrow."
  4. Verses 20-21: "He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: And he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his servants and his cattle in the field."
    - a. The Egyptians who heeded the warning brought their servants and livestock in from the fields; those who disregarded the warning left their servants and animals in the field, and these suffered the consequences foretold.
    - b. There may have been Egyptians who were converted to the God of Israel, and which may account for the "mixed multitude of people" who went with Israel into the wilderness (Ex. 12:38).
  5. Verses 22-26: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail."
    - a. The details of the fearful plague are here given. The "fire mingled with hail" was likely bolts of lightning, which usually accompany such storms. Such a storm had not been seen in the land since Egypt became a nation, a period of many hundreds of years.
    - b. "Hailstorms are among the most destructive and violent events in nature. This writer saw a hailstorm that devastated a section of Rock Creek Park (Washington, D.C.) in the early 1950's, in which some
-

of the hailstones were five inches in diameter. Hedging against the disbelief anticipated, several of these were preserved in a deep freeze icebox as a means of convincing the skeptics!" (Coffman, p.114).

- c. The cattle destroyed by the murrain were those remaining in the field; those which were sheltered were spared from that plague, just as those men and beasts sheltered in the present plague were also spared. This hailstorm smote man and beast, and trees and herbs. But there was no life lost and no damage done in the land of Goshen where Israel was located. God protected his own people.

Hail Stone



6. Verses 27-28: "And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD *is* righteous, and I and my people *are* wicked. Entreat the LORD (for *it is* enough) that there be no *more* mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer."
  - a. Pharaoh, being stricken with fear at this grievous event, sent for Moses and Aaron, confessing that, "I have sinned *this* time." He implies that he had not been guilty heretofore. "This passage recounts the verbal surrender of Pharaoh; but his stubborn will induced him to repudiate it as soon as the thunderings and the hail ceased" (Coffman, p.115). By limiting his confession of wrongdoing to the present instance, the king actually confessed nothing.
  - b. His confession was like that of King Saul who seemed to confess to David that he had wronged his young servant: "Then said Saul, I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly" (1 Sam. 26:21). David, knowing that Saul was not to be trusted, did not return to the king's service. There have been "over-persuaders" who have stirred sincere people to respond to their preaching; some of these had a response that was purely emotional: "I don't want to go to hell!"
  - c. "Many another sinner has admitted wickedness when confronted with God's judgment; but lip repentance is no substitute for the real thing" (ibid.).
  - d. "But the very limitation 'this time' showed that his repentance did not go very deep, and that his confession was far more the effect of terror caused by the majesty of God, which was manifested in the fearful thunder and lightning, than a genuine acknowledgment of his guilt" (Keil, p.492).
  - e. Here the king shows he has made progress. At the first encounter, he had claimed to know nothing of the Lord ("Who is the Lord?"); but now he affirms that the "Lord is righteous."
  - f. Pharaoh asked Moses to intercede for him with the Lord, "for it is enough." He claims that he has had enough: "there is no need for further judgments; I am ready to submit to Jehovah."
7. Verse 29: "And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; *and* the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know



how that the earth *is* the Lord's. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God."

- a. Moses agrees to entreat the Lord in Pharaoh's behalf—as soon as he leaves the city. He is confident that the Lord will hear the plea, and cause the grievous storm to cease. But Moses is a wise and perceptive man: he realizes that Pharaoh and his people have not genuinely repented, that they do not yet fear the Lord. This implies that more plagues would be necessary.
  - b. "This awful display of divine displeasure did seriously impress the mind of Pharaoh, and, under the weight of his convictions, he humbled himself to confess he had done wrong in opposing the divine will. At the same time he called for Moses to intercede for a cessation of the calamity. As for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God. Pharaoh and his courtiers already acknowledged Yahweh as the God of the Hebrews; but the grand truth which the remarkable judgments brought upon Egypt were designed to teach was, that Yahweh was 'Elohiym (OT:430)—the Lord was the true and only God. A full and abiding conviction of this truth had been so imperfectly attained, that in every instance, as soon as the cause of present alarm was removed, they returned to the old distinction between Yahweh and God, and clung to the hope that they would find in their tutelary divinities a protection from the Deity of the Hebrews (Hengstenberg, 'Christol.,' Macdonald 'Pent.,' i., p. 181" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft].
8. Verses 30-32: "But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God. And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley *was* in the ear, and the flax *was* bolted."
- a. NKJ: "But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear the Lord God." Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops.
  - b. "The account of the loss caused by the hail is introduced very appropriately in vers. 31 and 32, to show how much had been lost, and how much there was still to lose through continued refusal" (Keil, *ibid.*). Flax and barley had been smitten; these were vital crops to Egypt. Linen, from which the garments of the priests were made, came from the flax; barley was used as food for man and beast. The fact that these crops were "in the ear" and "in bloom" shows that the time of this plague was in late January or early in February.
    - 1) "But the wheat and the "rie" were not damaged. Rie is said to be "spelt" (a grain similar to wheat, used for food among the poorer classes). Coffman says that more than any of the other grains, this grain appears frequently on the sculptures and monuments in Egypt. These two crops (rye and wheat) had only begun to develop and thus were not destroyed by the storm.
    - 2) "These accounts are in harmony with the natural history of Egypt. According to *Pliny*, the barley is reaped in the sixth month after sowing-time, the wheat in the seventh. The barley is ripe about the end of February or beginning of March; the wheat, at the end of March or beginning of April. The flax is in flower at the end of January. In the neighbourhood of Alexandria, and therefore quite in the north of Egypt, the spelt is ripe at the end of April....
    - 3) "Consequently the plague of hail occurred at the end of January, or at the latest in the first half of February; so that there were at least eight weeks between the seventh and tenth plagues" (Keil, pp.492f).
9. Verse 33-35: "And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD: and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by Moses."
- a. When Moses had departed from the city, he entreated God, as he had promised the king he would do, that this great plague be brought to a conclusion. We are not told why he waited until leaving the city to offer this prayer, and we are not told which city it was. Neither piece of information is essential to our understanding the story. He may have wanted to pray outside the city so as to have proper privacy, and not to appear to be putting on a demonstration before the Egyptians. In response to the

prayer to God, the terrible thunderings, the rain, and the hail ceased. Rain had not been previously mentioned but is a common part of a hailstorm.

- b. Pharaoh asked Moses to "entreat" God for the removal of this storm; Moses promised to do so by replying that he would "spread abroad my hands unto the Lord." The entreating was done by prayer; the prayer was accompanied by the spreading forth of the hands.
  - c. "*I will spread abroad my hands*. That is, I will make *supplication* to God that he may remove this plague. This may not be an improper place to make some observations on the ancient manner of approaching the Divine Being in prayer. *Kneeling down, stretching out the hands, and lifting them up to heaven*, were in frequent use among the Hebrews in their religious worship. Solomon *kneeled down on his knees, and spread forth his hands to heaven*; 2 Chron. 6:13. So David, Psa. 143:6: *I will stretch forth my hands unto thee*. So Ezra: *I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God*; chap. 9:5. See also Job 11:13: *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thy hands towards him*" (Clarke, p.337).
  - d. When Pharaoh perceived that the storm was gone, the shallow repentance, based only on momentary fear, left the king. Moses reports that he sinned yet more. This sin and the hardening of his heart are used as different ways of saying the same thing: He sinned by hardening his heart. This is an important statement for it shows that the process of hardening the heart was sinful; since it was sinful, God could not have been the one responsible for doing it.
  - e. God can be said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart only in the sense that he gave the king something to do which the king would not agree to do; if God had not made the demand of him, he would not have hardened his heart; but what the Lord required of him was right and necessary; the refusal of the king to obey was wrong and unnecessary; when he saw that the thing demanded was unsuitable, he hardened his heart against doing the thing commanded. He alone was responsible for this sin!
  - f. There were a great many deities of Egypt which were exposed and discredited by this miraculous storm. Their sky-goddess Nut could not protect them; Seth could not protect their agriculture; Osiris could not deliver them from the fire; Isis (who presided over the climate and fields) could do nothing against the rain, hail, and thunder. There were eighty or more deities exposed as human inventions by this plague. This display of genuine divine power was most disconcerting to these idolatrous Egyptians.
-

---

## EXODUS 10

### A. Introduction.

1. The plagues have followed in rapid succession in the narrative, and now the inspired writer describes the 8th and 9th in this chapter, with the 10th plague yet to come.
2. Two notable differences in the proceedings are:
  - a. Here Pharaoh tries to negotiate with Moses *before* the onset of the plague.
  - b. Pharaoh's advisors insist on his releasing Israel.

### B. Exodus 10:1-6: The Announcement of the Eighth Plague: The Plague of Locusts.

1. Verse 1: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him."
    - a. Pharaoh had maintained his usually stubborn heart, and still refused to allow God's people to depart from Egypt.
    - b. The fact is stated that Pharaoh's heart and the hearts of his servants have been hardened. The latter soon develop a softened attitude for they joined Moses in asking for the freedom of Israel lest Egypt be utterly destroyed (10:7).
  2. Verse 2: "And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I *am* the LORD."
    - a. God states plainly to Moses that one purpose of these great plagues against the Egyptians is for the purpose of convincing Israel of Jehovah's power. Having seen the awesome demonstrations of God's power, they could convey that information to their own children and grandchildren, to the end that they also might have proper faith in, and reverence for, and obedience to, the God of heaven. Psalm 78 and 105 give descriptions of these great judgments.
    - b. God's aim in these plagues was "not to crush the poor worm, Pharaoh...but to convince his enemies, to the end of the world, that no cunning or power can prevail against him; and to show his followers that whosoever trusted in him should never be confounded" (Clarke, p.340).
    - c. Old Testament events provide lessons for today:
      - 1) Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
      - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11: "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted....Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
  3. Verses 3-4: "And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast."
    - a. Moses and Aaron approach Pharaoh with a question and a warning. The question is "How long will you refuse to humble thyself before God?" This clearly shows that at any time Pharaoh could have softened his heart and humbled himself before the Lord. Hence, the hardening was not God's doing! God never forces a man either to obey or disobey his will. If he did either, then he would be showing partiality—for or against the individual involved.
      - 1) Deuteronomy 11:26-28: "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."
      - 2) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
      - 3) Ezekiel 18:31-32: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no
-

pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye."

- 4) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
- b. The responsibility for incurring the plague or preventing the plague was entirely upon the head of Pharaoh. He could allow Israel to depart from Egypt and remove the threat of the plague, or else he could continue in this selfish and stubborn rebellion and bring upon his land another terrible judgment. God is not responsible for his hardened heart; Pharaoh alone is. If he continues his rebellion, God will bring into his borders a plague of locusts.
4. Verse 5: "And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field."
  - a. These locusts will cover the face of the earth so that the ground where they are cannot be seen. Eye-witness reports of locust invasions state that this is literally true. "There are historical instances of areas of 1,600 to 1,800 square miles being covered with locusts to a depth of four or five inches" (Coffman, pp.121f). The Lord promises that these insects will eat what remained from the preceding plague of the great hail storm.
  - b. The "Readers' Digest" reported [1980s] on a locust invasion in Mauritania, a country in West Africa on the Atlantic. This plague covered an area six miles wide by sixty miles long. Such a swarm can eat thousands of tons of vegetation each day. The article also stated that if vegetation and crops run out, they may eat the wool from a sheep's back, the thatched roofs of huts, even wooden handles of farm tools which contain the salts and oils from human hands; if there is nothing else to eat, they will turn on each other.
  - c. They are amazingly tough and resourceful. If they grow too tired to fly when over water, they will rest on "rafts" made up of millions of their own drowned kind. Swarms in high mountains have stayed snow-covered for days and taken off again. They can digest a meal in as little as 30 minutes or take as long as four days if food is scarce. Pilots have reported swarms of locusts at altitudes of 8,000 feet. West African swarms reached the Caribbean, an unprecedented 3500-mile flight, in just five days, in one instance.
  - d. The desert locust is one of eight species of locust in various parts of the world; this is thought to be the locust of Exodus 10. Its carved image can be seen on tombs dating back some 4400 years, at Sakkara, Egypt. Murals dating back to the 8th century depict skewers of insects being served to Sennacherib, the famous Assyrian king.
  - e. Between plagues, the desert locust lives as a harmless Jiminy Cricket grasshopper. But periodically, for reasons not fully known, it undergoes a physical change and enters a swarming phase. Its color changes from brown to yellow; its wings lengthen; its hind legs shorten; its metabolic rate and oxygen intake increase. Its face, with large, red-and-black striped compound eyes and hard, black, serrated jaws, become more menacing. (These descriptions were taken from the *Readers' Digest* article.)
5. Verse 6: "And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh."
  - a. God further warned that the locusts would invade the houses of the people. There was nothing in their past history to compare with this invasion. Scholars report that, while Egypt suffered occasionally from locust invasions, that they were not as much plagued by them as other nations, since their soil and climate are not conducive to the development of great swarms.
  - b. Having delivered the warning to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron departed from his presence.
- C. Exodus 10:8-11: Pharaoh's Advisors Call on the King to Relent; He Speaks Again With Moses.
  1. Verse 7: "And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?"
    - a. The king's servants, who were doubtless his advisors and not household slaves, asked him to let Israel

- go. This man is a snare: referring to Moses. He has been the source of great problems for us; the land is being destroyed; therefore, let them go.
- b. Keil says that the term translated "men" is a reference to the whole nation of Israel, and not to the men of Israel only.
2. Verses 8-9: "And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: *but* who *are* they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we *must hold* a feast unto the LORD."
    - a. Pharaoh recalled Moses and Aaron and asked who would be leaving Egypt to worship. He seems to be softening his position somewhat by his statement; but he is still unwilling to relent to the demand.
    - b. Moses responded to the question by stating that all the Israelites would be going including the young and old, sons and daughters, and flocks and herds. We will all be leaving to hold a feast unto the Lord. The flocks and herds would help furnish the food and sacrifices; the women would be preparing the food; all Israel would participate in one form or another in the proceedings; hence, all would have to go.
  3. Verses 10-11: "And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look *to it*; for evil *is* before you. Not so: go now *ye that are* men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence."
    - a. Other versions:
      - 1) "And he said unto them, So be Jehovah with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve Jehovah; for that is what ye desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence" (ASV).
      - 2) "Then he said to them, 'The Lord had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the Lord, for that is what you desired.' And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence" (NKJV).
    - b. In a rather dark statement, Pharaoh replies to Moses and Aaron. "Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go...evil is before you." He probably meant, "May the Lord be with you if ever I let you go; may the Lord help you with his divine protection as you make your journey to the same extent that my permission is for you to go." Since he did not plan to let them go, so the protection he spoke of was likewise meaningless. "May the Lord help you in the same way in which I let you and your little ones go. This indicated contempt not only for Moses and Aaron, but also for Jehovah, who had nevertheless proved Himself, by His manifestations of mighty power, to be a God who would not suffer Himself to be trifled with" (Keil, p.495).
    - c. "Look to it; for evil is before you." This was intended as a warning to Moses: watch out, for you are facing danger; or, you are planning evil. He did not intend to let them go, and he did not believe the Lord could deliver them out of his hand. Since Moses had been simply asking and, at the most, demanding their release, Pharaoh may have thought that God could not deliver Israel without his permission. He had seen the power of God manifested in various plagues, but so far he had not seen anything that caused him to think the Lord would forcibly remove his people, or harm him in some direct way.
    - d. Pharaoh says in effect in verse 11, "I will not permit all of you to go; but the men of Israel may go and serve your God; but you do not need to take your wives, children or livestock." This is another of his famous compromises. But even in this offer, it is unlikely that he was serious insofar as permitting even the men to go. With these words he caused them to be driven from his presence. "The restriction of the permission to depart to the men alone was pure caprice; for even the Egyptians, according to Herodotus (2,60), held religious festivals at which the women were in the habit of Accompanying the men" (Keil, p.495).
    - e. His compromise proposals, which Moses could not accept, included:
      - 1) Sacrifice in the land (8:25);
      - 2) Go, but don't go far (8:28);
      - 3) Only the men may go (10:11);

4) Go but leave your livestock behind (10:24).

D. Exodus 10:12-15: The Plague of Locusts Descends upon Egypt.

1. Verses 12-13: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, *even* all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts."
  - a. Moses is instructed by the Lord to stretch forth his hand over the land so that the plague can be commenced. This judgment was to take effect upon that which was left undestroyed by the hail. This shows the Egyptians and current readers that Moses was directly connected with the coming of the hailstorm.
  - b. The critics try to find fault with everything they think will serve their unholy cause. Here, some have charged the writer with a contradiction for God told Moses to stretch out his hand, and he stretched forth the rod instead. Since the rod was in his hand, if he stretched forth his hand, he also stretched forth the rod. There is no difficulty.
  - c. God caused a strong east wind to rise which pushed the locust swarms into Egypt within the space of a day and a night. He could miraculously have created these insects and caused them suddenly and immediately to descend on the land, but in his wisdom, he chose to operate as he did.
  - d. The existence of the locusts involved no miracle of itself, but the springing up of the east wind, and the bringing in of the swarms at the time indicated, and the kind of locusts as these were, did indeed involve the miraculous! If the wind was blowing at the speed of 30 MPH, in 24 hours a distance of 720 miles could have been covered. Their coming from the east, and requiring a day and a night to arrive, indicates that they originated somewhere in Arabia.
  - e. "This capacity of vast swarms to travel long distances on the wind is the basis for the designation given to them in the east, 'The Teeth of the Wind!'" (Coffman, p.125).
  - f. It is said that the locusts invading Egypt usually come from Ethiopia or Libya, on a south or southwest wind. But in this instance they are brought by an east wind, showing the omnipotent power of God is not limited to Egypt or in doing things by ordinary methods
2. Verse 14: "And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were they*; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such."
  - a. The locusts arrived with a vengeance; they rested within the borders of Egypt; they were very grievous; there were no such locusts before or afterward. It appears from this description that there was something special about these insects: their number, their size, their ferocity, their destruction, or their appetite.
  - b. The coming of these locusts is pictured in the Hebrew term as an invasion, a term used to describe a hostile invasion by an enemy.
3. Verse 15: "For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt."
  - a. Another miraculous feature of this judgment is seen in the fact that the entire land of Egypt was afflicted by this invasion; usually the locusts will be limited to a band several miles wide as they progress across a territory.
  - b. The face of the earth was covered by these swarms so that the sun was hidden and a measure of darkness descended upon the land. This is one of the common effects of the presence of a great swarm of these insects, although we may be sure that none of purely natural causes would equal the effect of this divine judgment. The plants, the fruit of the trees, the greenery in the field, throughout the land of Egypt, were consumed.
  - c. The opening statement of this verse ("the face of the whole earth") is limited by the closing statement ("through all the land of Egypt"). The inspired writer is not saying that the entire surface of the earth was covered by locusts, but only that the entire land of Egypt was thus affected. We are not told explicitly whether Goshen was spared this disaster. They likely were spared; however, since they

were not to be in Egypt much longer, it would not have been so grievous on them, unless it affected the feed for their livestock.

E. Exodus 10:16-20: The Plague of Locusts Ends.

1. Verses 16-17: "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only."
  - a. NKJ: Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, "I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you. Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that He may take away from me this death only."
  - b. So terrified was Pharaoh that he sent for Moses and Aaron, hastily! He had sent for them before, but not with such a sense of urgency. He confessed his sin against the Lord and against them, and asked that they forgive him and pray to God for the removal of this "death." He could properly call this locust plague "death," since destruction and death came with them.
  - c. "Once again comes the easy confession of sin, and the shallow repentance that springs only from a desire to avert the consequences (Heb. 12:17)" (Cole, p.100).
2. Verses 18-19: "And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD. And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt."
  - a. Moses left Pharaoh and asked the Lord to bring the great plague to an end. God could have ended the judgment miraculously, quickly and immediately, but he chose to use a natural means by which to accomplish this miraculous cessation of the plague.
  - b. He caused a mighty, strong west wind to arise, which carried the locust swarms into the Red Sea which lay to the east of the Egypt.
3. Verse 20: "But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go."
  - a. But when the threat was removed, the fear Pharaoh felt also departed. This is the way it is when penitence or obedience is caused only by fear. Many people will pray to God when in danger, but when the peril is past, so also their prayers. But sometimes genuine faith and obedience will grow out of a frightening experience.
  - b. The Egyptians trusted their gods to provide for their food, attributing to Isis and Serapis the ability to provide their plenty. They also venerated the winds. But these so-called deities were unable to stand against the onslaught of this God-sent plague of locusts. Feeble man stood defenseless against it.

F. Exodus 10:21-29: The Ninth Plague: The Plague of Darkness.

1. Verse 21: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness *which* may be felt."
  - a. As in the case of the third and sixth plagues, this one came without any express warning given to Pharaoh. One thing of significance about this darkness was that it was described as darkness which could be felt. This could mean (1) that its effects would be felt by the Egyptians, or (2) that there was something tangible that could be detected. The text does not explain the details of this darkness. That it was miraculous is seen in the fact that (1) it came when Moses stretched forth his hand, and (2) it did not affect the land of Goshen. When Jesus was suffering on the cross, there was a darkness upon the land for three hours, from the sixth to the ninth hour (12—3 p.m.) (Matt. 27:45; Amos 8:2-9). Neither of these two case of darkness was an eclipse; both were miraculous.
    - 1) Amos 8:2-9: "And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: *there shall be* many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast *them* forth with silence. Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; *yea*, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land



tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as *by* the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." [Amos worked about 755 B.C.].

- 2) Matthew 27:45: "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."
    - b. Some commentators assert that this darkness of the plague was caused by a great and fearsome sandstorm. They attribute the cause as the yearly wind which "'blows off the desert to the south, producing an immense sandstorm known as Khamsin.' 'This terrible wind, called Khamsin, prevails twenty-five days before and twenty-five after the vernal equinox'" (Coffman, p.128). But this darkness lasted only three days and its commencement was ordered by the Lord, as was its terminal date. If this had been only a natural occurrence, there would have been no evidential power involved to accomplish what the Lord intended to accomplish (cf. 10:2). The effect of this darkness was sufficient to cause Pharaoh to offer another compromise (vs. 24). There would have been no message or movement from the king if this was purely natural.
  2. Verses 22-23: "And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."
    - a. As a result of Moses stretching forth his hand toward heaven, the thick darkness descended upon Egypt, lasting three days. God caused this effect by miraculous means. It is called "thick darkness," an expression describing the deepest darkness.
    - b. "The combination of two words or synonyms gives the greatest intensity to the thought. The darkness was so great that they could not see one another, and no one rose up from his place" (Keil, p.497). There was no darkness in Goshen, which shows the truly special nature of this miraculous demonstration.
  3. Verse 24: "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you."
    - a. Pharaoh sent for Moses, knowing that he was surely connected with this plague. He offered a compromise proposal: you may take the Israelites into the wilderness to serve your God, but you must leave your flocks and herds behind; your children may go with you. But Moses properly turned down this compromise.
    - b. Pharaoh was so stubborn that he could not bring himself, even under the awesome circumstances he faced, to give in to the demand placed upon him—he had to get Moses to give in on at least some small point. This reminds one of one who is haggling over the price a horse, or some other item.
  4. Verses 25-26: "And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither."
    - a. Moses bluntly announced that all their cattle must go with them; not one hoof would be left behind. He told Pharaoh further that when they got to the place where the sacrifice was to be offered, they would then be told what was to be sacrificed. Hence, all that they had must accompany them so as to have the necessities for the offering, and for the feast mentioned in verse nine.
    - b. Unless Pharaoh allows them to take their livestock, the permission will be hollow for when they get to the place God selects, they would not then be able to do that which they came there to accomplish—sacrifice to God.
  5. Verses 27-28: "But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in *that* day thou seest my face thou shalt die."
    - a. Again the statement is made that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. And again we stress, God did not do so in any direct way for that would have been interfering with man's free moral capacity to choose, and would have compromised God's often-stated claim to impartiality in his dealing with men.
-

- b. Pharaoh told Moses to get out, and that they would see his face no more, "for in the day thou seest my face thou shalt die." He closed the door to further conversation. He threatened Moses with death if he should come before him again.
6. Verse 29: "And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more."
- a. Moses agreed that the negotiations were over. In Exodus 12:31, Pharaoh spoke with Moses and Aaron, although it was at night, and perhaps they did not see each other, or maybe the communication was given through a messenger. But Moses may only be saying that he would not come before Pharaoh to request the release of Israel. After the 10th plague, which would be the most severe of all, Pharaoh would not have to be entreated for the release of God's people—he would voluntarily dismiss them from his country.
  - b. This interview does not conclude with verse 29, but rather after chapter eleven and verse eight, with verses one through four serving as a parenthetical statement to bring the reader up to date with what was going on in the mean while. After Exodus 11:8, Moses seeks no further interview with Pharaoh.
  - c. The plague of darkness struck another blow against the idolatrous religious system of Egypt. They worshipped the sun, and esteemed it as the soul of the world, and thought it and the moon ruled over all things. But God showed them that his power was vastly more superior to these supposed gods of the sky, causing thick darkness to cover the land, despite the power of the sun and moon.
-

## EXODUS 11

### A. Introduction.

1. "This is a transitional chapter. To this point, Moses has been dealing with Pharaoh; but, God's judgmental punishment of Egypt about to be completed, Moses' concern beginning with chapter 12 will focus upon Israel. The section of Exodus ending with this chapter may be called judgment; the rest of the book may be called deliverance" (Coffman, p.133).
2. The first three verses of this chapter are parenthetical, "resulting in ambiguity unless this is discerned; but, of course, any unusual or difficult arrangement of the text is always seized upon by critical scholars as an excuse for alleging interpolations, variable sources, or contradictions" (ibid.).

### B. Exodus 11:1-3: A Parenthetical Interlude.

1. Verse 1: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let *you* go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether."
  - a. Fields: "The word for plague in 11:1 is not used elsewhere in Exodus. Its most numerous occurrence is in Lev. 13-14, where it refers to the plague of leprosy. It means a blow, or striking. It was to be the final decisive blow."
  - b. "The announcement made by Jehovah to Moses, which is recorded here, occurred before the last interview between Moses and Pharaoh (10:24-29); but it is introduced by the historian in this place, as serving to explain the confidence with which Moses answered Pharaoh (10:29). This is evident from vers. 4-8, where Moses is said to have foretold to the king, before leaving his presence, the last plague and all its consequences" (Keil, p.499).
  - c. A quotation is given by Coffman involving Hebrew grammar suggests the same conclusion:
    - 1) "'The Hebrew had no form for the pluperfect tense, and is consequently obliged to make up for the grammatical deficiency by using the simple preterite in a pluperfect sense.' It is precisely this perception that requires the understanding of these three verses as a parenthesis.
    - 2) "Besides that, verses 4ff are clearly a 'response to Pharaoh's threats (10:29)'. And even beyond this, the *necessity* for this parenthesis appears in its utility as giving the basis for Moses' confident reply to Pharaoh's threat of death (10:29). Moses now knew that victory was Jehovah's, and that the people would soon be delivered.
    - 3) "Some scholars have supposed that these three verses record what was revealed to Moses *during* that last interview, which, of course could be true; but we think the more reasonable explanation that Moses, writing long after the events, included them here as an explanation, not only of his confident reply to Pharaoh, but also of other events such as the willingness of the Egyptians to give their treasures to the Israelites" (p.134).
  - d. Moses told Pharaoh in 10:29 that he would see his face no more, but in 11:8 Moses leaves the king. If 10:29 concluded that interview which Moses said would be the last time Pharaoh would see his face, then how do we account for the departure from Pharaoh in 11:8? Verses 1-3 of this chapter must be given simply as a brief statement which the author inserted later when he wrote the narrative in order to bring his auditors up to date on the other developments which had occurred. Hence, the pluperfect tense: "God *had said* unto Moses...."
  - e. God had foreseen the need for the upcoming tenth plague. Not only will Pharaoh allow Israel to depart, he will insist that they leave!
2. Verse 2: "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let them ask every man of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold" (ASV).
    - 2) "Speak, I pray thee, in the ears of the people, and they ask — each man from his neighbour, and each woman from her neighbour, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold" (YLT).
    - 3) "Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every

- woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold" (NKJV).
- b. Moses had been told to tell the people to ask their Egyptian neighbors to give to them jewels of gold and silver. In the previous mention of this action (3:22), only the women of Israel are named; here, all the people of Israel are to be involved in making this request. The idea of "borrow" is not the significance of the text, for that word suggests the use of the jewels for only a limited period of time, at the end of which the items would be returned. There is nothing in the text indicating that either the Israelites or the Egyptians considered this a loan.
  - c. Bible critics try to twist this around to make the request a contemptible matter. But it was the Egyptians whose conduct was vile for it was they who had enslaved Abraham's descendants, and exploited them in the cruel and evil way described by the divine writer. They had done this for many generations.
3. Verse 3: "And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people."
- a. God, in some unspecified manner, gave Israel favor in the sight of the people of Egypt. The result of this was that the Egyptians were very willing to give the items requested by Israel.
  - b. Several things are involved in the gaining of this favor.
    - 1) The terrible plagues had taken a toll of Egyptian wealth, welfare, and life; thus, their fear of what might next be sent against them compelled them to profoundly respect the power of the God of Israel.
    - 2) There must have been a measure of guilt on the part of the Egyptians. They had exploited Israel for many years, heaped shame, slavery, punishment, and even death upon them.
    - 3) Moses had been of Pharaoh's household, a mighty man in word and deed in Egypt (Acts 7:22). Now he had returned after forty years absence with the demand for the release of Israel. He had been the instrument of the great plagues which befell Egypt in rapid succession.
  - c. Because of these reasons, it is easy to see why the favor of the Egyptian people toward Israel developed.
  - d. Critics say that no man of principle and humility would have written about himself what is said in this verse about Moses. But it must be remembered that the inspired writers were not responsible for the contents of their writings: they were being led by the Spirit to record these things. Hence, Paul wrote a complimentary passage in 2 Corinthians 10:8-14 and 11:24-27; and likewise Nehemiah in 5:18-18. They were simply led to present what God considered to be an important feature of the message.
    - 1) Nehemiah 5:18-19: "Now *that* which was prepared *for me* daily *was* one ox *and* six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people. Think upon me, my God, for good, *according* to all that I have done for this people."
    - 2) 2 Corinthians 10:8-14: "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present. For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ."
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 11:24-27: "Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger

and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

C. Exodus 11:4-8: The Proclamation of the Final Plague Given to Pharaoh.

1. Verse 4: "And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt."
  - a. This is a continuation of Moses speech, taking up from Exodus 10:29. Pharaoh had told Moses he would die if he came before him again (10:28). To this Moses had agreed, and now adds, "About midnight" this final plague will be given.
  - b. "What midnight was this?...If the preparations for the institution of the Passover had already been made by Israel, which certainly could have been true, then that midnight could have been that of the very day Moses prophesied the final plague; but, on the other hand, if the detailed instructions for the slaying and eating of the Passover lamb were given to the people by Moses following this final interview with Pharaoh, then that *midnight* could well have been five or ten nights later. It seems more reasonable to us to suppose that the exact midnight was unspecified, leaving Pharaoh to fear and tremble *every midnight* until the fatal blow came" (Coffman, p.137).
  - c. There is no reason to think that the details of the Passover had already been given. "What midnight is meant, cannot be determined. So much is certain, however, that the last decisive blow did not take place in the night following the cessation of the ninth plague; but the institution of the Passover, the directions of Moses to the people respecting the things which they were to ask for from the Egyptians, and the preparations for the feast of the Passover and the exodus, all came between" (Keil, p.500).
  - d. Fields:
    - 1) "God would go out into the midst of Egypt. (The I in 11:4 is emphatic.) All the firstborn of Egypt would die, those high-born and those low-born, and the firstborn of all beasts. There would be a great cry of anguish throughout all the land of Egypt.
    - 2) "The lowly maidservant (slave woman) working at the "two grindstones" (a lower one and an upper stone that rotated upon the lower) would see her firstborn die. Pharaoh on his throne would suffer the same.
    - 3) "Pharaoh's forefather had once tried to slay the babes of Israel (1:22). Now all Egypt is sentenced to have its firstborn die.
    - 4) "The death of firstborn beasts would be impressive in Egypt, where many beasts were worshipped as manifestations of various gods.
    - 5) "Ramm comments<sup>3</sup>that the universality of the plague of death of the firstborn is a type of universality of God's last judgment, when the small and great alike shall stand before the judge (Rev. 20:12). God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). There will be weeping and wailing, like the cry that came up from Egypt (Matt. 25:30)."
2. Verses 5-6: "And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that *is* behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more."
  - a. The plain declaration of the plague is given: the firstborn in Egypt will perish from the firstborn of Pharaoh to the lowliest of slaves, and all the firstborn among the beasts. The lowest slave is described as the woman pushing the mill, a grinding device which was propelled by someone walking behind and pushing the lever ahead.
  - b. Pharaoh is told that there will be a great cry arising throughout Egypt, such as had never been heard before. The Egyptians are said to have been very emotional in the death of their loved ones. This would be terrible, indeed. Israel had cried out to her God for deliverance; they had cried under the whips of the taskmasters; but now it would be the Egyptians who would be wailing. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).
3. Verses 7-8: "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out,

and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger."

- a. NKJ: "But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger."
- b. To show Pharaoh how powerful was the God of Israel, Moses said that the dogs of the land would not move their tongues in consequence of the plague. A dog, especially at night, is prone to bark and howl; and especially so in response to other cries. But the dogs would not do so on this occasion; they would not bark against Israel, or they would not attack them in any way. This would show Pharaoh that God was effecting this release.
- c. Moses then tells Pharaoh that his own servants will come to him (Moses) and plead with him to take Israel and depart from Egypt. "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, *We be all dead men*" (Ex. 12:33).
- d. Moses departed from the king "in a great anger." This is not a petty display on Moses' part, but illustrates that the time of God's grace was over, and the time of his wrath was at hand.
- e. Pulpit Commentary: "And the Lord said. Rather, "had said." God had forewarned Moses that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened (Ex 4:21; 7:3), and that, in spite of all the miracles which he was empowered to perform before him, he would not let the people go (Ex 3:19; 4:21). It was not until God took Pharaoh's punishment altogether into his own hands, and himself came down and smote all the first-born, that the king's obstinacy was overcome, and he proceeded to "thrust the people out." That my wonders may be multiplied. Compare Ex 3:20; 7:3. If Pharaoh had yielded at the first, or even after two or three miracles, God's greatness and power would not have been shown forth very remarkably. Neither the Egyptians nor the neighbouring nations would have been much impressed. The circumstances would soon have been forgotten."

D. Exodus 11:9-10: A Summary of God's Judgmental Plagues and Their Effect.

1. Verse 9: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."
  - a. This is a restatement of what God told Moses in Exodus 3:19-20: "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go."
  - b. God had told Moses that he should not expect immediate acquiescence to the demand for Israel's release; it would not be quickly forthcoming. But after the final blow, their departure would be granted. The purpose of this drawn-out process would give greater knowledge of God's almighty power which he would show against Egypt.
  - c. God was not desirous of punishing the Egyptians, but in demonstrating his power. Israel would be more firmly committed to him, and many of the unbelievers would become re-acquainted with Jehovah, the knowledge of whom had been lost to them through the centuries preceding.
2. Verse 10: "And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land."
  - a. This summarizes the nine plagues in which Moses and Aaron had had a part. The last plague would be accomplished without human instrumentality. It would be sufficient to force Pharaoh's agreement to let God's people go.
  - b. "Aaron's agency is not always mentioned, and seems to have been less marked in the later than in the earlier miracles, Moses gradually gaining self-reliance. In passing from the subject of the plagues wrought by the two brothers, it may be useful to give a synopsis of them, distinguishing those which came without warning from those which were announced beforehand, and noting, where possible, their actual worker, their duration, their physical source, and the hurt which they did" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
  - c. "The occurrence of these plagues singly was well fitted to arrest attention. But viewed as a whole, they must have produced a profound sensation among intelligent and reflecting observers, who could not

fail to see the God of the Hebrews asserting his supremacy by these marvelous phenomena over the entire course of nature within the range of Egypt....

- 1) “Rationalists, who maintain the unchangeableness of natural laws, and deny that the Almighty interfered to inflict these plagues, ascribe what is miraculous in them to the traditional embellishments of a later age (Davidson's 'Introduction,' i., p. 103).
  - 2) “But to all who accept the historic truth of this narrative, the miraculous character of these plagues appears clear and unmistakeable. The intensity, the extent, the orderly succession of these plagues, their occurrence and their cessation at the command of Moses, and the marked exemption of the district of Goshen from the operation of the destructive visitations, prove, beyond a doubt, that they proceeded immediately from the hand of God” [from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
-



## EXODUS 12

### A. Introduction.

1. "The deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt was at hand; also their adoption as the nation of Jehovah (chap. 6:6,7). But for this a divine consecration was necessary, that their outward severance from the land of Egypt might be accompanied by an inward severance from everything of an Egyptian or heathen nature. This consecration was to be imparted by the Passover—a festival which was to lay the foundation for Israel's birth (Hos. 2:5) into the new life of grace and fellowship with God, and to renew it perpetually in time to come. This festival was therefore instituted and commemorated before the exodus from Egypt" (Keil, p.9).
2. This long chapter naturally divides itself into seven parts:
  - a. The Passover announced and directions for its observance given: 1-14.
  - b. The Feast of Unleavened Bread described: 15-20.
  - c. Specific instructions given to the elders regarding the Passover: 21-28.
  - d. The Tenth Plague: 29-30
  - e. Israel given permission to depart from Egypt: 31-36.
  - f. Israel leaves Egypt and begins their journey to Canaan: 37-42.
  - g. Special information concerning the covenant: 43-51.
3. Month Of the Jewish Calendar:

Month	Length	Equivalent
Nissan	30 Days	March—April
Iyar	29 Days	April— May
Sivan	30 Days	May—June
Tammuz	29 Days	June—July
Av	30 Days	July—August
Elul	29 Days	August—September
Tishri	30 Days	September—October
Heshvan	29 or 30 Days	October—November
Kislev	29 or 30 Days	November—December
Tevet	29 Days	December—January
Shevat	30 Days	January—February
Adar	29 or 30 Days	February—March
Adar II	29 Days	March—April

### B. Exodus 12:1-14: Instruction Concerning the Passover.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: *it shall be* the first month of the year to you."
  - a. It was while Moses and Israel were still in Egypt that the following information was given to him by Jehovah. Prior to their departure they were told about the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread; similarly, prior to the beginning of his kingdom, the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper. Israel officially began as a nation with the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. The month in which Israel both observed the first Passover and obtained their freedom from bondage was made the first month of the Hebrew calendar; it was called Abib (13:4) until after the Babylonian captivity about 900 years later.
  - b. "The significance of this is that if the postexilic priesthood had had anything to do with placing these verses in Exodus, they *would never* have used this word *Abib*" (Coffman, p.145). The word "Abib" means "the ear-month," because the grain was then in ear; after the captivity it was called "Nisan" (Neh. 2:1; Esth. 3:7).
2. Verses 3-5: "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth *day* of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it* according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats."
  - a. On the tenth day of the month, each household was to select one lamb, one lamb for each house; but if one lamb was too much for them to eat, then two households could use the same lamb.
  - b. The qualities the lamb must have are given, which find a parallel in Christ, the Lamb of God (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7).
    - 1) It was to be without blemish.
      - a) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."
      - b) 1 Peter 1:19: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
    - 2) It was to be a male one year old, hence full grown and in the prime of life. Christ was about 33 when he was crucified, full grown and in the prime of manhood.
  - c. It could be selected from the sheep or goats, thus giving a degree of latitude which would impose no hardship on any of the Hebrews.
3. Verses 6-7: "And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it."
  - a. The lamb was to be killed at evening, literally, "between the two evenings. This is said, by scholars, to be either between three in the afternoon and sundown, or between sundown and dark; the preference is the first of these since Jesus expired about three (the ninth hour): "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (Matt. 27:45-50).
  - b. The 14th day of the month was the time selected as the day of the Passover. The blood of the lamb was to be collected and was to be put on the upper door post and two side posts of the entrance of each house.
4. Verses 8-10: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire."
  - a. They were to eat the flesh of the lamb during the night; it was to be roasted over the fire, without being dismembered. This prefigured the fact that Christ would be slain without any bone being

broken.

- 1) Exodus 12:46: "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."
  - 2) Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
  - 3) John 19:32-36: "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."
- b. They were to eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Leaven often is used in the Scriptures as a figure of sin; here its absence in the bread suggests the absence of that which is impure. The bitter herbs were symbolic to the Israelites of the bitter bondage from which they were now about to be released. Nothing of the lamb was to remain until the morning; the scraps were to be burned.
5. Verse 11: "And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: *it is* the LORD'S passover."
- a. They were to eat this meal with their loins girded, with their shoes on their feet, and with their staff in their hand. They were to eat it in haste, fully readied for departure. The long flowing robes would get in the way of one who was working or traveling, hence they bound them up, calling it "girding the loins."
- b. The description, and thus the name, of this feast is the Lord's Passover. God would pass over the land of Egypt that night
6. Verses 12-13: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt."
- a. The Lord would "pass through" Egypt in judgment over the Egyptians; he would "pass over" Israel in mercy, provided they followed the directions set forth for the feast described.
- b. He would pass through the land during this night, during which all the first born of man and beast would die. Every family would be affected since each family has a firstborn, if not the father or mother, or both, then the first of their children if they had any. Many family groups would suffer multiple losses. We are not told just how many groups of beasts would be affected, but certainly those which were used in farming, in transportation, as objects of worship, and in eating. For one to know the identity of each of these individuals would require infinite knowledge; to bring about the death of each of these would require infinite power. Truly, a mighty miracle was in evidence in the Lord's passing through Egypt!
- c. His passage through Egypt would also be a severe blow to the Egyptian gods. "There were all kinds of animal 'deities' in Egypt; and when these alleged 'gods' were unable to protect either themselves or their offspring from death, the status of their 'godhead' perished! The sacred bulls, frogs, cows, serpents, beetles, whatever, all died in sufficient numbers to remove the whole animal kingdom from any further consideration as being 'gods'" (Coffman, p.151).
- d. He would pass over the Israelites who had followed the instructions regarding the preparation and eating of the passover lamb. What was a passage of punishment on the Egyptians was a passage of mercy for Israel. Similarly, the gospel is God's message of destruction to those who do not obey it, but a message of salvation and blessing to those who follow it. "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:15-16).
7. Verse 14: "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."
- a. This was to be the first of many passover feasts which Israel was to keep. The pattern for it was given
-

here, and each succeeding year, the basic parts of the feast were to be kept. There would be no need for them to sprinkle blood on the doorways thereafter since God would not be passing over them as he did on this first occasion.

- b. In the future it would be a reminder to Israel of what God had done for them on that first instance of the feast. Although not understood by Israel in those ancient days, it was also a type of the coming Messiah who would die for the sins of the whole world. The Jews were to keep the passover "forever" which is tempered by "throughout your generations." They still observe it today, but without divine approval. Forever has reference to the fullness of the time involved; in this case, as long as they remained a special people of God, which status ended when Christ died on the cross.

C. Exodus 12:15-20: The Feast of Unleavened Bread Ordained.

1. Verse 15: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel."
  - a. "It is true that these instructions regarding the holy convocations at the beginning and at the end of the passover week were applicable to later times after Israel had entered into the land of Canaan; but no such fact negates the truth that these instructions came along with and accompanied that very first passover" (Coffman, p.152).
  - b. "The first day was the 15th day of the month (cf. Lev. 23:6; Num. 28:17)...The significance of this feast was in the eating of the *mazzoth*, *i.e.*, of pure unleavened bread (see ver. 8). As bread, which is the principal means of preserving life, might easily be regarded as the symbol of life itself, so far as the latter is set forth in the means employed for its own maintenance and invigoration, so the *mazzoth*, or unleavened loaves, were symbolical of the new life, as cleansed from the leaven of a sinful" practice (Keil, pp.20f). A severe penalty was imposed on one who refused to abide by the instructions given: he would be cut off from Israel.
2. Verse 16: "And in the first day *there shall be* an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save *that* which every man must eat, that only may be done of you."
  - a. NKJ: "On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat — that only may be prepared by you."
  - b. A holy convocation (a holy gathering) was to be held on the first and seventh days of this special week. No labor was to be done on these two days, except eating. Some scholars think they were permitted to both prepare and eat food on these days; some also think that the days on which no labor was to be done included the entire seven days.
  - c. The Israelites were able to eat unleavened bread on this first instance of this special week, but due to their departure from Egypt it was not possible for them to omit the labor or to keep the holy convocations. Hence, the instructions were intended for later implementation.
3. Verse 17: "And ye shall observe *the feast of* unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever."
  - a. The feast described was intended to be observed by Israel throughout her special years. It was on this day that God would bring them forth from Egypt. Notice that God speaks of this as if it had already taken place. God's intentions are as good as done. Numerous Bible prophecies are expressed as if they had already been fulfilled, when they still lay in the future.
  - b. Compare: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6-7).
4. Verses 18-20: "In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found

in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread."

- a. The feast of unleavened bread was to begin at evening on the 14th of Abib, with the eating of the passover meal; only unleavened bread was to be eaten until the 21st of Abib, a period including two sabbath days. No leaven was permitted to remain in their dwellings during this seven day period; this restriction applied to all Israel and the strangers living in their midst.
- b. This was intended to stress the importance of purity, since leaven is almost always used as a symbol of impurity. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7).

D. Exodus 12:21-28: Instructions Given to the Elders on the Keeping of the Passover.

1. Verses 21-23: "Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*."
  - a. Moses called the elders together to discuss the details with them concerning the passover. They were to take a lamb, kill it, and take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the basin filled with the lamb's blood, sprinkle the blood on the two door posts and the lintel. They were to remain in their houses during the night for the Lord would pass over those who were "covered" by the blood. There is uncertainty regarding the plant called hyssop here, but obviously it would be an excellent sprinkler. When God saw the blood, he would pass over them, and not allow the "destroyer" to smite those in the house where the blood was.
  - b. "Destroyer" is symbolic of the punishing power God used in smiting the Egyptians. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:10 refers to the smiting of the Israelite murmurers in the wilderness (Num. 16:1-35) as being "destroyed of the destroyer."
2. Verses 24-25: "And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service."
  - a. This ordinance was intended to be observed by that generation and their sons "for ever." The same Greek word is used here in the LXX as is used in John 16:14, a passage promising the apostles the Holy Spirit "forever." As the Holy Spirit abode with the apostles for the full term of time God intended ("forever"), so the feast of unleavened bread was to be observed for the full term of time God intended.
  - b. The Lord also specified that this feast was to be observed when they entered into the promised land. It was impossible for them to observe it on the occasion of their departure from Egypt.
3. Verses 26-28: "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they."
  - a. The memorial, teaching aspect of this feast is stressed here. When Israelite children later on ask the meaning of the feast, they are to be told that it is a reminder of how God passed over Israel when he smote the Egyptians in delivering Israel from their cruel bondage.
  - b. On hearing these words of instruction, the people bowed their heads and worshipped. They then went away to their abodes and did as the Lord had commanded them to do through Moses and Aaron.

E. Exodus 12:29-30: The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn.

1. Verses 29-30: "And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that *was* in the

dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead."

2. The last great judgment is visited upon Egypt at midnight. There was some feature about this plague that caused the people to awake, arise, and find their firstborn dead. As the Lord's power passed over the land that night, all those among man and beast called the firstborn, died. We are not told how these deaths were effected, except that it was obviously by supernatural power. But there was some external sound, commotion, or some other evidence which was sufficient to awaken the people. The dogs were silent.
3. Clarke and others say that the Egyptians were especially tended toward outward display of emotion in the death of a loved one. "No people in the universe were more remarkable for their mournings than the Egyptians, especially in matters of religion; they whipped, beat, tore themselves, and howled in all the excess of grief. When a relative died, the people left the house, ran into the streets, and howled in the most lamentable and frantic manner" (Clarke, p.356). This must have been a very frightful sound, which arose from across every city and hamlet of the country, for all the houses in the land was affected.
4. The plague affected every family, from the pharaoh on the throne to the lowliest captive in the dungeon; also all the cattle. The magnitude of this miracle, and the intimate and far-reaching information it required, leave us with utter amazement at the awesome knowledge and power of our God!

F. Exodus 12:31-36: Israel Given Permission to Depart Egypt.

1. Verses 31-32: "And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, *and* get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also."
  - a. NKJ: Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also."
  - b. Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, on the very night of this great plague. In keeping with the Lord's statement in 11:1, they are driven from Egypt. He may have spoken through messengers, or he may have changed his attitude from 11:28. Moses never sought this last encounter, as he may have meant in his statement in 11:29; it was Pharaoh who sought this interview giving permission for Israel to leave.
  - c. He removed all his conditions of compromise, and said they could go "as ye have said." They could take all their flocks and herds, and children. He gave no conditions or limitations, but allowed all that Moses had requested from the start.
  - d. He meekly asks that Moses "bless me also." He has seen the power of God, and asks that the blessings of God be left behind on their departure.
2. Verses 33-34: "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, *We be* all dead *men*. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders."
  - a. NKJ: And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead." So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.
  - b. The Egyptians were fully impressed with the power of Jehovah, and urged the Israelites to hastily depart from the land. They were convinced that if Israel remained then the inhabitants of the whole country would be slain.
  - c. "This urgency of the Egyptians compelled the Israelites to take the dough, which they were probably about to bake for their journey, before it was leavened, and also their kneading-troughs bound up in their clothes (cloths) upon their shoulders" (Keil, p.25).
3. Verses 35-36: "And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required*. And they spoiled the Egyptians."
  - a. NKJ: "Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from

the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.”

- b. As the Lord has promised, he gave them favor in the eyes of the Egyptians, and made it possible for them to obtain jewels of silver and gold, and raiment from them. The Egyptians were doubtless glad to give these rich gifts to Israel to be rid of them.
  - c. Neither the Egyptians nor the Israelites had any idea of these valuable gifts being returned. This was poor wages indeed for the centuries of free labor and suffering the children of Israel had been forced to bear. The description is given of this as of an army taking spoils from a defeated enemy.
4. "Note how carefully the sacred writer included the fulfillment of God's word to Abraham that Israel would depart from the land of their affliction with 'great substance.' We have no way of knowing exactly 'how much' property they took with them, but it must have been a phenomenal amount. Not only did they have all of their flocks and herds, but they were enriched by the jewels and raiment given to them by the Egyptians....The truly significant thing about this, however, is that God had foretold this very thing to Abraham nearly half a millennium earlier! There is no intelligent understanding of these remarkable writings as a patch-work collection of prior documents. The synchronization, the mysterious correspondence of all these wonders that more than a thousand years afterwards were reenacted and fulfilled in the deeds and teachings of the Great Passover, and the overwhelming evidence of *truth* carried in every line of the holy record—these things, and many others, place the Bible utterly above any possibility of human origin" (Coffman, p.158).

G. Exodus 12:37-42: Israel Leaves Egypt and Begins Her Journey to Canaan.

1. Verse 37: "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children."
  - a. The exact location of these places is uncertain, and is unimportant to the understanding of the story. The number of men is put at six hundred thousand, which Bible critics deny. They assert that the number could not have been this great since (they claim) such a large number could not have lived in Egypt, could not have survived in the desert, or would be too numerous for Canaan. But even greater numbers of people live in Egypt and Canaan today; and God took care of their needs in the desert. Also, if only a few thousand men were involved, why were the Egyptians so afraid of them? And why were the Moabites terrified of them? How were they able to conquer all the kingdoms in Canaan? And why had fear of Israel spread over the whole land (Josh. 2:9)?
  - b. The fact that there were so many men argues for a great nation numbering into the millions of people. If only two children and one woman were present for each of the six hundred thousand men, their number would have been 2,400,000. Likely, there were far more than an average of two children per family.
2. Verse 38: "And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle."
  - a. A mixed multitude of others went with them out of Egypt. These may have included others who had been in slavery to the Egyptians; and perhaps even some of the Egyptians who had been sympathetic to Israel, and had accepted Israel's God.
  - b. All their flocks and herds were taken with them, thus the picture is one of a vast multitude of people and animals leaving the land. Truly a great exodus!
  - c. Pulpit Commentary: "Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. 36 And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians."
3. Verse 39: "And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual."
  - a. Their departure was made with such haste that the women had not even had time to put leaven in their dough, thus they ate unleavened bread. Other than the unleavened dough, they had not had time to prepare proper provisions for this journey. God had set it up this way, so that they would be required



to place their trust in him.

- b. They were to eat the passover meal fully clothed and prepared to make a journey, except for the provisions for the way. The Egyptians thrust them forth from the land that they could not delay long enough to make full preparations.
- c. Verses 40-41: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
- d. The inspired writer provides the length of time Israel had spent in Egypt: it was a full 430 years from the time Jacob and his family made the move into the land at the invitation of Joseph. God had used the round figure of 400 years in describing to Abraham the length of time his descendants would be abused by their captors (Gen. 15:13).
- e. Some argue that the time in Egypt was only 215 years, using the text of the LXX as the basis of their contention, but the LXX gives that figure without any authority. The account of this passage is too plain and definite to permit misunderstanding, and is further strengthened by Genesis 15:13 (cf. Gal. 3:17).
  - 1) Genesis 15:13: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."
  - 2) Galatians 3:17: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."
- f. "The selfsame day" may have been in reference to the day Jacob entered Egypt or to the day the passover was eaten as the day they left Egypt (or both). Verse 51 indicates that it was on the day following their eating the passover meal that they were brought forth from their bondage.
- g. Regarding the 430 years, Jamieson offers these comments: "The plain import of the present Hebrew text is, that the Israelites remained in Egypt, as a tribe or people, during the period specified. The Septuagint adds the clause: *kai en gee Chanaan*, and in the land of Canaan, and the Alexandrian Codex, the Samaritan text, and the Targum of Jonathan, have this further insertion [*autoi kai hoi pateres autoon*]; so that the reading is: 'They and their fathers sojourned in Egypt, and in the land of Canaan 430 years.' Without entering into a critical inquiry whether the text in the Septuagint is more accurate than the Masoretic reading, or the Septuagint has interpolated a clause by way of explanatory gloss, it is obvious that the adoption of the one or the other of these readings must materially affect the view taken of the duration of the sojourn.
  - 1) "Through the indirect influence of the Septuagint, Josephus, and the Rabbis, the truthfulness of whose views has been supposed to be endorsed by Paul (Gal 3:17), the popular interpretation of this passage is to consider it as embracing the entire period, from the call of Abraham to the exodus:—thus reducing the actual stay of the Israelites in Egypt to 215 years, while the previous half was that passed by the patriarchs in Canaan. The point of commencement in the computation is laid in the prophetic announcement to Abraham.
  - 2) "But such an interpretation is not warranted by the terms of that prophecy, which describes the fortunes of Abraham's posterity during a period of 400 years (cf. Acts 7:6-7), not those of the patriarch himself, though, if the specified time is to be reckoned from the call at Haran, it must include a portion of his past life; because he had been several years in Canaan before he was favoured with the vision.
  - 3) "Moreover, it speaks of his descendants being 'strangers in a strange land'—a description totally inapplicable to Canaan, which was his as well as theirs by divine promise, and in which, although all the three great patriarchs were frequently annoyed by the petty jealousies of surrounding tribes, they could not be said to be afflicted, much less to lose their independence. Above all, it is added, that 'in the fourth generation (see the note at Gen 15:16) they should come hither again'—words which evidently mean that the servitude and affliction were to be endured in another—a foreign land, from which they were to be restored to Canaan.
  - 4) "On these grounds, the old traditionary interpretation, which computes this portion of Israel's early

history from the call of Abraham to the exodus, has been abandoned by all the modern commentators of eminence, except Bengel and Baumgarten; and the statement in Ex 12:40 is taken in its natural acceptance, as referring exclusively to the sojourn in Egypt. The difficulties that were supposed to stand in the way of this explanation have disappeared before the searching scrutiny of criticism. Thus,

- a) "The hypothesis that the sojourn in Egypt lasted for 215 years only was based chiefly on the passage in Gal 3:17, where the apostle alludes to the promise made to Abraham and his seed, which was Christ; a promise which was repeated to Jacob at Beersheba, on the night previous to that patriarch and his household entering within the confines of Egypt. That announcement is related with such solemn particularity, and is so evidently alluded to in the verse under review, that every intelligent and reflecting reader must be persuaded it is from this last repetition of the promise—not the first utterance of it—the 430 years of the apostle must be dated.
  - b) Another difficulty that stood in the way of the short chronology was the genealogy of Aaron (Ex 6:16-20). But we have shown on that passage (cf. Num 26:59) that the genealogical table must have been abridged; because between Joseph and Joshua there were 10 descents—he being the 11 th—i.e., the exodus comprised 10 full generations of 30 or 40 years each, with part of an 11 th, amounting to 430 years....
  - 5) "The round or general number of 400 years, which was appropriate in a prophecy, is exchanged for the precise and definite date of 430, which is more suited to a historical record. And thus the statement in Ex 12:40 is seen to occupy its natural place as a proper conclusion to the narrative of the exodus. It forms one of two salient points for the chronology of Israel's history in ancient times, and the prophetic type of Ezekiel (Ezek 4:5-6), where the  $390 + 40 = 430$  days to be reckoned years, is obviously borrowed from the duration of this sojourn" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft].
4. Verse 42: "It *is* a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this *is* that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."
- a. The night in which they had eaten the passover and had received Pharaoh's permission to leave Egypt was an occasion to be much remembered and observed in years to come.
  - b. The Passover feast which they held year-by-year would bring to their remembrance what God had done for them on that date; and would furnish them an excellent occasion to impress on their children this same great truth.
  - c. "At last, Israel was free! The great dream of the Chosen People which had begun more than four centuries earlier with the call of Abraham was now ready to unfold on a much larger stage of action; but all of the details of God's wonderful promises to this people were in place" (Coffman, pp.157f).
  - d. You might recall the scent of their departure as it was depicted in the movie, *Ten Commandments*. That was very impressive.
- H. Exodus 12:43-51: Special Information Concerning the Covenant of the Passover.
1. Verses 43-45: "And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This *is* the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof."
    - a. The Passover was a special feast which commemorated a great act of mercy God had shown to his people. For it to keep its significance, it must be observed by his people, and only by them. God here forbade any stranger to eat it with them. However, every Hebrew's servant who had been bought with money, if he had been circumcised, could eat.
    - b. The circumcision indicated that he had been brought into the covenant God had made with Israel. But no foreigner or hired servant could eat it. Under the gospel covenant, only those who have truly become Christians may acceptably partake of the Lord's supper.
  2. Verse 46: "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."
    - a. The Passover lamb was to be eaten; none of its flesh was allowed to be taken out of the house. That
-

which could not be eaten was to be burned with fire before the morning came: "And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire" (Ex. 12:10).

- b. They were not allowed to break a bone of the lamb, a condition which would find its real significance in the death of the True Lamb of God (John 19).
3. Verse 47: "All the congregation of Israel shall keep it."
  - a. The covenant included all the children of Israel. If they were to maintain their relationship with Jehovah, this was one of the conditions they must meet. It should have been seen by them as a privilege, in memory of what God had done for their forebears in that ancient day.
  - b. If God had not intervened in behalf of Israel, there would not have been a later Israel, for they would have perished in Egypt or have been absorbed by their neighbors.
4. Verses 48-51: "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the selfsame day, *that* the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies."
  - a. If others later came to dwell with them, and wished to keep the Passover also, then their males were to be circumcised. These then would be permitted to observe the passover just as the natural born Hebrews. But none who was uncircumcised was allowed to participate.
  - b. The same law that pertained to the natural born Hebrew would apply to those who accepted that Law and was circumcised.
  - c. The inspired writer gives a summary of the obedience of the Israelites to the will of God in this particular. After observing that first passover, God brought them out of the land on that selfsame day.

### **Similarities Between the Passover Lamb and Christ**

1. The lamb was innocent, as was Christ.
2. The innocent suffered for the guilty.
3. Each was submissive and uncomplaining in death.
4. There was no salvation for Israel except by the blood of the passover lamb; there is no salvation for any today except by the blood of Christ.
5. Not a bone of either was broken.
6. The lamb was a male in the prime of life; Jesus was about 33 years old, in the prime of manhood.
7. The Passover lamb was without any blemish; there was no blemish of sin on the part of Christ.
8. Both the lamb and Christ suffered and died between the two evenings.
9. The great ordinance commemorating the two deliverances, the Jewish Passover and the Lord's Supper, were both instituted before the great events occurred which they were designed to commemorate.
10. There is some reason to think that as the lamb was selected and put up four days before the Passover feast, that Christ entered Jerusalem four days before his crucifixion (see Coffman, p.162).

Note: God does not do things haphazardly; what he did followed a definite pattern.

---

## EXODUS 13

### A. Exodus 13:1-2: Sanctification of the Firstborn of Man and Beast to God.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and of beast: it *is* mine."
  - a. The word "sanctify" means "to set apart." It describes the action of separating someone or some thing from earthly uses to the service and use of God. The Lord's commandment here is for the firstborn among Israel and their animals to be consecrated (set apart) to God. This separation was not the establishment of a separate priesthood; that would come later, and be limited to the tribe of Levi. This setting apart of the firstborn was representative of consecrating the whole nation of Israel to the Lord.
  - b. Three memorials were established in connection with the deliverance of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. These were:
    - 1) **The Passover**, which was intended to remind them annually that it was the Lord's work which delivered them from slavery. Their observance of the first Passover caused them to mark their houses with the blood of the lamb which identified the occupants as faithful believers in God. On seeing their obedience, God passed over these homes and spared the firstborn connected with that household.
    - 2) **The feast of Unleavened Bread**, which reminded them each year of the haste with which they had to leave Egypt; they didn't have time to leaven the dough which had been mixed for baking later.
    - 3) **The Sanctification of the Firstborn**, which reminded them continually, with the birth of each firstborn child in a family, that God had spared all their firstborn during the fateful night he passed through Egypt. \
  - c. These memorials would furnish excellent teaching situations in which the parents could appraise their children fully how God had richly blessed them in the exodus. "They established an unending chain of teaching and instruction designed to keep God's people *informed* throughout all subsequent ages with reference to the events memorialized and their significance to the children of Israel, and unto all men" (Coffman, p.165).
  - d. "The sanctification of the first-born was closely connected with the Passover. By this the deliverance of the Israelitish first-born was effected, and the object of this deliverance was their sanctification. Because Jehovah had delivered the first-born of Israel, they were to be sanctified to Him" (Keil, p.33). The Lord had the right to make this demand of Israel since he is the Almighty Creator and had spared the first born in the passover. He has the right to make demands of us today by virtue of the fact that Christ died on the cross for our sins and since he is the Creator.
    - 1) Numbers 3:13: "Because all the firstborn *are* mine; *for* on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I *am* the LORD."
    - 2) Numbers 8:17: "For all the firstborn of the children of Israel *are* mine, *both* man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself."
    - 3) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
  - e. Pulpit Commentary:
    - 1) In connection with the deliverance from death of the Israelite first-born by the blood of the lamb, and still further to fix the remembrance of the historical facts in the mind of the nation, Moses was commissioned to declare all the firstborn of Israel for all future time, and all the firstborn of their domesticated animals "holy to the Lord."
    - 2) There was, perhaps, already in the minds of men a feeling that peculiar dignity attached to the first-born in each family; and this feeling was now strengthened by the assignment to them of a sacred character. God claimed them, and also the first-born of beasts, as His own. The clean beasts became his by sacrifice; but the unclean ones could not be similarly treated, and therefore

had to be "redeemed" (verse 13) by the sacrifice of clean animals in their place.

- 3) The first-born of men became at the first institution of the new ordinance God's ministers; but as this system was not intended to continue, it was announced that they too would have to be "redeemed" (verses 13, 15). The exact mode of redeeming them was left to be settled afterwards, and will be found in Num 3:40-51; 18:16.

#### B. Exodus 13:3-10: The Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1. Verse 3: "And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this *place*: there shall no leavened bread be eaten."
  - a. Moses is said here to be the spokesman of these words, but God is the real source of the statement, as he was for all the other information delivered by Moses. He shows the people that their deliverance was not due to their own strength and design, but in the mighty power of God. No human agency was able to free them; they were not severed from Egypt by accident; but God had done it *miraculously!*
  - b. They were to remember this grand day by observing the instruction regarding the annual feast of unleavened bread.
  - c. The remembrance of their coming out of Egypt must also be perpetuated .... v. 3. Remember it by a good token, as the most remarkable day of your lives, the birthday of your nation, or the day of its coming of age, to be no longer under the rod." Thus the day of Christ's resurrection is to be remembered, for in it we were raised up with Christ out of death's house of bondage. The scripture tells us not expressly what day of the year Christ rose (as Moses told the Israelites what day of the year they were brought out of Egypt, that they might remember it yearly), but very particularly what day of the week it was, plainly intimating that, as the more valuable deliverance, and of greater importance, it should be remembered weekly. Remember it, for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out. [Matthew Henry].
2. Verses 4-5: "This day came ye out in the month Abib. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month."
  - a. It was in the month of Abib that they were set free; when they come into the land of promise, they are to observe the feast during this same month, year after year.
  - b. The land of Canaan was then inhabited by various kingdoms and nations. Several of these are named. Collectively, they were all known as "Canaanites" (vs. 11), but each bore a special name, and they were independent of each other.
  - c. Milk and honey—excellent depiction of the bounties of the land of Canaan! Compare Numbers 13:23: "And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs."
  - d. Fields:
    - 1) "To a good land, a land flowing (oozing) with milk and honey. This means that it was a land of pastures, where flocks giving milk could be raised. It would be a land of flowers, from which bees would make honey. The phrase "flowing with milk and honey" is repeated in 3:17; 13:s; Jer. 11:s. The goodness of the land is also described in Deut. 8:7-8.
    - 2) "Sinuhe, an Egyptian fugitive who fled into the land of Canaan, or a nearby area, about 1960 B.C., described the land in a way similar to that by which God described it to Moses: It was a good land, named Yaa. Figs were in it, and grapes. It had more wine than water. Plentiful was its honey, abundant its olives. Every (kind of) fruit was on its trees. Barley was there, and emmer. There was no imit to any (kind of) cattle." [Comment made under Exodus 3:8].
  - e. Deuteronomy 8:7-8: "For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey."
3. Verses 6-7: "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day *shall be* a feast to the

LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.”

- a. The feast of unleavened bread was to last seven days; during this period no leaven was permitted to remain in their houses. This would remind them of the haste with which they left Egypt; and since leaven usually represents iniquity in the Bible, it would symbolize their separation from that which contaminates the soul.
- b. 1 Corinthians 5:6: “...Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Christ is said to be our Passover, but the Old Testament Passover did not typify the Lord's Supper. The analogy between the Passover lamb and Christ shows several points of comparison.
  - 1) Both are without blemish (Ex. 12:5; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:21; Heb. 4:15).
  - 2) The Passover lamb was to be slain at evening (Lev. 23:5; Ex. 12:6; cf. Matt. 27:45-50).
  - 3) The blood of the Passover lamb produced the deliverance of ancient Israel when the death-plague passed over Egypt (cf. 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 1:5; Eph. 1:7; Matt. 26:28).
  - 4) The bones of the Passover lamb were not to be broken (Ex. 12:46; cf. John 19:36-37; Ps. 34:20).
4. Verses 8-10: “And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.”
  - a. As they observed this feast beginning when they took possession of Canaan, their children would ask the meaning of these special functions, thus affording them occasion to profitably teach them the significance of the feast.
  - b. The feast was intended as a sign upon their hands and a memorial between their eyes. The Jews took this statement as having a literal application, consequently they later wrote down the instructions pertaining to this subject on parchment, placed the paper in little boxes which they wore on their persons.
  - c. This practice became so exaggerated by the first century that the Pharisees enlarged the size of these ornaments and used them as a proclamation of their superior spirituality! "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues" (Matt. 23:5-6).
    - 1) They make broad their phylacteries. Phylacteries were pieces of parchment upon which were written certain passages of scripture. The word *phylactery* comes from a word which means to keep, preserve, or guard (Barnes).
    - 2) The phylactery was regarded as an amulet or charm, and was thought to provide its wearer with special protection from evil. There are those today who regard the Bible as some kind of charm, more than a revelation from God describing how we ought to live.
    - 3) The broader the phylactery, the greater spirituality the wearer was thought to have. It was a device which brought to the Pharisee or scribe more praise from his constituents.
    - 4) "In Exodus 13:16; Deuteronomy 6:8 and 11:18, it was said to Israel concerning the teaching of the law, that they should be bound, 'for a token upon thy head, and for frontlets between thine eyes.' In the interbiblical period, we find the Jews converting this figure into outward fact. They took four passages adjacent to the thrice repeated injunction, viz., Exodus 13:2-10; Exodus 13:13-22; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; and Deuteronomy 11:13-22, and writing them on strips of parchment, encased the folded strips in minute leatherboxes. These four boxes were set on edge and fastened upon one leather base, which was placed in the middle of the forehead, and held there by a string tied round the head with peculiar knots which had a mystical meaning" (See Coffman, p.362).
    - 5) The larger the phylactery the more attention it would generate for the wearer. The error of confusing the figurative for the literal is also made by many today, for example in the false doctrine of transubstantiation; also Revelation 20:1-5.
    - 6) They enlarge the borders of their garments. The Hebrews were required to make fringes on the borders of their garments and to put on the fringes "a ribband of blue" (Num. 15:37-39). This law

was intended to put them in remembrance of the entire Law which God had given them. This fringe would distinguish them from the other nations. The Pharisees had "improved" on the Mosaic edict by making the borders of their garments broader than others did, so that they might appear more religious than all others.

- 7) They love the uppermost rooms at feasts. "Rooms" here does not carry with it our modern meaning, but rather *reclining places*. "But all their works they do to be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called of men, Rabbi" (Matt. 23:5-7, ASV).
- d. The passages they used as justification for this practice was Exodus 13:1-16, Deuteronomy 6:19, and 11:13-21. The Lord never intended this statement to be understood as literal; that it was figurative is seen by the third part of the statement: it was to be a sign upon their hands, as a memorial between their eyes, and the Law was to be in their *mouth!*
- e. As the law was not intended literally to be in the mouth, so it was not intended to be on their hands and between their eyes. "The words are then used figuratively, as a proverbial expression employed to give emphasis to the injunction to bear this precept continually in mind, to be always mindful to observe it" (Keil, p.34). The reference to the law being in their mouths signifies the requirement God gave them to instruct their children and others in the law.
- f. The ordinance was to be observed by them during the month of Abib, from year to year, beginning when they took possession of the land of promise.

#### C. Exodus 13:11-16: Further Information given Regarding the Setting Apart of the Firstborn.

1. Verses 11-13: "And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males *shall be* the LORD'S. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."
  - a. The onset of this sanctification was to be when they enter Canaan. But further details are here given: it is limited to the firstborn males; it includes the people and their animals; this shall be observed in Canaan.
  - b. The sanctification indicated was that of a dedicated life and service to God. Compare: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2).
  - c. "This law is still further explained in chap. 22:29, where it is stated that the sacrificing was not to take place till the eighth day after birth; and in Deuteronomy 15:21,22, it is still further modified by the command, that an animal which had any fault, and was either blind or lame, was not to be sacrificed, but to be slain and eaten at home, like other edible animals" (Keil, p.35).
  - d. They were able to redeem (buy back) these firstborn. The price of a first-born donkey was a lamb; if they did not choose to buy him back, they were to slay it ("break its neck"). They were able to redeem their firstborn sons also (Ex. 34:20; Num. 3:46-47; 18:15-16). Their setting apart their firstborn and then buying him back would show their devotion to God, and would also help provide the necessary funds and animals for carrying out the other religious activities.
2. Verses 14-16: "And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt."
  - a. In time to come, after entering Canaan, the natural inquisitiveness of their children would raise

questions regarding why the firstborn were set apart; again, this would provide opportunity to instruct them in their glorious past, and what the Lord had done in their behalf.

- b. The purpose of this instruction was that each generation would be fully informed of the Lord's will, with sufficient information of what he had done for Israel to motivate their obedience.
- c. Notice:
  - 1) Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
  - 2) 2 Timothy 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."
  - 3) 2 Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
  - 4) Ephesians 6:4: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

D. Exodus 13:17-22: Israel Journeys to the Edge of the Wilderness.

1. Verses 17-19: "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: But God led the people about, *through* the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you."
  - a. NKJ: Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."
  - b. The shortest route to Canaan was in a northerly direction, but that would take them through the land of the Philistines. Critics claim that these war-like people did not move into Canaan until the 12th century B.C., but obviously there were some of them there at the time of the exodus. The divine writer should know; he was there, these unbelievers were not! After centuries of slavery, Israel was not prepared for war; God knew the disheartening effect a war would have on them; for this, and no doubt for the added purpose of further proving and developing them, he led them into the wilderness.
  - c. There were enemies in place in the land of the land of the Philistines. Most people want to avoid war, if conflict can be evaded. If Israel had been going directly into Canaan on the most direct route, they would have encountered trouble, and the return to Egypt might seem to be their best option.
    - 1) God foresaw this problem and for this and other reasons, chose to take them through the wilderness. It was necessary for them to go to Sinai since that part of their journey was already mandated: "And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (Exod. 3:12).
    - 2) Numbers 13:26-33: "And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there .... But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers,



- and so we were in their sight.”
- 3) Numbers 14:1: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.” The weak members of Israel did the very thing that God had just announced in our text.
  - d. The inspired writer shows that their departure from Egypt was not disorganized, even if it had been hastily arranged: They went up "harnessed" out of the land of Egypt. There is much disagreement among the translations on this word, but the usage of the same word in Numbers 32:30,32 and Deuteronomy 3:18 shows that it means "prepared for the march" (Keil, p.38).
  - e. They took with them the bones (the mummy) of Joseph, in keeping with his request in Genesis 50:25 (cf. Josh. 1:14; 4:12).
    - 1) Genesis 50:25: “And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.”
    - 2) Joshua 24:32: “And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.”
  - f. It appears from Acts 7:15-16 that the other patriarchs were also carried back to Canaan for burial: "So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor *the father of Sychem*" (Acts 7:15-16).
    - 1) Jacob was buried in Canaan soon after his death in Egypt. The statement implies that the remains of the twelve sons of Jacob were likewise transported back into Canaan. Joseph's body was taken there in the Exodus (Gen. 50:25-26; Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32).
    - 2) This verse speaks of the twelve sons of Jacob being transported to Canaan for burial; since Joseph's body was taken back by the Exodus, it appears that the bodies of his eleven brothers were likewise taken back at that time.
2. Verses 20-22: "And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people."
- a. They made their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham, locations which have not been clearly identified today. God led them by means of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. These were not different columns, but in the day they could see the pillar of cloud, and perhaps be shaded by it; at night they could see and follow the pillar of fire which would light their way. The Lord did not remove the pillar by night or day; he stayed with them for their guidance and protection.
  - b. Paul, says that the Lord was Christ: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). The Old Testament says that the manna ceased when they entered into Canaan where they could provide food for themselves (Josh. 5:12). It may be properly assumed that the pillar of fire and smoke stayed with them until that time also. The guidance of this pillar is used as the basis of a classic hymn, "Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah."
-

## Special Note on the Red Sea

Bible critics have always been unwilling to accept the Bible's plain affirmations regarding the miracles of God. They know that if they accept Bible miracles, if they are consistent, they must also accept the other information given therein, including the requirements of godly living. This they are unwilling to do. One of the greatest miracles in the Bible was the crossing of the Red Sea by Israel. But the unbelieving critic does not believe this happened as described in the Bible, thus he must come up with some means of explaining away the miraculous element. For generations they have asserted that the sea they crossed was not the Red Sea at all, but the "Sea of Reeds," basing their claim on the supposed meaning of the Hebrew word used in the name. Their theory has found its way into some Bible maps, being placed at various different locations.

In the July/August, 1984 issue of *Biblical Archeology Review*, an article was published which puts to rest for all time the theory about the "Reed Sea." The critical claim is that the "Sea of Reeds" was nothing more than a swampland, and thus no miraculous crossing was necessary. But the author of the article cited (Bernard Batto), examined the problem from all angles in his seven-page investigation. He showed that there is no authority at all for the "Reed Sea" concept, and that it is unquestionably false.

"Ever since Sir Alan Gardiner, a preeminent authority on hieroglyphics, announced his erroneous conclusion that the *Yam Sup* of the OT, by reason of its identification with an Egyptian word, p3TWF(y)m 'beyond dispute,' means *Reed Sea*, many of the translators of the Bible, even, have been deceived, leading to the adoption of this outrageous *translation* in such Versions as the RSV, the Jerusalem Bible, the New American Bible, the New English Bible, and with learned notes admitting it, in such Versions as the NIV... 'The Egyptian p3-twfy has nothing to do with *Yam Sup*.' It is impossible for the expression to mean 'sea of Reeds'... 'Yam Sup' means *Sea of the End*, or *Sea at the end of the world*.' The ancients, prior to 1500 B.C., believed that all of the great Southern Oceans, including even the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and both the Gulfs of Aqaba and Suez, were portions of the End Sea at the end of the world. Old maps may still be seen in libraries which give these names to those bodies of water decorated with drawings which carry the legend, 'Here be dragons, here be demons that devour men.' It is not surprising, therefore, that this ancient name would have been given to that body of water crossed by Israel, which most certainly was the Red Sea, and which was universally known to the people of that era as the End Sea. Here, again, is proof that Exodus was not written by priests in the 9th Century, but by Moses in the 15th.

"Batto also explored a dozen or so of the other occurrences of this expression, *Yam Sup*, in the OT, showing that there could not possibly be any other meaning than Red Sea, a fact tacitly recognized by all the *perverters* of scripture who, while rendering it Reed Sea for the place of Israel's crossing, revert to its obvious meaning everywhere else, for example, in 1 Kings 9:26, where we have, 'King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber near Elath on the shore of the *Yam Sup*! If the *Yam Sup* means Reed Sea in Exodus 13, then it means Reed Sea where Solomon launched his navy; but of course it means that *nowhere* in the word of God.

"We cannot leave this without pointing out how appropriate indeed that Israel should have been created, Pharaoh destroyed, and the forces of evil defeated at the *End Sea*. That was the END of slavery for Israel; it was the END of Pharaoh; it was the END of the oppression of God's people in Egypt; and the symbolism reaches all the way into the NT, where Christian baptism appears as the END of slavery to sin, the END of bondage to Satan; the END of guilt and shame; and the BEGINNING (the other END) of the new life in Christ!

"This breakthrough of archeological information is actually founded upon the archeological discovery that that key Egyptian word, p3-twfy(y) through further studies of the hieroglyphics on ancient Egyptian monuments, has been proved to be 'never a determinative for lake or water.' This simply means that it is linguistically *impossible* for it to modify *sea*" (Coffman, pp.177-179).

When all the facts relative to the case are known, the Bible is always, without exception, shown to be right about whatever it says! We may safely trust it!

---

## EXODUS 14

### A. Introduction.

1. The location of the crossing of the Red Sea has not been determined. Moses gives details of the site by identifying certain places, but these places are still unknown to modern research. The main body of the Red Sea is eliminated from consideration since it is about a mile deep and 150 miles wide, and crossing here would have put them in Arabia, not the wilderness of Sinai.
2. The place of crossing was somewhere along the extension of the Red Sea known as the Gulf of Suez, which likely extended further north than today, and which probably connected with Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes. This was not merely a swampland as Bible critics allege, but a genuine arm of the Red Sea, a formidable water barrier.
3. The Israelites thought it was impassible; Pharaoh thought they were trapped against it; it was deep enough to drown Pharaoh's army; the crossing was possible only by a divine act of God.
4. Psalm 77:17-20 indicates that the crossing was accompanied with a storm, thundering and lightening, and an earthquake: "The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron."
5. Reelfoot Lake in west Tennessee was formed by an earthquake; the Mississippi flowed backwards for a day or so, filling up the huge cavity. But this was the result of natural events. The Red Sea opened for Israel to cross by the supernatural powers of the Almighty!

### B. Exodus 14:1-9: Israel is Pursued by the Egyptian Army.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea."
  - a. An unusual command is given by God to Israel: they are to turn from their line of march and encamp near Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon (these places are unknown today, but were familiar to the Israelites). They were to set up camp by the sea.
  - b. This move would put them in impossible circumstances; they could not go forward, and they were cut off on the left and right hand by mountains, with the Egyptian chariots soon to hem them in from the rear. God was making sure that both the Israelites and Egyptians knew that it was Jehovah who would deliver them.
  - c. "All of the place names, not merely here, but in v. 9 as well, are impossible of any certain identification as to exactly *where* they were....Nevertheless, the strategy is clear enough. God deliberately ordered Moses to signal confusion and uncertainty to Pharaoh by changing directions and taking up a very vulnerable position 'by the sea' ....From the human viewpoint, it did appear that Israel was trapped, hemmed in by mountains on either side and a formidable arm of the Gulf of Suez in front of them; and Pharaoh would promptly supply the rest of the trap himself (so he thought) by moving in to their rear with a well-equipped army!" (Coffman, p.185).
2. Verses 3-4: "For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD. And they did so."
  - a. NKJ: For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." And they did so.
  - b. God foreknew that Pharaoh would learn of their predicament and would think he could recapture his slaves. "To be entangled in the land" and being "shut in by the wilderness" gives a good picture of the position of Israel. The Egyptians had enslaved them and had drowned many of their babies in the Nile; it was divine justice that their army should suffer a horrible end in the waters of the sea.

- c. By delivering Israel by his marvelous means, and by justly punishing the Egyptians, God would have the honor he properly deserved.
- d. Pulpit Commentary:
- 1) "Hitherto the march of the Israelites had been to the south-east. Another day's journey in this direction would have taken them beyond the limits of Egypt, into the desert region east of the Bitter Lakes, which was dry, treeless, and waterless. In this tract there would have been but scant nourishment for their flocks and herds, and absolutely no water for themselves, unless it had been obtained by miracle. God therefore changed the direction of their route from south-east to due south, and made them take a course by which they placed the Bitter Lakes on their left hand, and so remained within the limits of Egypt, in a district fairly well watered, but shut off from the wilderness by the Bitter Lakes and the northern prolongation of the Gulf of Suez, with which they were connected.
  - 2) "This route suited the immediate convenience of the host; and, having no suspicion of any hostile movement on the part of the Egyptians, they—not unnaturally—made no objection to it. It had, however, the disadvantage, in case of a hostile movement, of shutting them in between their assailants on the one hand, and the sea upon the other; and this circumstance seems to have led Pharaoh to make his pursuit."
3. Verse 5: "And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?"
- a. "Of their departure he could not be ignorant, because himself had given them liberty to depart: but the word *fled* here may be understood as implying that they had utterly left Egypt without any intention to return..." (Clarke, p.369). Clarke suggested further than Pharaoh had only given permission for them to go three days' journey into the wilderness to worship God, but this is not clearly stated in the text.
  - b. When Israel was well gone, the Egyptians began to sorely miss their labors, and came before Pharaoh crying over this tremendous loss. It would have devastated the Egyptian economy!
  - c. "The reaction of feeling was not confined to Pharaoh. His subjects participated in it. The loss of such a large body of labourers would be generally felt as a severe blow to the prosperity of the nation. It would affect all classes. The poor labourers might be benefited; but the employers of labour are the influential classes, and they would be injured. So 'Pharaoh's servants' were of one mind with their master, and they 'turned against' the Israelites. Why have we done this? In the retrospect, the afflictions which they had suffered did not seem so very great. They at any rate had survived them, and were not perhaps even seriously impoverished. Royal favour will find a way of making up any losses which court minions have suffered, out of the general taxation of the country. But in prospect, the loss of 600,000 (more or less skilled) labourers appeared a terrible thing. The official class was quite ready to make a strenuous effort to avert the loss." [Pulpit Commentary].
4. Verses 6-9: "And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand. But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon."
- a. Having his heart hardened again, Pharaoh prepared an army to pursue Israel. His army included 600 chosen (special, select) chariots, the proper number of commanders, along with horses, horsemen, and an army.
  - b. Some scholars claim there was no calvary in Egypt at the time, and that the horsemen referred to were those who rode in the chariots (however, 15:1 speaks of the "horse and his rider" being thrown into the sea). Pharaoh's host probably included calvary, chariots, and infantry.
- C. Exodus 14:10-18: Israel Quails Before the Egyptian Host, but God Prepares Their Salvation.
1. Verses 10-12: "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the

Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.”

- a. When they discovered the hopeless situation they were in with the enemy fast approaching their rear and being hemmed in on all other sides, Israel became filled with terror; they cried out to God and began to accuse Moses of having dealt with them with deceit.
  - b. They claimed they had not wanted to leave Egypt; they asked him if it was because there were no graves in Egypt that he led them into the wilderness to die!
  - c. Fields:
    - 1) “Probably the Israelites were too frightened to sense the almost humorous sarcasm in these words. No people in the world have ever been more preoccupied with the making of tombs and regular attention to the dead than the Egyptians. There are millions of tombs in Egypt. Even the pyramids were just tombs. Many tombs had an adjoining room where rituals were conducted daily for the feeding and care of the dead in their after-life. We have no record that the Israelites had spoken the exact words quoted in 14:11-12 in Egypt. However, the fearful spirit expressed by these words is quite similar to that expressed in Ex. 5:21. Possibly they had indeed uttered these words, even though we have no record of it....
    - 2) “The Israelites had been slaves too long to realize that death in freedom is preferable to existence in slavery. Young Christians facing tests soon after accepting Christ, may, like the Israelites, long for the lack of responsibility in the old life.”
  - d. Psalm 106:7-8: “Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.”
2. Verses 13-14: “And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”
    - a. Moses told them to dismiss their fear, and be quiet; they would find out that the Lord was going to fight their battle for them. Thus, hold your peace and see the salvation God will provide; as for the enemy, you shall see them no more for ever.
    - b. In our day, false teachers have tried to find justification for their "salvation by faith only" doctrine by appealing to this passage: "Stand still; you don't have to do anything at all; God will do everything necessary for your salvation!" But this passage offers no comfort to such a devil's doctrine; God would part the sea, but Israel still had an obligation: they had to step forward and walk through the sea, trusting God to keep the way open for their passage. If they had remained standing on the shore, they would not have been delivered! God did his part and they must do theirs.
    - c. It is interesting, in the light of the sectarian notions just noted, that Paul specifically mentioned the subject of baptism, in discussing Israel crossing the Red Sea: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:1-2).
      - 1) They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. *Baptism* literally means "an immersion," and has the figurative meaning of being "overwhelmed." As Israel passed through the midst of the sea, being hemmed in on each side by the two great walls of water, and above by the overshadowing cloud, they can accurately be described as having been baptized. They were covered up by the walls of water and cloud; and they were overwhelmed by these elements.
      - 2) By being thus enclosed, hidden from the sight of the Egyptians, and overwhelmed, they were baptized unto Moses. This was a figurative baptism; it was not identical to New Testament baptism, but it is a type of it.
      - 3) Some sectarian debaters in the past have argued that the Lord's church began in the days of Abraham, and in a feeble attempt to justify infant church membership, twist this passage to teach

infant baptism. They argued that all of the Israelites, including infants, experienced this baptism. But what proves too much, proves nothing. All of the Israelites passed through the sea and were thus baptized, but so also did all of the sheep and other animals they carried with them! If this episode proves the rightness of infant baptism for today, it also proves the rightness of baptizing animals today!

- 4) Other sectarian debaters have argued against the essentiality of baptism for the remission of sins, saying that the Israelites were saved by the blood of the passover lamb, and that the benefits of that blood were received prior to this "baptism." However, the blood of the passover lamb was not shed for all of Israel; it was intended to benefit only the firstborn! Israel escaped from Egypt only after they had crossed the sea; they were saved from the Egyptian army only after the crossing; and they sang their song of deliverance after they got safely to the other side (Ex. 15). Alien sinners are saved only after meeting the conditions of scriptural baptism.
  - a) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
  - b) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
  - c) 1 Peter 3:21: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."
- 5) All who were under bondage in Egypt were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and today, all who are under the bondage of sin must be baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27; John 8:34). Babies are not under the bondage of sin (Matt. 18:6; 19:14; Ezek. 28:15). All of the Israelites were under Egyptian bondage.

3. Verses 15-18: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."
  - a. Apparently Moses had been praying to God, for the Lord told him to give the order to Israel to go forward into the sea, between the walls of water. There is a time to pray and there is a time to act! They would not be saved by prayer only. Moses is told to stretch forth his staff over the waters that they be divided. The waters would be parted and Israel would be able to walk across the sea bed on dry ground!
  - b. The heart of Pharaoh would remain hardened so that God would be able to obtain the proper honor from them. He mentions Pharaoh, his host, chariots and horsemen as being the objects of the punishment he was about to bring to bear. This indicates that Pharaoh was to die along with all his men and horses in the sea.
  - c. Subsequent verses do not specifically say that Pharaoh was drowned, but this passage suggests that this was to be his fate. Even if the mummified body of this pharaoh exists, that does not preclude his being drowned in the sea, for the bodies of the Egyptians were seen by Israel upon the seashore. If his corpse had washed ashore, he could have been identified, if not by his body, then by his regal clothing.

D. Exodus 14:19-31: Israel is Delivered and the Egyptians are Drowned.

1. Verses 19-20: "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet

gave it light by night: and the one came not near the other all the night.:

- 2) NKJ: "And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night."
  - b. "In these few enigmatical words stands the record of one of the greatest events since the Great Deluge. No words were wasted. There's not a word about how the exodus began, or whether they moved in one massive body of people three miles wide, or if they went by hundreds, fifties, thousands, or tens of thousands....In these verses, we have (1) the positioning of the Angel of Jehovah *between* the two encampments, (2) the positioning of the *pillar* to correspond with that, indicating that the pillar was a visible manifestation of the *Angel of Jehovah*, and (3) the fact of darkness resting upon the Egyptians and light enabling the Israelites to go forward at night, suggesting that this was a night-time deliverance" (Coffman, p.191).
  - c. The text does not say that they crossed at night, but verses 24,27 indicate such. The text says that Israel had light from the cloud during the time that darkness was on the Egyptian camp. The effect of this pillar, which was commanded by the Angel, was to prevent the Egyptians from attacking Israel.
2. Verses 21-22: "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left."
  - a. Moses stretched forth his staff over the waters; the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind; he dried up the sea bed enabling Israel to cross on dry land; and the waters were parted. The east wind blew all that night, suggesting that several hours of preparation were necessary, or that it blew during the crossing.
  - b. The exact mechanical sequence is unclear, but it may be that the water was parted when Moses stretched forth his staff, and that the east wind dried up the sea bed; it may mean, however, that this sequence was started by Moses' stretching forth his staff, and that the wind both parted the water and dried up the sea bed.
  - c. Israel stepped out on faith, enduring the frightful time required to pass through the sea, with the walls of water on each side of them. We are not told how wide the partition was; it would have to be wider than a few feet in order for two or three million people, plus the great number of animals, to cross over in the space of a few hours, probably during the night.
3. Verses 23-25: "And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians."
  - a. NKJ: And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the Lord looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians."
  - b. As Israel progressed through the sea, the pillar of cloud/fire followed them. As they were given room to move, the Egyptians advanced into the sea, following their prey. On seeing such a sight as had unfolded before them, why did not the Egyptians flee? Could they not see that this was yet another miraculous act of God? Could it be that their vision was somewhat obscured so that they could not see the complete scene? Whatever the case was, they pursued Israel into the sea.
  - c. During the morning watch, the Lord looked upon the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud; he troubled them by causing the wheels of the chariots to come off; their progress was slowed considerably. Now they understood the situation: God was fighting for Israel and against Egypt. They decided too late that it was time to flee.

- 
- d. "In the morning watch. The 'morning watch' of the Hebrews at this period of their history lasted from 2 a.m. to sunrise. Sunrise in Egypt, early in April, would take place about a quarter to six" [Pulpit Commentary].
  - e. Fields:
    - 1) "They followed after the Israelites when they were mostly all across, if not indeed all completely across. They started across some time before the morning watch, about 2:00 a.m.
    - 2) "We doubt that the Egyptians even noticed the walls of water on either side. A fifteen-foot wall of water a half-mile away might not appear too threatening, especially at night when it was the dark, and more especially if your attention was diverted by lightning flashes and howling wind.
    - 3) "The Egyptian host surely had to be aware that the whole experience had very unusual features! First the dark cloud utterly blocked out their view for hours. Then the cloud moved from before them. And in the middle of the night they see the Israelites several miles away, almost all far across the sea. They surely recalled how the Israelites had been blocked by the sea a few hours before. They probably wondered how in the world the sea had been cleared before them!
    - 4) "Then there was that light from the cloud, lighting up the path, even though it was two o'clock in the morning! Besides that, a storm overhead began to flash lightning, and to boom thunder, and pour rain, while the wind blew violently. All of this was so unusual, even eerie, that we feel that if the LORD had not hardened their hearts, they would never have gone in after the Israelites."
  4. Verses 26-28: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them."
    - a. The Lord instructed Moses to stretch forth his hand (with the staff) over the sea again, and cause the waters to return to their normal position. When the morning appeared, the waters began to flow together again, trapping the Egyptians.
    - b. The waters covered their chariots, their horsemen, and the entire host: "*There remained not so much as one of them.*" This suggests that Pharaoh perished also.
    - c. Pulpit Commentary: "God here interposed a new difficulty. Moses was instructed to stretch out his rod once more, and undo his former work. At the appointed sign, the east wind ceased to blow .... the Red Sea waves came rushing on at unwonted speed. In vain the Egyptians fled. They were met by the advancing floods, which poured in on either side, overwhelming and covering up all those who had entered on the dangerous path."
    - d. If the walls of water began to close from the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, the ensuing clash of waters would have spewed the enemy host to the opposite shore, the side on which Israel had left the sea.
  5. Verses 29-31: "But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses."
    - a. Israel had been able to cross on dry ground, between the walls of water. Thus did God save them from the Egyptians. And Israel saw the dead Egyptians upon the shore.
    - b. The salvation of Israel here was a physical deliverance. This great experience made a very strong impression on Israel: they feared Jehovah and believed on him firmly. It seems very strange to us that their faith could be so short-lived, for before long, they were murmuring against Moses, and desiring to shun God and return to Egypt!
-



## **J.W. McGarvey's Examination of the Place Israel Crossed the Red Sea**

Our object in visiting Suez was to study the question of the crossing-place of the children of Israel; and for this purpose we gave ourselves two days there. Three theories have been advanced on this subject by explorers, the careful study of which had left my mind in uncertainty and confusion. Our consul at Cairo, Mr. Forman, of New York, who has been at Suez, told me that I would probably be worse confused after visiting the place than I was already; but I was resolved to fully test the matter, let the result be what it might.

One of these theories is, that the Red Sea, in the time of Moses, extended so far north as to connect with the Bitter Lakes,—a series of shallow lakes northwest of the present head of the sea, distant about 50 miles, and that the crossing occurred at the head of these lakes. Those who adopt this theory suppose that a heavy wind moving off shore at low tide carried the water out, leaving a dry beach on which Israel crossed over, and that, as Pharaoh and his host followed, the wind changed, the tide came in, and they were drowned.

The second theory adopts the same supposition in regard to the northward extension of the sea, and assumes that the crossing occurred a short distance above the present head of the sea, where there is a depression a mile or so wide, in which the miracle and the disaster might have taken place. Dr. Robinson, whose judgment I have learned to regard with the highest respect, adopted this view when he visited the place in 1838.

The third theory, and the one which was universal until the former two almost entirely supplanted it among Europeans and Americans, is that the crossing occurred several miles south of the present head of the sea, where the water is deep, and its width is from 8 to 10 miles.

I was determined that on this question, as on all others pertaining to sacred geography, the Bible should be my guide-book, and that I would accept no place as the one at which Moses crossed which fails to meet the requirements of the Scriptures. These requirements are as follows:

1. The place was so situated as to require Israel to turn from the direct route toward Canaan in order to reach it (Ex. xiv. 2).
  2. It was such that when Israel reached it they were “entangled in the land,” so that Pharaoh was encouraged to pursue them (xiv. 3).
  3. It was such that when Pharaoh overtook them there was no escape for them except by going through the sea (xiv. 10, 13, 16).
  4. It was such that in opening a passage the waters were divided, not driven away to one side, and that they were “a wall on the right hand and on the left” (xiv. 16, 21, 22, 29).
  5. The distance across was sufficient to allow all the 600 chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh to be within it at one time, and the water was deep enough to prevent the escape of a single person when the two walls of water rushed together (xiv. 7, 9, 28).
  6. The place was near enough to Ma’rah, now Huwar’ah, 33 miles below Suez, to allow Israel to march thither in three days (xv. 22, 23).
  7. It was where Israel, after crossing, could find an immediate supply of drinking water, so that they did not suffer for water till they came to Ma’rah (xv. 22, 23).
-

With these requirements before us, we may dismiss the first theory mentioned above at once; for, although in a slight degree it meets the first three requirements, it is utterly inconsistent with the other four. Indeed, it denies entirely the miraculous character of the crossing; and, if this event was not miraculous, it was nothing.

It required only my observations from the train in approaching Suez, and a few minutes spent on the flat roof of the hotel next morning, to satisfy me that the second theory is also untenable. I stood on the rear platform of the car (it was one built on the American model) for many miles as we approached the head of the sea, watching for the indications on this subject, and I searched for them carefully at Suez; but, although the supposition of a passage at or above Suez would meet in a good degree all the requirements of the text had there been enough water there, the absence of water is fatal to it. If Moses had been led by this route, he would have reached the head of the sea, and he would not have been required to make a detour of more than a mile to pass around it, Only on the supposition that the main body of this arm of the sea extended many miles above its present head can this theory be accepted; and this supposition is utterly void of historic evidence. Indeed, the historic evidence is in opposition to it. In order to be safe in our conclusions, we must take the sea as it is, without stretching it, and the Bible as it is, without mutilating it.

Our next task at Suez was to test the third and last theory, and to this we devoted our two days there. The first day we went down to Ay'un Musa (the Fountains of Moses), about eight miles below the head of the sea on the east side. We took one of the rude Ar'ab sailboats which abound in the harbor of Suez, for about half the distance, carrying in it, besides the four boatmen and ourselves, our guide, five donkeys, and two donkey drivers. After landing we rode one hour and a half on the donkeys, the drivers running behind to make them go and to guide them: the rider can do neither very easily. Mine was well gaited, and we had no little fun on the ride. The fountains lie 'about a mile from the seashore, and are seven in number. We dismounted at the largest one, took its dimensions, and ate our lunch in a rude building by its side intended for this use.

The fountain rises in the centre of an oblong inclosure, which has been made around it by building a *stone* wall some three or four feet high to keep out the sand. This wall is even with the ground outside, and the basin inclosed is 46 feet long, 36 feet wide at one end, and 27 feet at the other. The water forces itself up through soft mud in the centre, and with it rises a constant succession of gas-bubbles, which explode as they reach the surface. Through an opening in the wall at the north side the water flows away in a lively stream two feet wide and four inches deep. This stream is led through a garden of three or four acres and irrigates it. The garden is filled with a luxuriant growth of date-palms, acacia — and pomegranate — trees, and under these beds of garden vegetables and patches of wheat. Another fountain, which sends off no stream, helps to supply the water for irrigation. There are three such gardens standing in a line parallel to the seashore, and separated from each other only by pass-ways like roads. They are watered by five fountains, and constitute a most beautiful oasis in the midst of a perfectly barren desert. In the hands of a European of taste and means they could be made a little paradise for resort from the dirt and the heat of Suez.

All these fountains rise on top of a sandstone ridge, 15 or 20 feet above the beach which spreads between them and the sea, and nearly that high above the sand immediately east of them; yet they are 30 feet below the general level of the desert which stretches away to the southeast, and along which the Israelites continued their journey after crossing the sea.

We could see at a glance that this spot answers all the demands of the Scriptures as a landing-place for Israel after crossing. A gently ascending beach one mile wide, and stretching about five miles up and down the seashore, an abundant supply of water for their immediate use, and an easy march of three days to Ma'rah, only 25 miles distant, are the features it presents; whereas, but a short distance above, there is no sea to cross, and immediately below there is a perpendicular shore at least 50 feet high. Looking directly across the sea, we saw plainly the gap in the mountains on that side suitable for Israel's approach to the shore, and we determined to explore it, the next day.

---

A range of mountains called Jebel Ata'kah presents an almost perpendicular wall on the west side of the sea, beginning at its head, and stretching along the shore about eight or nine miles. Farther down the shore there rises the high and dark wall of another range, called Jebel Abu Duraj. Between these there is a gap, and for this gap we started in our Arabian boat the next morning. A pleasant breeze was blowing, making the temperature delightful, but it was a contrary wind, compelling us to sail in a zig-zag, and making our progress very slow. As we approached the southeastern extremity of the Ata'kah bluffs, we discovered that a low sand-beach, stretching out like a cape two or three miles into the sea, lay in our way. Our boatmen said that they were afraid to pass around it, on account of the heavy waves then rolling in the open sea beyond, and that it was only half a mile across it, so we landed and struck out afoot. Instead of half a mile, we found it two miles across the beach. We also found that, though we had now come abreast of the hill which had appeared to be the last of the Ata-kah range, another had come into view beyond it and apparently about a mile away. After taking lunch we struck out for it, but found it three miles away instead of one, and we found on reaching it that instead of being a hill about 50 feet high, as it at first appeared, it was at least 300 feet high, and its front was almost perpendicular. We had not yet learned to estimate distances and heights in this clear atmosphere by the eye.

Though somewhat fatigued we clambered to the top of this cliff, and found that, though we had not even yet reached the terminus of this mountain range, the hills beyond grew rapidly lower and lower, and there was unmistakable evidence of a valley several miles wide between it and the mountains below. Here, then, was the valley by which Israel is supposed to have descended between the two mountain ranges to the seashore, and the entire scene of the crossing—meeting in the minutest particular all the requirements of the Scriptures—lay in full view at our feet. About three miles to the south of us, and a little west, was the mouth of the valley, probably three miles wide. On reaching the sea through that pass, Israel could not turn to the right because of the Abu Duraj Mountains in that direction, but to the left of a smooth beach, almost as smooth as a floor and gently sloping to the sea, opened a line of march two miles wide and diverging about 30 degrees from their former course. When their marching column had stretched out nine miles along this beach, its front rank found its progress checked by the body of water, four miles across, over which we had sailed in the morning. Here, then, they camped beside the sea, as the Lord had commanded, with the sea on their right and a mountain-wall on their left, the sea also passing around their front and meeting the mountain-wall in front of their left flank. While thus encamped, Pharaoh's host came down the mountain-pass behind them; the cloudy pillar stretched itself across the pass in their front, hiding Israel from the Egyptians, while it spread itself over Israel and the sea, a canopy of light. The sea was opened from the Abu Duraj Mountains on the southwest to the projecting beach on the northeast, a width of about five miles, and the entire column of the host of Israel marched by a flank movement directly across the dried bed of the sea. The Fountains of Moses, distinctly in view from our hill-top, are nearly directly opposite the centre of this line of march, and the depth of the water before us, according to the British and French soundings quoted by Baedeker in his guide-book, varies from 9 to 16 fathoms in the midst of the sea. On both sides the approach to this depth is gradual—as we can testify from having taken a delightful bath in the water on both sides during the two hot days of our excursion—and the distance across was about 8 miles for the head of the column, and 10 or 12 for the rear.

I came down from our hill-top with my mind at rest on the subject of the crossing-place, and I felt well repaid already for the time and money invested in my journey. We walked to the seashore at a right angle to the line of our former walk, and then started for our boat. I had directed our boatmen to come around the beach as far as they could to meet us, but they had not moved the boat from where we left it. I got back to it leg-weary, foot-sore, and almost ready to drop on the sand. Estimating the distance by my pace and the time occupied, as I had learned to do with great accuracy by my walk of a mile and a half to college every morning, we had walked since noon *twelve miles*, and it was now growing dark. I reached the shore near the boat last of all our company, and found that the ebbing of the tide had compelled the boatmen to withdraw their vessel a hundred yards from the shore. I thought I would have to wade through the shallow water to it, but, the first thing I knew, one of the Arabs went behind me, stuck his head between my legs, and, lifting me up astride of the back of his neck, walked to the boat with me, turned around, and seated me on it. The wind had fallen to a gentle breeze; we had drunk up, several hours previously, all the water which we had brought with us from the hotel; we had a burning thirst, and at least two hours of slow sailing were before us. My feet were almost blistered and very painful. I pulled off my boots, and, sitting on the side of the boat, hung my feet in the cool salt water as we sailed along. The effect was almost

magical. I felt refreshed all over; the soreness soon passed away; my thirst was partially quenched; and after enjoying this bath about half an hour I stretched myself on my back, looked up at the stars, thought of home, listened to the sigh of the wind around the edge of the sail and the ripple of the water as it broke past the rudder, and fell into a sweet sleep. I was awakened by the mutterings of one of the Mussulmans going through his evening prayer, and found that we were passing the ships in the harbor, and were nearly home, Thus ended the most toilsome, but the most satisfactory day of our wanderings thus far. [McGarvey's *Lands of the Bible*].

---

## EXODUS 15

### A. Introduction.

1. "For those who might be interested in the critical efforts to fragment this chapter and assign it to various times and authors, we call attention to the magnificent and monumental work of Oswald T. Allis, which is a thorough and devastating refutation of the whole sprawling and contradictory web-work of the so-called 'higher criticism' which, especially during this century, has been directed against the Holy Bible... 'It would be a simple matter to break a crystal ball into a number of fragments and then to fill a volume with an elaborate description and discussion of the marked differences in the fragments thus obtained, and to argue that these fragments all came from different globes. The conclusive refutation would be the proof that when fitted together they form once more a single globe. Thus, it is the unity and harmony of the Biblical narratives as they appear in the Scriptures which is the best refutation of the theory that these self-consistent narratives have resulted from the combining of several more or less diverse and contradictory sources'" (Coffman, p.200, quoting from *The Five Books of Moses*, p.120).
2. "In the song of praise which Moses and the children of Israel sang at the Red Sea, in celebration of the wonderful works of Jehovah, the congregation of Israel commemorated the fact of its deliverance and its exaltation into the nation of God. By their glorious deliverance from the slave-house of Egypt, Jehovah had practically exalted the seed of Abraham into His own nation; and in the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, He had glorified Himself as God of the gods and King of the heathen, whom no power on earth could defy with impunity" (Keil, pp.49f).

### B. Exodus 15:1-19: The Song of Moses.

1. Verse 1: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."
  - a. The song which Moses led Israel in singing unto God is one comprised entirely of praise and adoration of the Almighty. Moses is the author of this inspired song. "The song is composed of three gradually increasing strophes, each of which commences with the praise of Jehovah, and ends with a description of the overthrow of the Egyptian host (vers. 2-5, 6-10, 11-18) (Keil, p.50). After affirming the glorious triumph of God over Egypt, Moses states that he had thrown the horse and his rider into the sea.
  - b. "On the incomplete and uncertain determination by archaeologists that the Egyptians had no cavalry, and that soldiers did not ride horseback, this is alleged by some to be an anachronism, despite the fact of its being vigorously disputed by eminent Egyptologists" (Coffman, p.202).
2. Verse 2: "The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him."
  - a. NKJ: "The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him."
  - b. God is proclaimed to be the source of their strength and the object of their song. They speak of preparing for him a habitation, or as the ASV gives it, "This is my God, and I will praise him." "...It was so natural a thing that, after the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, they should turn their eyes to Canaan, and, looking forward with certainty to the possession of the promised land, should anticipate with believing confidence the foundation of a sanctuary there, in which their God would dwell with them..." (Keil, pp.50f).
  - c. God is said to be "my father's God"—a reference to Abraham, the father of the nation. "Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God" (Ex. 3:6).
3. Verse 3: "The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD *is* his name."
  - a. God is a Warrior; he is able and willing to fight against his enemies; no power on earth can successfully wage war against him.
    - 1) 2 Corinthians 10:4: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)."

- 2) Ephesians 6:10-17: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
- b. Israel developed a misunderstanding of the nature of the God's eventual plan: they thought that the Messiah would be a great military leader who would conquer their enemies and subjugate them to their nation.
- c. But they failed to see the great purpose of God, that he intended to bless all the families of earth through the seed of Abraham.
- 1) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
- 2) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
- 3) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
4. Verses 4-5: "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone."
- a. God was able to destroy Pharaoh's army, including his chariots, his fighting men, and his captains. "On such an expedition it is likely that the principal Egyptian nobility accompanied their king, and that the overthrow they met with here had reduced Egypt to the lowest extremity. Had the Israelites been intent on plunder, or had Moses been influenced by a spirit of ambition, how easily might both have gratified themselves, as, had they returned, they might have soon overrun and subjugated the whole land" (Clarke, p.375).
- b. The Egyptians are pictured as a stone sinking to the bottom. But Israel, though the men were strong, were not trained soldiers. The army sent against them had been destroyed; it was not any strength or large numbers on the part of Israel that overpowered the enemy; it was the limitless power of God.
5. Verses 6-10: "Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters."
- a. "Jehovah had not only proved Himself to be a true man of war in destroying the Egyptians, but also as the glorious and strong one, who overthrows His enemies at the very moment when they think they are able to destroy His people" (Keil, p.52).
- b. God's victory over Egypt is pictured as fire which consumed them as stubble. The east wind which he sent to help Israel to cross the sea is described as a blast from his nostrils. The wind divided the waters and caused them to stand upright. The enemy was filled with overconfidence, but God ruined their plans and destroyed them in the sea.
- c. Regarding the east wind: "Dry, parching, and blighting, as blowing from over burning deserts. The E. wind was what blasted the grain in Pharaoh's dream; strictly the S.E. wind (*chamsin*) is what is most hurtful in Egypt to animals and vegetation. While it lasts doors and windows are shut; but the

- fine dust penetrates everywhere, wooden vessels warp and crack, the thermometer suddenly rises, the grass withers (Ukert in Hengstenberg on Egypt and the Books of Moses). Israel's passage through the Red Sea after the passover was just the time of year when the "strong E. wind" from the Red Sea blows, exactly as the sacred narrative records (Exo. 14:21)" [Fausset Dictionary].
6. Verse 11: "Who *is* like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who *is* like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders?"
    - a. The so-called gods conceived and produced by humanity are non-entities; they have no being or power. There is none like unto God. He is glorious in his holiness. He is fearful in praise: "Such glorious holiness cannot be approached without the deepest reverence and fear..." (Clarke, p.376). His wonders are just that—wondrous.
    - b. "Every part of the work is wonderful not only *miracles*, which imply an inversion or suspension of the laws of nature, but every part of nature itself. Who can conceive how a single blade of grass is formed; or how earth, air, and water become consolidated in the body of an oak? And who can comprehend how the different tribes of plants and animals are preserved, in all the distinctive characteristics of their respective natures?" (ibid.).
  7. Verses 12-16: "Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people *which* thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided *them* in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, *and* be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased."
    - a. God caused the earth to swallow the Egyptians. The seas are part of the earth, thus the statement is correct. Jonah 2:6 says that the "earth with her bars was about me **for ever**." Moses is employing poetic language. The holy habitation is most likely that of Canaan, the land of promise, where Israel was to serve and worship her God (cf. verse 17). They had not yet arrived, but their ultimate success was assured. God can speak of things yet in the future as having already occurred.
    - b. Compare: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6-7).
    - c. The effect of Israel's coming into the land, on the inhabitants of Canaan, is predicted. "And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Josh. 2:8-11).
  8. Verses 17-21: "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in* the place, O LORD, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in, *in* the Sanctuary, O Lord, *which* thy hands have established. The LORD shall reign for ever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."
    - a. God would give them a fixed place in which to live. During the days of the patriarchs they were wanderers, merely sojourning in the land. They moved into Egypt by the sufferance of the Egyptians. But God was now bringing them into their own land. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and

confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned" (Heb. 11:13-15).

- b. Miriam is called a prophetess. Other prophetesses are Deborah (Judg. 4:4); Huldah (2 Kings 22:14); Nodiah, a false prophetess (Neh. 6:14); Isaiah's wife (Isa. 8:3).
- c. "It is very likely that Miriam was inspired by the Spirit of God to instruct the Hebrew women, as Moses and Aaron were to instruct the men; and when she and her brother Aaron sought to share in the government of the people with Moses, we find her laying claim to the prophetic influence, Num. 12:2" (Clarke, p.377).
  - 1) Numbers 12:2: "And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it."
  - 2) Notice that Miriam played the timbrel and she and the women danced. There is no authority in this episode for us today to dance or play a mechanical instrument of music in our worship of God. Dancing was closely connected with the worship of idols and with drunkenness and immorality.

### C. Exodus 15:22-27: Israel Continues Her Journey.

1. Verse 22: "So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water."
  - a. Leaving the Red Sea, Moses led Israel into the wilderness of Shur. They did not find water for three days, thus an emergency situation was at hand. Shur is the name "given to the tract of desert which separates Egypt from Palestine, and also from the more elevated parts of the desert of Arabia, and stretches from the Mediterranean to the head of the Arabian Gulf or Red Sea, and thence along the eastern shore of the sea to the neighbourhood of the Wady Gharandel" (Keil, p.57).
  - b. Shur:
    - 1) "Outside the eastern border of Egypt. Meaning 'a wall.' The strip of desert which skirts the wall-like range of jebel er Rahah (E. of Suez, the continuation of the range jebel et Tih northward toward the Mediterranean, still called by the Arabs jebel es Sur) as far S. as wady Gharandel. Hagar fleeing from Abraham, then in southern Palestine, reached a fountain "in the way to Shur" (Gen 16:7). She was probably making for her country Egypt by the inland caravan route, the way by Star over jebel er Rahah as distinguished from the coast road by el Arish.
    - 2) "Abraham settled for a time between the two deserts of Kadesh and Shur, and finally sojourned at Gerar (Gen 20:1). In Gen 25:18 Shur is defined to be 'before (i.e. E. of) Egypt.' So 1 Sam 15:7; 27:8; Josephus (Ant. 6:7) makes it Pelusium, near the Nile's mouth; others the N.E. part of the wilderness of Paran, now al Jifar. Gesenius makes Shur the modern Suez. Israel entered 'the wilderness of Shur' when they had crossed the Red Sea (Ex 15:22-23).
    - 3) "The wilderness of Shur is the whole district between the N.E. frontier of Egypt and Palestine, Shur being derived from the Egyptian Khar (occurring in a papyrus of the 19 th dynasty), Kh and Sh being interchanged. In Num 33:8 the special designation occurs, 'the wilderness of Etham' (at the northern extremity of the Bitter Lakes)" [Fausset's Bible Dictionary, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1998 by Biblesoft].
      - a) Numbers 33:6: "And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which *is* in the edge of the wilderness."
      - b) Exodus 13:20: "And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness."
  - c. Verses 23-24: "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"
    - 1) The Israelites began to panic after having found no water for three days, and reaching the waters of Marah only to find the water undrinkable. Instead of humbly asking for the Lord's help, they began to murmur against God's appointed leader, Moses.
    - 2) "Just as trials in the Christian life come early, this distressing episode followed very quickly upon the triumphant rejoicing in the Song of Moses. Three days earlier they were indeed flying high:



- delivered from slavery, their foes drowned in the sea, they were already anticipating the entry into the land of Canaan; and then, they ran out of water! When they found water, it was too bitter to drink...Did they call a council, resort to prayer, appoint a committee to look for water, or ever attempt to dig a well, or call a prayer meeting to pray for rain?...They **murmured!**" (Coffman, p.212).
- 3) Keil reports that in his day the first water found as one travels from the Red Sea toward Sinai is about 33 miles from the sea. "It is now a basin of 6 or 8 feet in diameter, with two feet of water in it, but so disagreeably bitter and salty, that the Bedouins consider it the worst water in the whole neighbourhood..." (pp.57f). It would require about three days for the company to cover that distance.
- d. Verses 25-27: "And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, *which* when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the LORD that healeth thee. And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters."
- 1) Moses interceded for them; God provided a special tree which (miraculously) made the water potable. God tested them; he gave them instructions to follow; he would protect them from the diseases which the Egyptians had suffered.
  - 2) They went on to Elim, finding 12 wells of water and 70 palm trees. During the last century there were still 9 wells there, and more than 2000 palm trees.
- e. Fields:
- 1) "Moses received the instructions to cast in the tree as an answer to his cry (prayer) to the LORD. We admire Moses' action of turning to prayer, rather than to rebuke and contention with the unreasonable people. The fact that the LORD showed Moses the tree was God's method of teaching Israel that they constantly needed divine guidance and instruction. This awareness of their need for instruction prepared the people spiritually for their acceptance of the law at Mt. Sinai.
  - 2) "This experience at Marah was a testing for Israel. There God proved them. Similarly he tested them again soon after this by the manna (16:4), as to whether they would walk in his law (torah) or not. At Marah God made for them a statute (or law) and an ordinance (or judgment). Possibly the words of God in 1526 constitute the law and ordinance....
  - 3) "They camped there by the waters from twelve springs, in an area graced by seventy palm trees. The specific details about these numbers sound like the record of an eyewitness. It is about seven miles from Marah to Elim, an easy day's journey. S. C. Bartlett found much shrubbery between Marah and Elim. Elim is generally considered to be the Wady Gharandel, This wady (or winter-flowing brook channel) has water issuing from it in several spots, forming brisk rivulets, flowing several barrels a minute. Several considerable pools of water overgrown with rushes lie by the wady channel. The water of Elim is as good as that of the Nile, and nowhere in the Sinai peninsula, except in the wadi Feiran, is it so abundant."
-

## EXODUS 16

### A. Exodus 16:1-3: The Israelites Murmur Against Moses and Aaron.

1. Verse 1: "And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt."
  - a. Numbers 33:10-11 shows that they camped by the Red Sea after they removed from Elim: "And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red sea. And they removed from the Red sea, and encamped in the wilderness of Sin."
  - b. The present account omits that stop-over, probably because nothing significant took place there, and brings them into the wilderness of Sin. This area is placed by the author as being between Elim and Sinai. There is no connection between the English word sin and the name of this wilderness; it is related in form to Sinai, and may have been so-named because of its proximity to that renowned mountain. They left Egypt on the 15th day of the month and arrived here on the 15th day of the second month, apparently thirty days later. Coffman takes the text to mean that it was six weeks after leaving Egypt, the middle of the second month of travel.
2. Verses 2-3: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."
  - a. The entire congregation was moved to complain against Moses and Aaron because of a shortage of food. If they had taken the direct route into Canaan, barring any conflict with the Philistines, they likely could have made it there on the food they had, plus the food they could have taken from the land. But here they were, in a deserted and barren wilderness, and without food. They had earlier complained on two occasions.
  - b. Exodus 14:10-12: "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."
  - c. Exodus 15:24: "And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"
  - d. They were facing a genuine hardship for there was not food enough to feed such a great multitude. Freedom does not come without cost. From their description of the flesh pots, etc., it appears that they were well-fed as slaves. But when we face hardships and discouragements, former conditions appear in a better light; it is easy to overlook the former difficulties and remember only the good things. They conveniently forgot the miracles God wrought in their behalf, and accused Moses and Aaron with having brought them into the desert to starve them to death!

### B. Exodus 16:4-8: God Promises to Feed Israel.

1. Verse 4: "Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."
  - a. God's dealings with mankind have been complex. Not only did he intend to feed the Israelites by giving them bread from heaven, but he also used this procedure as background for a great spiritual lesson taught by Jesus:
  - b. Compare: "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him,

Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves" (John 6:29-43).

- c. The manna given in the wilderness was a type of the true bread from heaven, God's Son. Some scholars try to explain away the miracle of the manna, or at least lessen its power, by saying it was the natural produce of certain vegetation in the wilderness. But in this first promise about it, God said he would cause it to rain down from heaven. If it had been produced naturally the people would not have been dumbfounded about what it was. And it would not have made a sudden appearance or ceased abruptly when they came to Canaan (vs. 35).
  - d. The similarities between the manna and Christ are striking:
    - 1) Both came from heaven.
    - 2) They each gave life.
    - 3) They represented the only hope available.
    - 4) They both were meant for all.
    - 5) Manna was not at first recognized by Israel and Christ was not known by them.
    - 6) The manna represented a test for Israel just as Christ represents a test for all men.
  - e. The Lord said that he would provide the bread which they would gather daily at a certain rate, and that this would be a test for them.
    - 1) Deuteronomy 8:2-3: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."
    - 2) Deuteronomy 8:16-17: "Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth."
  - f. A test was also involved in his allowing them to go hungry. They should have plainly seen that they must trust God for their provisions of food; they murmured instead. God humbled them by letting them suffer hunger, and he further tried them by teaching them the importance of trusting him. They had to depend on the Lord for their very lives and everything they needed. Compare: "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mt. 6:11).
2. Verses 5-8: "And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare *that* which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what *are* we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, *This shall be*, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what *are* we? your murmurings *are* not against us, but against the LORD."
    - a. On the sixth day, God would provide twice as much manna as on the preceding five days. This arrangement was necessary because on the seventh, no manna would be given. God was preparing them for the law of the Sabbath which was soon to be given.
-

- b. Moses and Aaron told the people that they would see evidence that it was the Lord who brought them out of Egypt, and not Moses and Aaron, as they had charged in the complaint of verse one. In the evening God would demonstrate it, and then in the morning when they would see a manifestation of his glory. In the evening God would give them flesh to eat, in the form of quails.
- c. The presentation of God's glory before them was because of their complaint. God had heard their murmuring, and waging to impress them with the wickedness of their distrust. Moses pointed out to them that when they complained against him and Aaron, they were really doing so against God. He affirmed that he and his brother were nothing; they were not worthy of the complaint since it was not they who performed the miracles to obtain Israel's release, but God.
- d. Christians often make the same mistake by murmuring against elders and preachers, never realizing that in doing so they are addressing their complaints against God who appointed them to the work they are doing. When one rejects a godly elder or preacher who is doing the very best he can do, God is the one who is being rejected, just as much so as was the case when Israel demanded that Samuel appoint a king for them (1 Sam. 8).
- e. Compare: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16).

C. Exodus 16:9-15: The Glory of God is Manifested.

1. Verses 9-12: "And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God."
  - a. Moses instructs Aaron to tell the people to come near before the Lord. God not only hears prayers, he also hears murmurings, and in this instance, he manifested his glory for the purpose of impressing them with the gravity of their rebellious attitude. The glory was shown in the cloud, evidently the pillar of cloud.
  - b. God spoke to Moses, stating the fact that he had heard their murmuring, and that he was going to provide them with food, in the evening and morning; the purpose was that they might know that he is the Lord their God.
  - c. Verses 13-15: "And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there lay* a small round thing, *as* small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, *It is* manna: for they wist not what it *was*. And Moses said unto them, *This is* the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat."
    - 1) NKJ: So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground. So when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat."
    - 2) As promised, quails were brought into the camp in the evening—by a miraculous work. On another occasion, God brought quails upon their camp, but as a punishment: "And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let *them* fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits *high* upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all *that* night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread *them* all abroad for themselves round about the camp. And while the flesh *was* yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague" (Num. 11:31-33).
  - d. In the morning a dew was on the ground, and when it evaporated, the manna was seen upon the ground. It is described as a small round item, as the hoar frost. So strange was it that they asked one

another about it. The marginal rendering expresses the clause (It is manna) in the form of a question: "What is it."

- e. We are told elsewhere that this was something new:
  - 1) Deuteronomy 8:3: "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."
  - 2) Deuteronomy 8:13: "And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied."
- f. It also appears that there was never any more of it to be obtained since a pot of manna was preserved in the ark of the covenant. "What is it" became the name of the manna.
- g. Coffman gives the following points of comparison between manna and Christ (p.219):
  - 1) Both were from heaven, not earth.
  - 2) Both must be gathered early (Christ needs to be heeded early in life).
  - 3) Must be gathered daily.
  - 4) One cannot store up enough gospel for the future.
  - 5) If the manna was hoarded, it spoiled; we must spread the gospel to keep it ourselves.

#### D. Exodus 16:16-21: Instructions About Gathering the Manna.

1. Verses 16-18: "This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, *according to* the number of your persons; take ye every man for *them* which *are* in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did mete *it* with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating."
  - a. Each man was to gather enough for all who resided in his tent, an omer for each one. When they gathered, some got more than others, but when it was meted out with an omer, he that had picked up the most had none left over, and they who had gathered the least did no lack.
  - b. "Probably every man gathered as much as he could; and then when brought home and measured by an omer, if he had a surplus, it went to supply the wants of some other family that had not been able to collect a sufficiency, the family being large, and the time in which the manna might be gathered, before the heat of the day, not being sufficient to collect enough for so numerous a household, several of whom might be so confined as not to be able to collect for themselves" (Clarke, p.385).
  - c. This is used in 2 Corinthians 8:14-15 to teach the need for sharing our bounty with other Christians: "But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack."
  - d. Verses 19-21: "And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted."
    - 1) Moses told them that they are not to leave any until the following morning. Notwithstanding his instructions, some of them tried to save it up for future use, thus demonstrating their distrust in the divine directive, and their greed.
    - 2) God provided the manna daily, partly as a means of testing their faith in him; by trying to hoard it up, they manifested their lack of trust in his ability to provide. By trying to save it, they lost it, for it bred worms and developed a bad odor. It had to be gathered quickly for when the sun grew hot, it melted.

#### E. Exodus 16:22-31: Instructions Regarding the Sabbath Day.

1. Verses 22-26: "And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This *is that* which the LORD hath said, To morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake *that*

which ye will bake *to day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day *is* a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the sabbath, in it there shall be none."

- a. On the sixth day of the week, they gathered twice as much, enough for two days. This was done in order to observe the rest of the following day. They had to be told about the sabbath and its observance; they had never kept it before.
- b. The Lord was giving them early training just as Christ gave advance instruction regarding things to be practiced in the church: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:15-17).
- c. Jamieson:
  - 1) "On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread. The people did so of their own accord, judging from the unusual quantity that had fallen that it was a provision for the Sabbath; and their conduct can be accounted for on no other hypothesis than that of its being a human existing institution. The announcement (Ex 16:5) had been privately made to Moses; and there is no reason to believe that it had been communicated either to the people or to the rulers before the sixth day.
  - 2) "And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. Since the gathering of a double quantity had been so general, the attention of the elders or princes in the various tribes was directed to the circumstance; and whether they regarded this accumulation of manna as a violation of the divine injunction, or from having contracted Egyptian habits, they had become so indifferent to Sabbath desecration as to have been anticipating a gathering of food as usual on the seventh, they resolved in a body to lay the matter before the leader.
  - 3) "He said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, ... The conduct of the people met the full approval and sanction of Moses, who now announced the promise which had been made to him (Ex 16:5). Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath. This is just the language which would naturally be employed by one who wished to remind his hearers of the morrow being a season of periodical cessation from their ordinary employments."
- d. The word "rest" means "cessation" (Young's Concordance). They were to prepare the manna in their normal ways—to be eaten on the day of rest. It would keep on the sabbath!
- e. Verses 27-31: "And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day. And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it *was* like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with honey."
  - 1) Some people will not take heed even to the clearest of instructions. Some of them went looking for the manna on the sabbath, and found none.
  - 2) They called it manna; it was like coriander seed (white); it tasted like wafers made with honey (in its uncooked state); when cooked it was like fresh oil: "And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium. And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil" (Num. 11:7-8).
- f. Coffman on this section:
  - 1) There is no sabbath commandment in Genesis. Some cite Genesis 29:7 as such, but "sabbath" is not in the passage. The very first occurrence of the word "sabbath" in the entire Bible is right here in Exodus 16:23.[26]

- 2) Furthermore, in this passage, the sabbath is not introduced as The Sabbath, but merely as a rest. Misunderstanding of this has come about because of an unfortunate rendition in the King James Version, which has "The rest of thy Holy Sabbath." Rawlinson cited the inaccuracy of this rendition, pointing out that, "the absence of the article is a strong indication that the idea was new." [27]
- 3) God revealed his sabbath, not to Adam, nor to anyone on the other side of the Flood, nor to anyone ever born upon earth before Moses, for the prophet of God stated that "God revealed His holy sabbath through Moses (Nehemiah 9:13-14).
- 4) Furthermore, the very first revelation of it was "in the wilderness," as we have it in this chapter. Ezekiel wrote: "I (God) brought them into the wilderness ... and gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between me and them" (Exodus 20:10-12). The sabbath was never a sign between God and all people, but a sign between God and Israel (Exodus 31:17). The reason assigned by God for keeping the sabbath was not the prior existence of the institution, but the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deuteronomy 5:15).
- 5) The prophet Amos foretold that the sabbath would be "gone" when God caused the sun to go down at noon and the earth to be darkened on a clear day (Amos 8:9).
- 6) Paul categorically declared that the sabbath was "nailed" to the cross of Christ (Colossians 2:14). The very name "sabbath" is Jewish to the core, deriving from the Hebrew word [*shabbath*], meaning "rest." [28] This would never have been the case if the sabbath had derived from some pre-Mosaic period.
- 7) Therefore, in the light of the Word of God, those who find a pre-Mosaic sabbath institution in this chapter are finding something that definitely is NOT in it. As Ralph Langley put it, "The origin of the sabbath is datable to the wilderness period, and in particular to the manna-miracle." [29]

F. Exodus 16:32-36: Instructions About Preserving a Pot of Manna for Later People to See.

1. Verses 32-34: "And Moses said, This *is* the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept."
  - a. Measures:
    - 1) Omer: "A dry measure, the tenth of an ephah, equal to about 7 ½ pints" [ISBE, Biblesoft].
    - 2) Ephah: "A dry measure of about one bushel capacity. It corresponds to the bath in liquid measure and was the standard for measuring grain and similar articles since it is classed with balances and weights (Lev. 19:36; Amos 8:5) in the injunctions regarding just dealing in trade. In Zech 5:6-10 it is used for the utensil itself" [ibid.].
  - b. The pot of manna would encourage trust and faithfulness in future generations. This pot of manna was later stored in the ark of the covenant (Heb. 9:4): "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant."
  - c. "The mere fact of such a multitude being fed for forty years in the wilderness, where no food of any kind is to be obtained, will show the utter impossibility of their subsisting on a natural production of the kind and quantity as this tarfa gum; and as if for the purpose of removing all such groundless speculations, Aaron was commanded to put a sample of it in a pot—a golden pot (Heb 9:4)—to be laid before the Testimony, to be kept for future generations, that they might see the bread on which the Lord fed their fathers in the wilderness. But we have the bread of which that was merely typical (1 Cor 10:3; John 6:32)" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database].
  - d. Verses 35-36: "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Now an omer *is* the tenth *part* of an ephah."
    - 1) The manna ceased when they came to the borders of Canaan: "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna

- any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year" (Josh. 5:12).
- 2) God gave them what they could not provide for themselves. This is expressed in the past tense, as if the manna had already ceased: Either Moses wrote it in anticipation of its ceasing or it was part of what Joshua was inspired to include in the divine record: "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD" (Josh. 24:26).
-



### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES IN THE BIBLE

#### Dry Capacity

Measure	System Equivalent	Approx. Metric Equivalents	Approx. U.S. Equivalents
log	1/4 Kab	0.33 l	20 ½ cu. in.
kab	4 logs	1.2 l	73 cu. in.
omer	7 logs, 1 4/5 kabs	2.4 l	146 ½ cu. in.
seah	3 1/3 omers, 6 kabs	7.3 l	1/4 cu. ft.
ephah	10 omers, 3 seahs	22 l	3/4 cu. ft.
lethech	15 seahs, 5 ephahs	110 l	3 3/4 cu. ft.
homer	10 ephahs, 2 lethech	220 l	7 3/4 cu. ft.

-----  
 Excerpted from The Complete Multimedia Bible based on the King James Version  
 Copyright ©) 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc.

### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES IN THE BIBLE

#### Liquid Capacity

Measure	System Equivalent	Approx. Metric Equivalents	Approx. U.S. Equivalents
log	1/12 hin	0.33 l	1/12 gal.
kab	4 logs, 1/3 hin	1.3 l	1/3 gal.
hin	12 logs, 3 kabs	3.67 l	1 gal.
seah	6 kabs, 2 hins	7.33 l	2 gal.
bath	3 seahs, 6 hins	22 l	6 gal.
homer	10 bath, 60 hins	220 l	60 gal.

-----  
 Excerpted from The Complete Multimedia Bible based on the King James Version  
 Copyright ©) 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc.

### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES IN THE BIBLE

#### Weight

Measure	System Equivalent	Approx. Metric Equivalents	Approx. U.S. Equivalents
gerah	½ shekel	0.5 g	1/50 oz.
beka	10 gerahs, ½ shekel	5 g	3/16 oz.
pim	1 ½ bekas, 3/4 shekel	7 g	1/4 oz.
shekel	2 bekas, 1 ½ pims	10 g	½ oz.
mina	75 pims, 50 shekels	500 g	1 lb.
talent	60 minas, 3000 shekels	30 kg	66 lbs.

-----  
 Excerpted from The Complete Multimedia Bible based on the King James Version  
 Copyright ©) 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc.

**WEIGHTS AND MEASURES  
IN THE BIBLE**

Length			
<b>Measure</b>	<b>System Equivalent</b>	<b>Approx. Metric Equivalents</b>	<b>Approx. U.S. Equivalents</b>
finger (digit)	1/12 span	2 cm	3/4 in.
palm (handbreadth)	4 fingers, 1/3 span	7.5 cm	3 in.
span	12 fingers, 3 palms	22.25 cm	9 in.
gomedh	3 3/4 palms, 1 1/4 spans	30 cm	12 in.
cubit	6-7 palms, 2 spans	44.5 cm	17 1/2 in.
fathom	4 cubits, 8 spans	2 m	2 yds.

-----  
 Excerpted from The Complete Multimedia Bible based on the King James Version  
 Copyright ©) 1994 Compton's NewMedia, Inc.

## EXODUS 17

### A. Exodus 17:1-7: The Israelites Strive With Moses Due to the Lack of Water.

1. Verse 1: "And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people to drink."
  - a. As they made their journey from the wilderness of Sin, they came to a place known as Rephidim. According to the record in Numbers 33:12-14, they made two stops between the wilderness of Sin and the present encampment. They found no water in this latter place. "And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah. And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Alush. And they removed from Alush, and encamped at Rephidim, where was no water for the people to drink" (Num. 33:12-14).
  - b. They journeyed according to the commandment of God: he had given directions for their travels and guided them with the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. When the pillar went forward, that was a sign for them to move. He knew when to stop them for rest; he knew how much distance they could cover during a particular period of time, taking into account the difficult or ease of travel over the various kinds of ground.
2. Verses 2-3: "Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"
  - a. Because of their thirst and the absence of water at Rephidim, the people began to chide with Moses. The word chide means to strive or contend. In the previous chapter they had panicked when they realized they were out of food (16:3); now they are terrified over the prospect that they were going to perish for lack of water. Their faith was overwhelmed by their fear, and they complained bitterly against Moses, accusing him of bringing them into the wilderness to kill them all with thirst! But Moses charges them with "tempting" God, putting the Lord to the test.
  - b. By their unbelief they were sorely trying the longsufferance of God. He had always provided for their needs as they journeyed; it was he who had miraculously brought about their release from Egypt; it was he who had defeated their enemies when there was no human source of help; he had brought them across the Red Sea safely. They had every reason to trust him for the provision of their present need.
  - c. This is the second of three times when they were in great need of water. Exodus 15:22-25 and Numbers 20:10-13 are the other occasions.
    - 1) Exodus 15:22-25: "So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, *which* when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them."
    - 2) Numbers 20:10-13: "And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*. And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This *is* the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them."
  - d. Notice their demand for water: "Give us water..." They did not humbly pray for it. They also made a false accusation against Moses, alleging he intended for them to die of thirst in the wilderness. They gave up without trying to find a solution for the problem: that solution was simply to ask the Lord, through Moses, to provide water.
  - e. "This is an excellent picture of that 'evil heart of unbelief' (Hebrews 3:12) which persistently

manifested itself throughout the whole period of Israel in the wilderness. Significantly, the NT writers have abundantly warned Christians against falling into the same sin" (Coffman, p.231).

- f. "In this the people manifested not only their ingratitude to Jehovah, who had hitherto interposed so gloriously and miraculously in every time of distress or need, but their distrust in the guidance of Jehovah and the divine mission of Moses, and such impatience of unbelief as threatened to break out into open rebellion against Moses" (Keil, p.76).
3. Verses 4-6: "And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel."
    - a. Moses knew the Lord was the one who had the answers, so in prayer the great man cried to Jehovah. He knew the gravity of the situation, thus he said that they were about ready to stone him. Stoning was the last step in rejection of a leader. Jews tried to stone certain of their leaders, sometimes being successful:
      - 1) David: "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God" (1 Sam. 30:6).
      - 2) Adoram: "Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem" (1 Kings 12:18).
      - 3) Christ: "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him" (John 10:31).
      - 4) Stephen: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:51-60).
      - 5) Paul: "And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19).
    - b. God told him to take the elders of Israel, along with his staff (rod), and go to the rock of Horeb. The elders were to be eyewitnesses of the forthcoming miracle. The rod would again be used in instigating the miracle which God was about to produce. The rock of Horeb was obviously known to Moses; he was to stand upon this rock and God would stand before him.
    - c. God was proposing to produce ample water from the rock for the people. In this case, he did not intend to punish the people on account of their unbelief, rather he was going to provide the needed water. The Lord was as patient with them as possible.
    - d. "We should also allow the opinion of Jamieson that the rock here was smitten at such a height and in such a position with reference to the lower valleys where the hosts of Israel were deployed that the mighty issue of the waters provided water for Israel throughout the years following this event. This also has the utility of explaining why there was no recurring water shortages for Israel till they came to Kedesh in the far northern part of the Sinaitic peninsula" (Coffman, p.232).
  4. Verse 7: "And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"

- a. Moses called this place by two names: Massah (temptation) and Meribah (Chiding), as a reminder of what they had done there. Thus, their sinful attitudes were remembered in the names given.
- b. "The rude and rebellious *demands* of Israel were most sinful and unbecoming a people so recently redeemed from slavery; but it should be remembered that long years of slavery had left their mark upon the minds and hearts of that people. In their dreams and imaginations of freedom, they had somehow overlooked the *price* and *requirements* of freedom. Free men should not expect that God will exempt them from every hardship. 'They incorrectly thought that it was God's business to see to it that his people were rendered marvelously immune to the hazards of existence, time, accident, and environment'" (Coffman, p.233). Their temptation of the Lord was in their words, "Is He among us, or not?" This was a declaration of their lack of faith.

B. Exodus 17:8-16: The Battle with Amalek.

1. Verses 8-10: "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill."
  - a. Amalek is the name of the descendants of Esau through his grandson Amalek, the son of Eliphaz (Gen. 36:12, 16). They were distantly related to Israel, but had no friendship toward God's people. They attacked the "hindmost" of Israel (Dt. 25:17-19).
  - b. Moses instructed Joshua to take an army of men and engage the Amalekites in battle on the following day. Moses stated that he would mount a nearby hill with the rod of God in his hand (implying that in so-doing God's assistance would be insured). This is the first time Joshua is mentioned in the Bible. Joshua is equivalent to the name Jesus in the New Testament.
    - 1) Acts 7:45: "Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David."
    - 2) Hebrews 4:8: "For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day" (ASV).
2. Verses 11-12: "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."
  - a. NKJ: "And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."
  - b. As long as Moses held up his hand, the battle went in Israel's favor; but when his arm grew heavy and he had to lower it, Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur placed a stone under Moses for him to sit on, and they stood on each side of Moses and held up his hands. They assisted Moses in this important work. To hold up another's hand is symbolic of giving timely assistance.
  - c. Moses was given a duty to do in this plan. This showed Israel the importance of Moses in the plan of bringing deliverance to the people.
  - d. Holding up one's hands is also a symbol of prayer in the Bible.
    - 1) Psalms 28:2: "Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle."
    - 2) Psalms 63:4: "Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name."
    - 3) 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."
  - e. Bible critics claim that because Moses was unable to hold up his hand for enough time for Israel to rout the enemy that this means he was old and feeble. But the Bible critic should try to hold up his arms for five minutes and see how difficult it is, even for one who is in excellent physical condition. Even though Moses was old in years, he maintained his natural eyesight and strength until death: "And Moses *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force

abated" (Deut. 34:7).

- f. Hur is mentioned here and again in Exodus 24:14, where he evidently occupies a position of prominence among the Israelites. Josephus asserts that Miriam was his wife. Exodus 31:2-5 shows that he was the grandfather of Bezaleel, who was a great sculptor and worker in metals. He was of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:18-20).
  - g. The purpose of Moses holding up his hand was in order to extend the rod of God upward as a plea for God to help.
  - h. "The lifting up of the staff secured to the warriors the strength needed to obtain the victory, from the fact that by means of the staff Moses brought down this strength from above, *i.e.*, from the Almighty God in heaven; not indeed by a merely spiritless and unthinking elevation of the staff, but by the power of his prayer, which was embodied in the lifting up of his hands with the staff, and was so far strengthened thereby, that God had chosen and already employed this staff as the medium of the saving manifestation of His almighty power.
    - 1) "There is no other way in which we can explain the effect produced upon the battle by the raising and dropping...of the staff in his hands. As long as Moses held up the staff, he drew down from God victorious powers for the Israelites by means of his prayer; but when he let it fall through the exhaustion of the strength of his hands, he ceased to draw down the power of God, and Amalek gained the upper hand.
    - 2) "The staff, therefore, as it was stretched out on high, was not a sign to the Israelites that were fighting, for it is by no means certain that they could see it in the heat of the battle; but it was a sign to Jehovah, carrying up, as it were, to God the wishes and prayers of Moses, and bringing down from God victorious powers for Israel" (Keil, p.80).
3. Verses 12-16: "But Moses' hands *were* heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation."
- a. Aaron and Hur each held up one of Moses' arms and thus Israel was able to defeat the enemy. Where did Israel get the weapons? They either brought them from Egypt, or what is more likely, obtained them from the dead Egyptian soldiers whose bodies washed up upon the seashore (14:30).
  - b. Josephus describes the details of this victory:
    - 1) "So the armies joined battle; and it came to a close fight, hand to hand, both sides showing great alacrity, and encouraging one another. And indeed while Moses stretched out his hand towards heaven the Hebrews were too hard for the Amalekites: but Moses not being able to sustain his hands thus stretched out, (for as often as he let down his hands, so often were his own people worsted,) he bade his brother Aaron, and Hur their sister Miriam's husband, to stand on each side of him, and take hold of his hands, and not permit his weariness to prevent it, but to assist him in the extension of his hands.
    - 2) "When this was done, the Hebrews conquered the Amalekites by main force; and indeed they had all perished, unless the approach of the night had obliged the Hebrews to desist from killing any more. So our forefathers obtained a most signal and most seasonable victory; for they not only overcame those that fought against them, but terrified also the neighboring nations, and got great and splendid advantages, which they obtained of their enemies by their hard pains in this battle: for when they had taken the enemy's camp, they got ready booty for the public, and for their own private families, whereas till then they had not any sort of plenty, of even necessary food.
    - 3) ""The forementioned battle, when they had once got it, was also the occasion of their prosperity, not only for the present, but for the future ages also; for they not only made slaves of the bodies of their enemies, but subdued their minds also, and after this battle, became terrible to all that dwelt round about them.
-

- 4) “Moreover, they acquired a vast quantity of riches; for a great deal of silver and gold was left in the enemy's camp; as also brazen vessels, which they made common use of in their families; many utensils also that were embroidered there were of both sorts, that is, of what were weaved, and what were the ornaments of their armor, and other things that served for use in the family, and for the furniture of their rooms; they got also the prey of their cattle, and of whatsoever uses to follow camps, when they remove from one place to another.
  - 5) “So the Hebrews now valued themselves upon their courage, and claimed great merit for their valor; and they perpetually inured themselves to take pains, by which they deemed every difficulty might be surmounted. Such were the consequences of this battle” [Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
- c. Moses is instructed to record this information in a (the Hebrew text says *the*) book, and tell Joshua the details. The book is doubtless the Pentateuch. God stated his intention to destroy Amalek, which was done more than 400 years later (1 Sam. 15).
  - d. The name of the altar Moses erected was called Jehovahnissi ("Jehovah is my ensign or banner"). This was because Israel fought under the Lord's directions and by his power they conquered Amalek. The wicked people fully earned the destruction they received. Their attack against Israel in the present instance was an attack on God. And by the victory of Israel, great respect for Israel and God from the heathen was won.
-

## EXODUS 18

### A. Exodus 18:1-6: Jethro Comes to Meet Moses.

1. Verse 1: "When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt."
  - a. Jethro first appeared in the sacred record in Exodus 2:18, and is introduced to us initially as Reuel. He became Moses' father-in-law. Within a span of nine verses he is called both Reuel and Jethro (2:18; 3:1) and is said to be the priest of Midian. It was very common for men to have two names, as this case seems to be. He is called by the name "Raguel" in Numbers 10:29.
  - b. The Midianites and Amalekites both descended from Abraham: the latter were enemies of Israel, whereas the former were friendly to Israel [at this time].
2. Verses 2-4: "Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, And her two sons; of which the name of the one *was* Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land: And the name of the other *was* Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he*, *was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."
  - a. We are not told when Zipporah and her two sons went back to her father, but it was no doubt following the events detailed in Exodus 4:18-26. It appears that he sent her back home with the boys after the frightful experience at the inn shortly after they began their journey toward Egypt. There is no indication of any divorce even though the Hebrew word used here later was used to refer to divorce (Cole, p.137). The events in Egypt, in which ten plagues were brought upon Pharaoh and his people, and the journey from Egypt, probably only occupied a few months.
  - b. The great miracles wrought in Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptian army, the movement of such a great nation through the wilderness, and the battle of the preceding chapter with the Amalekites would have come to the attention of Jethro. He now came out to meet Moses, bringing Moses' wife and children with him. The boys were named Gershom and Eliezer.
3. Verses 5-6: "And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God: And he said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her."
  - a. Israel was camped at "the mount of God" when Jethro came to Moses. Exodus 3:1 identifies this mount as Horeb.
  - b. The statement of verse six was given to Moses through a messenger since the next verse speaks of Moses going forth from the camp to meet with Jethro.

### B. Exodus 18:7-12: Moses and Jethro Meet; a Sacrifice is Offered.

1. Verses 7-11: "And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of *their* welfare; and they came into the tent. And Moses told his father in law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, *and* all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and *how* the LORD delivered them. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Jethro said, Blessed *be* the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD *is* greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly *he was* above them."
    - a. On meeting, Moses "did obeisance" (bowed down before him in the Eastern custom) and greeted him with a kiss. They each asked of the other's welfare, and entered the tent. Moses related all that God had done to the Egyptians in Israel's behalf, and of the travail they had endured on their journey. Mention is made here only of the hardship with no reference to Israel's murmuring.
    - b. Jethro rejoiced on hearing of the good things God had done for his people. The details furnished by the text about Jethro indicate that he was a deeply religious man, believing in the God of Israel. He praises God for having delivered Israel, and states his firm conviction that God is greater than all the idols of men. The false gods were exalted by their worshippers as being great, but they were merely lifeless, powerless, inanimate material objects. The Living God declared his superiority to these supposed gods by his mighty wonders. Compare Isaiah 44:9-20.
-



2. Verse 12: "And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God."
  - a. Jethro, the priest of Midian, offered sacrifices to God. This indicates that he had continued to serve God after the practice of Abraham, his ancestor, and that the worship of God had not entirely died out. The worship of only the One True and Living God prevailed for a long time after the creation, but gradually polytheism was developed by men.
  - b. Bible critics claim that the first instances of religion were polytheism and that only later was monotheism conceived; this is directly opposite to the truth.
  - c. "The very purpose of God in the election of a Chosen Race, was not to develop a new conception of God, but to preserve for all the world the true perception of the One and Only God which was already in the world and in danger of being erased by the immoralities of the postdiluvians and the resultant resurgence of paganism. Monotheism was *first* on earth, not paganism; and the threat against the universal acceptance of that truth has always come about from basic sensualities so dear to human flesh. However, these sensualities cannot be indulged without some kind of psychological justification; and that's exactly what paganism is" (Coffman, pp.244f).
  - d. Following the sacrifice, Moses, Jethro, and the elders of Israel ate together.

C. Exodus 18:13-27: Jethro's Timely Suggestion.

1. Verses 13-16: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make *them* know the statutes of God, and his laws."
    - a. On the next day, Moses sat to judge the people. There was a great number of them which had come before him for the settlement of various grievances and problems. They were there from morning to evening. Jethro demanded to know why Moses was trying to do all this by himself.
    - b. Moses answered by describing the situation: The people have matters which must be settled; they come before me to find out what God's will is in regards to the problems. When they tell me the problem, I render a judgment to settle the strife which arises between them; and in the process make known to them the will of God in the matter at hand. This does not mean that the Law had already been delivered, as Clarke thought.
    - c. Moses was not completely in the dark about what God required since at least some facts had been revealed to Moses along the way. Moses could make certain deductions from what the Lord revealed to him, thus could know at least a few precepts.
    - d. "This has no reference to the Decalogue, which was not yet given, but is a reference to that vast body of rules and regulations that Moses had already communicated to the people upon the commandment of the Lord, for example, the matter of gathering the manna, when, how much, how to use it, etc. There had also, in all probability, been many other things of a similar nature" (Coffman, p.247).
    - e. Nine of the ten great principles of the Decalogue were in effect from the beginning; these Moses would have needed to expound to the people. These nine principles have been incorporated into the gospel.
  2. Verses 17-21: "And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest *is* not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that *is* with thee: for this thing *is* too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do."
    - a. Jethro, the wise old sage that he was, immediately knew that Moses was not using the best of judgment in the way he was trying to settle the affairs. With so many people involved, and especially since they were in the wilderness, there would be a huge number of problems generated daily. Not only would Moses wear himself out by trying to handle all these details personally, but the people
-

- would grow restive and discouraged by the lengthy delays.
- b. The counsel given by Jethro did not lessen the authority of Moses. The counsel made good sense, and was likely given by inspiration.
  - c. "Jethro seems to have been a man of great *understanding* and prudence. His advice to Moses was most appropriate and excellent; and it was probably given under the immediate inspiration of God, for after such sacrificial rites, and public acknowledgment of God, the prophetic spirit might be well expected to descend and rest upon him. God could have showed Moses the propriety and necessity of adopting such measures before, but he chose in this case to help man by man..." (Clarke, p.394).
  - d. He advised Moses to stand between the people and God, and that he should teach them the things they needed to know. He also stated that if he followed this counsel God would be with him.
3. Verse 21: "Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens."
    - a. He advised Moses to provide from among the people certain men, who met certain qualifications, and set them over the people after a set order: over tens, over fifties, over hundreds, and over thousands. In this fashion the people could be better organized and thus be more efficient in following directions, and information could be passed down the chain from Moses to those in the camp in a more proficient manner. These would be side benefits to the plan.
    - b. The qualification given are:
      - 1) **Able men.** People of wisdom, ability, skill, discernment and fortitude. Each person is given one or more talents; some who would make excellent leaders over a crew of ten might have great difficulty overseeing a hundred or a thousand. The qualities to be sought were those which would make a man a good judge.
      - 2) **Men who fear God.** This is of great importance in choosing a judge, for one who has little regard for God will not likely be considerate of those who stand before him.
      - 3) **Men of truth.** Truth is basis of judgment. If the truth is not sought for, justice is not apt to be had.
      - 4) **Men who hated covetousness.** A judge who is covetous is ripe for bribery, and bribery is a perversion of justice. This has been a common failing of judges down through history and in every land. It was prominent during the days of the Minor Prophets (Amos 2:6); Felix wanted a bribe from Paul (Acts 24:25-27). The Bible condemns those who take bribes.
        - a) Acts 24:25-27: "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."
        - b) Amos 2:6: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes."
        - c) Job 15:34: "For the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery."
        - d) Psalms 26:10: "In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes."
  4. Verses 22-27: "And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, *that* every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear *the burden* with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee *so*, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves. And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own
-

land."

- a. According the plan, the lesser judges were to handle the lesser problems; and Moses was to handle those great problems which arose. In this way, both Moses and the people would be benefitted.
  - b. Notice the conditional statement: "If...God command thee so." Pulpit Commentary:
    - 1) "Jethro does not suppose that Moses will take his advice without further consultation. He assumes that the matter will be laid by Moses before God, and God's will learnt concerning it. The entire narrative supposes that there was some established means by which the Israelite leader could refer a matter to Jehovah and obtain a decision upon it. This can scarcely have been as yet the Urim and Thummim. Probably Moses held frequent communication with Jehovah by means of waking visions.
    - 2) "Thou shalt be able to endure—i.e., 'the work will not be too much for thee—thou wilt be able to bear it.' This people shall also go to their place in peace. The 'place' intended would seem to be Palestine. Keil supposes that the word 'peace' is to be taken literally, and concludes from it that breaches of the peace had previously been frequent, the people having 'often taken the law into their own hands on account of the delay in the judicial decision'; but this is to extract from the words more than they naturally signify. 'In peace' means 'cheerfully, contentedly.'
    - 3) "If the changes which he recommends are carried out, Jethro thinks that the people will make the rest of the journey to Canaan quietly and contentedly, without complaint or dissatisfaction" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
  - c. Jethro knew the destination of Israel and was aware that it was "their place." Apparently he knew about God's promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3).
  - d. Moses followed the counsel of Jethro. It was obviously the will of God, and it certainly made good sense. Deuteronomy 1:9-18 gives Moses' summary of how these men were selected and appointed. The people chose them from among their number (cf. Acts 6:3-4). The "Boston Church" used this Old Testament passage in developing their concept (MSOP, p.159) to set up "rulers" over tens, fifties, etc. But the New Testament does not authorize such; it requires that elders be over the whole flock.
  - e. Jethro returned to his own land. His visit had (1) restored Moses' family to the great lawgiver; (2) given Moses an opportunity to worship God through the sacrifices this priest offered; (3) provided a system of judges which greatly assisted Moses and the people; and (4) offered much needed encouragement for Moses.
-

## EXODUS 19

### A. Exodus 19:1-6: Israel Arrives at Sinai.

1. Verse 1: "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai."
  - a. The text simply states that they arrived at Sinai in the third month, from their departure from Egypt; it then adds that this was the same day (apparently meaning the same day of the month in which they took their leave from Egypt). Jewish tradition says that the Law was delivered to them on the day of Pentecost, the 50th day after the Passover. Keil says that this tradition is too recent to be accepted as truth (p.89), and maintains that the verse only specifies the month (not the day of the month); he thinks that the word "day" is used in only a general sense as in Genesis 2:4 and Numbers 3:1.
  - b. In the ancient custom of counting time, the day they departed from Egypt would be counted as the first month; immediately after the start of the next month would be considered the second month, and thus also with the third month. A part of a day, week, month, or year was reckoned as a whole when listing the time. For example, Jesus' body was in the grave three days and three nights, but not for a literal 72 hours. Hence, anytime from the sixtieth day onward (for the next thirty days) would have been counted as the third month—from day 60 to day 90. If they arrived on the same day of the month as their departure, it was either after sixty days or ninety days.
  - c. Scholars say that the Hebrew phrase ("the same day") is unclear in its meaning. But it seems to this scribe that the preceding clause ("when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt") qualifies and identifies "the same day" as meaning the same day of the month they had departed.
  - d. Pulpit Commentary:
    - 1) "From Rephidim in the Wady Feiran, where they had discomfited Amalek (Ex 17:8-13), the Israelites moved towards Sinai, probably by the two passes known as Wady Solar and Wady-esh-Sheikh, which gradually converge and meet at the entrance to the plain of Er-Rahah. This plain is generally allowed to be 'the Desert of Sinai.' It is 'two miles long, and half-a-mile broad' (Our Work in Palestine, p. 268), nearly flat, and dotted with tamarisk bushes. The mountains which enclose it have for the most part sloping sides, and form a sort of natural amphitheatre.
    - 2) "The plain abuts at its south-eastern extremity on abrupt cliffs of granite rock rising from it nearly perpendicularly, and known as the Ras Sufsafeh. 'That such a plain should exist at all in front of such a cliff is,' as Dean Stanley well remarks, 'so remarkable a coincidence with the sacred narrative, as to furnish a strong internal argument, not merely of its identity with the scene, but of the scene itself having been described by an eye-witness' (Sinai and Palestine, pp. 42-3).
    - 3) "All the surroundings are such as exactly suit the narrative. 'The awful and lengthened approach, as to some natural sanctuary, would have been the fittest preparation for the coming scene. The low line of alluvial mounds at the foot of the cliff exactly answers to the 'bounds' which were to keep the people from 'touching the mount.' The plain itself is not broken and uneven and narrowly shut in, like almost all others in the range, but presents a long retiring sweep, against which the people could 'remove and stand afar off.
    - 4) "The cliff, rising like a huge altar, in front of the whole congregation, and visible against the sky in lonely grandeur from end to end of the whole plain, is the very image of the mount that might be touched, and from which the voice of God might be heard far and wide over the plain below, widened at that point to its utmost extent by the confluence of all the contiguous valleys. Here, beyond all other parts of the peninsula, is the adytum, withdrawn as if in the end 'of the world,' from all the stir and confusion of earthly things' (ib, p. 43).
    - 5) "As an eminent engineer has observed— 'No spot in the world can be pointed out which combines in a more remarkable manner the conditions of a commanding height and of a plain in every part of which the sights and sounds described in Exodus would reach an assembled multitude of more than two million souls.' Here then, we may well say, in the words used by the most recent of scientific explorers, 'was the scene of the giving of the law. From Ras Sufsafeh the law was

- proclaimed to the children of Israel, assembled in the plains of Er Rahah' (Our Work in Palestine, p. 208)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
2. Verse 2: "For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come *to* the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount."
    - a. In keeping with the Lord's instructions (3:12), Moses has brought the people to Mount Sinai. "Wilderness" does not necessarily mean a desert (as the Sahara), but a deserted land where no one lived. This present wilderness was one which could support large herds and flocks of livestock. They were there about two years (Num. 1:1). The mount before which they encamped was Sinai.
    - b. Keil:
      - 1) "But in Ex. 33:6 this spot is designated as 'Mount Horeb,' and in Deuteronomy, as a rule, it is spoken of briefly as 'Horeb' (Deut. 1:2,6,19; 4:10,15; 5:2; 9:8; 18:16; 28:69). And whilst the general identity of Sinai and Horeb may be inferred from this; the fact, that whenever the intention of the writer is to give a precise and geographical description of the place where the law was given, the name Sinai is employed, leads to the conclusion that the term Horeb was more general and comprehensive than that of Sinai; in other words, that Horeb was the range of which Sinai was one particular mountain, which only came prominently out of view when Israel had arrived at the mount of legislation....
      - 2) "There is no ground for supposing that the name *Horeb* includes the whole of the mountains in the Arabian peninsula. Sufficient justice is done to all the statements in the Bible, if we restrict this name to the southern and highest range of the central mountains,—to the exclusion, therefore, of the Serbal group.
      - 3) "This southern range, which Arabian geographers and the Bedouins call *Jebel Tur* or *Jebel Tur Sina*, consists of three summits: (1) a central one, called by the Arabs *Jebel Musa* (Moses' Mountain), and by Christians either *Horeb* or else *Horeb-Sinai*, in which case the northern and lower peak, or *Ras es Sufsafeh* is called Horeb, and the southern and loftier one Sinai; (2) a western one, called *Jebel Humr*, with *Mount Catherine* on the south, the loftiest point in the whole range; and (3) an eastern one, called *Jebel el-Deir* Convent Mountain..." (Keil, pp.89f).
    - c. Mount Sinai was one of these, according to scholars, but they are not agreed as to which. The general consensus is that **Jebel Musa** is the right one. This mountain rises to a height of more than 7,000 feet. Near its base is found St. Catherine Monastery, where Tischendorf found the Codex Sinaiticus, an ancient manuscript containing the New Testament and much of the Old. It is not important that we be able to identify the precise location since the events that transpired there are the important factor.
  3. Verses 3-4: "And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself."
    - a. On their arrival, Moses proceeded to climb into the mountain, likely to the site of the burning bush episode. God gave him a message to deliver to Israel. The expression "house of Jacob" occurs nowhere else in the Pentateuch (Coffman).
    - b. The message begins with a reminder to them of what the Lord had done for Israel, first, against the Egyptians, and second, in bearing them to this place "on eagles' wings." When the young eaglets have reached an age and size which the parents know by instinct is the time for them to learn to fly, they will stir up the nest and force them to attempt to fly. But to insure their safety, an adult eagle will fly under them with wings spread wide; should the young one falter and fall, it can be borne back to the nest safely on the parent's back. This is a beautiful description of the help and guidance with which God had brought Israel to this place.
      - 1) Deuteronomy 32:11-12: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: *So* the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange god with him."
      - 2) Isaiah 40:28,31: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is* no searching of his understanding...."But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount

- up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint."
- 3) Isaiah 41:10: "Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."
  - c. While they were full of fear, lacking in faith, and often even rebellious, nevertheless there had been no need for them to be dismayed. God's might had constantly aided them (Deut. 4:34), providing them with food, water, clothing, protection, and guidance. Only by their lack of faith were they in any danger. God was eminently longsuffering with them! And with us!
  4. Verse 5: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine:"
    - a. Having reminded them of his blessings upon them, God now gives them the assurance that they will retain this special standing—if they "will obey my voice indeed." They generally had been obedient so far, although their faith had faltered several times when difficulties arose.
    - b. They were about to be given a detailed law which enjoined many obligations upon them. If they obeyed his voice *indeed* they were promised the continued special status to which they had been elevated. All the earth belongs to God by right of creation and preservation (cf. Ps. 100:3), but he had chosen these descendants of Abraham to occupy a position of special standing with Jehovah. In this there was no reason for them to exult; they had done nothing to earn this status. God had chosen the great man of faith (Abraham) to become the father of this special nation.
      - 1) Genesis 18:19: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."
      - 2) Genesis 22:12: "And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."
      - 3) Deuteronomy 4:37: "And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt."
      - 4) Deuteronomy 7:6-11: "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them."
    - c. God described the blessed state they could have and retain as "a peculiar treasure unto me." What a wonderful advantage! How impossible it is to calculate its full value! Yet the faithful Christian surpasses these ancient Israelites in blessings! Many families have special heirlooms or other valuable possessions which are very important to them. Israel was similarly of great worth in God's sight. We are likewise of special value to him!
      - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
      - 2) 2 Timothy 2:19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."
      - 3) Matthew 10:29-31: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not

therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

- 4) 2 Corinthians 6:17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
  - 5) Matthew 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."
5. Verse 6: "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."
- a. God also refers to them as a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. They were to be a kingdom in that God was to be their only King. He never intended for them to have some earthly king, but when they demonstrated their rebellion against God and demanded a king, he allowed them to get one. "I gave them a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath" (Hos. 13:11).
  - b. Likewise, he intended that they be a kingdom of priests. A priest is one who is a mediator between men and God. Coffman suggests that this means that God did not intend to have a special, separate priesthood in Israel; that he wanted for Israel what he later fulfilled in the church: that each individual be able to come before God without some man as a mediator. But if God did not want a special priesthood for Israel, why did he set up one?
  - c. There is another sense in which this can taken: that Israel, as a nation, was to be a priestly kingdom, showing the other nations the God of heaven; or, that as a kingdom under God, they had the means of worshipping God as a united entity without the need of priests from any other source outside itself.
  - d. The pattern of the Israelite system was a type of the system under the Savior. In the Lord's church, each individual member is able to approach God directly, through Christ, and without the priestly functions of any man.
    - 1) 1 Peter 2:5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."
    - 2) 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
  - e. Israel was intended to be a holy nation; by following God's law which was soon to be given, they would be holy, their trespasses covered to by the various offerings specified by the law. The church is spoken of as spiritual Israel.
    - 1) Galatians 6:16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon **the Israel of God.**"
    - 2) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."
    - 3) 1 Peter 2:5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."
    - 4) 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
    - 5) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

**B. Exodus 19:7-15: Israel Agrees to Obey God; Moses Sanctifies the People.**

1. Verses 7-8: "And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD."
  - a. Moses returned from the mountain and delivered to them the message God had just given for Israel.

He gave the message to the elders who in turn delivered it to the people. The response of Israel was a forthright affirmative. Moses then told the Lord what the people had answered. There is no suggestion that God could not know their response apart from Moses' report.

- b. In this two-way conversation between God and Moses, the prophet was simply holding up his end of the conversation. Moses occupied a special relationship with Jehovah: they spake "face to face."
    - 1) Exodus 33:11: "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."
    - 2) Exodus 33:20-23: "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
    - 3) Numbers 12:7-8: "My servant Moses *is* not so, who *is* faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"
    - 4) Deuteronomy 34:10: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face."
  - c. These were preliminaries to the giving of the great Law.
2. Verse 9: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD."
    - a. God's response to their acceptance was to inform Moses that he (God) would appear in a thick cloud upon the mountain so as to impress the people with his majesty. They would hear God's voice as he spoke with Moses.
    - b. "One clear purpose of God was to surround the giving of the Law with such circumstances of glory and wonder that there could never afterwards be any doubt whatever that God did indeed speak to them on that occasion" (Coffman, p.260).
    - c. "...It was necessary, in order to accomplish the design of God, that the chosen mediator should receive special credentials; and these were to consist in the fact that Jehovah spoke to Moses in the sight and hearing of the people, that is to say, that He solemnly proclaimed the fundamental law of the covenant in the presence of the whole nation (chapt. 19:16-20:18), and showed by this fact that Moses was the recipient and mediator of the revelation of God, in order that the people might believe him '*for ever*'..." Keil, p.101).
  3. Verses 10-11: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai."
    - a. Moses is instructed to return to the people and sanctify them in preparation for the giving of the Law. They were to wash their clothes (obviously they would also bathe themselves). On the third day God would come down on the mount in a visible demonstration.
    - b. "Moses had withdrawn himself from the people to report their words to God (vers. 8, 9). He was now commanded to return to them. Sanctify them. Or 'purify them.' Purification in Egypt was partly by washing, partly, by shaving the hair, either from the head only, or from the entire body (Herod. 2:37), partly perhaps by other rites. The Israelites seem ordinarily to have purified themselves by washing only. To-day and to-morrow. The fourth and fifth of Sivan, according to the Jewish tradition, the Decalogue having been given upon the sixth. The requirement of a two-days' preparation marked the extreme sanctity of the occasion. Let them wash their clothes. Compare Lev 15:5. Rich people could 'change their garments' on a sacred occasion (Gen 35:2); the poorer sort, having no change, could only wash them. The Lord will come down. Jehovah is regarded as dwelling in the heaven above, not exclusively (Ps 139:7-10), but especially and therefore, when he appears on earth, he 'comes down' (Gen 11:5-7; 18:21; Ex 3:8; etc.). In the sight of all the people. That a visible manifestation of the



Divine presence is intended appears, unmistakably, from verses 16 and 18" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].

4. Verses 12-13: "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye go not* up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death. There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether *it be* beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount."
    - a. Words of warning were also issued by the Lord. Moses was to set up "bounds" around the mountain to prevent any of the people or their animals touching the mount. We are not told what the bounds consisted of, but there was some kind of mark on the ground, at least, or perhaps even some kind of fence to mark the safe ground. It is not likely that the "bounds" extended entirely around the mountain, but likely only on the side where Israel was encamped. As it turned out, they were so frightened by the awesome sights and sounds they witnessed that none of them was interested in getting too close to the mountain.
    - b. Instructions were given that any one, even an animal, was to be executed if he came too close to the mount. When the trumpet was blown long, they were to approach the mount, but none of them was to touch it.
    - c. Why the clean clothes? This was a mark of reverence which God required of those in his presence. God looks on the heart, and he does not judge a man by the clothes he wears. However, in keeping with the principle of this passage, if one appears in the worship assembly dressed in dirty, unkempt, ragged, or overly casual dress, what does this reveal about the individual's heart? Does his careless attire show reverence if the individual had better clothes but purposely chose to wear what he wore? If one will wear proper clothing when paying respects to the dead, or when visiting some dignitary, or attending some social function, but will wear very casual, even unkempt, clothing in the worship assemblies, what does this show about his reverence toward God? Does he respect the dead, some man, or the social event more than he reverences the Almighty?
  5. Verses 14-15: "And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at *your* wives."
    - a. Moses gave these instructions to the people to which they complied. Moses also told the married men not to come at their wives. Marital relations are right, but in this extraordinary situation the prohibition was proper: they would be better able to contemplate spiritual matters if their minds were free of earthly affairs.
    - b. 1 Corinthians 7:5: "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Incontinency means "the inability to contain."
- C. Exodus 19:16-25: The Awesome Display of God's Power and Majesty (cf. Heb. 12:18-29).
1. Verses 16-20: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses *up* to the top of the mount; and Moses went up."
    - a. On the morning of the third day the miraculous demonstrations began. Thunder and lightning came forth from the mount; it was covered by a thick cloud; the sound of a trumpet was exceedingly loud. The people were filled with fear, but Moses brought them to the foot of the mountain.
    - b. Some commentators try to explain this display by assigning to it natural causes, but the Lord tells us plainly why these demonstrations occurred: the Lord descended upon the mountain! It was a most frightful sight and sound, beyond anything we have seen.
    - c. The sound of the trumpet was long and grew louder and louder. The trumpet and the sound it emitted
-

were miraculous. Moses spoke and God answered him by a voice.

- d. Hebrews 12:18-29: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."
2. Verses 21-25: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them. And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them. So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them."
    - a. God told Moses to charge the people again lest they break through to try to catch a glimpse of the Lord, and thus perish. The priests referred to were not of the Levitical order since that arrangement had not been made yet. Their identity is not specified, but since sacrifices were ordained to be offered throughout the Patriarchal Age, and since someone had to do the offering, these priests were those men. They were likely the heads of the families.
    - b. The repetition of the warnings not to touch Sinai is given for at least two purposes: to emphasize the holiness of God and the unholiness of man. A Jewish writer says that the Old Testament High Priest had a rope tied to his foot when he entered the Most Holy Place; if he was unholy, he would die instantly and since no one else was permitted to enter, they could drag his body out with the rope (Coffman, p.266).
    - c. Those described in the Bible who came into the Lord's glorious presence were aware of their unworthiness:
      - 1) Psalm 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him."
      - 2) Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
      - 3) Luke 5:8: "When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."
      - 4) 2 Samuel 6:1-9: "Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on

psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals. And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day. And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?"

---

## EXODUS 20

### A. Exodus 20:1-17: The Giving of the Ten Commandments.

#### 1. Introduction.

- a. The Jewish division of the ten commandments [the Decalogue] is to place the first five on the first table and the other five on the second. Exodus 32:15-16 shows that they were written on both sides of each tablet. Exodus 31:18 shows that God wrote the original set with his "finger." These were broken by Moses, who was later told by God to record them again (Exod. 34:1).
  - b. Catholics eliminate the second command, dividing the last into two separate parts in order to have ten. It appears that they do this to keep from having one of their pet practices to be contradicted by one of the Ten Commandments. However, the passage which forbids the use of graven images is still in the Bible!
  - c. Jesus named God as the author of the Law: "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Matt. 15:4); he specifically mentioned commandments number 5, 6, 7, and 9 (Matt. 5:21-37; 19:16-20).
  - d. The Lord took the entire law away after he fulfilled it.
    - 1) Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
    - 2) Romans 7:1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? *is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for **I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.**" The Law that has been removed included the Decalogue, which codified the sin of coveting. Nine if the ten commandments have been made part of the Gospel of Christ—in broadened and strengthened form.
    - 3) Ephesians 2:13-15: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
    - 4) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
  - e. Christ summarized the whole list in the two great commandments he named in Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
- #### 2. Verses 1-2: "And God spake all these words, saying, I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."
- a. New Testament passages indicate that angels were involved in the giving of the Law (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2), yet it appears that it is God who is speaking in this present instance. Perhaps the angels were instrumental in an indirect way here, and more directly in the giving of the rest of the Law.

- b. Whatever the case, God is the Author of it, and angels were instrumental in some way in the giving of it. Deuteronomy 4:12-13, 32-33 indicates that it was God who personally spoke the words of the ten commandments (cf. Matt. 3:15-17; 17:1-5; John 12:28-31). The self-existent God, the God of Israel who had brought them up from Egypt, is the giver of these laws.
- 1) Deuteronomy 4:12-13: "And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone."
  - 2) Deuteronomy 4:32-33: "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?"
  - 3) Matthew 3:13-15: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him."
  - 4) John 12:28-31: "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."
- c. Jewish scholars take the statement of Deuteronomy 6:4 ("The Lord our God is one Lord") as a denial of the Trinity. But the word translated "one" (*echad*) means a compound unity, also used in the phrase "the people are one." The word for absolute unity (to denote a singularity) is another word (*achid*) (See Coffman, p.270).
- d. It was important that the preface to the Ten Commandments include a reference to the supreme authority of God. He had demonstrated his superiority over all earthly power in bringing Israel out of Egypt to this place. He reminds them of this fact, and of all the details associated with it, before laying down the Law. Unless there is an acknowledgment of this truth there is no basis for any requirement. When men deny God his authority over them, it is then that oppression, crime, and sin of every kind and stripe appear. The attitude one develops toward God determines the direction he will go in life—and eternity.
- e. There is in our day a great need for the divine injunction to hold the God of heaven in high esteem. "The pantheon of the old pagan gods is no longer around; but Venus (sex), Bacchus (wine), Mars (power), and all the rest of them: Gold, Fashion, Fame, Ease, Intellect, Travel, War, Passion, Chance, Drink, etc. are all very much still in business! Science, especially, is the god of many" (Coffman, p.271). In modern society, the religion of humanism has been exalted to the place rightfully belonging to God.
- f. "Therefore, if mankind would improve world conditions, if they would reduce crime, conquer selfishness, procure any measure of peace and happiness to the world, or destroy the fatal cancer of lust and hatred gnawing at the vitals of society, then let them acknowledge our dependence upon God" (ibid., p.272).
3. Verse 3: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."
- a. The **FIRST** commandment. "This commandment prohibits every species of mental idolatry, and all inordinate attachment to earthly and sensible things. As God is the fountain of happiness, and no intelligent creature can be happy but through him, whoever seeks happiness in the creature is necessarily an idolater; as he puts the creature in the place of the Creator, expecting that from the gratification of his passions, in the use or abuse of earthly things, which is to be found in God alone. The very first commandment of the whole series is divinely calculated to prevent man's misery and promote his happiness, by taking him off from all false dependence, and leading him to God himself, the fountain of all good" (Clarke, pp.402f).
-

- 1) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
  - 2) Romans 14:17: "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."
  - 3) Read the Beatitudes again: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you" (Matt. 5:3-12, ASV).
- b. The prohibitions included in this commandment extend to polytheism, idolatry, the worship of idols in thought, word or deed: "Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day....And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth....And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish" (Deut. 8:11,17,19).
  - c. But it also requires fear, love, obedience and worship of the True God.
    - 1) Deuteronomy 6:5: "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."
    - 2) Deuteronomy 6:13: "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name."
    - 3) Deuteronomy 6:17: "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee."
    - 4) Deuteronomy 10:12: "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul."
    - 5) Deuteronomy 10:20: "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name."
    - 6) Micah 6:8: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
4. Verses 4-6: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."
    - a. The **SECOND** commandment. The aim of this injunction was not to eliminate the making of any kind of graven image since God directed that certain images be constructed and made part of the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:18-22). What is prohibited is the making of any image for religious purposes. Worship of images was wide-spread. The prohibition against making any such image extended to include any being in heaven above (birds, etc.), on the earth, or under the sea. They had no way of knowing the image of God since they had not seen him (Deut. 4:11-12, 15-19).
    - b. These religious images must not be made, they must not be bowed down to, and they must not be served. "How can that which is material represent anything spiritual? How can that which is helpless represent eternal omnipotence? How can that which decays represent life eternal? How can that which is not intelligent represent omniscience? How can that which is dumb, unfeeling, blind, and dead represent any of the vital realities of God and holy religion?" (Coffman, p.273). Yet the pope's gang have a multitude of such images. And they have deleted this commandment from the list of ten.
    - c. God said he was jealous—in the good sense of the word. "For thou shalt worship no other god: for

the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God" (Exod. 34:14).

- 1) "The meaning is that God will not tolerate a rival. This is true, not only for God's own honor, but also for the good of his people....A debasing effect is always seen in the character of those who worship an inferior god. The history of idolatrous Israel shows how God visited iniquity upon the successive generations of those who followed that practice, by withdrawing his divine protection and delivering them into the hands of their enemies" (ALC, 1960, p.172).
  - 2) Oprah Winfrey said that she believed in the God of the Bible until she heard a preacher cite this passage—that God is a jealous God. Her misconception of the precept caused her to turn away altogether from the Bible. God demands our full devotion; he will not take a half-hearted obedience. He will not allow us to divide our allegiance between him and something else (Matt. 6:24). This is for our good; and he has the right to make such demands, since he is our Creator and Sustainer.
- d. Sin has its effect, often upon those who did not originate the sinful condition. One generation departs into a sinful way of life; they are followed by the next two or three generations. God, in his long-suffering, gives them time to repent, but in time brings punishment to bear upon the later generations. This does not mean that the originating generation got off without punishment; it does not mean necessarily that the later generations were more wicked or without sin. But as he punishes the evil-doers, so he generously rewards those who do good. The influence of one generation can do incalculable evil or good for those who follow—in morality, alcohol, drugs, profanity, vulgarity, etc.
- e. Concerning the foolishness of idol worship, Romans 1:22-23 says: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Coffman tells of visiting "Japan's great Diabutsu, a great wooden temple surrounded by many niches usually housing various idols. On that day, however, there were large signs in black and red letters in two languages, saying, 'Sorry, these gods are out for repair!'" (p.274).
5. Verse 7: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."
- a. The **THIRD** commandment. This command forbids all false oaths, all common swearing in which God's name is used, all profanity, and all light and irreverent use of his name. We may also use his name in vain by professing to honor him but only pretend to live up to that profession: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).
    - 1) Leviticus 19:12: "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord."
    - 2) Leviticus 18:21: "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD."
    - 3) Nehemiah 13:17: "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?"
  - b. Careless uses of God's name constitutes a violations of this commandment. Consider the common bywords which even little children use today: gosh, golly, good heavens, goodness gracious, O God, my God, good God, etc. Violation of the commandment is done whether the proper name is used or some euphemistic expression which means the same thing.
  - c. The New Testament makes the same prohibition:
    - 1) Matthew 5:34: "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne."
    - 2) Romans 13:9: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
    - 3) Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
    - 4) Colossians 4:6: "Let your speech *be* alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."
-

- 
- 5) James 5:12: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."
- d. God will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. This is God's way of saying that certain punishment will be dealt out to the offenders. The word vain means "void, empty, meaningless." If we, in a fit of anger, ask God to condemn some person or thing to torment, we are uttering empty words; we are asking God to do something he will not do on our say-so. To use loosely the names of heaven, spiritual or eternal things, people, or places, in our common conversations, is a violation of the commandment. The word "profane" (Lev. 19:12) means to make common, use loosely, to pollute."
- 1) Hebrews 10:29-31: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
- 2) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
- 3) Isaiah 6:1-5: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
6. Verses 8-11: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."
- a. The **FOURTH** commandment. The sabbath law was given to Israel, not to anyone else.
- 1) Exodus 34:27-28: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."
- 2) Deuteronomy 5:3: "The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day."
- 3) Deuteronomy 5:15: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."
- b. God rested on the seventh day (that is, he ceased his creating work). We are not told in Genesis when God sanctified it: "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Gen. 2:3).
- c. He did not tell man about the Sabbath until he revealed it to Israel at Sinai: "Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant" (Neh. 9:13-14).
- d. There is no record of any one ever observing the sabbath day prior to Israel's observance of it after leaving Egypt. Sabbatarians think that the word "remember" implies that it had been kept for long ages prior to their time.
-



- 
- e. However, if the word is used in reference to some previous occasion, then Exodus 16:23 would be the occasion; this is the first mention of the sabbath in the Bible. They were told to remember their leaving Egypt (Ex. 13:3), but they had not done this before.
  - f. The disciples were told to eat the Lord's supper in remembrance of Christ (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-25), even though they had not done this before. If they had always kept the sabbath, why did God have to remind them twice to keep it? "And he said unto them, This *is that* which the LORD hath said, To morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake *that* which ye will bake *to day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.... And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day *is* a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the sabbath, in it there shall be none" (Ex. 16:23-26).
  - g. Sabbatarians claim that only the "ceremonial" part of the law was removed by Christ but that the ten commandments continue on; however, Romans 7:1-7 shows that the entire law was taken away, including the ten commandments. The law that forbade coveting was the Decalogue (commandment number 10—Ex. 20:17). Paul wrote that we have been delivered from that law.
    - 1) It is wrong to covet, not because this restriction was part of the Mosaic Law, but because it is part of the Gospel of Christ. It has always been wrong to covet, commit adultery, steal, murder, lie, take the name of Deity in vain, serve another god, make graven images to worship, and it has always been right to honor parents.
    - 2) Commandment number 4 [the Sabbath] pertained only to the Law of Moses; it was not observed before that law was given; it is not to be observed after the Gospel took effect.
  - h. The law required that the seventh day be observed as a day of rest by Israel; they were to work six days, and rest on the seventh. The requirement was that the seventh day was to be used as a day of rest and the other six days were to be used to do all their work. If we are to follow the sabbath law, we would also be required to work the other six days of the week. If the "rest" requirement is bound, then the "work" requirement is to be bound also.
  - i. No labor was to be done on the seventh day. The preacher, the writer, the artist, the housewife, the bus driver, the doctor, the nurse, the air traffic controller, the policemen, et al., are workers. If the law of the sabbath is still bound, then each one of these would be violating the law if they plied their trade on the sabbath.
  - j. If the sabbath is still bound, so also would the penalty for breaking the sabbath be bound.
    - 1) Exodus 31:12-17: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that *ye* may know that I *am* the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it *is* holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh *is* the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth *any* work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, *for* a perpetual covenant. It *is* a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."
    - 2) Numbers 15:32-36: "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses."
  - k. As the accompanying chart [at the end of this section] depicts, each of the other nine commandments has always been true, and have been carried over into the New Testament where many of them have been strengthened and broadened. However, the fourth commandment never did apply to anyone other than Israel; it began at Mt. Sinai and ended at the cross. It was not made part of the New
-

Testament system.

- 1) Colossians 2:14-16: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."
  - 2) 1 Chronicles 23:30-31: "And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even; And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD."
  - 3) 2 Chronicles 31:3: "*He appointed* also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, *to wit*, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD."
7. Verse 12: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."
- a. The **FIFTH** commandment. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:1-3). This is called the first command with promise; the preceding do not have a directly stated promise attached. But here, if the honor due parents is given, the result is that "thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."
  - b. "There is a degree of affectionate respect which is owing to parents, that no person else can properly claim. For a considerable time parents stand as it were in the place of God to their children, and therefore rebellion against their lawful commands has been considered as rebellion against God" (Clarke, p.405).
  - c. Leviticus 19:3: "Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God."
  - d. The governor of Colorado said in 1984 that "the principle duty of old people is to die and get out of the way of the younger generation" (Coffman, p.280). This is in opposition to the Lord's order.
  - e. The functional unit of society is the family; great attacks are being directed toward the home today. Many homes are being destroyed by divorce, infidelity, physical abuse, etc., and is being further disrupted by a lack of respect and honor on the part of children for their parents. Often it is the parents' fault for not instilling this respect in their children at an early age; but the government, the school system, and the judicial system, through misguided laws, humanism, and unholy rulings have undermined parental authority, and thus are helping to destroy the respect and honor that children might otherwise have for their parents. God's will cannot be ignored and repudiated without divine retribution.
  - f. As strange as it is, there are many today who demand the right of two of the same sex to be married. Regardless of how bizarre and repulsive an action is, there will always be some judge or politician who will lend their support. Some states have already "legalized" same sex "marriage." We can only wonder how long it will be until someone will want to marry his dog, or cat, or goat! There is no logical stopping-point when one rejects the Bible as God's word!
8. Verse 13: "Thou shalt not kill."
- a. The **SIXTH** commandment. The Lord's interpretation of this command is given in Matthew 19:18 as "Thou shalt do no murder." There is a great difference between killing and murdering. The edict is against "killing" others of Adam's race. Reference is not to killing animals. If God meant killing in the general sense of taking someone's life, then he violated his own law many times (Lev. 10:1-2; 1 Sam. 15:2-3; Acts 5:1ff; Gen. 9:4-6; 38:7-10).
  - b. But, as seen in the Lord's quotation of it, the prohibition is against murder. God required Israel to execute certain offenders (Ex. 21:12, 17; 22:18, 19; Deut. 22:22). He ordered that one who murdered another be put to death (Gen. 9:6; cf. Rom. 13:1-7). Legal execution of a convicted capital offender

is not murder.

- c. Some of the killing done in some wars must be deduced as murder (for example, in the case when a ruler initiates a war for the sake of conquest; but would it be murder for those who are attacked to defend themselves against that invader? Certainly not). But the laws of a land which require the death penalty for petty offenses might be murder in God's sight. Deaths caused as a result of riots, robberies, drunkenness, etc. could also be considered as murders.
  - d. The New Testament prohibits the motives which lie behind murders.
    - 1) Matthew 5:21-26: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."
    - 2) 1 John 3:14-15: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."
9. Verse 14: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."
- a. The **SEVENTH** commandment. God does not have to give a reason for any of his laws, and none is given in this place. However, other passages show that this sin is against God (Gen. 39:9), against the offender's body (1 Cor. 6:18), against his soul (Prov. 6:32), and against the family (Matt. 19:1-9). It is productive of far-reaching and profound evil, and of no good. The sin of adultery is that which occurs when one or both of the participants are married but not to each other. Fornication is the general classification which includes all of the many varieties of sexual sins.
  - b. This commandment was given as a protection of the family. It implies the sanctity of marriage: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:27-32).
  - c. "Christ abolished the death penalty for adultery (John 8:11). The Saviour was anticipated in this judgment by Joseph, the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, who refused to invoke the penalty against her despite his presumption of adultery on her part (Matthew 1:19)" (Coffman, p.286). The death penalty for adultery was imposed by the Mosaic Law, but not by the Gospel.
10. Verse 15: "Thou shalt not steal."
- a. The **EIGHTH** commandment. This is given as a protection of property. "To steal is to deprive one of that which rightfully belongs to him, whether it be by stealth or by taking advantage of one's ignorance or inexperience in some kind of trade or business transaction. Stealing is possible in every field of endeavor, and it follows therefore that one is a thief who deprives his fellow man of that which is his, without due compensation" (ALC, 1960, p.173). "Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10).
  - b. Coffman (p.288) cites examples of failed attempts to do away with private property. Private ownership has always been practiced and necessary. Even in the strictest Communist society, individuals still have property, albeit maybe only such things as their clothes.
-

- c. The New Testament does not teach and does not require a communistic concept; rather it shows the right of the individual to have and use whatever property he may possess (Acts 5:3-4). Christians possessed wealth and property (e.g., Cornelius, Philemon, Philip).
- d. It has always been wrong to steal. The New Testament concept not only forbids stealing, but it requires us to work so that, as we have ability and opportunity, we may assist those who need help.
- 1) Galatians 6:9-10: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
  - 2) Ephesians 4:28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."
- e. But did not Christ command the rich, young ruler to sell his possessions, give the money to the poor, and come follow him? (Matt. 19:21). "In this, Christ required the young man, as a prospective follower in company with the Twelve, to sell everything and give it away, not because that was a basic requirement of Christianity, which it is not, but because it *was* a requirement for those who personally attended Jesus in his travels on earth, these not even being allowed to own a purse or wallet. All of the Twelve had 'forsaken all' (Mark 10:28). How impossible it would have been for Jesus to have accepted that rich young ruler in *that* company without his first disposing of his wealth. This requirement of *those persons* was *never* extended to become a precondition of becoming a Christian" (Coffman, pp.289f).
- f. There are other forms of stealing. One may rob God by selfishly or vindictively withholding the contributions which should be made in support of the Lord's work. Compare: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8). Repressive regimes may impose excessive taxes on its citizens. Selfish moneylenders may demand excessive interest and merchants may extort excessive payments from their customers. Employers may force their workers to labor for wages far below the worth; employees may demand excessive wages from their employers.
11. Verse 16: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."
- a. The **NINTH** commandment. This command protects the reputation of individuals. It forbids false, damaging testimony given in a court of law, but is not limited to that situation. Christ demands that his people tell the truth in all circumstances and at all times: "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt. 5:33-37).
  - b. The awful penalty of torment is set before "all liars" (Rev. 21:8).
    - 1) Proverbs 6:16-19: "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."
    - 2) Ephesians 4:25: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."
    - 3) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
  - c. "Bearing false witness against one's neighbor may be done by actually giving false testimony, or by withholding the truth when such will result in injury. This command prohibits all half-truths or talk which we do not know to be true" (ALC, 1960, p.173).
12. Verse 17: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's."
- a. The **TENTH** commandment. "The Tenth Commandment differs from all others in that while they

prohibit the overt act, this condemns the very desire to act. With the exception of the First Commandment, this one is more spiritual than any of the rest, because it deals with the inner desire of the heart. In fact, the obedience of this commandment would automatically result in the obedience of most if not all of the others" (Cline, MSOP Lectures, 1987, p.237).

- b. Covetousness is not usually viewed by the average person as a grievous matter, but is condemned by the Lord's as very serious. It is the opposite of the Divine spirit. God is characterized by love; his love urges him to give to his offspring such things as are needed by them and which are for their good; he does not seek to deprive anyone of their lawful possessions. But covetousness seeks to obtain that which belongs to someone else. If we love our fellowman as directed by the Bible, we will not set our hearts on obtaining what rightfully belongs to our neighbor. The broad application of the prohibition extends to his house, his wife, his servants, his ox, his ass, and to any other thing that belongs to him.
    - 1) 1 John 4:20-21: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."
    - 2) Luke 12:15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
    - 3) Luke 16:14: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him."
    - 4) Romans 7:7-8: "What shall we say then? *is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead."
    - 5) Ephesians 5:5: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."
    - 6) Colossians 3:2: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
  - c. To covet means to desire. We are forbidden to desire that which is another's. But there is a good sense in which the word may be used: "Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31; cf. 14:39).
  - d. "To covet is to have an inordinate, that is, unregulated, desire for that which is another's. It has been called the mother of theft; because, like hatred or a lustful look, it may, and often does, lead to the overt act" (ALC, 1960, p.173).
  - e. Achan and Ahab were covetous, and that led to their downfall (Josh. 7; 1 Kings 21).
-

<b>PATRIARCHAL Principle</b>	<b>MOSAIC Code</b>	<b>CHRISTIAN Principle</b>
Worship God	No Other Gods	Worship God: Jn. 4:24
No Images	No Graven Images	No Idols: 1 Jn. 5:21; Col. 3:5
No Vain Swearing	No Vain Swearing	No Swearing: Jas. 5:12
No Special Day	Keep Sabbath	No Sabbath
Honor Parents	Honor Parents	Obey Parents: Eph. 5:1-2
Not Murder	Not Murder	No Hate: Mt 5:21-22; 1 Jn. 3:15
No Adultery	No Adultery	No Lust: Mt. 5:27-28
Not Steal	Not Steal	Not Steal: Eph. 4:28
Not Lie	Not Bear False Witness	Not Lie: Col. 3:9
No Covetousness	Not Covet	Not Covet: Eph. 5:3

### **The Ten Commandments and the New Testament**

Exodus 20:1-17

<b>Old Testament Code</b>	<b>New Testament Counterpart</b>
1. No Other Gods—Ex. 20:2-3	Matt. 4:10; John 4:23-24; Rev. 22:8-9
2. No Graven Images—Ex. 20:4-5	1 John 5:21; 1 Cor. 10:7, 14; cf. Col. 3:5
3. Not Take God's Name in Vain—Ex. 20:7	Matt. 5:33-37; Jas. 5:12
4. Keep Sabbath—Ex. 20:8-11	Sabbath Not Bound Under the New Testament
5. Honor Parents—Ex. 20:12	Eph. 6:1-3
6. Not Kill (Murder)—Ex. 20:13	Matt. 19:18; 1 John 3:15; Matt. 5:21-22
7. Not Commit Adultery—Ex. 20:14	Matt. 5:27-28
8. Not Steal—Ex. 20:15	Eph. 4:28
9. Not Bear False Witness—Ex. 20:16	Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:8
10. Not Covet—Ex. 20:17	Eph. 5:5; Heb. 13:5; Luke 3:11

---

**B. Exodus 20:18-21: The Reaction of the People to the Miraculous Demonstrations.**

1. Verse 18: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off."
  - a. "The terrible phenomena, amidst which the Lord displayed His majesty, made the intended impression upon the people who were stationed by the mountain below, so that they desired that God would not speak to them any more, and entreated Moses through their elders to act as mediator between them, promising at the same time that they would hear him (cf. chap. 19:9, 16-19)" (Keil, p.125).
  - b. At this point, there was no reason to expect them to come too near the mountain, or try to touch it or climb it. They moved themselves as far from the mountain as they thought reasonable.
2. Verse 19: "And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die."
  - a. They were so fearful of the might of God that they asked Moses to act as their mediator so that he could receive and convey to them what God said. They were terrified that God's speaking to them directly would result in their death.
  - b. Deuteronomy 5:23-28: "And it came to pass when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; and ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our god shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken."
  - c. Hebrews 12:18-29: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
3. Verses 20-21: "And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God *was*."
  - a. Moses agreed to this arrangement. He told them that God had thus spoken audibly to prove them; the frightful demonstration was designed to so impress them that they would be less likely to sin. They later did sin greatly, but one wonders how much more grievous would their sins have been without the effect of this mighty scene.
  - b. Moses went up on the mountain, entering into the thick darkness which enshrouded Sinai.

**C. Exodus 20:22-26: God Gives Some Preliminary Instructions Leading up to the Covenant.**

---

1. Verses 22-24: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."
  - a. He reminded Moses that he had talked with Moses from heaven, and that no idols of silver or of gold were to be made. Idolatry was one of the most prominent sins of antiquity.
  - b. The altar to be built was to be made of earth or stone. As they would be moving about from time to time before entering Canaan, a more substantial altar was not needed. He would bless Israel where his name was. "The significance of this is, wherever he placed his approval for men to meet and worship, there he would bless them. The phrase 'where his name was' is equivalent to saying 'the place that he approved for them to worship'" (Pledge, p.231).
  - c. As they moved, the place of worship would change. When they first entered Canaan, the tabernacle was erected at Shiloh; later it was moved to Jerusalem. The proper place for worship was specified by God; Israel did not have the right to decide the location, to change any part of the worship ordained, or make any substitutions. Nadab and Abihu later discovered too late that God means what he says about the ingredients of worship: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD" (Lev. 10:1-2). Cain had earlier discovered this to his shame.
2. Verse 25: "And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."
  - a. "For the worship of Jehovah, the God of heaven, Israel needed only an altar, on which to cause its sacrifices to ascend to God. The altar, as an elevation built up of earth or rough stone, was a symbol of the elevation of man to God, who is enthroned on high in the heaven; and because man was to raise himself to God in his sacrifices, Israel also was to make an altar, though only of earth, or if of stones, not of hewn stones" (Keil, p.127).
  - b. The description given concerning the construction of the altar indicates that it was to be simple and unadorned. They were not to "lavish skill or expense on the construction of an altar; the altar of itself, whether costly or mean, was nothing in the worship—it was only the *place* on which the victim should be laid, and their mind must be attentively fixed on that God to whom the sacrifice was offered, and on the sacrifice itself, as that appointed by the Lord to make an atonement for their sins" (Clarke, p.408).
  - c. God stated that if they used stones they were not to use tools to chisel them; rather stones as they were found were to be used. He said that to use hewn stones would be to defile the altar. Again, the point is that the worship was to be kept simple; there was to be no elaborate edifice constructed. The Lord desired their hearts to be in the sacrifice they offered.
    - 1) "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deut. 5:29).
    - 2) "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart" (Deut. 6:6-6).
  - d. The altar was not to represent God or some earthly creature, but was intended to be the place where man's worship was to be offered to the Almighty. He had the right to name the place, the composition of the altar, the items of worship, and any other item or particular relating to the worship. He is the one to whom the adoration is directed; what pleases man is of no importance in worship, but what pleases God! "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). There is such a thing as vain (empty, void, useless) worship (Matt. 15:7-9). There is such a thing as ignorant worship (Acts 17:23). There is such a thing as *will* worship (Col. 2:23). This is worship which is according to man's will, and not according to God's will. Doing what God said, in the manner God directs, and for the purpose he intended, is what avails.



- 1) Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
  - 2) Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
  - 3) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
  - 4) Matthew 7:21-27: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."
  - 5) Galatians 1:6-12; "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."
  - 6) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
  - 7) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;"
  - 8) 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
3. Verse 26: "Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon."
- a. They were forbidden to make steps leading up to the top of the altar. From the time of the Tower of Babel, men have thought there was something special about having exalted places for worship. These were places which only exalted the ego of men, and did nothing to the glory of God. Throughout the Old Testament, mention is made of the "high places" constructed for the worship of idols. These were often overthrown by the men of God, and consistently spoken against.
    - 1) 2 Kings 18:1-4: "Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan."
    - 2) Jeremiah 7:31: "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded *them* not, neither came it into my heart."
    - 3) Jeremiah 17:3: "O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance *and* all thy treasures to the
-

spoil, *and* thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders."

- 4) Jeremiah 19:5: "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind."
  - 5) Jeremiah 32:35: "And they built the high places of Baal, which *are* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin."
  - 6) Jeremiah 48:35: "Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods."
- b. In earlier times, religious groups sometimes erected pulpit stages which were much higher than the level of the audience. Why did they do this, if not to exalt the preacher above the common folks. Also, the benches used by judges are raised above the audience and the audience is required to rise when the judge enters. Is this merely to emphasize the honor the judge has?
  - c. "God therefore ordered *his* altars to be made, 1. either of simple turf, that there might be no unnecessary expense, which, in their present circumstances, the people could not well afford; and that they might be no incentives to idolatry from their costly or curious structure; or 2. of *unhewn* stone, that no images of animals or of the celestial bodies might be sculptured on them, as was the case among the idolaters, and especially among the Egyptians, as several of their ancient altars which remain to the present day amply testify..." (Clarke, p.408).
  - d. The nakedness referred to has to do with the shame of sin. The sin of Adam and Eve led them to see their nakedness with shame (Gen. 3:7). When one gets involved in sin, his guilt is exposed for God to see. "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23; cf. Heb. 4:13).
-

## EXODUS 21

### A. Introduction.

1. The Ten Commandments had been delivered by God in the presence of all the people (20:18-21); the information beginning in 20:22 and extending to 24:3 had apparently been given to Moses to be relayed to the multitude as they had requested.
2. The information contained in this chapter deals with personal rights of various segments of Israelite society. "There is so much good sense, feeling, humanity, equity, and justice in the following laws, that they cannot but be admired by every intelligent reader; and they are so very plain as to require very little comment" (Clarke, p.410).
3. "The inherent protection certified to such minorities as women, slaves, and the accused, which was guaranteed by these Divine pronouncements must be hailed as the greatest Bill of Rights ever known upon earth at so early a period" (Coffman, p.302).

### B. Exodus 21:1-6: Regulations Governing their ownership of Hebrew Slaves.

1. Verses 1-2: "Now these *are* the judgments which thou shalt set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing."
  - a. NKJ: "Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them: 2 If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing."
  - b. The Lord prefaces these principles by stating that what he was about to tell Moses was to be set before the People.
  - c. In the case where one of the people owned a fellow Hebrew, he was to retain ownership only for six years, at the end of which the slave was to be set free without any recompense. Deuteronomy 15:12-15 furnishes additional details: the slave was not to be sent out empty-handed, but was to be given liberally of the former owner's property. This was a reminder of God having earlier delivered the nation from their bondage in Egypt; and as they came forth laden with material wealth given them by the Egyptians, so the newly-freed Hebrew slave was to be given wherewithal to begin a profitable life of freedom. The rule applied both to males and females.
  - d. "And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: *of that* wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day" (Deut. 15:12-15).
  - e. Some think that the seventh year refers to the sabbatical year, and that if one came to be bound to a master at any time during the preceding six years prior to the sabbatical year, that he gained his freedom at the onset of the sabbatical year. Thus, in some cases, the bondage would last only a year, while in others it would last as much as six years. (See Clarke, p.410).
  - f. Slavery was rampant in the ancient world. God did not abolish this evil institution by divine edict, but set in motion certain principles in the gospel which eventually caused enlightened nations to get rid of it.
  - g. "It may appear at first view strange that such a law should have been given; but let it be remembered, that this servitude could extend, at the utmost, only to six years; and that it was nearly the same as in some cases of apprenticeship among us, where the parents bind the child for seven years, and have from the master so much per week during that period" (Clarke, p.411).
  - h. The Hebrew could be sold into bondage because of theft (Ex. 22:3-4), or the parent could sell a child (Ex. 21:7).
    - 1) Exodus 22:3-4: "If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double."
    - 2) Exodus 21:7: "And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do."

- 3) Leviticus 25:39-46: "And if thy brother *that dwelleth* by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: *But* as an hired servant, *and* as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, *and* shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: And *then* shall he depart from thee, *both* he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they *are* my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God. Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, *shall be* of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that *are* with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them for* a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour."
- 4) Deuteronomy 15:12-18: "*And* if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: *of that* wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day. And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee; Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust *it* through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise. It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant *to thee*, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest."
- i. Jamieson: "Though slavery was recognized in Israel, and the mention of purchase-money here seems to point to the procuring of a slave, it must not be imagined that Hebrew servitude bore any resemblance to the ancient slavery of the Greeks and Romans, or of the modern slavery in America. The Hebrew language has no word for a slave who was absolutely in the power or at the mercy of an owner. [*ebed*], servant, properly signifies labourer; and so far from being a term implying degradation or infamy, it was applied to the chosen people, to Moses, to the prophets and kings, as well as to the Messiah. Accordingly it is rendered in the Septuagint by *pais*, not *doulos*, which denotes one bound. Every Israelite was free-born; but servitude was permitted under certain restrictions: for a Hebrew might be reduced to the condition of a servant through poverty, debt, or crime."
2. Verses 3-6: "If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever."
- a. If the servant entered the arrangement as a single man, he shall leave it as a single man; if he was married, he shall leave it with his wife and children. But if the owner had given him a wife, when he leaves the arrangement, he must leave the wife and children with the owner. This would be just, for the owner had provided the wife (Deut. 15:16-18). The master has had the worth of the servant's labor, and has lost nothing.
- b. If the man chooses to stay with the master, of his own free will, then the owner is to bring him before the proper authorities and have the man's ear bored through with an awl. The text does not identify the location of the doorpost against which the ear was to be bored: it could be the tabernacle or the house. The length of his servitude is said to be "for ever," meaning for the rest of his life.
- c. "There were three different circumstances possible, under which emancipation might take place. The servant might have been unmarried and continued so....in that case, of course, there was no one else to set at liberty. Or he might have brought a wife with him; and in that case his wife was to be set at

liberty as well. Or his master might have given him a wife in his bondage, and she might have borne him children: in that case the wife and children were to continue the property of the master. This may appear oppressive, but it was an equitable consequence of the possession of property in slaves at all. At the same time, in order to modify the harshness of such a separation of husband and wife, the option was given to the servant to remain in his master's service, provided he was willing to renounce his liberty for ever (vv. 5, 6). This would very likely be the case as a general rule; for there were various legal arrangements, which are mentioned in other places, by which the lot of Hebrew slaves was greatly softened and placed almost on an equality with that of hired labourers" (Keil and delitzsch]. Consider these passages:

- 1) Exodus 23:12: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed."
- 2) Leviticus 25:6: "And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee."
- 3) Leviticus 25:39: "And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant."
- 4) Leviticus 25:43: "Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God."
- 5) Leviticus 25:53: "And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight."
- 6) Deuteronomy 12:18: "But thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto."
- 7) Deuteronomy 16:11: "And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there."

C. Exodus 21:7-11: Rules Governing the Sale of a Daughter into Bondage to another Hebrew.

1. Verses 7-8: "And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her."
  - a. There were some special provisions which affected a young lady sold by her father. She was not to be released unconditionally as were the men servants. This would place the women at a disadvantage, having no means of earning their own way, not being able to easily be married, and perhaps being unable to return to their father's home.
  - b. If the master had promised to marry her but later changed his mind, then he was to permit her to be redeemed. He was not allowed to sell her into bondage to one of a strange nation. This was so because, in the case described, he had dealt deceitfully with her.
  - c. "Among ancient nations the father's rights over his children were generally regarded as including the right to sell them for slaves. In civilised nations the right was seldom exercised; but what restrained men was rather a sentiment of pride than any doubt of such sales being proper. Many barbarous nations, like the Thracians (Herod. 5:6), made a regular practice of selling their daughters. Even at Athens there was a time when sales of children had been common (Plut. Vit. Solon. § 13). Existing custom, it is clear, sanctioned such sales among the Hebrews, and what the law now did was to step in and mitigate the evil consequences....
    - 1) "These were greatest in the case of females. Usually they were bought to be made the concubines, or secondary wives of their masters. If this intention were carried out, then they were to be entitled to their status and maintenance as wives during their lifetime, even though their husband took another (legitimate) wife (ver. 10). If the retention was not carried out, either the man was to marry her to one of his sons (ver. 9), or he was to sell his rights over her altogether with his obligations to another Hebrew; or he was to send her back at once intact to her father's house, without making any claim on him to refund the purchase-money.

- 2) "These provisos may not have furnished a remedy against all the wrongs of a weak, and, no doubt, an oppressed class; but they were important mitigations of the existing usages, and protected the slave-concubine to a considerable extent. If she please not her master. If he decline, i.e., to carry out the contract, and take her for his wife. Then let her be redeemed. Rather, 'Then let him cause her to be redeemed.' Let him, i.e., look out for some one who will buy her of him and take his obligation of marriage off his hands.
  - 3) "To sell her to a strange nation he shall not have power. Only, this purchaser must be a Hebrew, like himself, and not a foreigner, since her father consented to her becoming a slave only on the condition of her being wedded to a Hebrew. Seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. By professing to take her as a secondary wife, and not carrying out the contract" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database].
2. Verses 9-11: "And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. If he take him another *wife*; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money."
- a. In the case where the master has betrothed her to his son, he shall bear the part of a father to her, and treat her as his daughter. But if the son decides to marry someone else, the master is required to provide her food, raiment, and duty of marriage.
  - b. The first two of these three things mean that she is to be treated as a permanent member of the family; the third item ("duty of marriage" or "marital rights") is difficult; it may have reference to "a due proportion of the husband's time and company" (Clarke), or the legal standing as if she were his wife.
  - c. "A man might have bought the maiden for this object, or finding himself not pleased with her (ver. 8), might have made his son take his place as her husband. In this case but one course was allowed—he must give her the status of a daughter thenceforth in his family. If he take him another wife—i.e., If he marry her himself, and then take another, even a legitimate, wife—her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage shall he not diminish—she shall retain during her life all the privileges of a married woman—he shall not diminish aught from them. The word translated 'duty of marriage' seems to mean 'right of cohabitation.' If he do not these three unto her. Not the 'three' points of the latter part of ver. 10; but one of the three courses laid down in vers. 8, 9, and 10. She shall go out free—i.e., she shall not be retained as a drudge, a mere maidservant, but shall return to her father at once, a free woman, capable of contracting another marriage; and without money—i.e., without the father being called upon to refund any portion of the sum for which he had sold her" [ibid.].

#### D. Exodus 21:12-21: Capital Cases.

1. Verses 12-14: "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver *him* into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee. But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die."
  - a. The age-old precept that the murderer be put to death is stated again in verse twelve.
    - 1) Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
    - 2) Leviticus 24:17-22: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*. And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* the LORD your God."
  - b. But if a man kills another without any intention to do so, he shall not be put to death. God here promised to provide them with suitable places to which the accidental slayer could flee to escape the vengeful kinsmen of the slain person; this would give time for their blood-lust to subside and for the innocence of the slayer to be shown. Such a case of death is described as one in which God has delivered the victim into the dangerous situation where he loses his life. This is not meant to suggest that God is responsible for the man's death: This is the biblical way of saying that the death was

unplanned and undesired. God later appointed six cities of refuge for the protection of those who committed such "crimes" (Josh. 20:1-9).

- c. But in the case of presumptuous (premeditated) murder, the guilty party was to be surely put to death. Even if he ran to cling to the horns of the altar, he was to be forcibly removed and executed: "Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day. And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died. And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh. Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD. So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness" (1 Kings 2:24-34).
  - d. "Certainly, the idea was well known long before Moses that guilty men could claim immunity from punishment by fleeing to the altar of some holy place. The gross abuse of that pagan idea had turned the great cities of the pagan world into vast concentrations of the most evil men on earth. At a time long after Moses, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus extended their sanctuary for a full half mile in all directions from the temple area; and that, in the times of the apostles, was probably the most concentrated population of grossly wicked men ever known on earth. Here God specifically denied the efficacy of such places of refuge" (Coffman, p.308).
2. Verses 15-17: "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death. And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death."
    - a. Three other cases of capital offense are identified. One who smites his father or mother is to be executed. Nothing is said here about the blow causing the death of the parent, for in that case, the provision of verse 12 would apply; to smite the parent was itself a capital offense.
    - b. Kidnapping was another capital offense. If a man had stolen someone and sold him, he was to be put to death; even if the kidnapped person had not been sold as yet, still the offender was to be executed.
    - c. The third case was one who cursed his father or mother. This offense is on a par with smiting the parent since both evil actions stem from the same disposition of heart. Either of these offenses was a violation of the 5th commandment. "Since to curse was to will and pray the downfall of the other with all one's heart, it represented the attitude from which sprang acts like striking or murder" (Cole, p.168).
- E. Exodus 21:18-27: Rules Governing Actions Involving Various Injuries.
1. Verses 18-19: "And if men strive together, and one smite another with a stone, or with *his* fist, and he die not, but keepeth *his* bed: If he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote *him* be quit: only he shall pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall cause *him* to be thoroughly healed."
    - a. In the case of two man fighting in which one is struck with a rock or a fist which injures him but does

not kill him, the one causing the damage is to pay for the injured man's loss of time and for his "doctor bills."

- b. The implication is that if the victim had died, this would have been a case for capital punishment.
2. Verses 20-21: "And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he *is* his money."
    - a. If a man smites his servant with a rod (or other such weapon, of course) which results in the death of the servant, the master is to be punished. The punishment is not specified here, but verse twelve is the governing principle: "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." But if the servant survives, even for a few days, the owner is not to be punished since the loss of the servant will have deprived the master of money. The master had bought the servant; the loss of the servant would be deemed sufficient penalty.
    - b. "This was a protective right granted to slaves that they should not be beaten to death! If that seems like a small blessing to us, let it be remembered that under the system in vogue all over the pagan world of that era, and extending down even till apostolical times, the Roman Law, in force all over the world, provided as a penalty against slaves, even for trivial and unintentional violations, that shame of the whole pagan world '*flagellis ad mortem* (beaten to death),' a penalty usually inflicted in the presence of all the other slaves of a master. God here provided that punishment should be meted out to a slave-owner for following that pagan custom" (Coffman, pp.309f).
    - c. The following is an apt description of the condition of slaves under Roman law:
      - 1) "The slave had no legal rights whatever; indeed, Roman law hesitated to apply the term *persona* to him and compromised by calling him an 'impersonal man.' It is only by a considerate error that Gaius discusses him under the law of persons; logically the slave came under the rubric of property (*res*). He could not own, inherit, or bequeath; he could not make a legal marriage; his children were all classed as illegitimate, and the children of a slave woman were classed as slaves even if the father was free.
      - 2) "Slaves male or female might be seduced by their master without legal redress. The slave could not bring action in the courts against those who injured him; he could proceed in such a case only through his owner. The latter, under the law of the Republic, could beat him, imprison him, condemn him to fight beasts in the arena, expose him to die of starvation, or kill him, with cause or without, and with no other control than a public opinion formed by slaveowners.
      - 3) "If a slave ran away and was caught he could be branded or crucified; Augustus boasted that he had recaptured 30,000 runaway slaves and had crucified all who had not been claimed. If, under these or other provocations, a slave killed his master, law required that all the slaves of the murdered man should be put to death. When Pedanius Scundus, urban prefect, was so slain (A.D. 61), and his 400 slaves were condemned to die, a minority in the Senate protested, and an angry crowd in the streets demanded mercy; but the Senate ordered the law to be carried out, in the belief that only by such measures could a master be secure"

(Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, p.397).
3. Verses 22-25: "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart *from her*, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges *determine*. And if *any* mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."
  - a. In the case of men fighting, and a pregnant woman is injured, likely trying to separate the men, and her fruit depart (the baby is born prematurely, and is healthy enough to survive), the man causing the woman's injury is to be punished according to the dictates of her husband, and pay as the judges determine. But if mischief follows the woman's injury, the punishment will be in accordance to the injury received: an eye for an eye, a foot for a foot, etc. Notice that this assignment of punishment is in relation to injury done to a woman/unborn baby. Other verses assign this kind of punishment to other cases (Lev. 24:17-22; Deut. 19:16-21). Also, notice that this was not to be meted out by



individuals, but by the legal establishment (cf. 21:22).

- 1) Leviticus 24:17-22: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*. And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* the LORD your God."
  - 2) Deuteronomy 19:16-21: "If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him *that which is* wrong; Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, *if* the witness *be* a false witness, *and* hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you. And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you. And thine eye shall not pity; *but* life *shall go* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."
  - 3) Deuteronomy 21:22: "And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree."
  - b. "It has sometimes been claimed by those in favour of abortion that the unborn child is not really considered as an individual here; but that is not the point of this passage, which is primarily concerned with injury to the woman. The destruction of the unborn child was regarded by the Hebrews as an instance of the most barbarous cruelty, calling down God's judgment (2 Ki. 15:16)" (Cole, p.169). "Then Menahem smote Tiphseh, and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he smote *it*; *and* all the women therein that were with child he ripped up" (2 Kings 15:16).
  - c. "The departing of her fruit with no mischief following means her baby is delivered early or prematurely but lives. How could it be delivered dead with no mischief following? The mischief that follows would be if the baby is aborted in the process. Then life is to be required for life. The one who prompted the baby's murder must pay for this with his own life. They greatly err who think the passage just requires a fine levied for baby murder. The fetus is as much human as it will be a day after its birth" (Robert Taylor, Ripley Bulletin, 12-18-89).
  - d. The gospel denies us the right to avenge ourselves; rather, we are required to help our adversaries by doing good to them in response to the evil they do us; in doing this, we can heap coals of fire on their heads (Rom. 12:17-21). However, civil authorities have the God-given right (and duty) to punish evildoers.
    - 1) Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth *evi*. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
    - 2) 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
4. Verses 26-27: "And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall

let him go free for his eye's sake. And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake."

- a. This passage extends the penalty of exacting an eye for an eye to the case of a master who smites his servant with damage resulting. The master had the right to control his servants, even to mete out righteous punishment when such was necessary, but he did not have the right to dismember or otherwise cause serious injury to the slave.
- b. "It was a noble law that obliged the unmerciful slaveholder to set the slave at liberty whose eye or tooth he had knocked out. If this did not teach them humanity, it taught them caution, as one rash blow might have deprived them of all right to the future services of the slave; and thus self-interest obliged them to be cautious and circumspect" (Clarke, p.412).
- c. "Eye and tooth are individual examples selected to denote all the members, from the most important and indispensable down to the very least" (Keil, p.135).

F. Exodus 21:28-36: Rules Governing Death and Injury caused by Animals.

1. Verses 28-29: "If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death."
    - a. In the case of an ox that gores to death a man or woman, the beast is to be stoned to death, and its flesh is not to be eaten. By the prohibition to eat the ox's flesh, the implication is left that it was unclean since the animal had caused the death of an innocent person. Some scholars have supposed that this was intended as a penalty for the owner who perhaps did not use due caution and thus must pay a price for this unwarranted loss of life.
    - b. But if the ox had been known to push with his horns in the past, showing an aggressive and dangerous nature, and the owner had been advised of this but had not put up the beast to protect the public, then both the ox and its owner were to be slain.
  2. Verses 30-32: "If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him. Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him. If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned."
    - a. An exception clause is given since the death was not intended by the owner. He was allowed to redeem his life by payment of a sum of money determined by the affected party. The ransom price for the death of a son or daughter was to be determined in each individual case. But the ransom price for a slain servant was fixed at thirty shekels of silver. This was about fifteen dollars.
    - b. This was the same price the religious leaders agreed to pay Judas for his treacherous betrayal of Christ (Matt. 26:14-16). This was the identical price prophetically determined for the Savior's betrayal (Zech.11:12-13). The owner could save his life by paying the ransom, but the ox must be slain.
  3. Verses 33-36: "And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein; The owner of the pit shall make *it* good, *and* give money unto the owner of them; and the dead *beast* shall be his. And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die; then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it; and the dead *ox* also they shall divide. Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox; and the dead shall be his own."
    - a. In the case of a man having an open pit, and another's animal fell into it and died, the man was to pay for the animal; the carcass then belonged to the man.
    - b. In the case of one man's ox goring to death another man's ox, the surviving ox was to be sold and the money and the dead ox divided. But if the aggressive ox had been known to push in times past, and the owner had not put him up, the owner was to pay for the dead animal, and the carcass was his.
-

## EXODUS 22

### A. Exodus 22:1-17: Various Laws Dealing With Theft and Property.

1. Verses 1-3: "If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, *there shall* no blood *be shed* for him. If the sun be risen upon him, *there shall be* blood *shed* for him; *for* he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft."
  - a. One who steals, and kills or sells, an ox or sheep has to repay the owner at the rate of five oxen for an ox, or four sheep for one sheep.
  - b. If a burglar is caught in the act of breaking into a house and is slain in the ensuing struggle, no fault will be attached to the defender of the property. The condition understood, and implied in verse 3, is that the burglary takes place at night. In the darkness the intruder is not apt to be identified, and it could not certainly be established that the owner was acting out of mischief in killing him, thus the benefit of doubt goes to the defender. But if the intruder is found breaking in during daylight the owner does not have the right to slay him; this is so because the thief could be identified, and others would likely be around to assist in apprehending him. The thief is required to make full restitution, and if he is unable to pay, he is to be sold into bondage.
2. Verses 4-6: "If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution. If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution."
  - a. NKJ: "If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double. If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution."
  - b. If a thief is found with the stolen animal in his possession, and has not been slain or sold, he is to restore double. This connects with verse one. For each ox, ass, or sheep he has stolen, he is repay two of the same. This penalty is easier than that of verse one because it could be argued that he intended to return the property. He at least had retained the option of returning it.
  - c. The Code of Hammurabi required that a 30-fold restitution be made if the property belonged to the state; 10-fold if it belonged to a private citizen; if he could not pay, he was to be put to death.
  - d. If a man allows his beast to eat a field or vineyard, he must make restitution for the loss from the best of his own field or vineyard.
  - e. If someone sets a fire which consumes the grain in the field, the responsible party must make restitution.
3. Verses 7-13: "If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double. If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, *to see* whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods. For all manner of trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, *or* for any manner of lost thing, which *another* challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour. If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing *it*: *Then* shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall not make *it* good. And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof. If it be torn in pieces, *then* let him bring *it* for witness, *and* he shall not make good that which was torn."
  - a. These are various laws and conditions relating to property. If a man delivers into a neighbor's hands certain property for him to keep for him (possibly as surety for a loan), and the property is stolen, the thief is to repay double the worth of the property. If no thief is found, the master of the house is to be brought before the judges to see whether he has been the culprit.

- b. In the case of a man seeing something of his that has been stolen in the possession of someone else, the cause is to be brought before the judges; the one found guilty of the crime (either the theft or the false charge of theft) will pay the other party double the worth of the contested item.
- c. If a man delivers an animal into the keeping of his neighbor, and the beast is hurt or dies or is driven away, the one having the care of the animal is to give an oath attesting his innocence. There are some cases where only sworn testimony is available to determine the truth of a matter. In those early days of Israel, a man's word was worth more than it was during the first century. In the earlier days of our own country, a man's word was valuable and respected—but not so now with a great many people. When God's name is revered, men will not be as apt to swear to a falsehood. But in our society the sanctity of truth-telling and reverence for the Almighty are at a low ebb.
- d. If the one who has accepted responsibility for the animal allows it to be stolen from him, he shall make restitution for the loss. In the regions of Israel which bordered with the territory where other nations lived, it was common for bands of "rustlers" to drive away livestock. Also, there were various wild beasts which frequently attacked the tame animals. If the one watching over another's animal can produce the carcass of the missing animal, he will not have to make restitution. The shepherd who watched over sheep belonging to another would fight desperately to ward off thieves and wild beasts—otherwise he might have to pay for any that were lost.
  - 1) David fought and killed a lion and a bear: "And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee" (1 Sam. 17:34-37).
  - 2) "Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus *in* a couch" (Amos 3:12).
- 4. Verses 14-15: "And if a man borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it, he shall surely make *it* good. *But* if the owner thereof *be* with it, he shall not make *it* good: if it *be* an hired *thing*, it came for his hire."
  - a. If a man borrows something from his neighbor, and the animal is hurt or dies, he shall make it good if he was not present. It may be presumed that he could have prevented the injury or death if he had been present.
  - b. But if he was present, he shall not make it good if he had obtained the animal by hire (he paid for it). The owner must bear the loss since he had agreed to rent the beast to the neighbor.

B. Exodus 22:16-31: Laws Relating to Moral Issues.

- 1. Verses 16-17: "And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins."
  - a. If a man entices a maiden who is not betrothed to lie with him, he must pay the dowry for her to become his wife. But if her father refuses to allow her to marry him, the man must nevertheless pay the dowry.
  - b. The father would have been deprived of the dowry which would have come to him when the daughter later married, and since it would now be very difficult for her to find a husband, the offender must bear the loss.
- 2. Verse 18: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."
  - a. One who was found to be a witch was to be put to death. Leviticus 20:27 includes warlocks (men witches) in this capital crime, and specifies stoning as the manner of the execution. These passages which speak of witches and warlocks are not asserting that these individuals have the ability to perform supernatural works. It was through various kinds of trickery and enchantments that they

produced their evil; no miraculous acts were present. When the witch of Endor produced Samuel from the dead, she was terrified: "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself" (1 Sam. 28:7-14). This was the Lord's doing, not hers. Clearly this witch had never seen such a thing that now sprang before her; she was a phony.

- b. The Greek word in the LXX for witch is *pharmakeus*, which is closely related to our English word *pharmacy*, and means "one who deals in drugs and poisons, a poisoner." There were several things wrong with witchcraft which made it punishable by death, including the fact that it was entirely false, and led people away from truth and God; it often included poisoning for hire; and was associated with all kinds of other sinful activity:
  - c. "And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger" (2 Chron. 33:6).
  - d. The supposed miraculous demonstrations were attributed to the forces of darkness. This evil is also condemned in the New Testament, although we are not given the right or responsibility to put them to death today. If capital punishment were to be suddenly carried out upon all those who claim such today in our land, our population would drop considerably!
3. Verse 19: "Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death."
    - a. This heinous spiritual crime was punishable by death as was homosexuality (Lev. 20:13). This prohibition is also found in Leviticus 20:15-16 and Deuteronomy 27:21. This form of fornication is also present among the perverted population of our time.
    - b. Coffman tells of a case in Houston in which the board he served on placed a guard on a horse farm within the city limits to protect the mares from this unnatural act (p.323). No doubt many other cases of this horrible conduct is practiced daily in our land. Many of the base characteristics of paganism have been revived in our time, and in our own country! Such conduct as this was surely deserving of death.
  4. Verse 20: "He that sacrificeth unto *any* god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed."
    - a. They were prohibited from offering any sacrifice to any of the false gods which were plentiful in the world then. One doing such was to be utterly destroyed (put to death). This precept would have kept Israel free from the corrupting influence of idolatry if it had been faithfully practiced. This command does not show God's hatred for those who do such things, but for the act itself.
    - b. He was trying to protect his people from the awful consequences of this sin. There was a need for them to be reminded of God's law, for when they lost their knowledge, they lost their freedom, country, homes, and souls: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6).
  5. Verses 21-24: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."

- a. They were here forbidden to oppress the strangers (foreigners) who would dwell among them, or sojourn with them. The reason: they were once strangers in Egypt. This shows God's interest in all mankind: "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Tim. 4:10).
- b. They are commanded against afflicting any widow or orphan. If they violated this decree, and the victim cried out to God, he would hear their cry and punish the offender with the sword, and *their* children would then be fatherless! This involves the age-old principle that one must reap what he has sown. One of the contributing factors in the overthrow of ancient Israel by Babylon was their violation of this very precept.
  - 1) Jeremiah 22:3-5: "Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people. But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation."
  - 2) Amos 2:6: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes."
6. Verses 25-27: "If thou lend money to *any of my people that is poor* by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: For that *is* his covering only, it *is* his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I *am* gracious."
  - a. "The old versions used 'usury' for the word 'interest' in this passage; but the word 'usury' in Hebrew usage did not carry the connotation of exorbitant and excessive interest as does our English word. It simply means 'interest' as translated here" (Coffman, p.324).
  - b. The KJV has "usury" and the ASV has "interest." Thus they were forbidden to loan money to a poor Hebrew and charge interest on the loan. It was customary that a pledge (collateral, surety) be given; if it was the outer garment of the borrower, it must be returned to its owner by sundown since it also served as bed covering.
7. Verses 28-31: "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people. Thou shalt not delay to *offer* the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, *and* with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me. And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat *any* flesh *that is* torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) "Thou shalt not revile God, nor curse a ruler of thy people. Thou shalt not delay to offer of thy harvest, and of the outflow of thy presses. The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with its dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me. And ye shall be holy men unto me: therefore ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs" (ASV).
    - 2) "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people. You shall not delay to offer the first of your ripe produce and your juices. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. Likewise you shall do with your oxen and your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me. And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs" (NKJV).
    - 3) Contempt of God consists not only in blasphemies of Jehovah openly expressed, which were to be punished with death (Lev 24:11 ff.), but in disregard of His threats with reference to the oppression of the poorer members of His people (vv. 22-27), and in withholding from them what they ought to receive (vv. 29-31). Understood in this way, the command is closely connected not only with what precedes, but also with what follows. The prince (*naasiy'* (OT:5387), lit., the

elevated one) is mentioned by the side of God, because in his exalted position he has to administer the law of God among His people, and to put a stop to what is wrong” [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

- b. The command regarding the giving of the firstborn and firstfruits is enjoined (cf. Ex. 13:2,12). The "liquors" (flowing) refers to their wine and oil they produced.
  - c. Because of blood remaining in the flesh, they were forbidden to eat animals which had been torn by wild beasts.
    - 1) Genesis 9:3-4: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."
    - 2) Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul."
-

## EXODUS 23

### A. Exodus 23:1-9: Various Laws Governing Treatment of Others.

1. Verses 1-5: "Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest *judgment*: Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "Thou shalt not take up a false report: put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest justice: neither shalt thou favor a poor man in his cause. If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, thou shalt forbear to leave him, thou shalt surely release it with him."
    - 2) NKJ: "You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice. You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute. If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it."
  - b. The two clauses of verse one are connected, and the second indicates that a court action is under consideration. They were forbidden to raise a false report against some other person. This is an extension of the commandment forbidding bearing false witness.
  - c. The majority is usually wrong. Consider the generation of Noah and Israel during Elijah's time: "And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away....Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:10,18). The popularity of a view does not insure its correctness, nor does the unpopularity of another view prove its invalidity.
  - d. Truth is very narrow. One must have the exact phone number to ring your telephone, and the exact combination numbers to open a lock. There is an exact velocity that must be reached to place an object into space. Chemicals must be combined in precise amounts to produce the desired compounds. To get to heaven, the narrow way must be followed: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).
  - e. Israel followed the counsel of the majority of the twelve spies to their own hurt. Many legal causes have been decided on the basis of popularity instead of truth and justice. The principle of this verse forbids the doing of evil in any case even though the majority may favor it. Truth and justice are not to be perverted though favored by most.
  - f. No favoritism is to be shown to the poor man because of his poverty. Compassion should not cause justice and truth to be disregarded. No "war on poverty" will destroy poverty. Despite the efforts to shift as much of the rich man's wealth from him to the poor, the poor will always be with us (Mark 14:7). There is not enough wealth on earth to provide everyone all that he may want. Rome tried to keep their poverty-stricken class of good-for-nothings quiet and submissive by providing them with a daily dole of bread and entertainment. This contributed to their eventual destruction as a nation.
  - g. They are taught to be compassionate and helpful, even to an enemy. If one's enemy has a donkey that has strayed from home, he is to return it to the owner. If the beast has fallen under his load, help it back to its feet. "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them:



thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother *be* not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again" (Deut. 22:1-4).

2. Verses 6-9: "Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous. Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) ASV: "Thou shalt not wrest the justice due to thy poor in his cause. Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no bribe: for a bribe blindeth them that have sight, and perverteth the words of the righteous. And a sojourner shalt thou not oppress: for ye know the heart of a sojourner, seeing ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt."
    - 2) NKJ: "You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous. Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt."
  - b. They were forbidden to pervert justice against a poor man. Verse seven is "a general command to keep far away from a false matter, and not to slay the innocent and righteous, i.e., not to be guilty of judicial murder, together with the threat that God would not justify the sinner" (Keil, p.145).
  - c. Verse eight forbids the taking of bribes for the purpose of perverting justice. The religious leaders of the Lord's time on earth were quick to bribe witnesses and pay for silence.
    - 1) Matthew 28:11-15: "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."
    - 2) 1 Samuel 7:3: "And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then* put away the strange gods and Ashtaroath from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines."
    - 3) Psalms 26:10: "In whose hands *is* mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes."
    - 4) Proverbs 17:23: "A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment."
    - 5) Isaiah 1:23: "Thy princes *are* rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."
    - 6) Isaiah 5:23: "Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!"
    - 7) Micah 3:9-11: "Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, *Is* not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us."
    - 8) Zephaniah 3:3: "Her princes within her *are* roaring lions; her judges *are* evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow."

- d. Verse 9 forbids any oppression being directed toward the strangers who dwelt among them; they are to remember that they were once strangers in Egypt.

B. Exodus 23:10-13: The Sabbatical Year

1. Verses 10-11: "And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: But the seventh *year* thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, *and* with thy oliveyard."
  - a. The law of the sabbatical year is introduced. They were to till and plant for six years, but the land was to lie fallow during the seventh year. Whatever came up during that year was to go to the poor of the land and the beasts of the field. The same procedure was to be followed with the vineyards and oliveyards. The fields would get a needed rest, and others would benefit. It was also a test of their faith.
  - b. Leviticus 25:21 promised that enough would be harvested during the sixth year to provide for the needs of that year, the seventh year, and the eighth year while the harvest of that year was being produced. "Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years" (Lev. 25:21).
  - c. Israel paid little or no heed to this law. The Lord later sent them into 70 years of Babylonian captivity—a time factor which would make up for the non-observed sabbatical years: "To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years" (2 Chron. 36:21).
2. Verses 12-13: "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed. And in all *things* that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth."
  - a. Verse twelve addresses the sabbath day, a day of rest for all concerned, plus the beasts. Clarke stated that a foreigner had referred to England as "the paradise of women, the purgatory of servants, and the hell of horses" (p.420). In many societies, the beasts of burden, etc., have been sorely mistreated. The Old Testament law provided for the humane treatment of animals.
  - b. They were to utterly reject the gods of the people of the land; they were not even to talk of them.

C. Exodus 23:14-19: Three Feasts Appointed.

1. Verses 14-16: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field."
  - a. Three feasts are given, one of which had already been observed—the Passover. The Feast of Unleavened Bread. He does not mention the Passover but it was the beginning of this feast. The Passover and Unleavened Bread went together so that they were thought of as one. "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" (Luke 22:1). They were to appear before the Lord, not with empty hands, but with proper sacrificial gifts: "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee" (Deut. 16:16-17).
  - b. The Feast of Harvest (Pentecost). The feast of harvest is also known as the feast of weeks (Ex. 34:22). It was celebrated 50 days after Passover, and always fell on Sunday (Lev. 23:15-16). This commemorated the giving of the law at Sinai fifty days after Passover.
    - 1) Exodus 34:22: "And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end."
    - 2) Exodus 24:18: "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights."

- 3) Leviticus 23:15-16: "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD."
- c. The Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles) commemorated the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. During this feast they erected booths in which they lived.
2. Verses 17-19: "Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."
  - a. NKJ: "Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord God. You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning. The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."
  - b. The males of the land were to appear before the Lord on these three feast days during each year. The place where they were to celebrate these feasts was where the tabernacle was erected. This did not forbid the women from also attending; it just did not require their presence (1 Sam. 1:3ff; Lk. 2:41ff). Exodus 34:24 answers the question they would naturally have in their minds: what if the enemy should take advantage of the absence of the men and attack our homes? God would take their protection in hand. "Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year" (Ex. 34:23-24).
  - c. The passover lamb was to be offered with unleavened bread; leavening was not to be retained in the houses where the feast was eaten. The remainder of the lamb was to be burned before morning. The firstfruits of the harvest were to be offered to the Lord.
  - d. They are prohibited from seething a lamb in its mother's milk. First, it is an indication of unconcern for the beasts involved. "Even human nature shudders at the thought of causing the mother to lend her milk to seethe the flesh of her young one!" (Clarke, p.422). A discovery in 1930 revealed an ancient pagan ritual that called for a kid to be boiled in its mother's milk, with the fluids produced being sprinkled on the crops; this was supposedly able to increase fertility of the soil. "With this information, it is easy to understand why God would not allow Israel to do anything resembling the pagan rites of idolatrous nations around them" (Coffman, p.336).
- D. Exodus 23:20-24: The Promise of the Angel Leading Them into Canaan.
  1. Verses 20-21: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him."
    - a. God had prepared the promised land for his people. The Angel, evidently a reference to Christ, would lead them into taking possession of it. He had power to lead them into Canaan and to withhold forgiveness, something beyond the capability of an ordinary angel. "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).
    - b. They are cautioned against this Angel: beware of him, obey what he says, do not provoke him. He will not pardon your transgressions: if you violate his word, he will deal harshly with you (there will be no overlooking of your evil). When they later rejected the word of the two wise spies and refused to proceed with the occupation of Canaan, they were severely punished by the events of the next thirty-eight years in the wilderness, in which all the men except two died. When Moses went against the instructions he was given to produce water for the camp, he was denied the privilege of entering into Canaan. The Angel's word was inviolate. God's name was in him. This is added evidence that this Angel was special. His name refers to his authority; this angel was operating by the great authority of Jehovah.

2. Verses 22-24: "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off. Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images."
  - a. The conditional promise is given concerning their enemies. If Israel obeyed the voice of the Angel, then their enemies would be God's enemies, thus would he place the full forces of heaven behind their welfare and success.
  - b. This Angel would precede them into the land, insuring their successful invasion. The inhabitants are identified under six names; there were subdivisions, but these are given as a comprehensive description of the entire list. God promises to cut these enemies off; but the Angel and Israel were also involved in the process. God gave them Jericho, but it was necessary for them to follow a divinely-given plan of operation, which resulted in their acquiring possession of the city.
  - c. They are instructed to keep away from the idols of the land, in fact, to destroy the various images they found there.

E. Exodus 23:25-33: Conditional Promises of Blessings and Help.

1. Verses 25-27: "And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil. I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee."
  - a. Provided they follow the Lord's word, he will give them blessings of food and water. Also he will bless their increase: nothing would cast their young prematurely; he would allow them to come to full term to insure a natural and safe birth.
  - b. He would send fear on the enemies before their arrival (Num. 22:3; Josh 2:9,11). Many battles are won before the first shot is fired. The hornet drove out some of the pagan inhabitants who had forfeited their right to the land.
    - 1) Numbers 22:3: "And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they *were* many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel."
    - 2) Joshua 2:9,11: "And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you... And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."
    - 3) Joshua 24:12: "And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; *but* not with thy sword, nor with thy bow."
2. Verses 29-33: "I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land. And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee. Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee."
  - a. God promised to give them the land, but not all at once; the pagans would be driven forth little by little, as Israel spread her conquest, and gained control.
  - b. The intended boundary would extend from the Red Sea, to the Mediterranean Sea, to the eastern desert, to the river (Euphrates). "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life" (1 Kings 4:21).
  - c. The pagans were to be removed from the land; no covenants were to be made with them; Israel was to have nothing to do with their gods. Later, they demanded an earthly king so they could be like their pagan neighbors, a demand that resulted in disaster. Joshua [Josh. 9:3-27] was deceived into entering

an agreement with the deceptive Gibeonites.

- 1) Joshua 9:15: “And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.” (He should have inquired of the Lord before making peace with them.
  - 2) When Joshua discovered their deceit, he took appropriate action: “And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, in the place which He would choose, even to this day” (Josh. 9:27, New King James).
-

## EXODUS 24

### A. Exodus 24:1-8: Establishment of the Covenant with Israel.

1. Verses 1-3: "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do."
  - a. Moses had received the laws of the previous chapters. He was told to bring Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders, and worship afar off from the Lord. Moses alone was to approach the Lord; those other men were to stay away; the people were not permitted to be present. Moses had either already returned from the mountain before receiving these instructions, or else he was told to return to camp and bring those men mentioned with him on his next trip up the mountain.
  - b. Moses came and reported to the people, detailing all the commandments and instructions the Lord had delivered to him. In response to these laws, the people all affirmed their willingness to abide by the conditions and rules the Lord had given them.
  - c. It was necessary for the people to be clearly taught what was expected of them before they entered into the covenant. Their response was unanimous and complete, and apparently enthusiastic. However sincere they may have been in their acceptance of God's word, within forty days they were involved in idolatry and were plotting to renounce Moses and return to Egypt (chapter 32).
  - d. Peter also thought he was up to the task of remaining steadfast to the Lord. Compare: "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples" (Matt. 26:33-35).
2. Verses 4-6: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar."
  - a. Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. This statement shows that the book of Exodus is not a collection of oral traditions compiled many years later by unknown editors. Moses wrote the laws down soon after receiving the information, and it is no less certain that he also recorded the events which occurred in connection with them.
    - 1) Exodus 17:14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."
    - 2) Exodus 24:4: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel."
    - 3) Exodus 34:27: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel."
    - 4) Numbers 33:1-2: "These *are* the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these *are* their journeys according to their goings out."
    - 5) Deuteronomy 31:9: "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel."
    - 6) Deuteronomy 31:11: "When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing."
  - b. Moses, arising early the next morning, built an altar under the hill and set up twelve pillars which were representative of the twelve tribes of Israel.
  - c. He sent young men to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings of oxen. We are not told who these

young men were; we are not told how many there were or how many oxen they sacrificed. There were obviously several oxen, the blood of which would be enough to fill several basins—sufficient for the upcoming ceremony conducted by Moses.

- d. Moses took half of the blood and sprinkled it upon the altar. "The division of the blood had reference to the two parties to the covenant, who were to be brought by the covenant into a living unity; but it had no connection whatever with the heathen customs...in which the parties to a treaty mixed their own blood together. For this was not a mixture of different kinds of blood, but it was a division of one blood, and that *sacrificial* blood, in which animal life was offered instead of human life, making expiation as a pure life for sinful man, and by virtue of this expiation restoring the fellowship between God and man which had been destroyed by sin" (Keil, pp.157f).
3. Verses 7-8: "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words."
    - a. Moses read the book of the covenant in the presence of all the people; they again agreed to render obedience to all that the Lord had spoken. This is the third such instance of their promise to obey.
      - 1) Exodus 19:8: "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD."
      - 2) Exodus 24:3: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do."
    - b. Moses then sprinkled the blood that remained on the people. We are not told the mechanics of this operation: perhaps he walked through their midst, or had helpers to do so, sprinkling the blood; another method would be to have them pass before him. In some manner, he sprinkled the blood.
    - c. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper and stated that his blood was represented by the fruit of the vine (Mt. 26:28). The blood of Christ was connected with the new covenant just as the blood of the sacrificed animals was connected with the words of that first covenant. "And this covenant was made 'upon all the words' which Jehovah had spoken, and the people had promised to observe" (Keil, p.158).
  4. Coffman suggests several reasons why the covenant was established in blood (p.347).
    - a. It stressed the serious, even fatal, nature of sin, in that only blood, indicating death, could cleanse it.
    - b. Particularly, it was a type of the sacrifice of Christ "for the sins of the whole world."
    - c. In God's view of a covenant, before it could be in force, a death must have occurred: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:15-17).
    - d. Not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood: "Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without blood" (Heb. 9:18).
    - e. This also constituted a reminder that death was the penalty of breaking the covenant.
    - f. It symbolized the unity between God and Israel, since the same blood was sprinkled upon both, upon God in a figure, at the altar, and upon the people also (verse seven).
    - g. "The blood symbolizes the grace of God in man's redemption."
- B. Exodus 24:9-11: The Manifestation of God's Glory.
1. Verse 9: "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel."
    - a. In response to the instructions given in verses 1-2, Moses ascended part-way up the mountain, taking Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders. These would be representatives to report the awesome sight they were shortly to behold.
    - b. When Christ was transfigured, he accomplished this before selected disciples; when he showed
-

himself alive following his crucifixion, he did so before selected witnesses: "Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:41).

2. Verse 10: "And they saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in *his* clearness."
  - a. NKJ: "And they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity."
  - b. These men saw God: a plain declaration of fact. However, we are not to think that they actually saw the face of the Almighty, but a representation or manifestation of his glory. Other verses show that no man has at any time seen God (Deut. 4:15; 1 John 4:12; 1 Tim. 3:16). However, "they did behold a very wonderful display of God's excellent presence, sufficiently miraculous to inspire them with the knowledge that it truly was God himself who had given them the covenant and sealed it with blood" (Coffman, p.348).
    - 1) Exodus 33:20-23: "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
    - 2) Numbers 12:8: "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"
    - 3) Deuteronomy 4:12,15: "And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only *ye heard* a voice....Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire."
    - 4) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."
    - 5) 1 John 4:15: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."
  - c. The form of God that was manifested is not described lest some carnally-minded person should try to reproduce a material image for the purpose of worship. Isaiah gives no description of the wondrous sight he beheld of the Lord (Isa. 6:1ff).
    - 1) Daniel 7:9: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire."
    - 2) Ezekiel 1:26: "And above the firmament that *was* over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne *was* the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it."
    - 3) Isaiah 6:1-5: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
  - d. They saw under the feet of the Lord's form a pavement made of sapphire which is described as being clear. Compare: "And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind" (Rev. 4:6).
  - e. "According to Noth, this type of pavement is known particularly in Mesopotamia. It may be a reference to the blue 'lapis lazuli' which was favourite there from early times. If correctly translated,



*sapphire* would imply a deep blue, and a better description of the vault of the sky could hardly be found. After all the thunders and lightnings, now there is a transparent azure; yet even this splendour is only God's lowly footstool" (Cole, p.187).

3. Verse 11: "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off."
  - a. The nobles of the nation (those men who had accompanied Moses on to the mountain) also saw this form of God—yet they lived. Had they seen the actual face of God they would not have lived (according to verses cited above). Since they "saw God," it follows therefore that they saw only some manifestation of God, not the actual person of the Almighty.
  - b. The statement is made that God "laid not his hand" upon these men. That is, they were not slain by God. A meal was eaten in conjunction with this marvelous scene, a common part of ancient covenant-making.

C. Exodus 24:12-18: Moses Ascends Further up the Mountain.

1. Verses 12-14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God. And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur *are* with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them."
  - a. God instructs Moses to go higher into the mountain to receive the tables of stone on which God had written the commands. Moses was to instruct the people in all the matters covered in the law and commandments God would give to him. Notice that God said he had written the information. These tables were destroyed by Moses, and later replaced by a copy of them given by the Lord and inscribed by Moses.
    - 1) Exodus 31:18: "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."
    - 2) Exodus 32:15-16: "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written. And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables."
    - 3) Exodus 34:1-4: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone."
    - 4) Exodus 34:27-28: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."
  - b. Moses, taking Joshua with him, ascended the mountain; the elders, along with Aaron and Hur, remained behind. These two men were appointed to tend to civil matters that might arise during Moses' absence. Joshua went at least part way with Moses, but it is not likely he was immediately with Moses throughout the upcoming experiences. "And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, *There is a noise of war in the camp*" (Ex. 32:17).
2. Verses 15-18: "And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the LORD *was* like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights."
  - a. Moses ascended the mountain, and entered the area covered by the cloud. The glory of God was upon

Mount Sinai. The awesomeness of the sight must have been very impressive and fearful. God did not immediately address Moses, but waited until six days had passed. Men are always in a hurry; time is meaningless to God.

- b. In the meantime, Israel had a clear view of the awesome display of God's majesty upon the mountain-top. They saw it as a "devouring fire."
  - c. The inspired writer gives us a preview of the time Moses spent on the mountain. Forty days and nights were to pass before he made his way down to the people. Deuteronomy 9:9-12 reveals that Moses fasted during his stay there. It is significant that the 3 men appearing in the Lord's transfiguration scene had each fasted for forty days: (Moses, Dt. 9:9); Elijah (1 Kings 19:8); Christ (Matt. 4; Luke 4). The number forty seems to have had a special significance, for it appears very frequently in the Record.
3. The covenant God made with Israel was conditional (Ex. 23:22; Jer. 31:9). Many times the condition of faithfulness on Israel's part is connected with God's promises to them. This covenant was temporary.
- a. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34).
  - b. Romans 7:1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? *is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."
  - c. Cf. Hebrews 8; Galatians 3-4.
-

## EXODUS 25

### A. Introduction.

1. "The great Covenant having been established, God next instructed Israel with reference to their public worship. Some elements of worship, of course, had been known for centuries by all peoples as well as the Jew. Cain and Abel had received definite instructions with reference to sacrifices, else it would have been impossible for Abel 'through faith' to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. All of the patriarchs offered sacrifices; but now God would require the building of 'a tabernacle,' or sanctuary, in which a regular and formal schedule of religious events would more thoroughly instruct and guide Israel in matters religious.
2. "There was *another design*. This tabernacle would serve as a type, or pattern, of that ultimate spiritual entity through which men would be able to know and please God, i.e., the Spiritual Body of Christ, the Church of the Living God....God gave Moses the 'pattern' to be followed in this construction, requiring absolutely that he 'make all things according to the pattern' (v.9)" (Coffman, p.355).

### B. Exodus 25:1-9: Freewill Offerings For the Construction of the Tabernacle.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering."
  - a. Chapter 35 gives the fulfillment of these instructions. Each man who was willing was to give an offering. The marginal note gives "heave offering" for "offering." The heave offering was something which was lifted up, raised above the head (Exod. 29:26). As verse 8 indicates, the purpose of this offering was to provide the items and material necessary to construct the tabernacle. Exodus 36:5-7 shows that the generosity of Israel provided a great abundance of material, more than was needed, so that Moses had to ask the people to refrain from giving. What a wonderful, but short-lived, attitude! This is the kind of giving God delights in: giving that is cheerful and willing.
    - 1) Romans 8:32: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"
    - 2) 2 Corinthians 8:1-5: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves; Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 9:6-7: "But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
  - b. It is obvious that the people had considerable possessions. How did Israel happen to be in possession of the things needed? The tabernacle God envisioned was one built of costly material. God would take up his abode (in a figure of speech) in this tabernacle. Hence, it must be made of costly materials. Compare: "And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver" (2 Sam. 24:24).
  - c. "All of the patriarchs of Israel had been extremely wealthy persons; and a thrifty and energetic people had retained extensive possessions even during the years of their forced labor in Egypt; and in addition, God had put it into the hearts of the Egyptians to load them with costly gifts when they departed. In the meanwhile, there had been the defeat of the Amalekites' army, which also might have improved their economic status substantially" (Coffman, p.356).
  - d. Exodus 12:35-36: "And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. And Jehovah gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. And they despoiled the Egyptians."
2. Verses 3-7: "And this *is* the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and

shittim wood, Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.”

- a. The things asked for are named. The brass is thought to be a reference to copper, which was found in abundance in the area where the wilderness wanderings took place. The blue, purple, and scarlet were costly dyes used in tinting material for clothing, draperies, etc. Linen was the material used in the clothing worn by priests and nobles in Egypt, being cool and neat in appearance. Goats' hair was used in making material for tents; it was resistant to rain, and long-lasting. Rams' skins and badgerskins were included (for badger skin usage, see Num. 4:6). Shittim wood is probably a reference to acacia wood, which "grows in Egypt and on the Arabian peninsula into a tree of the size of a nut-tree, or even larger; the only tree in *Arabia deserta* from which planks could be cut, and the wood of which is very light and yet very durable" (Keil, p.164).
  - 1) The precious stones were to be used in ornamentation. The ephod was "a garment of some kind peculiar to the priests, and ever considered essential to all the parts of Divine worship..." (Clarke, p.429).
- b. Concerning badger skins:
  - 1) Numbers 4:6: "And shall put thereon a covering of sealskin, and shall spread over it a cloth all of blue, and shall put in the staves thereof." The KJV has "badger skins" but the ASV gives seal skins. The latter translation is more accurate
  - 2) "It is generally agreed among moderns that this is a wrong translation. Badgers are found in Palestine, but not either in Egypt or in the wilderness. The Hebrew takhash is evidently the same word as the Arabic tukhash or dukhash, which is applied to marine animals only, as to seals, dolphins, dugongs, and perhaps sharks and dog-fish. 'Seals' skins' would perhaps be the best translation" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
  - 3) "The tabernacle was covered with badgers' skins; the shoes of women were also made of them (Ezek 16:10). Our translators seem to have been misled by the similarity in sound of the Hebrew *tachash* and the Latin *taxus*, 'a badger.'
    - a) "The revisers [ASV] have correctly substituted 'seal skins.' The Arabs of the Sinaitic peninsula apply the name *tucash* to the seals and *dugongs* which are common in the Red Sea, and the skins of which are largely used as leather and for sandals.
    - b) "Though the badger is common in Palestine, and might occur in the wilderness, its small hide would have been useless as a tent covering. The *dugong*, very plentiful in the shallow waters on the shores of the Red Sea, is a marine animal from 12 to 30 feet long, something between a whale and a seal, never leaving the water, but very easily caught. It grazes on seaweed, and is known by naturalists as *Halicore tabernaculi*" [Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
  - 4) The *dugong* is another name for the sea cow. "The dugong's massive body is about 2.4 to 2.7 m (about 8 to 9 ft) long and tapers to a forked, horizontally flattened tail" (*Encarta*).
- c. Verses 8-9: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*."
  - 1) We are told elsewhere that God does not dwell in edifices built by human hands (Acts 17:24; 1 Kings 8:27). It was only in an accommodative manner that it could be said that God would dwell in the tabernacle. The meaning is that it was in the tabernacle that he would (1) meet with Israel (Ex. 20:24), (2) record his name, and (3) have a representative dwelling place. The tabernacle would be a physical reminder of God's presence with his people, and would serve as a rallying place for their gatherings and worship, and the focal point of their sundry activities.
    - a) 1 Kings 8:27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"
    - b) Acts 17:24: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."
  - 2) Before any instruction regarding the construction of the tabernacle was given, a warning was issued

that Moses build it, and its furniture, according to the pattern God would provide (cf. verse 40; Heb. 8:5). This is one of the frequent warnings in the scriptures about doing things according to God's will. Although it is one of the most prominent features of the Bible, yet it is one of the most ignored!

- a) Exodus 25:40: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."
- b) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
- c) Galatians 1:9-10: "As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."
- d) Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."

C. Exodus 25:10-22: The Ark of the Covenant; Cf. Exodus 37:1-9.

1. Verses 10-15: "And they shall make an ark *of* shittim wood: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *shall be* in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it."
  - a. The ark was a chest which was designed in part to contain certain items. The word used here is different from the one describing Noah's boat (Cole, p.190). The size of the ark is given as two and a half cubits in length, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits tall. If a cubit is taken as 18 inches, the measurements of the ark would be 45 x 27 x 27 inches. The configuration of the ark would make it capable of containing the items God intended to place in it and made it easy to transport. It was designed so that the mercy seat would neatly fit on top.
  - b. It was to be made of acacia wood: "The tree often assumes a characteristic umbrella-like form. The wood is close-grained and is not readily attacked by insects. It would be well suited for such purposes as described, the construction of the ark of the covenant, the altar and boarding of the tabernacle. Even today these trees survive in considerable numbers around 'Ain Jidy and in the valleys to the south" (ISBE]. The ark was to be overlaid with pure gold, within and without. The crown of gold around it was probably a fancy golden rim (border), or a golden wreath encircling it (LXX).
  - c. Four golden rings were to be connected to the sides of the ark, at the corners. Staves were to be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. The number of the staves is not given but logic demands that they be two. The staves were to be used in carrying the ark which would be of considerable weight. These staves were to remain in the carrying rings. Numbers 4:6 speaks of the staves being removed, likely in order to put on the protective coverings.
2. Verses 16-20: "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims *of* gold, *of* beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be."
  - a. The testimony mentioned refers to the two stone tablets which would be stored in the ark. Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna were also kept there: "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod

that budded, and the tables of the covenant" (Heb. 9:4). The fact that the tables were to be in the ark gives a reason for the ark being called "the ark of the covenant."

- b. The mercy seat was designed to fit on top of the ark, and serve as a lid. The measurements of it would make for a perfect fit. It was to be made of pure gold. No mention is made of overlaying some other material with the gold, so the mercy seat was obviously of solid gold. The thickness of the sides and bottom of the ark, or of the mercy seat, is not given. The ark, with its contents, would have been heavy and costly.
  - c. Two cherubims (angels) were to be fashioned and fitted on top of the mercy seat, at either end, facing each other. Their wings were to be outspread, covering the mercy seat.
3. Verses 21-22: "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."
- a. The mercy seat was to be placed on top of the ark and the testimony which would be given was to be placed inside the ark. This mercy seat would be the focal point of Israel's worship. Later it will be revealed that the ark of the covenant (with its mercy seat) was to be put in the most holy compartment of the tabernacle, and that the high priest was to enter this room only on one day of the year when atonement was made for the sins of the people. On that occasion, blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. See Leviticus 16. Was the blood every cleaned off?
  - b. God would meet with his people through their representative (the high priest) at the mercy seat on the prescribed day. Some have thought that the placement of the mercy above the location of the tables of the law meant that "God's mercy ranks higher than God's law." The truth of the matter is that God's mercy is expressed by means of God's law.
    - 1) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness."
    - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
    - 3) Romans 5:21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."
    - 4) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
    - 5) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
  - c. We are saved by the grace of God (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9); we have access into this saving grace by our faith (Rom. 5:1-2); the faith that saves is the faith that obeys (Jas. 2:14-26); and faith comes by the hearing/learning of God's word (Rom. 10:17). There would be no way for us to be benefitted by God's grace if he had not given us his law (his word) by which our obligations, blessings, etc., are revealed.
    - 1) "*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:1-3)
    - 2) We have no condemnation today if we are in Christ and walk after the Holy Spirit's directions; the law of the Spirit (the gospel) has made us free from the guilt of sin, a blessing which the Mosaic Law (vs. 3) could not give: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

D. Exodus 25:23-30: The Table of Showbread; cf. Exodus 37:10-12.

1. Verses 23-25: "Thou shalt also make a table *of* shittim wood: two cubits *shall be* the length thereof, and

a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about."

- a. Directions for the construction of the table of showbread are given, starting with its dimensions: 2 cubits long, one cubit wide, and one and a half cubits in height: 36 x 18 x 27 inches (if one cubit is taken as 18 inches).
  - b. This table of acacia wood was to be overlaid with pure gold; a crown of gold was to be made around it; a border the width of a hand was to be around it. The crown of gold was to be connected with the border (this crown was different from that crown mentioned in verse 24—see Exodus 37:10-11: "And he made the table of acacia wood: two cubits was the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof: and he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereto a crown of gold round about" (ASV).
2. Verses 25-30: "And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that *are* on the four feet thereof. Over against the border shall the rings be for places of the staves to bear the table. And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with them. And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal: *of* pure gold shalt thou make them. And thou shalt set upon the table showbread before me alway."
- a. Four rings of gold were to be placed at the corners of the table, above the four feet (on which the table stood). Staves of acacia wood overlaid with gold were to be made by which to carry the table.
  - b. The dishes and utensils necessary for the services involved with the table of showbread were to be made of pure gold. Bread was to be kept on the table. Details concerning the services, etc., are given later in Leviticus 24:5-9. There were to be two rows of bread, with six pieces in each row. These were to be replaced every sabbath; priests were to eat the bread that was being replaced.

E. Exodus 25:31-40: The Candlestick; cf. Exodus 37:17-24.

1. Verses 33-36: "And thou shalt make a candlestick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: Three bowls made like unto almonds, *with* a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, *with* a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick *shall be* four bowls made like unto almonds, *with* their knops and their flowers. And *there shall be* a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it *shall be* one beaten work *of* pure gold."
- a. The candlestick and all its parts were to be made of pure gold. It had one shaft and six branches; the shaft in the middle served as the holder of the seventh candle. The knops were ornamental knobs (cf. capital, chapter; these are at the top of columns in buildings). The bowls held the lamps (37:23). The flowers or blossoms were ornamentations.
- b. The candlestick is described by Keil as follows: "Upon the base there rose an upright central pipe, from which three side pipes branched out one above another on either side, and curved upwards in the form of a quadrant to the level of the central stem. On this stem a calix and a knob and blossom were introduced four separate times, and in such a manner that there was a knob wherever the side pipes branched off from the main stem, evidently immediately below the branches; and the fourth knob, we may suppose, was higher up between the top branches and the end of the stem....The candle-stick had thus seven arms, and seven lights of lamps were to be made and placed upon them" (p.173).
- c. Coffman says, "One picture is said to be worth a thousand words, and fortunately a likeness of the golden candlestick which was robbed from the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem by the soldiers of Vespasian and Titus, A.D. 70, has been preserved in the carved representation of it engraved upon the Arch of Titus (c. 90 A.D.) commemorating the Triumph of that Flavian Caesar. We may not be certain that it was exactly like the golden candlestick of the tabernacle, described here; but, since the Jews constructed their Temple, in many respects, along the pattern of the tabernacle, it is as authentic a



likeness of the candlestick as could be found. This likeness of that ancient piece of tabernacle furniture is visible today on the Arch of Titus in Rome, or in the plaster casts made from it and exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Significantly, it was very heavy, being made entirely of beaten gold; and the carvings represent several men as being required to carry it" (pp.362f).

d. Arch of Titus:



2. Verses 37-39: "And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it. And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, *shall be of pure gold. Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.*"
  - a. Details about the making of the lamps, tongs, and snuff-dishes are given. The snuff-dishes were used to extinguish the lamps. The lamps were the only source of light within the tabernacle, just as the word of God is the only light within the church of Christ.
  - b. The tabernacle and its various items of furniture are representative of various things of the New Testament situation. 1 Kings 7:49 shows that Solomon varied the design of the candlestick, making one with 10 branches.
3. Verse 40: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."
  - a. This is a remarkable and very meaningful verse! If the precept stated in this passage were always adhered to by all men there would be no religious division today.
  - b. The great principle is stated many times in the scriptures in a variety of ways.
    - 1) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
    - 2) 1 Chronicles 15:13: "For because ye *did it* not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order."
    - 3) Proverbs 30:6: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."
    - 4) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;



---

Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."

- 5) Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
  - 6) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not *to go* beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
  - 7) 1 Timothy 1:10; 4:16; 6:20: "For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine....Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee....O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."
  - 8) 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2, 4:3: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus....And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also....For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."
  - 9) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
-

## Lessons From the Tabernacle

### A. INTRODUCTION:

1. The Old Testament's laws and commands are not binding on people today.
  - a. Colossians 2:12-16: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."
  - b. But there are many things in the Old Testament which are of great interest and importance to everyone who wishes to serve God in the Christian Age:
    - 1) Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:7, 11: "Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play....Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
  - c. And there are many types and shadows given in the Old Testament which are fulfilled in the New Testament. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1).
2. There are many New Testament truths illustrated by the various aspects of the Tabernacle.
  - a. This study deals with the beautifully clear, pictorial outline of certain things in the Christian system illustrated by the tabernacle. "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:1-6).
  - b. The Lord gave the design for the Tabernacle, the materials to be used, and all the significant details pertaining to its construction and its services, along with warnings: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:40).
  - c. The Tabernacle was to be a representative dwelling place for God.
    - 1) Exodus 25:8-9: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*."
    - 2) 1 Kings 8:27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"
    - 3) Acts 17:24: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."
  - d. God met with men in the tabernacle: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel"(Ex. 25:22).
  - e. The church of Christ is the place where God meets with men today, and he dwells in the church indirectly today.
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God

dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

- 2) 2 Corinthians 6:17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
- 3) Ephesians 2:21-22: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."
- 4) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

## B. DISCUSSION:

### 1. The Outer Court of the Tabernacle is representative of the world.

- a. The Israelites could enter the court, but since the average Hebrew was not a priest, he was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle proper. One had to have certain definite qualifications before he was permitted to enter the Holy Place.
- b. Those who would enter God's true tabernacle today (the church), must be converted from the world, and lose the stain of sin.
  - 1) Isaiah 6:1-3: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
  - 2) Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
  - 3) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
  - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
  - 5) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
  - 6) Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
  - 7) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." [Since nothing contaminated can enter Heaven, so nothing tainted can enter the Lord's church. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17)].
- c. No one could enter the Holy Place without meeting the qualifications and receiving the purification of priestly appointment, so no one can enter the True Tabernacle without meeting the qualifications of gospel obedience (faith, repentance, confession), and receiving the purification provided by the blood of Christ in baptism.
  - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
  - 2) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
  - 3) 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as*

silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

- 4) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

2. The Altar of Burnt Offerings is representative of the Sacrifice of Christ.

- a. The Altar was used in offering up the many sacrifices which God commanded Israel to offer.
- 1) Leviticus 9:7: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded."
  - 2) Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul."
- b. The sacrifices involved the offering of the blood of animals.
- c. The Israelites provided the sacrifices which were costly to the individuals.
- d. Without the shedding of the blood of the animals offered, there was no means of their approaching God. Compare: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22).
- e. The Antitype is in the Lord's sacrifice of himself for the sins of all men.
- 1) Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
  - 2) Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
  - 3) Hebrews 7:27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
  - 4) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
  - 5) Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
  - 6) Hebrews 10:16-19: "This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."
  - 7) Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

3. The Laver has its counterpart in the New Testament System.

- a. The laver was a basin containing water: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations" (Ex. 30:18).

- b. The Type involves the following particulars.
- 1) God specified its location: Between the tabernacle and altar: "Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (Exodus 30:18).
  - 2) Those entering the tabernacle were to lay aside their old clothes before washing and putting on the priestly garments.
  - 3) Those entering the tabernacle were to wash before entering lest they die.
    - a) Exodus 29:4: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water."
    - b) Exodus 30:19-20: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD."
  - 4) After washing and before entering, they were to put on their priestly garments prior to assuming their priestly duties (Exodus 29:4ff).
  - 5) They had to be ceremonially pure before they could perform their priestly services acceptably: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. 30:17-21).
- c. The Antitype holds true to the pattern.
- 1) God specified the location of baptism: between Christ's sacrifice and salvation.
    - a) Acts 2:36-38: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
    - b) 1 Peter 3:21: "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."
  - 2) We baptize rebellious children of the devil; they are rebelling against Satan and desire to obey God sincerely.
  - 3) We must lay aside our practices of sin (by repenting) before we can be washed.
    - a) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
    - b) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
    - c) Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
    - d) Colossians 3:8-9: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."
  - 4) The impurities (guilt) of sin are removed in baptism.
    - a) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - b) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
    - c) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood
-

of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

- 5) After this washing, we put on our spiritual garments.
  - a) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
  - b) Colossians 3:15-20: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."
- 6) We are now spiritually pure and our services can be offered acceptably: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:5,9).

#### 4. The Holy Place typifies the church of Christ.

##### a. Bible statements:

- 1) Acts 15:16-17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."
- 2) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are."
- 3) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- 4) Hebrews 9:7-11: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building."

##### b. There are several items of significance pertaining to the Type.

- 1) There was only one entrance.
- 2) Definite qualifications had to be met before one was authorized to enter the Holy Place: he had to be of the right lineage and age.
  - a) Exodus 28:1: "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."
  - b) Numbers 3:10: "And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."
  - c) Numbers 4:1-3: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host,

- to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation."
- 3) Only those who had been washed were permitted to enter.
  - 4) Those who entered did not do so merely for their own pleasure and benefit; they entered to serve God according to his revealed will: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God" (Heb. 9:6).
  - 5) Those qualified to enter the Holy Place were afforded the privilege of eating the showbread and burning incense upon the altar.
  - 6) Those who were in the Holy Place had the benefits furnished by the candlestick.
  - 7) The only entrance into the Most Holy Place was through the Holy Place.
- c. The church is the great antitype.
- 1) There is only one entrance: Obedience to the gospel which culminates in baptism at which point the Lord adds us to the church.
    - a) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
    - b) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
  - 2) The qualifications required before one can enter the Lord's church are: faith, repentance, confession of faith in Christ, and baptism for the remission of sins. Underlying this process is the fervent, loving commitment to serve the Lord.
  - 3) One must be washed from his sins.
    - a) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - b) 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
    - c) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
  - 4) While there are immeasurable blessings and privileges of being in Christ, yet we are not in the church merely for our pleasure; we are here to serve.
    - a) Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
    - b) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
  - 5) Only those who are faithful members of the Lord's church have the privilege of eating the Lord's supper and praying.
    - a) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."
    - b) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."
-

- c) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
- d) John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."
- e) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
- 6) Faithful members of the Lord's church see by the light of God's word.
- a) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
- b) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
- c) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
- d) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- e) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- f) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
- g) 2 Peter 1:1-11: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
-



- h) 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- 7) Only by going through the church can any accountable person have hope of entering heaven.
- a) Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
- b) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
- c) Matthew 16:17-18: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
- d) 1 Corinthians 15:24: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
- e) 2 Peter 3:5-11: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness."
5. The Candlestick depicts the Word of God.
- a. The thick tenting material closed out all the natural light, dust, and rain. The candlestick of the Tabernacle was to burn continually, and furnished the only light for the Holy Place: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually" (Lev. 24:1-4).
- b. The Word of God is the only light needed in the Antitype, the Lord's church.
- 1) All man-made precepts, commandments, and creeds are specifically excluded. We must insulate the church from all error!
- a) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
- b) Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him
-

- be accursed."
- c) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
- 2) God's word gives light.
- a) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
  - b) Psalms 119:130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."
  - c) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
  - d) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
  - e) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- c. While we draw light and strength from the word, we must also be proclaimers and defenders of the word.
- 1) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
  - 2) Romans 1:14-16: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
  - 3) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
  - 4) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
- d. Our lives, words, and attitudes are to be reflectors of the light of the word of God.
- 1) Matthew 5:14-16: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
  - 2) Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
6. The Altar of Incense has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.
- a. Exodus 30:1-9: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: *of* shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *shall be* of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat
-

offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon."

- b. A morning and evening ceremony was held each day in obedience to God's decree that this should be done perpetually. As the priests were burning the incense in the Holy Place, the people would be outside the tabernacle praying.
  - c. Prayer is the counterpart of this service in the gospel system.
    - 1) Revelation 5:8: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." In John's vision, the golden vials full of odors (incense) represented the prayers of the saints.
    - 2) Prayer is a perpetual privilege and obligation for members of the Lord's church.
      - a) Matthew 6:6-15: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
      - b) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."
      - c) 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."
7. The Table of Showbread has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.
- a. This table contained twelve loaves of bread which were replaced every sabbath.
    - 1) The priests were to eat the loaves that were replaced. "Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute" (Lev. 24:3-9).
    - 2) Only the priests were authorized to eat this bread.
  - b. The Lord's Supper is the counterpart in the church of Christ.
    - 1) Every first day of the week, the saints come together and eat this supper in remembrance of Christ. It is a perpetual command.
      - a) Acts 20:7: "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."
      - b) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had

supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

2) Only Christians have the right to partake of it.

- a) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
- b) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
- c) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
- d) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

8. The Veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place has its counterparts.

- a. The Veil is described in Exodus 26:31-37 as a very costly and beautiful curtain: "And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars *of* shittim *wood*, and overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *shall be of* gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them."
  - 1) It was made of fine twined linen of cunning work and dyed with the costly colors of blue, scarlet, and purple.
  - 2) Only the High Priest could go beyond the veil, and that only on the Day of Atonement when he offered the blood of the atoning sacrifice for all: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone

once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7; cf. Lev. 16).

- 3) The Veil concealed the items in the Most Holy Place: the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat.
- b. The Veil, and its being rent at the Lord's death, depicts several significant things.
  - 1) It symbolizes the mysteries of God's eternal plan which was unrevealed until the New Testament was given
    - a) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
    - b) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
    - c) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
  - 2) It symbolizes for us death by which we leave this world and enter eternity. Its having been rent depicts the great truth that Christ, by his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, has won victory for us over death.
    - a) Isaiah 25:7-8: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*."
    - b) 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
    - c) 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
    - d) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
  - 3) The rending of the veil at the death of Christ symbolizes the abrogation of the Old Covenant.
    - a) Matthew 27:50-51: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."
    - b) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But

even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."

- c) Hebrews 9:7-10: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation."
  - 4) It symbolized the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator.
    - a) Matthew 23:8: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren."
    - b) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
    - c) 1 Peter 2:5.9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
    - d) Revelation 1:6: "And he made us *to be* a kingdom, *to be* priests unto his God and Father; to him *be* the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (ASV).
  - 5) Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, is in heaven, and has offered the atoning sacrifice for us: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:6-17).
  - 6) The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened.
    - a) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
    - b) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
9. The Most Holy Place represents Heaven.
- a. The Ark of the Covenant rested there.
-

- 1) It contained the tables of the law, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna; the golden censer of Hebrews 9:4 is likely the one from the Holy Place which was taken into the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement: "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times" (Lev. 16:12-14).
  - 2) It was covered by the Mercy Seat, which was made of pure gold.
  - 3) It was in this place, at the mercy seat, that God met with his people: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 25:22).
  - 4) No artificial light was in this place; the glory of God was sufficient light.
- b. The Antitype is Heaven itself.
- 1) The ark of the covenant and the tables of the law suggest the New Covenant.
    - a) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
    - b) Hebrews 8:7-13: "For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
  - 2) The manna suggests Christ who is the bread of life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:47-51).
  - 3) The mercy seat suggests our Advocate and Mediator in Heaven—Christ: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*" (1 John 2:1-2).
  - 4) The Most Holy Place itself is Heaven.
    - a) Hebrews 6:19-20: "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
-

- b) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
- c) Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."
- c. There is no need for the sun, moon, or other light; the glory of God the Father and of the Son is sufficient: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23).

### C. CONCLUSION:

#### 1. God Gave the Details Pertaining to the Building and Services of the Tabernacle.

- a. He commanded the placing of the furniture and the other arrangements thereof.
- b. The showbread was eaten and the incense was burned inside, not outside, the Tabernacle.
  - 1) Leviticus 24:1-9: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute."
  - 2) God warned that all things were to be according to his plan.
    - a) Exodus 25:40: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."
    - b) Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."

#### 2. Those who are in Christ do not need baptism.

- a. Some try to move baptism and put it in the church, and speak of it as "Christian" baptism. But it is not for a Christian, but in order to become a Christian.
- b. The Laver was outside the Tabernacle; the priests had to wash there before they were allowed to enter the Holy Place. Baptism puts one into the church (into Christ).
  - 1) 1 Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."
  - 2) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
  - 3) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."

#### 3. On entering the Holy Place (the church of Christ), one is prepared to serve.

- a. We are not members of the body of Christ merely for our own pleasure and profit, but to serve God and our fellowman.
  - 1) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
  - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
  - 3) Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the



gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

- b. Our obligations are ordained by the God of heaven:
    - 1) **To worship of God:** "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).
    - 2) **To live pure lives:** "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).
    - 3) **To spread the gospel:** "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
    - 4) **To defend the faith:** "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7c; 2 Cor. 2:17).
  - c. Thus do we prepare for Heaven!
-

## EXODUS 26

### A. Introduction.

1. The information in this chapter deals with the construction of the tabernacle. We must keep in mind that the God of heaven does not dwell on earth, not even in the most elaborate of mansions. The tabernacle is said to be God's dwelling place, but only in a representative manner.
  - a. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).
  - b. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded" (1 Kings 8:27). This verse has reference to the magnificent temple Solomon had built. Has there ever been a more beautiful temple constructed?
2. The instructions given here, coupled with the vision Moses had been given on the mount and the Israelites' knowledge and skills of tent building, were sufficient for them to construct the tabernacle just like God wanted. Since we do not possess the same skills, and did not see the picture of the tabernacle God gave Moses, the instructions contained in this chapter are likely insufficient for us to reconstruct it precisely today. What is given here was supplemental to the pattern shown to Moses on the mount.
  - a. They had men who were gifted with expertise in working with wood and metal to produce the intricate designs required by the divine plan. It appears from Exodus 32 that Aaron was skilled in metalwork.
  - b. "One cannot fail to be disappointed by many of the commentaries on this chapter, which are preoccupied with problems arising from the incomplete nature of the instructions. One thing is sure, no one today, following these instructions, could go out and construct anything like what Moses built, that not at all being the purpose of these instructions. That the instructions are indeed incomplete is evident. We do not know if it had a flat roof, or a sloping roof like tents have today" (Coffman, p.365). Some have envisioned the tabernacle as having a flat roof; others with one or three ridgepoles; it has been pictured at different heights.
  - c. "There are not two commentators anywhere who agree on what was meant by the doubling of the boards (v. 24). 'The very meaning of the Hebrew term here rendered 'doubled' is not fully known.' Noth thought that 'the bars' went 'on the outside,' while others believe they went 'inside.' Furthermore, regarding the pillars, did they go 'inside' the fine linen curtains decorated with the cherubim, or on the outside, in which case the gold covered pillars would have been completely hidden! Other examples of this incompleteness could be cited, but these are sufficient to show that God was not telling all future generations how to make that tabernacle, but Moses only....The things that were mentioned in these verses were given for the purpose, not of enabling us to build a tabernacle, but for the purpose of giving facts about it that are pertinent and significant for all generations because, 'they are copies of the things in heaven' (ibid, pp.366f).

### B. Exodus 26:1-6: Instruction on the Curtains.

1. Verses 1-3: "Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them. The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure. The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another."
    - a. The curtains were to be 28 cubits long (42 feet) and each was to be 4 cubits in width (6 feet). There were to be ten curtains in all, and all were to be the same size. They were to be made of linen in three rich colors: blue, purple and scarlet. These are said to have been the most expensive dyes of ancient times. Cherubims "of cunning work" were to be embroidered upon these linen curtains, making a very beautiful, expensive, and appropriate inner "lining."
    - b. Five curtains were to be coupled together, giving two sections of curtains, each measuring 42 feet in length and 30 feet in width. Possibly, these two sections were attached to the inside of the framework of the tabernacle, running from end to end, with one section covering from the center of the structure to the bottom of the side and the other doing the same on the opposite half of the tent. It would be draped down at each end of the tabernacle. But perhaps they ran from side to side as the next covering.
-

2. Verses 4-6: "And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the second. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that *is* in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one tabernacle."
    - a. Fifty loops of blue were to be made for each of the two sections so that they could be joined (perhaps at the center-top). "Selvedge" means "end or extremity."
    - b. Fifty taches (clasps) of gold were to be made as the means of connecting the two sections of curtains.
- C. Exodus 26:7-14: Instructions for the Outer Coverings.
1. Verses 7-9: "And thou shalt make curtains *of goats' hair* to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make. The length of one curtain *shall be* thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains *shall be all* of one measure. And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle."
    - a. These curtains were to be made of goats' hair; there were to be 11 curtains of this material, each measuring 30 cubits (45 feet) in length and 4 cubits (6 feet) in width.
    - b. Five were to be connected together to form one section, and the remaining six were to be connected as the second section. The sixth curtain "was to be made double, i.e., folded together, towards the front of the tent, so as to form a kind of gable, as Josephus has also explained the passage (Ant. iii. 6,4)" (Keil, p.177).
  2. Verses 10-13: "And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain *that is* outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it."
    - a. Fifty loops were to be made on the edges of each of the curtain sections; taches (clasps) of brass were to be made for each of these loops that the two sections could be connected together.
    - b. "This tent-cloth was two cubits longer than the inner one, as each piece was 30 cubits long instead of 28; it was also two cubits broader, as it was composed of 11 pieces, the eleventh only reckoned as two cubits, as it was to be laid double" (Keil, p.177). On the back side of the tabernacle, the extra one-half cubit was to be placed; and the extra two cubits in length were to be put one cubit on each side.
  3. Verse 14: "And thou shalt make a covering for the tent *of rams' skins dyed red*, and a covering above *of badgers' skins*."
    - a. Two additional coverings were to be made, one of rams' skins dyed red, and the other of badgers' skins. Apparently, these coverings were outer layers which were exposed to the elements. The effect of these four coverings was that the outside light would be shut out; also the wind and dust would be excluded, as would precipitation.
    - b. Since the tabernacle was to be used for a period of time after entering Canaan, the materials were durable. And since there are rainy seasons in the land, the roof was possibly sloped to some degree since a flat roof of the materials used would collect water and sag inwardly. (Unless the boards described below also were to be on the top).
- D. Exodus 26:15-25: The Framework for the Tabernacle.
1. Verses 15-21: "And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle *of shittim wood* standing up. Ten cubits *shall be* the length of a board, and a cubit and a half *shall be* the breadth of one board. Two tenons *shall there be* in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side *there shall be* twenty boards: And their forty sockets *of silver*; two sockets
-

under one board, and two sockets under another board."

- a. Boards were to be made which were ten cubits (15 feet) long and one and one half cubits in width (27 inches). Two "tenons" were to be in each of these boards. These items were likely pegs such as are used to connect and support the extensions in our dining tables. These acacia boards were to be placed upright, side by side.
  - b. Twenty boards, each measuring one and a half cubits in width, standing side by side, gives us the length of the tabernacle—45 feet (using 18 inches as the equivalent to one cubit). These upright boards were to have two tenons at the bottom which were to fit into special sockets made of silver. The instructions for the south side of the tabernacle were given first; those for the north side were identical.
2. Verses 22-25: "And for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou shalt make six boards. And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets *of* silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board."
- a. The western end of the tabernacle was to have six boards (of the same width and height as the other boards); plus, two boards were to be placed at the corners. These were to be coupled together.
  - b. "The meaning of these words, which are very obscure in some points, can only be the following: the two corner beams at the back were to consist of two pieces joined together at a right angle, so as to form as double boards one single whole from the bottom to the top" (Keil, p.180).

E. Exodus 26:26-30: Instructions on Making the Bars.

1. Verses 26-29: "And thou shalt make bars *of* shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings *of* gold *for* places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold."
  - a. Five bars of acacia wood were to be fashioned for each of the three sides (south, west, and north). These bars it seems were to be placed horizontally. The middle of these bars was to extend the full length of the structure. The description is difficult to grasp. Golden rings are mentioned, so it may be that some of the bars passed through these rings.
  - b. Keil suggests that "the other four bars on every side were not to reach the whole length of the walls, and (we) may therefore suppose that they were only half as long as the middle one, so that there were only three rows of bars on each wall, the upper and lower being composed of two bars each" (pp.180f). The boards and bars were overlaid with gold.
2. Verse 30: "And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount."
  - a. The warning is issued again that the tabernacle was to be reared up according to the fashion shown Moses on the mount.
  - b. Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."
  - c. We all should be very careful to adhere to God's instructions, sincerely and seriously. There was a young preacher in Florida several years ago who took issue with an article written in our local church bulletin. The short article pointed out the necessity of being careful in what we teach from the Bible, that caution should be exercised. This young man from a liberal congregation in the area ridiculed what was taught in the message. Clearly, he was over-confident and arrogant in his approach to the word of God. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).
    - 1) If it was not possible for a Christian to fall, why did the inspired apostle give this sober warning? It is possible to fall! Some will argue that if one falls, he was never saved, but one cannot fall unless he is standing or elevated; since the fall depicts the state of condemnation, the condition prior to the fall was that of salvation (Jas. 5:19-20; 2 Peter 2:20-22).
    - 2) The warning is demanded because of the severity of falling. If one could fall and not be lost, there

would be no real cause for a warning to be issued. But in view of the consequence of falling, the warning is sorely needed.

- 3) To fall means that one is bound for eternal condemnation: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thess. 1:6-10).
- 4) We have this strong statement from the past: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9-10).

F. Exodus 26:31-37: The Veil and the Placement of the Furnishings.

1. Verses 31-32: "And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver."
    - a. The veil, which was to divide the tabernacle into two separate rooms, was to be made of linen of blue, purple, and scarlet colors. The material, color, and design were identical with the interior lining.
    - b. Four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold were to be erected as the means of hanging the veil. The hooks upon which the silver sockets were placed were to be of gold.
  2. Verses 33-35: "And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side."
    - a. The ark of the testimony (covenant) was to be placed in the most holy place behind (to the west) of the veil. The candlestick was to be placed opposite the table of showbread on the south side of the holy place. Thus, the table of showbread was on the north side.
    - b. The altar of incense is not mentioned here, but Exodus 30:1-9 places it before the veil.
  3. Verses 36-37: "And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars *of* shittim *wood*, and overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *shall be of* gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them."
    - a. The closure for the east end is described which included more of the fine linen, beautifully dyed; there were also five pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold, with golden hooks to receive the brass sockets.
    - b. This constituted the door of the tabernacle.
-

## EXODUS 27

### A. Exodus 27:1-8: Instructions for Constructing the Altar.

1. Verses 1-2: "And thou shalt make an altar *of* shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof *shall be* three cubits. And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass."
  - a. This altar was to be five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high. These measurements would make it about 7.5 feet in length and width, and 4.5 feet high. This assumes eighteen inches per cubit. It was to be made of acacia wood, and overlaid with brass.
  - b. Brass:
    - 1) "The use of the word brass has always been more or less indefinite in its application. At the present time the term brass is applied to an alloy of copper and zinc or of copper, zinc and tin. The word translated "brass" in the King James Version would be more correctly rendered bronze, since the alloy used was copper and tin (Ex 27:4).
    - 2) "In some passages however copper is meant (Deut 8:9), as bronze is an artificial product. This alloy was known in Egypt in at least 1600 B.C. It was probably known in Europe still earlier (2000 B.C.), which helps to answer the question as to the source of the tin. Bronze was probably of European origin and was carried to Egypt.
    - 3) "At a later period the Egyptians made the alloy themselves, bringing their copper from Sinai, Cyprus or northern Syria..., and their tin from the Balkan regions or from Spain or the British Isles.... When the Children of Israel came into the promised land, they found the Canaanites already skilled in the making and use of bronze instruments.
    - 4) "This period marked the transition from the bronze age to the iron age in Palestine Museums possessing antiquities from Bible lands have among their collections many and varied bronze objects. Among the most common are nails, lamps, hand mirrors, locks, cutting instruments, etc. Within comparatively recent times brass, meaning an alloy of copper and zinc, has been introduced into Syria....Sheet brass is now being extensively imported for the making of bowls, vases, etc. Bronze is practically unknown in the modern native arts" (ISBE).
  - c. Horns were to be made on the corners. These horns would serve several possible purposes: as ornamental adornments; to be used to tie the victims to the altar to prevent their falling off the altar. "God *is* the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, *even* unto the horns of the altar" (Ps. 118:27).
  - d. The altar was the site of the offering of the bodies of animals. The whole operation may seem to our minds, in this delicate age, a cruel and repulsive matter, but sacrifices in the Old Testament formed the background for the offering of Christ on the grossly repugnant Roman cross. It is necessary for us to recognize the harshness of animal sacrifice to more fully perceive the vastly more important sacrifice of the Son of God!
2. Verse 3: "And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basins, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make *of* brass."
  - a. NKJ: "Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze."
  - b. The utensils pertaining to the altar were to be made of brass. Gold and silver would not be as durable as brass in the heavy work of offering animal sacrifices. Pans and shovels would be needed in taking away the ashes; basins would be required in catching the blood of the victims; fleshhooks would be needed in moving the victim; firepans were likely to hold the fire.
  - c. Some scholars suggest that the fire which fell upon the altar from heaven (Lev. 9:24) was retained in the firepans, and after the camp moved, or when the altar was being cleaned, the fire was replenished from the fire kept alive in the firepans. Blood was smeared on the horns (Lev. 4:7), and those who fled to the altar to save their lives laid hold on the horns.
    - 1) Exodus 21:14: "But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die."
    - 2) 1 Kings 1:50-53: "And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught

hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword. And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house."

3. Verses 4-5: "And thou shalt make for it a grate of network *of* brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar."
  - a. NKJ: "You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze; and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar."
  - b. A grating of brass was to be constructed for the altar. Keil thought that this was a narrow walkway placed on the sides of the altar and extending completely around it. The priest could stand on it while performing the various activities pertaining to the sacrifice. Others think that it was a grating upon which the victim was laid while being offered. In this case, the wood would be underneath the grating.
  - c. Still others think that the grating was built into the sides of the altar to allow air to be drawn for the fire. The most natural view seems to be that this was a grating upon which the victim was laid and underneath of which the fire was built. This is suggested by the wording of verse 5. Four brazen rings were to be put on the four corners of the altar for the purpose of carrying it from place to place.
4. Verses 6-8: "And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay them with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it. Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was showed thee in the mount, so shall they make *it*."
  - a. Staves of acacia wood and overlaid with brass were to be made which were used in transporting the altar; these staves were inserted through the rings named above.
  - b. The altar was to be made hollow on the inside. Apparently, the grating was installed within the altar. Exodus 20:22-26 gives more details concerning the altar. Earth or stones could be used. Possibly part of the inner hollow of the altar was to be filled with earth or stones.
  - c. Abraham's altars were not so elaborate. It could be quickly put together from stones immediately available. "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood" (Gen. 22:6-9).

B. Exodus 27:9-19: Instructions for Constructing the Outer Enclosure of the Court.

1. Verses 9-15: "And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward *there shall be* hangings for the court *of* fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side: And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets *shall be of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *shall be of* silver. And likewise for the north side in length *there shall be* hangings of an hundred *cubits* long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver. And *for* the breadth of the court on the west side *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward *shall be* fifty cubits. The hangings of one side *of the gate shall be* fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. And on the other side *shall be* hangings fifteen *cubits*: their pillars three, and their sockets three."
- a. Other translations:
  - 1) "And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen a hundred cubits long for one side: and the pillars thereof shall be twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings a hundred

cubits long, and the pillars thereof twenty, and their sockets twenty, of brass; the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets, of silver. And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits; their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits. The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. And for the other side shall be hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three” (ASV).

2) “And thou hast made the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward, hangings for the court of twined linen, a hundred by the cubit [is] the length for the one side, and its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets [are] of brass, the pegs of the pillars and their fillets [are] of silver; and so for the north side in length, hangings of a hundred [cubits] in length, and its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets [are] of brass, the pegs of the pillars and their fillets [are] of silver. And [for] the breadth of the court at the west side [are] hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. And [for] the breadth of the court at the east side, eastward, [are] fifty cubits. And the hangings at the side [are] fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their sockets three. And at the second side [are] hangings fifteen [cubits], their pillars three, and their sockets three” (YLT).

3) "You shall also make the court of the tabernacle. For the south side there shall be hangings for the court made of fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long for one side. And its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets shall be bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be silver. Likewise along the length of the north side there shall be hangings one hundred cubits long, with its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze, and the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver. And along the width of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits, with their ten pillars and their ten sockets. The width of the court on the east side shall be fifty cubits. The hangings on one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. And on the other side shall be hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets” (NKJV).

- b. The North and West sides of this enclosure were to be 100 cubits in length, or about 150 feet. There were to be made of fine twined linen, with the necessary pillars, sockets, hooks, and fillets (fasteners).
- c. The ends of the court, west and east ends of the enclosure, were to be 50 cubits (75 feet). These were each to have ten pillars and sockets. (See Coffman, pp. 382-385 for a discussion and diagram which answer critical views of this passage).
- d. Verse 18 indicates that the height of these outer walls was to be five cubits (7.5 feet); it was about one-half as tall as the tabernacle, and thus did not hide the tabernacle from the view of those outside the court.

2. Verses 16-19: "And for the gate of the court *shall be* an hanging of twenty cubits, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework: *and* their pillars *shall be* four, and their sockets four. All the pillars round about the court *shall be* filleted with silver; their hooks *shall be of* silver, and their sockets *of* brass. The length of the court *shall be* an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits *of* fine twined linen, and their sockets *of* brass. All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, *shall be of* brass."

- a. The gate of the court was to be 20 cubits (length), and made of blue, purple, and scarlet fine twined linen. The proper pillars, fillets, hooks, and sockets were to be made.
- b. Verse eighteen again stresses the dimensions of the outer court, while the next verse says that the vessels of the tabernacle (here evidently referring to those tools needed to dismantle and erect the structure) were to be made of brass.

### C. Exodus 27:20-21: Instruction Regarding the Lighting of the Tabernacle.

1. Verse 20: "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always."
  - a. Israel was to prepare pure, beaten olive oil for the candlestick (lampstand). This is said to be oil produced from olives which were bruised, not crushed.
  - b. Normally, olives were crushed in order to remove the oil; but in this case, the oil was to be obtained by gentler methods, thus producing finer, cleaner oil.



- 
2. Verse 21: "In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which *is* before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: *it shall be* a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."
    - a. Those appointed priests were to service the candlestick. Some think it was burning only at night, others say it burned continually.
      - 1) Exodus 30:8: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations."
      - 2) 1 Samuel 3:3: "And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep*;"
    - b. It would seem that the lamps would be extinguished while being refilled and cleaned. It is unclear whether they burned only at night or constantly. They were to be used throughout the Mosaic Age.
-

## EXODUS 28

### A. Exodus 28:1-5: Instructions for Making Garments for Aaron.

1. "This paragraph introduced a dramatic change into the religious economy of Israel. Until this point, Moses himself had acted in the capacity of a high priest, actually sprinkling the blood upon the people in the ratification of the Covenant (Ch. 24:8). There had never been an established priesthood dedicated to the worship of Jehovah prior to the one commanded here. Job offered sacrifices for his family. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as countless others, as the first-born or heads of families, had discharged the duties of priests. That entire period of history was called the Patriarchal Age; but now, with the setting up of the Aaronic priesthood, the Mosaic Dispensation would begin, meaning the age which in matters of the priesthood would follow the instructions God gave to Moses" (Coffman, pp.389f).
2. Verse 1: "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."
  - a. God instructs Moses to take Aaron and his four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, and set aside these men as the first priests. As it turns out, Aaron is the high priest, the first in a long line of high priests extending down to the end of the Jewish system.
  - b. Some have wondered why Aaron was chosen for this high office instead of Moses.
    - 1) The reasons offered are perhaps many, but the chief one seems to be that Christ was to be a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, not after the Aaronic priesthood (see Ps. 100:4; Heb. 7).
    - 2) Aaron was imperfect in life. He was involved in the golden calf episode (Ex. 32). and joined Miriam in trying to usurp Moses' authority (Num. 12).
    - 3) Moses as lawgiver was a type of Christ.
  - c. Nadab and Abihu were slain by God when they offered strange fire in the worship (Lev. 10).
  - d. Eleazar followed Aaron as high priest: "And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father" (Num. 3:4).
    - 1) Later the descendants of Ithamar became high priests from Eli through Abiathar.
      - a) 1 Samuel 2:27-28: "And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?"
      - b) 1 Kings 2:26-27: "And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh."
    - 2) First Chronicles 6:8-15 shows that the descendants of Eleazar served in this capacity from Zadok on (1 Chron. 24). "And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz, And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan, And Johanan begat Azariah, (he it is that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem:) And Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum, And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah, And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak, And Jehozadak went into captivity, when the LORD carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar" (1 Chron. 6:8-15).
3. Verses 2-3: "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt speak unto all *that are* wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office."
  - a. God now begins the instructions concerning Aaron's priestly garments. They are to serve the purpose of presenting glory and beauty. The Lord even refers to them as holy garments. These garments

would be impressive in their design, beauty, and glory; they would give Israel something more to appreciate and respect. These garments were to be worn when Aaron was discharging his priestly functions, and would impress upon him and the people the need for holiness and preparedness in approaching the Almighty. The richness of the privilege of serving God would also be impressed upon their minds.

- b. Verse 3 shows that there were certain men who had been given special skills which were to be utilized in making these garments. God is able to raise up certain people who have the inborn talents to do things needed for the time. Consider Samson, Saul, David, Solomon, Paul. The garments were to consist of a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a brodered coat, a miter and a girdle. Instructions are to follow regarding the making of appropriate garments for the lesser priests, starting with Aaron's sons.
4. Verses 4-5: "And these *are* the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen."
- a. The design of the garments would allow them to be used by a variety of different men of varying sizes over many years. As appears in later descriptions, there were two pieces to the ephod which could be adjusted to fit different size men.
  - b. Gold, costly and beautiful dyes, and fine linen were to be used in making these garments.

B. Exodus 28:6-14: Instructions for Making the Ephod.

1. Verses 6-12: "And they shall make the ephod *of* gold, *of* blue, and *of* purple, *of* scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and *so* it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which *is* upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; *even of* gold, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: Six of their names on one stone, and *the other* six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod *for* stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial."
  - a. "This was the principal element in the high priest's costume, bearing not only the memorial stones on the shoulders, but also the breastplate (next to be described) with its four rows of memorial stones. The mention of the 'two ends' indicates that it was long enough to come down to about the knees both front and back, connected with straps, to which there were affixed the onyx stone memorials at the shoulder level. This arrangement permitted the adjustment of the straps to fit any sized person" (Coffman, p.392).
  - b. Two onyx stones were to be set on the shoulders of the ephod. Upon each of these two stones were to be engraved the names of six sons of Israel, according to their birth. This could mean according to the chronological order of the birth of Jacob's sons, or by some division of the sons according to their mothers. To Leah were born Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; to Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin were born; to Leah's handmaid (Zilpah) were born Gad and Asher; to Rachel's handmaid (Bilhah) were born Dan and Naphtali. Since Leah had six sons herself, perhaps they were listed on one stone, and the sons of the other three women were listed on the other stone. How they were divided is not important for us to know.
  - c. The precise work of the engravers is to be greatly admired. The engravings would be on the order of a signet ring. The KJV has "ouches" whereas the ASV describes the place where these stones were placed as "settings" of gold.
  - d. The stones were to serve as memorials. Since God did not need to be reminded of the names of Jacob's sons, the memorial was intended for others. It would be a notice to Israel that the high priest was acting in their behalf, and a reminder to the high priest of the nature of his work: in the behalf of the whole nation.
  - e. Many men want to have a special priesthood after the fashion of the Aaronic priests. But the Lord made use of these priests to perform a service in that long ago age; he never intended for such to be in use in his church today. Every Christian is a priest, and as such, can approach God directly through
-

Christ (1 Pet. 2:5,9). To set up a separate priesthood as the Catholics and others have done is to revert back to the Old Testament way, and is to miss the blessings of Christ (Gal. 5:4; 3:10; 2 Cor. 3). The New Testament is built upon a better covenant with a better system in every way (Heb. 7:18-22). One is foolish indeed to hold on to the shadow when he can have the substance.

- 1) 1 Peter 2:5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."
  - 2) 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
  - 3) Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
  - 4) Galatians 3:10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."
  - 5) Hebrews 7:18-22: "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."
2. Verses 13-14: "And thou shalt make ouches *of* gold; And two chains *of* pure gold at the ends; *of* wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches."
- a. The ouches (settings) for the stones were to be made of gold. Two chains of pure gold were to be made to be fastened to the settings.
  - b. "You shall also make settings of gold, and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings" (NKJV).
3. This ephod was a garment, but the same word is later used in reference to some kind of image (see Judg. 8:24-37; 17:5; 18:14; Hos. 3:4). The Hebrew language had to make more than one use for many of its words. We must do the same in English, but to a lesser degree.

#### C. Exodus 28:15-30: The Breastplate.

1. Verses 15-21: "And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; *of* gold, *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* scarlet, and *of* fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. Foursquare it shall be *being* doubled; a span *shall be* the length thereof, and a span *shall be* the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: *this shall be* the first row. And the second row *shall be* an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their enclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes."
- a. The current use of the word breastplate is to describe a part of a suit of armor which protects the chest. This garment of the high priest's clothing is spoken of as a breastplate because it covered this area of the body, not because it was intended as protection.
- b. It is called the breastplate of "judgment." As will be noted later, the breastplate had a pocket in which the Urim and Thummim were kept. The breastplate is likely called the breastplate of judgment because various judgments (rulings) were received by means of the Urim and Thummim.
- c. It was to be made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen. Thus beauty and richness of the ephod also characterized this item.
- d. On this breastplate were to be placed four rows of three stones. On these stones the names of the children of Israel were to be engraved as on the two stone discussed earlier. Compare this description with that given in Revelation 21. The heavenly city and the breastplate are foursquare; and each has twelve names recorded: the children of Israel; the apostles.

## Gemstones of the High Priest's Breastplate

First Row		
Sardius (Ruby)	Reuben	Son of Leah
Topaz	Simeon	Son of Leah
Carbuncle	Levi	Son of Leah
Second Row		
Emerald	Judah	Son of Leah
Sapphire	Issachar	Son of Leah
Diamond	Zebulun	Son of Leah
Third Row		
Ligure (Jacinth)	Dan	Son of Bilhah
Agate	Naphtali	Son of Bilhah
Amethyst	Gad	Son of Zilpah
Fourth Row		
Beryl (Crysolite)	Asher	Son of Zilpah
Onyx (Sardonyx)	Joseph	Son of Rachel
Jasper	Benjamin	Son of Rachel

2. Verses 22-30: "And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the ends *of* wreathen work *of* pure gold. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. And thou shalt put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breastplate. And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen *chains* thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put *them* on the shoulder pieces of the ephod before it. And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate in the border thereof, which *is* in the side of the ephod inward. And two *other* rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart thereof, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that *it* may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the LORD continually. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually."
- a. Descriptions are given of two rings of gold through which the two wreathen chains of gold were to be passed; these chains were fastened to the settings described earlier. Two other chains of gold were to be made and were to be connected to the breastplate, and in some way unclear to us, to bind the breastplate to the lower end of the garment.

- b. Much speculation but little information has resulted from considering these items. In some way undiscovered by modern man the Urim and Thummim were able to give to Israel some judgments of God.
- c. "What the Urim and Thummin really were, cannot be determined with certainty, either from the names themselves, or from any other circumstances connected with them...If the Urim and Thummim had been intended to represent any really existing thing, their nature, or the mode of preparing them, would certainly have been described" (Keil, pp.198f).
- d. "We do not know what these were. They appear to have been two objects already widely known, and apparently having been used to determine in some manner God's will regarding certain questions that could have been answered by some system of inquiry suggesting, to some at least, the casting of lots, or dice....
  - 1) "The function of the Urim and Thummin is illustrated by Numbers 27:21, where Joshua was instructed to inquire (seek God for unrevealed information) before the priest Eleazar through the Urim and Thummin. (This does not indicate that the Urim and Thummin had magical power in themselves, but only that God used these items as a vehicle of his truth)'....
  - 2) "Their use in Israel declined; and there is no instance of their use after the times of David" (Coffman, pp.396f).
- e. "And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation" (Num. 27:21).

#### D. Exodus 28:31-35: The Robe.

1. Verses 31-32: "And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all *of* blue. And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent."
  - a. This article was to be made all of blue, with a hole in the middle of it so that it could be slipped over the head. The edge of this hole was to have a binding so as to prevent its being torn.
  - b. In this sense it was like a habergeon (a short jacket of mail; a coat of mail).
2. Verses 33-35: "And *beneath* upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy *place* before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not."
  - a. On the lower hem of this garment, pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet were to be fashioned. Alternating with the pomegranates, little golden bells were to be hung. The number of these items is not specified in the text. The purpose of the bells was at least for decoration. It would add to the aura of beauty, glory, and holiness in the eyes of the people. While Aaron was busy in the tabernacle performing the various duties assigned to him, the sound of the bells could be heard. "Aaron was not to appear before the Lord without the sound of the bells upon his robe being heard, in order that he might not die..." (Keil, p.202).
  - b. "In Mark 14:61, where is recorded the question of Caiaphas: 'Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed? Jesus answered, I AM, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming with the clouds of heaven!' It is then recorded that, 'The high priest rent his clothes!' (Mark 14:63). This was an unlawful and capital offense on the part of Caiaphas. God had specifically commanded even the sons of Aaron, 'Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes, lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people' (Leviticus 10:6). This rending of his high priestly garments by Caiaphas has been understood as typifying 'the rending of the priesthood from himself and from the Jewish nation'" (Coffman, p.398).

#### E. Exodus 28:36-39: The Mitre, the Coat, and the Girdle.

1. Verses 36-38: "And thou shalt make a plate *of* pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be

always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD."

- a. NKJ: "And thou hast made a flower of pure gold, and hast opened on it — openings of a signet — 'Holy to Jehovah; and thou hast put it on a blue ribbon, and it hath been on the mitre — over-against the front of the mitre it is; and it hath been on the forehead of Aaron, and Aaron hath borne the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel do hallow, even all their holy gifts; and it hath been on his forehead continually for a pleasing thing for them before Jehovah."
  - b. A plate of pure gold was to be made, upon which the words, "Holiness To The Lord" were to be engraved. This plate was to be put on blue lace, and mounted on a mitre. Scholars say the word "plate" means "petal of a flower," indicating that the item was in the shape of a flower. The mitre was to be worn on the forehead of the priest.
  - c. "Aaron's bearing the iniquity of the holy things given by the people is a manner of saying that Aaron would bear the iniquity of Israel; and this is a symbol of Him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree!" (Coffman, p.400).
  - d. Pulpit Commentary:
    - 1) The plate, though a mere ornament of the mitre, was, at once, its most conspicuous and its most significant feature. Placed directly in front, right over the forehead, and probably of burnished gold, it would attract universal attention, and catch the eye even more than the breast-plate. Its position made it "the culminating point of the whole priestly attire" (Kalisch)— and its inscription gave to that position extraordinary force and significance. For it taught that "holiness to the Lord" is the very highest crown and truest excellence of religion .... that without which all the paraphernalia of worship must ever be in God's sight a mockery. It set this truth conspicuously before the eyes, and was apt to impress it upon the hearts of all. It taught the high priest himself not to rest upon outward forms, but to aim in his own person, and teach the people to aim continually, at internal holiness. The extreme importance of this, causes the putting forward at once of the plate and its inscription before any account of the "mitre" is given.
    - 2) Thou shalt put it on a blue lace. In Ex 39:31, it is explained that the blue lace, or ribbon, was "tied to it," probably at either end. That it may be upon the mitre — i.e., "that it may be kept in place, and not slip from its position on the mitre."
    - 3) It shall be upon his forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the sacred things. Imperfection attaches to everything that man does; and even the sacrifices that the people offered to God required to be atoned for and purified. It was granted to the high priest in his official capacity to make the necessary atonement, and so render the people's gifts acceptable. For this purpose he was invested with an official holiness, proclaimed by the inscription upon the plate, which exhibited him as the type and representative of that perfectly Holy One, through whom alone can any real atonement be made to the Father. It shall be always upon his forehead - i.e., whenever he ministers.
  - e. Keil:
    - 1) The diadem was the only thing about it that had any special significance. This was to be placed above (upon) Aaron's forehead, that he "might bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel sanctified, with regard to all their holy gifts,...as an acceptableness for them before Jehovah."
    - 2) "*won naasaa*: to bear iniquity (sin) and take it away; in other words, to exterminate it by taking it upon one's self. The high priest was exalted into an atoning mediator of the whole nation; and an atoning, sin-exterminating intercession was associated with his office.
    - 3) The qualification for this he received from the diadem upon his forehead with the inscription, "holiness to the Lord." Through this inscription, which was fastened upon his head-dress of brilliant white, the earthly reflection of holiness, he was crowned as the sanctified of the Lord (Ps 106:16), and endowed with the power to exterminate the sin which clung to the holy offerings of the people on account of the unholiness of their nature, so that the gifts of the nation became well-pleasing to the Lord, and the good pleasure of God was manifested to the nation."
  - f. The High Priest met with God, in an accommodated sense, on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16). His activities in the Most Holy Place on that important day would address the matter of sin; the sins of
-

the people were “rolled forward” for another year, until the Day of Atonement returned. “For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh. Else would they not have ceased to be offered? because the worshippers, having been once cleansed, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made of sins year by year. For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:1-4).

2. Verse 39: "And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre *of* fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle *of* needlework."
  - a. A coat of fine linen was to be embroidered; the mitre was to be of fine linen; and the girdle was to be of needlework. "The shape of the mitre is not given here; but Josephus' description of the headdress of the ordinary priests states that, 'they were not conical of form, nor did they cover the whole head'" (ibid.). The girdle was a sash-like garment and was made of fine embroidered needlework. The Talmud describes the girdle as being wrapped around the coat and was being forty-eight feet long (ibid.).
  - b. The coat is described by Josephus as being "an inner garment worn close to the body, with sleeves tied close to the arms, and covering practically all the body. 'It was embroidered with flowers of scarlet, purple, and blue, and hung loosely down to the ankles and was tied about the waist'" (ibid.).

F. Exodus 28:40-43: The Garments of the Other Priests.

1. Verses 40-41: "And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office."
  - a. These garments included coats, girdles and bonnets (head-tires). These were also to be for beauty and glory. Few details are given here; more are added later.
  - b. These garments were to be put on the priests (with Aaron's garments described above being put on him). They are to be anointed, and consecrated, and sanctified; the purpose of all this was that they might be properly prepared to minister to the Lord. This was not merely for the purpose of show; there were underlying reasons of meaning.
  - c. The glory and beauty of the high priest's appearance was typical of the beauty of our High Priest; the glory and beauty of the other priests was a shadow of the beauty that pertains to Christians. "And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:10-17).
2. Verses 42-43: "And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy *place*; that they bear not iniquity, and die: *it shall be* a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him."
  - a. The priests were also to be provided with linen breeches to cover their nakedness. Pagan priests and priestesses were noted for their nakedness and obscene behavior as they carried out their evil activities. "The religion authorized by God was designed in such a manner that no essential element of it in any way manifested any similarity to the pagan religions of antiquity; and another distinguishing feature of the priesthood here initiated by Almighty God was the clothing of its priests in white, contrasting magnificently with the black-robed priests of paganism. This is not always apparent in the scriptures, because the word linen as used here actually means white linen" (Coffman, p.401).
  - b. Catholicism adopted black robes to distinguish between the "clergy" and "laity." Black robes were



symbolic of pagan priests. Compare *chemarims* in Zephaniah 1:4: "I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, *and* the name of the Chemarims with the priests."

- 1) The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem are pinpointed as the primary objects of God's judgment. The primary cause of his punishment is their worship of Baal; those who followed idolatry would be taken away. The vestiges of idolatry would be removed. The Israelites opined that their standing with God was so secure that they would be preserved and blessed, while all of God's wrath would be directed toward their enemies.
  - 2) The *Chemarims* (Chemarin—ASV) would be removed. This word is the Aramaic word for *priest*, and carries the root meaning of *black* (i.e., "black-robed").
    - a) 2 Kings 23:5: "And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven."
    - b) Hosea 10:5: "The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Bethaven: for the people thereof shall mourn over it, and the priests thereof *that* rejoiced on it, for the glory thereof, because it is departed from it."
  - 3) These Chemarin were the priests who served the idols. Their future was limited and their fate determined.
- c. The priests were to enter the tabernacle wearing their priestly garments. This chapter gives a record of the establishment of the Aaronic priesthood which was later expanded to include others in the tribe of Levi. It was intended to exist only as long as Judaism lasted; it ended with the death of Christ (Heb. 8, 9).
- 1) Colossians 2:12-14: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
  - 2) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
-

## EXODUS 29

### A. Exodus 29:1-9: Instructions for Consecrating the Priests.

1. Verses 1-2: "And this *is* the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: *of* wheaten flour shalt thou make them."
  - a. Moses is given directions by which Aaron and his sons were to be installed into the priestly office. Moses was not selected as high priest, as noted earlier, but in keeping with his appointment as Israel's official leader, he was charged with the duty of consecrating these men into the priesthood and possessed the authority to do so.
  - b. "It should be noted that what we have here is God's instructions for their consecration, a commission to be discharged by Moses, and not the actual consecration, which is recorded in Leviticus chapters 1-7. At this point of time in Exodus, the tabernacle had not yet been completed; there has been no mention, as yet, of a laver; and, for that matter, not all of the instructions given by God to Moses have been enumerated, some of which will not appear till the more thorough account in Leviticus" (Coffman, p.403). It is interesting that it was Moses, not Aaron, who appeared with the Lord and Elijah in the transfiguration scene.
  - c. The items to be used in the consecration included: one young bullock, two rams without blemish, unleavened bread, cakes unleavened (with oil mixed in), and unleavened wafers anointed with oil (made from wheaten flour: flour made from wheat). Three kinds of bread were to be used.
  - d. The purpose of the forthcoming consecration ceremony was that Moses and his sons might minister to God in the priesthood.
2. Verses 3-4: "And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water."
  - a. These wafers and bread were to be placed in one basket and brought with the rams and bullock, along with Aaron and his sons, to the door of the tabernacle. There those men to be installed as priests were to be washed. As mentioned by Coffman, the actual ceremony took place as recorded in Leviticus 1-7; this was the initial instructions for that occasion. Their being washed is a shadow of New Testament baptism.
  - b. Before these men were fit to offer sacrifices in the worship of God, and act in behalf of Israel, they first must be made ceremonially clean themselves. Before one can offer spiritual sacrifices to God in the church today, he must first be cleansed by the blood of Christ in baptism.
    - 1) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
    - 2) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
    - 3) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
    - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - 5) Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
    - 6) Ephesians 5:26-27: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
3. Verses 5-7: "And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. Then shalt thou take the anointing oil,

and pour *it* upon his head, and anoint him."

a. The garments designed for the high priest were to be put on Aaron. He was then to be anointed with oil. This anointing with oil was used in three different cases in the Old Testament times: in the appointment of prophets, priests, and kings. The word "Messiah" means the "Anointed One." Christ is Prophet, High Priest, and King:

1) Psalms 45:7: "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

2) Hebrews 1:9: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

b. "This is a remarkable description of the Christ arrayed in the regal splendor of his heavenly garments in Revelation 1st chapter, resembling in a superficial way the splendid attire of Aaron; and due to this, some have mistakenly assumed that our Lord is there depicted as our great High Priest. However, it is not as High Priest, but as Judge of All the Earth, that Jesus appears there. The dominant feature that proves this is the sharp two edged sword that went out of the mouth of Jesus" (Coffman, p.406).

4. Verses 8-9: "And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons."

a. Aaron's sons are to be girded with the priestly garments prepared for them, including the girdles and the bonnets (head tires).

b. The priestly office was to be theirs (through their descendants) throughout the Mosaic Age.

#### B. Exodus 29:10-37: Offerings of the Consecration.

1. Verses 10-14: "And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock. And thou shalt kill the bullock before the LORD, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar. And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul *that is* above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and burn *them* upon the altar. But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: *it is* a sin offering."

a. This gives details concerning the disposition of the bullock. Aaron and his sons were to lay their hands upon its head (thus identifying it as the sin offering). "This was a symbolical acknowledgment upon their part of their sinfulness and their confession before God that they deserved death because of sin" (ibid., p.408).

b. The bullock was to be killed at the door of the tabernacle; some of its blood was to be smeared on the horns of the altar, and the rest of it was to be poured beside the bottom of the altar.

c. The fat of the inner parts of the bullock, the caul of the liver (appendages of the liver), and the kidneys and their fat were to be burned upon the altar. The remaining parts were to be burned without the camp. The reason: it is a sin offering. The reference to the offering being concluded outside the camp is a reference to the death of Christ outside the gates of Jerusalem: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb. 13:12-13).

2. Verses 15-18: "Thou shalt also take one ram; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram. And thou shalt slay the ram, and thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle *it* round about upon the altar. And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put *them* unto his pieces, and unto his head. And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: *it is* a burnt offering unto the LORD: *it is* a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD."

a. One of the rams was to be taken to Aaron and his sons; they were to lay hands on him, and kill him. His blood was to be sprinkled around the altar (on the sides). The carcass was to be cut into pieces and the inward parts washed. The animal was to be placed in an orderly manner upon the altar and burned. This offering would be accepted by God as a sweet savor (a pleasing smell); this is an ancient expression referring to an action of which God approves.

b. "Despite the fact of the bullock's having been called a sin-offering, and this a burnt-offering, there are elements of the same figure in both....One animal alone could not suffice to typify the Christ, because

the type required that the animal be consumed wholly upon the altar, and at the same time, be burned without the camp. Therefore, two beasts were required. Also, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world could not be adequately represented by a 'bull.' Yet, the enormity of humanity's load of guilt could hardly be represented by anything else!" (ibid., p.409).

3. Verses 19-25: "And thou shalt take the other ram; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram. Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. And thou shalt take of the blood that *is* upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him. Also thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and the right shoulder; for it *is* a ram of consecration: And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened bread that *is* before the LORD: And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and shalt wave them *for* a wave offering before the LORD. And thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn *them* upon the altar for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour before the LORD: it *is* an offering made by fire unto the LORD."
    - a. Moses was to place the other ram before Aaron and his sons, who were to put their hands upon its head. Moses was then to kill the ram, and put some of its blood upon the tip of the right ears of Aaron and his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hands and the great toe of their right feet; the ram's blood was also to be put on the altar round about. The significance of the blood on the ear, hand and foot of each of these men was that they would ever be ready to hear God's word, to do his will, and always walk in his way. This was the crowning act of the consecration ceremony, and represented their commitment to discharging their duties as loyal men of God.
    - b. More of the blood was to be sprinkled by Moses upon Aaron and his sons, and upon the priestly garments of each of these men. This would be a ceremonial sanctifying of the men and their holy garments. In Leviticus 8:30, Aaron and his sons were sprinkled with blood after the wave offering; in the present case, they were sprinkled beforehand. There is no contradiction; they were sprinkled before and after!
    - c. Moses was to take various specified parts of this ram, together with one loaf of bread, one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put these into the hands of Aaron and his sons; these new priests were to wave them for a wave offering before the Lord. The difference between a heave offering and a wave offering is said to be that in the case of the former, the offering was lifted upward once, while in the case of the latter, the offering was waved more than once. Some scholars with over-active imagination have supposed that these two (the heave and the wave offerings) taken together prefigured the "sign of the cross."
    - d. Moses was to take these wave offerings back from the priests, and burn them upon the altar. Again, it would be an acceptable sacrifice unto God.
  4. Verses 26-28: "And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave it *for* a wave offering before the LORD: and it shall be thy part. And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering, and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, *even* of *that* which *is* for Aaron, and of *that* which is for his sons: And it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever from the children of Israel: for it *is* an heave offering: and it shall be an heave offering from the children of Israel of the sacrifice of their peace offerings, *even* their heave offering unto the LORD."
    - a. The breast of the ram was to waved before the Lord; this part of the offering would be for Moses (to be eaten).
    - b. "In most cases, the wave-offerings, having been moved first toward the altar, symbolizing their having been given to God, and then moved toward the worshipper, showing that God was giving it back to him for food, constituted the food of the priests 'for ever'" (ibid. p.412). On "forever" see Deuteronomy 15:17: "Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust *it* through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise." "Forever" means for the duration of the time period; the individual was to be a servant for the rest of his life. The
-

regulation regarding the food for the priests [vv. 31-34] was to be in effect, not eternally, but for the full term of the Mosaic Law.

5. Verses 29-30: "And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them. *And* that son that is priest in his stead shall put them on seven days, when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy *place*."
  - a. The priestly garments were intended to be passed down from father to son, in the priestly office. "The holy garments made for Aaron were to be preserved after his death, and used at the consecration of each successive high priest, who was to be anointed and consecrated in them, and to wear them for seven days from the time that he entered upon his office. Eleazar's investment in them is mentioned (Num 20:28); but not that of any later high priest" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
  - b. "The priest in his consecration was to abide seven days and nights at the door of the tabernacle...See Lev. 8:33..." (Clarke, p.454).
6. Verses 31-34: "And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seethe his flesh in the holy place. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that *is* in the basket, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate *and* to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat *thereof*, because they *are* holy. And if ought of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it *is* holy."
  - a. Aaron and his sons were to eat the flesh of the ram (their part) and the bread at the door of the tabernacle. Only the priests were to eat it.
  - b. If anything was left over till the next morning, it was to be burned.
7. Verses 35-37: "And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all *things* which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock *for* a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy."
  - a. The procedures outlined by the Lord here were to require seven days for the completion of the consecration ceremonies. From verse 30, therefore, it appears that the same pattern was to be followed in the consecration of future priests.
  - b. A bullock was to be offered each of the seven days; the altar was to be cleaned and anointed to sanctify it. The altar could thereby make holy that which touched it. This is in keeping with the Lord's statement in Matthew 23:16-22: "Woe unto you, *ye* blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! *Ye* fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. *Ye* fools and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon."

#### C. Exodus 29:38-46: The Daily Sacrifice.

1. Verses 38-39: "Now this *is that* which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even."
  - a. Each day two lambs of the first year were to be offered, one in the morning and the other in the evening.
  - b. "Here is the institution of one of the most distinctive features of the Judaic faith, that of the Daily Sacrifice, an institution that was observed by Israel throughout their history unto the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus in A.D. 70. It ceased, as God prophesied that it would, 'upon the wings of abomination' when God made a full end of the Old Israel (Dan. 9:27)" (Coffman, p.415).
  - c. Acts 3:1 shows that the evening sacrifice was at the 9th hour (3 p.m.): "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour."

- 
2. Verses 40-46: "And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine *for* a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. *This shall be* a continual burnt offering throughout your generations *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle* shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I *am* the LORD their God."
- a. God would meet with Israel in the daily sacrifices; he meets with us in our regular gatherings. God would sanctify the people, the altar, and Aaron and his sons.
  - b. God would thus dwell among his people.
-

## EXODUS 30

### A. Exodus 30:1-10: Instructions for Making the Golden Altar of Incense.

1. Verses 1-2: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: *of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same.*"
  - a. This altar was for the purpose of burning incense, a sweet, pleasant smelling mixture which would go a long way toward dispelling the offensive smells caused by the burnt sacrifices and blood. But the primary purpose was for its spiritual significance. Revelation 5:8 shows that incense represented the prayers of the saints: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints."
  - b. The altar was to be one cubit square in its lateral measurements, and two cubits tall. Horns were to be made on it, meaning one on each corner as on the altar of burnt offerings. Acacia wood was to be used in its construction.
2. Verses 3-6: "And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves *of shittim wood*, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee."
  - a. The acacia wood was to be overlaid with pure gold; a crown (a wreath-like ornamentation) was to be made into the gold overlay; two golden rings and staves made of acacia wood overlaid with gold were to be made for transportation purposes.
  - b. The altar was to be placed in the holy place, near the veil shielding the most holy place. Hebrews 9:3-4 seems to show this item in the most holy place, but God put it in the holy place. Although in the holy place, it was placed nearest to the most holy place, and was used in connection with the great Atonement Day services "within the veil." "And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which *is* for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times" (Lev. 16:11-14).
  - c. Although situated in the holy place, it was so closely connected with the most holy place that Paul could speak of it as pertaining to the latter. It was an "appendage of the holy of holies, though not actually inside of it, in the same way (to use a homely illustration by Delitzsch) as the signboard of a shop belongs to the shop and not to the street" (see Coffman, p.421).
3. Verses 7-8: "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations."
  - a. Aaron was to burn incense on this altar every morning when he dressed the lamps. Dressing the lamps would involve trimming or replacing the wicks and refilling them with oil. When he lights the lamps at evening he was to burn incense again. Thus, twice each day incense was burned. Revelation 5:8 describes incense as representative of the prayers of the saints rising toward heaven. The offering of this incense was to be a "perpetual" decree—"throughout your generations" (for as long as the law of Moses was in effect.
  - b. Those who try to bind Sabbath-keeping on people today use a similar expression to try to prove their view: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, *for* a perpetual covenant" (Ex. 31:16). But...
    - 1) Leviticus 24:9: "And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for *it is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute."

- 2) Jonah 2:6: "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."
- c. "Perpetual" is limited by the phrase, "throughout your generations." The fact that incense was to be burned upon this altar daily shows that it was located in the holy place, for the most holy place could be entered only one day a year, and that by the high priest in performing his yearly duties on the day of atonement (Lev. 16).
4. Verses 9-10: "Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it *is* most holy unto the LORD."
  - a. No strange (unauthorized) incense was to be burned on this altar. No drink offering was to be poured upon it, no burnt sacrifice was to be offered here, and no meat offering was permitted to be given upon it. Only the incense God authorized was to be used here. But on the day of atonement, the high priest was to place blood from the sin offering upon the horns of this altar. Being so closely connected with the most holy place, God can say that this altar of incense was "most holy." Hence, he was very strict in what was done on this altar.
  - b. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire upon it and were slain because of this error.
    - 1) Leviticus 9:15-24 "And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which *was* the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first. And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner. And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt *it* upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning. He slew also the bullock and the ram *for* a sacrifice of peace offerings, which *was* for the people: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about, And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth *the inwards*, and the kidneys, and the caul *above* the liver: And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar: And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved *for* a wave offering before the LORD; as Moses commanded. And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces."
    - 2) Leviticus 10:1-2: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."
    - 3) Leviticus 16:12: "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil:"
  - c. The last reference is to what the high priest was to do on the day of atonement, but we may infer that the altar was to be the source of the fire on which the incense was burned twice daily. In any case, Nadab and Abihu offered "strange" fire—fire that did not meet the Lord's specifications.

B. Exodus 30:11-16: The Half-Shekel Ransom.

1. Verses 11-12: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when *thou* numberest them."
  - a. Instructions about numbering Israel and levying a tax on them are given in this section. The tax here levied is for the "service of the tabernacle." This could either mean for the service of the sanctuary, or for "the construction of the Tabernacle" (Coffman).
  - b. The money collected was called a "ransom" for the soul of each who paid it. Clarke states that the life (soul) of each was "forfeited to Divine justice" (p.458). If those accountable to this command obeyed it, they thereby ransomed themselves.
  - c. It may be that Peter had reference to this practice by his statement in 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as



ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." In the case of Israel, if they followed the precept, they would be spared from the plague indicated. In other words, if they obeyed there would be no punishment for disobedience. [with the Day of Atonement in mind].

2. Verses 13-14: "This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs:) an half shekel *shall be* the offering of the LORD. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD."
  - a. The ancient method of counting a crowd was simple: have them pass over from one place to another (perhaps over a line, as at the Alamo), and count them as they move.
  - b. Those counted were assessed the tax; those counted and taxed were males of twenty years or over. The shekel was equivalent to twenty gerahs (16 barleycorns; 320 gerahs to the shekel—Clarke, p.458).
3. Verses 15-16: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls."
  - a. The rich and the poor were given the same tax, showing that the Lord does not recognize any difference between the worth of a rich man and a poor man. A half-shekel was assessed to each. This indicates the great truth that all men are lost. To be saved, the same conditions apply to the rich and the poor. The gospel is intended for all lost men and women, regardless of their outward circumstances.
  - b. It appears that Coffman is right in stating that the money was to be used in the construction of the tabernacle, since the use of the money resulted in a "memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls." The money given was used in the construction of the tabernacle, which in turn was used to bring about the atonement for their sins; the tabernacle was the memorial.
  - c. "This is very emphatic testimony to the equal value of souls in God's sight. The payment was 'the ransom of a soul' (ver. 12)—an acknowledgment of God's mercy in sparing those whose life was justly forfeit. As each soul that he has created is equally precious in his sight, and as he designs equally the salvation of all—it was fitting that the same exact sum should be paid in every case. The application of the 'atonement money' is stated more distinctly in Ex 38:27,28. It was employed for the silver sockets that supported the boards of the tabernacle, and for the hooks, capitals, and connecting rods of the pillars which surrounded the court. Thus employed, it was a continual 'memorial' in the eyes of the people, reminding each man of his privileges and duties" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
4. Regarding the numbering of Israel, Keil offers the following: "According to Num. 1:1,18, as compared with Ex. 40:17, the census of the nation was not taken till a month after the building of the tabernacle was completed, and yet the atonement-money to be paid at the taking of the census was to be appropriated to the purpose of the building, and must therefore have been paid before. This apparent discrepancy may be reconciled by the simple assumption, that immediately after the command of God had been issued respecting the building of the tabernacle and the contributions which the people were to make for that purpose, the numbering of the males was commenced and the atonement-money collected from the different individuals, that the tabernacle was then built and the whole ceremonial instituted, and that, after all this had been done, the whole nation was enrolled according to its tribes, fathers' houses, and families, on the basis of this provisional numbering, and thus the census was completed. For this reason the census gave exactly the same number of males as the numbering (cf. chapt. 38:26 and Num. 1:46), although the one had been carried out nine months before the other" (p.212).

C. Exodus 30:17-21: Instructions for the Making of the Laver.

1. Verses 17-18: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and

the altar, and thou shalt put water therein."

- a. This section also begins with the statement that the things spoken were from the Lord to Moses—an affirmation of their being from God. God spoke in times past to the fathers "at sundry times and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1). He did not always use the same exact words to give the same instruction. The laver was to be made of brass; the foot (the stand upon which it was constructed or placed) was also to be made of brass (bronze). Exodus 38:8 shows the source of this metal to have been in the mirrors the women had brought from Egypt. Mirrors of that day was of highly polished metal. These items of vanity were eagerly given by these women.
  - b. "The mirrors of the women had been used for the purpose of earthly adorning. But now the pious Israelites renounced this earthly adorning, and offered it to the Lord as a heave-offering to make the purifying laver in front of the sanctuary, in order that 'what had hitherto served as a means of procuring applause in the world might henceforth be the means of procuring the approbation of God'" (Keil, p.214).
2. Verses 19-21: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations."
- a. Aaron and his sons (and all the later high priests and priests) were to wash their hands and feet before entering the tabernacle or doing service before the altar of burnt offerings. The penalty for not washing was death. With all the warnings given we wonder why Nadab and Abihu later transgressed as they did.
  - b. The washing required of these men before doing service to God is the shadow of the washing people received today in being baptized (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22). Acts 22:16 shows that the inner cleansing from the guilt of sin occurs in the same operation as the outer washing of baptism; our bodies are washed in the immersion, and our souls are cleansed by the blood of Christ.
    - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - 2) Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
    - 3) Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
    - 4) Hebrews 10:11: "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."
    - 5) 1 Peter 3:21: "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (ASV).
  - c. The hands and feet of the priests were to be cleansed before touching anything that pertained to the holy tabernacle; before we can enter the true tabernacle (Heb. 8:1-2), we must be cleansed from sin (cf. Isa. 59:1-2; Rev. 21:27).
    - 1) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
    - 2) Hebrews 8:1-2: "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."
    - 3) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." [This is a reference to Heaven].

#### D. Exodus 30:22-33: The Holy Oil of Anointing.

1. Verses 22-24: "Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, *even* two hundred and fifty *shekels*, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty *shekels*, And of cassia five hundred *shekels*, after

the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin."

- a. God specified the ingredients to be used in making the anointing oil; these were myrrh (500 shekels), sweet cinnamon (250 shekels), sweet calamus (250 shekels), cassia (500 shekels), and an hin (1½ gallons) of olive oil.
  - b. "These proportions preclude the supposition, that the spices were pulverized and mixed with the oil and myrrh in their natural condition, for the result in that case would have been a thick mess: they rather favour the statement of the Rabbins, that the dry spices were softened in water and boiled, to extract their essence, which was then mixed with oil and myrrh, and boiled again until all the watery part had evaporated" (Keil, p.215).
  - c. Verse 25 shows that this is the correct interpretation for the process was accomplished after the "art of the apothecary" (margin, "perfumer"). The spices would amount to about 46 lbs.
    - 1) Myrrh. "The text designates that this was to be 'freely flowing myrrh,' as contrasted with the myrrh produced by making incisions into the myrrh trees. The kind that appeared by itself was considered best. The ancients used it as a perfume, for embalming the dead, and for incense. 'This gum is produced from a low, thorny, ragged tree, that grows in Arabia Felix and Eastern Africa, called by botanists, Balsamodendron myrrha'" (Coffman, p.427).
    - 2) Cinnamon. "This is a rare spice, derived from a species of the laurel tree (*Laurus cinnamomum*) which grows only on the Malabar coast of India, Ceylon, Borneo, Sumatra, China, and Cochin China. The mention of it here shows that there was commerce between the Far East and the Near East at this early period" (ibid.).
    - 3) Sweet calamus. "Several aromatic reeds of this kind are known, and 'it is impossible to know exactly which one was meant here'" (ibid., pp.227f).
    - 4) Cassia. "This spice bears a strong resemblance to cinnamon, in fact having the botanical name *Cinnamomum cassia*. 'It is more pungent than the cinnamon which we know today, and of a coarser texture'" (ibid., p.428).
2. Verses 25-29: "And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot. And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy."
    - a. This anointing oil thus produced after the art of the perfumer was to be used to anoint the tabernacle, the ark of the testimony, the table and all its vessels, the candlestick and all its vessels, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering with all its vessels, and the laver and its foot.
    - b. The purpose of this anointing was that each of these items might be sanctified as pure, and that they might commute holiness to the things they touched. Jesus pointed out in Matthew 23:15-22 that the altar sanctified the gift placed upon it, not the other way around (as the Pharisees thought).
  3. Verses 30-33: "And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make *any other* like it, after the composition of it: it *is* holy, *and* it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth *any* like it, or whosoever putteth *any* of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people."
    - a. Aaron and his sons were likewise to be anointed with this holy oil, and for the same basic reason: that they might be consecrated to God and thus authorized to minister to him as priests.
    - b. Instructions and warning were to be issued to the people of Israel. The oil was for special religious purposes throughout their generations. It was not to be used for the ordinary purpose of anointing the human body (as with common perfume). The oil was to be applied to Aaron and his sons, but not to be applied to human flesh for ordinary purposes; this is the distinction made in verses 30, 32. The Israelites were not to even make any of this oil for their own private use. Anyone who did so was to be cut off from among the people. The "stranger" is likely a reference to anyone who is not a priest. To be cut off from among the people was a very grievous penalty, involving losing his rights and privileges of citizenship, his relationship with God, and in some cases even the loss of his life. See
-

Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

E. Exodus 30:34-38: Instructions for Making the Holy Incense.

1. Verses 34-35: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; *these* sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like *weight*: And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure *and* holy."
  - a. The ingredients specified by God for the incense were as follows (with the quotations given, taken from Coffman, pp.428f):
    - 1) Stacte: "'There are two kinds of stacte, one of myrrh and one of storaxa and a fat mixed.' The kind mentioned here is supposed to be myrrh."
    - 2) Onycha: "'This is a mollusk which emits a highly aromatic odor when burned. Gathered in the Near East till recently, it is used as an ingredient in perfume, and as a principal component of incense in India.'"
    - 3) Galbanum: "'This is a gum resin with a pleasant odor and a bitter taste. It is imported from Persia. It is derived from certain umbelliferous plants.'"
    - 4) Frankincense: "'The common frankincense is a gum derived from the ordinary fir tree; but the frankincense of the Jews is a substance now called Olibanum, a product of certain trees of the genus Boswellia. It grows in Arabia and Somaliland.'"
  - b. These spices were to be combined together "after the art of the apothecary." They were to be "tempered" (salted, margin), and were to be pure and holy. It would burn quickly and cleanly, giving off a pleasant smell.
2. Verses 36-38: "And thou shalt beat *some* of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. And *as for* the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people."
  - a. A potion of this incense was to be placed (stored) near the most holy place (beside or near the altar itself). This was to be beaten small (pulverized).
  - b. Another warning is given forbidding the people from making any of this incense for their own personal use. The same penalty named in verse 33 is prescribed for this offense. These warnings have their counterparts under Christ: we are to refrain from inventing religious beliefs and practices; we are to abide by what the Lord gave, under penalty of losing our souls; we are forbidden to use that which is holy in any profane way.
    - 1) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
    - 2) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."
    - 4) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book."
    - 5) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."

- c. Clarke has an interesting comment about human additions to the gospel:
- 1) “The Israelites were most strictly prohibited, on the most awful penalties, from making any anointing oil or perfume similar to those described in this chapter. He that should compound such, or apply any of this to any common purpose, even for smelling, Ex 30:38, should be ‘cut off,’ that is, excommunicated from his people, and so lose all right, title, and interest in the promises of God and the redemption of Israel.
  - 2) “From all this we may learn how careful the Divine Being is to preserve His own worship and His own truth, so as to prevent them from being adulterated by human inventions; because He will save people in His own way and upon His own terms. What are called human inventions in matters of religion, are not only of no worth, but are in general deceptive and ruinous. Arts and sciences in a certain way may be called inventions of men, for the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man—can comprehend, plan, and execute, under the general influence of God, everything in which human life is immediately concerned, but religion, as it is the gift, so it is the invention, of God.
  - 3) “Its doctrines and its ceremonies proceed from His wisdom and goodness, for He alone could devise the plan by which the human race may be restored to His favour and image, and taught to worship Him in spirit and in truth. And that worship which He Himself has prescribed, we may rest assured, will be most pleasing in His sight. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord; and their destruction by the fire of Yahweh is recorded as a lasting warning to all presumptuous worshippers, and to all who attempt to model his religion, according to their own caprice, and to minister in sacred things without that authority which proceeds from himself alone. The imposition of hands whether of pope, cardinal, or bishop can avail nothing here” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft].
-

## EXODUS 31

### A. Exodus 31:1-11: Bezaleel Appointed to Superintend the Making of the Holy Things.

1. Verses 1-5: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship."
  - a. God saw fit to call the individual whom he had prepared for the work to be done. Bezaleel was the son of Uri and the grandson of Hur. Hur was one of the men who held up Moses' hands during the fight with Amalek (Ex. 17:8-13; cf. 24:14). He was of the tribe of Judah, the tribe from which Jesus sprang (Heb. 7:14), and was from the line of Pharez (1 Chron. 2:5,9,18-20).
  - b. Bezaleel had received special gifts from God that he might be able to do the job at hand. He was able to devise cunning works, in gold, silver, brass, and in cutting of stones, carving timber, and in all manner of workmanship. When God gave a job to someone to do, he always gave to him the necessary tools to be successful.
2. Verses 6-11: "And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that *is* thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, And the table and his furniture, and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, And the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office, And the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy *place*: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do."
  - a. God gave Aholiab the work of assisting Bezaleel. "It is strange indeed that the man appointed by the Lord to make the curtains and have charge of all the fabric work for the Tent (v.7) was himself the bearer of a name Oholiab, which means 'Fathers' Tent.' It is mentioned that he was of the tribe of Dan; and although that tribe does not appear to have been famous for such men of artistic talent, it was likewise true that Hiram, the chief artist employed by Solomon for the ornamental work of the temple, was also a Danite (2 Chron. 2:14)...'The Danites in general were more warlike and rude than artistic (Genesis 49:17, Deuteronomy 33:22, Judges 13:2, 18:11,27)" (Coffman, pp.433f).
    - 1) Genesis 49:17: "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward."
    - 2) Deuteronomy 33:22: "And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan."
    - 3) Judges 13:2: "And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not."
    - 4) Judges 18:11: "And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war."
    - 5) Judges 18:27: "And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire."
  - b. To these men, and their workmen, was given the task of constructing the tabernacle, the ark and mercy seat, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, plus the altar of burnt offerings, the laver, the priestly garments, the anointing oil, and the incense. The special gifts provided by God "did not preclude either natural capacity or acquired skill, but rather presupposed them; for in ver. 6 it is expressly stated in relation to his assistants, that God had put wisdom into all that were wise-hearted" (Keil, p.217).

### B. Exodus 31:12-18: More Instructions Concerning the Sabbath.

1. Verses 12-13: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that *ye* may know that I *am* the LORD that doth sanctify you."
  - a. God gave the law of the sabbath only to the Israelites.

- 1) Deuteronomy 5:3: "The Lord made not this covenant (the Law of Moses, which included the law of the sabbath) with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day."
  - 2) Deuteronomy 5:15: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." No one before the time of Moses ever observed the sabbath day; and no Gentile observed it except as they accepted the Jewish system; but it was never commanded of the Gentiles.
  - b. The plural "sabbaths" has reference to the weekly sabbaths. Each (and every one) of these was to be observed loyally.
  - c. The law of the sabbath was given to Israel to observe "throughout their generations." There was a built-in time limitation to the law of the Sabbath (and to the rest of the Mosaic Law). It was to be observed for as long as their separate status was continued. But God never intended for the Law of Moses to continue as his operative system for all time; he planned from the beginning to establish the gospel system.
    - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
    - 2) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
    - 3) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
    - 4) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
    - 5) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
    - 6) Colossians 2:12-16: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."
  - d. We meet on the first day of the week now:
    - 1) Acts 20:7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until
-

midnight.”

- 2) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
2. Verses 14-15: "Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it *is* holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh *is* the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth *any* work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death."
  - a. The sabbath is the seventh day (not the first day) of the week. Anyone seeking to observe the sabbath must also accept the penalty that accompanied sabbath-keeping. Those who defiled it (by doing any work on that day) were to be surely put to death.
  - b. “To defile the sabbath was to do any unnecessary servile work upon it. Works of mercy, works of necessity, and works connected with religious observance were not prohibited. (See Matt 12:1-7; 10:1-12:50.) The penalty of death for breaking the sabbath seems to moderns over-severe; but the erection of sabbath-observance into the special sacramental sign that Israel was in covenant with God made non-observance an offence of the gravest character. The man who broke the sabbath destroyed, so far as in him lay, the entire covenant between God and his people—not only broke it, but annulled it, and threw Israel out of covenant. Hence, when the sin was committed, no hesitation was felt in carrying out the law. (See Num 15:32-36)” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
  - c. But Sabbatarians are unwilling to accept this essential component of the law; they only want to take the parts that appeal to them. To be cut off here means to be slain. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses" (Num. 15:32-36).
  - d. The Jewish teachers of a later age bound some silly laws on their disciples, including the following:
    - 1) The Talmud says: "In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered as sifting; if she rubs heads of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side-adherencies, it is sifting out fruit; if she bruises the ears, it is grinding; if she throws them up in her hand, it is winnowing" (Annual Lesson Commentary, 1959, p.130).
    - 2) "In the Pharisees' view, the disciples were guilty of *threshing wheat!* Such pedantry, nit-picking, and magnification of trifles would also have made them guilty of *irrigating land*, if they had chanced to knock off a few drops of dew while passing through the fields" (Coffman, *Commentary on Matthew*, p.165)
3. Verses 16-17: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, *for* a perpetual covenant. It *is* a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."
  - a. Again it is stressed that this law was between the children of Israel and God; it was not between the Gentiles and God; it is not between Christians and God. It was to be observed by Israel throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. The Sabbatarians claim that "perpetual" means that it was intended for all time, and for all people. But Leviticus 24:9 says that the showbread was to be eaten "by a perpetual statute." Does that mean that we must have showbread today?
  - b. As God rested on the 7th day of the creation week, so he ordained that Israel should rest during each 7th day, that day being devoted to God. [God rested in the sense that he ceased his creating work].

#### C. Exodus 31:18: The Tables of the Law.

1. Verse 18: "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."
2. God gave Moses the two tables of stone, written on both sides.
  - a. Exodus 24:12: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and



I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."

- b. Exodus 32:15-16: "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written. And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables."
  3. Did God literally and personally record these words with his finger? These were done by the power of God with the details omitted.
    - a. Psalm 8:3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained."
    - b. Psalm 33:6: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."
    - c. Luke 11:20: "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."
-

## EXODUS 32

### A. Exodus 32:1-6: The Making and Worship of the Golden Calf.

1. "The critical strategy of trying to understand this episode as a polemic developed in the times of Jereboam II (800-750 B.C.), more than a half a millennium after Moses wrote Exodus, is completely frustrated by the practical impossibility of any Jew at so late a period inventing an incident that would have so effectively damaged the reputation and stained for ever the name of Aaron, one of the national heroes of Israel" (Coffman, p.439).
  2. Verse 1: "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."
    - a. Moses was on the mount for forty days. During this extended absence the people grew restive and impatient. How long this was before Moses appeared is not stated, but several days would be needed to collect the gold and make the golden calf. The people assembled themselves before Aaron and demanded that gods be made for them to follow. It appears that they wanted to go back into Egypt.
    - b. "We don't know what has become of this man Moses." The length of time Moses was on the mount was a test for Israel, a test they failed miserably. Their lack of patience led to this great departure from God, which in turn caused them to perish in the wilderness without entering Canaan: "Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it. (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) To morrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea. And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, *As truly as* I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But *as for* you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, *which were* of the men that went to search the land, lived *still*" (Numbers 14:22-38).
    - c. Mankind in general, and ancient Israel in particular, is interested in the outward. Israel was not content to follow an invisible King in heaven, and so demanded that they be given an earthly king to reign over them. People today want icons and other outward ceremonies and signs, but the Lord requires that we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7).
    - d. "This is one pretence that the Roman Catholics have for the idolatry in their image worship. Their high priest, the pope, collects the ornaments of the people, and makes an image, a crucifix, a madonna, etc. The people worship it; but the pope says it is only to keep God in remembrance. But of the whole God says, The people have corrupted themselves; and thus as they continue in their idolatry, they have forfeited the blessings of the Lord's covenant. They are not God's people, they are the pope's people, and he is called 'our holy father the pope'" (Clarke, p.464).
  3. Verse 2: "And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives,
-

- of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me."
- a. Aaron told them to break off their earrings and bring them to him. "Both men and women wore these ornaments, and we may suppose that these were a part of the spoils which they brought out of Egypt. How strange, that the very things which were granted them by an especial influence and providence of God, should be now abused to the basest idolatrous purposes! But it is frequently the case that the gifts of God become desecrated by being employed in the service of sin: I will curse your blessings, saith the Lord, Mal. 2:2" (Clarke, p.463).
  - b. Instead of bravely and faithfully opposing the folly of the people, Aaron quickly gave in to their demands.
4. Verse 3: "And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron."
- a. It may be that Aaron, knowing of their desire for the outward ornaments that appealed to their vainglory, thought that they would be unwilling to part with their cherished jewelry. If so, he was wrong. Without any indicated delay, they broke off the earrings and brought them to Aaron.
  - b. "There were at least two million people in the Exodus; gold rings in 4 million ears, had they weighed only 1/4 oz. each, would have been 1,000,000 ounces, or 83,333 lbs. Troy..." (Coffman, p.441). There was far more gold available than was needed for this present evil work.
5. Verse 4: "And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."
- a. Fields: There has been much discussion about the identity of the "gods" which the Israelites requested Aaron to make. Were these "gods" (plural) or "a god"? The story mentions only one golden calf (32:8). But the Hebrew verbs translated "go up" and "brought" (in 32:4) are forms used with plural subjects. The Hebrew word for "God" ('elohim) is naturally plural in form, although when referred to the LORD it normally takes a singular verb (as in Gen. 1:1: "God [plural form] created [singular verb] . . ."). The word *elohim* frequently has a definitely plural meaning, "gods." In such cases the verb is plural also, as it 'is in Ex. 32:1.
  - b. After receiving their gold, he made a molten calf and fashioned it with a graving tool. Apparently, he melted the gold and poured it into a mold; and after it cooled, he carved out the image desired. This suggests that the image was made of solid gold.
  - c. It appears that Aaron presented the idol to the people with much gusto and pride. He claimed what was patently false, that this was the power that brought them from Egypt. How quickly people lose sight of God's goodness! And how foolish it is for men to give praise to images which they have fashioned with their own hands!
  - d. Compare: "They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make

the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:9-20).

6. Verses 5-6: "And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow *is* a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."
  - a. Aaron built an altar before the golden calf and proclaimed that tomorrow they would hold a feast "to the Lord." Just because one asserts that a religious act or service is dedicated to the Lord does not mean that it will be acceptable to him. In this case, although they were very zealous in what they did, their actions were sinful; if fact, so great were their abominations that none of those participating therein were permitted into the promised land. Of all the men who were twenty years old or more on leaving Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb survived the wilderness.
  - b. There are many in today's religious world who do everything imaginable and still assert that these are done to the glory of God. But God derives no glory from any false doctrine or practice; Satan gets the glory, God gets the shame, and the participants gets the stain! They gladly gave up their valuable earrings in order to have an idol. And men will gladly and generously give in support of the grossest errors today. Evil folks think this way: "I am going to offer an act of devotion to God; since I am sincere, God is obligated to accept my worship!" God says otherwise!
  - c. They rose up early the next morning. Many people often very quickly and energetically accept false doctrines and false practices. They usually are very slow to accept and support the truth. This indicates the depth of depravity to which the human family has plunged, and the extent the devil controls them.
  - d. These people offered burnt offerings and peace offerings—in keeping with some of the instructions God gave to Moses. After eating the food thus provided, they rose up to play. That innocent-sounding word ("play") was anything but innocent. Verse 19 suggests that the playing involved dancing, and was of such a nature that Moses was extremely angry. Compare: "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand" (1 Cor. 10:5-8). Their *play* included fornication!
  - e. Nakedness was involved in their playing (Ex. 32:25). Their activities placed them against God. In the very shadow of the mountain where God gave them the law, they immediately broke the I, II, III, and VII laws of the Decalogue (Exod. 20:1-17).
    - 1) Exodus 20:3: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."
    - 2) Exodus 20:4-6: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."
    - 3) Exodus 20:7: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." [They offered their *worship* in the name of the Lord—violating his word directly].
    - 4) Exodus 20:14: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

B. Exodus 32:7-14: Moses Intercedes for Israel.

1. Verses 7-10: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it *is* a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will

make of thee a great nation."

- a. God reported to Moses what was going on in the camp below. They had corrupted themselves. The Lord describes them as a stiffnecked people, that is, they were too stubborn to obey their God. He therefore announced to Moses that he was going to destroy them, and would make a great nation out of Moses (through his descendants). Up to a point God could have done that and still be true to his earlier promises. But Genesis 49:10 promised that "Shiloh" would come through the tribe of Judah, and Moses was of the tribe of Levi. However, it appears that God's threat here was as much a test of Moses as it was a demonstration of his anger against Israel.
  - b. "God puts the fate of the nation into the hand of Moses, that he may remember his mediatorial office, and show himself worthy of his calling. This condescension on the part of God, which placed the preservation or destruction of Israel in the hands of Moses, coupled with a promise, which left the fullest freedom to his decision, viz. that after the destruction of the people he should himself be made a great nation, constituted a great test for Moses, whether he would be willing to give up his own people, laden as they were with guilt, as the price of his own exaltation....The preservation of Israel was dearer to him than the honour of becoming the head and founder of a new kingdom of God" (Keil, p.224).
  - c. When God told Moses stand aside and He would destroy these rebels, and make another nation from the descendants of Moses. To many people, this would have been too strong an idea to be ignored. As far as producing people, as John the Immerser told his audience centuries later, God is of these stone able to raise up children unto Abraham (Matt. 3:9). God knew the spiritual strength of Moses!
2. Verses 11-14: "And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit *it* for ever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."
- a. Moses presented three arguments to persuade the Lord to change his mind: (1) He appealed for him to remember what he had already done for Israel (brought them out of Egypt with many miraculous demonstrations); (2) he pointed out that the Egyptians would accuse God of leading them out into the wilderness merely to destroy them; and (3) he pleaded with God to remember the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob regarding their posterity being multiplied and their possessing the land of Canaan. (See Coffman, pp. 443f). Of course, God already knew all these facts.
  - b. God "repented" of the evil he had intended to do to Israel. Moses had succeeded in influencing the God of heaven! "God never repents of anything in the usual meaning of the word; but when the actions of men justify a change in God's purpose, he does not hesitate to change it; and that phenomenon is called 'repentance' of God in the scriptures" (Coffman, p.444).
    - 1) Numbers 23:19: "God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"
    - 2) Jonah 3:10: "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not."
  - c. Again we must emphasize that God knew what he was going to do; what he had said to Moses was intended to be a test of that good man's resolve. His faith was mighty strong!

C. Exodus 32:15-29: Moses Returns to the Camp and Disciplines the People.

1. Verses 15-18: "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written. And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, *There is* a noise of war in the camp. And he said, *It is* not the voice of *them that* shout for mastery, neither *is it* the voice of *them that* cry for being overcome: *but* the noise of *them that* sing do I hear."
  - a. Taking the two tables of the law, Moses descended the mountain. The tables were written on both

- sides, and were the writing of God. The inscriptions were the result of some miraculous act described as being written by God's finger (31:18).
- b. It may be that Joshua had waited for Moses at some lower place on the mount, and descended to the camp with the lawgiver. As they neared the camp, Joshua interpreted the sound they heard as the noise of battle. But Moses disagreed, saying that it was the sound of singing. Of course, he had the advantage of having been told by God what was going on in the camp. This suggests that Joshua was not present with Moses when God was revealing the details of the law; nor was he present in the camp while the golden calf was being constructed and worshipped.
2. Verse 19: "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing; and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount."
    - a. When they came closer, they could see the calf and the dancing. Moses' anger was kindled and he cast the tables down and broke them. It seems to our minds that this violent act of breaking the tables must have been wrong, but we are not told of any censure placed on him by the Lord.
    - b. The breaking of the tables symbolizes the fact that Israel was not worthy to receive this great privilege of being guided by God's word. They had heard the voice of God when the ten commandments were announced: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not" (Ex. 20:18-20).
    - c. They were properly impressed at the time, but their fear faded. When emotions take control a person, reason forthwith is evicted! Our modern society operates primarily under the dictates of emotion; truth has little impact. Therefore, the pure Gospel has not interest to our generation.
  3. Verses 20-24: "And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder, and strowed *it* upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink *of it*. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they *are set* on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break *it* off. So they gave *it* me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."
    - a. Moses burned the idol (melted it down), ground it to powder, and mixed it in the water, and made the people drink it. Compare: "And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, *and* ground *it* very small, *even* until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount" (Deut. 9:21).
    - b. Moses then demanded of Aaron what the people did to him to make him bring so great a sin upon them. If he had stood firm in the truth, he might have kept the people from such a foolish experience. To a degree, we are our brother's keeper.
    - c. Aaron pleaded with Moses that he ought not to be angry toward him because what happened was the fault of the people. "You know them, that they are set on mischief!" He stated further that they came to him with the demand that he make gods "to go before us, for we don't know what has become of Moses." Aaron said that he then told them to bring gold to him, which he claimed to have cast into the fire, and "there came out this calf." We are not told of Moses' reply to this fraudulent excuse.
  4. Verses 25-26: "And when Moses saw that the people *were* naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto *their* shame among their enemies:) Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who *is* on the LORD'S side? *let him come* unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him."
    - a. Moses saw that the people were naked. If innocent play was all they were involved in, why were they unclothed? It is obvious that some kind of sexual orgy was taking place, in connection with the idol worship. Such sinful things were the usual in idol worship among the heathen. The account lays the blame for their nakedness on Aaron; it was he who fashioned the image and announced the festivities. Moses stood at the gate of the camp and invited all who were on the Lord's side to join him.
    - b. The implication is that those who did not come over to where Moses was, were not on the Lord's side.
-

It is significant that the tribe of Levi gathered themselves with their fellow tribesman. This they did partially out of personal regard for their leader, but also because he too was of the tribe of Levi. They perhaps deserve the benefit of the doubt—they wanted to serve God.

5. Verses 27-29: "And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, *and* go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day."
  - a. The Levites were subjected to a very severe test: they were told to circulate through the entire camp and slay certain ones. Those to be slain were fellow members of the children of Israel, hence they were brothers and neighbors. A great deal of trust in Moses and God was required to fulfill this demand.
  - b. "There is very much about this incident that we cannot know. How is it that the sons of Levi encountered no resistance? Since only 3,000 men were slain out of all the host of Israel, how was the selection made? Did they cast lots to find the guilty? Were those slain actually slain in the sinful act of violating the Law? None of this are we able to answer. Yet the hand of God was clearly in this episode, else it could never have been resolved at all" (Coffman, pp.447f).
  - c. "God, in these stern examples, was giving a glimpse of what always happens when men disobey their Creator. True, today God does not physically destroy the disobedient, but their eternal destruction, which is a far worse thing, is the certain and irrevocable penalty of any human's rebellion against his God. Note that this entire scene is related to Pentecost and the coming of the Gospel of Christ. Here three thousand men perished on the very first day that the Law of God became effective; whereas, on the other hand, three thousand souls were saved on Pentecost (Acts 2:38ff)" (ibid., pp.448f).

D. Exodus 32:30-35: Moses Intercedes Again in Israel's Behalf.

1. Verses 30-32: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written."
  - a. Moses announced to the people unequivocally that they had committed a great sin; but he said he would intercede for them with the Lord. It might be that some atonement could be made for their sin. He had punished the people, but now he sought for their restoration with God.
  - b. "We are amazed at the scholars who make an ellipsis (an incomplete sentence) out of this. All it needs is proper punctuation....Punctuation is altogether a human thing, anyway; and we have as much right to punctuate it accurately, as others do to make an ellipsis out of it by leaving out a comma!" (Coffman, p.449). Moses simply asks God to forgive the people; if not, Moses asks God to blot him out of the book of life in place of the people.
    - 1) Romans 9:1-3: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
    - 2) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
    - 3) Philippians 4:3: "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life."
    - 4) Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
    - 5) Luke 10:20: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather

rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

2. Verses 33-35: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."
  - a. God replied that those who would be blotted from the book of life were those who committed sin. The way a man lives determines his eternal fate: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).
  - b. God punished the people.
    - 1) Numbers 14:22-38: "Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it. (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) To morrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea. And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. I the LORD have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still."
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:1-11: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
    - 3) Hebrews 3:1-19: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence



and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- c. Moses is to continue to lead the people; he would be guided by the Angel. "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).
-

## EXODUS 33

### A. Introduction.

#### 1. Coffman:

- a. "God had already granted Moses' prayer for the nation of Israel to be spared, but the final issue of whether or not the broken covenant would be renewed was at this point unresolved, and also, if to be renewed, under what conditions. God's threatened withdrawal of his sacred presence from the apostate nation is announced (vv. 1-6); and it became clear at once that Israel would be required to demonstrate genuine repentance for their shameful rebellion in which the covenant had indeed been forfeited.
  - b. "Israel's line of communication with God had been broken; plans for construction of the Tabernacle were temporarily cancelled, and the consecration of the priesthood and initiation of the Tabernacle system of worship were dropped until the matter of the broken covenant could be resolved and the covenant renewed. This emergency situation left Moses as the only hope of Israel; for, if it had not been for Moses, there can be little doubt that God would have destroyed Israel or left them to wander for ever in the wilderness of Sinai; but Moses was equal to the Gargantuan task that confronted him.
  - c. "First, he improvised a temporary tabernacle to provide a provisional means of communication with God. This he did by moving his own tent to an eminence overlooking the whole camp of Israel, where God communicated with him; and then he took up a substitute residence for himself within the camp. We may be sure that Moses acted upon direct instructions from God in making these arrangements (vv. 7-11). Moses' continued, and fervent intercession for Israel resulted in the complete restoration and healing of the broken covenant" (p.453).
2. Exodus 19:1 reports that Israel came in the third month after departing from Egypt to Sinai.
- a. Numbers 10:11-13: "And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses."
  - b. Deuteronomy 1:6-8: "The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all *the places* nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them" (Deut. 1:6-8).
  - c. Israel had been out of Egypt for more than a year at this point in time.

### B. Exodus 33:1-6: Israel Repents.

1. Verses 1-3: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, *and* go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swore unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou *art* a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way."
  - a. God directs Moses to proceed with the people from Sinai to Canaan. God would be true to the promises he made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Lord promises to send an angel to accompany Israel as they enter the land, and that this angel would drive from the land of promise the various ungodly people inhabiting it. Notice the subtle thought that an angel would accompany them, and that the Lord's presence would not be among them. There clearly appears to be a distinction between the angel of this passage and the Angel described in 23:20-23.
  - b. The Angel of chapter 23 is one in whom God's name dwelled and who had the ability to forgive. Nothing of the sort is indicated in the present chapter. Israel understood the serious nature of this change in God's plans, and mourned (vv. 4-6). The reason God gave for not accompanying the nation is that they are a stiffnecked people, and their stubborn rebellion would sooner or later lead to his wrath breaking forth and destroying them. The information given in this passage is a continuation of what was introduced in Exodus 32:34-35: "Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of
-

which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

2. Verses 3-6: "Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou *art* a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way. And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye *are* a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb."
  - a. When the people learned of what the Lord had told Moses, they mourned. "The people were so overwhelmed with sorrow by this evil word, that they all put off their ornaments, and showed by this outward sign the trouble of their heart" (Keil, p.233).
  - b. Verse four shows that they did not adorn themselves with their ornaments; verses 5-6 show that God forbade their wearing them. Keil translates the command of verse five as, "Throw thine ornament away from thee, and I shall know by that what to do to thee" (ibid.). The idea seems to be that they were to remove them and refrain from wearing them in the future.
  - c. "The sorrow of Israel was profound when the full import of their shameful apostasy began to be fully realized by them. Indeed, God had spared the nation upon the intercession of Moses; but he here proposed that he would not accompany them to Canaan....Instead of being with them personally and actually talking with the elders of the people, as in their ratification of the covenant, God proposed that henceforth an angel would accompany the people, something of far less desirability" (Coffman.,p.456).
  - d. But in verse 5, God indicated that he had not made a final decision regarding his future relationship with Israel. He had given them his covenant which they agreed to follow (24:3,7); but in their sin of the previous chapter, they had failed to abide by the agreement, and thus nullified God's provisions. Since they had broken their bargain, God was under no obligation to uphold his part.
  - e. "Construction of the Tabernacle so elaborately planned and shown to Moses was cancelled for the time then being. No priests would be consecrated until the matter was resolved. Furthermore, God would not be 'in the midst of the people' at all, but would appear only to Moses, and even that was not to be while Moses was in the midst of the people; but it would happen 'outside the camp,' in a place especially prepared as a provisional means of communication during the period when the covenant was abrogated" (Coffman, p.ibid.).

### C. Exodus 33:7-11: The Temporary Tabernacle.

1. Verses 7-8: "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, *that* every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which *was* without the camp. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose up, and stood every man *at* his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle."
  - a. The tabernacle described in Exodus 26 was not constructed until the time of Chapter 36. The chronology of the book shows that the tabernacle of the present text is not the tabernacle wherein the priests were to offer their services.
  - b. "There were two tents or tabernacles directly connected with the Israelites during their long stay in the wilderness of Sinai. One was called 'The tent of meeting' (Ex. 33:7), and the other 'the tabernacle of the testimony' or simply the 'Tent' or 'tabernacle' (Num. 9:15-18). The first was used by Moses as a meeting place with Jehovah, while the other was the place of worship. The one about which we are to study today is 'The tent of meeting.' The other one had not been built at the time of this lesson. (See Ex. 35:10,11). This distinction should be kept in mind throughout this study" (ALC, 1960, p.175).
  - c. This tent, whether usually serving as Moses' residence, or some other, was removed from the midst of the camp and erected at some distance from where the people abode. The LXX reads, "And Moses took his tabernacle..." The removal of the tent from the camp was significant, a point not overlooked by the Israelites. Any who wanted to call upon God must leave the camp and go out to this tent. The removal of the tent to a place apart from Israel indicates that God will not meet with people who are

in sin.

- 1) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*:"
  - 2) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
  - 3) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
  - 4) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
- d. Later, when the tabernacle was constructed, it was erected in the midst of the camp (cf. Num. 2:1-2, mar.). The tent of this chapter seems to have continued in use.
- 1) Numbers 11:26: "But there remained two *of the* men in the camp, the name of the one *was* Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they *were* of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp."
  - 2) Numbers 12:4: "And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out."
  - 3) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."
  - 4) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
- e. "A feeling of consternation appears to have pervaded the entire camp of Israel, when they came to realize what they had lost in God's withdrawing his presence from them. They therefore anxiously watch Moses until he entered into the Tent. It is possible that they did this in the hope that the Lord's blessings could be obtained for them. This also no doubt emphasized the mediatorial office of Moses; for it was he and not they who had access to God" (ALC, 1960, p.176).
2. Verses 9-10: "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand *at* the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man *in* his tent door."
- a. The descent of the cloudy pillar to stand at the door of the tent was a clear demonstration of God's presence, and that God was pleased with Moses. The appearance of the cloud was miraculous, since it appeared when Moses entered the tent. No one could counterfeit the cloudy pillar. Furthermore, since they could surmise that Moses was interceding for them, they could have a measure of hope that God would again abide with them. They showed their penitence and desire for a reconciliation by their worshiping, "every man in his tent door."
  - b. "There were two reasons for this: in the first place, Moses desired thereby to lead the people to a fuller recognition of their separation from their God, that their penitence might be deepened in consequence; and in the second place, he wished to provide such means of intercourse with Jehovah as would not only awaken in the minds of the people a longing for the renewal of the covenant, but render the restoration of the covenant possible. And this end was answered. Not only did every one who sought Jehovah go out to the tent, but the whole nation looked with the deepest reverence when Moses went out to the tent, and bowed in adoration before the Lord, every one in front of his tent, when they saw the pillar of cloud come down upon the tent and stand before the door" (Keil, p.234).
  - c. "This whole paragraph deals with the period of rebellion of Israel's part, before the Tabernacle was constructed, as indicated by the totally different situation. (1) No sacrifices were offered. (2) There
-

was no high priest, nor even any lesser priests. (3) The Tent was 'without' the polluted camp of Israel, not in the midst of it. (4) When Moses needed someone to watch the Tent, he gave the commission to Joshua, not to Aaron, perhaps because Joshua was the only one in Israel who had not danced around the golden calf" (Coffman, p.458).

3. Verse 11: "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."
  - a. Moses had a relationship with God which others did not enjoy. This passage does not mean that Moses saw the face of God, but that God spoke with Moses directly, not through some medium.
    - 1) Genesis 12:7-8: "And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD."
    - 2) Genesis 32:30: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."
    - 3) Exodus 33:20-23: "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
    - 4) John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
    - 5) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen."
    - 6) 1 John 4:12: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."
  - b. When Moses returned to the camp, Joshua remained in the tent. This is further evidence that the tent was not the tabernacle since Joshua, as a man of Ephraim, was not permitted to enter it (Num. 8:14-21; Josh. 19:49-50; Num. 13:8,16).

#### D. Exodus 33:12-23: Moses Meets with God.

1. Verses 12-13: "And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation *is* thy people."
  - a. Moses mentions to the Lord that he had directed Moses to take Israel on toward the promised land, but that he had not identified to him who would guide them there. He knew that God had promised an angel, but God had not further identified that angel.
  - b. "Moreover, though it has not been mentioned before, Jehovah had said to Moses, 'I have known thee by name,'—i.e., I have recognised thee as Mine, and chosen and called thee to execute My will (cf. Isa. 43:1; 44:1)..." (Keil, p.235).
  - c. "The term 'know' in the latter part of verse 12 is used in the sense of approve or endorse. (Cf. Psalm 1:6; Matt. 7:23; 2 Tim. 2:19.) Moses had been deliberately chosen for the work he was doing, and Jehovah had demonstrated his confidence in him by his frequent communion with him. There was no doubt about how God felt toward Moses; but he was anxious to have some assurance regarding the success of his endeavor. He fully realized that he could not succeed without divine help. As Moses saw the matter, God's confidence in him made it essential that he have the additional information regarding the leader....This was a plea that God would show him something of his intended procedure toward his people, that is, how he intended for Moses, in subservience to his divine purpose, to accomplish the great task which he had assigned to him. As a further reason for making this request, he reverently called on God to consider the fact that the nation which he had been

- commissioned to lead was his people; and as such they should be guided by God's wisdom and in his own way. A failure to do this would be equivalent to abandoning them" (ALC, 1960, pp.177f).
2. Verses 14-17: "And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? *is it* not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that *are* upon the face of the earth. And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name."
    - a. God plainly stated that he would accompany them as they made their journey. The issue hung in the balance due to Israel's great sin of the previous chapter, but through the fervent intercession by Moses, God acceded to his request.
    - b. "The term 'presence' is used in the sense of face, and the meaning is that his personal presence would go with them. The reconciliation between Jehovah and the people had been completed, through their repentance and the intercession of Moses. God is always righteous, and when his people rebel against him he will not bless them, until they repent and turn to him. When a reconciliation between God and man is necessary, it is always essential for man to return to God; for God will never leave man, as long as he will walk in the way of righteousness" (ibid., p.178).
    - c. Compare: "And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:18-20).
    - d. God would be with Moses (and thus with Israel), and God would provide rest for them.
      - 1) Deuteronomy 3:20: "Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until* they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and *then* shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you." [Because of sin, Moses was not permitted to enter Canaan (cf. Deut. 34:1-7).
      - 2) Hebrews 4:8-11: "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."
    - e. Moses stated in verse 15 that if God did not accompany them, then they would remain in the wilderness where they were. In other words, Moses had rather be in the awful wilderness with God, than to be in the land of milk and honey without him. "Sinai at its worst with God was better than Canaan at its best without God" (Unger, as quoted by Coffman, p.459).
    - f. God's promise of verse fourteen is all the evidence Moses needed to assure him that God would be with them. Israel was to be distinctive from all other nations, a special and chosen for God. Herein lay their strength and hope. It appears that Moses is asking that God keep them separate, and that, in verse seventeen, God agrees to do so.
  3. Verses 17-20: "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."
    - a. Moses is forward enough to ask that God show him his glory. God proceeded to set forth a plan by which he would show his glory to Moses, but states clearly that no man could see him in his real essence and live (1 John 4:12; 1 Tim. 6:16).
    - b. Paul uses the Lord's words (of vs. 19) in Romans 9:15: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."
    - c. God did not owe this to Moses, but he would reveal a manifestation of his glory to him.
  4. Verses 21-23: "And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
-

- a. God would put Moses in a cleft of the rock, cover him with his hand, and after his glory passed by, Moses would be able to see his back parts. Cf. "Rock of Ages" and "A Wonderful Saviour."
  - b. Since "no man hath seen God at any time," it follows that what Moses was to see was a manifestation of God. No man could see God in his true essence and live. Keil (p.239) describes a grotto on Jebel Musa which some think is the cleft Moses was to enter.
-

## EXODUS 34

### A. Exodus 34:1-9: God Directs Moses to Return to Sinai.

1. Verses 1-3: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount."
  - a. Having accepted Moses' intercession in behalf of the people, God now instructed the prophet to ascend Sinai again, bringing with him two tables which Moses was to hew from stones. God promised to inscribe again the ten commands thereupon. This is not a different law, but a renewal of the original law which God ordained on Moses' previous extended stay upon the mountain. Moses was to ascend the mountain alone; neither Joshua nor the elders, nor any other persons were permitted to accompany Moses. The flocks and herds were to be kept away from Sinai. He was to be ready to present himself before the Lord the next morning.
  - b. "It is true that we have not yet been specifically told what these words were; but it has been left to our natural intelligence to understand that they must have been the 'ten words' uttered in the ears of the people amid the thunders of Sinai, as recorded in 22:1-19, which are the evident basis of all subsequent legislation. But in v. 28, and still more plainly in Deuteronomy 10:4, and v. 22, we have the desired statement. The fiction of a double decalogue, invented by Goethe, is absolutely without foundation in fact" (Rawlinson, as quoted by Coffman, p.466).
    - 1) Exodus 34:28: "And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."
    - 2) Deuteronomy 10:4: "And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me."
  - c. There is no direct censure of Moses for breaking the original tablets. It may be that that action was a case of being angry without sin, but notice that God required Moses to hew out the new tablets, something that God himself provided for in the earlier case.
2. Verses 4-7: "And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*."
  - a. Moses obeyed the instructions, and presented himself before the Lord on the mountain, bringing with him the two tables of stone.
  - b. God descended upon Sinai in a cloud and stood with Moses, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. Verse six speaks of God passing by before Moses, apparently in fulfillment of the information presented in chapter 33:18-23. These descriptions of God are also given in Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 86:15, 103:8, 145:8, Joel 2:15, Jonah 4:2, and Numbers 14:18.
    - 1) Exodus 33:18-23: "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
    - 2) Numbers 14:18: "The LORD *is* longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the



children unto the third and fourth *generation*."

- 3) Nehemiah 9:17: "And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou *art* a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not."
  - 4) Psalms 86:15: "But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."
  - 5) Psalms 103:8: "The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."
  - 6) Psalms 145:8: "The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy."
  - 7) Joel 2:15: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:"
  - 8) Jonah 4:2: "And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."
- c. The statement is one showing the love and justice of God: he is merciful but he will not overlook the guilty. Wishful-thinking, second-guessing God, or presumptuous law-making will not bring salvation to the disobedient. Mercy is extended to thousands and the consequences of one generation's sins are suffered by others of succeeding generations, but only the personal guilt of the individual is charged to the individual.
- 1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
  - 2) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
3. Verses 8-9: "And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it *is* a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance."
- a. Moses was greatly impressed by this display of God's glory, and quickly bowed before him and worshipped. He prayed that if he had found grace in the Lord's sight that their iniquity and sin might be pardoned.
  - b. Notice that Moses included himself in the confession of evil. He desired that God forgive them and accept them as his own. Israel had sinned horribly, and did not deserve God's good pleasure.

#### B. Exodus 34:10-26: God Renews the Covenant.

1. Verse 10: "And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou *art* shall see the work of the LORD: for it *is* a terrible thing that I will do with thee."
  - a. This covenant was not new, but a restoration of the one originally proposed, and to which Israel had bound themselves to do. Notwithstanding their avowals of obedience, they quickly fell into sin. God promises to do marvels which were unheard of on the earth. These marvels include the various miracles connected with driving the heathen population from Canaan, as well as the miraculous crossing of Jordan and overthrow of Jericho.
  - b. There were many miraculous demonstrations shown by God in connection with Israel's sojourn in the wilderness and conquering of Canaan. These would include some "terrible" things—terrible to Israel's enemies.
2. Verses 11-12: "Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:"
  - a. But there were certain requirements on the part of Israel, including their attitude toward the people

of the land of promise. God would cause these idolaters to be driven from the land, but Israel was not to make a covenant with them.

- b. "The subsequent history of Israel revealed how necessary and absolutely vital such a prohibition actually was. It was precisely through their transgression of this divine commandment that the eventual destruction of their 'sinful kingdom' came about. Solomon himself was the notorious example of the violation of this command" (Coffman, p.469).
  - c. By making covenants with these pagans, Israel set the stage for the later adoption of heathen sins and errors. The generation following the one which took possession of Canaan plunged into sin—"And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel....And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:7,10).
3. Verses 13-17: "But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods."
    - a. When Israel entered the land, they were to break down the heathen altars and images, and cut down the groves in which idolatry was often practiced. The reason for this was to prevent Israel from worshipping false gods, and thus incurring the wrath of a jealous God. The nature of the Almighty is such that he cannot and will not share our allegiance with any other: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). If the idols and that which pertained to them were permitted to remain, only time would be required before Israel fell into idolatry.
    - b. To "go a whoring after their gods" is a graphic depiction of sinful conduct. God's relationship with his people is often pictured in the Bible as that of husband and wife. Unfaithfulness on the part of the people (the wife in the figure) is thus "spiritual adultery." Compare: "The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD" (Hos. 1:2). But idolatry of ancient times was characterized by all kinds of fornication, so that in a very real sense, they could "go a whoring after their gods."
    - c. God included a plain statement forbidding "molten gods." In Exodus 20:4 he had forbidden graven images; perhaps Aaron thought he was getting around that law by fabricating a molten image; if so, God was explicit in the current prohibition. In place of "images" the margin has "statues." The ASV has "Asherim" (plural for Asherah, the name of a Syrian-Canaanite goddess of fertility; cf. 2 Kings 21:3,7; see Coffman, p.470 for more vile specifics).
  4. Verses 18-22: "The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt. All that openeth the matrix *is* mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, *whether* ox or sheep, *that is male*. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem *him* not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty. Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest. And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end."
    - a. God again gave details regarding the feast days: included in his statements are the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), Tabernacles, and the Passover. The Passover was directly connected with the feast of unleavened bread, and so is included. At the year's end, they were to observe the feast of ingathering (Tabernacles). The marginal rendering for "year's end" is "revolution of the year," ("...a scientific reference to the circling of the earth around the sun in its annual orbit, producing the years" (Coffman, p.473).
    - b. They were to keep the sabbath day "in seed-time and harvest." These were the busiest times of the year for their society, but that did not excuse them from their worship obligations. The regulations

given earlier about redeeming the firstborn are given again.

5. Verses 23-24: "Thrice in the year shall all your menchildren appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year."
  - a. Three times during the year the males among them were obligated to assemble at the appointed place (where the tabernacle was erected). Those three occasions were the three feasts named above. God anticipates their natural doubt of this by stating that there would be no need for them to fear the enemy coming in during the absence of the men and taking over.
  - b. God would not permit this to happen; he does not specify how he would prevent this, but among the means was the terror God's mighty works in Israel's behalf would create in their hearts.
  - c. "And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Joshua 2:8-11).
6. Verses 25-26: "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."
  - a. "All of these regulations are merely repetitions of those already given; and it is inconceivable that scholars would affirm, apparently seriously, that 'It is better to view them as distinct decalogues'" (ibid.).
  - b. The Passover is directly named here, with the mention that what was uneaten was not to remain until the morning. Some see in this a reference to the death of Christ, our Passover, whose body was not permitted to remain on the cross until the sabbath day began.
  - c. The law of the firstfruits and the prohibition against seething a kid in his mother's milk are again given (see 23:19).
    - 1) They are prohibited from seething a lamb in its mother's milk. First, it is an indication of unconcern for the beasts involved. "Even human nature shudders at the thought of causing the mother to lend her milk to seethe the flesh of her young one!" (Clarke, p.422).
    - 2) A discovery in 1930 revealed an ancient pagan ritual that called for a kid to be boiled in its mother's milk, with the fluids produced being sprinkled on the crops; this was supposedly able to increase fertility of the soil. "With this information, it is easy to understand why God would not allow Israel to do anything resembling the pagan rites of idolatrous nations around them" (Coffman, p.336).

C. Exodus 34:27-35: Moses to Record These Matters; His Face Shines Brightly.

1. Verses 27-28: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."
  - a. Moses was to transcribe these words. The word "tenor" here suggests that God had only given a summary of the laws previously revealed. This is the second 40-day sojourn on the mountain, and as in the first, Moses fasted during that time:
    - 1) Exodus 24:18: "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights."
    - 2) Deuteronomy 9:9-12: "When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, *even* the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water: And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them *was written* according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And

it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, *that* the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, *even* the tables of the covenant. And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted *themselves*; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image."

- b. From the last part of verse 28 it appears that Moses did the writing upon the tables, but verse 1 said that God would do this writing, and Deuteronomy 10:2 says plainly that it was God who did it. Only the ten commandments were inscribed on the tables; Moses wrote the other information in a book.
  - 1) Exodus 17:14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."
  - 2) Exodus 24:4: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel."
  - 3) Deuteronomy 10:2: "And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark."
- c. "It has been argued from this expression that Moses wrote the words on the second tables; and it would be natural so to understand the passage, had nothing else been said on the subject. But in ver. 1 we are told that 'God said, I will write upon these tables;' and the same is repeated in Deut 10:2. Moreover in Deut 10:4, it is distinctly declared 'He' (i.e. God) 'wrote on the tables according to the first writing.' We must therefore regard 'he' in this passage as meaning 'the Lord,' which is quite possible according to the Hebrew idiom" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 29-35: "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And *till* Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel *that* which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him."
  - a. The Hebrew word translated "shone" closely resembles the word for "horned." The Vulgate translates it with the latter word, and Michelangelo's great statue of Moses shows him with horns. This is foolish for Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:13-15 gives an allegory based on this event which indicates that the KJV is correctly translated: "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."
  - b. His face shone with a glorious light that was frightening to Israel. While Moses talked with them he wore a veil over his face, hiding from their sight this brightness. But when Moses talked with God, he removed the veil. Paul refers to this situation, and illustrates an important lesson thereby. In his use of it, the veil represents the blindness of heart which characterized the unbelieving Jews of his day in not being willing to see and accept the gospel. Paul said nothing about any horns.
  - c. "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished" (2 Cor. 3:13). Moses put a veil over his face to shield the eyes of the people near him from the overwhelming brightness of his face. By way of contrast to this, Paul did not use veiled language in affirming the greater glory of the gospel to the Law, and the replacement of the Law by the gospel. Jews who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, still clung to the Mosaic Law. Anyone who tried to show them that the Law was no longer in effect was in danger of persecution at the hand of the Jewish unbelievers.
  - d. "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading

of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart" (2 Cor. 3:14-15).

- 1) As the Old Testament Jews had their eyes blinded to some degree by the brightness of Moses' face, so the minds of their descendants have been blinded to the truth that the Old Covenant has now been replaced by the gospel of Christ.
  - 2) There is a figurative veil over their minds, blinding them to the clear truth that the Old Law has been superceded by the New Law. At the time Paul penned 2 Corinthians (about 57 A.D.), the majority of the Jews were still mentally blinded to the great change in Covenants.
  - 3) Since the Jews of the first century had no viable excuse to justify their rejection of the gospel, those living today have even less means to rationalize their rejection of the gospel. They ignore the plain statements incorporated into the Old Testament, including the Pentateuch (Deut. 18:15-18), which clearly predicted the ending of the Mosaic System: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:15-18).
- e. "Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away" (2 Cor. 3:16).
- 1) Although they are willfully blind to the truth, if they will open their eyes, they would be able to turn to the Lord. God will not perform a miracle to remove their blindness; that is an act which only they as individuals can do.
  - 2) God does not show partiality to anyone; if he removed the blindness and stubbornness from the Jews so that they could be saved, he would be obligated by his impartial nature to do the same for all the Gentiles as well. But that would nullify the death of Christ, and make void all the predictions and preparations of the Old Testament era regarding the gospel system. It would repudiate the New Testament entirely.
  - 3) Matthew 13:14-15: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
-

## EXODUS 35-40

### A. Exodus 35: Moses Calls on Israel to Provide the Materials for the Tabernacle.

1. Verses 1-3: "And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These *are* the words which the LORD hath commanded, that *ye* should do them. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day."
  - a. He begins to recount what the Lord had told him. He reminded the people of God's ordinance concerning the sabbath.
  - b. No fire was to be kindled during the sabbath. "The kindling of fire in early times involved considerable labour. It was ordinarily affected by rubbing two sticks together, or twisting one round rapidly between the two palms in a depression upon a board. Fire only came after a long time. Moreover, as in the warm climate of Arabia and Palestine artificial warmth was not needed, fire could only have been kindled there for cooking purposes, which involved further unnecessary work, and had already been forbidden (Ex 16:23). The Karaite Jews still maintain the observance of this precept to the letter, even in cold climates, as in that of the Crimea, and allow neither fire nor light in their houses on the sabbath day; but the Jews generally view the precept as having had only a temporary force, and have lights and fires, like other persons, even in Palestine. Strict Jews, however, still cook no food on the sabbath day" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 4-19: "And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate. And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded; The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets, The ark, and the staves thereof, *with* the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering, The table, and his staves, and all his vessels, and the showbread, The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light, And the incense altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle, The altar of burnt offering, with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot, The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court, The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords, The cloths of service, to do service in the holy *place*, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office."
  - a. Moses calls on those who are "of a willing heart" (vs. 5) to provide certain items. There would be a cost to them, just as the gospel makes certain demands of us:
    - 1) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
    - 2) Luke 13:24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
  - b. They were to bring the items and supplies which would be needed in constructing the tabernacle, for making the anointing oil and sweet incense, and the clothing for the priests.
  - c. "Having warned the Israelites against breaches of the sabbath, Moses proceeded to enumerate the offerings which God had said that they might bring (vers. 4-9), and the works which he had required to be constructed (vers. 10-19). In the former enumeration, he follows exactly the order and wording of the Divine command to himself, as recorded in Ex 25:3-7; in the latter, he changes the order, mentioning first the building, with its component parts (ver. 11), then the contents of the building (vers. 12-15), then the court with its contents (vers. 16, 17) together with some details which had been omitted in the former account (ver. 18), and finally the holy garments (ver. 19). After hearing him, the people returned to their several tents (ver. 20)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database.

Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].

3. Verses 20-29: "And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, *and* they brought the LORD'S offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, *and* brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that *offered* an offering of gold unto the LORD. And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought *them*. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the Lord's offering: and every man, with whom was found shittim wood for any work of the service, brought *it*. And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, *both* of blue, and of purple, *and* of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' *hair*. And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate; And spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses."

a. Other translations:

- 1) "And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and brought Jehovah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all the service thereof, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought brooches, and ear-rings, and signet-rings, and armlets, all jewels of gold; even every man that offered an offering of gold unto Jehovah. And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, brought them. Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought Jehovah's offering; and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, the blue, and the purple, the scarlet, and the fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun the goats' hair. And the rulers brought the onyx stones, and the stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate; and the spice, and the oil; for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Israel brought a freewill-offering unto Jehovah; every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work, which Jehovah had commanded to be made by Moses" (ASV).
  - 2) "And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and they brought the Lord's offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting, for all its service, and for the holy garments. They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, and brought earrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all jewelry of gold, that is, every man who made an offering of gold to the Lord. And every man, with whom was found blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, goats' hair, red skins of rams, and badger skins, brought them. Everyone who offered an offering of silver or bronze brought the Lord's offering. And everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. All the women who were gifted artisans spun yarn with their hands, and brought what they had spun, of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And all the women whose hearts stirred with wisdom spun yarn of goats' hair. The rulers brought onyx stones, and the stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate, and spices and oil for the light, for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Israel brought a freewill offering to the Lord, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring material for all kinds of work which the Lord, by the hand of Moses, had commanded to be done" (NKJV).
- b. The people departed from Moses, and went to assemble the materials. The gifts depended on the willingness of their hearts. Women who "were wise hearted did spin with their hands" to produce the blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen.
- c. Thus did they bring a "willing offering unto the Lord." "And Joses, who by the apostles [of the church] was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet"
-

(Acts 4:36-37).

- d. “No exciting harangues were made, nor had the people Bibles at home in which they could compare the requirements of their leader and see if these things were so. But they had no doubt as to his bearing to them the will of God; and they were impressed with so strong a sense of its being their duty, that they made a spontaneous offer of the best and most valuable treasures they possessed..... One powerful element, doubtless, of this extraordinary open-hearted liberality was the remembrance of their recent transgression, which made them ‘zealous of good works’ (cf. 2 Cor 7:11).
  - 1) “But along with this motive there were others of a higher and nobler kind—a principle of love to God and devotedness to His service, an anxious desire to secure the benefit of His presence, and gratitude for the tokens of His divine favour. It was under the combined influence of these considerations that the people were so willing and ready to pour their contributions into that exchequer of the sanctuary.
  - 2) “Every one whom his spirit made willing. Human nature is always the same; and it is implied, that while an extraordinary spirit of pious liberality reigned in the bosoms of the people at large, there were exceptions—some who were too fond of the world, who loved their possessions more than their God, and who could not part with these—no, not for the service of the tabernacle.
  - 3) “And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the LORD” [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft].
4. Verses 30-35: "And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in the cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, *both* he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, *even* of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work."
  - a. God had given Bezeleel and Aholiab the ability to do many crafts, which they were to teach to others. Without this special knowledge and skill the beautiful craftsmanship evidenced in the tabernacle, etc., would not have been possible.
  - b. Notice that God did not do for man what man was able to accomplish. He gave the original information, but that knowledge was to be passed on by diligent teaching and practice.

#### B. Exodus 36: The Tabernacle.

1. Verses 1-7: "Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, *even* every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it: And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it *withal*. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning. And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much."
  - a. The people willingly gave to this good work. When the followers of God have a willingness to obey, the greatest obstacles can be overcome. Compare: “So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people **had a mind to work**” (Neh. 4:6).
  - b. They brought in their offerings each morning, until finally those who were collecting the materials told Moses that they had more than was needed: "For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much" (vs. 7).



2. Verses 8-38: “And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle made ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: *with* cherubims of cunning work made he them. The length of one curtain *was* twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: the curtains *were* all of one size. And he coupled the five curtains one unto another: and *the other* five curtains he coupled one unto another. And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling: likewise he made in the uttermost side of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the second. Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the coupling of the second: the loops held one *curtain* to another. And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches: so it became one tabernacle. And he made curtains *of* goats' hair for the tent over the tabernacle: eleven curtains he made them. The length of one curtain *was* thirty cubits, and four cubits *was* the breadth of one curtain: the eleven curtains *were* of one size. And he coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. And he made fifty loops upon the uttermost edge of the curtain in the coupling, and fifty loops made he upon the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And he made fifty taches *of* brass to couple the tent together, that it might be one. And he made a covering for the tent *of* rams' skins dyed red, and a covering *of* badgers' skins above *that*. And he made boards for the tabernacle *of* shittim wood, standing up. The length of a board *was* ten cubits, and the breadth of a board one cubit and a half. One board had two tenons, equally distant one from another: thus did he make for all the boards of the tabernacle. And he made boards for the tabernacle; twenty boards for the south side southward: And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. And for the other side of the tabernacle, *which is* toward the north corner, he made twenty boards, And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. And for the sides of the tabernacle westward he made six boards. And two boards made he for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. And they were coupled beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one ring: thus he did to both of them in both the corners. And there were eight boards; and their sockets *were* sixteen sockets of silver, under every board two sockets. And he made bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the sides westward. And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other. And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings *of* gold *to be* places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold. And he made a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: *with* cherubims made he it of cunning work. And he made thereunto four pillars *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold: their hooks *were* *of* gold; and he cast for them four sockets of silver. And he made an hanging for the tabernacle door *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of needlework; And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapiters and their fillets with gold: but their five sockets *were* *of* brass. The account is given about the construction of the tabernacle according to the pattern showed to Moses on the mountain.”

- a. This gives the account of the construction of the tabernacle according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mountain. He did not fail to follow every detail.
- b. “The remainder of this chapter requires no comment, since it goes over ground already covered. The passage from ver. 8 to ver. 18 corresponds exactly with Ex 26:1-11; that from ver. 19-34 with Ex 26:14-29; that consisting of vers. 35, 36, with Ex 26:33,34; and the two concluding vers. with Ex 26:36,37. Under these circumstances a few mistranslations will alone be noticed” [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2001 by BibleSoft].
- c. Hebrews 8:5: “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.”

#### C. Exodus 37: The Furniture, the Oil and Incense.

1. Verses 1-5: “And Bezaleel made the ark *of* shittim wood: two cubits and a half *was* the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it: And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about. And he cast for it four rings of gold, *to be set* by the four corners of it; even two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the other side of it. And he made staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold. And he put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, to bear the ark.”
-

- a. The ark of the covenant is constructed in accordance to the divinely given pattern. This ark was a chest-like container, expensive and beautiful.
  - b. The following article is from Holman's PC Bible Dictionary: ARK OF THE COVENANT names the original container for the Ten Commandments and the central symbol of God's presence with the people of Israel.
    - 1) Old Testament: The ark of ancient Israel is mysterious in its origins, its meanings, and its ultimate fate. Its many names convey the holy sense of God's presence. The Hebrew word for ark means simply "box, chest, coffin," as is indicated by its use for the coffin of Joseph (Gen. 50:26) and for the Temple collection box of King Joash (2 Kings 12:9-10).
    - 2) The names used for the ark define its meaning by the words which modify it. The word "covenant" in the name defines the ark from its original purpose as a container for the stone tablets upon which the Ten Commandments (sometimes called the "testimony") were inscribed. Sometimes it is identified rather with the name of deity, "the ark of God," or "the ark of the Lord" (Yahweh), or most ornately "the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts (Yahweh Sabaoth) who is enthroned on the cherubim" (1 Sam. 4:4). The origin of the ark goes back to Moses at Sinai....It was planned during Moses' first sojourn on Sinai and built after all the tabernacle specifications had been communicated and completed....
    - 3) The ark was designed for mobility. Its size (about four feet long, two and a half feet wide, and two and a half feet deep) and rectangular shape were appropriate to this feature. Permanent poles were used to carry the ark, since no one was allowed to touch it, and only priestly (Levitical) personnel were allowed to carry it. The ark was the most important object within the tabernacle....
    - 4) The ark played a prominent role in the "holy war" narratives of the crossing of the Jordan and the conquest, of Jericho (Josh. 3-6). After the conquest, it was variously located at Gilgal, Shechem (Josh. 8:30-35; see Deut. 11:26-32; 27:1-26) or Bethel (Judg. 20:26), wherever the tribal confederacy was gathered for worship. Finally, it was permanently located at Shiloh, where a temple was built to house it (1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3)....
    - 5) Because of the faithless superstition of the wicked sons of Eli, the Hebrew tribes were defeated in the battle of Ebenezer, and the ark was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4). The adventures of the ark in the cities of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron are told to magnify the strength and glory of the Lord of the ark. The Lord vanquished Dagon and spread bubonic plagues among the enemy until they propitiated the God of Israel by symbolic guilt offerings and a ritually correct sending away of the dread object (1 Sam. 5:1-6:12). The men of Bethshemesh welcomed the return of the ark, until they unwisely violated its holiness by looking into it (1 Sam. 6:13-15, 19-20).
    - 6) Then it was carried to Kiriath-Jearim, where it remained in comparative neglect until David recovered the symbolism it had for the ancient tribal confederacy and moved it to his new capital and sanctuary in Jerusalem (1 Sam. 6:21-7:2; 2 Sam. 6). Abinadab and his sons (2 Sam. 6:3) seemed to have served the Lord of the ark faithfully until one son, Uzzah, was smitten for his rash touching of the holy object during David's first attempt to transport the ark from its "hill" at Kiriath-Jearim to his own city. In fear, David left the ark with Obed-edom the Gittite, whose household was blessed by its presence. More cautiously and with great religious fervor, David succeeded the second time in taking the ark into his capital city (2 Sam. 6:12-19)....
    - 7) Finally, Solomon built the Temple, planned by David, to house the ark, which he then transported into the holy of holies with elaborate festival ceremonies (1 Kings 8; 2 Chron. 5).
    - 8) The precise time of the theft or destruction of the ark is unknown. Some have suggested Shishak of Egypt plundered the Temple of this most holy object (1 Kings 14:25-28), but it seems more likely, from Jeremiah 3:16-17, that the Babylonians captured or destroyed the ark in 587 B.C. with the fall of Jerusalem and the burning of the Temple. As Jeremiah predicted, the ark was never rebuilt for the second Temple, the holy of holies remaining empty. Other mysteries of the ark are its relation to the cherubim, its ornate lid called the "mercy seat," and its precise ritual usage during the time of the monarchy. Because the ark of the covenant was the central symbol of God's presence with His people Israel, its mysteries remain appropriately veiled within the inner sanctuary of the living God....
    - 9) New Testament: Hebrews 9:1-10 shows the ark was a part of the old order with external
-

regulations waiting for the new day of Christ to come with a perfect Sacrifice able to cleanse the human conscience....*M. Pierce Matheney, Jr.*

2. Verses 6-9: “And he made the mercy seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and a half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And he made two cherubims *of* gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy seat; One cherub on the end on this side, and another cherub on the *other* end on that side: out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims spread out *their* wings on high, *and* covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; *even* to the mercy seatward were the faces of the cherubims. The mercy seat is made. The cherubims had their wings spread over the mercy seat, with their faces toward each other.”
  - a. The mercy seat served as a lid to the ark of the covenant. It was beautifully constructed.
  - b. Holman’s Dictionary gives the following information: **MERCY SEAT:** A slab of pure gold measuring about 45 inches by 27 inches which sat atop the ark of the covenant which was the same size. It was the base for the golden cherubim (Ex. 25:17-19, 21) and symbolized the throne from which God ruled Israel (Lev. 16:2; Num. 7:89). On the Day of Atonement the high priest sprinkled the blood of a sacrificial lamb on the mercy seat as a plea for forgiveness for the sins of the nation (Lev. 16:15). The Hebrew word means literally “to wipe out” or “cover over”...(ibid).
3. Verses 10-16: “And he made the table *of* shittim wood: two cubits *was* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof: And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round about. Also he made thereunto a border of an handbreadth round about; and made a crown of gold for the border thereof round about. And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings upon the four corners that *were* in the four feet thereof. Over against the border were the rings, the places for the staves to bear the table. And he made the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold, to bear the table. And he made the vessels which *were* upon the table, his dishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to cover withal, *of* pure gold.”
  - a. The table of showbread. The table was one of the items of furniture to be placed in the holy place; it held the bread which was eaten by the priests according to the schedule given in the law.
  - b. Holman’s Dictionary gives this information: “A table for the bread of the presence formed part of the furnishings for both the tabernacle (Ex. 25:23-30; 26:35; Lev. 24:5-7) and Temple (1 Kings 7:48). Other tables were used in the sacrificial cult (1 Chron. 28:14-16; 2 Chron. 4:7-8; Ezek. 40:38-43). Malachi 1:7, 12 describes the altar itself as a table. To share in a god’s table was an act of worship. Isaiah 65:11 and 1 Corinthians 10:21 refer to idolatrous worship. The ‘Lord’s table’ (1 Cor. 10:21) refers to the observance of the Lord’s Supper.”
4. Verses 17-24: “And he made the candlestick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten work made he the candlestick; his shaft, and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same: And six branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds in another branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches going out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick *were* four bowls made like almonds, his knops, and his flowers: And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches going out of it. Their knops and their branches were of the same: all of it *was* one beaten work *of* pure gold. And he made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuffdishes, *of* pure gold. *Of* a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof.”
  - a. The candlestick was the only source of light in the holy place. Virtually all natural light was excluded and no other artificial light than the candlestick was permitted.
  - b. Holman’s says: “A golden lampstand with three branches extending from either side of the central tier was placed in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:31-40). Each branch may have had a seven-spouted lamp (Zech. 4:2), as do some individual lamps found in Palestine. This seven-branched candelabra (menorah), supporting seven lamps, continued in prominence through the first and second Temple periods, and later became symbolic of the nation Israel. Surrounding nations also employed multitiered and multilegged lamps and lampstands. Lamps (lights) were used symbolically in the Old and New Testaments. Light depicted life in abundance, divine presence or life’s direction versus death in darkness (compare Ps. 119:105; 1 John 1:5 with Job 18:5; Prov. 13:9). Jesus is depicted often in

John as the light of the world (John 1:4-5, 7-9; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36, 46). Jesus' disciples are also described as the light of the world (Matt. 5:14-16)."

5. Verses 24-28: "*Of* a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof. And he made the incense altar *of* shittim wood: the length of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit; *it was* foursquare; and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same. And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round about. And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal. And he made the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold."
  - a. The altar of incense was made to be placed in the holy place. A divinely-provided schedule was given by which the priests were to burn incense there.
  - b. Holman's says: "**CENSER:** In Leviticus 10:1, a vessel used for offering incense before the Lord. Nadab and Abihu used it improperly to bring God's destruction. It probably was also used for carrying live coals employed in connection with worship in the tabernacle or the Temple, each priest having one (compare Num. 16:17-18). Use of the censer in Temple worship was restricted to members of the Aaronic priesthood, as King Uzziah discovered in shocking fashion (2 Chron. 26:16-21). The heavenly worship also involved censers and incense, according to John's vision (Rev. 8:3-5)."
    - 1) 2 Chronicles 26:16-21: "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land."
    - 2) Revelation 8:3-5: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."
  - c. Holman's further states: "A fourth type of altar mentioned in the Bible is the *gold altar* or *altar of incense*. It was located in the inner room of the sanctuary, just outside the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 7:48-50). The incense altar is described in Exodus as constructed of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, with dimensions one cubit square and two cubits high (Ex. 30:1-6). Like the altar of burnt offering, the altar of incense had horns on the four corners. As its name implies, incense was burned on this altar. The incense served as a means of purification after slaughtering animals, a costly sacrifice, and also as a sweet smelling offering that would be pleasing to God."
6. Verse 29: "And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary."
  - a. Concerning oil: "Oil was extensively used in religious ceremonies. The morning and evening sacrifices required, in addition to the lambs, a tenth of a measure of fine flour and a fourth of a hin of beaten oil. Other cereal offerings also required oil. Oil was used during the offering of purification from leprosy. In the New Testament, oil was used to anoint a body in preparation for burial (Matt. 26:12; Mark 14:8). Several persons in the Old Testament were anointed with oil: kings (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13), priests (Lev. 8:30), and possibly prophets (1 Kings 19:16; Isa. 61:1). Some objects were also anointed in dedication to God: the tabernacle and all its furniture (Ex. 40:9-11), the shields of soldiers

(2 Sam. 1:21; Isa. 21:5), altars (Lev. 8:10-11), and pillars (Gen. 35:14).” [Holman’s Dictionary].

b. Concerning incense:

- 1) Holman’s states: “A mixture of aromatic spices prepared to be burned in connection with the offering of sacrifices (Ex. 25:6). The word is also used to refer to the smoke produced by the burning. In the King James Version of the Bible, two Hebrew words are translated ‘incense’; however, the two words are practically synonymous. The incense used in worship was to be prepared according to exacting specifications and was to be offered only by the high priest. According to Luke 1:8-20, Zacharias was burning incense in the Temple when he was visited by the angel Gabriel.”
- 2) “The incense employed in the service of the tabernacle walls compounded of the perfumes stacte, onycha, galbanum and pure frankincense. All incense which was not made of these ingredients was forbidden to be offered. Ex 30:9. Aaron, as high priest, was originally appointed to offer incense each morning and evening. The times of offering incense were specified in the instructions first given to Moses. Ex 30:7,8. When the priest entered the holy place with the incense, all the people were removed from the temple, and from between the porch and the altar. Cf. Luke 1:10. Profound silence was observed among the congregation who were praying without, cf. Rev 8:1, and at a signal from the perfect the priest cast the incense on the fire and, bowing reverently toward the holy of holies, retired slowly backward. The offering of incense has formed part of the religious ceremonies of most ancient nations. It was an element in the idolatrous worship of the Israelites. 2 Chron 34:25; Jer 11:12,17; 48:35. It would seem to be symbolical, not of itself, but of that which makes acceptable, the intercession of Christ. In Rev 8:3,4, the incense is of as something distinct from offered with the prayers of, all the saints cf. Luke 1:10, and in Rev 6:8. It is the golden vials, and not the odors or incense, which are said to be the prayers of saints [Smith's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible].

D. Exodus 38: The Altar of Burnt Offerings and the Outer Court.

1. Verses 1-7: “And he made the altar of burnt offering of shittim wood: five cubits *was* the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof; *it was* foursquare; and three cubits the height thereof. And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass. And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basins, *and* the fleshhooks, and the firepans: all the vessels thereof made he of brass. And he made for the altar a brazen grate of network under the compass thereof beneath unto the midst of it. And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, *to be* places for the staves. And he made the staves of shittim wood, and overlaid them with brass. And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it withal; he made the altar hollow with boards.”
  - a. “The Altar of Burnt Offering. It differed in construction at different times. (1) In the tabernacle, Ex 27:1, ff.; Ex 38:1 ff., it was comparatively small and portable. In shape it was square. It as five cubits in length, the same in breadth, and three cubits high. It was made of planks of shittim (or acacia) wood overlaid with brass. The interior was hollow. Ex 27:8. At the four corners were four projections called horns made, like the altar itself, of shittim wood overlaid with brass, Ex 27:2, and to them the victim was bound when about to be sacrificed. Ps 118:27. Round the altar, midway between the top and bottom, ran a projecting ledge, on which perhaps the priest stood when officiating. To the outer edge of this, again, a grating or network of brass was affixed, and reached to the bottom of the altar. At the four corners of the network were four brazen rings, into which were inserted the staves by which the altar was carried. These staves were of the same material as the altar itself. As the priests were forbidden to ascend the altar by steps, Ex 20:26, it has been conjectured that a slope of earth led gradually up to the ledge from which they officiated. The place of the altar was at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.). Ex 40:29. (2) In Solomon's temple the altar was considerably larger in its dimensions. It differed too in the material of which it was made, being entirely of brass. 1 Kings 8:64; 2 Chron 7:7. It had no grating, and instead of a single gradual slope, the ascent to it was probably made by three successive platforms, to each of which it has been supposed that steps led. The altar erected by Herod in front of the temple was 15 cubits in height and 50 cubits in length and breadth. According to Lev 6:12,13, a perpetual fire was to be kept burning on the altar” [Smith's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible, Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc.]”

- b. The third type altar mentioned in the Old Testament is the *bronze* altar. The central altar in the court of Solomon's temple was a bronze altar. Its dimensions are given as 20 cubits by 20 cubits by 10 cubits high (about 30 feet square and 15 feet high) [2 Chron. 4:1]. Yet is unclear whether the entire altar was made of bronze, or if it had a bronze overlay on a stone altar. It is also possible that the bronze portion was a grate set on top of the otherwise stone altar (Ex. 27:4).
- 1) This altar is regularly known as the *altar of burnt offering*. The earlier tabernacle had a similar altar made of acacia (or shittim, KJV) wood overlaid with bronze (Ex. 27:1-2). The tabernacle altar was smaller, only 5 cubits square and 3 cubits high. The location of the altar of burnt offering of the tabernacle and Solomon's Temple is not given specifically. It is located "at" or "before" the door of the Tent of Meeting, which is also the place sacrificial animals are slaughtered. Generally reconstructions of the tabernacle and Temple locate the altar in the center of the courtyard, but the text seems to favor a location near the entrance of the tabernacle/Temple structure.
  - 2) The rationale was probably to locate the altar as close as possible to the focal point of God's presence, near the ark itself....Both the altar of the tabernacle and that of Ezekiel are described as having horns. It is likely that the altar of burnt offering in Solomon's Temple also had horns. The stone altar found at Beersheba has such horns preserved. Apparently grasping the horns of the altar was a way of seeking sanctuary or protection when one was charged with a serious offense (1 Kings 1:50-51; 2:28-34; compare Ex. 21:12-14). More importantly, the horns of the altar were the place where blood from a sacrificial animal was applied for atonement from sin (for example, Ex. 29:12; Lev. 4:7).
  - 3) Jeremiah graphically described the people's sin as being so severe that they were engraved on the horns of the altar (Jer. 17:1). During certain festivals a sacred procession led into the Temple and up to the horns of the altar (Ps. 118:27). Probably this procession carried the chosen animal sacrifice to atone for the people's sin and ended at the place of sacrifice. During the reign of Ahaz, the bronze altar or altar of burnt offering in Solomon's Temple was displaced by an altar that Ahaz had built on a Syrian model (2 Kings 16:10-16). This altar was apparently larger than the bronze altar of Solomon and was placed in the central position in the courtyard to be the main altar of sacrifice.
  - 4) No biblical description exists for the altar of burnt offering from the Second Temple. However, such an altar was constructed even before the Temple was rebuilt (Ezra 3:2). Josephus described the altar in the rebuilt Temple of Herod. He wrote that the altar was fifty cubits square and fifteen cubits high with a ramp leading to the top. This altar would have been much larger than the earlier ones. (Joel F. Drinkard, Jr., Holman's PC Bible Dictionary).
2. Verse 8-20: "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. It was foursquare; they made the breastplate double: a span was the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, being doubled. And they set in it four rows of stones: the first row was a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this was the first row. And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper: they were enclosed in ouches of gold in their enclosings. And the stones were according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes. And they made upon the breastplate chains at the ends, of wreathen work of pure gold. And they made two ouches of gold, and two gold rings; and put the two rings in the two ends of the breastplate. And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. And the two ends of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulderpieces of the ephod, before it. And they made two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, upon the border of it, which was on the side of the ephod inward. And they made two other golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the other coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod."
- a. The laver was a basin containing water, at which the priests were to wash.
    - 1) "LAVEN: A large basin or bowl used in purification rites. The Old Testament describes the lavers used in the tabernacle and in Solomon's Temple. The bronze laver of the tabernacle was

constructed from metal mirrors provided by the women who ministered at the tabernacle entrance (Ex. 38:8). The priests used the laver for washing their hands and feet before priestly service (Ex. 30:18; 40:30-31). Levites also used water from this laver to purify themselves (Num. 8:7). Solomon's Temple employed a large laver, the molten sea (1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Chron. 4:2-5), and ten smaller lavers (1 Kings 7:38-39; 2 Chron. 4:6). The priests washed in the molten sea. The ten lavers were used for washing sacrifices (1 Chron. 4:6). [Holman's].

- 2) "In the tabernacle, a vessel of brass containing water for the priests to wash their hands and feet before offering sacrifice. It stood in the fore offering sacrifice. It stood in the court between the altar and the door of the tabernacle. Ex 30:19,21. It rested on a basis, i.e. a foot, which, was well as the laver itself, was made from the mirrors of the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle court. Ex 38:8. The form of the laver is not specified, but may be assumed to have been circular. Like the other vessels belonging to the tabernacle, it was, together with its "foot," consecrated with oil. Lev 8:10,11. In Solomon's temple, besides the great molten sea, there were ten lavers of brass, raised on bases, 1 Kings 7:27,39, five on the north and five on the south side of the court of the priests. They were used for washing the animals to be offered in burnt offerings. 2 Chron 4:6" [Smith's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible].
- b. The Israelites could enter the court, but since the average Hebrew was not a priest, he was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle proper. One had to have certain definite qualifications before he was permitted to enter the Holy Place. Those who would enter God's true tabernacle today (the church), must be converted from the world, and lose the stain of sin.
- 1) Isaiah 6:1-3: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
  - 2) Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
  - 3) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
  - 4) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
  - 5) Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
  - 6) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
- c. No one could enter the Holy Place without meeting the qualifications and receiving the purification of priestly appointment, so no one can enter the True Tabernacle without meeting the qualifications of gospel obedience (faith, repentance, confession), and receiving the purification provided by the blood of Christ in baptism:
- 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
  - 2) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
3. Verses 21-31: "This is the sum of the tabernacle, *even* of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, *for* the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest. And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses. And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine
-

linen. All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy *place*, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary. And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation *was* an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: A bekah for every man, *that is*, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty *men*. And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the veil; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket. And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapters, and filleted them. And the brass of the offering *was* seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels. And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar, And the sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the court gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.”

a. The accounting of the gold and silver given for the work is listed:

- 1) Gold: 29 talents, 730 shekels. The amount of gold indicated is estimated to be about 2400 pounds, which if valued at \$400 per ounce would amount to more than fifteen million dollars.
- 2) Silver: 100 talents, 1775 shekels. This is estimated to have been about 8400 pounds. At \$15 per ounce, the amount would be more than two million dollars.

b. The number of men twenty years old and upward is given as 603,550.

E. Exodus 39: The Priestly Garments.

1. Verses 1-31: “And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy *place*, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he made the ephod *of* gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut *it into* wires, to work *it* in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, *with* cunning work. They made shoulderpieces for it, to couple *it* together: by the two edges was it coupled together. And the curious girdle of his ephod, that *was* upon it, *was* of the same, according to the work thereof; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; as the LORD commanded Moses. And they wrought onyx stones enclosed in ouches of gold, graven, as signets are graven, with the names of the children of Israel. And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, *that they should be* stones for a memorial to the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he made the breastplate *of* cunning work, like the work of the ephod; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. It was foursquare; they made the breastplate double: a span *was* the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, *being* doubled. And they set in it four rows of stones: *the first row was* a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this *was* the first row. And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper: *they were* enclosed in ouches of gold in their enclosings. And the stones *were* according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes. And they made upon the breastplate chains at the ends, *of* wreathen work *of* pure gold. And they made two ouches *of* gold, and two gold rings; and put the two rings in the two ends of the breastplate. And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. And the two ends of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulderpieces of the ephod, before it. And they made two rings of gold, and put *them* on the two ends of the breastplate, upon the border of it, which *was* on the side of the ephod inward. And they made two *other* golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. And they did bind the breastplate by his rings unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that it might be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate might not be loosed from the ephod; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he made the robe of the ephod *of* woven work, all *of* blue. And *there was* an hole in the midst of the robe, as the hole of an habergeon, *with* a band round about the hole, that it should not rend. And they made upon the hems of the robe pomegranates *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, *and* twined *linen*. And they made bells *of* pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates; A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to minister *in*; as the LORD commanded Moses. And they made coats



*of fine linen of woven work for Aaron, and for his sons, And a mitre of fine linen, and goodly bonnets of fine linen, and linen breeches of fine twined linen, And a girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, of needlework; as the LORD commanded Moses. And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And they tied unto it a lace of blue, to fasten it on high upon the mitre; as the LORD commanded Moses.*”

- a. The garments were made according to the instructions given by the Lord. On Mount Sinai, God gave Moses instructions to build the tabernacle. On the mount, God told Moses to appoint Aaron and his four sons to serve as priests, that is, to serve at the altar and in the sanctuary (Ex. 28:1, 41). Their holy garments are prescribed in detail and their consecration ritual is given in chapters 28 and 29.
  - b. “As to the work of these priests, most of Leviticus and some of Numbers and Deuteronomy give details. Aaron and his descendants of the tribe of Levi served in the tabernacle and Temple as priests. Members of the tribe of Levi not related to Aaron assisted the priests but did not offer sacrifices. Priests were supported by offerings and Levites by tithes (Num. 18:20-24)....” [R. Laird Harris, Holman’s].
2. Verses 32-43: “Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they. And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent, and all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his pillars, and his sockets, And the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the veil of the covering, The ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof, and the mercy seat, The table, and all the vessels thereof, and the showbread, The pure candlestick, with the lamps thereof, even with the lamps to be set in order, and all the vessels thereof, and the oil for light, And the golden altar, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the tabernacle door, The brazen altar, and his grate of brass, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot, The hangings of the court, his pillars, and his sockets, and the hanging for the court gate, his cords, and his pins, and all the vessels of the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of the congregation, The cloths of service to do service in the holy *place*, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments, to minister in the priest's office. According to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work. And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.”
- a. The work was accomplished and presented before Moses.
  - b. "According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work. And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them" (vv. 42-43).

F. Exodus 40: The Tabernacle is Erected and the Work is Finished.

1. Verses 1-16: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil. And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof. And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle. And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein. And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that *is* therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy. And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it. And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats: And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations. Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he.”

- a. The tabernacle is set up; the priests are washed and adorned with their priestly garments. All things were done as God had ordained (verse 16).
  - b. If the people had retained the godly attitudes and dedication they possessed on this occasion, their future history would have been much different.
2. Verses 17-33: “And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was reared up. And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark: And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the veil of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the veil. And he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward. And he lighted the lamps before the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil: And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set up the hanging *at* the door of the tabernacle. And he put the altar of burnt offering *by* the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash *withal*. And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.”
- a. On the day appointed (1st day of 1st month of 2nd year), Moses set it up.
  - b. This must have been a most impressive event; the people who witnessed it would have related the story to their children and grandchildren.
3. Verses 34-38: “Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.”
- a. After everything was set in order, only then did the cloud cover the tent and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.
  - b. It was a cloud by day and fire by night.
-

## Bibliography

- Bible, *American Standard Version*, (ASV), Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, NY
- Bible, *King James Version* (Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are from this version)
- Bible, *New King James Version*, (NKJV), Thomas Nelson Company, Nashville
- Biblesoft, *PC Study Bible*, Complete Reference Library, BibleSoft, Seattle, WA
- Cates, Curtis, Editor, *The Book of Exodus*, Memphis School of Preaching Lectures, Firm Foundation Publishing House, Inc., 1987
- Clarke, Adam, *The Old Testament, Vol. I*, Abingdon Press, New York and Nashville
- Coffman, Burton, *Commentary on the Exodus*, ACU Press, Abilene, TX, 1984.
- Cole, Alan R., *Exodus, An Introduction & Commentary*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, Eng. & Downers Grove, IL, 1973
- Dunn, Frank J., *Know Your Bible*, Firm Foundation Publishing House, Inc., Houston, TX 1996
- Fields, Wilbur. Copyright 1976. College Press, Second Printing 1986
- Gospel Advocate, *Annual Lesson Commentary, 1954*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1954
- Gospel Advocate, *Annual Lesson Commentary, 1960*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1960
- Gospel Advocate, *Annual Lesson Commentary, 1966*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1966
- Gospel Advocate, *Annual Lesson Commentary, 1968*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1968
- Gospel Advocate, *Annual Lesson Commentary, 1972*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1972
- Horne, Thomas Hartwell, *Introduction To The Scriptures, Vol. IV*, Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970
- Josephus, Flavius, *Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1960
- Keil, C.F. & Delitzsch, F., *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. III*, Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1968
- McGarvey, J.W., *A Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, Gospel Light Publishing Company, Delight, AR, 1875
- Milligan, Robert, *The Scheme of Redemption*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, TN
- Pledge, Charles, *Getting Acquainted With the Old Testament, Vol. I*, Pledge Publications, Memphis, TN 1970
- Thayer, Henry, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, National Foundation for Christian Education, Marshallton, DE
- Vine, W.E., *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, NJ, 1981
- Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition*, The World Publishing Company, New York and Cleveland, 1968
-