

Exodus

The Israelites (the descendants of Israel--better known as Jacob) were in Egypt because of the famine of Joseph's time (Jacob's favorite son). The Egyptians feared that the Israelites were becoming too numerous and therefore subjected them to slavery. Exodus is a narrative of the escape from Egypt (under Amenhotep II in 1446 B.C.) and the giving of the Mosaic Covenant on Mt. Sinai. It describes how the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, became the covenant people of God, and came to know His presence and His ways. The book records events from 1876-1445 B.C. It is the connecting link between the origin of God's people and the beginning of the theocratic kingdom.

Exodus accounts for many of the religious ceremonies and customs of Israel, the creation of the tabernacle, the formation of the priesthood, the Mosaic Law, and the sacrificial system. As such, Exodus is foundational for the subsequent history of Israel. Exodus provides the framework for the rest of the Old Testament message. The Passover, the Exodus, Moses, the Law, and the tabernacle dominated the thought of Israel for centuries to come.

Things to think about in each chapter/scene (narrative material):

1. Identify limits of scene
2. Subject – Complement
3. Summarize/analyze plot
(start ~ climax ~ conclusion)
4. Key verse / Focal point
5. Observations
 - Why is it in the Bible?
 - Why here (how does it relate to the other scenes)?
 - Significant issues, questions, etc.
 - Big Idea

Exodus 1

- Growth – Persists
- Scene:
 - Intro — Israel's sons in Egypt (vv. 1-5)
 - Story — Israelites growing, must be subjugated (vv. 6-14)
 - Climax — Egyptian midwives allow Hebrew boys to live (v. 18)
 - Conclusion — Pharaoh orders everyone to kill Hebrew boys (vv. 16, 22)
- Key verse – v. 20 :: God blessed and the Israelites continued to grow.
- The Israelites have moved to Egypt and God has blessed them, causing them to grow greatly in number. They have become more numerous than the Egyptians and are a threat. This chapter provides the connecting link between the last chapter of Genesis and the events to follow in Exodus. God providentially protected the children of Israel and increased their descendants from a small group to a large segment of the population in Egypt (probably around 2 million). This chapter shows the need for Israel's deliverance from Egypt.
- *God providentially causes the Israelites to continue to grow in spite of intense opposition.*

Exodus 2

- Moses – Preserved
- Scene:
 - Intro — A Hebrew boy is hidden (vv. 1-4)
 - Story — The Hebrew boy, Moses, becomes is protected in Pharaoh's family (vv. 6-13)
 - Climax — Moses killed an Egyptian (v. 12)
 - Conclusion — God remembers the Israelites groaning in slavery (vv. 22-23)
- Key verse – v. 15 :: Pharaoh tried to kill Moses but he escaped.
- A Hebrew woman plans to protect her young son by having him grow up in Pharaoh's household. This boy is Moses. Moses grows up in shelter and even after killing an Egyptian he is preserved by fleeing to

Midian. Pharaoh finally dies and Moses has still not been executed. God has not forgotten his people nor his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.

- *God preserves Moses, for he will be used of God to lead the people out of Egypt.*

Exodus 3

- Deliverance – Explained
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses sees a bush burning (vv. 1-3)
 - Story — The LORD explains his plan to Moses from the bush (vv. 4ff)
 - Climax — The LORD is present in the bush (vv. 4–6)
 - Conclusion — The Pharaoh will eventually let them go, carrying wealth (vv. 19–22)
- Key verses – vv. 7–8 :: The LORD has heard the cry and will deliver.
- Moses discovers the LORD in a burning bush. The LORD converses with Moses, explaining His plan for the deliverance of His people. We quickly understand why Moses was not killed in the previous occasions, for God is going to use Moses to be the Israelites quintessential leader.

Note: In the course of His plan's exposure, Yahweh tells Moses that He is I AM WHO I AM. The name indicates that Yahweh is sovereignly independent of all creation and His presence guarantees the fulfillment of the patriarchal covenants.

- *Yahweh¹ explains his plan of deliverance to Moses, the one who will lead God's people out of bondage.*

Exodus 4:1–17

- Presence – Proven
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses protests (v. 1)
 - Story — Miraculous sign given (vv. 2–9)
 - Climax — Moses protests that he is not able (v. 10)
 - Conclusion — Aaron will be the spokesman (vv. 14–17)
- Key verse – v. 12 :: Yahweh will be with Moses.
- God demonstrates His power, promising to prove His presence through three miraculous signs. However, Moses continues to protest against God, not depending upon Him in faith. So God promises to be with Moses and will provide his brother Aaron as a mouthpiece.
- *Yahweh promises to demonstrate that He has appeared to Moses as He accompanies Moses before Pharaoh.*

Exodus 4:18–31

- Return – Granted
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses seeks return from Jethro (v. 18)
 - Story — Moses instructed to return to Egypt (vv. 19–23)
 - Climax — Moses' son nearly killed (vv. 24–26)
 - Conclusion — Moses and Aaron return with signs (vv. 29–31)
- Key verse – v. 31 :: The Israelites are convinced that Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron.
- Moses is granted permission to leave by Jethro and is instructed to return by God. Oddly, we are given the story of God attacking Moses' son on the trip back to Egypt.² The reason for the attack was because Moses had failed to circumcise his son (or sons) in Midian. For Moses to carry out his divine commission with success he must prove himself to be a faithful servant of Yahweh in his own house—

¹His name is the guarantee of the plan's success.

²There is no antecedent in the text so the *him* could be referring to Moses. However, that seems unlikely since God has just told Moses that he will be the leader of the *exodus* in the previous verse.

he must obey God's pattern. Aaron and Moses meet up and perform the signs before the elders of Israel. They are convinced that Yahweh was with them.

- *Yahweh grants Moses safe return to Egypt despite Moses' past disobedience.*

Exodus 5:1–21

- Demands – Impossible
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses and Aaron request respite for worship (vv. 1–5)
 - Climax — Pharaoh requires same quota of daily work despite no materials provided (v. 18)
 - Conclusion — Israelite foremen complain to Moses and Aaron (vv. 19–21)
- Key verse – v. 21 :: Request regretted as Pharaoh receives excuse to kill Israelites.
- God's prophecy of Pharaoh's reaction is proven true. Pharaoh decides to push the Israelites even harder, fearing that their rebellion may spring up against him. He demands things that are virtually impossible so that he can take retribution against the Israelites.
- *Yahweh statements are proven correct—Pharaoh will not allow the people to go, instead demanding the impossible from them.*

Exodus 5:22–6:13

- Deliverance – Promised
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses entreats Yahweh (5:22–23)
 - Story — Yahweh promises to fulfill his Abrahamic covenant, delivering the people (vv. 1–8)
 - Climax — The discouraged people refused to listen (v. 9)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh commands Moses and Aaron to lead the people out (v. 13)
- Key verse – v. 8
- Though the people are dejected because of the Egyptians' mistreatment of them, God promised that Pharaoh would cause the people to leave. Moses is hesitant to appear before Pharaoh since his own people don't believe him, but God commanded him to lead the people out.
- *Yahweh promises to deliver the Israelites from Egypt and have Moses lead them into the Promised Land.*

Exodus 6:14–6:27

- Lineage – Established
- Scene:
 - Intro — An ancestry list forthcoming (v. 14a)
 - Story — Clans of Levi traced to Aaron and Moses (vv. 16–20)
 - Conclusion — Moses and Aaron are Levites to whom Yahweh spoke (vv. 26–27)
- Key verse – v. 27
- The line from Israel to Aaron and Moses is established they are true Israelites who God has spoken to. The explanation is necessary due to the primary leadership roles that these two have assumed.
- *Yahweh establishes the credentials of Moses and Aaron.*

Exodus 6:28–7:24

- Presentation – Miraculous
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh commanded Moses present the case before Pharaoh (6:28–30)
 - Story — Clans of Levi traced to Aaron and Moses (vv. 16–20)
 - Climax — Sign instructed, Nile to blood (7:19)
 - Conclusion — The Nile turned to blood (7:20–24)
- Key verse – v. 22 :: Despite a miraculous presentation Pharaoh's heart was hard.

- God commands another presentation before Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron present the signs as God instructed but Pharaoh would not budge. The sorcerers and magicians are able to replicate the miracles that Aaron and Moses present. Ironically, they also turn water to blood; thus, compounding Egypt's misery.
- *Moses and Aaron present miraculous signs before Pharaoh, but he has hardened against Yahweh's message.*

Exodus 7:25–8:15

- Power – Displayed
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses to go back before Pharaoh (8:1)
 - Story — Plague of frogs afflicts Egypt (8:2–8)
 - Climax — Pharaoh pleads for frogs to cease (8:10)
 - Conclusion — Moses prays and the frogs died (8:12–15)
- Key verse – 8:10 :: Pharaoh will know that none like Yahweh
- God commands another presentation before Pharaoh. Pharaoh again would not budge so God causes frogs to infest the land. The sorcerers and magicians are able to replicate the miracle (compounding Egypt's misery); however, they could not stop it. Pharaoh initially recognizes that Yahweh is the only one who has the power to stop such a calamity. Yet he again hardens his heart (v. 15) once the calamity has been relieved.
- *Yahweh displays His power by causing frogs to afflict the land of Egypt.*

Exodus 8:16–19

- Supremacy – Realized
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses & Aaron to strike the ground (v. 16)
 - Story — Plague of gnats afflicts Egypt (vv. 16b–18)
 - Climax — Pharaoh's sorcerers cannot replicate (8:10)
 - Conclusion — Sorcerers recognize Yahweh's power (v. 19)
- Key verse – v. 19 :: But Pharaoh remains hard-hearted, refusing to listen
- This time God foregoes a presentation before Pharaoh, instead instructing the plague of gnats to begin immediately. The gnats do not do any real damage; they are merely a nasty pestilence. This time the sorcerers and magicians are unable to replicate the miracle, which leads even them to understand that this is from Yahweh. Pharaoh will not listen to their insistence his heart remains hard (v. 19b).
- *The sorcerers realize Yahweh's supremacy; however, Pharaoh continues hard in his heart.*

Exodus 8:20–32

- Power – to Differentiate
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses to go back before Pharaoh (v. 20)
 - Story — Plague of flies afflicts only Egypt (vv. 24–29)
 - Climax — Pharaoh acquiesces to Moses' plea (v. 28)
 - Conclusion — Moses prays and the flies disappeared (vv. 30–31)
- Key verses – vv. 22–23 :: Yahweh will only afflict the Egyptians, not the Israelites
- God commands another presentation before Pharaoh. Pharaoh again would not budge so God causes flies to infest the land. The sorcerers and magicians no longer even attempt to replicate the miracle since they realized God's supremacy. Now we see God discriminating between Israelites and Egyptians. He continues to bring Egypt to its knees. Pharaoh initially says that the Israelites can leave to worship Yahweh but changes his mind and again hardens his heart (v. 32) once the calamity has been removed.
- *Yahweh displays His power by differentiating between Israelite and Egyptian, sending flies to afflict only the Egyptians.*

Exodus 9:1–7

- Power – to Differentiate
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses to go back before Pharaoh (v. 1)
 - Story — Plague against livestock afflicts only Egypt (vv. 2–6)
 - Climax — Yahweh’s claims of differentiation prove true (v. 7a)
 - Conclusion — Pharaoh’s heart was hardened (v. 7b)
- Key verse – v. 4 :: Yahweh will only afflict the Egyptians’ cattle, not the Israelites’
- God commands another presentation before Pharaoh. Pharaoh again would not budge so God causes the Egyptians’ livestock to be struck down (v. 3). Yahweh heightens His claim of power by again discriminating between the Israelites and Egyptians. Yahweh will show all Egypt that He favors the Israelites. Pharaoh again hardens his heart even after seeing God’s claims proven true (v. 7).
- *Yahweh shows His power and favor by differentiating between the Israelites and Egyptians.*

Exodus 9:8–12

- Hardening – Persists
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses & Aaron to spread the ashes (vv. 8–9)
 - Story — Plague of boils afflicts Egypt (vv. 9b–11)
 - Climax — Affliction of boils is intense (v. 11)
 - Conclusion — Pharaoh remains hard-hearted (v. 12)
- Key verse – v. 19 :: But Pharaoh remains hard-hearted, refusing to listen
- God again foregoes a presentation before Pharaoh (cf. 8:16–19), instead instructing the plague of boils to begin. We are not told directly that the Israelites were not harmed, but v. 11b seems to indicate this (“boils had broken out on [the magicians] and all the Egyptians”). The point of this encounter is found in the last verse: Yahweh hardened Pharaoh’s heart and he refused to listen (v. 12). This is the 1st time we read of God doing the hardening. Pharaoh did not take this plague to heart, and was given over to the divine sentence of hardening.
- *Yahweh continues the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart.*

Exodus 9:13–35

- Reason – Revealed
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh tells Moses to go back before Pharaoh (v. 13)
 - Story — Plague of hail afflicts only some Egyptians (vv. 19–26)
 - Climax — Pharaoh “admits” his guilt (v. 27)
 - Conclusion — Pharaoh’s heart was hardened (v. 35)
- Key verses – vv. 14b, 16 :: Yahweh reveals why He has plagued and still spared
- Yahweh reveals why He is sending the plagues on Egypt and why He has not wiped them out—He desires they know His power (v. 14b) and His fame be spread throughout the earth (v. 16). Pharaoh again would not budge so God causes the Egyptians who did not bring in their livestock and household to be struck killed by a mega hailstorm (v. 23). Again Yahweh discriminating between the Israelites and Egyptians, not sending hail in the land of Goshen (where the Israelites lived, v. 26). Pharaoh, understanding that whenever he recants the pestilence is taken away, “admits” his sin and begs the hail be taken away. After the hail is gone Pharaoh again hardens his heart and will not allow the Israelites to leave. Pharaoh fails to acknowledge Yahweh’s power over him.
- *Yahweh reveals the reason He is afflicting Pharaoh and his people—Yahweh’s power must be recognized and His fame spread.*

Exodus 10:1–20

- Mockery – Executed
- Scene:

Intro — Yahweh tells Moses to go back before Pharaoh (v. 1)

Story — Plague of locusts afflicts only Egyptians (vv. 13–16)

Climax — Pharaoh “admits” his guilt (v. 17)

Conclusion — Pharaoh’s heart was hardened by Yahweh (v. 20)

- Key verse – v. 2 :: Yahweh plans his miracles to be retold amongst future Israelite generations
- Yahweh reveals that He is causing Pharaoh’s heart to be hardened (v. 1b) so that future generations of Israelites would know that Yahweh is who He says He is, making a mockery of the Egyptians (v. 2). Pharaoh listens to his counselors (v. 7) but ultimately rejects the counsel because he does not want to comply *fully* with God’s demands (vv. 10–11). Therefore, locusts are sent to devour all plants not destroyed by the hail. Pharaoh again understands he can “repent” and get what he wants so he does so (v. 17). After the locusts were gone Pharaoh’s heart was again hardened by Yahweh.
- *Yahweh displays His power by executing his mockery of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening their hearts to His power.*

Exodus 10:21–29

- Final – Interaction

- Scene:

Intro — Yahweh tells Moses & Aaron to lift hands (v. 21)

Story — Darkness envelops only Egypt (vv. 22–23)

Climax — Pharaoh tells the people to leave (v. 24)

Conclusion — Pharaoh’s heart hardened again by Yahweh (vv. 27–28)

- Key verses – vv. 28–29 :: But Pharaoh remains hard-hearted, refusing to listen
- God afflicts deep darkness on only the Egyptians for three days; the land of Goshen (where Israelites lived) had the normal light of day. Pharaoh decides to let the Israelites leave, but does not comply fully. Yahweh again hardens Pharaoh’s heart and we find this will be the final encounter between Moses and Pharaoh.
- *The final encounter further continues Yahweh’s hardening of Pharaoh’s heart.*

Exodus 11:1–10

- Distinction – Devastating

- Scene:

Intro — Yahweh’s final blow (v. 1)

Story — The firstborns of Egypt will be taken (vv. 4–8)

Climax — Pharaoh will *compel* the people to leave (v. 8)

Conclusion — Pharaoh’s heart will continue to be hardened (vv. 9–10)

- Key verse – v. 7 :: Yahweh causes terrible calamity on only the Egyptians
- Yahweh promises that this will be the compelling blow. The Israelites will leave Egypt and will have blessing bestowed upon them (v. 3). The Israelites will not be affected by this last plague, but it will devastate the Egyptians.
- *The final powerful blow from Yahweh will be devastating to the Egyptians, but the Israelites will be distinct from it.*

Exodus 12:1–27

- Passover – Instructions & Remembrance

- Scene:

Intro — Still in Egypt, instructions given (v. 1)

Story — Passover a day to remember (vv. 2–27)

Conclusion — The people complied fully and were spared (vv. 28–30)

- Key verse – v. 14 :: A day to remember from generation to generation
- Yahweh gives special instructions for the Passover. The instructions were complied with fully thus allowing the people to be spared from God’s final judgment. Their compliance signified their complete conviction that God would do as He said He would.

- *The Israelites followed the Passover instructions completely, allowing them to have this day of remembrance of Yahweh's powerful preservation of His people.*

Exodus 12:31–42

- Exodus – Fulfilled
- Scene:
 - Intro — Pharaoh orders the Israelites to leave (v. 31)
 - Story — In leaving the Egyptians give the Israelites many treasures (vv. 33–36)
 - Climax/Conclusion — Yahweh kept his promise, delivering His people (vv. 40–42)
- Key verse – v. 14 :: A day to remember from generation to generation
- Yahweh fulfilled His promise in delivering His people. Pharaoh is finally broken and orders that the people leave, no conditions attached. In their 430 years in Egypt the people had grown to ~600,000 men + women & children, and they had been blessed with great flocks and herds.
- *Yahweh blessed the Israelites in fulfilling His promise to them—they can now leave Egypt.*

Exodus 12:43–50

- Passover – Purity
- Scene:
 - Intro — Instructions that Passover only be for Israelites (v. 43)
 - Story — Strict rules regarding who can participate (vv. 43–49)
 - Conclusion — The rules were kept strictly by the Israelites (vv. 50–51)
- Key verse – v. 47 :: Entire Israelite community to partake in remembering God's Passover power
- Yahweh fulfilled His promise in delivering His people. The Lord brought them out of Egypt; therefore, they should remember Him as they partook of the Passover. They must maintain purity in its restrictions, for foreigners could not understand the significance of the ritual.
- *Yahweh instructs purity in Israel's Passover celebrations.*

Exodus 13:1–16

- Celebration – of Power
- Scene:
 - Intro — Firstborn dedication (vv. 1–2)
 - Story — Celebration of remembrance (vv. 3–16)
 - Climax — Yahweh acted mightily in freeing the Israelites (v. 14)
- Key verse – v. 14 :: Yahweh's power to be celebrated
- Yahweh fulfilled His promise in delivering His people. The Lord brought them out of Egypt; therefore, they should remember Him as they partook of the Passover. The Israelites should pass on the story of God's glory to every generation.
- *Yahweh's powerful acts must be remembered and praised.*

Exodus 13:17–22

- Path – of Protection
- Scene:
 - Intro — Direct path not taken (v. 17)
 - Story — God sought to protect the people from discouragement (vv. 17–18)
 - Climax — Joseph's bones to be returned to promised land (v. 19, cf. Gen 50:25)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh guided the people through cloud and fire (vv. 20–22)
- Key verse – v. 17 :: Yahweh protected His people
- The longer path was taken so that the people might not be discouraged by encountering battles in Philistia. Yahweh sought to protect even the psyche of his newly freed people.
- *Yahweh directed the path of the Israelites, providing protection and guidance.*

Exodus 14

- Escape – Provided
- Scene:
 - Intro — Camped at Sea (vv. 1–4)
 - Story — Egyptian armies pursue Israelites (vv. 5–28)
 - Climax — All Egyptians killed (vv. 27–28)
 - Conclusion — All Israel escaped (vv. 29–31)
- Key verse – v. 31 :: Yahweh’s power provided escape/victory
- The people already are discouraged at their exodus as they see the Egyptians charging; however, Yahweh will show His power through the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart. Yahweh protects and provides for his people so that He (and only He) will get the glory.
- *Yahweh worked miraculously to provide escape for His people.*

Exodus 15:1–21

- Praise – Extolled
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses leads the camp in singing (v. 1a)
 - Story — All the Israelites praise Yahweh for mightily delivering them (vv. 1–18)
- Key verse – v. 18 :: Yahweh will reign forever and ever
- The people extol praise to God. He is the One who has won the victory. His works of deliverance demand high praise and eternal remembrance!
- *Yahweh receives the praise he deserves for his mighty acts of deliverance.*

Exodus 15:22–27

- Obedience – Conditioned
- Scene:
 - Intro — The camp continues moving (v. 22)
 - Story — The water where they camp is bitter (vv. 23–25)
 - Climax — Yahweh demands complete obedience (v. 26)
 - Conclusion — The people move on again (v. 27)
- Key verse – v. 26 :: Yahweh demands complete obedience
- In spite of the words immediately preceding the people are already acting as if God is not good to them. They complained about the bitter water. Yahweh decrees that He will treat them benevolently if they will obey Him; however, it is implied that should they not, He will strike them with the same diseases as He had the Egyptians.
- *Yahweh must already remind the people of His goodness, but He declares that they must act in obedience to continue receiving His kindness.*

Exodus 16

- Complaint – Tested
- Scene:
 - Intro — The camp journeyed toward Sinai (vv. 1–2)
 - Story — The people continue complaining; this time it’s food (vv. 2–25)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh requires a memorial be stored (vv. 33–35)
- Key verse – v. 8 :: Yahweh has heard the complaints *against Him*
- The people show such unbelievable gall in complaining about their freedom. Not only do they have terrible memories about their conditions in Egypt (recalling things as better than they actually were; never thinking about their slave condition), but they also have the audacity to complain against God’s benevolence (v. 8). Yahweh will test them and He will remind them that He brought them out of Egypt (v. 6). The Israelites will realize that they must depend on Him. He is benevolently providing for their most basic need—food for sustenance.

- *Yahweh graciously provides food in response to the Israelites' complaint; however, in his provision there is a test to see if they will follow His requirements fully.*

Exodus 17:1–7

- Complaint – Wearisome
- Scene:
 - Intro — The camp journeyed to Rephidim (v. 1)
 - Story — The people continue complaining; this time it's water (vv. 2–5)
 - Climax — Yahweh provides water from a rock (v. 6)
- Key verse – v. 2b :: The peoples' complaining is becoming tiresome; they are testing God
- The people continue to complain. Their initial joy of God's deliverance has soured into endless complaining. The reader becomes tired and appalled by it all. Yet Yahweh again provides.
- *Yahweh graciously provides water in response to the Israelites' tireless complaining.*

Exodus 17:8–16

- Victory – Granted
- Scene:
 - Intro — The Amalekites attack the camp (v. 8)
 - Story — The Israelites fight back while Moses raises his arms (vv. 9–13)
 - Climax — Israelites would continue winning if Moses kept hand raised (v. 11)
- Key verse – v. 15 :: Yahweh is the one who provided the victory
- A surprise attack cannot thwart God's plan; He gives the Israelites a stunning victory.
- *Yahweh grants an amazing/miraculous victory over the Amalekites.*

Exodus 18

- Help – Advised
- Scene:
 - Intro — Jethro visits Moses (v. 1)
 - Story — Jethro gives advice about Moses spending time judging disputes (vv. 13–23)
 - Conclusion — Moses takes Jethro's advice (vv. 24–26)
- Key verse – v. 24 :: Moses listened to Jethro's advice
- Moses, the Israelites' leader, was spending all of his time judging trivial matters between the people. This was not a wise use of his time, and Jethro saw that Moses was likely to get "burnt out." As the leader of God's chosen nation Moses should devote his time to important matters. Jethro gave wise counsel for Moses to seek help and Moses took his advice.
- *Moses wisely heeded the helpful counsel of his father-in-law.*

Exodus 19

- Preparation – for Arrival
- Scene:
 - Intro — Israelites arrive at Sinai (vv. 1–2)
 - Story — Moses prepares the camp for his ascent to see the LORD (vv. 9–15)
 - Climax — Yahweh descended on Sinai (vv. 16–20)
 - Conclusion — Moses instructed to remind the people to stay back (vv. 21–25)
- Key verse – v. 10 :: Moses to prepare people for Yahweh's arrival
- The people have come up out of Egypt because of Yahweh's deliverance. Now they come to the place where Yahweh will set up His covenant with them (v. 5). This is a key moment in Israel's history and the people must approach it as such. Therefore, they are given certain stipulations to follow in preparation for the arrival of Yahweh.
- *Israel must soberly prepare for the arrival of the Almighty Yahweh.*

Exodus 20:1–21

- Covenant – Announced
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh addresses the camp (v. 1, cf. 18)
 - Story — Ten Commandments announced (vv. 2–17)
 - Climax — The people stayed back, trembling in fear (v. 18)
 - Conclusion — The people ask Moses to represent them before Yahweh (vv. 18–21)
- Key verse – v. 1
- Yahweh first addresses the Israelites by reminding them of who He was—He was their strong deliverer. Yahweh alone was responsible for their exodus from Egypt. Therefore, it was appropriate that He should give covenant stipulations, for the Sovereign had done wonderful things for His people. ³This is the heart of the Law of Israel—it is the charter of the new nation of Israel. When Israel entered into the covenant with God, they entered into a theocracy by expressing their willingness to submit to his authority (cf. 19:5–6a, 8a). The Law was the binding constitution for the nation of Israel, and it legislated how Israel was to live in order to be blessed by God. Furthermore, it was given so that the people would fear Yahweh and keep from sinning (v. 20).
- *Yahweh establishes His charter with Israel, announcing 10 covenant stipulations to the Israelites so that they might not sin.*

Exodus 20:22–26

- Worship – Form
- Scene:
 - Intro — Worship of Yahweh (vv. 22–23)
 - Story — Proper form of worship instructed (vv. 24–26)
- This section instructs Israel on the form of proper worship of such a God. It focuses on the altar, the centerpiece of worship. In so doing it re-emphasizes/expands upon the 1st and 2nd commandments. The point of the section is that those who worship this holy God must preserve holiness in the way they worship—they worship where he permits, in the manner he prescribes, and with the blessings he promises. This paragraph is said to open the Book of the Covenant, which specifically rules on matters of life and worship.⁴
- *Yahweh describes the proper form in which He is to be worshipped—He will not accept a rival.*

Exodus 21

- Regulations – Individuals
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh presents regulations for Israel (v. 1)
 - Story — Instructions given regarding slaves and of injured ones (vv. 2–36)
- This section instructs Israel on the ethical treatment of people. Yahweh presents regulations concerning treatment of slaves and the right reactions to all manner of personal injury cases. Yahweh's covenant community, under theocratic governance, must comply with these regulations in order to stay under His watch-care (cf. 19:5–6). Within the section are elements relevant to the both the 5th (v. 15) and 6th (vv. 12, 14) commandments.
- *Yahweh gives regulations regarding the proper treatment of individuals within His covenant economy.*

Exodus 22:1–15

- Regulations – Property
- Scene:
 - Story — Instructions given regarding property, stolen or ruined (vv. 1–15)

³The OT Law is a covenant that is a binding contract between 2 parties—both have obligations. Obedience to the Law is how one's loyalty is expressed.

⁴NET Bible, Ex 20:22 – sn

- This section instructs Israel on the ethical treatment of people with regards to their property. Specifically, the treatment of a thief and the mistreatment of another's property is addressed, expanding upon the 8th commandment. Yahweh sets forth the right treatment of other's possessions.
- *Yahweh gives regulations regarding the proper treatment of other's property within His covenant economy.*

Exodus 22:16–31

- Regulations – Social/Moral
- Scene:
 - Story — Instructions given regarding many social and moral responsibilities (vv. 24–26)
- Key verse – v. 31a :: Yahweh's instructs so that the Israelites may be His holy people.
- Yahweh instructs the proper method of dealing with social and moral issues. After first addressing immorality (v. 17 developing the 7th commandment), Yahweh commits a segment that is concerned with pagan practices, all of which are capital offenses. Sorcery (v. 18) and bestiality (v. 19)⁵ cannot be tolerated, and there is an explicit prohibition against sacrificing to any other god (v. 20).⁶ The next section (vv. 21–27) concerns specific social issues. The law is concerned with protecting everyone in the community of Israel, especially those whose rights might be ignored. All of these laws were given so that the people might be consecrated to Yahweh (v. 31a).
- *Yahweh instructs the Israelites on specific social and moral issues within His covenant economy with the intent of having a people consecrated to Him.*

Exodus 23:1–9

- Regulations – Justice/Mercy
- Scene:
 - Story — Instructions given regarding all kinds of social and moral responsibility (vv. 1–9)
- Yahweh lays forth the right conduct in court and toward your enemies. These admonitions further expand upon the 9th commandment. Yahweh is concerned that His people act as He acts, never perverting justice and acting graciously even when it does not benefit you.
- *Yahweh admonishes the people to never pervert justice or act without mercy, rather act as Yahweh does in these matters.*

Exodus 23:10–19

- Regulations – Sabbatical/Festival
- Scene:
 - Story — Instructions given regarding all kinds of social and moral responsibility (vv. 1–9)
- Key verse – v. 13 :: Yahweh requires complete submission to Him only.
- Yahweh expands upon the 4th commandment (vv. 10–12), instructing the people to rest on the seventh day and from planting on the seventh year. This was to not only refresh the people, land, and animals but also to remind Israel that Yahweh owns the land and is the creator of days. Yahweh explains how the Israelites were to worship in the prescribed festivals (vv. 14–19). Yahweh actually begins with a warning against appealing to pagan deities (cf. v. 13), and ends with a mention of a specific pagan ritual (v. 19). In the broader context of agricultural festivals, the connection with a Canaanite fertility practice is clearly what God is prohibiting. He has again prescribed how He is to be worshipped.
- *Yahweh instructs the Israelites to worship and remember Him through their Sabbaths and feasts, submitting completely to His authority.*

Exodus 23:20–32

⁵This was obviously a problem that would face Israel in Canaan, because this issue is mentioned several more times in the Pentateuch (Lev. 18:23; 20:16; Deut. 27:21).

⁶Apparently this is meant to make explicit a point not specifically mentioned in connection with the first two commandments (Exod. 20:3–5).

- Presence (of Yahweh) – Conditional
- Scene:
 - Intro — Angel sent for protection (v. 20)
 - Story — Yahweh promises presence & blessing, but people must follow Him (vv. 21–31)
 - Climax — Yahweh will protect Israel (v. 27)
 - Conclusion — Do not participate in foreign gods: sin and idolatry (vv. 32–33)
- Key verse – v. 25 :: Yahweh requires complete submission to Him alone.
- The presence of Yahweh is important, for with it the Israelites are guaranteed blessing. He will protect them from their enemies, giving them the Promised Land; however, this is conditioned upon their total allegiance to Him. Yahweh can stand no imposters standing in His place.
- *Yahweh promises His presence, conditioned upon Israel’s complete allegiance to Him.*

Exodus 24

- Covenant – Ratified
- Scene:
 - Intro — Moses returns and relays the regulations to Israel (vv. 1–3a)
 - Story — Moses writes down everything and the people accept the terms (vv. 3–14)
 - Climax — The elders meet with God (v. 9–11)
 - Conclusion — Moses disappears into cloud of Yahweh at Sinai (vv. 15–18)
- Key verses – vv. 7–8 :: The people accept
- Moses’ part in the covenant ceremony is central. He alone is to “approach the Lord” (v. 2a), which implies an intercessory role. The covenant stipulations (including Decalogue and other ordinances) had been given. These were to regulate the Israelites as the chosen people of the one true God. The people unanimously ratify the pact, pledging to comply with all Yahweh’s requirements. Moses is ordered to return to the mountain to meet God and receive “the tablets of stone.”
- *Israel pledges to comply with Yahweh’s covenant (complete allegiance to Yahweh), thereby receiving Yahweh’s presence.*

Notes concerning the Law

In the process of legislating their conduct and their ritual for worship, the Law revealed God. It revealed the holiness of Yahweh as the standard for all worship and service, and in revealing that it revealed or uncovered sin. The NT teaches that the Law was good, and perfect, and holy. But it also teaches that Christ was the end (goal) of the Law—it ultimately led to him. The Law was a teacher to bring people to Christ, and when the fulfillment of the promise came in him, believers were not to go back under the Law. What this means for Christians is that what the Law of Israel revealed about God and his will is timeless and still authoritative over faith and conduct, but what the Law regulated for Israel in their existence as the people of God has been done away with in Christ.⁷

Exodus 25

- Materials – Specified
- Scene:
 - Intro — Yahweh prescribes sacred offerings to be brought (vv. 1–2)
 - Story — People to offer various fine materials and build tabernacle implements (vv. 3–39)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh orders that the patterns be followed (v. 40)
- Key verses – v. 8–9 :: Yahweh to live among Israelites
- Now that the copy of the laws has been received, Israel needs a repository for them. This explains the placement of the tabernacle instructions just after the conclusion of the covenant ceremony. The tabernacle is to be built; however, the people must provide the materials. The tabernacle is to be the tangible expression of God’s presence among the Israelites. Yahweh describes exactly what is to be brought as well as exactly how to build the tabernacle furniture.

⁷NET Bible, Ex 20:1 – sn

- *Yahweh seeks to abide among the people; His tabernacle must be prepared exactly according to His material specifications.*

Exodus 26–27

- Accouterments – Specified
- Scene:
 - Story — Exact specifications of tabernacle specified by Yahweh (vv. 26:1–27:19)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh orders that the lamps must be kept burning (27:20–21)
- Key verses – v. 30 :: Yahweh instructs tabernacle to be setup as patterned on the mountain
- Yahweh had exacting requirements for the way everything was to be built and laid out in the tabernacle. After all, it was to be His house. The tabernacle was important to Israel’s national life; it symbolized God’s dwelling among His people (25:8; 29:45) and was the place where He would meet with both the leaders and the people (29:42–43). God’s glory was manifest in the tabernacle (40:35), and it was the newly established theocracy’s visible center for the worship of God.
- *Yahweh seeks to abide among the people, and every aspect (accouterment) of His tabernacle must be prepared exactly according to His specifications.*

Exodus 28

- Priestly attire – Prescribed
- Scene:
 - Intro — Garments to be made for priests (vv. 1–5)
 - Story — Exact specifications of priests’ garments given by Yahweh (vv. 6–42)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh orders that the garments must be worn when in Tabernacle (v. 43)
- Key verses – v. 4 :: Yahweh instructs the special, ornate garments priests are to wear
- Since the specifications for the place of worship have been completed Yahweh addresses those who were to preside over the nation’s worship and entire religious life. Yahweh had exacting requirements for everything the priests were to wear. The priests were to minister in the tabernacle complex in a variety of ways and must be dressed and act according to Yahweh’s prescription.
- *Because God is holy, the priests were to approach Him with dignity and care, attired precisely as God had prescribed.*

Exodus 29

- Priestly ceremonies – Prescribed
- Scene:
 - Story — Priestly ceremonies (consecration & offerings) prescribed by Yahweh (vv. 1–42)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh will dwell with His people (vv. 43–46)
- Key verses – vv. 1, 44 :: Yahweh instructs the ceremonies priests are to fulfill
- This section lays down what is entailed in the rites of installation: washing, anointing, sacrifice⁸, and ordination. The daily, perpetual offerings of a lamb (v. 39) by the priest are a constant reminder of man’s need for atonement so that God might dwell among His people. Fellowship with God is on the basis of blood shed for sins. When the priests were consecrated and serving the Lord then God would dwell with them and they would know that He is the Lord their God.⁹
- *Because God is holy, the priests were to conduct ceremonies according to His instructions so that He can dwell among His people.*

Exodus 30

- Instruments – Purification
- Scene:

⁸The types of offerings are the sin offering (v. 14), whole burnt offerings (v. 18), the anointing of the priest’s extremities with the blood of the rams (vv. 19–21), and the wave offering (vv. 22–28).

⁹God’s condescending to dwell in a tent speaks of the depth of His concern for His people.

Story — Purification prescribed by Yahweh (vv. 1–38)

- Key verses – vv. 10, 16b, 21, 29–30, 36 :: The purification of religious instruments for holy use
- This section lays down what is needed for a right relationship and pure standing before Yahweh. The altar of incense, tabernacle offerings, laver washings, anointing oil, and incense were all instruments of purification for the priests and covenant community.
- *God's standard for purification must be followed exactly to perpetuate a right relationship with Yahweh.*

Exodus 31:1–11

- Craftsmen – Appointed
- Scene:
 - Story — God chooses 2 craftsmen to make everything (vv. 1–11)
 - Conclusion — Everything must be made exactly as prescribed (v. 11b)
- Key verse – v. 6b :: Yahweh has gifted craftsmen to build
- Having given Moses the directions for constructing the sanctuary as well as instructions for its service (chaps. 25-30), Yahweh now appointed the artisans who were to do the construction work. Yahweh has gifted these men with special skill and ability.
- *Yahweh has gifted special men with the ability to carry out every aspect of the codes He has prescribed.*

Exodus 31:12–18

- Sabbath – Special
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Yahweh gives instructions to Moses (v. 12)
 - Story — Sabbath is to be sign of covenant, set apart from other days (vv. 13–17)
 - Climax — Sabbath must always be kept (v. 16)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh finished speaking to Moses on the mount and inscribes tablets (v. 18)
- Key verse – v. 13 :: Sabbath a sign of the covenant for each generation
- In the Sabbath is the culmination and completion of everything Yahweh has said. God reminded Moses that obedience is also a religious duty. The Sabbath was the sign (vv. 13, 17) of the covenant that made Israel a theocracy, and it was a test of the nation's commitment to God. Failure to keep it a holy day would result in separation from the community (which would probably result in death). This command was based on God's resting after His work of Creation in six days (31:17). Because the nation was in a covenant relationship with Him, the people were to do as He had done.
- *Observation of the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant, marking Israel as God's special people.*

Exodus 32

- Idolatry – Worship
- Scene:
 - Introduction — The people are impatient for Moses' return (v. 1)
 - Story — The people have Aaron make an idol to worship (vv. 2–8)
 - Climax — Moses is enraged at the people's wickedness (v. 19)
 - Conclusion — Moses intercedes for the people (vv. 31–34)
- Key verse – vv. 7–8 :: The people have turned their hearts and Yahweh would destroy them
- This passage contains a number of notable events. ¹The people have just seen Yahweh's mighty power of deliverance, providential care, and awesome appearance. Now, just days later, they turn to idolatry in rebellion to the covenant they had ratified (cf. chap. 25). ²Yahweh is so enraged He desires to destroy them and start anew with Moses (v. 9). ³Moses has compassion and seeks to pacify Yahweh, and he intercedes on the people's behalf (vv. 11–13, 31–32). ⁴Aaron, the high priest, had a significant role to play in the nation's sin. ⁵There were repercussions for the national sin—God sent the Levites out to kill 3,000 (v. 28) and he sends a plague (v. 35). The nation as a whole shared in the guilt; corporately they were guilty of covenant unfaithfulness.

- *The Israelites exhibit unfaithfulness to Yahweh and His covenant by scandalously worshipping an idol.*

Exodus 33

- Presence – Necessary
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Yahweh orders Moses to lead the people up to the promised land (vv. 1–3)
 - Story — Yahweh will remove His presence from Israel, Moses interacts with Yahweh (vv. 2–18)
 - Climax — Yahweh promises to go with Israel for Moses' sake (v. 17)
 - Conclusion — Yahweh's glory is shown to Moses (vv. 19–23)
- Key verse – vv. 15–16 :: Moses pleads for God's presence so all will know Yahweh has chosen Israel
- Entry into the Promised Land was not forfeited; however, God says His presence on the way will be withdrawn. Yahweh had made a covenant promise to the patriarchs that He would be present with their generations, but Israel had not held up to their end of the covenant so it could be set aside because of sin (cf. 23:20–23). Moses clearly understood that without God's presence they would not be a people set apart from other nations, so why travel any further (vv. 13, 16)? Because of Yahweh's special relationship with Moses he responds favorably to Moses' request.
- *Israel was in danger of losing Yahweh's presence; however, He decides to continue to be with them so that others would see that Israel was His chosen race.*

Exodus 34

- Covenant Terms/Conditions – Re-issued
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Moses to present new tablets for writing (vv. 1–3)
 - Story — Yahweh re-issues the terms of the covenant to Moses (vv. 5–28)
 - Climax — Yahweh promises to go with Israel for Moses' sake (v. 17)
 - Conclusion — Moses presented the covenant to the leaders and covered with a veil (vv. 31–35)
- Key verse – vv. 27 :: Moses to write down God's covenant conditions
- Since Moses had broken the first set of Commandments (and laws of chaps. 20–23, 25–31) and Israel had been pardoned, new tablets are needed. God's discourse (vv. 6–7) begins with a description of His character with a heavy emphasis on the mercy and forgiveness of God (this He had just proven in pardoning Israel's idolatry). God then makes a covenant with Israel, and a brief summary of the stipulations follow. The emphases in these stipulations are: ¹observe God's commandments (v. 11a); ²follow conquest regulations (vv. 11b–16); ³make no images (v. 17); and ⁴obey worship regulations (vv. 18–26). This meeting with God is different than the previous one—Moses now radiates God's glory when he returns to camp (v. 29), and unlike the previous 40 days, the people this time did not become infatuated with idolatry.
- *Yahweh graciously forgives Israel and re-issues His covenant stipulations, and this time Israel abstains from their gross sin.*

Exodus 35:1–3

- Sabbath – Observance
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Returning from meeting with Yahweh, Moses called people together (v. 1a)
 - Story — Moses gave Yahweh's instructions concerning the Sabbath (vv. 1b–3)
- Key verse – v. 1b :: Moses instructs regarding Sabbath observances
- Moses' words regarding the Sabbath occur at the beginning because Israel had already demonstrated a tendency to disobey. If the covenant were to be maintained, instructions about the sign of the covenant had to be obeyed. Also, it was important that worship not be neglected even in doing worshipful work of constructing the Tabernacle.
- *The Sabbath must be a day set apart and observed in a holy manner.*

Exodus 35:4–36:7

- Offerings – Prepared
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Moses instructed the community to give offerings for Tabernacle (35:4–5)
 - Story — The needed items described and those who had been stirred gave (35:6–29)
 - Conclusion — Enough had been given (36:5–6)
- Key verse – 35:21 :: Those whose hearts had been stirred gave
- Yahweh’s covenant has been renewed and now Israel must go about preparing the Tabernacle as has been described (cf. chaps 25–30). This is a near duplication of chaps 25–31. The use of repetition in Semitic literature is a method of emphasizing the importance of something, and that is the case here. The fact that God orders the tabernacle built indicates that he would reside with his people in spite of their apostasy. The people respond by bringing in more than enough.
- *Israel responds to Yahweh’s gracious forgiveness by preparing abundant offerings for Yahweh’s Tabernacle.*

Exodus 36:8–38:31

- Tabernacle & Utensils – Constructed
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Moses instructed the community to give offerings for Tabernacle (35:4–5)
 - Story — The needed items described and those who had been stirred gave (35:6–29)
 - Conclusion — Enough had been given (36:5–6)
- Key verse – 35:21 :: Those whose hearts had been stirred gave
- This section describes the building of the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the table, lampstand, altar of incense, altar of burnt offering, washbasin (laver), and the Tabernacle’s courtyard. Each was built exactly as prescribed by Yahweh (cf. chaps 25–30). If our understanding of ancient Israelite measures are correct, then just over one ton of gold, four tons of silver, and three tons of copper are used (38:21–31). So, though the tabernacle’s outer covering may have made the tabernacle look the color of a bedouin’s tent (hides of sea cows), the richness of the metals was a clear indication to Israel the holiness, glory, and majesty of God who dwelt among them. God alone is worthy of such tribute.
- *The Tabernacle and its utensils are constructed exactly as Yahweh required and act as a testimony of God’s glorious presence.*

Exodus 39:1–31

- Garments – Fashioned
- Scene:
 - Introduction — Craftsmen began beautiful garments for priests (v. 1)
 - Story — Everything was made for the priests, just as Yahweh had commanded (vv. 2–31)
 - Conclusion — Medallion inscribed with HOLY TO YAHWEH (vv. 30–31)
- Key verse – vv. 1b, 5b, 7b, 21b, 26b, 29b, 31b :: Everything fashioned just as Yahweh commanded
- The priestly garb, the items that the priests would wear in leading the nation in worship, were constructed. Clearly, Moses’ emphasis in this section is that everything was fashioned exactly according to Yahweh’s instruction. There was great care taken in following His directives. Yahweh had been careful in explaining everything that was to be accomplished for He desired to be Israel’s God and to be remembered for His mighty acts in protecting them and making a great nation, bringing them out of bondage, and in the future He would give them the promised land.
- *Yahweh’s plans were followed exactly in the fashioning of the priestly garments.*

Exodus 39:32–42

- Inspection – Blessed
- Scene:
 - Introduction — People followed Yahweh’s instructions; brought items for inspection (vv. 32–33a)
 - Story — Every utensil brought to Moses for inspection (vv. 33b–41)
 - Conclusion — People had followed Yahweh’s instructions (v. 42)

- Key verse – v. 43 :: Everything passed Moses' inspection
- The people had not failed in any detail in the preparation of Yahweh's utensils of worship. Recognizing that the craftsmen had meticulously followed the Lord's instructions, Moses put his approval on all their work. All this was done . . . *as the Lord had commanded Moses.*
- *Moses inspected the religious accouterments and gave his blessing for they had been crafted exactly as Yahweh had instructed.*

Exodus 40

- Arrangements – Completed
- Scene:
 - Introduction —Yahweh instructs Moses to set up the Tabernacle (vv. 1–15)
 - Story — Moses does everything just as Yahweh instructed (vv.16–33)
 - Conclusion —Yahweh presence at the Tabernacle (vv. 34–38)
- Key verses – vv. 16, 19b, 31b, 23b, 25, 27, 29b :: Moses followed directives exactly
- Moses carefully arranged the Tabernacle and its instruments just as Yahweh had commanded. Yahweh now had His place of worship and place where He would dwell among His people. Despite the failings of Israel Yahweh would still be present among them. *The book ends on a strong positive note:* God was with the nation, and He was guiding them on to the Promised Land.
- *With the completion of the Tabernacle, Yahweh shows He is with the nation, leading them to the Land.*

Conclusion

The book of the Exodus is a continuation of the Genesis account, and it holds many similarities to the book of Genesis in that both are concerned with formative issues. Whereas Genesis is concerned with the beginning of the universe and God's dealings with Israel's patriarchs, Exodus concentrates on the seminal issues in the forming of the nation of Israel and God's dealings with her via the Covenant. Israel is God's conglomeration and she is indebted to Him for her protection and growth (Ex 1:7). Therefore, she was not only formed by, but also accountable to Yahweh. However, even early on we see the nation is rebellious, often straying into discontent and gross idolatry.

The Exodus narrative concerns the theological issues of Yahweh's mighty power, Sovereign right, and divine forgiveness and mercy; it also displays Israel's indebtedness, ingratitude, pledged fidelity, subsequent disobedience, and return to Yahweh. Yahweh is infinitely superior to any so-called "gods." Thus, the struggles of the Israelite nation evidence God's remarkable deeds of fidelity and power.

The major concerns of the book can be broken down as follow:

Section 1: Yahweh's mighty acts of protection, deliverance, and redemption

Section 2: Yahweh's desire for His acts to be celebrated, His Covenant declared and accepted

Section 3: Yahweh's prescription of How He is to be worshipped and His presence garnered

The mighty and glorious Yahweh must be worshipped, for He has redeemed His people and initiated the Covenant according to His patriarchal promises.¹⁰

¹⁰Corollary: Obedience to God is necessary for a redeemed and set apart people.