

God Delivers His Chosen People

EXODUS



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY
RICHARD "RUSTY" DAVID RUTHERFORD

The Book of Exodus

God Delivers His Chosen People and Brings Them to His Holy Mountain Sinai

You have seen for yourselves what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to my mountain. Now therefore if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then you shall be a particular treasure unto me above all people: for the whole earth is mine. You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation. **Exodus 19:3-5**

Written and taught by

Richard "Rusty" David Rutherford

Columbus Texas

2020

Copyright Notices and Policies

Scripture text is the ***GOD'S WORD*** translation. © 1995 by God's Word to the Nations. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

All other text is © 2021 The Sudan Family Foundation. All rights reserved. Other than as specifically authorized below, no part of this course book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying or other electronic or mechanical method, without prior written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, please email accessthebible@gmail.com.

You may use this course book for your own personal study or for teaching or participating in a Bible study group or class with others. You may download a copy of this course book to your computer, print or otherwise make paper photocopies for use in your own personal study or use in a Bible study group or class. If you charge for any copies, you may only charge for the cost of copying.

You may NOT make changes to the content of this course book and then attribute the course material to Mr. Rutherford.

Table of Contents

| | | |
|----------------|--|-----|
| Introduction | Israel in Forced Labor in Egypt | 6 |
| Session One | God Calls Moses to Deliver His Chosen People Chapters 1-4:28 | 9 |
| Session Two | Moses Confronts Pharaoh and Warns of Plagues Chapters 4:29-8:30 | 21 |
| Session Three | God Continues His Plagues on Egypt Chapters 9-11 | 33 |
| Session Four | The Passover Event and Its Significance for Israel Chapters 12-15:21 | 42 |
| Session Five | Israel Travels to Mount Sinai with the People Rebelling Against God and Moses All the Way Chapters 15:22-18:27 | 57 |
| Session Six | Moses Conducts a Covenant Ceremony with God Chapters 19-20:21 | 66 |
| Session Seven | God Gives Moses the Holiness Code – The Torah Chapters 20:22-23:33 | 73 |
| Session Eight | The Wilderness Tabernacle Instructed – Part I Chapters 24-28 | 84 |
| Session Nine | The Wilderness Tabernacle Instructed – Part II Chapters 29-31 | 96 |
| Session Ten | The People Defy God and Worship a Golden Calf Chapters 32-34 | 105 |
| Session Eleven | The People Finally Begin Building the Tabernacle Chapters 35-39 | 117 |
| Session Twelve | YHWH Allows Moses to Set Up the Wilderness Tabernacle and Begin Worship Chapter 40 | 129 |
| EPILOGUE | | 133 |

Author's Preface



This course is being written in June 2020 when the Covid 19 virus is sweeping across America striking fear into the hearts of many. Fortunately, I live in a small town of 4,000 people where very few cases have so far occurred. But we live on an interstate highway going between two large cities, Houston and San Antonio, that represent a cross roads stopping off place for travelers. So the chances of having the virus transmitted to us are high.

This virus is similar to the forced labor bondage faced by the Israelites in the Book of Exodus. It was something they did not choose to invade their lives but it did. And they had to learn to live with it. And God was behind it all. Many years before **YHWH** had told Abraham that his descendants would live in a land that was not their own where they would be slaves and would be oppressed for 400 years. But I will punish the nation they serve and after that they will come out with many possessions. **Genesis 15:13-14**

The year is 1,300 BC. The Israelites cried out and these cries went up to God. God sent them a man he had already chosen in advance and this man confronted the Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, with **YHWH**'s demands. Although the Pharaoh was stubborn, God finally brought a plague that made the Pharaoh change his mind. This tenth plague involved spreading blood on the doorposts and lintels of their home so God's death angel would not kill the first born sons in their homes as he would kill the Egyptian first born sons. Instead he would pass over their homes.

With a final miraculous act that divided a sea in two, God led his people to his holy mountain Sinai in a fifty day trek through the desert. At Mount Sinai **YHWH** prepared these people, who had been slaves for 400 years, to become a nation, a nation free to teach all the people of the world about **YHWH**, the one true God, and to bless all the families of the earth. It was a very slow process as the people were very slow to cast off their slave mentality.

The Book of Exodus traces the one year period the Israelites spent at Mount Sinai where they learned of God's plans for his human creatures to live in his Creation as he revealed them in his Torah or Law and agreed to follow them in a Covenant ceremony.

They learned of God's forgiveness as they violated his first commandment by worshipping a Golden Calf idol like they had worshiped in Egypt, even as he was writing these laws on two stone tables with his own finger.

They learned of God's desire to dwell in the midst of them as he detailed for Moses his plans for a Wilderness Tabernacle where he would meet with Moses above the mercy seat between the two cherubim of the Ark of the Covenant. At this Wilderness Tabernacle, the people would worship **YHWH** and offer sacrifices to cover their sin and rebellion against their God. This is covered in a later book called Leviticus – the Book of God's Holiness.

Finally, on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after they had left Egypt, the Levites blew two silver trumpets and the Israelites began an 11-day journey to Canaan, the land God had promised title to Abraham's descendants. This journey is described in the Book of Numbers and 40 years later recapped by Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy. Together, these five books the Jews call the Torah represent the story of God's calling of a people he chose to reveal himself to all the peoples he had created in his Creation.

Notes on this Bible Translation and My Editorial Insertions

The Bible translation used in this study is the ***GOD'S WORD*** translation. © 1995 by God's Word to the Nations Mission Society (GWT). The GWT translation is an attempt to make the English text of the Bible developed in the 1500's more readable to modern Americans. It is not a paraphrase, but it has retranslated the oldest manuscripts into modern American English at about newspaper level using "closest natural equivalence". The Bible is meant by God to be understood. Therefore, using modern language is essential.

I have used this translation in my teaching since 1996 and have found it very accurate. I love the King James Version and so when there are variances in the GWT, I may insert within the Bible text the original transliterated Hebrew or Greek word in **10-point bold-face type** followed by an English word to help better understand the meaning of the passage. English words added to aid in understanding are also in 10-point type but are not in bold. Lastly, if the original Hebrew or Greek word appears in the Bible 10 times or less, I may also indicate how often it appears (e.g., 10x or 2x, etc.). Here's an example from John 11:33 and the raising of Lazarus involving three Greek words:

³³When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who were crying with her were deeply moved *embrimaomai*-groaned 5x *pneuma*-spirit and troubled *tarasso*-agitated.

This has shown me that the GWT translation is rearkable for finding the right meanings to phrases that are often difficult to translate.

Notes on Font Usage

All text is in the Big Caslon font. Scripture text is in regular 14-point. If I have inserted parallel Scripture quotations, they are also in regular 14-point, but are slightly further indented (.08) than the main Scripture text and are enclosed by brackets []. All Scripture citations are in **12-point bold face**. All my comments and questions to think about are all in regular 12-point.

[Remainder of the Page Intentionally Left Blank]

Introduction

Israel in Forced Labor in Egypt

Exodus, the second book of the Bible, presupposes a knowledge of and acquaintance with, Genesis, the first book of the Bible. Beginning in Chapter 12 **YHWH** calls Abram to go to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation, your name will be great, and you will be a blessing to every family on the earth. **Genesis 12:3** Abram obeys God and leads his wife, nephew, and their servants to Canaan where he lives for one hundred years dying at age 175. **Genesis 25:7**

Many times, God approaches Abram. During the fourth encounter, God promises he will have a son as his heir. Abram asks God for a sign so God make a Covenant with Abram in that traditional way by passing between the two pieces of animals divided signifying what would be done if someone broke the Covenant. **Genesis 15:17**. He also told Abram that his descendants would leave Canaan where they would be slaves and be oppressed for 400 years. But after that, God himself would punish that nation and the people would come out with many possessions. **Genesis 15:13-14**. This promise is the basis of the Book of Exodus.

Abram had two sons. His eldest son Isaac had two sons. One son was named Jacob and it was he to whom God transmitted the blessing given to Abram who he had re-named Abraham. God also changed Abraham's grandson Jacob's name to Israel although Israel is still often called Jacob in the Bible.

Jacob had twelve sons who are called the twelve tribes of Israel. One son named Joseph was favored by his father. His envious brothers sold this son named Joseph to some Arab traders who then sold him as a slave in Egypt. Through some adventures, God protected Joseph. He interpreted a dream of the Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, so Pharaoh made him his Prime Minister. Joseph then invited Jacob and his family to reside in Egypt because there was a famine in Canaan.

The Book of Exodus begins by naming the twelve sons of Israel. The time is about 1,300 BC, 400 years after the sons of Israel or Israelites had come to Egypt. They had grown from 70 men to over 600,000 men and their families. This worried the Pharaoh of Egypt who decreed that any new boy babies be killed at birth.

To a man from the tribe of Levi named Amram and his wife Jochebed, God gave a son Aaron, a daughter Miriam and a younger son Moses. **Exodus 6:20**. Jochebed did not want to see Moses killed so she hid him in an ark made of bulrushes and placed him in the Nile River. The

daughter of Pharaoh saw the baby and adopted him. So Moses grew up in the Pharaoh's palace educated like an Egyptian prince.

However, when Moses was 40 years old, he saw an Egyptian beating an Israelite. So he murdered the Egyptian and hid the body. The next day, he tried to separate two Israelites fighting. But when he interfered with them, one asked: Will you now kill me like you killed the Egyptian? Moses was afraid and fled Egypt to the land of Midian. There he met a priest of Midian named Jethro and married his daughter Zipporah.

Moses then met God as a fire speaking out of a burning bush. God called Moses to go to Egypt and lead the descendants of Abraham back to Canaan. Moses protested but God was adamant. Soon Moses was in Egypt joined by his brother Aaron and sister Miriam.

The Book of Exodus then describes God bringing ten plagues on the Pharaoh and the people of Egypt to force the Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to escape. The last plague is dramatic. The Pharaoh's first born son is killed by God's death angel. Moses leads the people out but the Pharaoh changes his mind and chases them. The people's path is blocked by the Red Sea but God divides the water and allows the people to cross over as if on dry land.

For fifty days they travel to Mount Sinai, the mountain where God first called Moses. There God gives the people his Torah or Law with ten fundamental commandments. After that God gives Moses additional laws for the people. Then Moses conducts a Covenant ceremony sprinkling the people with blood.

Again Moses goes up the mountain to talk to God and he is gone 40 days and 40 nights. During this time God gives Moses instructions for building a Wilderness Tabernacle so that God can symbolically dwell in the midst of his people. There will be symbolic objects within the Tent to whom only priests will have access. But the people in camp below grow restless and force Aaron to build them a Golden Calf idol like they had in Egypt. God sees this and calls Moses to go down. Moses is furious. He has the Levites kill 3,000 men.

Then he goes back up the mountain asking God to forgive the people. God does and renews the Covenant broken by the people. Moses returns but first preaches a short sermon on the importance of the Sabbath **Exodus 35:1-3**. The Sabbath is mentioned in **Exodus 16:23, 20:8, 31:12, 35:2**. It is a way of stressing to the Chosen People the need to remember God is holy and to do this every seven days.

After Moses returns, the people begin building the Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting and its religious furnishings. Finally, God tells Moses to assemble the Tabernacle and begin worship. They then celebrate a Passover Festival to remember God's killing of Egypt's firstborn that caused Pharaoh to allow them to leave Egypt.

On the first day of the first month of the second year after the Israelites left Egypt, the Tabernacle is finished. God anoints the Tabernacle by filling it with his glory and placing his cloud of smoke or fire above it constantly. The Exodus journey has exactly taken a year. **Exodus 40:1**. What will happen next? On the 20th day of the second month of the second year, Moses commands the blowing of two trumpets and the Israelites begin an eleven day journey to Canaan. **Numbers 10: 11**

[Remainder of the Page Intentionally Left Blank]

Session One

God Calls Moses to Deliver His Chosen People

Israel Comes to Egypt

¹These are the names of the twelve sons of Jacob, whom God re-named Israel, who came with him to Egypt with their families: ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; ³Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; ⁴Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. ⁵Joseph was already in Egypt. The total number of Jacob's descendants was 70 men and their families.

⁶Eventually Joseph, all his brothers, and that entire generation died. ⁷But the descendants of Israel had many children. They became so numerous and strong that the land was filled with them.

When the nation of Israel left Egypt, there were 600,000 men and their families plus a mixture of Gentiles who accompanied them. **Exodus 12:37-38**

The Israelites Become Slaves

⁸Then a new Pharaoh, who knew nothing about Joseph, began to rule in Egypt.

Remember from Genesis that Joseph, the Israelite, was made the Premier of Egypt because he told the Pharaoh how to avoid disaster during the famine. **Genesis 41:39-44**

⁹He said to his people: There are too many Israelites, and they are stronger than we are. ¹⁰We have to outsmart them, or they'll increase in number. Then, if war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us, and leave the country.

¹¹So the Egyptians put slave drivers in charge of them in order to oppress them through forced labor. They built Pithom and Rameses as supply cities for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more the Israelites were oppressed, the more they increased in number and spread out.

The Egyptians couldn't stand them any longer. ¹³ So they forced the Israelites to work hard as slaves. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter with back-breaking work in mortar and bricks and every kind of work in the fields. All the jobs the Egyptians gave them were brutally hard.

Pharaoh Tells the Midwives to Kill All Hebrew Baby Boys

¹⁵ Then the Pharaoh of Egypt told the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah: ¹⁶ When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth, look at the child when you deliver it. If it's a boy, kill it, but if it's a girl, let it live.

¹⁷ However, the midwives feared God and didn't obey the Pharaoh of Egypt's orders. They let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the Pharaoh called for the midwives. He asked them: Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?

¹⁹ The midwives answered Pharaoh: Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women. They are so healthy that they have their babies before a midwife arrives.

²⁰ God was good to the midwives. So the people increased in number and became very strong. ²¹ Because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people to throw into the Nile every Hebrew boy that was born but to let every girl live.

The word *Hebrew* first appears in **Genesis 14:13** where Abraham is called a Hebrew. This is what the Egyptians call the Israelites in **Genesis 39:14,17, 41:12**. This word appears 26x in the Bible.

Pharaoh's Daughter Adopts Moses

2:1 A man Ashram from Levi's family married a Levite woman Jochebed. ² The woman Jochebed became pregnant and had a son Moses. **Exodus 6:20**. She saw how beautiful he was and hid him for three months. ³ When she couldn't hide him any longer, she took a basket made of papyrus plants and coated it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in it and set it

among the papyrus plants near the bank of the Nile River. ⁴The baby's sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵While Pharaoh's daughter came to the Nile to take a bath, her servants walked along the bank of the river. She saw the basket among the papyrus plants and sent her slave girl to get it. ⁶Pharaoh's daughter opened the basket, looked at the baby, and saw it was a boy. He was crying and she felt sorry for him. She said: This is one of the Hebrew children.

⁷Then the baby's sister asked Pharaoh's daughter: Should I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you? ⁸She answered: Yes. So the girl brought the baby's mother.

⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to the woman: Take this child, nurse him for me and I will pay you. She took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child was old enough, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses meaning *Pulled Out* and said: I pulled him out of the water.

Moses Commits Murder and Flees to Midian

¹¹In the course of time Moses grew up. Then he went to see his own people and watched them suffering under forced labor. He saw a Hebrew, one of his own people, being beaten by an Egyptian. ¹²He looked all around and when he didn't see anyone, he beat the Egyptian to death and hid the body in the sand.

¹³When Moses went there the next day, he saw two Hebrew men fighting. He asked the one who started the fight: Why are you beating another Hebrew?

¹⁴The man asked: Who made you our ruler and judge? Are you going to kill me as you killed the Egyptian? Then Moses was afraid and thought that everyone knew what he had done.

¹⁵When Pharaoh heard what Moses had done, he tried to have him killed. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian.

In **Acts 7:23**, Stephen says Moses was now 40 years old.

Moses Marries Zipporah

One day, while Moses was sitting by a well, ¹⁶seven daughters of the priest of Midian came. They drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's sheep. ¹⁷But some shepherds came and chased them away. So Moses got up, came to their defense and then watered their sheep.

¹⁸When they came back to their father Reuel Jethro, he asked them: Why have you come home so early today?

¹⁹They answered: An Egyptian rescued us from some shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the sheep. ²⁰Reuel asked his daughters: Where is he? Why did you leave the man there? Go, invite him to supper.

²¹Moses decided to stay with the man. So Reuel gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses as his wife. ²²She gave birth to a son. Moses named him Gershom meaning foreigner, because he said: I was a foreigner living in another country.

In **Exodus 18:1**, Moses' father-in-law is called Jethro. Jethro is a descendant of Midian, the descendant of Abraham's second wife Keturah. **Genesis 25:2**. So Jethro knows of Abraham's God YHWH.

The Israelites Pray to God during Their Suffering

²³After a long time passed, the Pharaoh died. The Israelites still groaned because they were slaves. So they cried out, and their cries for help went up to God. ²⁴God heard their groaning, and he remembered his Covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵God saw the Israelites being oppressed and was concerned about them.

God had made a Covenant with Abraham **Genesis 22:17-18**, and then renewed this Covenant with Abraham's son Isaac **Genesis 26:4**, and his grandson Jacob now named Israel **Genesis 27:9; 28:13-14**

YHWH Speaks to Moses from a Burning Bush

3:1 Moses was taking care of the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. As he led the sheep to the far side of the desert, he came to Horeb Sinai, the mountain of God.

Moses is now 80 years old according to Stephen. **Acts 7:30; Exodus 7:7**

2The Messenger of YHWH appeared to him there as flames of fire coming out of a bush. Moses looked and although the bush was on fire it was not burning up. **3**So he thought: Why isn't this bush burning up? I must go over there and see this strange sight.

4When YHWH saw that Moses had come over to see it, God called to him from the bush: Moses, Moses. Moses answered: Here I am. **5**God said: Don't come any closer. Take off your sandals because this place where you are standing is holy ground. **6**I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Obviously, Moses knew the stories of God's encounter with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob perhaps from his mother Jochebed who he was with until he was four years old. Perhaps he visited his mother and father while he lived in Pharaoh's palace with his adopted mother, the daughter of Pharaoh for 40 years. God's command to Moses here may be the reason the priests who served in the Wilderness Tabernacle never wore shoes when they served.

7YHWH said: I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt and I have heard them crying out because of the slave drivers. I know how much they're suffering. **8**I have come to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them from that land to a Good Land with plenty of room for everyone. It is a land flowing with milk and honey where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live.

9I have heard the cry of the people of Israel. I have seen how the Egyptians are oppressing them. **10**Now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you can bring my people Israel out of Egypt.

¹¹But Moses said to God: Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the people of Israel out of Egypt? ¹²God answered: I will be *haya* with you *im*. And this will be the proof that I sent you: When you bring the people out of Egypt, all of you will worship God on this mountain of Sinai.

The Hebrew word *with* for I will be *haya' with* you *im* is implied but not written in the Scripture text.

Moses Asks God to Reveal His Name to Him

¹³Then Moses replied to God: Suppose I go to the people of Israel and say to them: The God of your ancestors has sent me to you, and they ask me: What is his name? What should I tell them?

¹⁴God answered Moses: **I AM** Who I Am *hayah*-being. This is what you must say to the people of Israel: **I AM** has sent me to you.

¹⁵Again God said to Moses: This is what you must say to the people of Israel: **YHWH** God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever. This is my title throughout every generation.

In the Hebrew language, there are no vowels. So *hayah* is simply **YHWH**. Abraham used this name for God in **Genesis 14:22**. Most Bible translations use the title **LORD** instead of using God's personal name as Jews do not want to verbalize this sacred name.

¹⁶Go, assemble the leaders of Israel. Say to them: **YHWH** God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appeared to me. He said: I have paid close attention to you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷I promise I will take you away from your misery in Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁸The leaders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the leaders must go to the Pharaoh and say to him: **YHWH** God *elohim* of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us travel three days into the desert to offer sacrifices to **YHWH** our God.

¹⁹I know that the Pharaoh will not let you go even if he is forced to. ²⁰So I will use my power to strike Egypt. After all the miracles that I will do there, he will let you go. ²¹I will make the Egyptians kind to the people of Israel so that, when you leave, you will not leave empty-handed.

²²“Every Hebrew woman should ask her Egyptian neighbor and any woman living in her home for silver and gold jewelry and for clothes. Put them on your sons and daughters. This way you will strip Egypt of its wealth.

Remember that God had told Abraham 700 years before:

[You can know for sure that your descendants will live in a land that is not their own, where they will be slaves, and they will be oppressed for 400 years. But I will punish the nation they serve and after that they will come out with many possessions. **Genesis 15:13-14**]

YHWH Gives Moses Three Miraculous Signs

⁴¹They will never believe me or listen to me, Moses protested. They will say: YHWH didn't appear to you. Then YHWH asked him: What's that in your hand? He answered: A shepherd's staff.

³YHWH said: Throw it on the ground. When Moses threw it on the ground, it became a snake, and he ran away from it.

⁴Then YHWH said to Moses: Reach out and grab the snake by its tail. He reached out and grabbed it and it turned back into a staff as he held it.

⁵YHWH explained: This is to convince the people that YHWH God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appeared to you.”

⁶YHWH said to him: Put your hand inside your shirt. So Moses did this, and when he took his hand out, it had a skin disease. It looked as flaky as snow. ⁷Now put your hand back inside your shirt, YHWH said. Moses put it back, and when he took it out this time, it was healthy again like the rest of his body.

⁸Then **YHWH** said: If they won't believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second. ⁹But if they won't believe these two miraculous signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile River and pour it on the ground. The water you take from the Nile will turn into blood on the ground.

Moses Protests That He Is Not a Good Speaker

¹⁰Moses said to **YHWH**: Please, **Adonay**, I'm not a good speaker. I've never been a good speaker and I'm not now even though you've spoken to me. I speak slowly and I become tongue-tied easily.

¹¹**YHWH** asked him: Who gave humans their mouths? Who makes humans unable to talk or hear? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? It is I, **YHWH**. ¹²Now go, and I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.

Moses Refuses God Again

¹³But Moses said: Please **Adonay**, send someone else.

¹⁴Then **YHWH** became angry *aph* with Moses and asked: What about your brother Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He's already on his way to meet you and he will be very glad to see you. ¹⁵You will speak to him and tell him what to say. I will help both of you speak, and I will teach you both what to do.

¹⁶Aaron will speak to the people for you. He will be your spokesman and you will be like God. ¹⁷Take that shepherd's staff with you and use it to do the miraculous signs.

Moses Asks Permission of Jethro and Returns to Egypt

¹⁸Then Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro. Moses said to him: Please let me go back to my own people in Egypt. I would like to see if they're still alive. Jethro said to Moses: You may go.

¹⁹Now, **YHWH** had said to Moses in Midian: Go back to Egypt, because all the men who wanted to kill you are dead.

²⁰ So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and started out for Egypt. He also brought with him the staff God had told him to take.

Moses had fathered two sons with Zipporah: One was called Gershom. **Exodus 2:22; 18:3** The other was Eliezer. **Exodus 18:4**

²¹ **YHWH** said to Moses: When you get back to Egypt, see that you show Pharaoh all the amazing things that I have given you the power to do. But I will make him stubborn so that he will not let the people go.

YHWH Commands Moses to Warn Pharaoh

²² Then tell Pharaoh: This is what **YHWH** says: Israel is my firstborn son. ²³ I told you to let my son go so that he may worship me. But you refused to let him go. So now I'm going to kill your firstborn son.

God tells Moses in advance what the 10th plague will be. He will kill every first born son of the Egyptians. Moses is supposed to tell Pharaoh this. But does he?

God Attempts to Kill Moses

²⁴ Along the way they stopped for the night. **YHWH** met Moses and tried to kill *muwth* him. ²⁵ Then Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin, and touched Moses' feet with it. She said: You are a bridegroom of blood to me. ²⁶ So **YHWH** let him alone. It was because of the circumcision that she said at that time: You are a bridegroom of blood.

God had earlier said to Abraham:

[You and your descendants in generations to come are to be faithful to my Covenant. This is how you are to be faithful to my Covenant. Every male among you is to be circumcised. All of you must be circumcised. That will be the sign of the Covenant from me to you. For generations to come every male child who is eight days old must be circumcised, whether he is born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner who's not related to you. Every male born in your house or bought with your money is to be circumcised without exception. So my promised will be a sign on your flesh, an Everlasting Covenant. Any uncircumcised male

must be excluded from his people because he has rejected my Covenant.
Genesis 17:9-14]

Jethro had taught his daughter Zipporah this regulation of God to Abraham.

²⁷ Meanwhile, **YHWH** had told Aaron to meet Moses in the desert.

When Aaron met Moses at the mountain of God, he kissed him. ²⁸ Moses told Aaron everything **YHWH** had sent him to say and all the miraculous signs **YHWH** had commanded him to do.

We don't hear about Zipporah and her sons again until the Israelites return from Egypt to Mount Sinai. Jethro brings them to Moses after Moses had sent them back to Jethro. **Exodus 18:2** After that, we never hear of Zipporah or her sons again.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We have been told the situation the Israelites have found themselves in. About 1,700 BC, Joseph invited his father Jacob and his brothers and their families to leave Canaan and settle in Egypt where he was the Prime Minister because he had helped the Pharaoh avoid a famine. About 70 men and their families comprised the Israelites. Now, 400 years later, the Israelites comprise 600,000 men and their families and the present Pharaoh, despite the past history, is now afraid of the Israelites. They have grown too numerous. So he restricts them by forcing them into hard labor and treats them as second class citizens although more like slaves. He also decrees all male babies be immediately killed.

The Israelites remember **YHWH** and his promise to the patriarch Abraham around 2000 BC and renewed with his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. Please remember your Covenant to Abraham, they cry to **YHWH**. We are his descendants.

God in response to this plea, raises up Moses. His mother places the baby in an ark made of bulrushes in a place where Pharaoh's daughter bathes. The daughter sees the baby, names him Moses, adopts him and gives him to his mother to nurse. Then Moses is taken into the Pharaoh's house where he is raised.

When Moses is 40 years old, he sees an Egyptian abusing a Hebrew. So he murders the Egyptian. A Hebrew lets Moses know he saw this happen. So Moses becomes afraid, leaves Egypt and travels to Midian where he meets Jethro. Jethro is a descendant of Abraham through Abraham's second wife Keturah. Moses marries his daughter Zipporah and has two sons.

When Moses is 80 years old as he is shepherding Jethro's sheep on Mount Sinai also called Mount Horeb, he sees a bush burning but not consumed. **YHWH** speaks to Moses from the bush and commands him to go back to Egypt to demand that Pharaoh allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. Moses is reluctant, but when God becomes angry, Moses asks Jethro permission to leave with his daughter and their sons. Jethro agrees.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Some claim the Israelites really don't want to leave Egypt because they are comfortable living there. All they want is the hard forced labor lifted. Do you think this is true?
2. What are the Israelites attitudes toward God? Do they think he has abandoned them? Do they still pray to him and worship him? How much do they remember of the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. See **Exodus 13:19**.
4. What can Jethro tell Moses about Abraham Moses doesn't know?
5. Why does Moses want to know God's name? How would the Israelites in Egypt identify God? Remember God's person name was only used by Abraham once? None of his sons or grandson used this name.
6. Why does Moses accept God's demand on his life?
7. Why does God then attempt to kill Moses? This later incident may help explain:

At that time **YHWH** spoke to Joshua: Make flint knives and circumcise the men of Israel. So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the men on the Hill of Circumcision. This is the reason Joshua circumcised them:

All the soldiers had died on the way through the desert after they left Egypt. The men who had left Egypt had been circumcised. However, the men born later, on the way through the desert, were not circumcised. For 40 years the Israelites had wandered through the desert until all their soldiers who had left Egypt died. They died because they disobeyed **YHWH**. **YHWH** swore that he would not let them see this land flowing with milk and honey which he had sworn to give our ancestors.

The sons who took their place had not been circumcised on the way. So Joshua circumcised them. When all the men had been circumcised, they remained in the camp until they recovered. **YHWH** said to Joshua: Today

I have removed rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you. So Joshua named the place Gilgal meaning rolled away. **Joshua 5:2-9**

This incident took place after the 40 years wandering the desert, Moses had spoken the words of Deuteronomy and died, and the Israelites had crossed the Jordan River into Canaan under their new leader Joshua. Here they first celebrated the Passover Festival and the manna stopped. For some reason Moses didn't like circumcision. Had this rule died out during the 400 years the Israelites were in Egypt?

8. What words in the Scripture text of this session demonstrate that God had planned using Moses in advance from start to finish. HINT: How does Aaron know to come and meet Moses and how does he find him?

9. The story of God attempting to kill Moses has a point similar to the story in Genesis of Jacob's wrestling with an angel. God can only use a person who is totally submissive to him. Moses should have circumcised his son Gershom. God had declared:

[Every male born in your household or bought with your money is to be circumcised without exception. So my Covenant will be a sign on your flesh, an Everlasting Covenant. Any uncircumcised male must be excluded from his people because he has rejected my promise. **Genesis 17:13-14**]

But he didn't. Fortunately, Zipporah had the presence of mind not to allow Moses to antagonize God further. Jethro had taught her well about the nature of Abraham's God **YHWH**. He exhibits furious wrath on his enemies. What does this story tell us about Moses' relationship with **YHWH** at this point in his life?

Session Two

Moses Confronts Pharaoh and Warns of Plagues

Moses and Aaron Tell the People What YHWH Said

4:29 Then Moses and Aaron went to Egypt and assembled all the leaders of the people of Israel. ³⁰Aaron told them everything **YHWH** had said to Moses. He also did the miraculous signs for the people, ³¹and the people believed them. When they heard that **YHWH** was concerned about the people of Israel and that he had seen their misery, they knelt, bowing with their faces touching the ground.

What are the Israelites signifying when they do this?

Moses and Aaron Confront Pharaoh

5:1 Later Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said: This is what **YHWH** God of Israel says: Let my people go into the desert to celebrate a festival in my honor.

²Pharaoh asked: Who is **YHWH**? Why should I obey him and let Israel go? I don't know **YHWH** and I won't let Israel go.

³They replied: The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us travel three days into the desert to offer sacrifices to **YHWH** our God. If we don't go, he may kill us with a plague or a war.

⁴The Pharaoh said to them: Moses and Aaron, why are you distracting the people from their work? Get back to work. ⁵Then Pharaoh added: Look how many people there are in the land. Do you want them to quit working?

The Scripture text does not tell us why Pharaoh did not immediately imprison Moses and Aaron and kill them. Something is implied in the text that is not stated about the appearance and demeanor of Moses and Aaron that prevents Pharaoh from doing this.

Pharaoh Increases the Israelites' Labor

⁶That same day Pharaoh gave these orders to the slave drivers and foremen:
⁷Don't give the people any more straw to make bricks as you have been doing. Let them gather their own straw,⁸ but insist that they make the same number of bricks they were making before. Making fewer bricks will not be acceptable. They're lazy. That's why they're crying: Let us go offer sacrifices to our God. ⁹Make the work harder for these people so that they will be too busy to listen to lies.

The Pharaoh is assuming Moses and Aaron speak for the Hebrew people. What credentials did Moses and Aaron present to Pharaoh?

¹⁰The slave drivers and foreman went out and said to them: This is what Pharaoh says: I'm no longer giving you straw. ¹¹Get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work load will not be reduced one bit.

¹²So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for straw. ¹³The slave drivers kept hurrying them. They said: Finish the same amount of work each day, just as when you had straw.

¹⁴Pharaoh's slave drivers had placed Israelite foremen in charge of the people. The slave drivers beat the foremen and said: You didn't finish all the bricks you were ordered to make yesterday or today. Why didn't you make as many as you used to?

¹⁵Then the Israelite foremen complained to Pharaoh. They asked: Why are you treating us this way? ¹⁶We're given no straw and yet we're told to make bricks. We're being beaten but your men are at fault.

¹⁷You're lazy. Just plain lazy. Pharaoh answered. That's why you keep saying: Let us go offer sacrifices to **YHWH**. ¹⁸Now get back to work. You won't be given any straw but you must still make the same number of bricks.

¹⁹The Israelite foremen realized they were in trouble when they were told: Don't make fewer bricks each day than you're supposed to.

²⁰ As they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting for them. ²¹ So they said: May **YHWH** see what you have done and judge you. You have made Pharaoh and his officials hate us. You have given them an excuse to kill us.

²² Moses went back to **YHWH** and asked: **Adonay**, why have you brought this trouble on your people? Why did you send me? ²³ Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak for you, he has treated your people cruelly and you have done nothing at all to rescue your people.

6:1 Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. I will show him my power and he will let my people go. I will show him my power and he will throw them out of his country.

YHWH States His Plan to Rescue the Israelites

² God spoke to Moses: I am **YHWH**. ³ I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty El Shadday, but I didn't make myself known to them by my name, **YHWH**.

Yet Abraham uses God's personal name **YHWH** in **Genesis 14:22** but are that **El Shadday** is used in **Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25**.

⁴ I even made a Covenant to give them Canaan, the land where they lived as foreigners. ⁵ Now I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians hold in slavery, and I have remembered my Covenant.

⁶ Tell the Israelites, I am **YHWH**. I will bring you out from under the oppression of the Egyptians and I will free you from slavery. I will rescue you with my powerful arm and with mighty acts of judgment. ⁷ Then I will make you my people, and I will be your God.

This last sentence is God's promise of his Eternal Covenant between humans and himself. It will appear in many places in the Bible.

You will know that I am **YHWH** your God, who brought you out from under the forced labor of the Egyptians. ⁸ I will bring you to the Land I

solemnly swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will give it to you as your own possession. I am **YHWH**.

⁹Moses reported this to the Israelites. But they would not listen to him because they were so discouraged by their back-breaking work.

God Again Tells Moses to Speak to Pharaoh

¹⁰Then **YHWH** spoke to Moses: ¹¹Go tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave his country. ¹²But Moses protested to **YHWH**: The Israelites wouldn't listen to me. Why would Pharaoh listen to me? I'm such a poor speaker.

¹³**YHWH** spoke to Moses and Aaron about the Israelites and Pharaoh. He commanded them to bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

The Ancestry of the Sons of Israel

¹⁴These were the heads of the families:

The sons of **Reuben**, Israel's firstborn, were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. These were the families descended from Reuben. ¹⁵The sons of **Simeon** were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. These were the families descended from Simeon.

¹⁶These are the names of the sons of **Levi** listed in birth order: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi lived 137 years. ¹⁷The sons of Gershon listed by their families were Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath lived 133 years. ¹⁹The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These were the families descended from Levi listed in birth order.

Moses' and Aaron's Ancestry

²⁰Amram married his father's sister Jochebed. She gave birth to **Aaron** and Moses. Amram lived 137 years. ²¹The sons of Izhar were Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. ²²The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

²³**Aaron** married Elishama, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon. She gave birth to **Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar,** and **Ithamar**.

Other Sons of Levi

²⁴The sons of Korah were Assar, Elkanah, and Eliasaph. These were the families descended from Korah. ²⁵**Eleazar**, son of Aaron, married one of the daughters of Patel. She gave birth to **Phinehas**. These were the heads of Levite households listed by their families.

²⁶This was the same Aaron and Moses to whom **YHWH** said: Bring the Israelites out of Egypt in organized family groups. ²⁷They — this same Moses and Aaron — told Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Moses Again Questions YHWH

²⁸At that time **YHWH** spoke to Moses in Egypt. ²⁹He said to Moses: I am **YHWH**. Tell Pharaoh everything I tell you. ³⁰But Moses said to **YHWH**: Why would Pharaoh listen to me?

God has already answered Moses' question. Moses is speaking God's words, not his own words.

7:1 **YHWH** answered Moses: I have made you like a god to Pharaoh and your brother Aaron is your prophet. ²Tell your brother Aaron everything I command you. He must tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave the country.

YHWH Will Harden Pharaoh's Heart

³But I will make Pharaoh stubborn *qashah*-harden *leb*-heart. Even though I will do many miraculous signs and amazing things in Egypt. ⁴Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will use my power to punish Egypt severely, and I will bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt in organized family groups.

⁵The Egyptians will know *yada'* that I am **YHWH** when I use my power against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of there.

YHWH wants the Egyptians to know *yada'* that he is bringing the disasters on them. This word *yada'* appears almost 1,000 times in the Hebrew Bible. It appears 45 times in Exodus.

⁶Moses and Aaron did as **YHWH** had commanded them. ⁷Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 when they talked to Pharaoh.

⁸**YHWH** said to Moses and Aaron: ⁹When Pharaoh says to you:, Give me a sign to prove that God has sent you, tell Aaron: Take your shepherd's staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh and it will become a large snake.

¹⁰Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as **YHWH** had commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials and it became a large snake. ¹¹Then Pharaoh sent for his wise men and sorcerers. These Egyptian magicians did the same thing using their magic spells. ¹²Each of them threw his staff down, and they all became large snakes.

But Aaron's staff swallowed theirs. ¹³Yet, Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and would not listen to them, as **YHWH** had predicted.

The First Plague—The Nile River Turns into Blood

¹⁴Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Pharaoh is being stubborn. He refuses to let my people go. ¹⁵In the morning meet Pharaoh when he's on his way to the Nile. Wait for him on the bank of the river. Take along the staff that turned into a snake. ¹⁶Say to him: **YHWH** God of the Hebrews sent me to tell you :Let my people go to worship me in the desert. So far you have not listened.

¹⁷Here is what **YHWH** says: This is the way you will recognize that I am **YHWH**: With this staff in my hand, I'm going to strike the Nile, and the water will turn into blood. ¹⁸The fish in the Nile will die and the river will stink. The Egyptians will not be able to drink any water from the Nile.

¹⁹**YHWH** said to Moses: Tell Aaron: Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt — its rivers, canals, ponds, and all its reservoirs — so that they turn into blood. There will be blood everywhere in Egypt even in the wooden and stone containers.

²⁰Moses and Aaron did as **YHWH** had commanded. In front of Pharaoh and his officials, Aaron raised his staff and struck the Nile. All the water in the river turned into blood. ²¹The fish in the Nile died and it smelled so bad

that the Egyptians couldn't drink any water from the river. There was blood everywhere in Egypt.

²² But the Egyptian magicians did the same thing using their magic spells. So Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, as **YHWH** had predicted. ²³ Pharaoh turned and went back to his palace. He dismissed the entire matter from his mind.

If Pharaoh had thought more deeply about this, if his magicians were more powerful than **YHWH**, they could have reversed **YHWH**'s plague rather than duplicated it. But they couldn't.

²⁴ All the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink because they couldn't drink any of the water from the river. ²⁵ Seven days passed after **YHWH** struck the Nile.

In bringing these plagues, **YHWH** is demonstrating his dominance over the Egyptian gods. The Egyptians had gods for everything.

The Second Plague—Frogs

¹ Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Go to Pharaoh, and tell him: This is what **YHWH** says: Let my people go to worship me. ² If you refuse to let them go, I will bring a plague of frogs on your whole country.

³ The Nile River will swarm with frogs. They will come into your palace, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your officials, on your people, into your ovens and into your mixing bowls. ⁴ The frogs will jump on you, on your people, and on all your officials.”

⁵ Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Tell Aaron, hold your staff over the rivers, canals, and ponds. This will bring frogs onto the land. ⁶ So Aaron held his staff over the waters of Egypt. The frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷ But the magicians did the same thing using their magic spells and brought frogs onto the land.

⁸Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and said: Pray that **YHWH** will take the frogs away from me and my people. Then I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to **YHWH**.

⁹Moses answered Pharaoh: You may have the honor of choosing when I should pray for you, your officials, and your people. Then the frogs will leave you and your homes. The only ones left will be those in the Nile. ¹⁰ Pray for me tomorrow, Pharaoh said.

Moses replied: It will be as you say so that you will know *yada* that there is no one like **YHWH** our God. ¹¹The frogs will leave you, your homes, your officials, and your people. The only frogs left will be those in the Nile.

¹²After Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh, Moses prayed to **YHWH** about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh. ¹³**YHWH** did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the yards, and in the fields. ¹⁴They were piled into countless heaps and the land began to stink because of them.

¹⁵When Pharaoh saw that the plague was over, he became stubborn and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, as **YHWH** had predicted.

The Third Plague—Gnats

¹⁶Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Tell Aaron: Hold out your staff and strike the dust on the ground. All over Egypt the dust will turn into gnats.

¹⁷When Moses told him, Aaron held out the staff in his hand and struck the dust on the ground. It turned into gnats that bit people and animals. All the dust on the ground everywhere in Egypt turned into gnats.

¹⁸The magicians also tried to produce gnats using their magic spells, but they couldn't do it. The gnats bit people and animals. ¹⁹So the magicians said to Pharaoh: This is the hand *'etsba* finger of God.

Here is a small step forward. The Egyptian magicians believe God is doing this.

Yet Pharaoh continued to be stubborn *leb*-heart *chazaq*-hardened and would not listen to Moses and Aaron, as **YHWH** had predicted.

The Fourth Plague—Flies

²⁰Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Early in the morning, stand in Pharaoh's way when he's going to the Nile. Say to him: This is what **YHWH** says: Let my people go to worship me.

²¹If you will not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you, your officials, your people, and your houses. The homes of the Egyptians will be filled with flies, and even the ground outside will be covered with them.

²²But on that day I will treat the region of Goshen differently. That is where my people live. There won't be any flies there. This way you will know *yada*' that I, **YHWH**, am here in this land. ²³I will distinguish between my people and yours. This miraculous sign will happen tomorrow.

²⁴**YHWH** did what he said. Dense swarms of flies came into Pharaoh's palace and into the houses of his officials. All over Egypt the flies were ruining everything. ²⁵Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said: Go, sacrifice to your God here in this country.

²⁶Moses replied: It wouldn't be right to do that. The sacrifices we offer to **YHWH** our God are disgusting to Egyptians. If they see us offer sacrifices that they consider disgusting, won't they stone us to death? ²⁷We need to travel three days into the desert to offer sacrifices to **YHWH** our God, as he told us to do.

²⁸Pharaoh said: I will let you go but don't go very far. You may offer sacrifices to **YHWH** your God in the desert and pray for me.

²⁹Moses answered: As soon as I leave you, I will pray to **YHWH**. Tomorrow the swarms of flies will go away from you, your officials, and your people. But you must stop tricking us by not letting the people go to offer sacrifices to **YHWH**.

³⁰Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to **YHWH**. ³¹**YHWH** did what Moses asked. The swarms of flies left Pharaoh, his officials, and his people. Not

one fly was left. ³²Yet, this time, too, Pharaoh was stubborn and did not let the people go.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses and Aaron have now come to Egypt from Sinai. They assembled the leaders of Israel and told them what **YHWH** had said. He also did the three miraculous signs God had given him. When the people heard and saw this, they knelt bowing their faces touching the ground.

Moses and Aaron then approached Pharaoh and said: **YHWH** our God has said to you: Let my people go into the desert to worship me. Pharaoh replied: Who is **YHWH**? I don't know him so I won't let Israel go. They replied: The God of the Hebrews has commanded us. If we don't go, he may kill us with a plague or a war. The Pharaoh replied: Get back to work and he increased the burden on the Israelites by not providing the straw needed for brick making.

Of course the Israelites complained to Moses and Moses complained to God accusing God of doing nothing to rescue the people as he had promised. God merely told Moses: You forget who I am. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shadday and made a Covenant with them. I have heard the groaning of the Israelites and I have remembered my Covenant. I will rescue you and *you will be my people and I will be your God*. We will hear this promise of God all throughout the Bible many times.

Moses went back and told the people what God had said. But they would not listen to him because they were so discouraged. Moses now inserts a genealogy of the first three sons of Jacob: Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. Aaron and Moses are descendants of Levi.

Moses then goes before Pharaoh with Aaron. They showed Pharaoh the snake sign. But Pharaoh was not impressed. So Moses goes to Pharaoh when he went to the Nile early in the morning to say his prayers. He told him **YHWH** God of the Hebrews says: This is how you will know me, Pharaoh, I will turn your Nile River into blood. And this is what God did. But Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing so Pharaoh was not impressed. This plague lasted seven days.

Moses went again to Pharaoh and told him God will bring a plague of frogs on Egypt unless you let my people go. Pharaoh refused. So a plague of frogs came. Then Pharaoh asked Moses to pray to God to take away the frogs and I will let the people go. Again Pharaoh lied. Then God told Moses: Tell Aaron to hold out the staff and strike the ground. There will be dust everywhere that will turn into gnats. The gnats bit everyone. The magicians couldn't duplicate this so they said: This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh remained unconvinced.

Now comes a fourth plague of flies. But Moses said: This time things will be different. The flies will come only on Egypt, not on God's Chosen People living in the land of Goshen.

The flies ruined everything. But there were no flies in the land of Goshen. But Pharaoh again asked Moses to pray the flies leave and he would let the people go into the desert to pray to God and for him. Yet Pharaoh again was lying.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How sincere were the Israelites when Moses and Aaron told them what **YHWH** had said? Although they knelt and bowed the faces to the ground were they convinced that God would enable them to leave Egypt?
2. Why did Moses lose confidence in God when Pharaoh increased the burden on the Israelites of making bricks without straw? Where was Moses' faith?
3. How did God increase Moses' faith? What did Moses think of God saying: After I bring you out, then I will make you my people and I will be your God. What did Moses think God would do with the people?
4. Why is a genealogy placed in **Exodus 6:14-25**?
5. When Moses asked God: Why would Pharaoh listen to me? **Exodus 6:30** what reasons did God give him?
6. Apparently the snake sign was useless on Pharaoh. But was it? What did the Egyptian magicians think when Aaron's snake ate their snakes?
7. The Egyptians regarded the Nile River as almost a god. Go two miles in either direction from the River and it is nothing but sand. Why is the first plague of turning the Nile into blood such an effective sign?
8. If the Nile River was made blood for seven days and people were unable to drink it, where did they get water for those seven days? If all the water was blood, what did the Egyptian magicians make blood?
9. Frogs were helpful to Egypt to keep down the flies. There was even a frog god. What did the multiplication of frogs mean to the Egyptians?
10. In the third plague, gnats came without Pharaoh being warned. What should this tell Pharaoh? Will God warn him before each plague?

11. The Egyptians magicians ascribed the gnats to the finger of God. Did the Egyptian magicians now believe in the God of the Hebrews?

12. Now there are flies. But God treats Goshen, where the Israelites live, differently. What does this tell Pharaoh?

13. Some say the genuine reason for the ten plagues was so that Pharaoh would know that **YHWH** was sovereign over him. How would the plagues reveal **YHWH** to Pharaoh?

Session Three

God Continues His Plagues on Egypt

The Fifth Plague—Death of Livestock

¹Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Go to Pharaoh, and tell him: This is what **YHWH** God of the Hebrews says: Let my people go to worship me. ²If you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them in slavery, ³**YHWH** will bring a terrible plague on your livestock, including your horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep, and goats.

⁴But **YHWH** will distinguish between Israel's livestock and the livestock of the Egyptians. No animals belonging to the Israelites will die. ⁵**YHWH** set a definite time. He said: Tomorrow I will do this.

⁶The next day **YHWH** did as he said. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but none of the Israelites' animals died. ⁷Pharaoh found out that not one of the Israelites' animals had died. Yet, Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and would not let the people go.

The Sixth Plague—Boils

⁸Then **YHWH** said to Moses and Aaron: Take a handful of ashes from a kiln and have Moses throw them up in the air as Pharaoh watches. ⁹They will become a fine dust throughout Egypt. The dust will cause boils to break into open sores on people and animals throughout Egypt.

¹⁰They took ashes from a kiln and stood in front of Pharaoh. Moses threw the ashes up in the air, and they caused boils to break into open sores on people and animals. ¹¹The magicians couldn't compete with Moses because they had boils like all the other Egyptians.

¹²But **YHWH** made Pharaoh stubborn, so he wouldn't listen to Moses and Aaron, as **YHWH** had predicted to Moses.

This may have been one of the most remembered plagues of all. Moses referred to these when he describes the curses in Deuteronomy:

[**YHWH** will strike you with the same boils that plagued the Egyptians. He will strike you with hemorrhoids, sores, and itching that won't go away. **Deuteronomy 28:27**]

The Seventh Plague—Hail and Fire

¹³Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Early in the morning, go to Pharaoh and say to him: This is what **YHWH** God of the Hebrews says: Let my people go to worship me.

¹⁴Now I will send plagues that will affect you personally as well as your officials and people. This is how you will know that there is no one like me anywhere on earth. ¹⁵By now I could have used my power to kill you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. ¹⁶But I have spared you for this reason. I want to show you my power and make my name famous throughout the earth.

At this time Egypt was perhaps the greatest military power in the world. God wants to make certain that Pharaoh knows God is limiting his power so that Pharaoh will think twice about attacking the Israelites once they have left Egypt. God will still be protecting them. At this time, many of the city-states in Canaan had relationship with the Egyptians.

¹⁷You are still blocking my people from leaving. ¹⁸So, at this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever happened in Egypt since the beginning of its history. ¹⁹Now, send servants to bring your livestock and everything else you have indoors. All people and animals still outside and not brought in will die when the hail falls on them.

²⁰Those members of Pharaoh's court who listened to **YHWH's** warning brought their servants and cattle indoors quickly. ²¹But those who didn't take **YHWH's** warning seriously left their servants and animals out in the open.

²²Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Lift your hand toward the sky and hail will fall on people, animals, and every plant in the fields of Egypt.

²³When Moses lifted his staff toward the sky, **YHWH** sent thunder and hail, and lightning struck the earth. So **YHWH** made it hail on Egypt. ²⁴It hailed, and lightning flashed while it hailed. This was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation.

[Moses stretched forth his rod toward Heaven and the Lord sent thunder and hail and fire ran 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. **Exodus 19:23-24 KJV**]

²⁵All over Egypt the hail knocked down everything that was out in the open. It struck down people, animals, and every plant in the fields and destroyed every tree in the fields. ²⁶The only place it didn't hail was the region of Goshen, where the Israelites lived.

Pharaoh Admits He Has Sinned

²⁷Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron. This time I have sinned *hata'*; he told them. **YHWH** is right *sadiq*-righteous, and my people and I are wrong *rasa'*-wicked. ²⁸Pray to **YHWH**. We've had enough of God's thunder and hail. I'll let you go. You don't have to stay here any longer.

²⁹Moses replied: As soon as I'm out of the city, I'll spread out my hands to **YHWH** in prayer. The thunder will stop and there will be no more hail. This is how you will know *yada'* that the earth belongs to **YHWH**. ³⁰But I know *yada'* that you and your officials still don't fear *yare' panim*-face of **YHWH** God.

³¹The flax and the barley were ruined because the barley had formed heads and the flax was in bloom. ³²Neither the wheat nor the wild grain was damaged because they ripen later.

³³As soon as he left Pharaoh and went out of the city, Moses spread out his hands to **YHWH** in prayer. The thunder and the hail stopped, and no more rain came pouring down on the ground.

³⁴When Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had stopped, he sinned *hata'* again. He and his officials continued to be stubborn. ³⁵Pharaoh was stubborn *kabad leb* and would not let the Israelites go, as YHWH had predicted through Moses.

The Eighth Plague—Locusts

10:1 Then YHWH said to Moses: Go to Pharaoh. I have made him and his officials stubborn *kabad leb* so that I can do *sit-show* these miraculous signs among them. ²You will be able to tell your children and grandchildren exactly how I treated the Egyptians and what miraculous signs I did among them. This is how you will <all> know *yada* that I am YHWH.

³So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him: This is what YHWH God of the Hebrews says: How long will you refuse to humble yourself in my presence? Let my people go to worship me.

⁴If you refuse to let my people go, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country. ⁵They will cover the land so that the ground can't be seen. They will eat everything left by the hail, including every tree still standing in the fields. ⁶They will fill your houses and the houses of all your officials and those of all the Egyptians. Your parents and ancestors never saw anything like this from the time they first came here until now. Moses turned and left Pharaoh.

Pharaoh's Officials Beg Pharaoh to Reconsider Moses' Request

⁷Then Pharaoh's officials asked him: How long will this man hold us in his grip? Let the Israelite men go to worship YHWH their God. When will you realize that Egypt is ruined?

⁸So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. Go, worship YHWH your God, he said to them. But exactly who will be going? ⁹Moses answered: Everyone. We'll be taking our young and old, our sons and daughters, our flocks and herds with us. For us it's a pilgrimage festival in YHWH's honor.

¹⁰ Pharaoh said to them: **YHWH** would have to be with you if I would ever let you take your women and children along. I know you're up to no good.
¹¹ No. Only the men may go to worship **YHWH** since that's what you've been asking for. Then Moses and Aaron were thrown out of Pharaoh's palace.

YHWH Commands the Locust Plague

¹² **YHWH** said to Moses: Stretch out your hand over Egypt to bring locusts. They will invade Egypt and eat up every plant in the land —everything left by the hail.

¹³ Moses held his staff over the land of Egypt, and **YHWH** made a wind from the east blow over the land all that day and all that night. By morning the east wind had brought the locusts. ¹⁴ They invaded all of Egypt and landed all over the country in great swarms.

Never before had there been so many locusts like this, nor would there ever be that many again. ¹⁵ They covered all the ground until it was black with them. They ate all the plants and all the fruit on the trees that the hail had left. Nothing green was left on any tree or plant anywhere in Egypt.

¹⁶ Then Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron and said: I have sinned *hata'* against **YHWH** your God and against you. ¹⁷ Please forgive *nasa'* my sin *hatta'at* one more time. Pray *'atar* to **YHWH** your God to take this deadly plague *mavet* death away from me.

¹⁸ Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to **YHWH**. ¹⁹ Then **YHWH** changed the wind to a very strong west wind. It picked up the locusts and blew them into the Red Sea. Not one locust was left anywhere in Egypt.

²⁰ But **YHWH** made Pharaoh stubborn *hazaq leb*, so he did not let the Israelites go.

The Ninth Plague—Darkness

²¹ Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Lift your hand toward the sky and a darkness so thick that it can be felt will come over Egypt. ²² Moses lifted his hand

toward the sky, and throughout Egypt there was total darkness for three days. ²³ People couldn't see each other, and no one went anywhere for three days. But all the Israelites had light where they were living.

²⁴ Then Pharaoh called for Moses and said: Go, worship **YHWH**. Even your women and children may go with you, but your flocks and herds must stay behind.

²⁵ But Moses said: You must allow us to take our animals for the sacrifices and burnt offerings we have to make to **YHWH** our God. ²⁶ All our livestock must go with us. Not one animal must be left behind. We'll have to use some of them for worshiping **YHWH** our God and we won't know what we'll need until we get there.

²⁷ But **YHWH** made Pharaoh stubborn *hazaq leb* so he refused to let them go.

Pharaoh Warns Moses Never to Come Before His Presence Again

²⁸ Pharaoh said to Moses: Get out of my sight. Don't ever let me see your face again. The day I do, you will die. ²⁹ You're right. Moses answered. You'll never see my face again.

The Tenth Plague—The Death of the Firstborn

11:1 Then **YHWH** said to Moses: I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and Egypt. After that he will let you go. When he does, he will be certain to force all of you out of here.

² Now announce to the people of Israel that each man and woman must ask the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry. ³ **YHWH** made the Egyptians kind to the people. Moses was highly respected by Pharaoh's officials and all the Egyptians.

Moses Warns Pharaoh: God Will Kill Every Firstborn Son and Animal

⁴ Moses said: This is what **YHWH** says: About midnight I will go out among the Egyptians. ⁵ Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who rules the land, to the firstborn children of female

slaves who use their hand mills, including every firstborn domestic animal.
6There will be loud crying throughout Egypt, such as there has never been or ever will be again.

7But where the Israelites are, not even a dog will be startled by any person or animal. This is how you will see *yada'*-know that **YHWH** shows the distinction between Egypt and Israel.

8Then all these officials of yours will come, bow down to me, and say: You and all the people who follow you, get out. After that I will leave. Burning with anger, Moses left Pharaoh.

A Summary of Events

9**YHWH** had said to Moses: Pharaoh will not listen *sama'* to you. This is why I will do more amazing things *mopet*-wonders in Egypt. 10Moses and Aaron showed Pharaoh all these amazing things. Yet, **YHWH** made Pharaoh stubborn *chazaq*-hardened *leb*-heart so he wouldn't let the Israelites leave his country.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We continue to see fifth plague of the death of livestock. Yet again God will differentiate between the livestock of the Egyptians and that of the Hebrews. After the plague, Pharaoh verified this. And although Pharaoh admitted he had sinned, yet he continued to harden his heart and not allow the Hebrews to leave Egypt.

The plague of boils is next. These are horrific and were remembered by the Israelites who were also affected. But Pharaoh's heart remained hardened. Then came a plague of hail. Those Egyptians who heeded the warning and brought in their servants and animals saved them. But those who ignored the warning were devastated by the loss of animals, servants and plants in the fields. Again, the Israelites in Goshen were not affected. Pharaoh again admits he has sinned, but Pharaoh sinned again when he refused to allow the Hebrews to leave.

Now comes a plague of locust, deadly throughout the Middle East. It seems this time Goshen was afflicted also. Again, Pharaoh refused Moses' plea. A deep darkness now envelopes Egypt without warning. For three days it was so dark the darkness could be felt. Yet Goshen was not affected. Now Pharaoh warns Moses: Get out of my sight and never see me again or you'll die.

Yet apparently now Moses speaks to Pharaoh again. How he does this the Scripture does not say. He said: At midnight God's death angel will go among the Egyptians and kill every firstborn son and animal. Yet no Israelite will be afflicted. Then you and all your officials will bow to me and say: Get out of our land. Burning with anger, Moses left Pharaoh.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The plagues keep building in intensity. Which of the nine plagues do you think was the most frightening to the Egyptians? Why?
2. When Pharaoh says he has sinned, what does he mean exactly? He tells Moses he has sinned against **YHWH** your God and you. **Exodus 10:16**
3. Why did God allow the plague boil to affect the Israelites? Was it so Moses could mention this when he described the curses God will send on Israelites who break the Covenant? **Deuteronomy 28:27**
4. How could there be darkness all over Egypt but in Goshen there was light. This seems incredible.
5. In **Exodus 10:28**, Pharaoh tells Moses never to appear in his sight again or he will be killed. Yet in **Exodus 11:8** the Scripture text says: *Burning with anger, Moses left Pharaoh.* How did Moses communicate the Pharaoh the warning about the death of the first born in **Exodus 11:4-8**?
6. In the building up of the plagues, God is showing his power from many directions. To enable this happen, God sends many plagues not only on the Egyptians but also on the Israelites. What is God attempting to teach his own Chosen People?
7. It is clear from later happenings that many of the Israelites did not believe in God's power.

[When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles. They did not remember your numerous acts of mercy so they rebelled at the sea, the Red Sea. He saved them because of his reputation, so that he could make his mighty power known. **Psalm 106:7-8**]

[But they rebelled against me and refused to listen to me. Not one of them got rid of the detestable idols of Egypt. So I was going to pour out my fury on them and unleash my anger on them in Egypt. But I acted so that my name would not be dishonored among the nations where they were

living. While other nations were watching, I made myself known to them by bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. **Ezekiel 20:8-9**]

What does it take for a person to believe that God is God? When did the Israelites finally come to a full belief in God?

8. Many see the first nine plagues happening in sets of three. The last of each set happens without warning. So there seems to be a pattern here. Do you see any other patterns here?

Session Four

The Passover Event and Its Significance for Israel

The Passover Event

12:1 YHWH said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt: ²This month will be the very first month of the year for you.

The month the Passover Festival is held is the first month of the religious year in the spring. The civil year begins in the seventh month with Rosh Hashana – the Feast of Trumpets, followed by the Day of Atonement, followed by the Feast of Tabernacles – the High Holy Days of Israel.

³Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth day of this month each man must take a lamb or a young goat for his family – one animal per household. ⁴A household may be too small to eat a whole animal. That household and the one next door can share one animal. Choose your animal based on the number of people and what each person can eat.

⁵Your animal must be a one-year-old male that has no defects. You may choose a lamb or a young goat. ⁶Take care of it until the fourteenth day of this month.

The Passover Meal

Then at dusk, all the assembled people from the community of Israel must slaughter their animals. ⁷They must take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they will eat the animals.

⁸The meat must be eaten that same night. It must be roasted over a fire and eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. ⁹Don't eat any of it raw or boiled but roast the whole animal over a fire. ¹⁰Don't leave any of it until morning. Anything left over in the morning must be burned up.

¹¹This is how you should be dressed when you eat it: with your belt on, your sandals on your feet, and your shepherd's staff in your hand. You must eat it in a hurry. It is YHWH's Passover.

The Action on Passover Night

¹²On that same night I will go throughout Egypt and kill every firstborn male, both human and animal. I will severely punish all the gods of Egypt, because I am YHWH. ¹³But the blood on your houses will be a sign for your protection. When I see the blood, I will pass over *pacach* you. Nothing will touch or destroy you when I strike Egypt.

The Pilgrim Festival of Unleavened Bread Includes Passover as the First Day of the Festival

¹⁴This day will be one for you to remember. This is a permanent law for generations to come: You will celebrate this day as a pilgrimage festival in YHWH's honor. ¹⁵For seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

On the very first day you must remove any yeast that you have in your houses. Whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh day must be excluded from Israel.

¹⁶You must have a holy assembly on the first day and another one on the seventh. You must not work on these days except to prepare your own meals. That's all you may do.

¹⁷You must celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread because it was on this very day that I brought you out of Egypt in organized family groups. This is a permanent law for future generations: You must celebrate this day.

¹⁸From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month until the evening of the twenty-first day you must eat unleavened bread. ¹⁹There should be no yeast in your houses for seven days. Whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be excluded from the community of Israel, whether he is an Israelite or not. ²⁰Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat only unleavened bread.

Moses Gives Detailed Instructions for Passover Night

²¹Then Moses called for all the leaders of Israel. He said to them: Pick out a lamb or a young goat for your families and kill the Passover animal. ²²Take the branch of a hyssop plant, dip it in the blood which is in a bowl, and put some of the blood on the top and sides of the doorframes of your houses.

No one may leave the house until morning. ²³YHWH will go throughout Egypt to kill *nagaph* the Egyptians. When he sees the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, he will pass over that doorway, and he will not let the Destroyer *shachath* come into your home to kill *nagaph* you.

²⁴You must follow these instructions. They are a permanent law for you and your children. ²⁵When you enter the Land that YHWH will give you as he promised *dabar*, observe this ceremony.

²⁶When your children ask you what this ceremony means to you ²⁷you must answer: It's the Passover *pecach* sacrifice in YHWH's honor. YHWH passed *pacach* over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he killed the Egyptians.

Then the people knelt, bowing with their faces touching the ground. ²⁸The Israelites did as YHWH had commanded Moses and Aaron.

YHWH Passed Over Egypt at Midnight

²⁹At midnight YHWH killed *nakah* every firstborn male in Egypt from the firstborn son of Pharaoh who ruled the land to the firstborn son of the prisoner in jail, and also every firstborn animal. ³⁰Pharaoh, all his officials, and all the other Egyptians got up during the night.

There was loud crying throughout Egypt because in every house someone had died.

Pharaoh Allows the Israelites to Leave Egypt

³¹Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron during the night. He said: You and the Israelites must leave my people at once. Go, worship YHWH as you

asked. ³²Take your flocks and herds, too, as you asked. Just go. And bless *barak* me, too.

The Egyptian People Beg the Israelites to Leave Egypt Quickly

³³The Egyptians begged the people to leave the country quickly. They said: Soon we'll all *kol* be dead *mut*. ³⁴So the people picked up their bread dough before it had risen and carried it on their shoulders in bowls, wrapped up in their clothes.

³⁵The Israelites did what Moses had told them and asked the Egyptians for gold and silver jewelry and for clothes. ³⁶YHWH made the Egyptians generous to the people and they gave them what they asked for. So the Israelites stripped Egypt of its wealth.

[But I will punish the nation they serve, and after that they will come out with many possessions. **Genesis 15:14**]

The Israelites Leave Egypt. Gentiles Join Them.

³⁷The Israelites left Rameses to go to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand *eleph* men on foot, plus all the women and children. ³⁸Many other people *'ereb*-mixed *rab*-multitudes, Gentiles also went with them along with large numbers of sheep, goats, and cattle.

The Hebrew word *eleph* can mean *family*, *clan*, or *military unit*, therefore, this large number is questioned. Many see this word as meaning a clan and the total number of Israelites as about 50,000 people. An average clan would then be 83 people.

³⁹With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked round, flat bread. The dough hadn't risen because they'd been thrown out of Egypt and had no time to prepare food for the trip.

⁴⁰The Israelites had been living in Egypt for 430 years. ⁴¹After exactly 430 years all YHWH's people left Egypt in organized family groups *tsaba*'-hosts.

Apparently, each Israelite marched within their tribe and clan in an organized manner.

⁴²That night **YHWH** kept watch to take them out of Egypt. All Israelites in future generations must keep watch on this night, since it is dedicated to **YHWH**.

[It is a night to be much observed *simmurim*-vigil ^{2x} 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 all their generations. **Exodus 12:42**]

Rules for the Passover

⁴³**YHWH** said to Moses and Aaron: These are the rules for the Passover:

No foreigner may eat the Passover meal. ⁴⁴Any male slave you have bought may eat it after you have circumcised him. ⁴⁵No foreigner visiting you may eat it. No hired worker may eat it. ⁴⁶The meal must be eaten inside one house. Never take any of the meat outside the house. Never break any of the bones. ⁴⁷The whole community of Israel must celebrate the Passover.

⁴⁸Foreigners may want to celebrate **YHWH**'s Passover. First, every male in the household must be circumcised. Then they may celebrate the Passover like native-born Israelites. But no uncircumcised males may ever eat the Passover meal. ⁴⁹The same instructions apply to native-born Israelites as well as foreigners.

⁵⁰All the Israelites did as **YHWH** had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹That very day **YHWH** brought all the Israelites out of Egypt in organized family groups *tsaba*'-armies.

Another Recap of the Rules for Passover

13:1 **YHWH** spoke to Moses: ² Set apart every firstborn male for me. Every firstborn male offspring among the Israelites is mine whether human or animal.

³Then Moses said to the people: Remember this day — the day when you left Egypt, the land of slavery. **YHWH** used his mighty hand to bring you out of there. Don't eat anything made with yeast.

⁴Today, in the month of Abib, you are leaving Egypt. ⁵**YHWH** swore to your ancestors that he would give you the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites. When he brings you into that land flowing with milk and honey, you must observe this ceremony in this month.

⁶“For seven days you must eat unleavened bread. The seventh day will be a pilgrimage festival in **YHWH**'s honor. ⁷Only unleavened bread should be eaten during these seven days. No sourdough or yeast should be seen anywhere in your territory.

⁸On that day tell your children: We do this because of what **YHWH** did for us when we left Egypt. ⁹This festival will be like a mark on your hand or a reminder on your forehead that the teachings of **YHWH** are always to be a part of your conversation. Because **YHWH** used his mighty hand to bring you out of Egypt, ¹⁰you must follow these rules every year at this time.

Rules Concerning the Firstborn Child

¹¹ When **YHWH** brings you to the land of the Canaanites and gives it to you, as he swore to you and your ancestors, ¹²sacrifice every firstborn male offspring to **YHWH**. The firstborn male offspring of each of your animals belongs to **YHWH**. ¹³It will cost you a sheep or a goat to buy any firstborn donkey back from **YHWH**. If you don't buy it back, then you must break the donkey's neck. You must also buy every firstborn son back from **YHWH**.

¹⁴ In the future when your children ask you what this means, tell them: **YHWH** used his mighty hand to bring us out of slavery in Egypt. ¹⁵When Pharaoh was too stubborn to let us go, **YHWH** killed every firstborn male in Egypt — human and animal. This is why we sacrifice every firstborn male to **YHWH** and buy every firstborn son back from **YHWH**. ¹⁶So this festival will be like a mark on your hand and like a band on your forehead, because **YHWH** used his mighty hand to bring us out of Egypt.

God Leads the People out of Egypt

¹⁷When Pharaoh let the people go, God didn't lead them on the road through Philistine territory, although that was the shortest route. God said: If they see that they have to fight a war, they may change their minds and go back to Egypt.

¹⁸So God led the people around the other way, on the road through the desert toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were ready for battle when they left Egypt.

The Israelites Had Kept the Bones of Joseph for 400 Years

¹⁹Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, because Joseph had made the Israelites solemnly swear to do this. Joseph had said: God will definitely come to help you. When he does, take my bones with you. **Genesis 50:25**

This clearly demonstrates that the story of Israel's history since Abraham had been carefully preserved by the Israelites.

YHWH Led the Israelites with His Pillar of Smoke and Pillar of Fire

²⁰They moved from Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the desert.

²¹By day YHWH went ahead of them in a column *'ammuwd* of smoke *'anan*-cloud to lead them on their way. By night he went ahead of them in a column of fire to give them light so that they could travel by day or by night. ²²The column of smoke was always in front of the people during the day. The column of fire was always there at night.

The cloud or column occurs 18x in Exodus. This is God's first dwelling *among his people*. God dwelling among his people is a major theme in Exodus.

God dwelling with his people emphasized the need for holiness in Israel. This need increased when God descended to talk to Moses before the Ark of the Covenant above the cherubim at the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in the Wilderness Tabernacle. God's column will be mentioned again in the last verses of. **Exodus 40:34-38**.

It later is mentioned in **Isaiah 7:14** in the word *Immanuel*. This word will later be used at the beginning and end of the Gospel According to Matthew. **Matthew 1:23; 28:20**.

Pharaoh Pursues the Israelites with His Chariots

14:1 Then **YHWH** said to Moses: ²Tell the Israelites to go back and set up their camp facing Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. Set up your camp facing north — by the sea. ³Pharaoh will think: The Israelites are just wandering around. The desert is blocking their escape.

⁴I will make Pharaoh so stubborn that he will pursue them. Then because of what I do to Pharaoh and his entire army, I will receive honor, and the Egyptians will know *yada'* that I am **YHWH**. So that is what the Israelites did.

⁵When Pharaoh was told that the people had fled, he and his officials changed their minds about them. They said: What have we done? We've lost our slaves because we've let Israel go.

⁶So Pharaoh prepared his chariot and took his army with him. ⁷He took 600 of his best chariots as well as all the other chariots in Egypt, placing an officer in each of them.

⁸**YHWH** made Pharaoh so stubborn that he pursued the Israelites, who were boldly leaving Egypt. ⁹The Egyptians pursued the Israelites. Pharaoh's army, including all his horse-drawn chariots and cavalry, caught up with them as they were setting up their camp by the sea at Pi Hahiroth facing north.

The Israelites Criticize Moses

¹⁰As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and saw that the Egyptians were coming after them. Terrified, the Israelites cried out to **YHWH**. ¹¹They said to Moses: Did you bring us out into the desert to die because there were no graves in Egypt? Look what you've done by bringing us out of Egypt.

¹²Didn't we tell you in Egypt: Leave us alone. Let us go on serving the Egyptians? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert.

Did the Israelites really tell Moses this earlier? Or is this just an expression made up in the heat of the moment?

YHWH Divides the Red Sea

¹³Moses answered the people: Don't be afraid. Stand still and see what **YHWH** will do to save you today. You will never see these Egyptians again. ¹⁴**YHWH** is fighting for you. So be still.

¹⁵Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to start moving. ¹⁶Raise your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide the water. Then the Israelites will go through the sea on dry ground.

¹⁷I am making the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow the Israelites. I will receive honor because of what I will do to Pharaoh, his entire army, his chariots, and cavalry. ¹⁸The Egyptians will know *yada'* that I am **YHWH** when I am honored for what I did to Pharaoh, his chariots, and his cavalry.

¹⁹The Messenger of God, who had been in front of the Israelites, moved behind them. So the column of smoke moved from in front of the Israelites and stood behind them ²⁰between the Egyptian camp and the Israelite camp. The column of smoke was there when darkness came, and it lit up the night. Neither side came near the other all night long.

The Israelites Travel Through the Reed Sea As If on Dry Ground

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. All that night **YHWH** pushed back the sea with a strong east wind and turned the sea into dry ground. The water divided, ²²and the Israelites went through the middle of the sea on dry ground. The water stood like a wall on their right and on their left.

²³The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry followed them into the sea.

YHWH Causes the Reed Sea to Return

²⁴Just before dawn, YHWH looked down from the column of fire and smoke and threw the Egyptian camp into a panic. ²⁵He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they could hardly move. Then the Egyptians shouted: Let's get out of here. YHWH is fighting for Israel. He's against us.

²⁶Then YHWH said to Moses: Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the water will flow back over the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry.

²⁷Moses stretched his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the water returned to its usual place. The Egyptians tried to escape but YHWH swept them into the sea. ²⁸The water flowed back and covered Pharaoh's entire army as well as the chariots and the cavalry that had followed Israel into the sea. Not one of them survived.

²⁹Meanwhile, the Israelites had gone through the sea on dry ground while the water stood like a wall on their right and on their left. ³⁰That day YHWH saved Israel from the Egyptians and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the seashore.

The Israelites Fear YHWH and His Great Power

³¹When the Israelites saw the great *gadol* power *yad*-hand YHWH had used against the Egyptians, they feared *yare*'YHWH and believed *'aman* in him and in his servant *'ebed* Moses.

The Song of Moses: The First Song in the Bible

15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to YHWH:

I will sing to YHWH.

He has won a glorious victory.

He has thrown horses and their riders into the sea.

²YHWH is my strength and my song.

He is my Savior *yesu'a*-salvation.

This is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will honor him.

³YHWH is a warrior.

YHWH is his name.

⁴He has thrown Pharaoh's chariots and army into the sea.
Pharaoh's best officers were drowned in the Red Sea.

⁵The deep water covered them.

They sank to the bottom like a rock

⁶Your right hand *yamin*, O YHWH, wins glory because it is strong.
Your right hand, O YHWH, smashes your enemies.

⁷With your unlimited majesty,
you destroyed those who attacked you.

You sent out your burning anger.

It burned them up like straw.

⁸With a blast from your nostrils, the water piled up.

The waves stood up like a dam.

The deep water thickened in the middle of the sea.

⁹"The enemy said: I'll pursue them.

I'll catch up with them.

I'll divide the loot.!

I'll take all I want.

I'll use my sword.

I'll take all they have.

¹⁰Your breath blew the sea over them.

They sank like lead in the raging water.

¹¹Who is like you among the gods, O YHWH?

Who is like you?

You are glorious because of your holiness
and awe-inspiring because of your splendor.

You perform miracles.

¹²You stretched out your right hand.

The earth swallowed them.

¹³Lovingly, you will lead the people you have saved.

Powerfully, you will guide them to your Holy Dwelling.

¹⁴People will hear of it and tremble.

The people of Philistia will be in anguish.

¹⁵The tribal leaders of Edom will be terrified.

The powerful men of Moab will tremble.

The people of Canaan will be deathly afraid.

The Gentile nations around Canaan and the Canaanites themselves will be greatly afraid. The woman Rabab in the city of Jericho later told the Israelites:

[I know the Lord will give you this land. Your presence terrifies us. All the people in this country are deadly afraid of you. We've heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea in front of you when you left Egypt. When we heard about it, we lost heart. There was no courage left in any of us because of you. The Lord your God is the God of Heaven and earth. **Joshua 2:9-10, 11**]

¹⁶Terror and dread will fall on them.

Because of the power of your Arm *zeroa*, they will be petrified until your people pass by, O YHWH,
until the people you purchased pass by.

¹⁷You will bring them and plant them on your own Mountain,

the place where you live, O YHWH,

the Holy Place that you built with your own hands,

O Adonay.

God will now bring the Israelites to Mount Sinai where he will give them his Ten Words for living in his Creation. Then he will later bring them to Canaan, the Land he promised to Abraham's descendants. Later he will dwell on Mount Zion that will become the City of Jerusalem where a Temple will be built for him by King Solomon.

¹⁸**YHWH** will rule as King forever and ever.

God is the King of his people. The Israelites live in a theocracy.

A Final Summary Statement

¹⁹When Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry went into the sea, YHWH made the water of the sea flow back over them. However, the Israelites had gone through the sea on dry ground.

Later Moses will describe this event:

[Then the Lord used his mighty *hazaq* hand *yad* and powerful *nata*—out stretched arm *zeroa* to bring us out of Egypt. He used spectacular and awe-inspiring deeds *gadol*—great *mara*—terribleness, miraculous signs *ot*, and amazing things *mopet*—wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this Land flowing with milk and honey. Deuteronomy 28:8-9]

These words the Israelites repeat again and again as they remember God's deliverance of them.

The Song of Miriam

²⁰Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand. All the women, dancing with tambourines, followed her. ²¹Miriam sang to them:

Sing to YHWH.

He has won a glorious victory.

He has thrown horses and their riders into the sea.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We begin this session with a discussion of how Israel is to commemorate this event. It is to be an eight-day festival beginning with the Passover and followed by seven days of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. It is to commemorate God's wonderful action of the behalf of his Chosen People in rescuing them from slavery in Egypt.

Then there is the narrative of the actual leaving of Egypt. During the night, Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and simply said: Leave Egypt at once. And bless me too, he added. The Egyptians pleaded with the Israelites to leave and gave them much of their wealth to encourage them to leave.

The Israelites were 600,000 men strong hardened by the years of hard labor marching in organized tribes, clans, and family groups together with their wives and children, animals, and possessions. A group of Gentiles also accompanied them the Bible calls a mixed multitude.

Interspersed in the narrative is a rule of redeeming any firstborn male for **YHWH** as well as any firstborn animal.

God could have led the Israelites north along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to Canaan, but they would have encountered the Philistines, a war-some sea people from Greece and later Crete. God didn't think the Israelites were ready for a fight just yet .

So God led them on the road through the desert toward the Red Sea. Soon they were backed up against the sea. Meanwhile, Pharaoh had changed his mind and assembled his chariot army. He pursued the Israelites. But God placed his pillar of smoke and fire between the Egyptians and the Israelites.

Yet the Israelites took the time to criticize Moses and to tell him that really didn't want to leave Egypt at all. But Moses calmed them saying: **YHWH** is fighting for you. Later the Egyptian soldiers would repeat this.

During the night God made a great wind blow causing the sea to divide and to allow the Israelites to cross over as if on dry land. They crossed. But then the Egyptians followed. God allowed the sea to resume, and it drowned all the Egyptians and their horses and chariots.

Then the Israelites sang a song of praise to God for this great victory. It is something they would hopefully never forget.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The Passover becomes the first of three pilgrim festivals in Israel. Why must one be circumcised to participate in the Passover? **Exodus 12:48**
2. There must have been great preparation for the marching out of Egypt. In what order would the tribes march? In what order would the clans march? There must be a distinction between warriors and those too young, too old, or too disabled. Organizing 600,000 warriors and their families for a march through the desert is no small matter. We don't hear anything of this. When was this done?
3. How was their camp to be set up? Just organizing the camp for this many people would take great organization. Again, why are there no details?

4. Just reading the narrative, it seems like it there was only one day notice the Passover would occur. At dusk they would kill the lamb or goat and paint the doorposts of their homes. Then at midnight God's death angel would pass over. This appears to be very sudden.
5. Why did a mixed multitude of Gentiles join the Israelites? Why did they also want to leave Egypt?
6. Why did the Israelites criticize Moses when they were backed up to the Red Sea with the Egyptians approaching?
7. Didn't God pillar of fire stand between them and the Egyptians?
8. From the *Song of Moses*, we see the Israelites were aware of some of the peoples in Canaan, the Philistines, Edom, and Moab. How did slaves in Egypt know so much about the people around them?
9. In the *Song of Moses*, where is the mountain where **YHWH** lives, the holy place built with **YHWH**'s own hands? Are there two mountains or only one mountain? Is it Mount Sinai or Mount Zion later Jerusalem, **YHWH**'s Holy Mountain?

Session Five

Israel Travels to Mount Sinai with the People Rebelling Against God and Moses All the Way

God Provides Water for the Israelites

15:22 Moses led Israel away from the Red Sea into the desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³When they came to Marah, they couldn't drink the water because it tasted bitter. That's why the place was called Marah meaning Bitter Place.

²⁴The people complained about Moses by asking: What are we supposed to drink? ²⁵Moses cried out to **YHWH**, and **YHWH** showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water and the water became sweet.

There **YHWH** set down laws and rules for them to live by and there he tested them. ²⁶He said: If you will listen carefully to **YHWH** your God and do what he considers right, if you pay attention to his commands and obey all his laws, I will never make you suffer any of the diseases I made the Egyptians suffer, because I am **YHWH**, who heals you.

The diseases of Egypt are evidently the boils in the Sixth plague. **Exodus 9:8-10**

²⁷Next, they went to Elim, where there were 12 springs and 70 palm trees. They camped there by the water.

God provides sustenance for his people. At Elim, God gave them rest with water and fruit.

YHWH Provides Manna and Quails for the Israelites to Eat

16:1 The whole community of Israelites moved from Elim and came to the desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai. This was on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left Egypt. ²In the desert the whole community complained about Moses and Aaron.

The Israelites Complain Bitterly

³The Israelites said to them: If only **YHWH** had let us die in Egypt! There we sat by our pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted. You brought us out into this desert to let us all starve to death.

⁴**YHWH** said to Moses: I'm going to send you food from Heaven like rain. Each day the people should go out and gather only what they need for that day. In this way I will test them to see whether or not they will follow my instructions. ⁵But on the sixth day when they prepare what they bring home, it should be twice as much as they gather on other days.

⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites: In the evening you will know that it was **YHWH** who brought you out of Egypt. ⁷In the morning you will see the glory of **YHWH** because he has heard you complaining about him. Why are you complaining about us?

⁸Moses also said: **YHWH** will give you meat to eat in the evening and all the food you want in the morning. **YHWH** has heard you complaining about him. Who are we? You're not complaining about us but about **YHWH**.

⁹Moses said to Aaron: Tell the whole community of Israelites: Come into **YHWH**'s presence. He has heard you complaining.

¹⁰While Aaron was speaking to the whole community of Israelites, they looked toward the desert. Suddenly, they saw the glory of **YHWH** in the column of smoke.

¹¹**YHWH** said to Moses: ¹²I've heard the Israelites complaining. Tell them: At dusk you will eat meat and in the morning you will eat all the food you want. Then you will know *yada* that I am **YHWH** your God.

¹³That evening quails came and covered the camp and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the dew was gone, the ground was covered with a thin layer of flakes like frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the

Israelites saw it, they asked each other: What is this? because they didn't know what it was.

Moses said to them: It's the food **YHWH** has given you to eat. ¹⁶This is what **YHWH** has commanded: Each of you should gather as much as you can eat. Take two quarts for each person in your tent.

¹⁷So that is what the Israelites did. Some gathered more, some less. ¹⁸They measured it into two-quart containers. Those who had gathered more didn't have too much. Those who had gathered less didn't have too little. They gathered as much as they could eat.

¹⁹Then Moses said to them: No one may keep any of it until morning. ²⁰But some of them didn't listen to Moses. They kept part of it until morning and it was full of worms and smelled bad. So Moses was angry with them.

²¹Each morning they gathered as much food as they could eat. When the sun was hot, it melted away. ²²But on the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, four quarts per person. All the leaders of the community came to Moses and told him about it.

The Institution of the Sabbath Day – A Day of Rest for God

²³He said to them: This is what **YHWH** said: Tomorrow is a Day of Rest — a Holy Day dedicated to **YHWH**. Bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save all that's left over and keep it until tomorrow morning.

²⁴So they saved it until the next morning as Moses had commanded but it didn't smell or have worms in it. ²⁵Eat it today, Moses said because today is a Day of Rest — a Holy Day dedicated to **YHWH**. You won't find anything on the ground today. ²⁶You can gather food on six days, but on the seventh day, the Day of Rest, you won't find any.

²⁷On the seventh day some people went out to gather food, but they didn't find any. ²⁸**YHWH** said to Moses: How long will you refuse to do what I have commanded and instructed you to do?

²⁹ Remember: **YHWH** has given you this Day of Rest as a Holy Day. That's why he gives you enough food on the sixth day for two days. On the seventh day stay in your place — no one is to go out. Everyone stay where you are.
³⁰ So the people never worked on the seventh day of the week.

This is the first mention of the concept of a Sabbath Day. Notice how much repetition there is here. Is it because the people don't listen that God has to constantly repeat himself?

³¹ The Israelites called the food *manna* meaning: What is it?. It was like coriander seeds. It was white and tasted like wafers made with honey.

God Tells Moses to Save Some Manna to Help Israelites Remember What God Has Done for Them

³² Moses said: This is what **YHWH** has commanded: Take two quarts of manna to be kept for your descendants. This way they will see the food that I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.

³³ Moses said to Aaron: Take a jar, put two quarts of manna in it, and put it in **YHWH's** presence to be kept for your descendants. ³⁴ Aaron put the jar of manna in front of the Words of God's Covenant to be kept there, as **YHWH** commanded Moses.

This command preceded the building of the Ark of the Covenant and the Wilderness Tabernacle in **Exodus 25:10-21**. See **Numbers 17:10-11**.

³⁵ The Israelites ate manna for 40 years until they came to a place to settle. They ate manna until they came to the border of Canaan.

[The people of Israel camped at Gilgal in the Jericho plain. There they celebrated the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month. On the day after the Passover, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened bread and some grain. The day after that, the manna stopped. The people of Israel never had manna again. That year they began to eat the crops that grew in Canaan. **Joshua 5:10-12**]

³⁶ Now, the standard dry measure at that time held 20 quarts.

YHWH Provides Water for the Israelites from a Rock

17:1 The whole community of Israelites left the desert of Sin and traveled from place to place as YHWH commanded them. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²So they complained to Moses by saying: Give us water to drink,

Moses said to them: Why are you complaining to me? Why are you testing YHWH?

³But the people were thirsty for water there. They complained to Moses and asked: Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Was it to make us, our children, and our livestock die of thirst?

⁴So Moses cried out to YHWH: What should I do with these people? They're almost ready to stone me.

⁵YHWH answered Moses: Bring some of the leaders of Israel with you and go to where the people can see you. Take the staff you used to strike the Nile River. ⁶I'll be standing in front of you there by a rock at Mount Horeb. Strike the rock and water will come out of it for the people to drink. Moses did this while the leaders of Israel watched him.

⁷He named that place *Massah* meaning *Testing* and *Meribah* meaning *Complaining* because the Israelites complained and because they tested YHWH asking: Is YHWH with us or not?

God Defeats the Amalekites

⁸The Amalekites fought Israel at Rephidim. ⁹Moses said to Joshua: Choose some of our men. Then fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill. I will hold in my hand the staff God told me to take along.

This is the first mention of Joshua as Moses' military commander. He will be mentioned 7x in the Book of Exodus.

¹⁰Joshua did as Moses told him and fought the Amalekites while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. ¹¹As long as Moses held up his

hands, Israel would win, but as soon as he put his hands down, the Amalekites would start to win. ¹² Eventually, Moses' hands felt heavy. So Aaron and Hur took a rock, put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron held up one hand and Hur held up the other. His hands remained steady until sunset. ¹³ So Joshua defeated the Amalekite army in battle.

¹⁴ YHWH said to Moses: Write this reminder on a scroll, and make sure that Joshua hears it, too: I will completely erase any memory of the Amalekites from the earth.”

¹⁵ Moses built an altar and called it YHWH Is My Banner. ¹⁶ He said: Because a hand was lifted against YHWH's throne, he will be at war against the Amalekites from one generation to the next.

The Amalekites were Israel's constant enemy. They followed the people and picked off any stragglers and killed them. Both King Saul and King David fought the Amalekites. Heman, who attempted to kill all the Jews in the time of Esther was an Amalekite.

Jethro Brings Moses' Wife and Sons to Him

^{18:1} Moses' father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, heard about everything God had done for Moses and his people Israel and how YHWH had brought Israel out of Egypt.

How did Jethro, living in the wilderness of Midian, hear how God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt?

² When Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro had taken her in, ³ along with her two sons. The one son was named Gershom meaning Foreigner, because Moses said: I was a foreigner living in another country. ⁴ The name of the other was Eliezer meaning My God Is a Helper, because he said: My father's God was my helper. He saved me from Pharaoh's death sentence.

⁵ Moses' father-in-law Jethro brought Moses' sons and wife to Moses in the desert where he was camped near the mountain of God. ⁶ Jethro had sent

word to Moses: I'm coming to visit you and I'm bringing your wife and her two sons

⁷So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. Moses bowed with his face touching the ground and kissed Jethro. After they asked each other how they were, they went into the tent. ⁸Moses told his father-in-law everything **YHWH** had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel, all the hardships they had had on the way, and how **YHWH** had saved them.

⁹Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things **YHWH** had done for Israel in rescuing them from the Egyptians. ¹⁰He said: Thank **YHWH**. He rescued you from the Egyptians and their Pharaoh and rescued these people from the control of the Egyptians, ¹¹who treated Israel with contempt. Now I know *yada* that **YHWH** is greater than all other gods.”

¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God. Aaron and all the leaders of Israel came to eat the meal with Moses' father-in-law in God's presence.

Jethro Suggests that Moses Appoint Judges Over the People

¹³The next day Moses was settling disagreements among the people. The people stood around Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴When Moses' father-in-law saw everything Moses was doing for the people, he asked: Why are you doing this for the people? Why do you sit here alone while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?

¹⁵Moses answered his father-in-law: Because the people come to me to find out God's will. ¹⁶Whenever they have a disagreement and bring it to me, I decide which person is right, and I tell them God's laws and instructions.”

¹⁷Moses' father-in-law replied: What you're doing is not good. ¹⁸You and your people will wear yourselves out. This is too much work for you. You can't do it alone. ¹⁹Now listen to me and I'll give you some advice. May God be with you. You must be the people's representative to God and bring their

disagreements to him. ²⁰You must instruct them in the laws and the teachings, show them how to live, and tell them what to do.

²¹“But choose capable men from all the people, men who fear God, men you can trust, men who hate corruption. Put them in charge of groups of 1,000, or 100, or 50, or 10 people. ²²Let them be the ones who usually settle disagreements among the people. They should bring all important cases to you, but they should settle all minor cases themselves. Make it easier for yourself by letting them help you. ²³If God commands you and you do this, you will be able to continue your work, and all these people will have their disagreements settled so that they can go home.”

²⁴Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. ²⁵Moses chose capable men from all the Israelites and put them in charge of groups of 1,000, or 100, or 50, or 10 people. ²⁶These men were the ones who usually settled disagreements among the people. They would bring difficult cases to Moses but they settled all minor ones themselves.

²⁷Moses sent his father-in-law on his way. So Jethro went back to his own country.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This session describes the 50-day journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Mount Sinai. This is memorialized by the Israelites in the Feast of Pentecost which celebrates the giving of the Law by God that occurs 50 days after the Passover.

During this journey, the Israelites are tested by God. In the first test, they complain about not having water to drink. So God supplies it abundantly for them by directing them to Elim where there were 12 springs.

In the second test the Israelites complain about not having food especially meat. So God supplies them with quails and manna. But God uses the time to reinforce his rule for honoring the Sabbath day. A reminder of this command will appear at two more strategic points in the Book of Exodus.

Note that the Israelites are to gather the manna each day. Instead of being slaves who were fed by their masters, now they have to gather their food. When they finally come to Canaan, most

of the Israelites will have to learn to become farmers who have to grow their own food. Note that the Israelites throw off their slave mentality only slowly – many disobey and grumble.

Again the Israelites complain about having no water. God enables Moses to strike a rock and release the water trapped in the rock. Yet the Israelites are still strongly complaining about God saying: Is **YHWH** with us or not?

As the Israelites have been traveling, an Arab group called the Amalekites attacked the stragglers from the main body. At Rephidim, the Israelites fought them. Joshua led the army while Moses lifted up his hands praying to God for victory. The Amalekites were defeated.

Jethro, Moses' father-in-law heard Moses had returned so he brought Moses his wife Zipporah and his two sons. Then he offered a burnt offering to **YHWH** and the elders of Israel worshiped with him. After all, he was a descendant of Abraham's wife Keturah. Then he gave Moses advice about administering the company of Israelites.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. This is a fifty-day period when Israel traveled from Egypt to Mount Sinai. What is the most significant thing that occurred during this trip?
2. Water apparently was their biggest problem. How did they constantly obtain water for the entire people?
3. The meaning of the word *manna* is: What is it? Describe the manna. This will be the only bread for the Israelites for the next 40 years.
4. If the Amalekites were a nomadic troop of Arab warriors only picking off stragglers from the main body, how did the Israelites manage to get them to engage in a battle?
5. When did Moses send Zipporah and his sons back to Jethro? Did he intend to retrieve them from Jethro? When?
6. Israel left Egypt in organized family groups. Why then did Jethro suggest Moses divide the men into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens? Wasn't this organization already established.
7. How loyal to **YHWH** were the Israelites at this point?

Session Six

Moses Conducts a Covenant Ceremony with God

Israel at Mount Sinai

19:1 Two months after the Israelites left Egypt, they came to the desert of Sinai. ²Israel had moved from Rephidim and had come into the desert of Sinai. They had set up camp there in front of the mountain.

YHWH's Eagles' Wings Speech

³Then Moses went up the mountain to God and **YHWH** called to him from the mountain: This is what you must say to the descendants of Jacob. Tell the Israelites:

⁴You have seen for yourselves what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to my mountain. ⁵If you carefully obey me and are faithful to the terms of my Covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my own special possession *cegullah*-treasure, even though the whole world is mine. ⁶You will be my Kingdom of Priests and My Holy Nation.

These are the words you must speak to the Israelites.

These words of God were carefully remembered. The apostle Peter tells Christians that God also calls them as God called the Israelites:

[However, you are chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, people who belong to God. You were chosen to tell about the excellent qualities of God, who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not God's people, but now you are. Once you were not shown mercy, but now you have been shown mercy. **1 Peter 2:9-10**]

⁷So Moses went down and called for the leaders of the people. He repeated to them all the words that **YHWH** had commanded him. ⁸All the people

answered together: We will do everything YHWH has said. So Moses brought their answer back to YHWH.

This is the first time the people are ratifying the Covenant God is making with them.

God Tells Moses to Get the People Ready to Hear Him Speak to Them

⁹YHWH said to Moses: I am coming to you in a storm *ʾab*-thick cloud *ʾanan* so that the people will hear *sama* me speaking with you and will always believe *ʾaman* you. Moses told YHWH what the people had said.

¹⁰So YHWH said to Moses: Go to the people and tell them they have two days to get ready. They must set themselves apart as holy *qadas*-sanctify. Have them wash their clothesⁿ and be ready by the day after tomorrow.

On the third day YHWH will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch. ¹²Mark off a boundary around the mountain for the people and tell them not to go up the mountain or even touch it. Those who touch the mountain must be put to death. ¹³No one should touch them. They must be stoned or shot with arrows. No matter whether it's an animal or a person, it must not live.

The people may go up the mountain only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast.

¹⁴After Moses went down the mountain to the people, he had them get ready, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵Then Moses said to the people: Be ready two days from now. Don't disqualify yourselves by having sexual intercourse.

¹⁶On the morning of the third day, there was thunder and lightning with a heavy cloud over the mountain and a very loud blast from a ram's horn was heard. All the people in the camp shook with fear *hared*-trembled.

¹⁷Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because YHWH had come down on it in fire. Smoke rose from the

mountain like the smoke from a kiln, and the whole mountain shook violently. ¹⁹As the sound of the horn grew louder and louder, Moses was speaking, and the voice of God answered him.

²⁰**YHWH** came down on top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up. ²¹**YHWH** said to him: Go down and warn the people not to force their way through the boundary to see **YHWH**, or many of them will die. ²²Even the priests who are allowed to come near **YHWH** must set themselves apart as holy, or **YHWH** will violently kill them.

²³Moses said to **YHWH**: The people can't come up Mount Sinai, because you warned us yourself to mark off a boundary around the mountain and consider it holy.

²⁴**YHWH** said to him: Go down, and bring Aaron back with you. But the priests and the people must not force their way through the boundary to come up to **YHWH** or he will violently kill them.

²⁵So Moses went down to the people and told them.

The Ten Commandments: YHWH's Ten Words

20:1 Then God spoke all these words:

The First Commandment

²I am **YHWH** your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. ³Never have any other god.

The Second Commandment

⁴Never make your own carved idols or statues that represent any creature in the sky, on the earth, or in the water. ⁵Never worship them or serve them, because I, **YHWH** your God, am a God who does not tolerate rivals *qanna'*-jealous. I punish children for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. ⁶But I show mercy *hesed* to thousands *'elep*

of generations of those who love *'ahab* me and obey *samar* keep my commandments *misva*.

The Third Commandment

⁷Never use the name of **YHWH** your God carelessly. **YHWH** will make sure that anyone who carelessly uses his name will be punished.

The Fourth Commandment

⁸Remember the Day of Rest *sabat* by observing it as a Holy Day. ⁹You have six Days to do all your work. ¹⁰The seventh day is the Day of Rest — a Holy Day dedicated to **YHWH** your God. You, your sons, your daughters, your male and female slaves, your cattle, and the foreigners living in your city must never do any work on that day.

¹¹In six days **YHWH** made Heaven, earth, and the sea, along with everything in them. He didn't work on the seventh day. That's why **YHWH** blessed the day he stopped his work and set this day apart as holy.

[Heaven and earth and everything in them were finished. By the seventh day God has finished all the work he had been doing. On the seventh day he stopped the work he had been doing. Then God blessed *qadas*-sanctified the seventh day and set it apart as holy *qadas*-sanctified because that day he stopped *sabat*-rested from all his work of Creation bara'. **Genesis :2:1-3**]

The Fifth Commandment

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the Land **YHWH** your God is giving you.

The Sixth Commandment

¹³Never murder.

The Seventh Commandment

¹⁴Never commit adultery.

The Eighth Commandment

¹⁵ Never steal.

The Ninth Commandment

¹⁶ Never lie when you testify about your neighbor.

The Tenth Commandment

¹⁷ Never desire to take your neighbor's household away from him.

Never desire to take your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that belongs to him."

The People's Reaction

¹⁸ All the people heard the thunder and saw the lightning. They heard the blast of the ram's horn and saw the mountain covered with smoke. So they shook with fear and stood at a distance. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses: You speak to us, and we'll listen. But don't let God speak to us, or we'll die.

²⁰ Moses answered the people: Don't be afraid. God has come only to test you so that you will be in awe of him and won't sin. ²¹ The people kept their distance while Moses went closer to the dark cloud where God was.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Finally, after two months, Israel finally arrives at Mount Sinai and sets up camp in front of the mountain. God had earlier said to Moses at the burning bush:

[I will be with you. And this will be the proof that I sent you. When you bring the people out of Egypt, all of you will worship God on this mountain.
Exodus 3:12]

God then called Moses to come to him on the mountain. He gave his Eagles' Wings speech promising that if Israel obeyed the terms of his Covenant *beriyth*, they would be his chosen people, his special possession or treasure *cegullah*. This word only appears here in Exodus, but it appears 8x times in the Bible, the most in Deuteronomy 3x.

The people then say: *We will do everything YHWH has said.* This is first of three times they will say they will obey the terms of YHWH's Covenant.

Moses then tells the people to get ready for on the third day. God will speak *directly* to the people. This will be the only time in the entire Bible YHWH does this.

On the third day, God speaks his Ten Commandments directly to the people. The people are terrified at hearing God's voice. So they ask Moses to speak to God and then tell them what God says.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. In his Eagles' Wings speech, God refers to a Covenant. Is this the Abrahamic Covenant or the Mosaic Covenant or the Eternal Covenant?
2. Some say that in the Eagles' Wings speech, Israel becomes the servant nation of YHWH. Explain how this is so.
3. In the Eagles' Wings speech, the Israelites' nation is first referred to as a Kingdom of Priests outlining God's mission for his Chosen People. Relate this to **Isaiah 2:2-4**. This is the first mention of Kingdom as God's rule through people.
4. God promises the Israelites they will be his Chosen People if they obey the terms of his Covenant. They people agree to do everything God says. Are they are agreeing to do what God will say before even hearing his Ten Words?
5. What is the purpose of the ram's horn blast?
6. Moses then spoke, and the voice of God answered him. This was before God gave his Ten Commandments. What were they talking about?
7. Why are these Ten Commandment important? What purpose do they serve?
8. The only commandment that carries a penalty is the command not to worship idols. And yet this is the commandment the Israelites break the most. Explain God's penalty for doing this.
9. Notice the long explanation attached to the Sixth Commandment. Why does God say this commandment is given? List all the times in Exodus the Sabbath Day is mentioned.
10. The people promise: *You speak to us, and we'll listen.* Did the people always listen to Moses?
11. Did Moses always tell the people when the words he spoke were God's words or his words like the prophets when they said: Thus saith the LORD?

12. The Mosaic Law consisted of a moral law, the Ten Commandments, a ceremonial law and a religious law. The last two groups were applicable to those living in God's Holy Land of Israel. Do Christians have to follow any of these laws today? Why or why not?
13. What was the main purpose of the Mosaic Law Code?
14. How does the Mosaic Law reveal the holiness of God?

Session Seven

God Gives Moses the Holiness Code – The Torah, the Book of the Covenant

General Rules for Worship

Some call these the 42 judgments, seven judgments for each of the six days of the week. **Exodus 20:22-23:12**

20:22 YHWH said to Moses: This is what you must say to the Israelites: You've seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from Heaven. ²³Never make any gods of silver or gold for yourselves. Never worship them.

Here again is God's emphasis on not worshiping idols. According to the prophet Amos, the Israelites carried idols out of Egypt with them:

[Did you bring me sacrifices and grain offerings in the desert for 40 years, nation of Israel? You carried along the statutes of the god Sikkuth as your King and the star Kiyun, the gods you made for yourselves. **Amos 5:25-26**]

This prohibition is mentioned again in **Exodus 22:20**.

²⁴You must build an altar for me made out of dirt. Sacrifice your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, your sheep, goats, and cattle on it. Wherever I choose to have my name remembered, I will come to you and bless you.

²⁵If you build an altar for me made out of stones, never make it with cut stone blocks. If you use a chisel on it, you will make it unacceptable to me. ²⁶Never use stairs to go up to my altar. Otherwise, people will be able to see under your clothes."

Laws Concerning the Treatment of Slaves

21:1 Here are the legal decisions to be used by the Israelites:

²Whenever you buy a Hebrew slave, he will be your slave for six years. In the seventh year he may leave as a free man, without paying for his freedom. ³If he comes to you by himself, he must leave by himself. If he comes as a married man, his wife may leave with him.

⁴If his master gives him a wife and she gives birth to sons or daughters, the wife and her children belong to the master, and the slave must leave by himself.

The Way a Hebrew Becomes a Bond Slave

⁵But if he makes this statement: I hereby declare my love for my master, my wife, and my children. I don't want to leave as a free man,⁶ then his master must bring him to God. The master must bring him to the door or the doorframe and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his slave for life.

A Daughter Sold into Slavery

⁷Whenever a man sells his daughter into slavery, she will not go free the way male slaves do. ⁸If she doesn't please the master who has chosen her as a wife he must let her be bought back by one of her close relatives. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, since he has treated her unfairly. ⁹But if he has chosen her for his son, he must treat her like a daughter. ¹⁰If that son marries another woman, he must not deprive the first wife of food, clothes, or sex.

¹¹If he doesn't give her these three things, she can go free, without paying any money for her freedom.

Laws Concerning Injury to People

¹²Whoever strikes someone and kills him must be put to death. ¹³If it wasn't done intentionally, but God let it happen, the killer should flee to a place I will set aside for you.

These places will be called Cities of Refuge. Six cities will be set up in the Holy Land. **Numbers 35:11**

¹⁴ But whenever someone becomes so angry that he plans to kill his neighbor, you must take him away from my altar and put him to death.

It was an ancient tradition that the murderer could cling to the horns of the altar and be protected. **1 Kings 2:28**

¹⁵ Whoever hits his father or mother must be put to death.

¹⁶ Whoever kidnaps another person must be put to death, whether he has sold the kidnapped person or still has him.

¹⁷ Whoever curses his father or mother must be put to death.

¹⁸ This is what you must do whenever men quarrel, and one hits the other with a rock or with his fist and injures him so that he has to stay in bed. ¹⁹ If the injured man can get up again and walk around outside with a cane, the one who hit him must not be punished. He must pay the injured man for the loss of his time and for all his medical expenses.

²⁰ Whenever an owner hits his male or female slave with a stick so that the slave dies from the beating, the owner must be punished. ²¹ But if the slave gets up in a day or two, the owner must not be punished. The slave is his property.

²² This is what you must do whenever men fight and injure a pregnant woman so that she gives birth prematurely. If there are no other injuries, the offender must pay whatever fine the court allows the woman's husband to demand.

Lex Talionis

²³ If anyone is injured, the offender must pay a life for a life, ²⁴ an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵ a burn for a burn, a bruise for a bruise, a wound for a wound.

²⁶ Whenever an owner hits his male or female slave in the eye and the slave is blinded, he must let the slave go free to make up for the loss of the eye. ²⁷ If the owner knocks out the tooth of his male or female slave, he must let the slave go free to make up for the loss of the tooth.

²⁸Whenever a bull gores a man or a woman to death, the bull must be stoned to death, and its meat may not be eaten. The bull's owner is free from any liability. ²⁹But if the bull has had the habit of goring, and the owner has been warned but has not kept it confined, and it kills a man or a woman, then the bull must be stoned and its owner must be put to death, too.

³⁰However, if only a cash settlement is demanded from the owner, the bull's owner may save his life by paying whatever price is demanded of him. ³¹If the bull gores someone's son or daughter, this same ruling applies. ³²If the bull gores a male or female slave, its owner must pay 12 ounces of silver to the slave's master, and the bull must be stoned.

Laws Concerning Property

³³Whenever someone opens up a cistern or digs a new one and doesn't cover it and a bull or a donkey falls into it ³⁴the owner of the cistern must make up for the loss. He must pay money to the animal's owner and then the dead animal will be his.

³⁵Whenever one person's bull kills another person's bull, they must sell the live bull and divide the money between them. They must divide the dead bull, too. ³⁶However, if it was known that the bull had the habit of goring, and its owner didn't keep it confined, the owner must make up for the loss — bull for bull — and then the dead bull will be his.

22:1 Whenever someone steals a bull or a sheep and butchers it or sells it, he must make up for the loss with five head of cattle to replace the bull or four sheep to replace the sheep.

²If anyone catches a thief breaking in and hits him so that he dies, he is not guilty of murder. ³But if it happens after sunrise, he is guilty of murder.

A thief must make up for what he has stolen. If he is unable to do so, he must be sold as a slave to pay for what he stole. ⁴But if the stolen animal is found alive in his possession, whether it's a bull, donkey, or a sheep, he must make up for the loss with double the amount.

⁵Whenever someone lets his livestock graze in a field or a vineyard, and they stray and graze in another person's field, he must make up for what the damaged field was expected to produce. But if he lets them ruin the whole field with their grazing, he must make up from his own field for the loss with the best from his field and vineyard.

⁶Whenever a fire starts and spreads into the underbrush so that it burns up stacked or standing grain or ruins a field, the person who started the fire must make up for the loss.

⁷This is what you must do whenever someone gives his neighbor silver or other valuables to keep for him, and they are stolen from that person's house: If the thief is caught, he must make up for the loss with double the amount.

⁸If the thief is not caught, the owner of the house must be brought to God to find out whether or not he took his neighbor's valuables.

⁹If there is a dispute over the ownership of a bull, a donkey, a sheep, an article of clothing, or any other lost property which two people claim as their own, both people must bring their case to God. The one whom God declares guilty must make up for his neighbor's loss with double the amount.

¹⁰This is what you must do whenever someone gives his neighbor a donkey, a bull, a sheep, or any other kind of animal to keep for him, and it dies, is injured, or is captured in war, and there are no witnesses. ¹¹The case between them must be settled by swearing an oath to **YHWH** that the neighbor did not take the other person's animal. The owner must accept the oath. The neighbor doesn't have to make up for the loss.

¹²But if the animal was stolen from the neighbor, he must make up for the owner's loss. ¹³If it was killed by a wild animal, he must bring in the dead body as evidence. He doesn't have to make up for an animal that has been killed.

¹⁴Whenever someone borrows an animal from his neighbor, and it is injured or dies while the owner is not present, the borrower must make up for the

loss. ¹⁵ If the owner is with the animal, the borrower doesn't have to make up for the loss. If it is rented, the rental fee covers the loss.

Laws for Living as God's Holy People

¹⁶ Whenever a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged to anyone and has sexual intercourse with her, he must pay the bride-price and marry her. ¹⁷ If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must pay an amount of money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁸ Never let a witch live.

¹⁹ Whoever has sexual intercourse with an animal must be put to death.

²⁰ Whoever sacrifices to any god except **YHWH** must be condemned and destroyed.

²¹ Never mistreat or oppress foreigners, because you were foreigners living in Egypt.

²² Never take advantage of any widow or orphan. ²³ If you do and they cry out to me, you can be sure that I will hear their cry. ²⁴ I will become angry and have you killed in combat. Then your wives and children will become widows and orphans.

YHWH is the special protector of strangers, widows, and orphans. This will be repeated in Numbers and Deuteronomy.

²⁵ If you lend money to my people — to any poor person among you — never act like a moneylender. Charge no interest. ²⁶ If you take any of your neighbor's clothes as collateral, give it back to him by sunset. ²⁷ It may be the only clothes he has to cover his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will listen because I am compassionate.

²⁸ Never show disrespect for God or curse a leader of your people.

²⁹ Never withhold your best wine from me.

Redemption of the First Born

You must give me your firstborn son. ³⁰You must do the same with your cattle and your sheep. They will stay with their mothers seven days, but on the eighth day you must give them to me.

³¹You must be my holy people. Never eat the meat of an animal that has been killed by wild animals out in the countryside. Throw it to the dogs

^{23:1} Never spread false rumors. Don't join forces with wicked people by giving false testimony. ²Never follow a crowd in doing wrong. When you testify in court, don't side with the majority to pervert justice. ³Never give special favors to poor people in court.

⁴Whenever you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering loose, be sure to take it back to him. ⁵Whenever you see that the donkey of someone who hates you has collapsed under its load, don't leave it there. Be sure to help him with his animal.

⁶Never deny justice to poor people in court. ⁷Avoid telling lies. Don't kill innocent or honest people, because I will never declare guilty people innocent. ⁸Never take a bribe, because bribes blind those who can see and deny justice to those who are in the right.

⁹Never oppress foreigners. You know what it's like to be foreigners because you were foreigners living in Egypt.

The Sabbath Year

¹⁰For six years you may plant crops in your fields and harvest them, ¹¹but in the seventh year you must leave the land unplowed and unused. In that way the poor among your people will have food to eat, and wild animals may eat what the poor people leave. You must do the same with your vineyards and olive groves.

The Sabbath Day

¹² For six days you will do your work, but on the seventh day you must not work. Then your ox and donkey can rest. The slaves born in your household and foreigners will also be refreshed.

¹³ Be careful to do everything I told you.

Never mention the names of other gods or let them be heard on your lips.

Laws for Three Pilgrim Festivals

¹⁴ Three times a year you must celebrate a pilgrimage festival in my honor.

Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread

¹⁵ Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread: For seven days you must eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, because that was the month you left Egypt. No one may come into my presence without an offering.

Festival of Pentecost Fifty Days After Passover

¹⁶ Celebrate the Festival of the Harvest with the first produce harvested from whatever you plant in your fields.

Festival of Booths or Tabernacles

Celebrate the Festival of the Final Harvest at the end of the year when you harvest your crops from the fields.

¹⁷ These are the three times each year that all your men must come into the presence of the Master, **YHWH**.

¹⁸ Never offer the blood of a sacrifice to me at the same time you offer anything containing yeast. The fat sacrificed at my festivals should never be left over in the morning.

Celebration of First Fruits

¹⁹ You must bring the best of the first produce harvested from your soil to the House of **YHWH** your God.

This celebration is described in Deuteronomy 26:1-11.

Never cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

Laws about God's Messenger, Who Will Bring Israel to the Promised Land

²⁰ I'm going to send a Messenger *mal'ak*-angel in front of you to protect you on your trip and bring you to the place I have prepared. ²¹ Pay attention to him and listen to him.

Don't defy him because he will not forgive your disobedience. He is acting on my authority. ²² But if you will listen to him and do everything I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an opponent to your opponents.

²³ "My Messenger will go ahead of you and will bring you to the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites. I will wipe them out.

What God Will Do for His Chosen People in the Promised Land

²⁴ Never worship or serve their gods or follow their practices. Instead, you must destroy their gods and crush their sacred stones.

²⁵ You must serve **YHWH** your God and he will bless your food and water. I will take away all sickness from among you. ²⁶ No woman in your land will miscarry or be unable to have children. I will let you live a normal life span.

²⁷ I will send my terror *'ema*-fear ahead of you and throw any nation you meet into a panic. I will make all your enemies flee from you. ²⁸ I will spread panic *sir'a*-hornets ^{3x} ahead of you to force the Hivites, Canaanites, and Hittites out of your way.

This word *sir'a* also appears in Deuteronomy 7:20 and Joshua 24:12.

²⁹ I will not force them out of your way in one year. Otherwise, the Land would be deserted, and wild animals would take over. ³⁰ Little by little I will force them out of your way until you have increased enough in number to take possession of the land.

God Describes the Borders of the Promised Land

³¹ I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea and from the Sinai Desert to the Euphrates River. I will put the people living in the land under your control, and you will force them out of your way.

³² Never make a treaty with them and their gods. ³³ Never let them live in your Land, or they will make you sin against me and trap you into serving their gods

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is the supplement to the Ten Commandments. Additional commandments are also found in the Book of Numbers and the Book of Deuteronomy. Some of these repeat previous commands given earlier in Exodus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Even though YHWH prohibits stairs going up to an altar, I have rarely seen any altar without stairs going up to it. Why is this?
2. The Lex Talons is an old law designed to prevent excessive retribution. Only an eye for an eye. Why is it adopted in the Torah?
3. Where in Exodus is there a previous regulation regarding the redemption of the first born mentioned in **Exodus 22:29**?
4. Notice a repetition of the Fourth Commandment in **Exodus 23:13**. How many times is the Sabbath mentioned in Exodus?
5. Did the Israelites ever see God's messenger?
6. God says he will force Israel's enemies in one year? How long does it take Israel to force their enemies out of Canaan?

7. The borders of the land God is giving Israel is huge. On the south, the Red Sea. On the west, the Mediterranean Sea. On the east, the Arabian Desert. On the north, the Euphrates River. Does Israel ever conquer and settle all this land? Why not?

EXTRA CREDIT

List everything God says about not worshipping other gods in this session.

Session Eight

The Wilderness Tabernacle Instructed – Part I

God Allows Moses, Aaron and His Sons, and the Elders to Come Up the Mountain

^{24:1} YHWH said to Moses: You and Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and 70 of Israel's leaders come up the mountain to me and worship at a distance. ² Moses may come near YHWH, but the others may not. The people must not come along with Moses.

For a Second Time, the People Promise to Obey the Torah

³ Moses went and told the people all YHWH's words and legal decisions. Then all the people answered with one voice: We will do everything YHWH has told us to do.

Moses Writes Down the Torah

⁴ So Moses wrote down all YHWH's words.

Moses Conducts a Covenant Closing Ceremony with Blood

Early the next morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up 12 sacred stones for the 12 tribes of Israel. ⁵ Then he sent young Israelite men, and they sacrificed bulls as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to YHWH. ⁶ Moses took half of the blood and put it into bowls, and he threw the other half against the altar.

Moses Reads the Book of YHWH's Covenant to the People

⁷ Then he took the Book of YHWH's Covenant and read it while the people listened.

For a Third Time the People Agree to Obey the Torah

They said: We will obey and do everything YHWH has said.

Moses Sprinkles Blood on the People

⁸Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said: Here is the blood which seals the Covenant that **YHWH** has made to you based on everything you have just heard.

This is the only time in the Bible blood is sprinkled on the people.

Moses, Aaron and His Sons, and the Elders See God

⁹Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and 70 of Israel's leaders. ¹⁰They saw *ra'ah* the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made out of sapphire as clear and blue as the sky itself [as it were the body of Heaven in his clearness. KJV]. ¹¹God didn't harm these leaders of the Israelites. So they saw *chazah* God, and then they ate and drank.

This is the only time in the Bible where people are said to *see* God. Notice two different Hebrew words are used for *saw*.

Moses Goes up the Mountain to Receive God's Words Written on Stone

¹²**YHWH** said to Moses: Come up to me on the mountain. Stay there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the teachings *tora* and the commandments *misva* I have written for the people's instruction.

¹³Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. ¹⁴He said to the leaders: Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are here with you. Take all your disagreements to them.

¹⁵So Moses went up on the mountain and the cloud covered it. ¹⁶The glory *kabod* of **YHWH** settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered it and on the seventh day **YHWH** called to Moses from inside the cloud.

¹⁷To the Israelites, the glory *kabod* of **YHWH** looked like a raging fire on top of the mountain. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud as he went up the mountain. He stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.

Gifts for Use in the Tent of Meeting

^{25:1} YHWH said to Moses: ²Tell the Israelites to choose something to give me as a special contribution. You must accept whatever contribution each person freely gives.

³This is the kind of contribution you will accept from them: gold, silver, and bronze, ⁴violet, purple, and bright red yarn, fine linen, goats' hair, ⁵rams' skins dyed red, fine leather, acacia wood, ⁶olive oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet-smelling incense, ⁷onyx stones, and other precious stones to be set in the High Priest's ephod and his breastplate.

⁸"Then have them make a Holy Place *miqdas*-sanctuary wilderness tabernacle for me and I will live *sakan*-dwell among them. ⁹Make the Tent of Meeting *miskan* and all its furnishings exactly *ken*-even so like the plans *tabnit* I am showing *ra'a'* you.

God plans to dwell in the midst of the Israelite camp in the Wilderness Tabernacle. So he gives Moses the plans for this structure and plans for its furnishings. Some things apparently cannot be adequately described in words. How this is done is apparently in a vision for Moses sees it.

The Ark of the Covenant

¹⁰ Make an Ark of acacia wood 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ¹¹Cover it with pure gold inside and out, and put a gold molding around it. ¹²Cast four gold rings for it, and fasten them to its four feet, two rings on each side.

¹³Make poles of acacia wood, and cover them with gold. ¹⁴Put the poles through the rings on the sides of the Ark in order to carry it. ¹⁵The poles must stay in the rings of the Ark. Never remove them. ¹⁶Then you will put into the Ark the Words of my Covenant which I will give you.

¹⁷"Make a throne of mercy to cover the Ark out of pure gold 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. ¹⁸Make two angels *cherubim* out of hammered gold for the two ends of the throne of mercy, ¹⁹one on each end. Form the angels and the throne of mercy out of one piece of gold. ²⁰The angels should have their

wings spread above the throne of mercy, overshadowing it. They should face each other, looking at the throne of mercy.

The Significance of the Ark of the Covenant

²¹After you put into the Ark the Words of my Covenant which I will give you, place the throne of mercy on top. ²²I will be above the throne of mercy between the angels whenever I meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.

This Ark of the Covenant will be the symbol of God's presence. The pillar of smoke or the pillar of fire will also be above the Tent of Meeting or Wilderness Tabernacle.

The Table of Shewbread – the Bread of the Presence

²³Make a table of acacia wood 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ²⁴Cover it with pure gold, and put a gold molding around it. ²⁵Make a rim three inches wide around it, and put a gold molding around the rim. ²⁶Make four gold rings for it, and fasten them to the four corners, where the four legs are. ²⁷The rings are to be close to the rim. They are to hold the poles for carrying the table. ²⁸Make the poles out of acacia wood, cover them with gold, and use them to carry the table.

²⁹Make plates and dishes for the table out of pure gold, as well as pitchers and bowls to be used for pouring wine offerings. ³⁰Put the Bread of the Presence on this table so that it will be in front of me all the time.

The Seven Branched Lamp Stand – the Menorah

³¹“Make a lamp stand out of pure gold. The lamp stand, its base, and its shaft, as well as the flower cups, buds, and petals must be hammered out of one piece of gold. ³²Six branches are to come out of the sides, three branches on one side and three on the other.

³³Each of the six branches coming out of the lamp stand is to have three flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, with buds and petals. ³⁴The lamp stand itself is to have four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, with

buds and petals. ³⁵There should be a bud under each of the three pairs of branches coming out of the lamp stand. ³⁶The buds and branches should also be hammered out of the same piece of pure gold as the lamp stand.

³⁷Make seven lamps, and set them on the lamp stand so that they light up the area in front of it. ³⁸The tongs and incense burners must be made of pure gold. ³⁹Use 75 pounds of pure gold to make the lamp stand and all the utensils. ⁴⁰Be sure to make them according to the plans you were shown on the mountain.”

The Inner Tent

^{26:1} Make the inner tent with ten sheets made from fine linen yarn. Take violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and creatively work an angel design into the fabric. ²Each sheet will be 42 feet long and 6 feet wide — all the same size. ³Five of the sheets must be sewn together, and the other five must also be sewn together. ⁴Make 50 violet loops along the edge of the end sheet in each set, ⁵placing the loops opposite each other. ⁶Make 50 gold fasteners. Use them to link the two sets of sheets together so that the tent is a single unit.

⁷Make 11 sheets of goats’ hair to form an outer tent over the inner tent. ⁸Each of the 11 sheets will be 45 feet long and 6 feet wide. ⁹Sew five of the sheets together into one set and the remaining six into another set. Fold the sixth sheet in half to hang in front of the tent.

¹⁰Make 50 loops along the edge of the end sheet in each set. ¹¹Make 50 bronze fasteners, and put them through the loops to link the inner tent together as a single unit. ¹²The remaining half-sheet should hang over the back of the inner tent. ¹³There will be 18 inches left over on each side because of the length of the outer tent’s sheets. That part should hang over each side in order to cover the inner tent. ¹⁴Make a cover of rams’ skins that have been dyed red for the outer tent. Over that put a cover made of fine leather.

¹⁵Make a framework out of acacia wood for the inner tent. ¹⁶Each frame is to be 15 feet long and 27 inches wide, ¹⁷with two identical pegs. Make all the frames for the inner tent the same way. ¹⁸Make 20 frames for the south side

of the inner tent. ¹⁹Then make 40 silver sockets at the bottom of the 20 frames, two sockets at the bottom of each frame for the two pegs.

²⁰For the north side of the inner tent make 20 frames ²¹and 40 silver sockets, two at the bottom of each frame. ²²Make six frames for the far end, the west side. ²³Make two frames for each of the corners at the far end of the inner tent. ²⁴These will be held together at the bottom and held tightly at the top by a single ring. Both corner frames will be made this way. ²⁵There will be eight frames with 16 silver sockets, two at the bottom of each frame.

²⁶Make crossbars out of acacia wood: five for the frames on one side of the inner tent, ²⁷five for those on the other side, and five for the frames on the far end of the inner tent, the west side. ²⁸The middle crossbar will run from one end to the other, halfway up the frames. ²⁹Cover the frames with gold, make gold rings to hold the crossbars, and cover the crossbars with gold.

³⁰“Set up the inner tent according to the plans you were shown on the mountain. The canopy covers the room to the left, the Most Holy Place Holy of Holies.

³¹Make a canopy of violet, purple, and bright red yarn. Creatively work an angel design into fine linen yarn. ³²Use gold hooks to hang it on four posts of acacia wood covered with gold, standing in four silver sockets. ³³Hang the canopy from the fasteners in the ceiling, and put the Ark containing the Words of my Covenant under it.

The canopy will mark off the Most Holy Place Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. ³⁴Put the throne of mercy that is on the Ark in the Most Holy Place.

³⁵“Place the Table outside the canopy on the north side of the Inner Tent, and put the Lamp Stand opposite the Table on the south side.

³⁶For the entrance of the outer tent, make a screen out of fine linen yarn, embroidered with violet, purple, and bright red yarn. ³⁷Make five posts of acacia wood for the screen and cover them with gold. Make gold hooks for this screen. Cast five bronze bases for the posts.”

The Bronze Altar of Sacrifice

^{27:1} Make an altar out of acacia wood. It should be $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet square, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. ² Make a horn at each of its four corners. The four horns and the altar must be made out of one piece of wood covered with bronze.

³ Make all the utensils for it out of bronze: pots for taking away the altar's ashes, also shovels, bowls, forks, and incense burners.

⁴ Make a grate for it out of bronze mesh, and make a bronze ring for each of the four corners of the grate. ⁵ Put the grate under the ledge of the altar so that it comes halfway up the altar.

⁶ Make poles out of acacia wood for the altar, and cover them with bronze.

⁷ The poles should be put through the rings on both sides of the altar to carry it.

⁸ Make the altar out of boards so that it's hollow inside. It must be made just as you were shown on the mountain.

The Courtyard

⁹ Make a courtyard for the Tent. The south side of the courtyard should be 150 feet long and have curtains made out of fine linen yarn, ¹⁰ hung on 20 posts set in 20 bronze bases. The hooks and bands on the posts should be made of silver. ¹¹ The north side should be the same: 150 feet long, with curtains on 20 posts set in 20 bronze bases. The hooks and bands on the posts should be made of silver.

¹² The courtyard on the west end should be 75 feet wide and have curtains hung on ten posts set in ten bases. ¹³ On the east end, facing the rising sun, the courtyard should also be 75 feet wide. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Each side of the entrance will be $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide with curtains hung on three posts set in three bases.

¹⁶ The entrance to the courtyard must have a 30-foot screen made from fine linen yarn, embroidered with violet, purple, and bright red yarn, hung on four posts set in four bases. ¹⁷ All the posts around the courtyard should have

silver bands, silver hooks, and bronze bases. ¹⁸The courtyard should be 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 7½ feet high, with curtains made of fine linen yarn and with bronze bases.

¹⁹ All the things for the Tent of Meeting, no matter how they're used, including all the pegs for the tent and the courtyard, must be made of bronze.

Lamps in the Tent

²⁰“For the lighting, you must command the Israelites to bring you pure, virgin olive oil so that the lamps won't go out. ²¹In the Tent of Meeting outside the canopy where the words of my Covenant are, Aaron and his descendants must keep the lamps lit in YHWH's presence from evening until morning. This is a permanent law among the Israelites for generations to come.

The Holy Clothes for the Priests

^{28:1} Out of all the Israelites, bring your brother Aaron and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar to you. They will serve me as priests. ²Make holy clothes for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honor.

³Tell all those who have the skill — those to whom I have given this ability — to make Aaron's clothes. These clothes will set him apart as holy when he serves me as priest. ⁴These are the clothes they will make: a breastplate, an ephod and the robe that is worn with it, another specially woven linen robe, the High Priest's turban and a cloth belt. They will make these holy clothes for your brother Aaron and his sons so that they can serve me as priests. ⁵They must use gold, violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and fine linen.

The Ephod

⁶Make the ephod out of fine linen yarn. Creatively work gold, violet, purple, and bright red yarn into the fabric. ⁷It will have two shoulder straps attached at the top corners so that it can be fastened. ⁸Make the belt that is attached to the ephod out of the same fabric.

⁹Take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel ¹⁰in birth order —six of their names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. ¹¹Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the same way a jeweler engraves a signet ring. Mount them in gold settings, ¹²and fasten them on the shoulder straps of the ephod as reminders of who the Israelites are.

In this way Aaron will carry their names on his shoulders as a reminder in YHWH's presence. ¹³Make gold settings ¹⁴and two chains of pure gold, twisted like ropes, and fasten these chains to the settings.

The Breastplate

¹⁵Make the breastplate for decision-making as creatively as you make the ephod. Make it out of gold, violet, purple, and bright red yarn and out of fine linen yarn. ¹⁶Fold it in half so that it's 9 inches square. ¹⁷Fasten four rows of precious stones on it. In the first row put red quartz, topaz, and emerald. ¹⁸In the second row put turquoise, sapphire, and crystal. ¹⁹In the third row put jacinth, agate, and amethyst. ²⁰In the fourth row put beryl, onyx, and gray quartz. Mount them in gold settings. ²¹The stones correspond to the 12 sons of Israel, by name, each stone engraved like a signet ring with the name of one of the 12 tribes.

²²For the breastplate make chains out of pure gold, twisted like ropes. ²³Make two gold rings for the breastplate. Attach them to the two top corners of the breastplate. ²⁴Then fasten the two gold ropes to the rings at the top corners of the breastplate. ²⁵Fasten the other ends of the ropes to the two settings on the shoulder straps of the ephod so that the breastplate hangs in front of it.

²⁶Make two gold rings, and fasten them to the other two corners of the breastplate on the inside edge next to the ephod. ²⁷Make two more gold rings, and fasten them to the bottom of the shoulder straps on the front of the ephod. This will be close to the seam just above the belt of the ephod. ²⁸Then the breastplate should be fastened by its rings to the rings of the

ephod with a violet cord. This will attach it just above the belt of the ephod and will hold the breastplate in place.

²⁹Whenever Aaron goes into the Holy Place, he will be carrying the names of the sons of Israel over his heart as a constant reminder in **YHWH**'s presence. He must do this by wearing the breastplate for decision-making

The Urim and Thummim

³⁰ Put the Urim and Thummim into the breastplate for decision-making. They, too, will be over Aaron's heart when he comes into **YHWH**'s presence. In this way whenever he's in **YHWH**'s presence, Aaron will always be carrying over his heart the means for determining **YHWH**'s decisions for the Israelites.

Other Clothes for Aaron and His Sons

³¹ Make the robe that is worn with the ephod entirely of violet material.
³² Make an opening for the head in the center with a reinforced edge like a leather collar all around it to keep it from tearing. ³³ All around the hem of the robe make pomegranates of violet, purple, and bright red yarn with gold bells in between — ³⁴ a gold bell alternating with a pomegranate all around the hem of the robe.

³⁵ Aaron must wear it when he serves as priest. The sound of the bells must be heard when he comes into and goes out of **YHWH**'s presence in the Holy Place so that he won't die.

³⁶ Make a flower-shaped medallion out of pure gold, and engrave on it as on a signet ring: Holy to **YHWH**. ³⁷ Fasten a violet cord to it, and tie it so that it's on the front of the turban. ³⁸ It will be on Aaron's forehead. He's the one to be blamed for anything done wrong when the Israelites bring their holy offerings — whatever their gifts may be. The medallion must always be on Aaron's forehead so that **YHWH** will accept their offerings.

³⁹ Make the specially woven inner robe of fine linen. Make the turban of fine linen, but the belt should be embroidered with colored yarn.

⁴⁰ Also make linen robes, belts, and turbans for Aaron's sons. These clothes will give them dignity and honor. ⁴¹ Put these clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint them, ordain them, and set them apart to serve me as priests.

⁴² Make linen undergarments to cover them down to their thighs. ⁴³ Aaron and his sons must wear them when they go into the Tent of Meeting or when they come near the Altar to serve as priests in the Holy Place. Then they will be blameless and won't die.

This is a permanent law for him and his descendants.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The session begins with Moses conducting a Covenant Ceremony. He built an altar setting up 12 sacred stones for the 12 tribes of Israel. Then he had bulls sacrificed and put half of the blood in bowls and threw the other half against the altar. Moses read the Book of the Covenant to the people. Then the people said for a third time: *We will do everything God said*. Then Moses sprinkled the blood on the people. This is the only time in the Bible this is done.

Then Moses, Abraham and his sons, and the 70 leaders of Israel went up the mountain and had a Covenant meal with God. The Scripture text twice says: They saw God.

Then God called Moses to come up to the mountain where he will give Moses detailed directions and a pattern for constructing the Wilderness Tabernacle also called the Tent of Meeting, its furnishings and the courtyard containing the Bronze Altar of Sacrifice, and the Basin or Laver.

The Tent consists of two rooms: The Holy of Holies which houses the Ark of the Covenant symbolizing God's presence and the Holy Place where the priests serve with the Golden Altar of Incense, the Table of Shewbread and the Lamp Stand.

Then God describes the uniform for the High Priest.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why is God so detailed about everything?
2. Moses used four different terms to describe the Wilderness Tabernacle. He called it the sanctuary **Exodus 25:8**; the tabernacle **Exodus 25:9**; the Tent of Meeting **Exodus 26:36; 29:42-**

43; 35:21; and the Tabernacle of Testimony **Exodus 38:21**. What does Moses mean by each of these designations?

3. Why is the golden cover of the Ark of the Covenant *kippur* called *the mercy seat*?

4. Where in the Bible is the purpose of the Bread of the Presence explained?

5. The lamps are to be lit from evening to morning. How is there light enough for the priests to do their work during the day in the Holy Place? There aren't any windows.

6. The breastplate contains the Urim and Thummim used for decision making described in **Exodus 28:30**. How the Urim and Thummim work? Is this described anywhere in the Bible?

7. The *GOD'S WORD* translation says the High Priests robe has bells on it so that he won't die. **Exodus 28:35** How do the bells protect him?

8. On the High Priest's turban is a medallion made out of pure gold that says: *Holy to the Lord*. The GWT says the medallion must always be on Aaron's forehead so that YHWH will accept their offerings. **Exodus 28:38**. Explain this.

9. Many mention that the phrase, YHWH said to Moses occurs 7x - **Exodus 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12**. The final time introduces the Sabbath command. Is this to echo the seven days of Creation with rest on the seventh day? Or is there another purpose?

10. When God speaks about the pattern Moses is to follow, is God saying there is a Tabernacle in Heaven? See **Hebrews 8:5; 9:23-24; Revelation 11:19; 14:17; 15:5**.

11. Notice the order of in which God describes the tabernacle. He begins with the Ark of the Covenant before describing anything else. Why does he do this?

12. Where did the Israelites get the bread for the loaves on the Table of Shewbread? All they had was manna and that lasted only a day. Could they have saved up flour or got it by trading with people they met on the journey?

13. The four colors used in the tabernacle were white, blue, purple, and crimson. What do these represent?

14. Could the people enter the tabernacle courtyard? The Bible doesn't say. It seems that only priests could enter the courtyard. It appears people brought their animals to the entrance and gave them to the priests or a Levite. Remember, this area was not all that large -- only 75 x 150 feet, about the size of a residential home lot in most cities.

Session Nine

The Wilderness Tabernacle Instructed – Part 2

Ordain Aaron and His Sons Priests

^{29:1} Now, this is what you must do in order to set Aaron and his sons apart to serve me as priests:

Take a young bull that has no defects and two rams that have no defects. ²Use the finest wheat flour, but no yeast, and bake some loaves of bread, some rings of bread made with olive oil, and some wafers brushed with olive oil. ³Put the bread in a basket, and bring the basket along with the young bull and the two rams.

⁴Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and wash them. ⁵Take the clothes and put them on Aaron — the linen robe, the ephod and the robe that is worn with it, and the breastplate. Use the belt to tie it on him tightly. ⁶Put his turban on him, and fasten the holy crown to it. ⁷Take the anointing oil, pour it on his head, and anoint him.

⁸“Have his sons come forward. Dress them in their linen robes, ⁹and put turbans on them. Tie belts around the waists of Aaron and his sons. They alone are to be priests. This is a permanent law. In this way you will ordain Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰Then bring the young bull to the front of the Tent of Meeting. Aaron and his sons will place their hands on its head. ¹¹Slaughter the bull in YHWH’s presence at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ¹²Take some of the bull’s blood and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger. Pour the rest of it out at the bottom of the altar.

¹³Then take all the fat that covers the internal organs, the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat on them, and burn them on the altar. ¹⁴But

burn the bull's meat, skin, and excrement outside the camp. It is an offering for sin.

¹⁵Take one of the rams. Then Aaron and his sons will place their hands on its head. ¹⁶Slaughter it, take the blood, and throw it against the altar on all sides. ¹⁷Cut the ram into pieces, wash the internal organs and legs, and put them with the other pieces and the head. ¹⁸Then burn the whole ram on the altar. It's a burnt offering, a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to **YHWH**.

¹⁹Take the other ram. Then Aaron and his sons will place their hands on its head. ²⁰Slaughter it, take some of the blood, and put it on the right ear lobes of Aaron and his sons, on their right thumbs, and on the big toes of their right feet. Throw the rest of the blood against the altar on all sides. ²¹Take some of the blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his clothes and on his sons and their clothes. In this way Aaron, his sons, and their clothes will be holy.

²²From this same ram take the fat, the fat from the tail, the fat that covers the internal organs, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. This is the ram for the ordination.

²³From the basket of unleavened bread which is in **YHWH**'s presence, take a round loaf of bread, a ring of bread made with olive oil, and a wafer. ²⁴Put all of these in the hands of Aaron and his sons, who will offer them to **YHWH**. ²⁵Then take them from their hands, and burn them on the altar on top of the burnt offering. It's a soothing aroma in **YHWH**'s presence, an offering by fire to **YHWH**.

²⁶Take the breast from the ram used for Aaron's ordination, and present it to **YHWH**. This will be your share. ²⁷Set apart as holy the breast that is offered to **YHWH** and the thigh that is the contribution. Both will come from the ram used for the ordination. They both belong to Aaron and his sons. ²⁸It is a permanent law that the Israelites give this portion to Aaron and his sons as a contribution. This will also be their contribution to **YHWH** from the fellowship offerings.

²⁹ Aaron's holy clothes will belong to his descendants so that they can be anointed and ordained in them. ³⁰ The son who succeeds him as priest — the one who goes into the Tent of Meeting to serve in the Holy Place — will wear them for seven days.

³¹ Take the ram used for the ordination and boil its meat in a holy place. ³² At the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, Aaron and his sons will eat the meat of the ram and the bread left in the basket. ³³ They will eat those offerings through which they made peace with **YHWH** at their ordination and installation. No one else may eat them because the offerings are holy. ³⁴ If any meat or bread from the ordination is left over until morning, burn it up. It must not be eaten because it is holy.

³⁵ Do this with Aaron and his sons exactly as I have commanded you. Take seven days to ordain them. ³⁶ Each day sacrifice a young bull as an offering to make peace with **YHWH**. Sacrifice this offering for sin on the altar in order to pay for its sins. Then anoint it with olive oil in order to dedicate it. ³⁷ For seven days at the altar make peace with **YHWH** and set the altar apart for its holy purpose. Then the altar will be most holy. Anything that touches the altar will become holy.

The Daily Morning and Evening Sacrifice

³⁸ This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly every day: two one-year-old lambs. ³⁹ Offer one in the morning and the other at dusk. ⁴⁰ With the first lamb make an offering of eight cups of flour mixed with one quart of virgin olive oil. Make a wine offering of one quart of wine. ⁴¹ Offer the other lamb at dusk, and with it make the same grain offering and wine offering as in the morning. This is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to **YHWH**.

⁴² For generations to come this will be the daily burnt offering made in **YHWH**'s presence at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. There I will meet with you to speak to you.

⁴³ I will also meet with the Israelites there and my glory will make this place holy. ⁴⁴ I will dedicate the Tent of Meeting and the altar for their holy

purposes. I will set Aaron and his sons apart for their holy duties of serving me as priests.

God's Statement of Purpose for the Wilderness Tabernacle

⁴⁵Then I will live *sakan*-dwell among the Israelites and be their God. ⁴⁶They will know *yada'* that I am **YHWH** their God. I brought them out of Egypt so that I might live *sakan* among them. I am **YHWH** their God

The Golden Altar for Incense

^{30:1} Build an altar out of acacia wood for burning incense. ² Make it 18 inches square and 36 inches high. The horns and altar must be made out of one piece of wood. ³ Cover all of it with pure gold — the top, the sides, and the horns. Put a gold molding around it. ⁴ Make two gold rings, and put them below the molding on opposite sides to hold the poles for carrying it. ⁵ Make the poles out of acacia wood, and cover them with gold.

⁶ Put the altar in front of the canopy which hangs over the Ark containing the Words of my Covenant. I will meet with you there in front of the Throne of Mercy that is on the Ark.

⁷ Aaron must burn sweet-smelling incense on this altar every morning when he takes care of the lamps. ⁸ Also, when Aaron lights the lamps at dusk, he must burn incense. For generations to come an incense offering must burn constantly in **YHWH**'s presence.

⁹ Never burn any unauthorized incense on this altar or any burnt offerings or grain offerings. Never pour a wine offering on it. ¹⁰ Once a year Aaron must make peace with **YHWH** by putting blood on its horns. Once a year — for generations to come — blood from the offering must be placed on the altar to make peace with **YHWH**. It is most holy to **YHWH**.

Counting the Israelites

¹¹ Then **YHWH** said to Moses: ¹² When you take a census of the Israelites, each person must pay **YHWH** a ransom for his life when he is counted. Then

no plague will happen to them when they are counted. ¹³As each person is counted, he must give one-fifth of an ounce of silver using the standard weight of the Holy Place. This one-fifth of an ounce of silver is a contribution to **YHWH**.

¹⁴Everyone counted who is at least 20 years old must give this contribution to **YHWH**. ¹⁵The rich must not give more than one-fifth of an ounce of silver and the poor must not give less. This contribution is given to make peace with **YHWH** and make your lives acceptable to **YHWH**. ¹⁶Take the money the Israelites give to make peace with **YHWH**, and use it to pay the expenses of the Tent of Meeting. It will be a reminder for the Israelites in **YHWH**'s presence that the sins in their lives are removed.

The Bronze Basin

¹⁷**YHWH** said to Moses: ¹⁸“Make a bronze basin with a bronze stand for washing. Put it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and fill it with water.

¹⁹Aaron and his sons will use it for washing their hands and feet. ²⁰Before they go into the Tent of Meeting, they must wash so that they will not die. Before they come near the altar to serve as priests and burn an offering by fire to **YHWH**, ²¹they will wash their hands and feet so that they will not die. This will be a permanent law for him and his descendants for generations to come.”

The Oil for Anointing

²²**YHWH** said to Moses: ²³Take the finest spices: $12\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of powdered myrrh; half as much, that is, $6\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of fragrant cinnamon; $6\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of fragrant cane; ²⁴ $12\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of cassia — all weighed using the standard weight of the Holy Place — and 4 quarts of olive oil. ²⁵Have a perfumer make these into a holy oil, a fragrant mixture, used only for anointing. This will be the holy oil used for anointing.

²⁶ Use it to anoint the Tent of Meeting, the ark containing the Words of my Covenant, ²⁷ the Table and all the dishes, the Lamp Stand and all the utensils, the Golden Altar for Incense, ²⁸ the Bronze Altar for burnt offerings and all its accessories, and the Basin with its stand. ²⁹ In this way you will dedicate them for their holy purpose. Then they will be most holy, and anything that touches them will become holy.

³⁰ Anoint Aaron and his sons as well. In this way you will set them apart for their holy duties of serving me as priests.

³¹ Say to the Israelites: For generations to come, this will be my holy oil used only for anointing. ³² It must never be poured on the bodies of other people. Never make any perfumed oil using this formula. It is holy and you must treat it as holy. ³³ Whoever prepares a perfume like this or puts it on anyone who is not a priest must be excluded from the people.

The Incense for Use in the Tent

³⁴ YHWH said to Moses: Take one part fragrant spices – two kinds of gum resin and aromatic mollusk shells – and mix them with one part pure frankincense. ³⁵ Have a perfumer make it into fragrant incense, seasoned with salt, pure and holy. ³⁶ Grind some of it into a fine powder, and put it in front of the Ark containing the Words of my Covenant in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you. You must treat it as most holy.

³⁷ Never make any incense for yourselves using this formula. Treat it as holy to YHWH. ³⁸ Whoever prepares anything like it for his own enjoyment must be excluded from his people.

The Craftsmen for the Tent

³¹ YHWH said to Moses: ² I have chosen Bezalel, son of Uri and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah. ³ I have filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, making him highly skilled, resourceful, and knowledgeable in all trades.

This appears to be the second time the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Book of Exodus. The first time is **Exodus 28:3**. But it is the only time that a particular person is said to be filled with the Spirit.

⁴He's a master artist familiar with gold, silver, and bronze. ⁵He knows how to cut and set stones and how to work with wood. He's an expert in all trades.

⁶Also, I have appointed Oholiab, son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan, to help him. I have given every craftsman the skill necessary to make everything I have commanded you: ⁷the Tent of Meeting, the Ark containing the Words of my Covenant with the throne of mercy on it, and all the other furnishings for the Tent, ⁸the Table and the dishes, the pure gold Lamp Stand and all its utensils, the Altar for Incense, ⁹the Altar for Burnt Offerings and all its accessories, the Basin with its stand, ¹⁰the special clothes — the holy clothes for the priest Aaron and the clothes for his sons when they serve as priests, ¹¹the anointing oil, and the sweet-smelling incense for the Holy Place. They will make all these things as I commanded you.

The Sabbath Is a Sign between YHWH and His People

¹²**YHWH** said to Moses: ¹³Say to the Israelites: Be sure to observe my Days of Rest as Holy Days. This will be a sign between me and you for generations to come so that you will know *yada'* that I am **YHWH** who makes you holy *qadas*-sanctify.

¹⁴“Observe the Day of Rest because it is holy to you. Whoever treats it like any other day must be put to death. Whoever works on that day must be excluded from the people. ¹⁵You may work for six days, but the seventh day is a Day of Rest — a holy day, a day when you don't work.

It is holy *qodes* to **YHWH**. Whoever works on that day must be put to death. ¹⁶The Israelites must observe this Day of Rest as a holy day, celebrating it for generations to come as a permanent reminder of my Covenant. ¹⁷It will be a permanent sign between me and the Israelites, because **YHWH** made

Heaven and earth in six days, and on the seventh day he stopped working and was refreshed.

¹⁸**YHWH** finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Then he gave him the two tablets with his words on them, stone tablets inscribed by God himself.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Everything in the last two sessions was spoken to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. It took 40 days and 40 nights. God laid out his plans for the Wilderness Tabernacle in which he would symbolically dwell among the Israelites in their camp.

We begin with the ordination ceremony for Aaron and his sons. **YHWH** is particularly concerned with this since Aaron and his sons will be the closest to him. It will be an extensive ordination ceremony lasting seven days. Then **YHWH** adds instructions for the Golden Altar of Incense where incense must be burned to **YHWH** day and night – each morning when lamps are taken care of and at dusk when the lamps are lit. Inserted are instructions for payment to God when a census is taken of the Israelites. The Bronze Basin is described, the oil for anointing, and instructions for making the incense.

YHWH tells Moses he has selected two craftsmen to fashion the furnishing for the Tent of Meeting. Finally, God concludes by reminding Moses of the importance of observing the Sabbath. It is the sign between God and humans. Anyone who breaks the Sabbath must be killed or excluded from the people.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God says that only Aaron and his sons are to be priests. **Exodus 29:8**. List the names of the four sons of Aaron.
2. The priestly ordination is very elaborate and goes on for seven days. Why does God desire such an elaborate ceremony?
3. Inserted after the ordination is a requirement for a Daily Morning and Evening Sacrifice. Why every day? This was rigorously followed by the Israelites when they only had an altar and not a Temple. See **Ezra 3:2-6** where built an altar for sacrifice after returning to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity even before they started rebuilding the Temple
4. Why does God require a payment of silver by each person when they are counted? What is the spiritual meaning?

5. God even selected two craftsmen to fashion the Tent and its furnishings. Why does God choose these men rather than Moses?
6. God ends his session with Moses by a reminder to keep the Sabbath. Why is the Sabbath so important to God?
7. After speaking about the Sabbath God then gave Moses the two tablets on which he himself had written the Ten Commandments. Why is a discussion about the Sabbath important for Moses to hear before he goes down the mountain to the people?

EXTRA CREDIT

Words translated *holy* appear 55x in Exodus. The first time *holy* appears in the Bible is in **Exodus 3:5**. The word *qodes* usually translated *holy* appears 70x in Exodus exceed only by Leviticus 92x. Numbers is next with 55x followed by Psalms 45x. The prophet Ezekiel uses the word 57x and Isaiah 23x.

Define holiness. Why is this word so important to God?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

If the Morning and Evening Sacrifice was so important to God, and could be offered if there wasn't even a Temple, why didn't the Judeans in captivity in Babylon continue the Morning and Evening Sacrifice while they were in captivity in Babylon? Why did they wait until they returned to Jerusalem?

Session Ten

The People Defy God and Worship a Golden Calf Idol

The Israelites Grow Anxious at Moses' Absence and Worship a Golden Calf Idol

^{32:1} When the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron. They said to him: We don't know what has happened to this Moses, who led us out of Egypt. Make gods *elohim* who will lead us.

² Aaron said to them: Have your wives, sons, and daughters take off the gold earrings they are wearing, and bring them to me.

³ So all the people took off their gold earrings and handed them to Aaron.

⁴ After he had worked on the gold with a tool, he made it into a statue of a calf. Then they said: Israel, here are your gods *elohim* who brought you out of Egypt.

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of it and announced: Tomorrow there will be a festival in YHWH's honor.

Remember that Aaron had not yet been ordained as Israel's High Priest. He and Hur were only left in charge by Moses. But he is acting like a High Priest.

⁶ Early the next day the people sacrificed burnt offerings and brought fellowship offerings. Afterward, they sat down to a feast, which turned into an orgy *sachaq*-play KJV.

This word *sachaq* appears 11x in Genesis, 1x in Exodus and 1x in Judges. In Genesis it is translated laugh, mock, and sporting.

God Is Furious and Says He Will Consume the People

⁷ YHWH said to Moses: Go back down there. Your people whom you brought out of Egypt have ruined everything. ⁸ They've already turned from the way I commanded them to live. They've made a statue of a calf for

themselves. They've bowed down to it and offered sacrifices to it. They've said: Israel, here are your gods who brought you out of Egypt.

⁹YHWH added: I've seen these people and they are impossible to deal with *qashch*—stiff *oreph*—necked. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone. I'm so angry [*'ap*—wrath *hara*—wax hot KJV] with them I am going to destroy *kala*—consume them. Then I'll make you into a great nation.

Moses Intercedes for the People

¹¹ But Moses pleaded with YHWH his God. YHWH, he said, why are you so angry with your people whom you brought out of Egypt using your great power and mighty hand? ¹² Don't let the Egyptians say: He was planning all along to kill them in the mountains and wipe them off the face of the earth. That's why he brought them out of our land. Don't be so angry.

Moses Reminds God of His Covenant with Abraham

Reconsider your decision to bring this disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. You took an oath, swearing on yourself. You told them: I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. I will give to your descendants all the Land I spoke of. It will be their permanent possession.”

¹⁴ So YHWH reconsidered his threat to destroy his people.

¹⁵ Moses turned and went down the mountain carrying the two tablets with God's words. They were written on both sides, front and back. ¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was God's writing inscribed on the tablets.

¹⁷ Then Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting. He said to Moses: It's the sound of war in the camp. ¹⁸ Moses replied: It's not the sound of winners shouting. It's not the sound of losers crying. It's the sound of a wild celebration that I hear.

Moses Breaks the Covenant by Throwing Down the Tablets

¹⁹When he came near the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing *mechowlah*^{8x}. In a burst of anger Moses threw down the tablets and smashed them at the foot of the mountain.

²⁰Then he took the calf they had made, burned it, ground it into powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

Moses Upbraids Aaron for Neglecting His Duty

²¹Moses asked Aaron: What did these people do to you that you encouraged them to commit such a serious sin?

²²Don't be angry, sir, Aaron answered. You know that these people are evil *ra*: ²³They said to me: We don't know what's happened to this Moses who brought us out of Egypt. Make gods for us. They will lead us. ²⁴So I told them to take off any gold they were wearing. They gave it to me. I threw it into the fire, and out came *yasa'* this calf.

²⁵Aaron had let the people get out of control, and they became an object of ridicule to their enemies.

Moses Decides to Punish the People

When Moses saw this: ²⁶he stood at the entrance to the camp and said: If you're on **YHWH**'s side, come over here to me. Then all the Levites gathered around him.

²⁷He said to them: This is what **YHWH** God of Israel says: Each of you put on your sword. Go back and forth from one end of the camp to the other and kill your relatives, friends, and neighbors.

²⁸The Levites did what Moses told them and that day about 3,000 people died.

²⁹Moses said: Today you are ordained as **YHWH**'s priests. God gave you a blessing today because each of you fought with your own sons and brothers.

Some theorize that when the more idolatrous people drank the mixture Moses had mixed of the dust of the Golden Calf idol and water, there was a physical result enabling the Levites to identify them.

³⁰The next day Moses said to the people: You have committed *chata'* a serious *gadowl*—great sin *chata'ah*. Now I will go up the mountain to YHWH. Maybe I will be able to make a payment *kaphar*—atonement for your sin *chatta'ath* and make peace with YHWH for your sin.

Moses Begs YHWH to Spare the People

³¹So Moses went back to YHWH and said: These people have committed such a serious sin. They made gods out of gold for themselves. ³²But will you forgive their sin? If not, please wipe me out of the book *cepher* you have written *kathab*.

The writing Moses refers to has not been mentioned previously in the Bible. Is this the Book of Life? The Book of Life is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible but only 8x in the NT. Most think Moses is saying: YHWH, if you are going to consume the people, then consume me also.

³³YHWH answered Moses: I will wipe out of my book whoever sins against me. ³⁴Now, go. Lead the people to the place I told you about. My Messenger will go ahead of you. But when I punish, I will punish them for their sin.

³⁵So YHWH killed people because they had Aaron make the calf.

YHWH Assures Moses That He Will Have Mercy on Israel

^{33:1} Then YHWH said to Moses: You and the people you brought out of Egypt must leave this place. Go to the Land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with an oath, saying: I will give it to your descendants.

²I will send a Messenger *mal'ak*—angel ahead of you and I will force out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. ³Go to that land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not be with you *'alah*—go up *qereb*—midst, because you are impossible to deal with and I would destroy *kalah*—consume you on the way.

God has previously told Moses that his angel would precede them:

[I'm going to send a Messenger in front of you to protect you on your trip and bring you to the place I have prepared. **Exodus 23:20**]

⁴When the people heard this bad news, they acted as if someone had died. No one wore any jewelry.

⁵**YHWH** had said to Moses: Tell the Israelites: You are impossible to deal with. If I were with you, I might destroy you at any time. Now take off your jewelry and I'll decide what to do with you. ⁶After they left Mount Horeb, the Israelites no longer wore their jewelry.

Moses Symbolically Separates YHWH from the Israelite Camp

⁷Now Moses used to take a new tent and set it up far outside the camp. He called it the Tent of Meeting. Anyone who was seeking **YHWH's** will used to go outside the camp to the Tent of Meeting. ⁸Whenever Moses went out to this new tent, all the people would rise and stand at the entrances to their tents and watch Moses until he went in.

⁹As soon as Moses went into the tent, the column of smoke would come down and stay at the entrance to the tent while **YHWH** spoke with Moses. ¹⁰When all the people saw the column of smoke standing at the entrance to the tent, they would all bow with their faces touching the ground at the entrance to their own tents.

¹¹**YHWH** would speak to Moses personally, as a man speaks to his friend. Then Moses would come back to the camp, but his assistant, Joshua, son of Nun, stayed inside the tent.

Moses Wants God to Demonstrate That He Really Forgives the People

¹²Moses said to **YHWH**: You've been telling me to lead these people, but you haven't let me know whom you're sending with me. You've also said: I know you by name, and I'm pleased with you. ¹³If you really are pleased with

me, show me your ways so that I can know you and so that you will continue to be pleased with me. Remember: This nation is your people.

¹⁴YHWH answered: My presence *paniyim*-face will go with you, and I will give you peace *nuwach*-rest.

¹⁵Then Moses said to him: If your presence *paniyim* is <not> going *halak* with us, don't make us leave this place *'alah*-carry up. ¹⁶How will anyone ever know you're pleased *chen*-grace with your people and me unless you go *yalak* with us? Then we will be different *palah*-separated from all other people on the face of the earth.

¹⁷YHWH answered Moses: I will do *'asah* what you have asked because I am pleased *chen*-grace with you and I know *yada'* you by name.

Moses Asks God to Show Him His Glory

¹⁸Then Moses said: Please let me see *ra'ah* your glory *kabowd*.

¹⁹YHWH said: I will let all my goodness *tuwb* pass *'abar* in front of you, and there I will call out my name YHWH. I will be kind *chanan* to anyone I want to. I will be merciful *racham* to anyone I want to.

This is the strongest statement in the Bible of God's sovereignty.

²⁰But you can't see *ra'ah* my face *paniyim* because no one may see *ra'ah* me and live *chay*.

²¹Then YHWH said: Look, there's a place near me. Stand by this rocky cliff.

²²When my glory passes by, I will put you in a crevice in the cliff and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³Then I will take my hand away and you'll see my back, but my face must not be seen.

YHWH Writes His Commands on Two More Stone Tablets Reinstating the Covenant with the People

^{34:1}YHWH said to Moses: Cut two more stone tablets like the first ones and I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets which you

smashed. ²Be ready in the morning. Then come up on Mount Sinai and stand in my presence on the top of the mountain. ³No one may come with you or even be seen anywhere on the mountain. Even the flocks and herds may not graze in front of this mountain.

⁴So Moses cut two more stone tablets like the first ones. Early the next morning he went up on Mount Sinai, as YHWH had commanded him carrying the two stone tablets.

⁵YHWH came down in a cloud and stood there with him and called out his name YHWH.

God Describes His Characteristics to Moses

⁶Then he passed in front of Moses calling out: YHWH, YHWH, a compassionate *rachuwmm*—merciful and merciful *channuwmm*—gracious God, patient *'arek 'aph*—long suffering, always faithful *'emeth* and ready to forgive *rab*—abundant *cheeced*—loving kindness. ⁷He continues to show his love *cheeced* to thousands of generations, forgiving wrongdoing, disobedience, and sin.

Notice that God's *cheeced* is the only attribute of his mentioned twice.

He never lets *cheeced* the guilty go unpunished, punishing children and grandchildren for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation.”

⁸Immediately, Moses knelt, bowing with his face touching the ground. ⁹Then he said: Adonay, please go *yalak qereb*—among with us. Even though we are impossible to deal with, forgive *calach* our sin and the wrong we have done, and accept us as your own people *nachal*—inheritance.

YHWH Makes His Covenant with Israel Again

¹⁰YHWH said: I'm making my Covenant *beriyth* again. In front of all your people I will perform miracles that have never been done in any other nation in all the world. All the people around you will see how awesome these miracles are that I will perform for you.

YHWH Summarizes His Commandments

¹¹Do everything that I command today. Then I will force the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites out of your way. ¹²Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you're going. This will prove to be a trap to you.

¹³But tear down their altars, crush their sacred stones, and cut down their poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah. ¹⁴Never worship any other god, because **YHWH** is a God who does not tolerate rivals. In fact, he is known for not tolerating rivals.

¹⁵Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in that land. When they chase after their gods as though they were prostitutes and sacrifice to them, they may invite you to eat the meat from their sacrifices with them. ¹⁶Then your sons will end up marrying their daughters. When their daughters chase after their gods as though they were prostitutes, they'll lead your sons to do the same thing.

¹⁷Never make an idol.

¹⁸You must celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you must eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, because in that month you came out of Egypt.

¹⁹Every first male offspring is mine, even the firstborn males of all your livestock, whether cattle, sheep, or goats. ²⁰It will cost you a sheep or a goat to buy back the firstborn donkey. If you don't buy it back, then you must break the donkey's neck. You must buy back every firstborn of your sons.

No one may come into my presence without an offering.

Again God Mentions the Sabbath

²¹You may work six days, but on the seventh day you must not work. Even during the time of plowing or harvesting you must not work on this day.

²²You must celebrate the Festival of Weeks with the first grain from your wheat harvest, and the Festival of the Final Harvest at the end of the season.

²³Three times a year all your men must come into the presence of the Master, **YHWH** God of Israel. ²⁴I will force nations out of your way and will expand your country's borders. No one will want to take away your land while you're gone three times a year to **YHWH's** festivals.

²⁵Never offer the blood of a sacrifice to me at the same time you offer anything containing yeast. No part of the sacrifice at the Passover Festival should be left over in the morning.

²⁶You must bring the first and best of the produce harvested from your soil to the house of **YHWH** your God.

Never cook a young goat in its mother's milk.”

²⁷Then **YHWH** said to Moses: Write down these words, because on the basis of these words I'm making a Covenant to Israel and to you.

²⁸Moses was there with **YHWH** 40 days and 40 nights without food or water. He wrote on the tablets the words of the Covenant, the ten commandments.

Moses Returns to the People with a Glowing Countenance

²⁹Moses came down from Mount Sinai, carrying the two tablets with God's words on them. His face was shining from speaking with **YHWH**, but he didn't know it.

³⁰When Aaron and all the Israelites looked at Moses and saw his face shining, they were afraid to come near him. ³¹Moses called to them so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him. Then Moses spoke to them. ³²After that, all the other Israelites came near him, and he commanded them to do everything **YHWH** told him on Mount Sinai.

³³When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴But whenever Moses went into **YHWH's** presence to speak with him, he took

off the veil until he came out. Whenever he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵they would see that Moses' face was shining. Then Moses would put the veil back on until he went in again to speak with YHWH.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is perhaps the greatest disaster Israel ever faced. The second greatest disaster was when the Babylonians destroyed the Jerusalem Temple in 586 BC – 700 years later. Imagine, less than three months after coming out of Egypt, the Israelites disobeyed the God who had delivered them and worshiped an idol en masse.

They broke their Covenant with God that Moses had carefully put in their minds through an elaborate ceremony of first reading the Torah, then having the people confirm their acceptance of the Covenant by saying three times: *We will do all YHWH has said*, then sprinkling them with blood, then conducting a Covenant meal on the mountain with the priests and the leaders of the people where they saw YHWH.

The next step was for Moses to receive the Ten Commandments written on two stone tablets by the finger of God and to receive the instructions to construct the Wilderness Tabernacle. So Moses went up the mountain and was with God for 40 days and 40 nights.

Suddenly, God commanded Moses to leave him as the people were having a pagan festival in the camp below worshipping a Golden Calf idol. Moses is furious, throws down the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them by the finger of God breaking them and symbolically breaking the Covenant the people and God had just made.

Then he burns the idol, mixes the powder with water, and makes the people drink it. The idolaters become physically different. Moses then berates Aaron who acts like a fool. Moses himself then calls the Levites to slay them and 3,000 people die. Moses waits a night to allow his temper to cool down. Then he tells the people we will attempt to convince the Lord to forgive the people. Does he again leave Aaron and Hur in charge or does he give charge to Joshua?

Moses then pleads with God to forgive the people. God gives in slowly. Moses is very concerned. Is God really forgiving the people? God tells Moses to get ready to go to Canaan. **Exodus 32:35** says YHWH killed people. Were additional people killed by God other than the 3,000 killed by the Levites?

After Moses returned to the camp, he set up a tent outside the Israelite camp he called the Tent of Meeting. There Moses went to speak with God. All the Israelites watched as Moses went

to this tent and they worshiped. In this way, they saw God had not cut himself off from them completely, although they were separated from him.

Finally, God tells Moses to cut two more stone tablets and come up the mountain so he can write on them again. Here God first speaks of his attributes to Moses disclosing that his *cheed*, his loving kindness, is his greatest attribute. Then God summarizes his Torah and gives Moses the two tablets of stone.

When Moses came down the mountain his face was shining. Whenever Moses spoke with God, his face shown. God was working through his prophet.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. We are very disappointed in Aaron. How can God choose this man as Israel's first High Priest and his sons as the subsequent High Priests? God must know this man's heart. Was he an idolater or simply weak? As for Aaron saying a Golden Calf simply jumped out of the firewhat do we make up about that?
2. God spent a long time with Moses giving him the plans for the Wilderness Tabernacle -40 days and 40 nights. Didn't God know the people would soon rebel against him? Why then did he spend all this time detailing the plans?
3. Would God really have consumed the people and begun again with another people? If he did this, wouldn't he have been breaking his Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Why did God want to continue with these people?
4. How discouraged Moses must have been. It really took a great deal of courage for him even to go back up the mountain and intercede for the people with God. What was in his mind as he climbed back up the mountain?
5. Moses was very concerned that God really would not forgive the people. The long dialogue proves this. Yet God simply says: Lead the people to Canaan. My angel will be with you. **Exodus 32:34**. Why did Moses pursue this asking further: You've been telling me to lead these people but you haven't let me know whom you're sending with me. **Exodus 33:12**
6. Moses asks: If your presence is not going with us, don't make up leave this place. **Exodus 33:15**. In the previous verse God said: My presence will go with you, and I will give you peace. In the Scripture text, the word *not* does not appear. What is Moses asking God?
7. In **Exodus 19:6**, God declares that if the people obey him and keep the Covenant, they will become a nation of priests. Does Moses declaration of the Levites as God's ordained priests in **Exodus 32:29** now prevent all the people of the nation from being priests?

8. This is a great test for Moses as leader and mediator for the people. Will he abandon his people and allow God to make him the leader of a new people? What did Moses learn from this incident?

9. Instead of interceding for the people, Moses could have cursed them as David did. Remember that Moses has a terrible temper which eventually prevented him from entering the Promised Land. **Numbers 20:12**

Pour your rage on them. Let your burning anger catch up with him. Let their camp be deserted and their tents empty. Let their names be erased from the Book of Life. Do not let them be listed with righteous people. **Psalm 68:24-25,28.**

What allowed Moses to hold his rage in check here?

10. When Moses came down the mountain, he built a Tent of Meeting outside the camp. What were the Israelites supposed to learn from this? How had their relationship with God been changed? Had Moses relationship with God been changed by this incident?

11. How did God's revelation of his characteristics – the glory of God – change Moses' relationship with God. How did Moses' interpret God's attribute of *cheved*?

12. When Moses brings down the two tablets of stone writing with the Lord's finger showing that God has renewed the Covenant, why doesn't Moses conduct a second Covenant ceremony and sprinkle the people with blood a second time?

13. What was God teaching the people about his relationship with Moses when the people saw Moses' face shining? The Hebrew word *qaran* meaning *shining* means *horns* in **Psalm 69:31**. That is why some artists show Moses with horns.

14. Did the people of Israel genuinely repent of their sin in worshiping the Golden Calf idol? Did they ever worship other gods again? When?

EXTRA CREDIT

Did God command Moses to kill the 3,000 Israelites? We would like to have had Moses tell us this. Otherwise, Moses was murdering people without God's consent? We know Moses had a furious temper. Would have done this on his own initiative?

Session Eleven

The People Finally Begin Building the Wilderness Tabernacle

Rules about the Sabbath

^{35:1} Moses assembled the whole Israelite community and said to them: These are the things **YHWH** has commanded you to do: ²You may work for six days, but the seventh day is a holy Day of Rest, a day when you don't work. It is dedicated to **YHWH**. Whoever does any work on this day should be put to death. ³Never light a fire in any of your homes on this Day of Rest.

The word *Sabbath* appears 15x in Exodus. This is the last time it appears in the book. It previously appeared just before God gave instructions to build the tabernacle in Chapter 31. What is Moses attempting to emphasize when he constantly repeats God's command to keep the Sabbath Day holy?

The People Contribute Their Wealth

⁴Then Moses said to the whole Israelite community: This is what **YHWH** has commanded: ⁵Choose something of your own to give as a special contribution to **YHWH**. Let everyone who is willing bring this kind of contribution to **YHWH**: gold, silver, and bronze, ⁶violet, purple, and bright red yarn, fine linen, goats' hair, ⁷rams' skins dyed red, fine leather acacia wood, ⁸olive oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet-smelling incense, ⁹onyx stones, and other precious stones to be set in the High Priest's ephod and breastplate.

The Craftsmen for the Tent

¹⁰Have all the skilled craftsmen among you come and make everything **YHWH** has commanded: ¹¹the Inner tent, the Outer tent, and Cover, along with the fasteners, frames, crossbars, posts, and sockets, ¹²the Ark with its poles, the Throne of Mercy and the canopy over it, ¹³the Table with its poles, all the dishes, the Bread of the Presence,

¹⁴the Lamp Stand used for the light with its utensils, its lamps and the olive oil for the lamps, ¹⁵the Altar for Incense with its poles, the anointing oil, the sweet-smelling incense, the Screen for the entrance to the Tent, ¹⁶the Altar for Burnt offerings with its bronze grate, its poles, and all its accessories, the Basin with its stand,

¹⁷the curtains for the courtyard, the posts, bases, and the Screen for the entrance to the courtyard, ¹⁸the pegs for the Tent and the courtyard with their ropes, ¹⁹the special clothes worn for official duties in the Holy Place — both the holy clothes for Aaron the priest and the clothes for his sons when they serve as priests.

²⁰Then the whole Israelite community left Moses. ²¹Those who were willing and whose hearts moved them came and brought their contributions to **YHWH**. The gifts were used to construct the Tent of Meeting, to pay other expenses, and to make the holy clothes.

²²All who were willing — men and women alike — came and brought all kinds of gold jewelry: pins, earrings, signet rings, and pendants. They took these gifts of gold and offered them to **YHWH**.

²³Those who had violet, purple, or bright red yarn, fine linen, goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, or fine leather brought them. ²⁴Those who could give silver or bronze brought it as their contribution to **YHWH**. Those who had acacia wood that could be used in the construction brought it. ²⁵All the women who were skilled in spinning yarn brought violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and fine linen, which they had made by hand. ²⁶All the women who were willing and had the skill spun the goats' hair.

²⁷The leaders brought onyx stones and other precious stones to be set in the High Priest's ephod and breastplate. ²⁸They also brought the spices and the olive oil for the lamps, the anointing oil, and the sweet-smelling incense. ²⁹Every Israelite man and woman who was willing brought all these items to **YHWH** as a freewill offering. They brought these items to be used to make everything **YHWH** had commanded through Moses.

³⁰Then Moses said to the Israelites: **YHWH** has chosen Bezalel, son of Uri and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah. ³¹**YHWH** has filled Bezalel with the **Spirit of God**, making him highly skilled, resourceful, and knowledgeable in all trades. ³²He's a master artist familiar with gold, silver, and bronze. ³³He knows how to cut and set stones and how to work with wood. He's an expert in all trades.

³⁴Also, **YHWH** has given Bezalel and Oholiab, son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan the ability to teach others. ³⁵**YHWH** has made these men highly skilled in all trades. They can do the work of jewelers, carpenters, and designers. They know how to embroider violet, purple and bright red yarn on fine linen. They know how to weave yarn on a loom. They can do all kinds of trades. They are master artists.

36:I So Bezalel and Oholiab will do the work as **YHWH** has commanded. They will do this with the help of every other craftsman to whom **YHWH** has given the necessary skills and talents. They will know how to do all the work for constructing the Holy Place.

²Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every other craftsman to whom **YHWH** had given these skills and who was willing to come and do the work.

Excess Contributions

³Moses turned over to them all the contributions the Israelites had brought for the work of constructing the Holy Place. But the people still kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning. ⁴Finally, all the skilled craftsmen who were working on the holy place stopped what they were doing. They all came to Moses. ⁵They said: The people are bringing much more than we need for doing the work **YHWH** commanded us to do.

⁶So Moses gave instructions to have the following message announced all over camp: No man or woman needs to make anything more to give as their special contribution to the Holy Place. Then the people stopped bringing gifts. ⁷The material they had was more than enough to do the job.

The Tent

⁸All the skilled craftsmen among the workers made the Inner Tent with ten sheets made from fine linen yarn and violet, purple, and bright red yarn. An angel design was creatively worked into the fabric. ⁹Each sheet was 42 feet long and 6 feet wide — all the same size. ¹⁰Five of the sheets were sewn together and the other five were also sewn together. ¹¹Then they made 50 violet loops along the edge of the end sheet in each set, ¹²placing the loops opposite each other. ¹³They also made 50 gold fasteners. They used them to link the two sets of sheets together so that the Inner Tent was a single unit.

¹⁴They made 11 sheets of goats' hair to form an Outer Tent over the Inner Tent. ¹⁵Each of the 11 sheets was 45 feet long and 6 feet wide. ¹⁶Five of the sheets were sewn together into one set, and the remaining six into another set. ¹⁷Then they made 50 loops along the edge of the end sheet in each set. ¹⁸They also made 50 bronze fasteners to link the inner tent together as a single unit. ¹⁹They made a cover out of rams' skins that had been dyed red for the Outer Tent, and over that they put a cover made of fine leather.

The Framework for the Inner Tent

²⁰They made a framework out of acacia wood for the inner tent. ²¹Each frame was 15 feet long and 27 inches wide, ²²with two identical pegs. They made all the frames for the inner tent this same way. ²³They made 20 frames for the south side of the Inner Tent. ²⁴Then they made 40 silver sockets at the bottom of the 20 frames, two sockets at the bottom of each frame for the two pegs.

²⁵For the north side of the inner tent they made 20 frames ²⁶and 40 silver sockets, two at the bottom of each frame. ²⁷They made six frames for the far end, the west side. ²⁸They made two frames for each of the corners at the far end of the Inner Tent. ²⁹They were held together at the bottom and held tightly at the top by a single ring. Both corner frames were made this way. ³⁰There were eight frames with 16 silver sockets, two at the bottom of each frame.

³¹They also made crossbars out of acacia wood. Five were for the frames on one side of the inner tent, ³²five were for those on the other side, and five were for the frames on the far side of the Inner Tent, the west side. ³³They made the middle crossbar so that it ran from one end to the other, halfway up the frames. ³⁴They covered the frames with gold and made gold rings to hold the crossbars. They also covered the crossbars with gold.

The Canopy Over the Holy of Holies

³⁵They made the Canopy out of violet, purple, and bright red yarn and fine linen yarn. An angel design was creatively worked into the fabric. ³⁶They made four posts of acacia wood for it and covered them with gold. They made gold hooks for the posts, and they cast four silver bases for them.

The Screen at the Entrance to the Outer Tent

³⁷They made a Screen out of fine linen yarn for the entrance to the Outer tent. It was embroidered with violet, purple, and bright red yarn. ³⁸They also made five posts with hooks for hanging the screen. They covered the tops of the posts and the bands with gold, but the five bases for the posts were made of bronze.

The Ark of the Covenant

^{37:1}Bezalel made the Ark out of acacia wood 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ²He covered it with pure gold inside and out and put a gold molding around it. ³He cast four gold rings for its four feet, two rings on each side. ⁴Then he made poles out of acacia wood and covered them with gold. ⁵He put them through the rings on the sides of the Ark in order to carry it.

⁶He made the Throne of Mercy out of pure gold 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. ⁷Then he made two angels out of hammered gold for the two ends of the throne of mercy, ⁸one on each end. He formed the angels and the Throne of Mercy out of one piece of gold. ⁹The angels had their wings spread above

the Throne of Mercy, overshadowing it. They faced each other looking at the Throne of Mercy.

The Table of Shewbread

¹⁰ He made the Table out of acacia wood 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ¹¹ He covered it with pure gold and put a gold molding around it. ¹² He made a rim 3 inches wide around it and put a gold molding around the rim. ¹³ He cast four gold rings for it and fastened the rings to the four corners, where the four legs were. ¹⁴ The rings were put close to the rim to hold the poles for carrying the Table. ¹⁵ These poles were made out of acacia wood and were covered with gold. ¹⁶ For the Table he made plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers to be used for pouring wine offerings. All of them were made out of pure gold.

The Lamp Stand

¹⁷ He made the lamp stand out of pure gold. The lamp stand, its base, and its shaft, as well as the flower cups, buds, and petals were hammered out of one piece of gold. ¹⁸ Six branches came out of its sides, three branches on one side and three on the other. ¹⁹ Each of the six branches coming out of the lamp stand had three flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, with buds and petals. ²⁰ The lamp stand itself had four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a bud and petals. ²¹ There was a bud under each of the three pairs of branches coming out of the lamp stand. ²² The buds and branches were hammered out of the same piece of pure gold as the lamp stand.

²³ He made the seven lamps, the tongs, and the incense burners out of pure gold. ²⁴ The lamp stand and all the utensils were made out of 75 pounds of pure gold.

The Golden Altar for Incense

²⁵ He made an Altar out of acacia wood for burning incense. It was 18 inches square and 36 inches high. The horns and altar were made out of one piece

of wood. ²⁶He covered all of it with pure gold — the top, the sides, and the horns — and he put a gold molding around it. ²⁷He made two gold rings and put them below the molding on opposite sides to hold the poles for carrying it. ²⁸He made the poles out of acacia wood and covered them with gold.

²⁹He also had a perfumer make the holy oil to be used for anointing and for the pure, sweet-smelling incense.

The Altar for Burnt Offerings

^{38:1} He made the Altar for Burnt Offerings out of acacia wood $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet square and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. ²He made a horn at each of its four corners. He made the four horns and the altar out of one piece of wood covered with bronze.

³He made all the utensils out of bronze: pots, shovels, bowls, forks, and incense burners.

⁴He made a grate for the Altar out of bronze mesh, and put it under the ledge, halfway up the altar. ⁵He cast four rings to hold the poles — one for each of the four corners of the bronze grate. ⁶He made the poles out of acacia wood and covered them with bronze. ⁷He put the poles through the rings on the sides of the Altar to carry it. He made the Altar out of boards so that it was hollow inside.

The inside under the grate was then filled with dirt and coals were placed on top.

The Bronze Basin

⁸He made the Basin and stand out of the bronze mirrors given by the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

The Courtyard

⁹He also made the courtyard. The south side of the courtyard was 150 feet long and had curtains made out of fine linen yarn, ¹⁰hung on 20 posts set in 20 bronze bases. The hooks and bands on the posts were made of silver.

¹¹The north side was also 150 feet long with 20 posts and 20 bronze bases. The hooks and bands on the posts were made of silver.

¹²The west side was 75 feet long and had curtains hung on 10 posts set in 10 bases. The hooks and bands on the posts were made of silver. ¹³The east side, facing the rising sun, was 75 feet wide.

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Each side of the entrance to the courtyard was $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide with curtains hung on three posts set in three bases. ¹⁶All the curtains around the courtyard were made out of fine linen yarn. ¹⁷The bases for the posts were made of bronze. The hooks and bands on the posts were made of silver. The tops of the posts were covered with silver. And the bands on all the posts of the courtyard were made of silver.

The Screen for the Entrance to the Tent of Meeting

¹⁸The Screen for the entrance to the courtyard was made of violet, purple, and bright red yarn embroidered on fabric made from fine linen yarn. It was 30 feet long and $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, just like the curtains of the courtyard. ¹⁹It was hung on four posts set in four bronze bases. The hooks and bands on the posts were made of silver. The tops of the posts were covered with silver.

²⁰All the pegs for the Tent and the surrounding courtyard were made of bronze.

The Amount of Gold, Silver, and Bronze Used

²¹This is the amount of material that was used for the Tent – the Tent of the Words of God's Covenant. An inventory was ordered by Moses and carried out by the Levites under the direction of Ithamar, son of the priest Aaron.

²²Now Bezalel, son of Uri and grandson of Hur, from the tribe of Judah, made everything YHWH had commanded Moses. ²³He was a jeweler, carpenter, designer, and he knew how to embroider violet, purple, and bright red yarn on fine linen. His assistant was Oholiab, son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan.

²⁴The total amount of gold from the offerings presented to **YHWH** used in building the holy place weighed over 2,193 pounds, using the standard weight of the Holy Place.

²⁵The silver collected when the census of the community was taken weighed 7,544 pounds, using the standard weight of the holy Place. ²⁶This came to one-fifth of an ounce per person, for everyone counted who was at least 20 years old: 603,550 people. **Numbers 2:32.** ²⁷He used 7,500 pounds of silver to cast the 100 bases for the Holy Place and the Canopy. This was 75 pounds per base. ²⁸He used 44 pounds of silver to make the hooks and bands for the posts and the coverings for the tops of the posts.

²⁹The bronze from the offerings presented to **YHWH** weighed 5,310 pounds. ³⁰With this he made the bases for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the Bronze Altar with its bronze grate and all its accessories, ³¹the bases all around the courtyard, the bases for the entrance to the courtyard, all the pegs for the Tent, and all the pegs for the surrounding courtyard.

The Holy Clothes

30:1 From the violet, purple, and bright red yarn they made special clothes worn for official duties in the Holy Place. They also made the holy clothes for Aaron. They followed **YHWH**'s instructions to Moses.

The Ephod

²They made the ephod out of fine linen yarn and gold, violet, purple, and bright red yarn. ³They hammered the gold into thin sheets and cut them up. They twisted the gold into threads, which they creatively worked into each strand of the violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and throughout the fine linen. ⁴They made two shoulder straps attached at the top corners so that the ephod could be fastened. ⁵They made the belt that is attached to the ephod out of the same fabric. They followed **YHWH**'s instructions to Moses.

⁶They mounted the onyx stones in gold settings and engraved on them the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷Then they fastened them on the shoulder straps of the ephod as a reminder of who the Israelites are. They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

The Breastplate

⁸They made the breastplate as creatively as they made the ephod. It was made out of gold, violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and of fine linen yarn. ⁹It was folded in half and was 9 inches square. ¹⁰They fastened four rows of precious stones on it. In the first row they put red quartz, topaz, and emerald. ¹¹In the second row they put turquoise, sapphire, and crystal. ¹²In the third row they put jacinth, agate, and amethyst. ¹³In the fourth row they put beryl, onyx, and gray quartz.

The stones were mounted in gold settings. ¹⁴They corresponded to the 12 sons of Israel, by name, each stone engraved like a signet ring with the name of one of the 12 tribes.

¹⁵For the breastplate they made chains out of pure gold, twisted like ropes. ¹⁶They made two gold settings and two gold rings and attached the two rings to the top two corners of the breastplate. ¹⁷They fastened the two gold ropes to the rings at the top corners of the breastplate. ¹⁸They fastened the other ends of the ropes to the two settings on the shoulder straps of the ephod so that the breastplate hung in front of it.

¹⁹They made two gold rings and fastened them to the other two corners of the breastplate on the inside edge next to the ephod. ²⁰They made two more gold rings and fastened them to the bottom of the shoulder straps on the front of the ephod. This was close to the seam just above the belt of the ephod. ²¹Then they fastened the breastplate by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet cord. So the breastplate was attached just above the belt of the ephod and was held in place. They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

Other Clothes for Aaron and His Sons

²²They made the robe that is worn with the ephod, woven entirely of violet yarn. ²³The opening in the center of the robe had a finished edge like a leather collar all around it to keep it from tearing. ²⁴On the hem of the robe they made pomegranates of violet, purple, and bright red yarn, and fine yarn.

²⁵They made bells out of pure gold and fastened them in between the pomegranates all around the hem of the robe. ²⁶A gold bell alternated with a pomegranate all around the hem of the robe that is worn by Aaron when he serves as priest. They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

²⁷They wove inner robes out of fine linen for Aaron and his sons. ²⁸They also made the High Priest's turban and the other beautiful turbans out of fine linen. They made the undergarments and belt out of fine linen yarn. ²⁹The belt was embroidered with violet, purple, and bright red yarn. They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

³⁰They made the flower-shaped medallion – the holy crown – out of pure gold and engraved on it as on a signet ring: Holy to YHWH. ³¹They fastened a violet cord to it and tied it on top of the turban. They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

The Tent Is Brought to Moses

³²So all the work on the Inner Tent – the Tent of Meeting – was now done. The Israelites followed all YHWH's instructions to Moses. ³³Then they brought everything to Moses – The inner Tent, the Outer Tent and all its furnishings, the fasteners, frames, crossbars, posts, sockets, ³⁴the Cover made of rams' skins dyed red, the Cover made of fine leather, the Canopy over the Ark,

³⁵The Ark containing the Words of God's Covenant with its poles and the Throne of Mercy, ³⁶the Table with all the dishes, the Bread of the Presence, ³⁷the pure gold Lamp Stand with its lamps in a row and all its utensils, the olive oil for the lamps, ³⁸the Gold Altar, the anointing oil, the

sweet-smelling incense, the Screen for the Entrance to the Tent,³⁹ the Bronze Altar with its bronze grate, its poles, and all its accessories, the Basin with its stand,

⁴⁰The curtains for the courtyard, the posts, bases, and screen for the Entrance to the Courtyard, the ropes and pegs—all the equipment needed for the service of the Inner Tent – the Tent of Meeting – ⁴¹the special clothes worn when serving as priests in the Holy Place – both the holy clothes for the priest Aaron and the clothes for his sons when serving as priests. ⁴²The Israelites had done all the work following YHWH's instructions to Moses.

⁴³Moses inspected all the work and saw that they had followed YHWH's instructions. So Moses blessed them.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses has now come down from the Tent of Meeting after meeting with God. How long he was there with God we aren't told. He assembled the community and said: This is what YHWH has commanded.

Select something of your own to give to YHWH as a special contribution to the building of the Wilderness Tabernacle and its worship. Then have all the skilled craftsmen in the community come and construct the tabernacle and its furnishings according to the instructions and pattern God has given me.

The people brought their contributions. They brought so much Moses had to tell them to stop. Now follows the exact same instructions God gave to Moses while he was on the mountain with God before the Golden Calf incident. Note that several times Moses says: They followed YHWH's instructions to Moses.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- I. Given the time it takes to write a scroll, why are these instructions repeated here in all their detail? It seems to be because Moses wants the reader to realize the Covenant was really renewed. Is there another reason?

Session Twelve

God Instructs Moses to Set Up the Wilderness Tabernacle and to Begin Worship

Instructions for Setting Up the Tent

40:1 Then YHWH said to Moses: ² Set up the Tent of Meeting on the first day of the first month of the *second* year. ³ Place the Ark containing the Words of my Covenant inside it, and hang the canopy over the Ark. ⁴ Bring in the Table, and arrange everything on it. Bring in the Lamp Stand and set up the lamps. ⁵ Put the Gold Altar for incense in front of the Ark. Put up the screen at the entrance to the Tent.

⁶ Put the bronze Altar for Burnt Offerings in front of the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ⁷ Put the Basin between the Tent of Meeting and the Altar, and put water in it.

⁸ Set up the surrounding courtyard and put up the screen at the entrance to the courtyard. ⁹ Take the anointing oil, and anoint the Tent and everything in it. In this way you will dedicate it and all its furnishings. Then it will be holy. ¹⁰ Anoint the Altar for Burnt Offerings and all the utensils. In this way you will dedicate the Altar, and it will be most holy. ¹¹ Anoint the Basin laver and stand and they will be dedicated.

¹² “Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and wash them. ¹³ Then dress Aaron in the holy clothes and anoint him. In this way you will dedicate him to serve me as priest. ¹⁴ Have his sons come forward, and dress them in their linen robes. ¹⁵ Anoint them to serve me as priests, as you anointed their father. Their anointing will begin a permanent priesthood for them for generations to come.

This anointing ceremony will be described in detail in **Leviticus 8:1-30**

Moses Sets Up the Tent

¹⁶ Moses did everything as **YHWH** commanded him. ¹⁷ So the Tent was set up on the first day of the first month of the second year after the Israelites had left Egypt.

The Wilderness Tabernacle was erected exactly one year after the Passover Event in April.

¹⁸ When Moses set up the Tent, he put the sockets in place, put up the frames, inserted the crossbars, and set up the posts. ¹⁹ He spread the Outer Tent over the Inner Tent and put the cover on top. Moses followed **YHWH**'s instructions.

²⁰ He took the Words of God's Covenant the Ten Commandments, and put them in the Ark of the Covenant. He put the poles on the Ark and placed the throne of mercy on top of the Ark.

²¹ Then he brought the Ark into the Tent and hung the canopy over it to mark off where the Ark was. Moses followed **YHWH**'s instructions.

²² Moses put the Table of Shewbread in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the Tent outside the canopy. ²³ He arranged the Bread of the Presence on the table in **YHWH**'s presence, following **YHWH**'s instructions.

²⁴ He placed the Lampstand in the Tent of Meeting opposite the table, on the south side of the tent. ²⁵ He set up the lamps in **YHWH**'s presence, following **YHWH**'s instructions.

²⁶ Moses put the Gold Altar in the Tent of Meeting in front of the canopy. ²⁷ He burned sweet-smelling incense on it, following **YHWH**'s instructions.

²⁸ Then he put up the screen at the entrance to the Tent.

²⁹ He put the Altar for Burnt Offerings at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. He sacrificed burnt offerings and grain offerings on it. Moses followed **YHWH**'s instructions.

³⁰ He put the Basin between the Tent of Meeting and the Altar and put water in it for washing. ³¹ Moses, Aaron, and his sons used this water to wash their hands and feet. ³² They would wash whenever they went into the Tent of Meeting or whenever they approached the Altar. Moses followed YHWH's instructions.

³³ He set up the courtyard around the Tent and the Altar and put up the screen at the entrance to the courtyard. Finally, Moses finished the work.

YHWH Comes to the Wilderness Tabernacle and Fills It With His Glory

³⁴ Then the column of smoke covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of YHWH filled the Tent. ³⁵ Moses couldn't go into the Tent of Meeting, because the smoke settled on it and the glory of YHWH filled the Tent.

Finally, God was dwelling among his people as Immanuel. **Isaiah 7:14** His redemption was complete. He had delivered them from bondage in Egypt. He had adopted them as his special treasure – his Chosen People. He had made a Covenant with them and now has blessed them with his presence in the pillar of cloud of smoke or fire. Now God will tell Moses how to worship him in the Book of Leviticus.

³⁶ In all their travels, whenever the column of smoke moved from the Tent, the Israelites would break camp. ³⁷ But if the column didn't move, they wouldn't break camp. ³⁸ So YHWH's column stayed over the Tent during the day and there was fire in the smoke at night. In this way all the Israelites could see the column throughout their travels.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

God has completed what he had intended:

Have them make me a holy place -- sanctuary -- that I may dwell among them.
Exodus 25:8

God has revealed a pattern by selecting Israel as his Chosen People to have a relationship with him in faith, worship, and obedience – a horizontal relationship with him and a vertical relationship with the people in the congregation. Israel will reveal this relationship as they bless all the people of the earth by their holy living – living as God created them to live in his Creation.

God's grace stands out in Exodus as he chooses her, directs her, chastens her, and blesses her. Apart from God's grace, human actions fail again and again. Yet God leads Israel toward his goal of extending his glory in his Creation, slow but sure.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God uses Moses' story of the Israelites' journey with God as a pattern for each believer in God. God calls us, he gives us the faith to believe in him, and then sends us on a journey of sanctification, to become like the person he has created us to be, in his image, the *image deo*.

Genesis 1:27

- a. How did God call Moses? How did God call the Israelites? How did God call Pharaoh?
 - b. How did God give Moses the faith to believe in him? How did God give faith to the Israelites? How did God give Pharaoh the faith to believe in him?
 - c. How did Moses begin a journey to become more like God's image? How did the Israelites begin a journey to become more like God's image? Why didn't Pharaoh begin a journey to become more like God's image?
2. List the number of times Moses goes up Mount Sinai to talk to God. What happens after each visit?
 3. List your significant trips up the mountain to meet with God. What happened after each visit?
 4. What have you learned about God's sovereignty. Why is understanding this important to your relationship with God?
 5. What is God's greatest attribute? Why is understanding this important to your relationship with God.
 6. What do the Israelites learn about **YHWH** prior to arriving at Mount Sinai?
 7. What do the Israelites learn about **YHWH** before they leave Mount Sinai?

EXTRA CREDIT

What do the Israelites learn that Pharaoh has given up by not accepting God's gift of faith? Will this Pharaoh ever come to Canaan to fight the Israelites?

Epilogue

The Song of Moses

Lovingly, you will lead the people you have saved. Powerfully, you will guide them to your holy dwelling. People will hear of it and tremble. The people of Philistia will be in anguish. The tribal leaders of Edom will be terrified. The powerful men of Moab will tremble. The people of Canaan will be deadly afraid. Terror and dread will fall on them. Because of the power of your arm, they will be petrified until your people pass by, O YHWH, until the people you have purchased pass by.

You will bring them and plant them on your mountain, the place where you live, O YHWH, the Holy Place you built with your own hands, O YHWH.

YHWH will rule as King forever and ever. **Exodus 15:13-18**

The Book of Exodus is only one part of the story of God's people covering a little more than one year. The Book of Leviticus will also cover that same year. The Book of Numbers begins at the end of that same year and continues for the next 40 years.

In the second month of the second year after they had left Egypt, the Israelites travel to Canaan. But they don't believe YHWH has the power to enable them to defeat the Canaanites living there so they wander in the wilderness for forty years and then return to Kadesh Barnea, the place they could have entered the land promised to Abraham's descendants.

Before he dies, there Moses summarizes their journey written down in the Book of Deuteronomy. Moses dies, and Joshua takes over. The people cross the Jordan River and for the next 20 years are led by Joshua as they defeat the Canaanites as described in the Book of Joshua. Joshua dies and the people are led only by their tribal leaders. But God raises up judges for them. Things are up and down as described in the Book of Judges.

The last judge Samuel now appears. Beginning in the Books of 1 & 2 Samuel, we have the story of the United Monarchy of King Saul and King David, each reign lasting forty years. Beginning in the Book of First Kings, we have the story of the reign of King Solomon for the next 40 years.

After Solomon died, the United Kingdom split in two. Ten tribes formed the Northern Kingdom of Israel while the Solomon's son and his descendants ruled the Southern Kingdom

Judah. The Northern Kingdom lasted 203 years until the Assyrians came and made it a part of the Assyrian Empire.

The Southern Kingdom with two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, lasted 339 years until the Babylonians came, destroyed Jerusalem, the Temple, and carried the remaining people to captivity in Babylon. This story is contained in Chapters 12-22 of 1 Kings and the entire Book of 2 Kings.

This concludes what are called the Former Prophets.

In the Latter Prophets, we learn of the history of the Divided Kingdom in Isaiah, Jeremiah and some of the Book of the Twelve: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah.

In the Writings are 1 and 2 Chronicles that begin with the death of King Saul and conclude with the destruction of Jerusalem, a period of 424 years.

The history of Israel after that has to be gleaned from the Latter Prophets and the Writings. We learn some of the Exile from Daniel and Esther, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. We learn of the return from the Exile to Jerusalem from Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

What is called the Hebrew Bible ends historically about 400 BC with the Book of Malachi.