

Exodus Chapters 1–8: THE BIRTH OF A NATION

- ◆ The princess and the baby Moses
- ◆ How God uses the problems of life for good
- ◆ God speaks to Moses from a burning bush
- ◆ 10 plagues from God defeat Pharaoh
- ◆ The Jewish Passover explained
- ◆ Delivery from slavery in Egypt
- ◆ Meat and bread from God
- ◆ The people of Israel prepare to meet their holy God
- ◆ God's Ten Commandments for a holy life

THIS BOOK tells us how God fulfilled the promise He made to Abraham nearly 4000 years ago. God said that Abraham would have a very large family that would live in Canaan, the country we now call Israel. This book begins when the family of Jacob lived in Egypt. Jacob was Abraham's grandson whom God later called Israel. This story tells how God took them out from Egypt to Canaan. It tells us of God's plan for the people of Israel (later known as Jews). It tells us the importance of the Passover and the Ten Commandments for Jews and Christians today.

MANNA PUBLICATIONS supply Bible teaching commentaries written by Fred Morris. For many years Fred, and his wife Lorna, travelled round the world teaching and preaching. When they returned home they wrote these notes for printing and selling wherever there was a need for basic foundational Christian teaching.

THIS REVISED UK edition is written in easy-to-read Worldwide English which will add understanding and also speed up translation into other languages. It gives basic teaching for all readers plus additional notes for Bible students, teachers and pastors.

THESE BOOKS are to use on your own or to study in a group. They will teach you God's truth. They will help you to know God's Son, Jesus Christ. They will help you to talk about your faith in God. They will stop you from going the wrong way in life. They will help to lead you closer to Christ. They provide food for life.

WE PRAY that you may have a new peace and purpose in life as you read the Bible and use these commentaries.

Manna Publications

FOUNDATIONAL BIBLE TEACHING COMMENTARIES

'The secret of God's Kingdom has been given to you' (Mark 4:11)



THE BIRTH OF A NATION

Moses Part 1

A Bible Teaching Commentary in
easy-to-read Worldwide English
for personal or group study

by Fred Morris



Exodus Part 1

Chapters 1 to 20

To the reader or leader

These Bible commentaries explain the truth about God's Word in a way that is easy to read and understand. You can use these books to study the Bible on your own or with others in a group. In a group study, each person should have his or her own book and a Bible if possible.

There is a lot of information in this book. Please study it slowly and thoughtfully. Ask God to help you apply the things you learn to your own life and situation.



Now Read: Where you see this, it means you or your group leader should always read the Bible passage first before reading the words in this book.



Talk about: Where you see this, there are questions that can be asked in a group study. They also help the reader to understand the Bible verses.



Where you see this sign, the question requires more time and meditation.



Multiple choice questions. Where you see this, there are questions with three possible answers; some are right answers, some are wrong answers. These questions help you to think carefully about what you are reading. The answers to these questions are given at the back of the book. You can use the questions as a personal test.



Where you see **ruled boxes**, the information inside is mainly for Bible students, teachers and preachers.

Additional Bible readings are there to give you important information. God will use them to speak to you. This is why you should check all readings now or later and use them for study at home. Some readings are from the Old Testament (OT), which we call 'the holy writings'. That is the part of the Bible written before Jesus Christ lived on this earth. Some readings are from the New Testament (NT), the part of the Bible which was written after Jesus Christ lived on this earth.

Manna Bible commentaries give God's truth as a foundation for all believers. The people leading the study should add applications and experiences from their own Christian life and culture.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Exodus chapters 1 to 6

1. b; 2. a; 3. c.

Exodus chapters 7 to 13

4. c; 5. b; 6. a & b; 7. c.

Exodus chapters 14 to 20

8. a & c; 9. a & c; 10. c; 11. b.

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to save us from sin. Most of all, He wants us to be a holy people so that we are set apart to worship a holy God.

The amazing story of Moses and the Passover, the exodus from Egypt and the Ten Commandments teaches us a lot about God and about ourselves. We have tried to help you believe in the miracles of God and to understand the need to fear God, to respect God, to trust God, to obey God and His instructions for daily living, to know God, to love God and to worship God.

God's Ten Commandments guide us but also remind us that we are sinners, and therefore need Jesus Christ as our Saviour. He is the Son of God who died to save us. The Law, which is God's truth, cannot save us since we are all sinners. So without the Holy Spirit to guide us, none of us can please God. Praise God for all that Jesus has done to give us a new life with Him and to know the love and peace of Yahweh, Almighty God, and creator of all things. It is by the grace and mercy of God alone that we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 1:17; Ephesians 2:5,8).

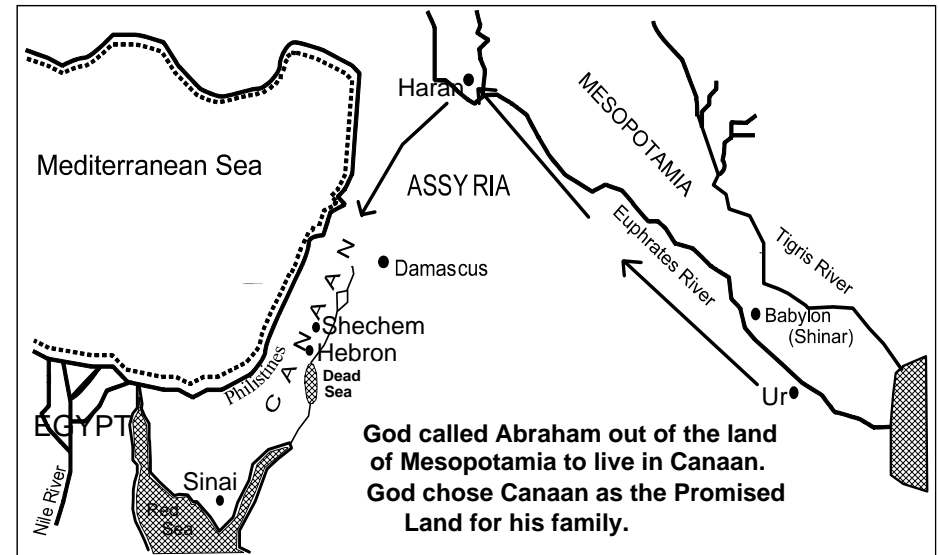
What joy it is when we are forgiven, to enter into His holiness surrounded by His love, peace and provision! What joy it is to serve others filled with God's love, purpose and power! May this be the experience of all who read these writings.

Moses was saved from death as a baby in order to save his people from slavery. He was called to do this by Almighty God, even though he murdered an Egyptian and ran away for 40 years leaving everything behind. His power in Egypt was destroyed but God gave him His own power to destroy the king of Egypt and his men. Through the people Moses saved, the holiness and purpose of God was shown to the world and written down for us to read. It was through these same people, the Jews, that Jesus the Messiah was also saved from death as a baby and came to live, suffer, die and rise from death to save the world from the slavery of sin. Amen.

INTRODUCTION: Exodus Part 1, Chapters 1 to 20

Exodus, the second book of the Bible, tells about the families of the 12 sons of Jacob when they moved from Egypt. Jacob was the grandson of Abraham. God gave the new name of Israel to Jacob.

God sent Abraham from the city of Ur, to Haran, then to Shechem in Canaan. God promised Abraham that his family would be given the land of Canaan. But God also told Abraham that his family would live in Egypt for 400 years before living in the land He promised them. This happened nearly 4000 years ago during the life of Abraham's grandson, Jacob, called Israel.



There was good food in Egypt and good grass for their sheep. At first, the people of Israel were happy and had many children. They began to forget about God's promises. They lived in peace in the land of Egypt. During this time, the children of Israel grew to over one million people. After 400 years in Egypt, God knew it was time for them to move back to the Promised Land of Canaan.



Exodus 1:1–22

THE SUFFERING OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

God did not forget His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 2:24). Already, one of His promises had come true (Genesis 15:5; 17:6; 22:18): now there was a very great number of people who came from

Abraham's son Isaac and his grandson Jacob (Israel) who had 12 sons. One day the family of Israel would be 'as many as the stars in the sky' and 'the grains of sand on the seashore' (Genesis 22:17). There were so many of them in Egypt that they 'filled the land' (Exodus 1:7) in the north of Egypt.

God made another promise to Abraham: 'Your children who live after you will be strangers in a country that does not belong to them [Egypt]. They will become slaves. They will be treated badly' (Genesis 15:13). Now it was the end of the 400 years. It was time for the people of Israel to leave Egypt and go to live in the Promised Land. God made life very hard for the people so that they wanted a change.

God made a special way for them all to leave. The first chapters of Exodus tell us how God made His promises come true through suffering (see opposite page). It tells how God saved them from being slaves in Egypt and made them ready to live a holy life in the Promised Land. God tells why He arranged the exodus – the coming out of Egypt – in chapter 9 verse 1: 'Let My people go so that they will worship Me.' Through this exodus, God made the people of Israel into a great nation. He set them apart to worship the one true God, Yahweh. This is the story of the birth of the nation of Israel – God's special people (Exodus 6:7).

Note: Bible names often change over the years. Hebrews means the same as Israelites or children of Israel or people of Israel. (Israel was Jacob's new name which was given to him by God, Genesis 32:28.) Later they were called Jews.

THE BLESSINGS AND CURSES OF GOD

After many years in Egypt, there was a new Pharaoh (king). He was afraid of the people of Israel (Exodus 1:9). He said, 'There are so many Israelites, they might join our enemies and fight against us.'

So he made them his slaves. The men were forced to make bricks to build cities (1:14). The women were forced to work hard in the fields. The Egyptians in charge of the slaves were cruel. Did the Hebrews suffer? Did they cry? Did they die? Yes! But God was with them. He promised to save them. Instead of fearing the Egyptians and the gods and evil spirits of Egypt, the Hebrews learned to fear Yahweh, the God of Abraham, who is the creator of all things.

Meanwhile, the number of Hebrews kept growing so Pharaoh tried to kill all the Hebrew baby boys (1:16, 22).

This is the first time that the people of Israel were persecuted. Ever since that time, many kings and many nations tried to destroy the Jews, but God punished those nations. God warned Abraham that this would happen. "I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you" (Genesis 12:3). At the same time, God promised that "all people on earth will be blessed by you! This happened when Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, lived and died on earth to save the world from sin.



MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Based on Exodus chapters 14 to 20

Please choose the correct answers, a, b or c. There could be one, two or three correct answers to each question. Answers are given at the end of the book.

8. How did the people of Israel get away from the Egyptians?
 - a. They hid behind the cloud.
 - b. They ran away.
 - c. They marched through the sea without getting wet.

9. What could the people of Israel do with the manna?
 - a. Boil it and bake it.
 - b. Keep it for six days.
 - c. Pick it for six days.

10. How did the people of Israel get water?
 - a. God sent them back to Elim.
 - b. They saved it from the River Nile.
 - c. Moses provided water from a rock.

11. Moses told the people —
 - a. to worship an altar of silver or gold.
 - b. to obey God's commandments.
 - c. to build a high altar to worship God.

CONCLUSIONS

The Bible tells us that God reminded the People of Israel more than 100 times that He saved them from the land and the gods of Egypt. He told them again and again, 'You must not do what the people of Egypt do' (Leviticus 18:3). God prepared Moses to lead the people out of Egypt. And God prepared the people to be led by Moses. God showed them miracles and He gave them instructions for living. He prepared them for a new life of holiness in the Promised Land. He prepared them to trust Him and to worship Him during many troubles.

The Ten Commandments reminded the people that they must be a special people, holy and different from other people. They must love and worship only Yahweh, Almighty God. They must also love and respect other people. They say what is right and what is wrong. They speak about the old life of sin. They remind the people that God had saved them and set them apart to be holy. Today they help us remember how much God wants

Commandment Eight: DO NOT STEAL

'Do not steal' (20:15). See Matthew 19:21.

Commandment Nine: DO NOT LIE

'Do not accuse anyone falsely' (20:16). See Matthew 12:36.

Commandment Ten: DO NOT ENVY

'Do not wish for anything that belongs to your neighbour' (20:17). See Luke 12:15.

Remember that laws cannot save us from sin. God's laws show us what is right and what is wrong. But they cannot take away our sin – only Jesus can do that. The Law helps us to know that we need Jesus Christ in our lives.

The Law helps us to obey God; but Jesus enables us to know God personally by saving us from sin.

A NEW BEGINNING TO WORSHIP GOD

God gave the Ten Commandments to show the people how to worship and obey Him. He wanted them to live clean holy lives. He wanted them to love Him and each other. This was a new beginning for the children of Israel as a holy people of God. They must build only simple altars to burn their sacrifices (20:24-26). They must not worship God by building tall altars with steps to go up, nor carved out of stone. This might cause some people to worship the building instead of God. When we worship God, we must not make or do anything that prevents us from worshipping Him. Nor must we wear clothes that attract/distract others away from worshipping God and cause them to sin (20:26).



Talk about this:

1. Explain how the tenth commandment helps us to fulfil all the other nine commandments.
2. Why do we say the Ten Commandments do not save us from sin?
3. Why were the Ten Commandments an important new beginning for the people of Israel?



How can we prepare ourselves, our meetings and our buildings for true worship of Almighty God?



Why does God let people suffer?

Why did God let the People of Israel suffer? Many people lived and died before God sent Moses to stop their suffering. The older people remembered the good times before they were slaves. Now they wanted God to help them. But if they were not slaves and became happy again, would they want to leave Egypt? If they did not suffer they might want to stay in Egypt. They became unhappy and this made them ask God to help them. They prayed to God and He answered their prayers. This was part of the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham.

The people of Israel were chosen by God for a special purpose. But many of them had forgotten that God had told Abraham that they would be slaves in Egypt. They forgot that God had promised Abraham that He would have a large family and take them to the Promised Land of Canaan.

They were now a nation of over one million people. But Egypt was not the land God promised them. At the end of 430 years in Egypt, God made them want to leave Egypt. Soon they would be a nation who worshipped Him in the land He had chosen.

Now we can understand why God let them suffer – it worked for good in their lives. We, too, can learn from this. We must never forget that God has a purpose for us. When we suffer, we must call out to God and ask Him to save us. We must always trust God and remember that He loves us. We must not be angry with God. We must ask Him to help us and show us how our troubles are working for good. Read Romans 8:28.

God understands if we are unhappy or angry at times. We must remember that God loves us but many troubles happen to us in this world through personal sin or accidents or ignorance or the sins and persecution of others.

Christians are also God's special people. But we, too, have troubles. Remember that God does not stop loving us when we have troubles. He always hears us when we call out to Him. He is always with us and will help us. Many people are enemies of Jews and Christians. Our enemies do bad things to us because they are afraid of the truth and power of God.

Sometimes, we must stay where we are and suffer. Sometimes, we must be ready to go where God wants us to go and not stay in the wrong place. We must trust God. We know He hears and understands and saves His people. He does not always answer our prayers quickly. But we must not stop trusting God. And when He helps us to understand what to do, we must be ready to act quickly. We must be ready for change!

Paul says we should learn to rejoice in our suffering (Romans 5:3). Read more about suffering in our Bible commentary on Romans Part 1.



Talk about this:

1. How did the Hebrews become slaves (1:7–11)? What wicked orders did the new king give (1:16,22)?
2. When life was easy for the children of Israel, did they remember God? When life was hard for the children of Israel, did they remember God? Are the answers still the same today?
3. What did God do to prepare the children of Israel for the big changes He wanted for them?



Exodus 2:1–25

THE PRINCESS AND THE BABY MOSES

It was now time for God to punish the Egyptians, to save His people and take them to the Promised Land of Canaan. So He made a way for one Hebrew boy to live in the king's palace! His name was Moses. Later, God used him to talk to the king and tell him to set the people free.



God saved baby Moses and God saved baby Jesus

How wonderful! God used a princess in Egypt to keep baby Moses safe. This was a miracle because:

- she knew the baby belonged to the people of Israel (2:6);
- she knew her father said his soldiers must kill all the Hebrew baby boys (1:22);
- she let the Hebrew mother of the baby care for him (2:7,8).

So Moses grew up in the king's palace but kept his mother's faith in the God of Abraham. He did not worship the Egyptian gods. Moses was the right person to talk to the king and also to lead the Hebrew people. God planned this for Moses and for the people of Israel.

So God used the people of Egypt to keep baby Moses safe. He was the one to save Israel. God also used the people of Egypt to keep baby Jesus safe. He became the Saviour of Israel and of the whole world. Read Matthew 2:13,14. Moses and Jesus were both saved when a wicked king ordered all the Israelite baby boys to be killed (Exodus 1:22; Matthew 2:16). This is one of the ways that Moses is a picture or type of Jesus Christ.

Baby Moses and baby Jesus were saved in Egypt from death by a miracle of God. Jesus actually met Moses on a mountain top near Jerusalem 1,500 years later (Luke 9:30). They spoke together about the fulfilment of God's salvation plan for the whole world through the death and resurrection of Jesus in Jerusalem. No wonder that Satan tried to kill baby Moses and baby Jesus! Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God and is the promised Messiah for the Jewish people. Through Him the whole world can know the salvation of God.



What is the connection between 'fear of God', 'knowledge of God' and 'love of God'?



Exodus 20:1–26

GOD'S TEN COMMANDMENTS

On Mount Sinai, God gave to Moses the Law that His people must obey. This includes the Ten Commandments. The laws of many countries in the world are based on these commandments.

For 430 years the Hebrew people were slaves in Egypt. They had no written laws. God wanted to make them become a holy people to obey His laws (Leviticus 19:2). The first four commandments are about God. The last six are about people. The Law is like a mirror. The mirror doesn't change you. It shows you how you are and what God wants to change in your life.

Before God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, He reminded the people (20:2) that they were slaves in Egypt. God saved them to be His special people. He promised this to Abraham nearly 500 years before. Now He told them how to live like holy people. The list below includes the teaching of Jesus.

Commandment One: WORSHIP GOD ONLY

'I am the LORD your God' (20:2,3). See Matthew 4:10.

Commandment Two: NO IDOLS

'Do not make statues ... or worship them (20:4–6). See Luke 16:13.

Commandment Three: RESPECT GOD'S NAME

'Do not use the name of the LORD your God in wrong ways' (20:7). See Matthew 5:34.

Commandment Four: REMEMBER GOD'S DAY

'Remember the Sabbath day. Keep it holy. Do all your work in six days' (20:8–11). See Mark 2:27-28.

Commandment Five: RESPECT YOUR PARENTS

'Respect your father and mother, so you will live a long time' (20:12). See Matthew 10:37.

Commandment Six: DO NOT KILL ANYONE

'Do not murder' (20:13). See Matthew 5:21,22.

Commandment Seven: NO SEX OUTSIDE MARRIAGE

'Do not commit adultery' (20:14). See Matthew 5:28.



A New Beginning: The Fear and Love of God

What does it mean to 'fear God'? Should we be afraid of God? In Exodus 19:9-24 God tells Moses the people must fear Him. The people must get ready, wash their bodies and their clothes, and start to think about meeting their holy God. Their desire must be for God alone. Then they must come near the holy mountain to listen to what He says. But they must not touch the mountain or they will die because God is powerful.

The Bible says 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge' (Proverbs 1:7). For the people of Israel, the fear of God was the start of getting to know Him personally.

This was a new beginning for the people of Israel. They were the special people that God promised to Abraham. And this was a new beginning between God and the whole of mankind. For through their Messiah, Jesus, the whole world can have a new beginning. It is the story of God's love. It is the story of God's desire for righteous people to worship Him and to live at peace and to rule with justice.

The apostle Stephen describes the history of the Jewish people and their Messiah in Acts 7:2-53. Read about this in Manna Bible Commentary Acts Part 1.

Why did they have to get ready to meet God? God told them:

- You will be God's special people (v.5).
- You will serve as God's priests (v.6).
- You will be a special nation (v.6).

They must learn to fear and obey God in order to know God. In this way they would understand God more and then experience His love and His provision.

Today, we live in New Testament times. The New Testament teaches us to repent and be baptised and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Then we can worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

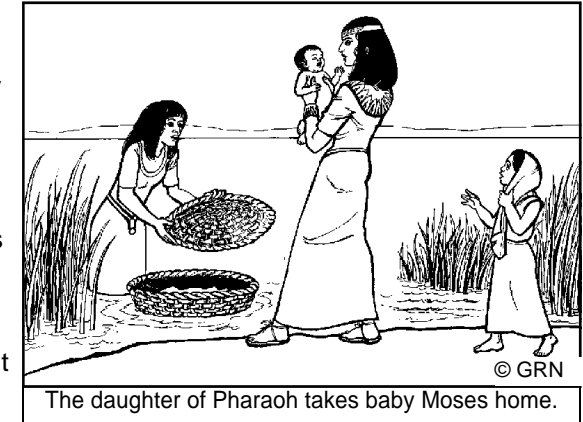
There must be no pushing in front of others. No one is more important than anyone else. Leaders and people must be ready to worship God together as equals before God. The Kingdom of God includes the least and the greatest.



Talk about this:

1. Why did God show Himself in this way so the people were afraid?
2. Why did God tell the people to get ready before they came to meet Him?
3. What did Jesus do so we are able to come near to meet God?
4. What does it mean to Christians to become 'God's special people' and 'to serve as priests' and to be 'a special nation'?

When Moses was a baby, his parents trusted God to keep him safe. They hid him in a basket in the River Nile. King Pharaoh's daughter found him. This was a miracle of God, for Moses grew up in the king's palace. He went to the best Egyptian schools but he did not forget what his mother taught him through the Spirit of God.



The daughter of Pharaoh takes baby Moses home.

People thought Moses was the 'son of Pharaoh's daughter' but when he was a man he wanted people to know he was a Hebrew (Hebrews 11:24). He wanted to belong to God. That was more important than being rich and living in the king's palace. The king's people did not worship the Almighty God of Jews and Christians whose special name is Yahweh.

In the palace, the Egyptians taught Moses about the stars, language, writing and numbers. But all the time he trusted God and did not trust in the Egyptian gods.

MOSES, RUNS AWAY

Moses knew that the Egyptians made Hebrew slaves work very hard. One day he went out to see for himself (Exodus 2:11). He saw an Egyptian master beating a Hebrew slave. He was very angry. He killed the Egyptian, then hid the man's body in the sand.

The next day Moses saw two Hebrews fighting. Boldly he tried to stop the fight. Perhaps he thought that his own people would know that God wanted him to help them (Acts 7:25).

'Why are you hitting a Hebrew when you are brothers?' he asked the man.

'Who made you in charge of us? Do you want to kill me like you did the Egyptian yesterday?' the man asked.

Then Moses was afraid. He now knew that someone had told Pharaoh he had killed an Egyptian. He then knew that Pharaoh would try to kill him (Exodus 2:15). So he ran away from Egypt. He knew that he had lost the respect of the Egyptians and had failed to gain the respect of the Hebrews.

In this mysterious way, through the next 40 years, God changed a murderer into a leader of God's people.

MOSES BECOMES A SHEPHERD

Moses went to Arabia, on the other side of the Red Sea. When he came to the land of Midian he was safe. He was a long way from Pharaoh. Moses was also a long way from the land where he was born and from the Hebrew people God wanted him to help.

He sat by a well to rest. Some shepherd girls came to the well to get water for their sheep, but other shepherds came and pushed them away. Moses was bold with the men. He made them wait and he helped the shepherd girls get water for their sheep first (2:19).

The father of the girls was a chief called Jethro. They ran home and told their father about the man who saved them from the rough shepherds.

'Where is he? Why did you leave him? Ask him to come and eat,' their father said to the girls (2:20).

Moses liked this kind chief and said, 'I will work for you,' so Jethro showed Moses how to care for the sheep and where to find water and food for them. Later, Moses married Jethro's daughter Zipporah. They had two sons.

In Egypt, Moses was a prince in Pharaoh's palace, but now in Midian he was a poor shepherd. He did not even own the sheep; they belonged to chief Jethro.

The Bible says that people are like sheep who go astray (Isaiah 53:6). Sheep are slow, and weak and often wander away. Moses must not lose them or let wild animals eat them. He found grass and water for them. He cared for Jethro's sheep on the hills of Midian for forty years.

So Moses became a shepherd of sheep. Later, he became a shepherd of people. Pastors are like shepherds. They care for the people (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Corinthians 4:15).

God cares too. He listens and answers when His people call out to Him. Notice the **verbs** in these verses: a) God **heard** their groaning; b) He **remembered** His covenant with Abraham; c) He **looked** on the Hebrews in mercy; d) He **cared** about them (Exodus 2:24-25, also read Exodus 34:6). But God often waits a long time until everyone and everything is ready.



Talk about this:

1. Why did God save the baby Moses from the River Nile?
2. Why did Moses not worship the gods of Pharaoh?
3. Why did Moses run away from Egypt?



Jethro and the people of Midian

Midian was the son of Abraham and Keturah (Genesis 25:1,2). The people of Midian, Midianites, lived in Arabia, south of Canaan, the land God promised to the people of Israel. They were traders who met many travellers, so Jethro knew about Egypt and the Hebrews and the God of Moses. Abraham, who lived a long time ago, was a forefather of both Moses and Jethro. The Midianites later became robbers and gave the people of Israel much trouble (Judges 6:4).

clothes and not sleep with their wives (19:10,15). They must let the desire to worship God be stronger than the desire to have sex. Their thoughts must be on God alone.

'On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning... a thick cloud over the mountain, and the sound of a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp shook with fear. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with Almighty God...' (19:16,17). The people were afraid.

There will be another loud trumpet blast when Jesus Christ appears to all nations (Matthew 24:30,31, 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

'Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him' (Exodus 19:19). Again God told Moses, 'Warn the people not to cross over the border or come near to touch the mountain. If they do they will die' (19:21,24).

The people knew it was Almighty God who spoke to Moses. They knew that He created the world and saved His special people from Egypt.

This is what God told the people of Israel to do. They must get themselves ready to meet God and then:

- Be quiet – no pushing in front of the others (v.21,24).
- Priests, leaders and people must all be ready together (v.22,24).



Every believer a priest

God told Moses 'You will become a kingdom of priests to serve Me' (Exodus 19:6). God wants all believers to be priests and no special clothes are required. The sacrifice of Jesus made it possible for all believers to be God's holy people. We can come to God at any time, tell him what we need and what others need. He will listen to us. 'You will be holy priests. You will offer spiritual sacrifices. God will accept them because of what Jesus Christ has done' (1 Peter 2:5).

The people, at the time of Moses, could not come close to God to talk to Him (Exodus 19:21). Only the priests that God chose could come near to God (19:22). Aaron, the chief priest, was the only one who could go near to the top of Mount Sinai with Moses to talk to God (19:24). Joshua was later allowed to go near to God (24:13).

God has made us holy by the sacrifice of Jesus and so all believers can now come near to God. This is a great blessing. Through Jesus we meet God. God raised Jesus from death and His Spirit now lives in all who believe in Him. Now His Spirit works through us. This is why we say all Christians are priests (1 Peter 2:9-10). We can come close to God at any time. We can pray to God for ourselves and for other people. We do not need the power of another priest to help us to come close to God. God gives us this power to come to Him through the blood of Jesus. This enables us to pray to God for ourselves and for others at any time in any place.

teach them and share meals with them and with the leaders (18:12). Like Jethro, they may be with us only for a short time (18:27).

So Moses chose good men to lead the people. Each man led a group of ten people. Then he chose other men to lead five groups, other men to lead ten groups and other men to lead 100 groups. He taught them how to live to please a holy God. The leaders over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens of people judged the small problems (18:21). When there were difficult problems they went to ask Moses for his advice.



Talk about this:

1. What was the method used to solve disputes (18:16)?
2. Is Jethro's plan good for choosing leaders today (18:21–22)?
3. Which people did Moses choose as leaders (18:21)?
4. Jethro told Moses what to do. What was the result (18:23)?



How can we encourage new believers? How can they encourage us?



Exodus 19:1–25

GOD MAKES THE PEOPLE READY TO MEET HIM

The people of Israel came to Mount Sinai and camped in front of the mountain. It was now three months since leaving Egypt. Mount Sinai was a high mountain. People call it a holy mountain, but God does not live in a mountain or in anything that He has made. He is much greater. He is all-powerful and has control over everything He has made.

God spoke to Moses from the mountain and told him, 'This is what you are to say to the family of Jacob (Israel)...' (19:3).

'Tell them, "If you obey Me and keep My Covenant, then of all the nations you will be My special treasure. You will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a special nation"' (19:5–6).

Moses went to the people. He called the leaders of Israel and told them what God said. All the people answered Moses, 'We will do everything the Lord says' (19:8).

So Moses went back up the mountain and told God what they said. The people could not see God. There was a thick cloud on the mountain like smoke, but they heard God speaking to Moses (Deuteronomy 4:11–14). Moses was their leader. They must listen to him, and trust him and Aaron, the chief priest.

God told Moses, 'Go to the people and make them ready... Make borders so the people don't come too near to the mountain...' (19:10–12). The people had to be 'clean' before they could worship God. No Israelite could come to God without getting ready. This is why they had to wash their

4. How did the boldness of Moses change his life (2:12,13,17)?
5. How did this affect the purpose of God for the people of Israel (2:15,21)?



Why does God use sinners like Moses to fulfil His purposes for the world? Why does God sometimes wait many years before He calls us into His service?



Exodus 3:1–22

GOD SPEAKS TO MOSES

Moses was forty years old when he ran away from Pharaoh's palace and he was in Midian forty years. All this time, the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt. As their lives got harder, they begged God to save them from their cruel masters.

One day God was ready to speak to Moses. Moses led the sheep across a desert, near to Sinai, a holy mountain (3:1). When he looked across, he saw a bush. The bush was on fire, but the bush did not burn away, so Moses went near to look.

'Moses! Moses!' a voice called. 'Here I am,' Moses answered.

Then God spoke to Moses from the bush: 'Do not come any closer. Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground' (3:4–5).

At once Moses turned his face away (3:6). He was afraid to look at the brightness of God's glory in the bush.

When Moses obeyed, God spoke again: 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.'



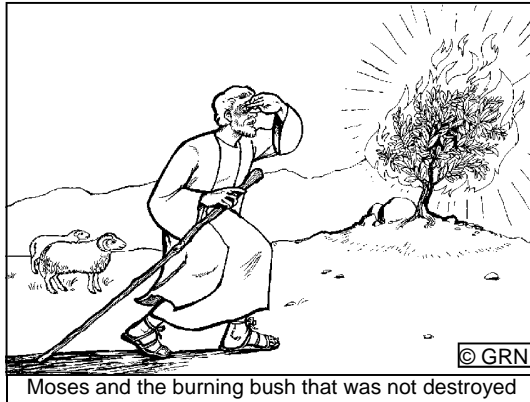
Waiting for God's time

Moses wanted to protect his own people but killed an Egyptian. He broke the moral law of Egypt and the moral law of God. He was a prince of Egypt but he killed a man so had to run away. He was no longer able to lead the Hebrews. He was no longer able to be a prince in Egypt. God's plan for Moses and the Hebrews was delayed. He lived in the desert as a shepherd for 40 years. God waited for the right time.

All that time, the people of Israel were suffering very much and **waiting for God** to set them free. The people of God suffered because of one man's sin.

God forgave Moses. After 40 years, God called Moses to deliver His people who were slaves. He told Moses to go and free His people. God forgives us too, because Christ died for us. But sometimes, because of our sins, or the sins of others, we have to 'live in the desert' and **wait for God** for some years. Because of our sins, others may suffer and have to **wait for God's time** to help them. To God, 40 years is a small time. God gave Moses a second chance after waiting 40 years.

Then God told Moses that He had come down because He was ready to save His people from the Egyptians. He wanted Moses to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt, and to go to Canaan, 'a land full of milk and honey' (3:8). It would be 'a good land'. But it would be a land where evil people lived. Up to 10 tribes lived in Canaan at that time (Genesis 15:19–21).



Moses and the burning bush that was not destroyed

God planned to make the people of Israel into a special nation. They must leave the place promised to them for 400 years and move to the place promised them forever. They must leave behind the gods of Egypt. They must learn to be a holy people, set apart to worship Yahweh, the one true and living God.

As God brought His people out of Egypt, so Jesus Christ brings us out of a life of sin. Men are slaves to sin (Romans 6:6,16). Jesus Christ died on the cross to set us free from the power of sin. When we ask God to save us and we believe in Jesus as our Saviour, God brings us out of the kingdom of darkness, where we are trapped by the power of sin. He brings us into the kingdom of Jesus, a kingdom of light, where we begin a new life as holy people, free to worship Him (Colossians 1:13–14).

God wants us to follow Jesus who will lead us into a new life to worship Him. God wanted the people of Israel to follow Moses into a new life to worship Him. But God warned Moses that the land was filled with evil people. The people of God must learn to overcome evil and be made into a holy



The Special Names of God

God told Moses to use the name Yahweh = the LORD (Exodus 3:15). God's name Yahweh, was so holy that the Hebrews did not say it out loud, or even write it. At that time they wrote the letters YHVH for the name of God.

Because God's name is so holy, instead of YHVH the people often used the word 'Adonai'. In English Bibles we use the word 'LORD' (with capital letters). This is not the same as the word 'Lord'. When you see 'LORD God' in English Bibles it means 'Yahweh God', the one true almighty and living God who created the world. In French Bibles, Yahweh is called the Eternal One or Everlasting God. In Manna books we say 'Almighty God'.

God wanted Moses to know that the almighty, living and eternal God was speaking to him from the burning bush. God also used His own special name 'I AM' (3:14). Before that, God did not tell anyone His special names (6:2).



Talk about this:

1. How did Jethro come to believe in the LORD God (18:8–9)?
2. What did Jethro say to show he believed in God (18:10–11)?
3. What did Jethro do to show he believed in God (18:12)?
4. What did the leaders of Israel do to show they were happy that Jethro believed in God (18:12)?
5. What does it mean to us to eat a meal together 'in the sight of God' (18:12)?



How can we welcome new believers and help them to be strong?

MOSES TRIES TO GUIDE THE PEOPLE

Next day Moses sat down to give guidance to the people, and they stood waiting from morning till evening (18:13). Everyone came to ask Moses about his or her problems. He taught them what God said and asked Him to show each person what He wanted them to do. Moses spoke to God and God spoke to Moses many times, so Moses knew what God wanted. He could teach the people the truth of God. The people could trust Moses for God's guidance.

God gave His people laws, so they knew how to live. They are part of the Jewish Torah, the first five books of the Bible written down by Moses. The earliest laws were about:

- Worship, sacrifices and priests (Exodus 12:2–8, 14–20; 18:12).
- Feasts and feast days (12:14–27; 43-49).
- The first born male (13:2).
- The Sabbath (seventh) day and rest (16:23–26).

And there were many other laws to help the people to live holy lives. (See the Manna book 'Moses part 2' for more information.) But there were many other things that the people wanted to know. So they came to Moses to tell him about their problems. Moses listened first then gave them guidance from God. He did not force his own opinions on the people. He also waited for them to come to him first (18:16).

Jethro saw Moses sitting to teach God's people. He said, 'What you are doing... is too much for you... Teach them the rules and laws, show them the way to live... then choose men who fear God... to serve as judges...' (18:17–22). Jethro also knew it was important for Moses to first seek God's wisdom to do what was right. 'You must speak to God... If that is what God wants...' (18:19,23). Jethro was a new believer yet could understand things clearly. He was given this wisdom from God.

Moses did what Jethro said. Sometimes God gives new believers important things to say to us. We should always listen to new believers and then see if what they say is right. We should encourage new believers, listen to them,

down the story of the battle. God also wanted Joshua to remember how He won the battle against the Amalekites. Joshua became the leader of the people of Israel when Moses died nearly 40 years later.

Some of the Amalekites would live a long time and God wanted Joshua to believe they would all be defeated in the end. (1 Samuel 15:2-3).

God promised He would destroy Amalek. Moses built an altar there to remember their victory. He named it 'The LORD is my Banner' (17:15).



Talk about this:

1. Why did God lead the people of Israel to a place without water (17:7)?
2. What would happen if they went back to Egypt?
3. Why was it important for Israel to win the battle against the Amalekites (13:17)? Why was it important for Joshua (17:14; Joshua 1:1-9)? Why was it important for the people?
4. How did Aaron and Hur help to win the battle?
5. Why did God ask Moses to write everything down (17:14)?



Do your memories of the past help you or hinder you going forward in life? Why doesn't God remove ALL your troubles along the way? Do you trust Him to lead you (17:1)?



Exodus 18:1-27

JETHRO VISITS MOSES

In Midian, Jethro heard about his son-in-law Moses. (See map on page 28) He heard of God's miracles in Egypt and how God made a path through the Red Sea for the people of Israel to cross over.

So he went to meet Moses. Moses told Jethro everything that God did. He also told Jethro how much God loved Israel (18:8). He told Jethro about the good times and the bad times in the desert. In this way Moses was teaching Jethro about the love and the power and the mercy of God. God did these things for His people in Egypt because He loved them. He called them His own special people. Moses praised God and When Jethro heard Moses tell him the story, he too praised God: 'Praise to the Almighty God, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians...' he said.

Jethro believed in the gods of Midian, but he said 'Now I know that Yahweh, the Almighty God, is greater than all other gods.' Moses told him how to worship God and they made a 'burnt offering and other sacrifices' (18:12). The leaders of Israel's tribes ate a meal with Jethro, Aaron and Moses. They knew that God was there with them: they were in His sight.

It is good to meet with family and friends to worship God, to talk about His goodness and to eat a meal together, knowing that God is with you.

people by a loving God. But first, they must learn to trust and obey Him and then gain victory over their enemies through God's power and His love for His people (Psalm 44:3).

MOSES TRIES TO SAY 'NO' TO GOD

'I will strike the Egyptians so that they will let you go to your own land,' God told Moses (Exodus 3:20). But Moses was afraid of Pharaoh and did not want to go back to Egypt.

God told Moses why he must go to Egypt (3:7-9). God wanted Moses to take His people out of Egypt, back to the land promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18). Moses was God's chosen man to lead them. Moses was the only Hebrew who knew and understood the king of Egypt.

'Who am I?' Moses answered. 'How can I do this?' he thought. He wasn't a great prince any more. He was just a poor shepherd. He was good at caring for sheep, not people. Moses was afraid. He killed an Egyptian. God knew this but He still chose Moses to speak to the Pharaoh king and to take the Hebrews out of Egypt. Moses had run away and the Hebrews suffered in Egypt for 40 more years. But now this was God's time. He would not wait any longer.

'I will be with you,' God told him, 'and I will give you a sign... When you bring the people out of Egypt, you will all worship Me here on this mountain...' It was Horeb the mountain of Sinai where Moses was keeping the sheep (3:1,12).

GOD TELLS MOSES MANY THINGS

'I AM WHO I AM,' God told Moses. Yahweh, the Almighty God, is My name forever' (3:14-15).

Before Moses could serve Yahweh, the Great 'I AM', he had to know Him as the One who is always there. He was there in creation, in history, with Abraham, in Egypt with Jacob. And He has all power in heaven and on earth, now and in the future for all time.

But now it was time for God to rescue His people and teach them the meaning of this new name, Yahweh. The people of Israel must know God is Yahweh, the great 'I AM', the 'Almighty God who Saves'. They must also know God's power to bring them out of Egypt. God uses the word 'know' many times in chapters 6 to 11.

Then God next tells Moses some of the things that will happen in Egypt (3:18-22).



Talk about this:

1. Discuss the way God made Moses ready to work for Him:
 - as a baby

- as a young man
- as a shepherd.

2. What made the ground beside the burning bush holy (3:5)?
3. What did God tell Moses to do (3:10)? What did Moses do next? What did God do next?
4. God told Moses about 'the land full of milk and honey'. What kind of land did God mean? Where was this land (3:8; Genesis 15:18)?



What do God's people need to 'know' in their lives to have victory?



Exodus 4:1–18

GOD PREPARES MOSES TO GO TO EGYPT

Moses felt God very near to him. He was afraid and he covered his face from the bright light. Life had been very quiet for Moses and he was not ready to say 'Yes' to God's plan.

God is all-powerful. He could bring His people out of Egypt without Moses, but He did not. He chose Moses to do this great work. And He chose the people of Israel to be His witnesses in the earth, to show the other nations that He is God (Ezekiel 20:5; Isaiah 43:10–13). God speaks to us so we know what is true. We must tell His truth to other people. God gives us His Holy Spirit to help us to do this (Acts 1:8).

God gave Moses three miracles, or signs, to help him trust God:

1. God turned Moses' shepherd's stick into a snake, then back to a stick (Exodus 4:3–4). This showed that God would work miracles through Moses.
2. God gave Moses leprosy and then healed him (4:6–7). This showed God's power to bring sickness as judgement and power to give healing.
3. God told Moses when he poured out some water from the River Nile that it would turn to blood. This showed God's power over blood and water that give life.

God gave these signs to Moses to show that He is greater than anything or anyone else.

Moses knew he must not argue with God any more. But still he was afraid to go back to Egypt so he said, 'Please send someone else instead of me. I cannot speak very well' (4:10,13). Moses had great fear and little faith. He was still afraid because he killed an Egyptian. But God had chosen Moses and prepared him to be the right man to go for Him. So God said that Aaron, the brother of Moses, could go with him. Aaron would speak for Moses (4:16).

Moses made excuses to God :

- I am nobody (3:11).
- The people won't believe me (4:1).

The people of Israel tested God to see if He was with them or not (Exodus 17:7). God answered and gave them a stream of water. It was pure and clean and gave them life.

GOD FIGHTS FOR ISRAEL

The Amalekites lived in the desert of Arabia, near the Negev. This was the first nation to fight Israel after they left Egypt. They were from the family of Esau. (Esau was the twin brother of Jacob whom God renamed 'Israel'.)

Moses sent Joshua and his men to fight the Amalekites. This was Joshua's first battle. Joshua was afraid, but he trusted God. He and his men won the battle with God's help because their leader, Moses, held up 'the rod of God' while they fought.

When Moses got tired, and his hands dropped to his side, the people of Israel began to lose the fight. So Aaron and Hur stood one on each side of Moses and held up his hands (17:12).

God chose his leader, Moses, to help the people win the battle. God could give victory without Moses. But God used Moses to bless the people. If Moses did not hold up the rod, then they did not win. The people saw if they did not trust God and His servant Moses, they would all die in the desert.

Moses held up his rod for them to see while they fought the battle, like holding a flag or banner. It was to show them that Moses trusted in God and that God was in control. They could see Moses on top of the hill holding his rod. Christians must learn from this:

- God gives us leaders to care for His church and we must trust them.
- Church leaders can get tired and need their family and friends to help them.
- Leaders have no power without God to help and guide them.
- They must remember to obey God and do what He tells them.
- Churches must not give up the battle against evil powers and against sin. It is important to win every battle however small.

God knew Moses and Joshua needed to win their first battle. Then they would trust Him when harder things happened. God also knew the people must learn to trust Him and to trust Moses and to trust Joshua. Everyone, including Aaron and Hur, learned to trust God and to help and trust each other.

God wanted the people to remember these important things (17:14). So He told Moses to write



Joshua wins the battle as Moses holds up the rod of God.

The manna fell at night, so they got up early and gathered it. If they tried to keep it to the next day, it spoiled. On the sixth day they gathered enough for two days and this did not spoil on the seventh day (Saturday). Always there was enough for the young and the old and the weak ones. No one had too much; no one had too little (16:17–18).

1500 years later, Jesus spoke about the bread of Moses and called Himself the 'Bread of Heaven' who came to give us everlasting life (John 6:32–35, 48–54, 57–58). 'Those who feed on this bread will live forever.'

God sent manna from Heaven until the people came to Canaan (16:35). This supplied their daily need for bread. The birds supplied their meat. God also guided the people through the desert and supplied their water.



Talk about this:

1. Why is it not good to grumble when we need something (16:8; 1 Corinthians 10:10)? What should we do instead?
2. Can we trust God to give us what we need day by day?
3. What does it mean for us to feed on manna from heaven (John 6:51)?



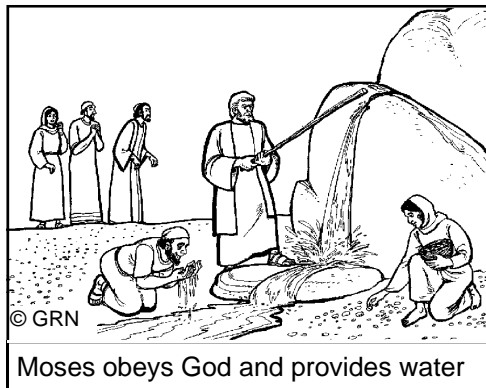
Exodus 17:1–16

THE ROCK IN THE DESERT

The people came to Rephidim, but there was no water there. They were angry and grumbled again at Moses. They wanted to throw stones to kill him but Moses called out to the LORD to help him to know what to say and do (17:4).

Each time that life was difficult in the desert for the people of Israel, they said they wanted to go back to Egypt (14:12; 16:3; 17:3). The LORD God wanted them to trust Him and look forward with hope. He did not want them to go back to slavery. Their memories of Egypt hindered them from going forward.

So God told Moses, 'Take your stick (his shepherd's rod was sometimes called the rod of God) and walk in front of the people' (17:5). I will stand in front of you beside the rock at Horeb. Hit the rock hard and water will come out.' Moses did this so the elders of Israel could see. Later, Israel's hymn writers and prophets wrote songs about this (Psalms 78:15–16; 105:41; Isaiah 48:21).



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Moses obeys God and provides water

- I cannot speak well (4:10).
- Send someone else (4:13).

We, too, can make excuses, but we cannot run away from God and what He wants us to do. God is in charge and He does not change His mind (1 Samuel 15:29). He wants us to say 'Yes' to Him. He wants to give us another chance to obey Him.

God calls every Christian to serve Him. He doesn't tell us about the difficult things that may happen to us – He wants us to trust Him. God wants us to serve Him – to help and to save others. He wants us to say 'Yes' when He asks us to do little things. Then we will say 'Yes' when He asks us to do big things! Sometimes it is difficult to say 'Yes'. It was difficult for Moses. He tried to say 'No' at first.

It does not matter if our faith in God is small. What matters is God's calling to do His work. Our lack of faith in God will let us down sometimes. But God will never let us down. Therefore we must learn to trust Him.

Then Moses asked Jethro, his father-in-law, if he could go to Egypt. It was the custom at that time to ask for permission. Moses didn't tell Jethro that God had told him to go. He said he wanted to see if his relatives were alive. Perhaps he was hoping that Jethro would say 'No'. He was still afraid to trust and obey God. He also knew it would be hard because God said, 'I know that the king of Egypt will not let your people go' (3:19).

Jethro told Moses to go to Egypt and he asked the God of Moses to bless him. So now Moses knew nothing could stop him. He had no more reasons to say 'No' to God.



Talk about this:

1. How do we get ready to say 'Yes' to God?
2. What signs showed God's power to Moses (4:3–9)?
3. How did God show his trust in Moses (4:11–12)?
4. How did Moses show his faith in God (4:1, 10, 13, 18)?



How did Jethro encourage Moses? How should family members support each other to do what is right?



Exodus 4:19–31

GOD DEMANDS HOLINESS AND OBEDIENCE

When Moses decided to go, God began to encourage him. He told him that the people who wanted to kill him were dead (4:19, 21–23). This is just like God! When he calls us to do His work, He does not tell us everything at first – He wants us to obey Him and trust Him one step at a time. When we begin to obey God, He helps us and encourages us along the way.

'Do all these signs for Pharaoh to see,' God told Moses. 'Say to Pharaoh, "Almighty God says, Israel is My firstborn son. Let My son go, so that he can worship Me. If you won't let him go, I will kill your firstborn son"' (4:21–23).

The meaning and fulfilment of this became clear later on.

Zipporah, the wife of Moses, packed their things for the journey. Moses put her and her two sons on a donkey. Moses held 'God's wooden stick in his hand' (4:20). His shepherd's stick was now the rod of God which he would use to show God's power.

On the way to Egypt, Moses nearly died. God stopped him from going to Egypt. Zipporah understood why. It was because Moses had not obeyed God. His family was unholy. He had not circumcised his younger son in the way that God had instructed father Abraham (Genesis 17:9–14).

Quickly she took a sharp stone and cut off the spare skin of the boy's penis. She put it beside Moses. All the male members of Israel's family had this special sign of the Jews in their bodies. They were God's special people. Zipporah did the right thing to save Moses' life and they went on to Egypt.

Circumcision was a special sign. It was a religious law from God. He judged Jews who did not circumcise their children. This is why God stopped Moses.

When a Jewish boy is born, he is born into God's special family and must keep the covenant God made with Abraham. Moses had to learn to obey God and to keep his part of God's covenant. This rule applies only to males in the family of Abraham.

Moses lived in the desert for 40 years but did not live like one of God's special people. He did not obey the law of God at that time. He therefore did not respect God. He was therefore unholy before God. His heart was not right



Trusting God at all times

King David wrote Psalm 37. He said many things to help the people of Israel to be strong. He wanted them to trust God and to worship

Him at all times, even when things seemed wrong (Psalm 37:7–8):

- Be still. Be patient. Wait for the almighty God to act.
- Don't worry when other people get on well.
- Don't worry when they do evil things.
- Don't worry or get angry. It only leads to trouble.

One hundred years later, Azariah, a prophet of God said (2 Chronicles 15:2–4,7):

- The LORD is with you when you are with Him.
- If you really look for Him, you will find Him.
- But if you leave Him, He will leave you.

For a long time Israel didn't know God's Law. But when they were in trouble, they turned to Almighty God. When they did this, they found Him. So be strong and don't give up.



Explain how believing, trusting and obeying God leads us to know Him personally.



Exodus 16:1–36

MANNA FROM HEAVEN

One month after leaving Egypt, they came to a very hot part of the desert called the Desert of Zin.

Day after day they marched through the desert, near Mount Sinai. They soon forgot to trust God. The people were angry with Moses and Aaron: 'You brought us out into the desert to starve us to death,' they said (16:3). They wanted meat to eat. God spoke to Moses and promised to send food that very evening (16:12). Large numbers of birds came (16:13). This provided fresh meat for everybody. They dried some of the meat to eat later.

God also promised food from heaven in the night (16:4). The next morning, God sent this special food from heaven (16:13). We call it 'manna'. It was like coriander seed (Numbers 11:7). Every morning for six days each week the people gathered it into their pots. Then they had to grind the grains, boil them in a pot and make them into cakes (Numbers 11:8).

God told Moses, 'Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.' God wanted His people to rest on the seventh day so on the sixth day He gave them enough food for two days (Exodus 16:28–29).

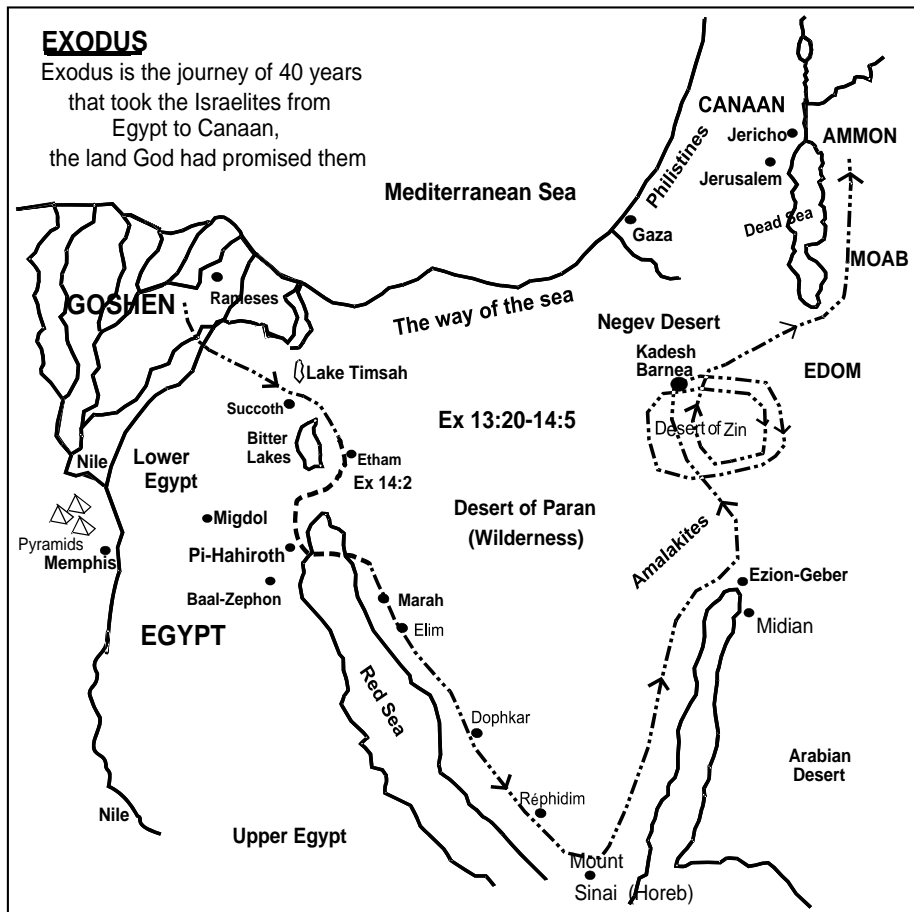


Manna from Heaven: old and new

For forty years in the desert, God gave His people everything they needed. He gave them special bread from heaven called manna. Moses wrote about this. Many years later, other friends of God wrote about this:

'Because You loved them so much, You didn't leave them in the desert. You gave them Your good Spirit to teach them. You didn't hold back Your manna from their mouths. You gave them water when they were thirsty.' (Nehemiah 9:19–20.) 'He opened the doors of the heavens. He rained down manna for the people to eat. Men ate the bread of angels.' (Psalm 78:23–25.)

Later still, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth... He who comes down from heaven is the bread that God gives. He is the one who gives life to the world... I am the bread that gives life. Anyone who comes to Me will never be hungry. Anyone who believes in Me will never be thirsty... The person who believes in Me will live for ever. I am the bread that gives life. Your fathers ate bread in the desert long ago, but they died. Here is bread that comes down from heaven. The person who eats this bread will never die. I am the bread that gives life.' (John 6:32–51, TJB.)



If Israel obeyed God, and listened carefully to Him, He promised to keep them safe from getting sick (15:26) and from other troubles. They must learn to trust God and to ask in faith and not moan in fear.

Soon they came to Elim on the way to Mount Sinai. God blessed them there. The name 'Elim' means 'large trees'. There were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees there; twelve springs for the twelve families of Israel!

Talk about this:

1. How much did the people change (15:1)? Why did they change?
2. Why is verse 2 an important verse in the song of Moses?
3. What does the song of Moses say about trusting God in the future (15:13-18)?
4. Was their trust in God weak or strong (15:24)?

with God. Zipporah did not want Moses to die, so she acted quickly to circumcise their son. His wife saved Moses from God's punishment.

What do we learn from this?

- We must obey God AND live holy lives.
- It is important that husbands and wives lovingly help each other to obey God and to teach their children.

We also learn from this chapter:

- Moses had little faith in God but God had much trust in Moses.
- Moses was slow to obey God but God encouraged him once he started to obey.
- Moses was a sinner with an unholy family and deserved to die. So God stopped Moses and put right the things that were wrong in his life.

This means that God can call us at any time, even if we have little faith or are afraid or have sin and unholy lives. We must be ready to serve God at all times. But we must be ready for God to show us what is wrong in our lives and in our families so that we can repent, be forgiven and then move forward in the truth of God.

Talk about this:

1. When and how did God encourage Moses (4:19)?
2. How did God warn Moses what would happen in Egypt (4:21-23)?
3. How did the wife of Moses save him from unholy lives (4:24-26)? What does this teach us today?

Talk about this:

MOSES MEETS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Aaron had not seen Moses for forty years. Now God sent Aaron to go from Egypt to find his brother Moses. He found him near 'the mountain of God'. Moses told his brother everything that God said (4:28).

Together they went back to Egypt. In Egypt, Moses called all the leaders to a meeting. Aaron told them everything that God said to Moses. Moses told Aaron what to say, and Aaron spoke the words (4:30).

Moses threw his stick down in front of the leaders of Israel and it became a snake. Before it could bite anyone, Moses held it by the tail and it became a stick again. Moses put his hand in his cloak and it became white with leprosy. When he put his hand back in his cloak and took it out, it was clean again. The people saw God heal Moses' hand of leprosy so they believed that God sent him and Aaron to free them from Pharaoh (4:31). They saw God's power and believed.

Many people of Israel prayed for many years, asking God to help them. Now they knew that God heard their prayers, and they worshipped Him.



Exodus 5:1–21

MOSES AND AARON GO TO PHARAOH

Then Moses and Aaron went to king Pharaoh. They told him, ‘This is what Yahweh, the almighty God of Israel says, “Let My People go...”’ (5:1). God told Moses what to say, but Moses spoke to Pharaoh through Aaron. Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh, ‘The people of Israel must go into the desert to worship Almighty God (5:3; 8:27). They must make sacrifices where the Egyptians cannot see us (8:26,27).

Pharaoh answered Moses, ‘Who is Yahweh? Why should I obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know Him and I will not let Israel go’ (5:2).

Pharaoh was against Moses. Leaders who do not know God are often against people who believe in Him. They also try to stop God’s people meeting together for worship.

Moses knew that God would kill Pharaoh’s firstborn son if he did not obey Moses (4:23). Moses told Pharaoh, ‘Terrible things will happen if you do not obey Almighty God and let His people go.’ This made Pharaoh very angry and he shouted, ‘Get back to your work! You are taking the people away from their work’ (5:4).

So Pharaoh told his slave masters to make the slaves work harder (5:6–14). The slave leaders went to Pharaoh to beg for mercy.

‘You are lazy,’ Pharaoh told them, ‘Now get back to work!’

The slave leaders went to Moses and Aaron: ‘God will punish you’ they said. ‘You have made things much worse for us and now they will kill us’ (5:21). They were very angry with Moses.



Exodus 5:22 to 6:30

WHAT MOSES SAID TO GOD

- Why are you bringing more trouble on the people of Israel?
- Why did you send me back here?
- I have done what you told me to do.
- I have spoken to Pharaoh using your special name.
- Pharaoh has brought even more trouble on the people.
- You haven’t saved your people at all!

WHAT GOD SAID TO MOSES

- You will see what I will do to Pharaoh through My power.
- Pharaoh will let the people of Israel go – he will drive them out of his country!
- I am the same God who talked to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, though they didn’t know my special name, Yahweh.



No way ahead in life?

The people of Israel came to a place where there was no way ahead. They were afraid (14:10). The Red Sea stopped them going forward. Their enemies were behind them. There are three things to do when we come to a stop in our life:

1. We must **be still** until God gives us His peace (14:13,14). We can’t change things by worrying. We must first find peace.
2. We must **wait** until God speaks (14:15). His time is best and He knows what He is doing. We must listen to God.
3. We must be ready to **obey** what God tells us. When we trust God, He separates us from our enemies (14:20) and opens up the way ahead (14:21-22). We must be prepared to change.

Also, we can ask our friends to pray for us. Their faith in God will encourage us. Remember, too, that God’s guardian angels surround us (Psalm 78:49).

Moses’ sister, Miriam, led the women. They sang and danced with their tambourines. She too was a prophet (15:20).

A WAY THROUGH THE DESERT

The people of Israel looked forward to the time when they would live in the land called Canaan which God promised them. (See map on page 28)

They believed:

- God was with them and would show them the way (v.13).
- It will be God’s land (v.13).
- Other nations will be afraid and they will let God’s people go through their lands (v.14–16).

God does not tell us everything that will happen to us. He tells us some things to help us to be strong. He wants us to trust Him and go forward even when it is difficult and we do not know what will happen on the way.

After they crossed the Red Sea, the people went southeast through the desert to Marah and Elim. They were led by God’s pillar of fire. Soon they had no water and when they found water, it was bad (Deuteronomy 8:2). God tests His children to see if they trust Him, and to make their faith stronger (James 1:3–4). Satan tempts us to try to make us stop trusting God.

When God tested the people, they did not trust Him nor ask Him to give them the water they needed. Three days after they crossed the Red Sea, the people grumbled at Moses. This meant they grumbled at God too (Exodus 15:24). Then God showed Moses a piece of tree. He used it in faith to make the bad water taste sweet. This was one of many miracles that God performed in the desert.

know that Yahweh was the one true and Almighty God (14:4,18,25b) and not their gods and witchdoctors. And it was so that other nations should know God is the greatest. 'People will say, "See what God has done"' (Numbers 23:23; Joshua 2:9).



Talk about this:

1. Why did God change the route of the exodus (14:1–14)? Is change good or bad?
2. What should we do when there is no way forward and no way back (14:13,15)?
3. What did the people say to Moses when they were afraid (14:11–12)? Why was this not good?



What things did Moses do in faith (14:15,16)? What can we do to encourage and lead the people of God?



Exodus 15:1–27

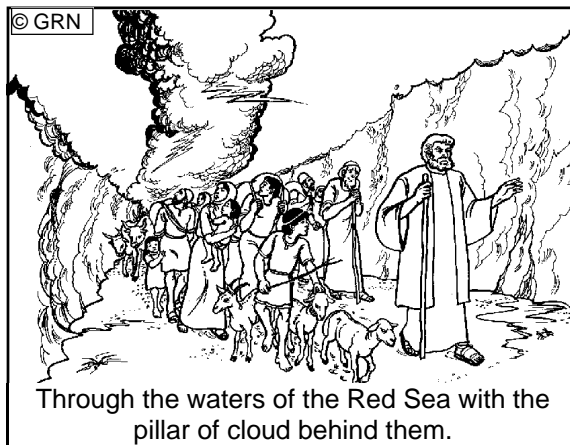
THE SONG OF MOSES

Moses sang! Moses sang because God saved His people by His great power. In his song he called Almighty God by His special name – Yahweh – 10 times (15:1–18). Moses knew God was powerful and mighty because He saved them. He now knew God personally.

He sang these words: 'He is my God and I will praise Him (15:2).

- He calls God 'my strength and my salvation' (2).
- He says God's power is wonderful (6).
- God is angry at evil (7).
- God does wonderful things (11).
- He goes on loving us (13).
- God cares for His people and plans for the best (17).

The people also sang this song to God. The people of Israel did not know God personally. But they were learning about God. They knew about God because of what He did for them. Soon they would know a lot more about God.



Through the waters of the Red Sea with the pillar of cloud behind them.

- I promised to give them the land of Canaan.
- I know how much the people of Israel are hurting because they are slaves in Egypt, and I heard them crying.
- I have not forgotten My promise.
- Tell the people of Israel, I am Almighty God
- I will make them free.
- I will punish the Egyptians.
- You will be My own special people and I will be your God.
- I will show you that I am Yahweh your God.
- I will bring you to the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because I am Yahweh, the Almighty God.

MOSES DOUBTS GOD

Moses told the people what God said but they would not listen. They had lost their hope (6:9). And Moses told God, 'If the people of Israel won't listen, then Pharaoh won't listen. I am not a good speaker' (6:12,30).

Between verses 13 and 27, the Bible reminds us of who Moses and Aaron were. They were from the family of Levi (v.19,20). The Levites were priests. They were chosen by God as priests of the LORD to serve the people of Israel. God chose Moses and Aaron to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt (v.13,26,27). They must serve the people as priests. They must continue doing what God called them to do. Nothing would stop God's plans for His people. But the people doubted God (6:9). And Moses doubted God (6:12,30).



Talk about this:

1. Was it good for Moses to speak to God in this way (5:22,23)?
2. How many times did God use His special name (6:1–6)? Why?
3. What three things did God do (6:4,5)?
4. What could the people of Israel hope for – everything (6:6–8) or nothing (6:9)?
5. What do we hope for (Romans 8:28)?
6. What did God tell Moses to continue to do (6:11,29)?



How can we use our faith to encourage others to see the power of God at work so that they will believe and worship Him (4:30-31)?



MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Based on Exodus chapters 1 to 6

Please choose the correct answers, a, b or c. There could be one, two or three answers that are correct for each question. Answers are given at the end of this book.

1. Pharaoh and the Egyptians were frightened of the people of Israel because —

- a. the people of Israel were always fighting.
 - b. there were so many of them.
 - c. the Egyptians did not remember Joseph.
2. Moses —
- a. was chosen by God to lead the people of Israel.
 - b. wanted to go back to Egypt to help the people of Israel.
 - c. was a good speaker to teach the people of Israel.
3. When Moses said that he could not speak to Pharaoh —
- a. God spoke to Pharaoh instead.
 - b. God did miracles instead.
 - c. God used Aaron instead.



Exodus 7:1–13

GOD HELPS MOSES TO HOPE

Moses and the people of Israel gave up hoping (6:9,12,30). Then God spoke to Moses again. God told him what He said before. He also told him new things to make him go again to Pharaoh with new hope. This is what He said (7:1–5):

- I will make you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron will be as a prophet.
- You must say everything I tell you to say to Pharaoh – your brother Aaron will speak to him.
- Aaron must tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave Egypt.
- I will make Pharaoh’s heart stubborn (hard).
- I will do many signs and wonders in Egypt.
- Pharaoh will not listen. I will use My power to show Egypt that I am judging them because of their bad ways.
- I will bring the people of Israel out of Egypt like an army.
- Then Egypt will know that I am Yahweh the Almighty God.

It is always important to seek and to understand the mind of God and to obey what we believe is right to say and do. In this way our faith in God will grow as things begin to happen that are normally impossible to happen. Also in this way, others will see the works of our Almighty God and He will have the glory. Some will believe and worship God (4:31).

THE MIRACLE OF AARON’S ROD

Moses and Aaron went back to Pharaoh. This time they knew from God that Pharaoh would not listen. God made his heart even harder. They knew that God wanted to show Egypt and Israel that He is the Almighty God, who created the world.

So Aaron did the miracle God told him to do. God turned his rod (stick) into a snake. But Pharaoh would not listen. He told his witch doctors to do the same. They could make their sticks into snakes, but Aaron’s snake swallowed

God had a plan for the people of Israel. He did not take them the short route to the Promised Land. This was too dangerous because of the Philistines (13:17). So God led them to the Red Sea (14:1). He showed them the way by the pillar of fire and cloud. God’s plan was to test the people of Israel and then to increase their faith in Him. He told them exactly where to go (14:2). The route that God chose deceived Pharaoh and made him think the Israelites were trapped (14:3) but in fact it was a trap for the Egyptian armies (14:13).

‘What have we done?’ Pharaoh asked. ‘We let the people of Israel go and now we have no one to work for us’ (14:5). So he took his war chariots, with horses to pull them, and went after the Hebrews (14:7). The Hebrews looked and saw Pharaoh’s army coming and they were very afraid. And they had nowhere to go! They had reached the Red Sea. (See map on page 28) There was no escape. They complained to Moses but God led them there to teach them to trust Him (14:10-14).

Then God’s pillar of fire moved between them and Pharaoh. During the night it gave light to the people of Israel, but darkness for the Egyptians (14:19,20). They all saw that Almighty God was at work when He separated God’s people from their enemies.

GOD SAVES THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Moses told them, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand firm.’

That night God told Moses, ‘Everyone will see what happens to Pharaoh and know that I am Almighty God... Lift up your rod and hold it out over this sea to divide the water...’ (14:16). God can win the war against His enemies without us, but He wants us to do our part in faith.

All night God made a strong wind blow back the waters and dry the land. The next morning, the people of Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. It was a miracle (14:22). God delayed the Egyptians until the people of Israel were safely across. When the Egyptians tried to pursue them God broke the Egyptians’ chariots and then allowed the waters to flow back, they all drowned (14:28). Because of this, the people of Israel learned to trust God. And they learned to trust Moses (14:31).

Christians should ‘stand firm’ and see God answer prayers. God will win the battle against the enemy if we trust Him and do what He says in faith. We do not need to fear Satan. Jesus won the battle for us on the cross. We ‘stand’ because of His victory (John 16:33; 1 Corinthians 15:57).

The worst punishment for Egypt came AFTER the ten plagues. Instead of being a rich and famous country, now they were very poor. The Egyptians gave away a lot of their gold and silver to the people of Israel (Exodus 12:35–36). Then they also lost their slaves, who helped them to build big cities and work in the fields. They lost their strong army in the Red Sea. Why did God punish Pharaoh and the Egyptians so much? It was so the Egyptians would



How did the blood of a lamb set the people of God free from slavery (Exodus 12:13)? How did the blood of the Lamb of God set all believers free from sin (Matthew 26: 19,27; Romans 5:9).



MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Based on Exodus chapters 7 to 13

Please choose the correct answers, a, b or c. There could be one, two or three answers that are correct for each question. Answers are given at the end of this book.

4. God said that Pharaoh would harden his heart —
 - a. so that the Egyptians could see some more miracles.
 - b. so that He would make the people of Israel work harder
 - c. so that the Egyptians would know the only true and living God.

5. When there was a plague of gnats —
 - a. the witch doctors also made gnats.
 - b. the witch doctors said that it was the finger of God.
 - c. the gnats only went in Pharaoh's house.

6. God told Moses that the plagues were sent so that —
 - a. the people of Israel could tell their children.
 - b. the Egyptians would know who was Almighty God.
 - c. the Egyptians would die.

7. The angel of death would pass over their houses if —
 - a. they were people of Israel.
 - b. they stayed inside and locked their doors.
 - c. the lamb's blood was put on the door posts.



Exodus 14:1–31

THE EGYPTIANS TRY TO STOP THE EXODUS

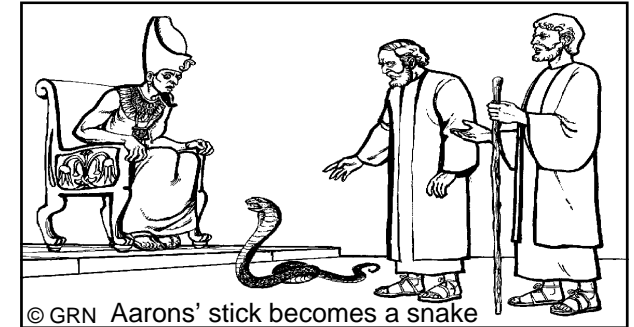
One more time God hardened the heart of Pharaoh (14:4). He was told that the people of Israel had gone away and would not come back (14:5). So he planned to go after God's people and bring them back. But God saved his people so the Egyptians would know He is the Almighty God (14:4).

the snakes of Pharaoh's witch doctors. Pharaoh still would not listen. It happened as God said (7:13). But this time Moses and Aaron did not give up hope.



Talk about this:

1. Why did Moses and Aaron obey God (7:1,5)?
2. Should we expect to be like God at times (7:1)?
3. Why did Pharaoh disobey God (7:13)?



© GRN Aaron's stick becomes a snake



Explain how we can grow in faith and give glory to God by not giving up hope.



Exodus 7:14 to 11:10

GOD SENDS TEN PLAGUES ON EGYPT

After the miracle of Aaron's rod, God sent the famous ten plagues of Egypt:

1. All the water in Egypt turned to blood and smelled bad; the fish in the River Nile died (7:19–21).
2. A plague of frogs; many, many frogs came into the Egyptians' houses (8:3–6).
3. A plague of gnats bit the Egyptians and their animals (8:17).
4. A plague of flies covered the people and the land (8:24).
5. All the animals of the Egyptians died (9:6).
6. A plague of boils on the skin of the Egyptians (9:11).
7. A plague of hail damaged the crops in the fields (9:25).
8. A plague of locusts destroyed every plant and tree (10:13–15).
9. Three days of total darkness (10:22).
10. The firstborn son of every Egyptian died (11:5,6).

A plague is big trouble. The plagues are written in three groups. Before each group of plagues, God warned Pharaoh. God warned Pharaoh before he punished him. Aaron was the prophet of God who spoke God's judgement (7:1,4).

God told Moses that He sent the plagues so that the Egyptians would 'know Him' (7:5). They would know He was the Almighty God. But Israel too would know His power and also His love and mercy. He saved them from the

plagues and from the cruel slave masters of Egypt. He judged their gods and showed how powerless they were. And He set His people free

Moses did not always understand God's ways. He wanted a simple, one-step plan, but God was teaching Moses to have strong faith, and some of the lessons were hard. Moses wrote later that he saw how God fought against the false gods of Egypt (Psalm 98:1).

God said to Pharaoh, 'My people are different from your people so I will care for them and the plagues will not hurt them (8:22,23; 9:4,26; 10:23). As Christians, we know that we are different from other people and show that we belong to God (2 Corinthians 6:14–18).

When God sent the ten plagues:

- Moses and Aaron obeyed God but Pharaoh did not obey God.
- The witch doctors copied the first two miracles but they could not do anything else (8:18).
- The plagues came on all the Egyptians but they did not come on the people of Israel in the land of Goshen in the north of Egypt.
- Finally the Egyptians stopped punishing the people of Israel and the people of Israel stopped blaming Moses and God.

WHY GOD SENT THE PLAGUES

God sent plagues on Egypt because He wanted all the world to hear about the miracles and to know how powerful He is (Exodus 9:15–16). Instead of killing the Egyptians, He sent the plagues as His punishment. Paul describes this in Romans 9:17. In the Old Testament writings, God says to Pharaoh, 'That is why I made you ruler. I wanted to show my power through you. I wanted people to know about me all over the earth.'

God also wanted the people of Israel to know His power. 'You will be able to tell your children and your grandchildren how I made fools of the Egyptians and the great miracles I did. All of you will know that I am Yahweh, the Almighty God' (Exodus 10:2). You can read God's special name nearly 100 times in the story of the ten plagues.

As Pharaoh's heart grew harder, so God's punishment of the Egyptians became worse. But God said that after the tenth plague Pharaoh would send the people of Israel away out of Egypt (11:1).

God told Abraham this would happen. Over 400 years before, God told Abraham 'Your children who come after you will be strangers in a country that does not belong to them. They will become slaves. They will be treated badly for 400 years. But I will punish the nation that makes them slaves' (Genesis 15:13–14).



Talk about this:

1. Why did God send the plagues to Egypt? Give three reasons (Genesis 15:14; Exodus 9:16, 10:2).

you' (Exodus 13:19; Genesis 50:25). So they carried Joseph's bones with them.

The people marched out of Egypt in tribes and families. Every family leader kept his family with him. They kept in order as they went through the desert towards Horeb, Mount Sinai.

If people move away from home they must take with them food, clothes and money. But most important of all they must take with them their faith in God. God is with us at all times. Ask Him to give us peace and all we need, even when others try to stop us.

The people of Israel now believed God's promises. They worshipped God and obeyed Him (Exodus 12:27,28,50). They believed God's words and talked about them. The truth given by God was 'on their lips' and 'in their hearts' (13:9).

THE LORD LEADS THEM THROUGH THE DESERT

The Old Testament writings give a summary of the Passover in Exodus 12:43 to 13:16. They remind the Jews to repeat the story of the Passover each year, especially to the eldest boy of each family (13:2,8,14). In this way, God is honoured in every home.

It was the eldest son of each family who was saved from punishment in Egypt. God's angel of death passed over the homes which were covered by the blood of the lamb (12:13). Now they were all free to begin a new life led by God. They were saved through the blood of the lamb.

God gave a tower (or pillar) of cloud in the daytime and of fire in the night to go in front of the people of Israel. In this way He led them through the desert (13:21–22). And we know the Holy Spirit leads us and His angels guard us today. We must always believe that God goes with us even if we cannot see Him. And we must also remember that we have been saved from punishment through the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

God guided the people of Israel away from their enemies, the Philistines (13:17). He guided them instead on the long journey through the desert (13:18) towards the Red Sea.

God gave them all they needed, but He wanted them to learn to trust Him and love Him. It would take them a long time to learn to trust God always. In Egypt they looked at the food in their gardens and water in the river. Now they learned to look up to their Almighty God, for everything they needed.



Talk about this:

1. How do Jews honour God in their homes today (13:6–10)?
2. In what ways did God help the people of Israel get away from Egypt (13:5,14,17,21)?
3. Talk about the sacrifice of innocent blood in God's plan of salvation (Genesis 4:4; 22:13; Exodus 12:13).

clothes and animals and great riches They baked their bread without yeast as they went (12:36–39). They left after 430 years in a foreign land, just as God promised Abraham (Genesis 15:13,14).

Many years before, Joseph said to the leaders of Israel: 'God will take care of you and lead you out of this place, and then you must take my body with



The Passover and the Last Supper

Each year at the time of the Passover, the Jews remember that God saved the firstborn son of each family. The sacrifice of the lamb was sufficient to redeem or pay the price for the life of the firstborn.

Christians believe that God gave His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die in their place, for their sins. If you repent of your sins and you believe Jesus is the Son of God, then His death on the cross brings you everlasting life, even though you deserve to die because of sin. His blood sacrificed on the wooden cross saves you from death. God pays the price and buys back your life through the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus the Lamb of God. You are redeemed. You are set free from sin and from the punishment of sin. Jesus is therefore your Redeemer.

This is the most important teaching of the Christian Bible. Believe in faith and receive the salvation of our loving and merciful God!

1500 years after the first Passover in Egypt, at His Last Supper, Jesus remembered and celebrated this same Passover meal. He ate the special bread and drank the wine with His disciples. But as He gave thanks to God and broke the bread He said, 'This is My body.' And as He poured the wine and passed it to His disciples He said, 'This is my blood' (Matthew 26:26–29).

These things help Christians remember that Jesus is the special Lamb of God, who died as a sacrifice so we do not have to be punished or die for our sins. Through Jesus, the special Lamb, God made a way for us to be saved from punishment and to receive everlasting life with Him. We can only be saved by the blood of the Lamb who had no sin and was perfect in every way. Jesus asked His followers to remember His sacrifice.

2000 years after the Last Supper, Christians still remember the death of Christ as believers gather together for the Lord's Supper (Communion). Christ is our Passover Lamb: His blood on the wooden cross saved us from God's punishment. The red wine helps us to remember the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God. The broken bread reminds us of His broken body.

Read what John the Baptist and the Apostles teach about the Lamb of God: John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8; 1 Peter 1:18–19.

Once a year, Jews today still remember the Passover when the blood of a lamb was used to save the people of Israel from punishment in Egypt.

Every week, Christians around the world meet together to remember and celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus through breaking bread and sharing wine together.

2. What three things happened first (6:5)?
3. What did Moses tell Pharaoh must happen to Israel (10:25–26)?
4. What did Moses tell Pharaoh would happen to Egypt (11:6,8)?

WHAT PHARAOH SAID

Pharaoh could see now it was no longer a fight between the Egyptian gods and the God of Israel. It was a fight between Pharaoh and God.

Pharaoh tried to win but God beat him. When Pharaoh thought he was winning, he changed his mind and would not let the people of Israel go to worship their Almighty God. He tried to trick Moses:

- He said if God stopped the plague he would let them go (8:8).
- He said the people of Israel could worship God 'here in Egypt' (8:25).
- He said he would let them go just a little way into the desert to worship God (8:28).
- He asked Moses to pray for him (8:28).
- He said he had sinned (9:27; 10:16).
- He said he would let only the men go away to worship God (10:11).
- He said he would let the people go but they must leave all their animals behind (10:24).

Pharaoh's tricks and his hard heart brought many troubles for the people of Egypt. God was punishing the nation who were so cruel to the Hebrews. Now this strong nation had to do what God wanted.

In the end Pharaoh knew that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was the most powerful. The Egyptians knew this. The Hebrews knew this. The whole world heard about it. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that He could show His great power – to Egypt, to Israel and to the other nations. He would also destroy the heathen power of Egypt



Talk about this:

1. Pharaoh said, 'I have sinned...' Was he TRUE or FALSE (10:16)?
2. What did the people of Egypt want (10:7)?
3. Why does it say that God made Pharaoh's heart hard (10:27)?
4. What does Paul say about the way God used Pharaoh (Romans 9:17,18,21–25)?



Exodus 11:1–10

THE FINAL PUNISHMENT

After each plague, God did what Moses asked. He proved that His word to Moses was true (8:13).

Moses knew God would bring one final plague on Pharaoh and Egypt. After that, Pharaoh would let His people go. He would drive them out (11:1).

God would also make the people of Egypt friendly towards the people of Israel (11:3). Then Moses told Pharaoh about God's tenth plague (11:4–8).

God said, 'About midnight, I will go through the land of Egypt. Every firstborn son of Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl' (11:5). This was a terrible thing, because it was the custom for fathers to give everything to their firstborn sons. God's angel of death would visit the Egyptians. At the same time He had a final plan to save the people of Israel from slavery and death.



Exodus 12:1–28

THE NIGHT OF THE PASSOVER

God told Moses to tell the people of Israel to get ready to leave Egypt (12:1–11).

'On the tenth day of this first month, each Hebrew must take a lamb for his family – enough for each person to eat. The lamb must be male with nothing wrong with it. Take care of the lambs until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of Israel must kill them at sunset. Then they must take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs... Eat it quickly; it is called God's Passover.'

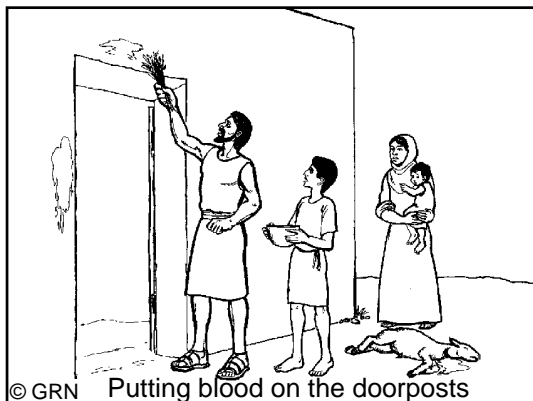
'The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you...' (12:13). God sent His angel of death who would see the blood and know not to kill the firstborn in that house. The blood saved them from the curse of death.

The Passover was so important that God told them always to remember it each year in a special way (12:14). You can read how they did this – Numbers 9:2,3; Joshua 5:10; 2 Chronicles 30:1; 35:1; Ezra 6:19; Luke 2:41; John 2:13.

When Moses explained this to the people, 'they bowed down and worshipped' (12:27). Then they went and did what Almighty God told them to do.

Before midnight, each man of Israel brought his family into his house. Nobody outside the house was safe. They were safe in the house because of the blood of the lamb on the door. At midnight, when the angel of death came, he would see the blood, and pass over that house.

God told the Hebrews always to remember the meaning of the Passover – how



they were saved from the punishment of God through the blood of a perfect and innocent lamb. God saved them because of His love and care. This is why today most Jews remember the Passover every year at a special meal and remind themselves they belong to God. Christians believe that under God's new covenant, people are saved by the blood of Jesus.

Jesus always remembered the Passover meal. He also told His followers always to remember His own death. The death of Jesus, the perfect and sinless Lamb of God means we are saved from the punishment of God through the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus saves us and leads us to everlasting life.



Talk about this:

1. How were the people of Israel saved from death?
2. Why do the Jews remember the Passover today (Exodus 12:27)?
3. Why do Christians remember the death of Jesus today (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25)?



God's main purpose in saving Israel was for them to worship Him and to prepare the way for the salvation of the world through their promised Messiah. What does this purpose and provision of God mean for us all today?



Exodus 12:29–13:22

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL LEAVE EGYPT

That night there was loud crying all over Egypt (12:30). All the first-born Egyptian boys died. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron in the middle of the night. Pharaoh said to Moses:

- Go! Leave my people!
- Go! Worship Yahweh, your God!
- Go! Take your animals with you!
- Go! And give me your blessing!

For a brief period of time, Pharaoh changed his mind. He knew that Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, was greater than all the gods and kings of Egypt.

The Egyptians said to the people of Israel (12:33):

- Go! Or we will all die!

So the people of Israel took their dough, even before it was baked into bread, and they left their houses. They left quickly. They asked the Egyptians for jewellery and gold and the Egyptians gave them everything they asked for (12:36).

Over one million people left Egypt that night (12:37). They were like a huge army marching to another country (12:41). They took with them all their