

Exodus: The Redemption of Israel

Themes

A. The Sovereignty of God

1. Genesis taught that the only way one can realize the purpose for which God created them is through faith, expressed in obedience, in the trustworthy God.
2. Exodus teaches that the God with whom one can have a relationship is not only trustworthy but also sovereign. This realization should lead one to worship and obedience.
3. Sovereignty is the attribute of God that expresses the fact that Yahweh is the ultimate ruler of the universe. This does not speak to how He chooses to exercise His sovereignty, just that He is sovereign.
4. One can see God's sovereignty clearly in His superiority over all the so-called gods of Egypt. He displayed His great power in all of His activity that resulted in the liberation of the Israelites and His adoption of them as His people.

B. The Salvation of Man

1. Genesis demonstrated the need for salvation (the Fall and repeated failures of man).
2. Exodus teaches that God provides salvation for man. Man does not provide it for himself. It also reveals that man appropriates what God has provided by faith, which is expressed through obedience and worship.

C. The Methods by which the Sovereign God Effects Man's Salvation

1. God created the nation of Israel so that He could demonstrate through Israel for all other nations to see how glorious it can be to live under God's government. God's election of Israel was not the selection of a pet that God would favor at the expense of all others. It was the construction of a pattern. Israel was to be a demonstration to the entire world how wonderful life can be under the rule of Yahweh (cf. 19:5-6).
2. God's method of dealing with Israel was by revealing Himself, and through revelations, sought to deepen their understanding of and appreciation for Himself and His will. The special privilege of receiving the revelation was a blessing to them and should have resulted in their being a blessing to the whole world. Israel was to do this by demonstrating how good it is to live under God's kingship.
3. God's method of dealing with individuals was by providing opportunities, choices. One can see this most easily in God's dealing with the two major characters in Exodus, Moses and Pharaoh. God's method of dealing with both men was the same, but their responses were different and consequently so were their fates. (See Thomas L. Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, pp. 2-4.)

I. Israel in Egypt (Exodus 1:1-13:16)
A. Slavery in Egypt (1:1-22)

1. What is the significance of the mention of Jacob and his twelve sons?

The verb “swarm” in verse 7 is

“Assuming that the original group to enter Egypt was at least 140 persons (the number 70 of verse 5 includes males only), the original population would have had to have doubled fourteen times to produce the number who took part in the exodus (about 2,000,000). This apparently reflects special divine blessing and intervention as promised in the Abrahamic covenant (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:5).” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, p. 56.)

The rise of a “new king” in verse 8 must be understood as a new dynasty. “Who did not know” should be understood as had no experience or knowledge of Joseph. The narrator refers to the radically changed circumstances in Egypt where a whole new family of rulers have come into power bringing different policies and thus he has no respect for or obligation to Joseph and his decedents.

2. What is the motivation for the Egyptians antagonism toward Israel in verses 8-10?
3. Describe the condition of Israel in verses 11-14.
4. What are the three plans of Pharaoh to control the growth and strength of Israel? Do they work? What is the implication of this?

"Although the biblical term 'Hebrew' [v. 15] is probably cognate to the similar word *'apiru* (found in Egyptian, Babylonian, and Canaanite texts), the latter was applied to a population element that was ethnically diverse and that had in common only a generally inferior social status. The word 'Hebrew' is almost always used by Gentiles to distinguish Israelites ethnically from other peoples and apparently denotes descent from Eber (Gen. 10:24-25; 11:14-17), whose ancestor was Noah's son Shem (Gen. 10:21)." (Ronald F. Youngblood. *Exodus*, p. 27.)

5. How do the midwives describe the Hebrew women and what are the consequences for their actions?

"Even though these women lied to Pharaoh (which the Bible, as is often the case, does not stop to specifically condemn at this point), they are praised for their outright refusal to take infant lives." (Walter C. Kaiser Jr. "Exodus." In *Genesis-Numbers*, Vol. 2 of Expositor's Bible Commentary, p. 306.)

"The central idea [in this pericope] is that God faithfully fulfills His covenant promises in spite of severe and life-threatening opposition. Even Pharaoh, the most powerful man on earth could do nothing to thwart God's purpose. In fact, God actually used Pharaoh's opposition as a means of carrying out His promises." (Gordon H. Johnston, "I Will Multiply Your Seed [Exodus 1]," *Exegesis and Exposition* 1:1 (Fall 1986), p. 27.)

B. Birth and Early Life of Moses (2:1-22)

The fact that Moses is mentioned as coming from two parents that are from the house of Levi in verse 1 is foreshadowing the sacred nature of Moses' leadership over Israel.

1. What is the irony of verse 3?

“This ark (תִּבְנָה) the same word used for Noah's ship, Gen 7, 8, 9) is not a means of exposure but a lovingly made means of salvation, over which a careful watch was to be kept from a distance.” (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 16.)

“As Noah's ark was God's instrument for preserving one savior of the human race, Moses' ark proved to be His means of preserving another savior of the Israelites. Moses' parents obeyed Pharaoh and put Moses in the river (1:22), but they also trusted God who delivered their baby.” (Thomas L. Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 14.)

2. What is the sense of doom in verses 5-6 and how is it relieved?

3. How does the circumstances of Moses' mother in verses 1-4 compare with 7-9?

In verse 10 the statement “When the child grew” is understood by some as a weaning period of about two or three years, or by some others as much as twelve years.

“Moses' name was probably Egyptian, but it became a popular Hebrew name. It relates obviously to the names of other great Egyptians of that period (e.g., Ahmose, Thutmose, et al.). The ‘mose’ part of the name means ‘one born of’ and ‘mo’ means ‘water.’” (Thomas L. Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 15.)

"The phrase 'drew him out' (v. 10) is a Hebrew pun on the name, emphasizing the baby's rescue from the waters of the Nile." (Ronald F. Youngblood. *Exodus*, p. 30.)

“The adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses enjoyed the highest privileges in his education. In commenting on Moses' training Stephen said that he became, "a man of power in words and deeds" (Acts 7:21-22). Josephus wrote that Moses was a general in the Egyptian army that defeated the Ethiopians and that he married the daughter of the king of Ethiopia. We cannot prove the accuracy of this statement, but it suggests that Moses may have risen high in Egyptian society before he fled Egypt.” (Thomas Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 15.)

In verse 11 the statement “when Moses had grown up” shows that Moses is now a grown man. Acts 7:23 states that Moses was 40 years old here.

4. What is the narrator contrasting in verses 11-15 and what does this say about Moses?

5. What do verse 14-15 teach Moses about his previous actions?

The Midianites were descendents of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25:1-2) and may have remained to some extent worshippers of the one true God.

6. What contrast is there between Moses circumstances in 16-22a and what he says in 22b?

The name Gershom means

C. The Call of Moses (2:23-4:31)

Ex. 2:23 states “that a long period of time” has gone by, which according to Acts 7:30 has been 40 years. Thus verses 23-25 serve as an introduction for the call of Moses. The Pharaoh that has just died is Thutmose III. This sets the stage for his successor Amenhotep II, to whom Moses will give God’s command of “let My people go.”

1. Why does God now hear Israel’s cries and remember His covenant with Abraham in 2:23-25?

“Nearing the conclusion of over 400 years of Subjugation, humiliation and frustration, the Lord now begins to initiate the plan of redemption and freedom for His covenant people.” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, p. 66.)

2. What is the significance of 3:1 in light of the following paragraph?

Horeb is another name for Sinai.

3. How does Moses behavior change throughout this paragraph?
4. Is the Angel of the Lord a separate being than God or the same?

"God begins his discourse with Moses by warning him not to come near to him because he is holy (v. 5). As we will later see, the idea of God's holiness is a central theme in the remainder of the book. Indeed, the whole structure of Israel's worship of God at the tabernacle is based on a view of God as the absolutely Holy One who has come to dwell in their midst. We should not lose sight of the fact, however, that at the same time that God warns Moses to stand at a distance, he also speaks to him 'face to face' (cf. Nu 12:8). The fact that God is a holy God should not be understood to mean that he is an impersonal force—God is holy yet intensely personal. This is a central theme in the narratives of the Sinai covenant that follow.” (John H. Sailhamer. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 245.)

5. What is the reason and purpose that God has come down in 3:7-10 and what does this say about His character?

6. What does “a land flowing with milk and honey” mean?

“The question that must have loomed large in his mind was, what could a man of eighty do for his people now? The answer to this question was to come from God Himself and in a most unusual way.” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, p. 68.)

7. What is the significance of Moses five questions/comments in 3:11-4:17 and how does God respond? Be specific.

8. How will the elders and Pharaoh respond to Moses words and signs according to God in 3:18-20?

Notice in 3:21-22 that God says He will give Israel the plunder of Egypt.

9. What does God say, in 4:21-23, will happen when he speaks to Pharaoh?

Ex. 4:21-23 seems to serve as the backdrop for the bizarre incident that follows in 4:24-26. “The firstborn son was to the Egyptians not only special, but in many respects sacred. It is therefore interesting that the people of God are regarded as firstborn in this passage (cf. Hos. 11:1).” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt*, p. 79).

10. What does “the Lord met Moses and sought to kill him” mean (4:24)?

11. Was only Moses son uncircumcised or both he and his son uncircumcised?

What does Zipporah’s words “Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me” mean? Cassuto explains that she was saying, “I have delivered you from death, and your return to life makes you my bridegroom a second time, this time my blood bridegroom, a bridegroom acquired through blood” (Umberto Cassuto. *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, pp. 60-61.) It was as though God had given Moses a second chance and they were married a second time ready to begin a new life under the covenant. Perhaps she had accepted Yahweh's authority over Moses and was making him available to Yahweh's service.

The point is that this son of Abraham had not complied with the sign of the Abrahamic covenant. Those who were not circumcised according to Gen. 17:14 would be cut off from the people and Ex. 12:40-51 states that no one who had not complied would take part in the Passover-exodus who had not complied. So how could the one who was going to lead God’s people not comply?

“If God takes the “hardness of Pharaoh’s heart” so seriously as to kill his firstborn son (Exod. 4:21-23), then He must likewise deal with the sin of Moses who by not circumcising his son has endangered him greatly. According to the word of the Lord recorded in Genesis 17, his son should have been “cut off from his people.” The holiness of God is clearly manifested in the near fatal illness of Moses. God does not look lightly on any sin.” (Bob Deffinbaugh. *Exodus: The Birth of the Nation*. <http://www.bible.org>, p. 4.)

12. Who is the one speaking and performing the miracles before the people of Israel in 4:27-31?

13. How do the people of Israel respond?

14. Based on the incidents of chapters 3-4 what is Moses attitude and commitment toward God and his calling?

D. Pharaoh's Oppression of Israel (5:1-6:13)

1. What do Moses and Aaron ask of Pharaoh in 5:1-5 and why do they ask this?
2. How does Pharaoh respond to their request?
3. What does "who is Yahweh that I should obey him by releasing Israel? I do not know the Lord, and I will not release Israel," mean?

"Thus as the plague narratives begin, the purpose of the plagues is clearly stated: 'so that the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD' (7:5). Throughout the plague narratives we see the Egyptians learning precisely this lesson (8:19; 9:20, 27; 10:7). As the narratives progress, the larger purpose also emerges. The plagues which God had sent against the Egyptians were 'to be recounted to your son and your son's son . . . so that you may know that I am the LORD.'" (John H. Sailhamer. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 249-50.)

4. How does the People of Israel respond to Moses and Aaron in 5:20-21 and what does this say about them?
5. How does Moses respond in 5:22-23?
6. What does the Lord say in response to Moses in 6:1-8?
7. How do the people of Israel respond to Moses in 6:9 and then how does Moses respond to the Lord's command in 6:11?
8. How does the Lord respond in 6:13?

E. Genealogies (6:14-27)

1. What is the point of this genealogy?

F. The Plagues (6:28-11:10)

1. What do we see Moses doing once again in 6:28-30?
2. How does the Lord respond in 7:1-5 and what seems to be the pattern in His character throughout all of Moses' complaints?
3. What is the significance of the statement in 7:6-7?
4. Chart the plagues of Egypt. Consider who is the performer of the plague (on behalf of God), the nature and extent of the plague (who did it affect and not affect), the reaction of the Egyptians and Pharaoh, and are there any patterns or progressions throughout the plagues.

See *The Finger of Yahweh* Excursus

See *The Divine Hardening of Pharaoh* Excursus

G. The Redemption of Israel (12:1-13:16)

1. What is the significance of “this month” becoming the first month of the year?
2. What is required of the Israelites in the Passover meal?
3. What is the focus of the Passover meal in verses 21-28?

The biblical view of consecration is both negative and positive for it involves separation *from* the world and separation *unto* God.

4. Why does God want the children year after year to ask what does the service mean?
5. What is the significance of verse 28 in connection to the practices of verses 1-27?

"This series of five imperative verbs [in v. 31], three meaning 'go' (*dlh* is used twice) and one meaning 'take,' coupled with five usages of the emphatic particle *mg* 'also' . . . , marvelously depicts a Pharaoh whose reserve of pride is gone, who must do everything necessary to have done with Moses and Israel and the Yahweh who wants them for his own." (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 167.)

6. In what two ways did the Egyptians respond to the Israelites in verses 29-36?

7. How should the reader see God in this section?

The number of men over twenty years of age is listed as 600,000. Assuming that these males make up approximately one-fourth of the population, the total number of Israelites involved in the exodus would have surpassed 2,000,000 people.

8. Who are the “mixed multitude” in verse 38?

The text is very clear that Israel was in Egypt 430 years "to the very day" (v. 41).

9. What are the requirements of participating in the Passover meal in verses 43-50?

10. What are the Israelites to do in verses 13:1-16 and why?

II. The Journey from Egypt to Sinai (13:17-18:27)

A. The Exodus from Egypt (13:17-14:31)

1. What are the reasons that Yahweh did not lead the Israelites “on the way to the land of the Philistines” when that was the shortest route to the promise land?
2. What is the purpose of the pillar of cloud and fire in verses 20-22?

"When the excessive heat made it necessary for Israel to march at night, the light of the Fiery Pillar was enough to light the way: and when in the day the scorching glare of the sun was blinding, the cloud spread itself abroad like a great umbrella, so that the women and children could travel in comparative comfort [cf. Ps. 84:11]." (Frederick B. Meyer. *Devotional Commentary on Exodus*, p. 158.) This pillar of fire would have also provided warmth for Israel during the cold nights in the desert.

"Yahweh's first intention was to give the appearance that Israel, fearful of the main road, then fearful of the wilderness, was starting first one way and then another, not knowing where to turn and so a ready prey for recapture or destruction. Yahweh's second intention was to lure the Egyptians into a trap, first by making Pharaoh's mind obstinate once again, and then by defeating Pharaoh and his forces, who were certain to come down in vengeance upon an apparently helpless and muddled Israel." (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 187.)

3. How do the Israelites respond to the oncoming force of Pharaoh in verses 14:10-12?
4. How does Moses respond to the people and what does this say about his faith?

“Whatever reluctance and anxiety Moses may have possessed prior to the exercise of God’s power in the ten plagues was surely removed when he saw the hand of God at work. Moses became a very articulate statesman and a great leader who exercised unwavering faith. If God was able to take an eighty-year-old man and accomplish such significant victories, what must the potential be for the dedicated young man of twenty years? The spiritual insight and maturity of Moses will long be an example for believers in every age in every land.” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, p. 159.)

5. Why does Yahweh use the pillar of cloud at night and why move it to the rear of the Israelites?

In Ex. 13:3 Moses calls Egypt the “house of slavery” that is what Egypt represents in the Scriptures. Egypt as the “house of slavery” is a picture of this world, and this is the place that humanity is all born into. While Israel in the “house of slavery” Yahweh tells them to sacrifice lamb and place the blood on the doorpost and this is what will save them from the wrath of Yahweh to come on the “house of slavery.” Then they were to eat the lamb and enjoy it, they were to enjoy the blessings of the salvation they had just experienced and be thankful to Yahweh. All during this Yahweh keep telling Israel that He was preparing another land for them, one flowing with milk and honey. Then He manifested Himself in a pillar of fire and cloud and told them to keep their eyes on Him and follow. This Pillar was the glory of God that would later indwell the Temple and guide and protect the people of Israel. It was a symbol of the Holy Spirit who now indwells believers who are the new Temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21). When Yahweh brought Israel through the Red sea, it was their water baptism (1 Cor. 10:1-2). The pillar of fire then moved behind Israel separating them from the “house of slavery” and consecrated them. Thus the fire was the wrath of God on the “house of slavery” and the purification by fire of Israel (Matt. 3:9-12; Lk. 3:16-17).

6. How did Israel respond after the waters were drawn over the Egyptians?

Yahweh uses the chaos of the sea in order to judge the Egyptians (Isa. 51: 9-10) much like He did in Noah’s day (Gen. 6:11-21; 7:17-24) and then subdued the chaos in order to establish His new people much like He did in the creation of the universe for Adam and Eve (Gen. 1-2; Psalm 74:12-17; 89).

The text does not say that Pharaoh personally perished in the Red Sea (cf. vv. 8, 10, 28; Ps. 106:7-12; 136:13-15).

B. The Song of Moses (15:1-21)

“It is interesting that Moses described the Egyptian pursuers as being thrown into the sea (v. 4) and sinking like a stone (v. 5) and lead (v. 10). The same image describes Pharaoh's earlier order to throw the Hebrew babies into the Nile River (1:22). God did to the Egyptians what they had done to the Israelites.” (Thomas Constable. *Noyes on Exodus*, pp. 77-78.)

“The poem of Ex. 15 celebrates Yahweh present *with* his people and doing *for* them as no other god anywhere and at any time *can* be present to do. As such, it is a kind of summary of the theological base of the whole of the Book of Exodus.” (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 210.)

Miriam was the first woman to have been given the title of prophetess

C. The Wilderness of Shur (15:22-27)

1. Why did Yahweh bring His people to waters that were bitter and undrinkable?
2. How do the people respond to this and how does Moses respond?

“In three days they had forgotten God's miracles at the Red Sea. This should prove that miracles do not result in great faith. Rather great faith comes from a settled conviction that God is trustworthy.” (Tomas Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 80.)

3. What agreement does Yahweh make with the people and what would this teach them?
4. What is the significance of verse 27?

“A method of God's dealing with the Israelites as His people that He frequently employed stands out clearly in these incidents. God did not lead the Israelites around every difficulty. Instead He led them into many difficulties, but He also provided deliverance for them in their difficulties. This caused the Israelites to learn to look to Him for the supply of their needs. He still deals with His children the same way. (Thomas Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, pp. 82-83.)

D. The Wilderness of Sin (16:1-36)

1. Why does Israel complain in verses 1-3 and what is the irony of what they are complaining about?
2. What repetition do you notice in verses 1-12?
3. Way does Yahweh provide for Israel in the way that He does with the manna and quail?

Israelites had not known about or observed the Sabbath rest until now (v. 23). As slaves in Egypt they would have worked seven days a week. However, God in His care for them was blessing them with a day of rest and preparing them for the giving of the fourth commandment (20:8-11). Thus this command would have been seen as a relief rather than a burden.

4. Are the Israelites faithful in the gathering of the manna and quail?

“A pattern is thus established here that continues throughout the narratives of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness. As the people's trust in the Lord and in Moses waned in the wilderness, the need grew for stricter lessons.” (John H. Sailhamer. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 273.)

E. The Rock at Rephidim (17:1-13)

1. What is different between the situation at Marah and Rephidim, what is God teaching them with this?
2. Why is it that Israel complains so much despite the mighty deeds Yahweh has demonstrated and the miraculous way He is providing for them?
3. What is the connection between Moses fear and the way Yahweh provides water?
“One of Moses' most characteristic and praiseworthy traits was that he took his difficulties to the Lord (v. 4; 15:25; 32:30; 33:8; Num 11:2, 11; 12:13; 14:13-19 et al).” (Walter C. Kaiser Jr. “Exodus.” In *Genesis-Numbers*, Vol. 2 of *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, p. 406.)
4. What does verse 7 say the true nature of Israel's complaints are here?
5. What is the negative and positive lesson in the way Yahweh responds to the people's complaints?

“The whole history of the wandering in the wilderness is a good example of the longsuffering of God with people who constantly tempted and provoked Him (Ps. 78:56; 106:7, 14, 25, 29).” (John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, p. 195.)

Joshua's name is actually Hoshea meaning "savior" but was later changed to Yehoshua meaning "Yahweh is savior."

6. What is the significance of the connection between Moses raising his staff and the victory of the battle?
7. What is the significance of the altar Moses built?

F. Jethro and Moses (18:1-27)

1. What is the significance of verses 1-12 in light of the previous sections?
2. What are the criteria for leadership in verse 21?
3. What can one learn from Jethro's advice?

“In times of great crises God always provided men to lead the way to deliverance. Moses is an eloquent example of this very fact. The hand of God providentially prepared this man for this very moment. He was cognizant of Egyptian manners and was therefore able to articulate demands before the King of Egypt. Moses had been trained in military matters and was therefore capable of organizing this large mass of people for movement across the deserts. His training in Egypt had given him the ability to write and therefore provided a means by which these accounts would be recorded for eternity. Forty years of desert experience had given Moses the know-how of travel in these areas as well as the kind of preparation that would be needed to survive the desert heat. All of this a mere accident of history? No indeed. The history before us is a supreme example of God's sovereign ability to accomplish His purposes for His people. Those who belong to Him have every reason to be confident that that which God has promised He will perform.”
(John J. Davis. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*, pp. 189-90.)

III. Covenant and Law at Sinai (19:1-40:38)

A. The Preparations for the Covenant (19:1-25)

1. What is the nature of the covenant that Yahweh is going to make with Israel in verses 3-6?

"The image of the eagle [v. 4] is based on the fact that the eagle, when its offspring learns [sic] to fly, will catch them on its wings when they fall." (William H. Gispen. *Exodus*, p. 179.)

"The reaction of the Israelites to God's promises was understandably positive. They wanted what God offered them. However, they overestimated their own ability to keep the covenant, and they underestimated God's standards for them. This twin error is traceable to a failure to appreciate their own sinfulness and God's holiness. The Mosaic Law would teach them to appreciate both." (Thomas L. Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 97.)

2. What is the purpose of the thunder, lighting, fire and smoke on the mountain?

3. What is required of the people in order for them to come to the mountain?

"At Sinai, Israel received the law and the tabernacle. The law expressed the obedience of God's redeemed people, and the tabernacle expressed their worship. Thus the law and the tabernacle deal with the two major expressions of the faith of the people redeemed by the grace and power of God." (Thomas L. Constable. *Notes on Exodus*, p. 95.)

See *The Mosaic Covenant* Excursus

B. The Decalogue (20:1-17)

C. The Covenant Code (20:18-23:33)

D. Ratification of the Covenant (24:1-18)

E. Directions for the Tabernacle (25:1-31:18)

1. What is the significance of verses 1-9?

"Only voluntary gifts were acceptable as materials for the Lord's house (25:2; 35:3, 21-22, 29), since love rather than compulsion is the basis of all truly biblical giving (2 Cor. 9:7)." (Ronald F. Youngblood. *Exodus*, p. 113.)

F. The Breaking and Renewing of the Covenant (32:1-34:35)

1. What is the flaw in the thinking and actions of the Israelites in verse 1?
2. Contrast Yahweh's desire for Israel's possessions in 25:1-9 with how they are using them in 32:2-4?
3. Did Israel know that they were sinning in this action (Ex. 20:2-6; 24:3-8)?

"It is precisely the attempt to worship *Yahweh* by means he has already declared totally unacceptable that makes the sin of the golden calf so destructive, far more so than a simple shift of allegiance to 'other' or 'foreign' gods." (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 421.)

"The bull seems to have had manifold meanings in the iconography of the Near East. It symbolized the god. It expressed attributes of a god. It represented a pedestal for the god. Each of these meanings is important in understanding the cult of the golden calves in Israel's religious experience." (Stephen Von Wyrick, "Israel's Golden Calves," *Biblical Illustrator* 13:1 (Fall 1986): 10.)

4. Was Aaron trying to lead Israel away from idolatry or was he in approval of their actions?
5. Why does the Lord say that He is going to destroy Israel and then change His mind?

The Lord's statements concerning His intentions or will can be unconditional or conditional. *Decrees* are statements of God that are classified as unconditional, and nothing the recipient does can change this (Gen. 22:16-18). *Announcements* are statements of God that are classified as conditional where if the recipient meets the conditions of the *if...then* statement, God will relent (Jer. 26:4-6). However, most statements are unmarked in that it is not clear whether it is a decree or an announcement. For example, when Nathan told David that his son would die because of his sin (2 Sam. 12:14), David cried out to God for the child's life because the condition of God's statement was ambiguous. It was after the child died that he knew that God's will here was that of a decree. Likewise other ambiguous statements of God prove conditional. Micah announced that Jerusalem would become a heap of rubble because of their sins (Mic. 3:12), but one discovers from Jer. 26:17-19 that the judgment was averted by the repentant Hezekiah, proving the statement a conditional one. Exodus 32:12-14 is another example of this. To see God as one who can change His mind does not threaten His immutability, rather it shows Him as one who desires and is able to have a give-and-take relationship with humanity. (For a further discussion, see Robert B. Chisholm. "Does God 'Change His Mind'?" In *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152:608 (October-December, 1995): 387-99)

6. Why does Moses deal so harshly with the Israelites?

7. What announcement does Yahweh make in 33:1-6?

"Throughout the remainder of the Pentateuch, the incident of the worship of the golden calf casts a dark shadow across Israel's relationship with God, much the same way as the account of the Fall in Genesis 3 marked a major turning point in God's dealing with humankind." (John H. Sailhamer. *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 310.)

8. What three requests does Moses make of the Lord in verses 12-23? Does the Lord grant them?

". . . though Yahweh does indeed come to Moses in theophany, what he gives to Moses is quite specifically *not* the *sight* of this beauty, his glory, his Presence—that, indeed, he pointedly denies. What he gives rather is a *description*, and at that, a description not of how he *looks* but of how he *is*." (John I. Durham. *Exodus*, p. 452.)

9. What announcement does the Lord make in 34:1-26?

"There is nothing more terrible than the way in which sin clings to a man and dogs his footsteps. Let a man once steal, and he is never trusted again, even though he has made reparation for it. Men look at their fallen brothers through their sin; but God looks at man through the idealized [sic] life, with a love that imputes to him every virtue for Christ's sake." (Frederick B. Meyer. *Devotional Commentary on Exodus*, pp. 448-49.)

"The physical nature of this phenomenon must remain a mystery, but its theological meaning is crystal clear. Moses, as covenant mediator, was authenticated as such by his resemblance to the God of glory whom he represented. It is precisely for this reason that Moses and Elijah shared the radiance of the transfigured Jesus (Luke 9:31-32)." (Eugene H. Merrill. "A Theology of the Pentateuch." In *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 56.)

G. Construction and Dedication of the Tabernacle (36:1-40:38)

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