

# Commentary & Notes on Exodus

The commentary and notes below are adapted from the teaching materials of Annie Kartoizian (1906-1989). In 1934 Annie became a missionary in China with OMS. During World War II she spent 21 months in a Japanese concentration camp as a prisoner. She was repatriated in 1943 and sailed on the famous vessel Gripsholm. In 1949 she made a miraculous last-minute escape from Beijing before it fell to Mao's Communists. When she could no longer enter China, Annie went to Taiwan. Annie and her family have been life-long friends of our family. In 1989, while pastoring with the United Armenian Congregational Church of Hollywood I had the honor of participating in her funeral. It was during those years in Los Angeles that Annie gave me her teaching notes (the commentary below) - laboriously typed on what is now yellowed paper with hand written marginal notes, many of which are in Chinese. - Pastor Steve

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. Relation of the Book of Exodus to the Book of Genesis

In Exodus nothing is commenced and nothing is finished. The book preceding and the book following must be read with it. It is a sequel to Genesis and develops the chronicle of a family of seventy souls into the history of a nations so numerous that its Egyptian oppressors were alarmed.

In Genesis the earth rises out of darkness into light. In Exodus Israel emerges out of the darkness of Egyptian bondage into light and liberty. Genesis tells how God formed the world for Himself - to show forth His praise. Exodus shows how God formed Israel for Himself - to show forth His praise (Isaiah 43:21).

### II. Moses The Writer

Genesis was written out of previously existing documents. With Exodus begins the account of Moses himself. With Exodus begins the history of those things to which he was himself an eye and ear witness. His own life and work comprise the subject matter of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The account of Moses constitutes about one-seventh of the whole Bible and is about two-thirds as large as the entire New Testament.

New Testament proofs as to Mosaic authorship of Exodus (Exodus 24:4): Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37, etc. There are twenty-five passages quoted from Moses in express words by

Christ and His apostles. There are nineteen passages where quotations are made as to the sense and meaning of Mosaic writings.

### **III. Main Topics Of The Book Of Exodus**

1. The four hundred years in Egypt
2. The going out of Egypt
3. The Ten Commandments
4. The Tabernacle

### **IV. Notable Chapters In Exodus**

Chapter 2 - Birth, childhood, and young manhood of Moses

Chapter 3 - Call of Moses and his commission to deliver Israel

Chapter 14 - The departure from Egypt, passage through the Red Sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh

Chapter 20 - Giving of the Ten Commandments

Chapters 25-31 - Directions for the Tabernacle

Chapter 32 - The Golden Calf

### **V. Divisions Of The Book Of Exodus**

1. Israel in bondage - chapter 1 - see page 4
2. The deliverance of Israel - chapters 2-19 - see page 5
3. Giving of the law and institutions which completed the organization of the people into a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" - chapters 20-40 - see page 28

One and two are historical but contain three important laws. Three is legislative but contains history also.

### **VI. Types Of Christ**

There are more types of Christ in this book than in any other book in the Old Testament. The way of man's reconciliation to God and coming into covenant and communion with Him by a mediator is here represented (John 5:46).

### **VII. Notes On The Plagues**

They came exactly according to prediction and at the command of Moses and Aaron. They extended only to Egyptians and left the land of Goshen (the Israelites, their cattle, and substance) entirely untouched.

### **VIII. Notes On The Passover**

Passovers in Scripture

1. In Egypt (Exodus 12:28)
2. In the wilderness (Numbers 9:5)
3. In Canaan (Joshua 5:10)
4. By Hezekiah during revival (2 Chronicles 30:13-15)
5. By Josiah during revival (2 Kings 23:22; 2 Chronicles 35:1-19)
6. By Ezra after the return from exile (Ezra 6:19)
7. In Jesus' boyhood (Luke 2:41)
8. During Jesus' ministry (John 2:13; 6:4)
9. By Jesus, before His betrayal (Matthew 26:17)

Four things were required in the first Passover that were never required afterwards:

1. The eating of the lamb in their houses dispersed through Goshen (Exodus 12:46; Deuteronomy 16:2,5,6).
2. The taking the lamb on the tenth day (Exodus 12:3; Leviticus 23:4-8).

3. The striking of the blood on the doorposts and lintels of their houses (Exodus 12:7,22).
4. Their eating it in haste (Exodus 12:11).

The paschal lamb is typical of Christ who is our passover (1 Corinthians 5:7b)

1. It was to be a lamb - Christ is the Lamb of God (Exodus 12:5; John 1:29)
2. It was to be a male of the first year in its prime (Exodus 12:5). Christ offered up Himself in the midst of His days, not in infancy with the babes of Bethlehem. It denotes strength and sufficiency.
3. It was to be without blemish (Exodus 12:5), denoting the purity of the Lord Jesus (1 Peter 1:19).
4. It was to be set apart four days before (Exodus 12:3,6), denoting the designation of the Lord Jesus to be Savior. Christ was crucified at the Passover, so He solemnly entered into Jerusalem four days before the paschal lamb was set apart (Luke 9:51,53; Acts 2:23; Revelation 13:8)
5. It was to be slain and roasted with fire (Exodus 12:6-9), denoting the sufferings of the Lord Jesus even unto death. The wrath of God is as a fire and He was made a curse for us.
6. It was to be killed by the whole congregation between the two evenings (Exodus 12:6). Christ suffered at the end of the ages (Hebrews 9:26), by the hand of the multitude of the Jews (Luke 23:18).
7. Not a bone of it must be broken (Exodus 12:46), which was expressly fulfilled in Christ (John 19:33,36).

The sprinkling of blood was typical (Exodus 12:7,22)

1. It had to be sprinkled. It was not enough for it to be shed. The merits of Christ's death must be applied to be effective.
2. It was sprinkled on the door-posts - an open confession is to be made of faith in Christ, owning our dependence on Him.
3. It was not to be sprinkled on the threshold, which cautions us to take heed of trampling under foot the blood of the covenant (Hebrews 10:29).
4. The blood thus applied was a means of preservation. It is a protection from the wrath of God and the curse of the law (Romans 8:1).

The eating of the lamb was typical of our duty to Christ.

1. It was killed to be eaten (Exodus 12:8). We must by faith make Christ ours (John 6:53-55).
2. It was to be all eaten (Exodus 12:10). We must feed on the whole Christ.
3. It was to be eaten immediately, not deferred till morning (Exodus 12:10). Today Christ is offered and is to be accepted today (2 Corinthians 6:2).
4. It was to be eaten with bitter herbs (Exodus 12:8). We feed on Christ and find Him the sweeter as we remember the bitterness of sin.
5. It was to be eaten in a departing posture (Exodus 12:11). We are in the world but not of it, with an attitude of forsaking (Hebrews 13:13,14).

The Passover and the Lord's Supper

Jesus commemorating the Passover with the disciples, said, "*Take, eat...*" (Luke 22:14-22; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29). This has been religiously observed by the whole Christian world to keep the paschal sacrifice and the death of Christ in commemoration.

## I. FIRST DIVISION: ISRAEL IN BONDAGE Chapter 1

### Chapter 1

There is a gap between Genesis and Exodus of nearly 300 years, from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses. This makes a total of 430 years from Jacob's migration to Egypt till the Exodus (Exodus 12:40,41).

Verses 1-5: Moses again introduced the names and number of the family of Jacob when they came to Egypt, to show that though they were then very few, yet in a short time, under the blessing of God, they had multiplied exceedingly; and thus the promise to Abraham had been literally fulfilled. At the time of the exodus there were 600,000 men above twenty, besides women and children (Numbers 1:46). This would total approximately 3,000,000. For seventy persons to reach this number in 430 years it would be necessary to double about every twenty-five years, which would be easily possible.

These family records of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, no doubt had been carried to Egypt and there became part of Israel's national annals; and through the long years of bondage there was a steadfastly cherished hope that Canaan would one day be their national home. This was Israel's star of hope.

During Israel's sojourn in Egypt, Egypt became a world empire. With Israel's departure, Egypt declined, and became (and remained) a second-rate power.

The number of Jacob's family was just the number of nations by which the earth was peopled according to the account in Genesis 10 (cf. Deuteronomy 32:8).

Verse 6: All the Egyptians who had known Jacob and his twelve sons died. Thus the important services performed by Joseph were forgotten. Joseph died at the age of 110 years having spent 93 years in Egypt.

Verse 7: "*Fruitful*" - like healthy trees bringing forth an abundance of fruit. "*Increased*" - like fishes as the original implies. This increase was under the providence of God, due to two reasons: 1) The fruitfulness of the Hebrew women; and 2) The fact that there were no early deaths among them. Their increase, apparently, was after the death of Joseph. When they lost the benefit of his protection God made their numbers their defense.

Verse 8: "*Knew not*" - he approved of that system of government which Joseph had established, and he refused to acknowledge the obligations under which the whole land of Egypt was to Joseph.

Moses was brought up under either Thothmes III or Ramses II, both of whom were among Egypt's most famous kings. The exodus was either under Amenhotep II or Merneptah. Mummies of all four have been found.

He knew not Joseph and after him came one who said, "*I know not the Lord*" (Exodus 5:2).

Verses 9,10: Pharaoh probably called a council of his nobles. "*Our enemies*" - shepherd-kings had fought a long series of wars with Egypt; Israelites were of the same occupation and the king attributed to them the same motive. "*Get them out of the land*" - having heard them speak of the promise made to their fathers regarding a home in Canaan, the Egyptians feared they would leave.

Verse 11: “*Pharaoh*” - first time used - signified the king. It meant a crocodile which was a sacred animal among the Egyptians; this name added greater respect and reverence for the king.

The Israelites were so peaceable and inoffensive that they could find no occasion of war upon them; therefore they had to find other means of weakening them.

Some writers suppose that besides cities the Israelites also built the pyramids. If the history of the pyramids is not found here, it is nowhere else extant.

Verse 12: In proportion to their afflictions was their prosperity.

Verse 13: “*Rigor*” - this kind of cruelty to slaves was later forbidden to the Israelites (Leviticus 25:43,46b - where the same word is used).

Verse 15: Were they Egyptians or Hebrews? There is a question here. It may mean the midwives used by the Hebrews. These two were, no doubt, the chiefs under whom others acted and by whom they were instructed in obstetrics.

Verse 16: From Jonathan ben Uzziel - *“Pharaoh slept and saw in his sleep a balance, and behold the whole land of Egypt stood in one scale, and a lamb in the other; and the scale in which the lamb was outweighed that in which was the land of Egypt. Immediately he sent and called all the chief magicians and told them his dream. And Janes and Jimbres (2 Timothy 3:8) who were chief of the magicians opened their mouths and said to Pharaoh, ‘A child is shortly to be born in the congregation of the Israelites whose hand shall destroy the whole land of Egypt.’ Therefore Pharaoh spake to the midwives, etc.”* Therefore, this cruel order to kill the male children born to the Hebrews.

Verse 17: They feared to do what would displease God.

Verse 19: Because the Hebrew women were obliged to work, they had easy deliveries; also God was multiplying them.

Verse 21: God rewarded the midwives by the increase and prosperity of their own families.

Verse 22: The Nile was a sacred river among the Egyptians. Probably Pharaoh intended the young Hebrews as an offering to his god with the thought of: 1) Increasing the fertility of Egypt; and 2) Preventing the increase of population among the Israelites.

## II. SECOND DIVISION: THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL Chapters 2-19

### Chapter 2

Verse 1: As a new law was to be given and a new priesthood formed, God chose a religious family out of which the lawgiver and the high priest were both to spring. Father of Moses - Amram, son of Kohath, son of Levi (Exodus 6:16-20). Mother of Moses - a question as to whether she was the daughter of Levi or a daughter of the tribe of Levi. If the former, she was Jochebed, sister to Kohath and aunt of Amram (Exodus 6:20; Numbers 26:59). Such family marriages were at this time lawful though they were afterwards forbidden (Leviticus 18:12).

Verse 2: Aaron was three years older and Miriam must have been at least 10 years older (Exodus 7:7; Numbers 26:59). Miriam and Aaron had no doubt both been born before the decree was passed for the destruction of the Hebrew male children mentioned in chapter 1.

Verse 3: "*Bulrushes*" - This plant grows on the banks of the Nile and in marshy grounds. The stalk rises to about six or seven cubits above the water - nine or ten feet. This reed was of great use; the pith serving as food and the woody part to build vessels... "*in the flags*" - not willing to trust it in the stream for fear of a disaster; and maybe choosing the place where the Egyptian princess was accustomed to come.

Verse 5: The word "herself" is not in the original. This probably was a religious act or for the purpose of washing her clothes.

Verse 6: She knew of the edict of her father. Some say that after finding Moses she implored her father to abolish the edict.

Verse 7: Having done everything they could, they left the event in God's hands (Hebrews 11:23). He worked it out miraculously.

Verse 9: His mother taught him so well in childhood that these early impressions were never eradicated from his mind. He had the finest Egypt could afford but he never lost his childhood faith.

Verse 10: What name he had from his parents, we do not know. "Moses" means "drawn out". The word is used in the same sense in 2 Samuel 22:17 and Psalm 18:16. An old writer says he was turned over to the wise men, Janess and Jimbrees for instruction and wisdom (2 Timothy 3:8). Jewish tradition tells us that Pharaoh's daughter had no child and that she was the only child of her father.

Verse 11: "*When Moses was grown*" - He seems to have been appointed to some high office, civil or military, in the government of Egypt. Josephus says he commanded an army of the south. He must have attained considerable power and reputation, else he would have not undertaken so gigantic a task as the deliverance of Israel, which, it is said in Acts 7:25, he had in mind in intervening in the fight (Hebrews 11:23-29). He was forty years of age at this time (Acts 7:20-29). He supposed that God who had given him the commission had also given his brethren to understand that they were to be delivered by his hand. But the people were not ready for his leadership yet.

Note on Hebrews 11:24-26:

1. Moses forsook his place in the highest caste of Egypt to take one in the lowest. The Egyptian castes in order were:
2. The Royal Family
3. Priests
4. Soldiers
5. Husbandmen, Gardeners, Huntsmen, Public Weighers
6. Tradesmen, Boatsmen and Stonecutters
7. Fowlers and Fishermen
8. Slaves

Moses chose not the first and the glories of Egypt for a season, but the seventh and afflictions with the people of God to attain eternal glory.

Verse 12: It may be that the Egyptian was about to kill the Hebrew, or had already killed him. Thus on the Noahic precept, Moses was justified in killing him (Genesis 9:6).

Verses 13,14: He saw that the Israelites were not as yet ready to leave their bondage; and that though God had called him to be their leader, yet His providence had not yet sufficiently opened the way. There was no place for him in Egypt until that day.

Verse 15: *“Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh”* - in Hebrews 11:27 it states that Moses did not fear the wrath of the king. The apostle speaks not of this forsaking of Egypt but of his final departure when he disregarded the threats of the king and led the people out of the land in the name and strength of God.

Midian - the land of the Midianites who are supposed to have had their origin from Midian, the fourth son of Abraham and Keturah (Genesis 25:2).

Verse 17: As the daughters of Reuel filled the trough and brought their flocks to drink, the shepherds drove the sheep away and watered their own cattle, thus profiting from the labor of the girls.

Verse 18: Reuel - called also Jethro or Jether (Exodus 3:1; 4:18; 18:1, etc.).

Verses 21,22: This was part of Moses' training. The loneliness and roughness of the wilderness developed sturdy qualities hardly possible in the palace. It also taught him to know the country where he and his people were later to sojourn for another forty years. No doubt Moses' forty years of shepherd life carried him over the whole region.

Verse 23: Acts 7:30 and Exodus 7:7 - the death of the Egyptian king happened about forty years after the escape of Moses to Midian. Some (Jewish tradition) suppose that Moses wrote the book of Genesis, and also the book of Job, while he sojourned in Midian.

Verses 24,25: The name of God is here emphatically prefixed to four different expressions. The frequent repetition of the name of God here intimates that we are now to expect a work worthy of God. His eyes which run to and fro through the earth were now fixed on Israel to show Himself a God in their behalf (2 Chronicles 15:9; Zechariah 4:10).

### **Chapter 3**

During forty years in Egypt Moses acquired the wisdom of the Egyptians; during forty years in the wilderness he grew in the wisdom of God. At eighty the call to deliver Israel came clear and definite from God Himself. His life is divided into three forties; first he was prince in the court of Pharaoh for forty years; then he was a shepherd in Midian; the last forty years he was the leader of the children of Israel. He died at one hundred twenty (Deuteronomy 34:7).

Verse 1: He had now finished the second period of forty years and received his commission to bring Israel out of Egypt.

This was poor employment for a man of his education, but he was in the place where God's call could reach him.

*“The mountain of God, even Horeb”* - Horeb was probably the primitive name, which was afterwards called the mountain of God, because God appeared upon it to Moses; and also Mount Sinai (from “seneh”, a “bush”) because it was in a bush or bramble that God

appeared in a flame of fire. Note: 1) God appeared in the bush (Exodus 3:1); 2) Moses brought water from the rock (Exodus 17:6); 3) Moses, by lifting up his hands, made Joshua to prevail over Amelek (Exodus 17:8ff); God delivered the law (Exodus 19:20); 5) Moses fasted forty days and forty nights (Exodus 24:15-18; 34:1,2,27,28); 6) Hence he brought the two tablets; 7) Here Elijah had a vision (1 Kings 19:8,11-13).

Verse 2: *"The angel of the Lord"* - (the messenger of the covenant - Malachi 3:1), the Messiah. Called "Jehovah" in verse 4; attributes of the Godhead applied to Him in verse 14.

*"A flame of fire out of the midst of the bush"* - God accompanied the Israelites in all their journeyings through the wilderness as a pillar of fire by night (Deuteronomy 4:24; 9:3; Isaiah 10:17).

*"And the bush was not consumed"* - an emblem of Israel and its various distresses and persecutions; it was in the fire of adversity but not consumed. They were in bondage in Egypt - in the brick-kilns - but not consumed.

Verse 4: God called him by name; his response was immediate.

Verse 5: Josephus says that it was general opinion that God dwelt on that mountain; hence the shepherds did not dare feed their flocks there. Moses, however, finding the soil to be rich and the pasturage good, boldly drove his flock thither to feed on it. God cautioned him against rashness in his approach. He must draw near to hear but not to pry.

Verses 7,8: *"I have seen: I know: I have come"* - God's time for action had come.

*"Good land and large"* - Canaan was large in comparison to Goshen. It was excellent for pasturage because it abounded in herbage and flowers; and from the latter an abundance of wild honey was collected by the bees.

Verses 10,11: Such was the bondage of the children of Israel and the power of the Egyptians that Moses knew a person could not bring about their deliverance. Perhaps he lacked courage or faith.

Note on Moses' objections:

1. Lack of fitness - Exodus 3:11
2. Lack of words - Exodus 3:13
3. Lack of authority - Exodus 4:1
4. Lack of power of speech - Exodus 4:10,13
5. Lack of initial success - Exodus 5:23
6. Lack of acceptance - Exodus 6:12,30

Moses lacked confidence in what God could do through him. This is not humility but a lack of faith (Isaiah 6:8; Jeremiah 1:6; Galatians 2:20).

Verse 12: *"Certainly I will be with thee"* - God's counsel and power was to bring this to pass. *"And this shall be a token unto thee"* - 1) this miraculous manifestation of the burning bush was to be a proof that God had sent him; or 2) God's presence with him was to be a proof of his divine mission.



Verses 13,14: *"I AM that I AM"* - Self-existent: He is not created. He alone has His being of Himself and has not dependence upon any other. Being self-existent, He cannot but be self-sufficient, and therefore all-sufficient and inexhaustible. Eternal - unchangeable in word and nature; true to His promises and always the same, yesterday, today and forever. This name cannot be reasoned out nor found by searching (Judges 13:18; Proverbs 30:4).

The very name precludes the possibility of idolatry because it was impossible for the mind to present this Being in any assignable shape; for who could represent SELF-EXISTENCE or BEING by any limited form?

Verse 15: He directed Moses to use another name more familiar and intelligible. The first name referred to His eternal existence (Exodus 34:5-7); this second to the discovery He made of Himself as long as time shall last. God wanted to: 1) Revive among them the religion of their fathers; and 2) Emphasize His covenant relation. This is His memorial name to all generations - that is, while time shall be.

Verse 16: *"I have surely visited you"* - an exact fulfillment of the prediction of Joseph in the same words (Genesis 50:24 - also Exodus 4:31). This is the earliest notice of elders acting as a body. They were representatives of the people. Their authority appears undefined and extended to all matters concerning public welfare. There were at least 70 elders (Exodus 24:1). When the tribes became settled, the elders were distinguished by different titles according to their roles as governors (Deuteronomy 31:28) and magistrates (Deuteronomy 19:12).

Verses 17-22: A prediction of their deliverance from Egypt. *"Every woman shall borrow"* (Exodus 3:22) - the word is to ask of demand. "Spoil" - the original word is used also in 1 Samuel 30:22 to signify property that had been taken away by violence. Hence the Israelites recovered a part of their property, wages, and what they had been deprived of unjustly by the Egyptians.

## **Chapter 4**

Verse 1: Moses' objection that the people would not hear him cannot be justified because it contradicts what God had already said (Exodus 3:18).

Verse 2: As the rod was made the instrument of working many miracles, it was afterwards called the *"rod of God"* (Exodus 4:20). Formerly it has been Moses' shepherd crook. It was now consecrated to God and became a token of His presence and operation. To Israel it was a token of guidance, encouragement, and protection; to Egypt it was a token of judgment, like the bite of a serpent.

Verse 3: Moses fled from the serpent. It was either a kind which he had never seen before or which he knew to be dangerous.

Verse 4: His faith was so far strengthened by the sign that he ventured at God's command to seize it by the tail, and it again became a rod.

Verses 6-7: His hand was the subject of a double miracle. This signified that Moses was not to work miracles with his own hand or in his own power. His leprous hand forever excluded boasting.

Verse 9: This indicated that some would be more difficult to persuade than others.

Verse 10: This was not humility or modesty. He sought to excuse himself indicating some unbelief or cowardice or both. However, it may be possible that Moses was not fluent in the Hebrew tongue. His first forty years were spend mostly in the court; the last forty years he had spent in Midian. Therefore he might not have spoken it as his native language.

Verses 11,12: Moses knew that God made man, but he had to be reminded here that God made man's mouth (Psalm 94:9; Luke 21:14,15).

Verses 13,14: God justly resents Moses' backwardness to serve Him.

Verses 15,16: Aaron was to speak for Moses. Moses was to communicate to him what God spoke.

Verses 18,20: Moses departed in a friendly way from Jethro. He took the rod which was once the badge of his shepherd's office; now it was that by which he was to feed, rule, and protect Israel.

Verse 21: God is here represented as doing what He only permitted to be done. Pharaoh made his own heart stubborn against God and God gave him up to his own way (Romans 1:24a,26a,28a). He permitted Satan to entice, blind, and deceive him. He chose the path and God permitted him to follow it to his own destruction. God told Moses this so he would not be discouraged or surprised. Pharaoh had already hardened his heart against the oppressed Israelites. He had already hardened his heart before Moses and Aaron met him (Exodus 2:23). Pharaoh was responsible for the hardening of his heart. This is the first mention of "hardening."

Verse 23: They could not serve God in Goshen because the animals which they sacrificed in worship to God were sacred among the Egyptians. Moses gives Pharaoh this reason (Exodus 8:26).

Verses 24-26: It is supposed the circumcision was in use among the Midianites as descended from Abraham and that both Zipporah and Moses had neglected this in the case of a son (we are not certain which one). According to the law the uncircumcised child was to be cut off from his people, so that there should be no inheritance for that for that branch of the family in Israel (Genesis 17:14). Moses, therefore, for neglecting this had exposed him to this cutting off; but Zipporah prevented this by quick action. They could not join Israel with the uncircumcised child in the family. Circumcision was not peculiar to Israel, but they alone circumcised infants; so Zipporah reproaches Moses as being the cause of the bloodshed.

Verses 27,28: God informed Aaron so correctly that the brothers arrived at the sacred mountain at the same time.

Verses 30,31: The elders of Israel acknowledged God as Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and Moses as His messenger for their deliverance.

## **Chapter 5**

Moses and Aaron were in peril of their lives in going to Pharaoh, especially Moses who had forty years before fled after killing an Egyptian.

Verse 1: In speaking to the elders of Israel Moses spoke of the “*God of their fathers*”; but in speaking to Pharaoh he speaks of the “*God of Israel*” (the people), and it is the first time we find Him called so in Scripture.

Verse 2: Pharaoh seemed to think that every place and people had a special deity; and he supposed that this Jehovah might be the special deity of the Israelites to whom he, as an Egyptian, was under no special obligation.

Verse 3: The distance from Goshen to Sinai by the shortest way on foot (see Exodus 3:12-18). The Israelites could not sacrifice in the land of Egypt because the animals they offered were held sacred by the Egyptians; neither could they omit this duty because it was essential to religion before the giving of the law.

Verses 4,5: Pharaoh hinted that the Hebrews were in a state of revolt and charged Moses and Aaron as being ringleaders of the sedition.

Verses 6-9: The task-masters were Egyptians, the officers were Hebrews (Exodus 5:14). Without examination, Pharaoh took it for granted that the people were not fully employed; so the people were obligated to go over all the cornfields and pluck up the stubble, which they were obligated to substitute for straw (Exodus 5:13).

Verse 14: The Israelite officers whom the task-masters had set over the people were severely beaten, probably bastinadoed (caning the soles of the feet). This form of punishment can still be seen pictured on ancient Egyptian monuments. The culprit lies prone, his legs turned up behind erect. Then the executioner gives him the prescribed number of blows on the soles of the feet with a stick. This was severe punishment, the sufferer not being able to walk for many weeks after, while some were lamed for life. (See Deuteronomy 25:2,3; Jeremiah 20:2).

Verses 20,21: The people reproached Moses and Aaron as being accessories to their slavery. Persons called to public service for God must expect to be tried not only by their enemies, but also by unkind and unthinking friends, who judge only by outward appearance.

Verses 22,23: Since God did not later reprove them for these words, they must have been within due bounds and from proper motives.

It is no certain proof of the displeasure of God that a whole people, or an individual, may be found in a state of great oppression and distress; nor is prosperity and plenty signs of His approval. God loved the Israelites better than the Egyptians, though circumstances seemed to point to the opposite.

## **Chapter 6**

Verse 1: “*Strong hand*” - the same verb which we translate “to harden” (Exodus 4:21). Sovereign power suddenly and forcibly applied. God purposed to manifest His power in the sight of Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Verses 2,3: Israel as yet did not know the full import of the name “Jehovah”; they knew nothing of the power and goodness of God in comparison to what the Israelites were now about to experience. Now and hereafter the chosen people were to realize the full import of the name “Jehovah”. (See Exodus 34:5-7)

Verses 4,5: Jehovah was to fulfill His promise and perfect that which He had begun. In the history of creation, God is never called Jehovah, till the heavens and the earth were finished (Genesis 2:4).

Verses 6-8: “*I will...I will...I will*” (7 times in English). Why should God take such a people for His own people? 1) Because He had promised to do so to His noble ancestors. 2) That the province by which they were protected might be the more visible; for they had been endowed in the illustrious qualities and effects of the providence might have been ascribed to their own wisdom. 3) That God might show to all succeeding generations that He delights to instruct the ignorant, help the weak and save the lost. God seems to have chosen the weak to show them the greatest proof of His willingness to save the sinner and the disobedient. None need despair.

Their bondage had become so oppressive that they had lost all hope of ever being redeemed from it. “*Anguish of spirit*” is labor so continual and bondage so oppressive that they had scarcely time to breath.

Verses 10,11: Moses was sent the second time to Pharaoh. God thus repeated His command to Pharaoh before He began His punishment.

Verse 12: Denoted unsuitableness and incapacity through some defect or impediment, or because of impaired knowledge of Egyptian after an absence of forty years.

Verses 14-27: This genealogy was intended to show that Moses and Aaron came in a direct line from Abraham. Here we may see how the divine promise in Genesis 15:16 was fulfilled. The Israelites were delivered out of Egypt in the fourth generation: Moses son of Amram, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Jacob.

Verses 28-30: This is connected with the first part of chapter seven.

## **Chapter 7**

Verse 1: At Moses' command the plagues were to come and to be removed; hence he appeared as a god to Pharaoh.

Verse 5: God suffered the enemies to oppose Moses and Aaron to the uttermost of their power so that Jehovah might appear to be All-mighty and All-sufficient.

Verses 10-12: Moses has been originally instructed in the learning of the Egyptians and was thought to have improved himself during his retirement; the magicians are therefore sent for to vie with him. There can be no doubt that real serpents were produced by the magicians. On this there are two opinions: 1) that the serpents were secreted until the time of the exhibition and then produced by juggling or sleight of hand; 2) that the serpents were brought by the ministry of an evil spirit.

It was necessary that God permit Pharaoh's wise men to act to the utmost of their skill in order to imitate the work of God, that His superiority might be clearly seen. This was fully done when Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. The two chief magicians were Jannes and Jambres (2 Timothy 3:8).

We come now to the first of the ten plagues. The ten plagues were aimed directly at the gods of Egypt, and were designed to give convincing proof of the superiority of the God of Israel over the gods of Egypt. By these miracles both Israel and the Egyptians were to

*“know that Jehovah is God”* (Exodus 6:7; 7:5,17; 8:22; 10:2; 14:4,18); as later manna and the quail were designed to show (Exodus 16:6,12).

Before the historic period of Egypt each tribe had its own god represented by an animal. Some of these representative animals were the bull, ram, cow, vulture, falcon, hawk, crocodile, goat, ape, serpent, frog, cat, and many other gods. The Nile was sacred. Pharaohs were deified. Of all the animals the bull was the most sacred. Whoever killed an ibis or a hawk was put to death. In the temples the various animals were fed, groomed, and cared for in luxury by priests. In On where Joseph resided (Genesis 41:45), incense was offered three times a day before the sacred bull and the sacred hawk, and once a month a sacrifice. Each of these animals on its death was embalmed and buried with pomp in a magnificent tomb. In the temple at Tunis fifty or more priests waited on the crocodile. It was among these people that the Hebrew people spent 400 years of their existence.

Verses 20,21: The waters of the Nile had been diverted into canals and ponds and was worshipped as the life-giver of Egypt. The first plague was the turning of the water of the Nile into a death dealing, putrid, fluid instead of life-giving waters. The Egyptians, especially the priests, were very particular about their personal habits, abhorring nothing more than blood. They were continually washing themselves. How they must have felt this blow. Fish was a general food and now the fish were dead (Numbers 11:5). They had stained the river with the blood of the Hebrew children and now their river was bloody (Revelation 16:6).

Verses 22-24: The Egyptians dug round about the river for water to drink, and it seems that the water obtained by this means was not bloody like that in the river; on this water therefore the magicians operated. When Moses acted upon God’s command, the waters of the river only appear to have turned to blood (Exodus 7:20); afterwards the plague doubtless became general. Pharaoh’s men imitated what God had done, but could not undo it.

Verse 25: This plague continued at least a whole month.

## **Chapter 8**

Verses 2-4: An Egyptian goddess was worshipped in elaborate ceremonies honoring the frog as a creature of two worlds - air and water. The river Nile which was an object of their adoration was here one of the instruments of their punishments. God showed the greatness of His power by making an animal, devoid of the evil quality, the means of a terrible affliction. *“Bring forth abundantly”* not only shows that large numbers of these creatures were to infest the land, but it seems also to imply that all the ova already in the marshes and river were miraculously brought to a state of perfection.

Verses 6,7: Again the magicians imitated the miracles, but they could not take the frogs away.

Verses 8-10: Moses addressed Pharaoh in this way: *“That thou mayest be persuaded that Jehovah alone is the inflictor of these plagues, appoint the time when thou wouldst have the present calamity removed, and I will pray unto God, and thou shalt plainly see from His answer that this is not casual affliction, that in continuing to harden thy heart and resist thou are sinning against God.”* Nothing could be fuller proof that this plague was supernatural than the circumstances of Pharaoh’s being permitted to assign himself the time of its being removed, and its removal at the intercession of Moses according to that

appointment. This is what Moses states in verse 10b. Thus also Moses showed that his performances had no dependence on the position of the planets or the luckiness of any one hour more than another.

Verses 13,14: The punishment was lightened by the killing of the frogs; but the leaving of them in the land was a continual proof that such a plague had taken place and that the displeasure of the Lord still continued. Calmet supposes that the plague of flies originated from the plague of frogs; that the former deposited their ova in the putrid masses and that from these the innumerable swarms afterwards mentioned were hatched. Thus the natural means for the fourth plague had been miraculously provided by the second.

Verses 16,17: God brought forth tiny forms of life from the dust, from which He had brought forth the highest form, man. This sign was against the worship of all the gods of Egypt because the lice contaminated the priests and their religious vestments and thus prevented all worship. The priests were painfully careful of pollutions of any kind and particularly lest they should bring vermin on their clothes into the temple, which was a profanation. They shaved off their hair on this account.

Verses 18,19: They tried the utmost of their skill either to produce these insects or to remove this plague. If the magicians had acted from spiritual agents, these agents had assigned limits beyond which they could not go; for every agent in the universe is acting under the direction or control of the Almighty. The magicians were convinced that no man could do these miracles which these holy men did, unless God were with them. God permits evil spirits to manifest themselves in a certain way, that men may see that there is a spiritual world, and be on their guard against seduction. He at the same time shows that all these agents are under His control, that men may have confidence in His goodness and power.

Verses 22-24: Swarms of flies were sent to cover the land, except Goshen where the Israelites lived. This was against the worship of Beelzebub. There was no limitation of the sign by the magicians, but for the first time Pharaoh began to make concessions. Pharaoh's compromises: 8:25 - worship in the land; 8:28 - don't go too far; 10:11 - only the men may go; 10:24 - only the people may go, leave the flocks.

Verse 25: Pharaoh consented to have their worship tolerated in Egypt.

Verses 26,27: Moses asked that they go three days' journey to sacrifice.

Verses 28,31,32: Pharaoh consented but later refused to let them go when the swarms of flies were gone. The flies were probably swept into the sea by a strong wind. Pharaoh hardened his own heart (see also Exodus 8:15) by continued opposition to God's plan and command. As he continued obstinate, so his heart continued to harden.

## **Chapter 9**

Verse 3: This plague was against the domestic animals of Egypt which were held sacred. This is the first place the horse is mentioned. Because of their activity and swiftness they were dedicated to the sun, also sacrificed in worship of the sun. It was principally on this account that God prohibited their use among the Israelites (also because they were used in warfare - see Deuteronomy 17:16).

Verse 6: All the cattle that did die belonged to the Egyptians. The bull was their chief god. Thus the Egyptians found the animals which they held sacred and deified slain by

the hand of Jehovah. Perhaps from the worship of the bull the Israelites learned to make the golden calf.

Verse 10: One part of the oppression of the Israelites consisted in their labor in the brick-kilns. These same furnaces now yielded the instruments which punished the Egyptians.

Verse 11: The magicians could not produce a similar malady by throwing ashes in the air; neither could they remove the plague from the people nor from their own flesh. Whether they perished in this plague or not, we do not know; but they are no more mentioned. If they were not destroyed, at least they left the field and no longer contended with God's messengers (2 Timothy 3:8,9).

Verses 14,15: Six times Moses had laid God's demand before Pharaoh. Now he is sent the seventh time. Now that no place is found for repentance in Pharaoh, nothing can prevent his utter ruin. God began to harden his heart and his case is hopeless.

Verse 16: God raises up very bad men to honor and power, spares them long, and suffers them to grow insufferably insolent, that He may be so much the more glorified in their destruction at last. Jethro saw the glory of God in the ruin of Pharaoh (Exodus 18:11).

Verse 17: Perhaps this was his last opportunity to submit to God.

Verse 18: This plague was against the moon-goddess who was worshipped as the power which controlled the weather. God set the time of this plague to show Pharaoh that Jehovah was Lord of heaven and earth and that the water, fire, earth, and air were creatures of His power. The objects of Egypt's worship were instruments of punishment in God's hands.

Rain or hail were very rare in Egypt; and such a tremendous storm as Moses announced would be without precedent.

Verse 19-21: In the midst of judgment, God remembered mercy; so those who regarded His word saved their cattle and their servants. It is wisdom to fear God and believe Him.

Verses 24-26: Again there was a distinction between Goshen and Egypt.

Verses 27-28: He was afraid but not to the point of real repentance and submission.

Verse 33: Moses went out of the city not only to for privacy but also to show that he dared venture abroad in the midst of the storm. He knew that the very hailstone had its direction from God Who meant him no harm.

## **Chapter 10**

Verses 1,2: It was not to crush Pharaoh that He wrought such mighty wonders, but to convince his enemies and to show his followers that Jehovah is the Lord.

Verse 3: Those that will not humble themselves, God will humble. Pharaoh had sometimes pretended to humble himself, but no account was made of it because he was neither sincere nor constant in it.

Verse 7: By this time the people of Egypt had been convinced that Israel should go. The sudden appearance and disappearance of the plagues at the word of Moses were such evident miracles that the people accepted them as from God. It is not known how long a period the ten plagues covered; some think a year. Pharaoh, no doubt, would have killed Moses if he had dared; but Moses' prestige went up and up (Exodus 11:3) so it would have been dangerous to touch him. The Egyptians had their gods and they supposed the Hebrews had theirs; and that this Jehovah required their services and would continue to afflict Egypt till His people were permitted to worship Him in His own way.

Verse 8: Pharaoh consented to let Moses and Aaron go but not the people.

Verses 10,11: He knew that if the men went and left their families, they would return.

Verses 13,14: God had no need to create new swarms for this purpose; He caused such a wind to blow as would bring those already existing over the land of Egypt. The goddess believed to be able to protect the Egyptians against the locusts was proved helpless.

Verses 16,17: His confession was not from a humble heart, but from a fearful heart.

Verses 21-23: This was a plague against the Egyptian sun-god, Ra. This was total darkness; they were prisoners of the dark. The lights of heaven were clouded, but all their fires and candles were put out by the damp vapors which caused this darkness. They felt troubled and strange so that they dared not move about in quarters familiar to them. This was a most dreadful plague therefore put first of the ten (Psalm 105:28).

Verses 27-29: This conference did not break off till Exodus 11:8 when Moses went out in great anger and told Pharaoh how soon he would change his mind and his proud spirit would come down. This was fulfilled in Exodus 12:31 when Pharaoh became a humble suppliant to Moses to depart. So after this interview came no more to see his face - to see his favor in behalf of his people.

## **Chapter 11**

Verses 1-3: This is supposed to be a parenthetical section. Moses was held in high esteem for his power and wisdom and, had it not been that they feared to molest him, some violence would have long since been offered to his person.

Verse 4: It is not certain how God was to perform this mission of punishment; but the works of God's justice are not less holy and pure than the works of His mercy.

Verse 5: From the highest to the lowest family, each would be struck with death.

Verse 7: Nothing was to be allowed by God to disturb His children.

Verse 8: Fulfilled in Exodus 12:31-33.

## **Chapter 12**

We suppose that while Moses was bringing the ten plagues on the Egyptians, he was directing the Israelites to prepare for their departure. Probably he had by degrees brought them together from their dispersions, for in verse 3 they are here called the "congregation of Israel."



Verse 2: God now changed the commencement of the Jewish year. The month to which this verse refers, the month of Abib, answers to a part of our March and April; previously to this the year began with Tisri, which answers to a part of our September; for in this month the Jews suppose God created the world, when the earth appeared at once with all its fruits in perfection. From this circumstance the Jews have formed a twofold commencement of the year; that which began in September was called the civil year; that which began with March was called the sacred or ecclesiastical year.

Verse 3: In after times they began their preparation on the thirteenth day, the day before the Passover, which was not celebrated until the fourteenth day (Exodus 12:6). However, on the present occasion, as this was the first Passover, they probably required more time to prepare.

Verse 4: If there were not enough persons in one family to eat a whole lamb, then two families joined together. The rabbis allow that there should be at least ten persons to one paschal lamb and not more than twenty. The persons who were to eat of it were first ascertained, and then the lamb was to be slain and dressed for that number.

Verse 5: The word used here means either a sheep or a goat; either was equally proper if without blemish. The Jews however preferred the lamb to the kid.

Verse 6: Taken from the flock on the tenth day and kept up and fed by itself until the fourteenth day when it was to be sacrificed. The sacrificial act in this case was not confined to the priests; any person might kill it. The head of the family slew the lamb in his own house.

*"In the evening"* - the day among the Jews had twelve hours (John 11:9). Their first hour was about six o'clock in the morning with us. Their sixth hour was our noon. Their ninth hour answered to our three o'clock in the afternoon. By this we may understand that the time in which Christ was crucified began at the third hour (9:00 a.m.) the ordinary time for the daily morning sacrifice, and ended at the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.), at the time of the evening sacrifice (Mark 15:25,33,34,37). God set no particular hour for the killing of the Passover lamb; any time between the two evenings.

Verse 7: This was to be done by dipping a bunch of hyssop into the blood and thus sprinkling it upon the posts, etc. (Exodus 12:22). The blood was not sprinkled on the threshold in order for the blood of the covenant to not be trampled under foot (Hebrews 10:29).

Verses 8,9: In opposition to the Egyptians who ate raw flesh. Whatever was implied by "bitter herbs", it was designed to put them in mind of their bitter bondage in the land of Egypt, from which God was now to deliver them.

Verse 10: To prevent putrefaction; for it was not meet that a thing offered to God should be subjected to corruption, which in hot countries is speedy.

Verse 11: In eastern countries they wore long loose garments; whenever they travel they tuck up the fore parts of their garments in the girdle which they wear round their loins. The easterners throw off their shoes when they eat; the Israelites were to have their shoes on because they were to commence their journey. They were to make use of the staff as they traveled on food. They were to take their departure suddenly. Jehovah was about to pass over the land, stopping at the houses without the blood and passing over the houses where the blood of the lamb had been sprinkled.

Verse 14: It was to be observed annually throughout their generations. It is remarkable that though the Jews have ceased from the whole of their sacrificial system, so that sacrifices are no longer offered by them in any part of the world, yet they all, in all generations and in all countries, keep up the remembrance of the Passover, and observe the feast of the unleavened bread. Their sacrifices have all totally ceased, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Even the flesh that is used on this occasion is partly roasted and partly boiled that it may not even resemble the primitive sacrifice; for they deem it unlawful to sacrifice out of Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple it became a home service again.

Verses 15,16: The Passover was to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month; the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the fifteenth and lasted seven days, the first and last of which were holy convocations.

*“That soul shall be cut off”* - There are thirty-six places in which this cutting off is threatened against the Jews for neglect of some particular duty; just what is implied is not well known. Some think it meant death, physical or eternal. It is very likely that it meant no more than a separation from the rights and privileges of an Israelite; so that after this excision the person was considered as a mere stranger, who had neither lot nor part in Israel. This is probably what Paul meant in Romans 9:3.

Verse 16: This is the first mention of an assembly for the mere purpose of religious worship.

Verse 19: The Jews on the eve of this festival made a search through every part of their houses, not only removing all unleavened bread, but sweeping every part clean, that no crumb of bread shall be left having any leaven in it. So strict were they that if even a mouse were seen to run across the floor with a crumb of bread in its mouth, they considered the whole house as polluted, and began their purification afresh. Leaven was an emblem of sin because it proceeded from corruption; and the putting away of this implied the turning to God with simplicity and uprightness of heart.

Verses 21-23: Instruction for the Passover.

Verses 25-27: The Passover was instituted to keep up the remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt. All the other feasts were instituted on similar reasons. The Jews never took their sons to the Tabernacle or Temple till they were twelve years of age, nor suffered them to eat of the flesh of any victim till they had themselves offered a sacrifice at the Temple, which they were not permitted to do before the twelfth year of their age.

Verses 29,30: Since there was not a house where there was not one dead, this does not literally mean the first-born. It is not likely that every first-born child in every family in Egypt was still alive, and that all of the first-born of their cattle remained. From the use of the word in other Scriptures it is evident that it means the “chief, most excellent, best-loved, most distinguished, etc.”

Verses 31,32: He probably sent a message to this effect.

Verse 33: The people also urged them to go.

Verse 37: The number of effective men, twenty years old and upwards, who were able to go to war numbered 600,000. No doubt upwards of two million souls with flocks, herds,

and very much cattle made this move; such a company the world never before nor since witnessed.

Verse 40: This same sum is given by Paul in Galatians 3:17, who reckons from the promise made of Abraham, when God commanded him to go to Canaan, to the giving of the law, which followed soon after the departure from Egypt (Genesis 15:13; Acts 7:6; Galatians 3:17).

Verses 43,44: “*Stranger*” - one who was not of genuine Hebrew stock or one who had not received circumcision (Exodus 12:48).

Verse 46: In one family, if that be large enough; if not, a neighboring family might be invited (Exodus 12:4). Every family had to abide within doors because of the destroying angel. Since they had to eat in haste, there was no time to separate the bones or to break them in order to extract the marrow; they were not to consume time with such a procedure (Exodus 12:11). Typical of John 19:33,36.

Verse 51: In an orderly regulated manner, acting together as troops in battle.

### **Chapter 13**

Verse 1: The commands in this chapter appear to have been given to Moses at Succoth on the same day in which they left Egypt.

Verses 2,12,13: “*Sanctify*” - to set apart a thing or person from all secular purposes to some religious use. This was to be done to commemorate the preservation of the first-born of the Israelites when those of the Egyptians were slain.

“*The first-born of man shalt thou surely redeem; and the first-born of an unclean beast shalt thou redeem*” (see Numbers 18:15-17). The “*ass*” is here put for any unclean beast, or unclean beasts in general. The lamb was to be given to the Lord, that is, to His priest (Numbers 18:8,15). Then the owner of the ass might use it for his own service, which without this redemption he could not do (Deuteronomy 15:19,20). The first-born of man was to be redeemed by giving to the priest five shekels of the sanctuary, every shekel weighing twenty gerahs. The Hebrew doctors teach that if a father had neglected or refused to thus redeem his first-born, the son himself was obligated to do it when he came of age. All the first-born were the Lord’s and should have been employed in His service; but He permitted the first-born of a useful unclean animal to be redeemed by a clean animal of much less value. And He chose the tribe of Levi in place of all the first-born tribes in general; and the five shekels were ordered to be paid in lieu of such first-born sons as were liable to serve in the sanctuary, and the money was applied to the support of the priests and Levites (Numbers 3:12,13,41,43,47-51).

Parents were not to look on their first-born as their own until they had first solemnly presented them to God, recognized His title to them, and received them back at a certain rate from Him.

Verse 5: It seems that the Israelites were not obligated to celebrate the Passover or keep the feast of unleavened bread until they were brought into the Promised Land.

Verses 9-16: This gave rise to phylacteries and this is one of the passages which the Jews write upon them to the present day. They wrote the following four portions of the law upon the slips of parchment or vellum: Exodus 13:2-10; 11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13

-21. These four portions, making in all thirty verses, were written as mentioned above and covered with leather. Then they were tied to the forehead and to the hand or arm. The latter were usually tied to the left arm, a little above the elbow, on the inside, that they might be near the heart, according to Deuteronomy 6:6.

A phylactery was a leather box, cube shaped, closed with an attached flap and bound to the person with a leather band. There were two kinds. One kind was bound to the inner side of the left arm near the elbow, so that with the bending of the arm it would rest over the heart the knot fastening it to the arm being in the form of the letter “yod” (י), and the end of the string finally being wound around the middle finger “*a sign upon the hand*” (Deuteronomy 6:8). There was only one compartment containing 1 or 4 passages. The second kind was bound in the center of the forehead “*between the eyes*” (Deuteronomy 6:8). The knot of the band was in the form of the letter “daleth” (ד), with the letter “shin” (ש) upon each end of the box, which was divided into four compartments with one of the 4 passages in each. These three letters formed the divine name “Almighty” (יהוה “Shaddai”) - first used in Genesis 17:1. The one on the arm was placed first and then the second one on the head. These were worn by every male over 13 years of age at the time of morning prayers except on Sabbaths and festal days.

In the process of time the spirit of this law was lost in the letter and, when the word was not in their mouth nor the law in their heart, they still had their phylacteries on their heads and on their hands. The Pharisees in our Lord’s time made their phylacteries very broad, that they might have many sentences written upon them, or the ordinary portions in very large and observable letters.

Verses 17,18: There were two ways from Egypt to Canaan. The first was short - from the north of Egypt directly to the south of Canaan, perhaps four or five days’ journey. The other was through the wilderness. God was their guide. Moses only gave them direction as he received it from the Lord. In His consideration God led them away from the land of the Philistines. Israelites were in all probability unarmed, totally unequipped for battle, encumbered with families and flocks and utensils which were necessary to provide them with bread. “*Harnessed*” refers to the orderly, well-arranged manner in which the Israelites commenced their journey from Egypt (Exodus 12:51).

Verse 19: It is supposed that the Israelites carried with them the bones or remains of all the twelve sons of Jacob, each tribe taking care of the bones of its own patriarch, while Moses took care of the bones of Joseph (Acts 7:15,16).

Verse 20: The second place of encampment - Etham - at the edge of the wilderness of Shur, next to Egypt, at the bottom of the Arabian Gulf.

Verses 21,22: On the authority of Paul (1 Corinthians 10:9) we believe that this means the Lord Jesus. It was He whose Spirit they tempted in the wilderness for it was He who led them through the desert to the promised land.

This pillar or column which appeared as a cloud by day and a fire by night was the symbol of the divine presence, or the divine dwelling place, and was continual proof of the presence and protection of God. It was necessary that they should have a guide to direct them through the wilderness even had they taken the most direct road; and how much more so when they took the circuitous route not usually traveled and of which they knew nothing except as the pillar pointed out the way. Probably even Moses himself did not know the route which God had determined, nor the places of encampment until the pillar

became stationary and pointed out the places of rest. If there was but one, it certainly assumed three different appearances for the performance of three very different offices.

1. In the daytime for the purpose of pointing out the way, a column or pillar of cloud (Deuteronomy 1:33b)
2. At night to prevent confusion, a pillar of fire - not to direct their journey for they seldom traveled by night - but to give light to every part of the Israelitish camp (Deuteronomy 1:33a).
3. In the scorching, barren, thirsty desert, a covering to protect them from the rays of the burning sun (Isaiah 4:5,6).

If it did not accompany them from Rameses, the cloud probably first appeared at Succoth. It continued with them until they came to Jordan when the ark became their guide (Exodus 14:19,24; 33:9,10; 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15,23; 10:11,34; Joshua 3:3,4).

## Chapter 14

The key to this chapter is Hebrews 11:29. This was accomplished by faith.

Verse 2: They were to turn from their direct course east (Which had now brought them quite near the north point of the Red Sea) to the south or southeast to cross the gulf about thirty miles below. A stage of two more would have brought them to Horeb, the place appointed for their serving God. But, instead of their going forward, they were ordered now to turn to the right, away from Canaan and toward the Red Sea. Where they were at Etham, no sea obstructed their way. But God ordered them into the straits where His purposes were to be served.

Verse 3: When Pharaoh would hear of their direction of march he would realize their desperate situation.

Verse 5: Pharaoh probably heard from some of the mixed multitude who went back that the Israelites neither halted in the wilderness to sacrifice nor kept the direct road to Horeb where some think they had said they intended to keep a feast to the Lord. They knew they had fled never to return.

Verses 6-9: Pharaoh prepared and overtook them.

Verses 10-12: Some cried to the Lord and others cried against Moses. The latter gave themselves up for lost.

Verses 13,14: Moses did not urge them to resist. There was no hope of that, for they were unprepared and unarmed. Moses' words show strong faith accompanied by a spirit of prophecy. God showed Moses what He would do and Moses believed Him to the extent that he spoke the words out to the children of Israel. The fighting and honor were to be entirely the Lord's.

Verses 15,16: We have no record of Moses' prayer. It was probably a crying to God from the heart. Neither Moses nor his rod could have been effective, but God wanted to show the children of Israel that Moses was His chosen instrument.

Verses 19,20: Some think that the messenger of the Lord and the cloud were the same thing - that the angel assumed the appearance of the cloud or that he clothed himself with it. It is more probable that the Angel of the covenant (Malachi 3:1), the Lord Jesus,

appeared on this occasion on behalf of the people, for this deliverance was to be a type of the deliverance of man from the power and guilt of sin through His incarnation and death. So He appeared as chief agent in this great crisis.

It appears that the cloud had two sides, one dark and the other light. The luminous side gave light to the whole camp of Israel during the night of the passage and the dark side turned towards the pursuing Egyptians prevented them from receiving any benefit from that light. God can use the same thing as an instrument of destruction or salvation.

Verses 21,22: Where the Israelites passed through the Red Sea is uncertain. It was a miraculous crossing and cannot be explained by natural conditions. The waters divided at night and the children of Israel crossed during the day.

Verses 23,24: During the night, the Egyptians pursued after them. On the second morning, *“the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians.”* They were frightened by the sudden fiery appearance of the cloud (Psalm 77:17-20).

Verse 25: The Egyptian horses were terrified and by their dashing hither and thither the wheels were destroyed and the chariots broken.

Verses 27,28: Josephus says that the arm of Pharaoh consisted of fifty thousand horsemen and two hundred thousand footmen. No one remained to carry tidings of this catastrophe.

Verse 30: The Egyptians had the secret of embalming and preserving the bodies of their great dead. But here they were in heaps on the seashore. By their spoil the Israelites were probably furnished with considerable riches, clothing, and arms. If they did not get their arms in this way, it is not known how they got them as there is not the slightest reason to believe that they brought them out of Egypt.

Verse 31: They saw that God fulfilled His word and they had the fullest proof that Moses was divinely appointed to bring them out of Egypt into the promised land.

## **Chapter 15**

This is the most ancient song that we know of. With this song of victory over Pharaoh, the Holy Spirit compares the song of those who have gotten victory over the spiritual Pharaoh when they stand by the sea of glass mingled with fire, having the harps of God and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb (Revelation 15:2-4).

This song is given in verses 1 to 21.

Verse 1: This verse states the subject of the song and the first two lines become the grand chorus of the piece as we learn from verse 21.

Verse 4: Probably the principal Egyptian nobility accompanied their king on this expedition.

Verse 11: All the objects of Egyptian idolatry were confounded and rendered despicable by the ten plagues which appear to have been principally directed against them. Here the children of Israel exult over them afresh.

Verse 12: It is possible that there was an earthquake on this occasion and that many of them were swallowed up by openings in the bottom of the sea.

Verse 17: Moses seems to have foreseen by the spirit of prophecy that God would place His habitation upon Mount Zion - the mount of Abraham's sacrifice of his son.

Verse 18: This is probably the chorus in which all the people joined.

Verse 20: Miriam was about ninety years of age at this time. Having generally lived with Aaron, she is called his sister rather than the sister of Moses.

Micah 6:4 refers to Miriam as joint leader with her two brothers. It appears that from the beginning to the present day the Jewish women all worshipped separate from the men. It is likely that Miriam was the instructress of the women and regulated the times, places, etc. of their devotional acts. She is spoken of as a prophetess so she was likely inspired by the Spirit of God to instruct the Hebrew women, as Moses and Aaron were to instruct the men. When she and Aaron sought to share in the government of the people with Moses, she laid claim to prophetic influence (Numbers 12:2).

Verse 23: The site of Marah is quite well established. There is still a small stream which, if not diluted with dews or rains, continues saltish as water in a saline soil.

Verse 25: Moses was not only a leader, but also a mediator. These waters were sweetened only for that occasion. Some find this tree symbolic of the cross of the Savior.

Verse 26: The statue and ordinance implied in the preceding verse are here explained. Having followed them, the promise was that they should have none of the diseases of Egypt put on them - that they should be kept in health of body and in peace of mind. The history of the children of Israel shows that they had, in general, a very good state of health.

Verse 27: The numbers twelve and seventy seem significant in Israel's history - twelve for the tribes of Israel and seventy for the elders (Exodus 24:1).

## **Chapter 16**

One month had passed since the children of Israel had left Egypt. During that time they had probably lived on provisions which they brought with them from Rameses, though it is possible that they might have had a supply from the sea coast.

Verse 1: Before they came to the wilderness of Sin, they had a previous encampment by the Red Sea after they left Elim, of which Moses makes distinct mention in Numbers 33:10,11.

Verse 2: Apparently the people could not have been persuaded to leave Egypt had they not been induced to do so by the most evident and striking miracles (Psalm 106:7).

Verse 3: While slaves in Egypt they were doubtless fed in large companies by their task masters in particular places, where large pots or boilers were fixed for the purpose of cooking their food.

Verse 4: This substance was not a production of the desert, nor was the dew that was the instrument of producing it common there, else they would have had this bread for a month before.

Verses 8,9: This probably refers to some particular place where the Lord manifested His presence. The great tabernacle was not yet built, but there appears to have been a small tabernacle or tent called the Tabernacle of the Congregation which, after the sin of the golden calf, was always placed without the camp (Exodus 33:7). Moses now invited them to come near before the Lord and witness His glory that they might be convinced that it was God not he that led them out of Egypt and that they ought to submit to Him and cease from their murmurings (Exodus 19:17).

Verse 13: Quail were not sent continuously as manna was. Only twice were they mentioned; here and a year later after Israel left Sinai (Numbers 11:31-34). They came in immense flocks, flying low. The people gathered them and used them as food. The quails probably flew within two cubits of the ground. Some say this refers to locusts.

Verse 14: Manna was a small round flake which fell with the dew each night. It began one month after they left Egypt and continued daily throughout the forty years until they crossed the Jordan. There is ceased as suddenly as it began (Numbers 11:6-9; Joshua 5:10-12).

Verse 15: They said one of another "*What is this?*" ("manna") for they wist not what it was. Moses immediately answered the question. From verse 31 we learn that it was called Manna in commemoration of the question they asked on its first appearance. It had never been seen before (Deuteronomy 8:3,16).

Verse 16: It is supposed that an omer represented about six or seven pints.

Verse 19: The petition in the Lord's prayer, "*Give us this day our daily bread*" (Matthew 6:11), is founded on this circumstance.

Verse 22: Had it been a natural production it would have fallen on the Sabbath as well as on other days (Numbers 11:6-9).

Verse 23: The Sabbath was not now first given to the Israelites.

1. When God finished His creation, He instituted the Sabbath (Genesis 2:2,3).
2. When He brought the people out of Egypt He insisted on a strict observance of it.
3. When He gave the law, He made it a tenth part of the whole, such importance was this institution in the eyes of the Supreme Being (Exodus 20:8-11).

Verse 24: God showed His power, presence, and goodness by:

1. Sending the manna on each of the six days.
2. Sending none on the seventh or Sabbath.
3. Preserving it from putrefaction when laid up for use of that day, though it infallibly corrupted if kept over night on any other day.
4. Preserved that which was laid up before in the Ark (Exodus 16:32-34).

They were given manna to be taught:

1. That man doth not live by bread alone (Deuteronomy 8:3).
2. That the Lord was their God (Exodus 16:12b).
3. That the Lord had brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 16:7). God saw that it was necessary to give them a daily miracle in the fall of manna, that they might have proof



of His divine interposition constantly before their eyes. Thus they knew that Jehovah had brought them out, and that it was not the act of Moses and Aaron (Exodus 14:31).

Manna is typical:

1. Of Christ Himself according to His own words (John 6:49-51). Manna was created for the present occasion and, like Him whom it typified, it was the only thing of its kind, the only bread from heaven which God ever gave to preserve the life of man; just as Christ is the true Bread that came down from heaven, and was given for the life of the world.
2. Manna is called spiritual meat (1 Corinthians 10:3).
3. The Word of God is the Manna by which our souls are nourished (Matthew 4:4).
4. The comforts of the Spirit are hidden manna (Revelation 2:17).

Verse 29: Several of the Jews understood by “place”, the camp, and have generally supposed that no man should go out of the place, i.e., the city, town, or village in which he resided any farther than one thousand cubits (about an English mile) which also is called a Sabbath’s day’s journey in Acts 1:12.

Verses 32-34: An omer of this manna was laid up in a golden pot (Hebrews 9:4) and kept before the Testimony or Ark after it was made. The preservation of this from waste and corruption was a standing miracle.

## Chapter 17

Verse 1: Numbers 33:12-14 states that after the Israelites left Sin they encamped in Dophkah and next in Alush before coming to Rephidim. There are those two stations omitted here probably because nothing of importance took place at either.

Verse 4: Moses cried to the Lord as the people murmured against him, and thus indirectly against the One who had sent him. They began to question whether God was with them or not.

Verse 6: God directed the attention of Moses to a particular rock with which he was well acquainted; for every part of the mount and its vicinity must have been well known to Moses during the time he kept Jethro’s flocks there (Exodus 3:1).

The water must have been in great abundance to supply two million persons. The miracle must have been of some continuance no doubt for they continued in that neighborhood for more than a year. This rock signified Christ smitten so that we might drink the water of life (Isaiah 53:1-3; John 7:37; 1 Corinthians 10:4; Galatians 3:1).

Verse 8: This was the first attempt to interfere with Israel’s march to Canaan. This was the first battle Israel fought and probably the first recorded in “*the book of the wars of the Lord*” (Numbers 21:14; 24:20).

The Amalakites were the posterity of Amalek (descendant of Esau) and consequently Israel’s brothers (Genesis 36:15,16). They attacked Israel in a most treacherous manner (Deuteronomy 25:18).

Verse 9: This is the first mention of Joshua. He was captain of the Hebrews under Moses, later succeeding him in the government of the people. He was also called Hoshea (Numbers 13:16).

The Greek name is Jesus and signifies savior. He is a very expressive type of the Lord. He fought with and conquered the enemies of his people, brought them into the promised land and divided it to them by lot.

Verse 10: This is probably the same Hur mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:19, who appears to have been the son of Caleb from the line of Judah. Josephus says he was the brother-in-law of Moses, having married his sister Miriam. Moses put much confidence in him, for he left him joint governor of the people with Aaron when he went to the mount to confer with God (Exodus 24:14). His grandson, Bezaleel, was the chief director in the work of the tabernacle (Exodus 31:2-5).

Verse 11: When Moses held up his hands in prayer, the house of Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hands from prayer, the house of Amalek prevailed. Two conclusions: 1) Thus God was indicated as the source of all help and protection, and; 2) Thus they could see that prayer and supplication to God were necessary to their prevalence over all their enemies.

Verse 14: This is the first time writing is mentioned in the Scripture though it is generally thought that Moses wrote the book of Genesis before this time. As Joshua was chosen to command the wars of Israel, it was proper that he be informed of this sentence. Joshua was to succeed Moses and then pass this charge on to the next in command.

This sentence was executed by Saul (1 Samuel 15:3ff) four hundred and twelve years later.

Verse 15: This is the first altar we read of since Jacob went into Egypt and it does not appear that public sacrifices were offered to Jehovah during the intervening period. This altar was not for sacrifices, but as a memorial of God's purposes concerning Amalek.

*"Jehovah is my banner"* - The hands and rod of Moses were held up as soldiers hold up their standards in time of battle. They fight under their banner, that is, under the direction and in the defense of that government. Thus the Israelites were to fight under the direction of God in defense of His name. Therefore, the name of Jehovah was their banner. They were Jehovah's soldiers.

## **Chapter 18**

Verse 2: It seems probable that Moses foreseeing the trouble to which his family would be exposed (Exodus 4:20) had he taken them to down to Egypt, sent them back to his father-in-law until God delivered His people. Now it was proper to bring Zipporah and her sons to Moses while he was in the vicinity of Horeb.

Verse 6: Jethro sent this word with a messenger.

Verses 9-11: Every part of Jethro's conduct proves him to be a religious man and a true believer. His thanksgiving to Jehovah is proof of this.

Verse 12: Jethro, who was a priest (Exodus 2:16), had a right to offer these sacrifices. Nor can there be any doubt of his being a worshipper of the true God. It is supposed the Kenites (1 Samuel 15:6) were the posterity of Jethro (Judges 1:16). They are there taken under special protection for the kindness their ancestors showed Israel.

The burnt offering was wholly consumed. Every part was considered as the Lord's portion. The other sacrifices mentioned here were such that, after the blood had been poured out before God, the officers and assistants might feed on the flesh. It is probable that the sacrifices offered on this occasion were those on the flesh of which Aaron and the elders of Israel feasted with Jethro.

Verse 13: Moses was obligated to sit all day and the people were constantly coming and going.

Verse 15: Moses was the mediator between God and the people, so they came to Moses to know what God had spoken.

Verse 19: Jethro seems to have been a man of great understanding and his advice to Moses was most appropriate and excellent. It was probably given under the inspiration of God.

Verse 20: A preacher's full duties are here listed. This is the work of a shepherd of the sheep.

Verse 21: Here are the qualifications of a ruler.

Verse 23: Moses acted upon this advice so the same Spirit which gave it must have sanctioned it.

Verse 27: With great reluctance Moses permitted so able a counsellor to leave him (Numbers 10:31).

Note on Moses' family:

We hear no more of Zipporah. He made no special provision even for his own sons. They and their families were incorporated with the Levites (1 Chronicles 23:14), and had no higher employment than that of taking care of the tabernacle and also serving and carrying burdens (Numbers 3:21-26; 4:24-28). Moses had no interest but that of God and His people. Nowhere in history is there such an example of consuming passion for the people of God (Hebrews 3:2,5,6).

## **Chapter 19**

Verses 1,2: This was probably some time that answers to our May. The "mount" may have been one hill with two peaks or summits - one called Horeb and the other Sinai (Exodus 3:12). Horeb was probably its most ancient name and might designate the whole mountain. They were at Mt. Sinai about eleven months (Numbers 10:11,12).

Verse 3: The cloud now seems to have removed to the top of Sinai; as this was the symbol of the divine presence, Moses went up to it to meet the Lord. According to Stephen (Acts 7:38) this was the Angel of the Lord, calling to Moses, the Angel of the Covenant Himself, the Lord Jesus.

Verse 5: All the inhabitants of the earth were His by right of creation yet Israel was His in a special way, having received His covenant and having entered into this relationship and revelation.

Verse 6: Israel was to be a theocracy; as God was their sole ruler, so all His subjects were to be priests - all worshippers, all sacrificers, every one offering up the victim for himself.

Verse 9: Hearing the voice of God and seeing His awe-ful glory, they could no longer disbelieve nor even doubt the divine mission of Moses.

Verses 10,11: The washing was necessary as they were about to appear in the presence of God. Everything was to be clean and pure about them that they might be admonished of the necessity of inward purity of which the outward washing was a sign.

Verses 12-18: It was necessary that God should give the people some evidence of His being and power that they might be saved from idolatry to which they were very prone. They could not touch the mount until they had permission, yet when the trumpet sounded long, they came up to the nether part of the mount (Exodus 19:17; Deuteronomy 4:11).

This taught them that God is a consuming fire and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 10:31; 12:29).

Five hundred years later (1 Kings 19:8,11-13), Elijah, at the same mountain was given a hint that God's work in the earth would be accomplished not by fire and earthquake methods, but by the still small voice of another Prophet in a later dispensation.

Note on the introduction of the law:

From the solemn and awful manner in which the law was introduced, it appears to exclude men from God rather than bring them to Him. We learn from this that approach to God would have been absolutely impossible had not the infinite mercy of God founded the plan of salvation. Only because of the greatness of His mercy, can we draw nigh to God (Hebrews 10:19).

### **III. THIRD DIVISION: GIVING OF THE LAW AND INSTITUTIONS    Chapters 20-40**

#### **Chapter 20**

The laws delivered on Mount Sinai have been variously named: "My Covenant" (Exodus 19:5; "His Covenant, Ten Commandments" (Deuteronomy 4:13).

The commandments are generally divided into the first and second tables. The First Table contains the first to fourth commandments and comprehends our duty to God. It is given first because: 1) Man had a Maker to love before he had a neighbor to love; 2) Man cannot love his neighbor unless he loves God; 3) Love for God and reverence for Him is the basis of the Ten Commandments. Jesus indicated that He considered it the elemental quality in man's approach to God and made the first petition in the Lord's prayer, "*Hallowed be Thy Name...*"

The Second Table contains the last six commandments (five to ten) and comprehends our duty to ourselves and to one another. These six commandments have to do with the sacredness of life, marriage, family relations, character, and property rights. Jesus condensed the Ten Commandments into two: love to God and love to man; thus are both tables observed, for on these hang all the law and prophets (Matthew 22:37-40).

The New Testament says that salvation (justification) depends upon faith (Romans 5:1) alone. Was not faith already present in Abraham in a very mature degree (Genesis 15:6; Acts 13:39; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:24; Hebrews 11:19)? Nevertheless, God gave the law and suffered mankind to languish in the shadow of death and to wait for another millennium and a half for the coming of the Redeemer. Was the period of the law a needless delay? Why did Christ not come at the time of Abraham?

For this there must be weighty reasons. God had a purpose in the law and man had a need met by the law.

The chief meaning of the law lies in the developing of an expectation of the Redeemer by revealing human sinfulness. Thereby the law should be a “*guardian* (tutor, schoolmaster, corrector, one who disciplines) *until Christ came*” (Galatians 3:24) and to Him as the Savior or sinners (Romans 3:20; 7:7,9,13b). The law was “the teacher” in our “course of study” with the “objective” that we might be justified by faith (Romans 3:20; Galatian 2:16; 3:11).

The course of study:

1. Our sin: To show our sinfulness (Romans 3:20; 5:20a; 7:7; Galatians 3:19).
2. God’s holiness: In it’s awfulness and glory (Exodus 15:11; 25:17; 40:34,35; Leviticus 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:3,26).
3. Christ: To bring us to Him (John 14:6; Galatians 4:4,5; Hebrews 8:13; 10:1,19).

In no sense has the doctrine of justification by faith set aside the covenant with Abraham, or stepped into its place, but has completed it, and is set by its side . It was “added”... Paul in his doctrine of justification turns back not to Moses but to Abraham (Romans 5:20; Galatians 3:19). The addition was necessary, the covenant with Abraham lacked sufficient emphasis on sin. Therefore it must be supplemented. The whole pre-Christian revelation of Salvation divides into two chief sections:

Covenant of Promise

positive  
 blessing (Galatians 3:9,14)  
 life (Romans 4:17; Hebrews 11:19)  
 summit in resurrection  
 God spoke the word “faith”  
 2,000 years education in faith

Covenant of Law

negative  
 curse (Galatians 3:13)  
 death (Romans 7:9)  
 summit in crucifixion  
 God spoke “repent”  
 1,500 years education in repentance

In the fulness of times Christ speaks, “repent” (Mark 1:15) and conjoins both in redeeming oneness.

A Comparison of Law and Grace (complementary and not competing):

Law

expression of God’s justice  
 reveals sin (Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:20b)  
 man bears responsibility for his guilt  
 (Ezekiel 18:20)  
 obedience because of fear  
 (Leviticus 19:14,32; 25:17,36;43)

Grace

expression of God’s mercy  
 reveals the sin bearer (Isaiah 53:6b; John 1:29)  
 God assumes all of man’s guilt  
 (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21)  
 obedience because of love  
 (John 14:15)

Verse 2: God states the reason why He has the right to give these commandments.

Verse 3: This first commandment prohibits all forms of mental idolatry - inordinate attachment to earthy and sensible things. God's people are not to share with false gods their allegiance or substitute any other god for the one true God. All the commandments are founded in the first.

Verses 4-6: This commandment prohibits every form of external idolatry - man's efforts at seeing what is unseen.

Verse 7: God's name is above all other names (Philippians 2:9).

Verse 8: This is the most ancient of institutions so God calls them to remember it. Because this commandment had not be particularly mentioned in the New Testament as a moral precept binding on all, some infer that there is no Sabbath under the Christian dispensation. The Sabbath is a type of the rest in glory which remains for the people of God. It is in force till the thing signified takes place (Hebrews 4:4,9). The command is also to labor on six days so he who idles way time is guilty before God as he who works on the Sabbath.

Verses 18,19: This shows the absolute necessity for the great Mediator between God and man.

Verse 20: Fear not with a fear that brings consternation, but fear with that fear which produced reverence and filial piety.

Verse 24: The law concerning the offerings was shortly to be given, though sacrifices of this kind were in used since Abel's day. Worship was to be in the place and way of God's choice.

Verses 25,26: The altar could not be made of hewn stone because: 1) They were still in a wandering state and could not take the time to rear costly altars; 2) No images could be carved on them as in the case of idolaters; and 3) Their attention was to be fixed upon God to Whom the sacrifice was offered instead of upon the altar (or the priest) itself. The altar of earth was preferred (20:24). The altars were not to be built upon high steps as in the case of the heathen who through prided and vain glory did.

## **Chapter 21**

Note on chapters 21-24: After the Ten Commandments, this was the first installment of laws on which the Hebrew nation was built. They were written in a book "The Book of The Covenant" (24:4,7). After ratification of the covenant, Moses went up into the mount, and was there forty days and nights (24:18). Later he again went up into the mount for another forty days and nights (34:2,28).

The laws in chapter 21 are termed political and are suppose to have been delivered by Moses alone because of the request of the people (20:19) that God should communicate His will to Moses, and that Moses should, as Mediator, convey it to them. The laws related in this chapter relate to the fifth (parents) and sixth (murder) commandments. The great tendency of these regulations is to show the value of human life and the necessity of having peace and good understanding in every neighborhood.

Verse 2: There were six different ways in which a Hebrew might lose his liberty:

1. In extreme poverty they might sell their liberty (Leviticus 25:39).
2. A father might sell his children (21:7).
3. Insolvent debtors became the slaves of their creditors (2 Kings 4:1).
4. A thief, if he had not money to pay the fine laid on him by the law, was to be sold for the profit of the one whom he had robbed (22:3b,4).
5. A Hebrew was liable to be taken prisoner in war, and so sold as a slave.
6. A Hebrew slave might be ransomed by a Hebrew from a Gentile master; then the slave might be sold by the one who ransomed him to one of his own nation.

No man could make himself servant or slave for more than seven years; and if he mortgaged the family inheritance it must return to the family at the Jubilee, which was every fifty years. If a man came into servitude during the interval between two sabbatical years, he could not be detained in bondage beyond that sabbatical year even if he had been sold only one year before (21:2; 23:10; c.f. Deuteronomy 15:12).

Verse 6: “*Bore his ear through with an awl*” - This ceremony implied:

1. That he was closely attached to the house and family.
2. That He was bound to hear all his master’s orders to obey them at once.

Verses 15-17: This was considered very serious, therefore no mercy was to be shown to the culprit.

Verses 20,21: If the slave who had been beaten by his master died under his hand, the master was punished by death; but if he survived the beating a day or two, the master was not punished because the man presumably died from another cause.

Verses 22,23: As posterity among the Jews was among the peculiar promises of their covenant, and as every man had some reason to think that the Messiah should spring from his family, therefore any injury done to a woman with child, by which the fruit of her womb was destroyed, was considered a heavy offense. “*But if there is harm...*” - that is, if the child was fully formed and was killed by this means or the woman lost her life in consequence, then the punishment was as in other cases of murder.

Verse 27: If this did not teach a master humanity, it did teach him caution; one rash blow might have deprived him of all right to the future services of the slave.

Verse 32: At this price, these same people valued the life of our Lord (Zechariah 11:12,13; Matthew 26:5). In God’s justice it was ordered that they have been sold for slaves into every country of the earth.

## **Chapter 22**

Verses 1-4: In no case of theft was the life of the offender taken away. The utmost that the law says on this point is in verse 2. If he had stolen and sold the property, then he was to restore four or fivefold (verse 1). But, if the animal was found alive in his possession, he was to restore double. If a thief was found breaking into a house in the night, he might be killed. But, not if the sun had risen, for then he might be known and taken, and the restitution made as mentioned in verse 4.

Verses 10,11: So solemn and awful were all appeals to God considered, that it was taken for granted that the man was innocent who could by an oath of appeal to the omniscient God that he had not put his hand to his neighbor's goods.

Verse 18: If there had been no witches, such a law as this would not have been made. The existence of the law given under the direction of the Spirit of God, proves the existence of the thing. The severity of this law shows how God viewed such seducers - seducers of the people from the allegiance to God, of whose judgment alone they should depend. By prying into the future they assumed and attribute of God, which implied blasphemy.

Verse 21: They were to remember their own oppression (23:9).

Verses 22-24: This was no common crime and could not be punished in any common way. The wrath of God shall wax hot against him (Psalm 10:14b,18; 68:5; 146:9).

## **Chapter 23**

Verses 1-3: These are commands addressed to the conscience. There is no mention of specific penalties.

Verses 4,5: Active kindness is to be shown to enemies.

Verse 9: They knew the heart of a stranger by experience.

Verse 11: As every seventh day was a sabbath day, so every seventh year was a sabbath year. Reasons for this ordinance:

1. To maintain equality of condition among the people, by setting the slaves free (21:2).
2. To inspire sentiments of humanity towards the poor, the slave, the stranger, and even cattle (23:11).
3. To accustom the people to submit to and depend on God's providence (Leviticus 25:20,21). This would demand one crop in its abundance equal to three, because it must supply the needs of three years: the sixth year, the seventh year, and the eighth year until harvest time.
4. To detach their affection from earthly and perishable things, and to make them heavenly-minded.
5. To show them God's dominion over the country.

Verse 12: This was of great importance in the sight of God, for He repeated it many times in the law. It is not only a benefit for the soul, but also for the health and comfort of the body. God even cares for the rest of the oxen.

Verses 14-17: The three great feasts of the Jewish year:

1. Passover - to bring to remembrance the departure out of Egypt (12:42; Leviticus 23:5).
2. Pentecost - also known as the feast of harvest and/or the feast of weeks (34:22). Fifty days after the Passover to commemorate the giving of the law on Mount Sinai (Leviticus 23:15,16).
3. Tabernacles - also known as the feast of the ingathering. The 15th of the month Tisri to commemorate the Israelites' dwelling in tents for forty years during their stay in the wilderness (Leviticus 23:34-43).



Verses 20-22: Some have thought this was Moses or Joshua. It is likely the great Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Himself.

Verse 23: There are on six of the seven nations mentioned here - add Gergashite.

## **Chapter 24**

Verses 1,2: After God had given Moses and Aaron all the laws mentioned from the beginning of chapter 20 to the end of chapter 23, before they went down from the mount to them before the people, He told them that when they had proposed the conditions of the covenant to the Israelites and they had ratified them, they were to come up again unto the mountain with Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, and seventy of the principle elders of Israel (24:3,9).

Verses 3-8: Sprinkled either on the people themselves or on the pillars that represented them (see note #3 below at 24:18).

Verses 9-11: The seventy elders who were representatives of the whole congregation were chosen to witness the manifestation of God. They saw no likeness but had a glimpse of His glory in the light and fire (Deuteronomy 4:15b). They saw the place where the God of Israel stood. Nothing is described but what was under His feet. They saw not so much as God's feet, but at the bottom of the brightness they saw His footstool - a rich and splendid pavement. They were given this manifestation that they might be satisfied of the truth of the revelation which He had made of Himself and of His will; and on this occasion it was necessary that the people also should be given such a sight of the glory of God (20:18), thus establishing the certainty of the revelation of many competent witnesses.

Verses 12-14: Probably Moses did not know that he was to tarry so long on the mount, nor is it likely that the elders tarried the forty days where they were. No doubt they returned to camp, reporting that Moses was lost. Not knowing how long he would be detained, Moses set Aaron and Hur as regents of the people during his absence.

Verses 15,16: Probably Moses went up into the mount on the first day of the week; and having with Joshua remained in the region of the cloud during six days, on the seventh, which was the Sabbath, God spoke to him and delivered to him the different statutes and ordinances which are afterwards mentioned.

Verses 17,18: Moses went up alone into the glory. Though he may have gone back to confer with Joshua from time to time. During that time he neither ate nor drank (34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9).

1. Moses who was the mediator of the Old Covenant was alone permitted to draw nigh to God. None of the people, not even Aaron and his sons, were permitted near. Moses was a type of Christ, Who is the Mediator of the New Covenant. He alone has access to God on behalf of the human race.
2. The law inspires nothing but terror without its sacrifices; and those sacrifices are nothing except as they refer to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.
3. The blood of the victim was sprinkled both on the altar and on the people to show that the death of Christ gave Divine justice what it demanded and to men what they needed.

## Chapters 25-31, 35-39

### The Tabernacle

This is a very important subject:

There are two chapters on the world's creation. There are not less than fifty on the subject of the tabernacle:

Exodus - 13 chapters (25-31; 35-40)

Numbers - 13 chapters

Leviticus - 18 chapters

Deuteronomy - 2 chapters

Hebrews - 4 chapters

What is the Tabernacle?

A temporary dwelling place (Exodus 25:8): *"Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."* It was temporary - only for four hundred years.

The pattern was given by God

Exodus 25:9,40; 26:30; 27:8; Numbers 8:4; Hebrews 8:5

God wanted to have His tent pitched in the midst of their tents. Though He was in the midst, direct access to Him was strictly guarded. Sin had rendered man unfit for God's presence. Sin had to be dealt with first. Solomon's temple, which followed the same pattern but was 2 times the size (1 Kings 6:2), taught the same lesson - man's unfitness to approach except in God's appointed way, and yet God's purpose to dwell in the midst of His people.

Why the Tabernacle?

*"That I may dwell among them"* (Exodus 25:8). Later the Temple (1 Kings 8:6,10,11; Hebrews 10:5). *"God was in Christ..."* (2 Corinthians 5:19). *"Emmanuel - God with us"* (Matthew 1:23). *"Made flesh - dwelt (tabernacle) among us"* (John 1:14; c.f. 2:19,21). Christ is the meeting place. *"Tabernacle of God is with man"* (Revelation 21:3). The Bible is a record of God's purpose to restore, through the work of redemption, man's communion and friendship with Himself, which was broken through sin. *"Dwell in your hearts by faith"* (Ephesians 3:17).

A willing offering: 25:1-8; 35:5-29; 36:6,7

These materials were from the spoil taken from Egypt (12:33-36). In the calf worship, this same material was used for the devil.

Curtains and coverings: chapter 26

Colors (26:1) - linen (white) = purity. Blue = divinity - worn on the fringe of skirts by Israelites to show separation to God. Purple = royalty of Christ - a member of His family. Scarlet = atoning sacrifice. Gold cherubim = connected with God's glory.

Rough covering (26:14) - Glory hidden under rough material. To be *"hid with Christ in God"* (Colossians 3:3); *"in earthen vessels"* (2 Corinthians 4:7). Skins speak of atonement (Leviticus 16:5).

Boards and bars: 26:15-28

Silver sockets (26:19); atonement (30:11-16) "atonement money" used. Boards are overlaid with gold (26:29). Foundation covered with God points to God's deity.

## Garments of High Priest: Exodus 28,29

Exodus 28:1-4

Colors: Gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and linen (as above)

Robe of ephod (28:31-35) - all blue fringe had pomegranates and golden bells. People could hear the priest in the Holy Place while they remained outside. No ephod was worn on the Day of Atonement (30:10; Leviticus 16:4) which was a day of humiliation. It was seamless and could not be rent (28:32; Leviticus 10:6). The robe of the ephod was that rent by Caiaphas the high priest when Jesus stood before him (Matthew 26:3,65). By this act he was subject to death and the high priesthood departed from him. How remarkable that this, the first and only time recorded in the Bible, the high priest should thus have rent his garments. It was no accident. It was God testifying by this act that Caiaphas was not the high priest. The One Who stood before him was the High Priest.

The ephod and girdle (28:6-8) - Blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen - all wrought with gold.

Linen breeches (28:42-43) were for Aaron as well as for all the ordinary priests.

There were three parts of the High Priest's dress which were engraved:

1. Two onyx stones on his shoulders which bore the names of the twelve tribes - six on each (28:9-12). The names were borne on the shoulder, the place of strength (Deuteronomy 33:12). The Good Shepherd lays the lost sheep on His shoulder. The government is on His shoulder (Isaiah 9:6).
2. Twelve stones of the breastplate on his heart which also bore the names of the twelve tribes, one on each (28:15-29). The names were borne on the heart, denoting the love of the heart, the love that led our Great High Priest to die for us.

Inside the breastplate was the Urim and Thummim (28:30; see also Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21; 1 Samuel 28:6; 30:7,8). We do not know exactly what they were, but they were the means of obtaining divine guidance.

3. The plate of the mitre on his forehead. The words "Holiness unto the Lord" were engraved there (28:36-38). The forehead is the seat of the will, the intellect, and wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:24).

## Vestments of the ordinary priests: 28:40-43

A summary of what the ordinary priest wore (coats, girdles, and bonnets) - all of the same material as the High Priest, but just a little different in detail.

Four garments worn by the High Priest and inferior priests (28:40-43)

1. Linen breeches
2. Linen coat
3. Linen girdle
4. Bonnet or turban (mitre for High Priest)

## Consecration of priests: 29:1-46 (Leviticus 8,9)

1. Washing with water (need of purity to serve) (29:1)
2. Clothed - Aaron first - then his sons (focus is on glory and holiness) (29:5)

3. Anointing - poured on Aaron then sprinkled on sons (Holy Spirit given without measure on Christ and to us all) (29:7)

God laid the path from within to without. At the center of things He begins with the Ark in the Holy of Holies (25:10,17). We approach it from without. God begins with Himself and works towards man. Man begins with himself and works towards God.

#### The court of the Tabernacle: 27:9-18

100 cubits by 50 cubits (150 x 75 feet) (27:18)

1. Walls (27:18) - White linen 5 cubits high hung on 60 pillars in sockets of brass, in the sand and secured by cords and brass pegs.
2. Entrance (27:13-15) - This was the only entrance and was located on the east. The gate was also a curtain but of blue, purple, scarlet, and white linen (27:16)
  - a. Jesus, the Door (John 10:9)
  - b. Jesus, the Way (John 14:6)
  - c. No other Name (Acts 4:12)
  - d. His righteousness - inside the gate we are completely surrounded by white linen (Isaiah 61:10; Jeremiah 23:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30)
3. The brazen altar of sacrifice (27:1-8) - The largest object in the whole tabernacle (5 cubits square x 3 cubits high - 27:1). By the side of by this altar the sacrifices were slain; upon it they were consumed fire, in whole or in part. It was in the court and lighted by the sun. It was wood covered with brass signifying judgment (Revelation 1:15) (27:1,2,6).

A type of Christ crucified whereby our judgment was removed, He "*offered one sacrifice for sins forever*" (Hebrews 10:12) the "*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*" (Revelation 13:8). The fire was continually burning (Leviticus 6:12,13; 9:24). The offeror brought his spotless lamb to the altar; before he slew it he put his hand on its head in token of the fact (Leviticus 1:3,4) that he deserved to die for his sin and of the transference of his guilt to the beast that was to be slain in his stead. We appropriate, each one for ourselves, what He has done for us (1 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 1:7).

4. The brazen laver (30:17-21) - It was a brass made of mirrors given by the women (Exodus 30:18; 40:30; 1 Kings 7:27,37-39). The word is compared to a mirror in which we see our state as reflected in a glass (James 1:22-25). It revealed the need of cleansing and offered the means of cleansing: it was filled with water - a type of the Holy Spirit, the Agent of our cleansing, and also the Word (John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26,27; Titus 3:5). Here the priests bathed at the time of their consecration to their holy office and here they washed their hands and feet before doing any service in the Holy Place. In the march in the wilderness, everything was covered but the laver (Numbers 4:5-15). This speaks of the daily cleansing we need to serve God acceptably.

#### The Tabernacle Itself

30 cubits by 10 cubits by 10 cubits (45 feet x 15 feet x 15 feet) (26:15,16,18)

The Tabernacle was a moveable structure adapted to the wilderness life of the Israelites (Hebrews 8:2; 9:11,24). We read that it was a type, model, of the true, the heavenly tabernacle in heaven itself, not made with hands.

Every detail was according to the pattern given to Moses by God Himself in the Mount (Hebrews 8:5). Each part of the tabernacle and every piece of its furniture is mentioned five times in the chapters in Exodus: 1) the directions given for its making; 2) the record of it being carried out; 3) then brought to Moses; 4) new directions for getting it in order; and 5) the actual placing of each part. In the last two chapters it is recorded seventeen times that all was done *“as the Lord commanded Moses”*.

Christ is the Key to the tabernacle; every part of it speaks to us of Him and of His great work of redemption.

1. The silver sockets (26:19,32) - One hundred sockets of silver, each weighing a talent, upon which the boards and the pillars of the veil rested. They were made of “redemption money”; thus the foundation of the whole structure of God’s sanctuary was redemption (Exodus 30:11-16). Out of this redemption money Moses was commanded to make the silver sockets for the boards of the tabernacle and for the four pillars of the veil to rest upon in the shifting sand of the desert. Every male of twenty years old and upwards was to give a half shekel when they were numbered; this was inadequate in itself but was an acknowledgement that they were a redeemed people, that they were not their own and that they belonged entirely to the Lord. Redeemed *“not with silver nor gold but with the precious blood of Christ”* (1 Peter 1:18).
2. The framework of the tabernacle (26:15-29) - Consisted of forty-eight boards of shittim wood, overlaid with gold, which formed the two sides of the building with its further end. The boards were firmly bound together by means of five bars of shittim wood overlaid with gold. These, passing through golden rings, ran in a horizontal direction along the three sides of the tabernacle. The middle bar reached from end to end. Each board had two tenons, or feet, which fitted into holes in two sockets of solid silver made from redemption money.

We see in these boards a picture of God’s redeemed people. The temple which is now building is made up of individual believers, called “living stones” (1 Peter 2:5). The wood in each board was comparatively worthless shittim wood, its value was because it was overlaid with gold - clothed with glory “hid in Christ with God” and resting on the foundation of redemption. Moreover the boards were bound together by the bars of shittim wood overlaid with gold, running through the golden rings; so those who believe in Christ are bound together in Him.

3. The outside covering (26:7-14) of the tabernacle was of badgers skins and entirely hid in the glories beneath. Beneath this again was a covering of rams’ skins dyed red. Beneath this again were eleven coats of goats’ hair. These curtains were described as the “tent of the tabernacle”. The innermost set of the curtains were woven of blue and purple and scarlet, fine twined linen with figures of cherubim woven into them. They were ten in number. These curtains were spoken of as the tabernacle itself. They typify the character and glories of the Lord Jesus Christ: the fine twined linen - His spotless purity; the blue speaks of His heavenly character; the purple, His royalty; the scarlet, His sacrifice.

Viewed from the outside, with its coverings of rough badgers skins, the tabernacle was not attractive; but the priests who entered the first room within, gazed upon a sanctuary of beauty. The world sees not beauty in the Lord Jesus Christ, but when the Holy

Spirit opens the eyes, it is like coming inside the beautiful sanctuary (Isaiah 53:3). *"The god of this world hat blinded the minds of them who believe not"* (2 Corinthians 4:4).

4. The rooms of the tabernacle. The first room was the Holy Place, 20 cubits by 10 cubits by 10 cubits (30 feet x 15 feet x 15 feet) which was just twice the length of the Holy of Holies which was a perfect cube of 10 cubits (15 feet), curtained off by the veil (c.f. 1 Kings 6:17,20). The two side walls were of gold. The golden candlestick was at the south side; and the little golden altar of incense stood just outside the veil. Gazing upwards the priest would see the curtains of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen which formed the roof with the wings of the cherubim woven upon them, speaking of God's protecting presence. To these the Psalmist referred, *"I will abide in Thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the cover of Thy wings"* (Psalm 61:4, see also Psalms 15:1; 27:5).
5. The contents of the Holy Place. This first part of the tabernacle was the place of service.
  - a. The candlestick was made of pure gold. It had a central shaft with six branches, making a seven-fold light. It was the special duty of Aaron and his sons to trim the lamps, morning and evening. The lamps were always burning and it was the only light in the Holy place (no light from the sun). It was filled with olive oil (27:20,21) typical of the Holy Spirit. There was not wood in the candlestick. The light was wholly divine.
  - b. The table of shewbread was made of shittim wood, overlaid with pure gold with a border and double crown round about it, probably to keep the loaves of bread in their place during the march. The loaves were twelve in number to represent the twelve tribes of Israel (Leviticus 24:5-9). They were made of fine flour and were placed fresh every Sabbath Day, those removed being eaten by the priests alone, and in the Holy Place. Fine flour is ground; oil represents the Holy Spirit; frankincense represents prayer. Here we see Christ, the Bread of Life (John 6:33,25). It was "shewbread" because it was placed always in the very presence of God. It is the Bread upon which the priests of the living God are to feed (1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6).
  - c. The altar of incense, the golden altar, stood just outside the veil (30:1-10), exactly opposite the Ark and Mercy Seat which were within the veil. It is also called *"the altar before the Lord"* to distinguish it from the brazen altar *"before the door of the tabernacle"* (40:5,6; Leviticus 4:18). It was also made of shittim wood overlaid with gold 1 cubit square and two cubits high (18 inches square x 3 feet). The brazen altar was the altar of sacrifice; the golden altar was for worship. It was lit from off the brazen altar; worship must rest upon the atoning sacrifice of Christ to be acceptable. The incense was fragrant when touched by fire - it burned perpetually before the Lord. Incense stands for prayer (Revelation 8:3,4). Christ is not only the brazen altar for the sins of the world but He is also the altar of incense for sinners who have found acceptance with God through the blood of Jesus and may draw near as priests to offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise to God continually (Psalm 116:17; Hebrews 13:15). *"Let my prayer be set before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice"* (Psalm 141:2).
6. The veil (26:31-33). The visible evidence of God's presence rested on the mercy seat above the ark, in the Holy of Holies. This was curtained off from the Holy Place by a

thick curtain called the veil. It was made of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined line, like cherubim woven into the texture. This veil was hung on four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold, resting upon four sockets of silver.

The veil was the symbol of separation between a holy God and sinful man. Love calls the sinner near; righteousness keeps him back. The entrance of the High Priest once a year foreshadowed the time when access to the Holiest would be given. In the fulness of time righteousness and love would be revealed in perfect harmony in Him in whom those types and shadows would find their fulfillment... the tabernacle was succeeded by the temple of Solomon and here again the veil shut off the Holy of Holies. In the temple built by Zerubbabel and restored and beautified by Herod, it was still the same. All the days of Christ's life on earth the veil was there (Matthew 27:50,51; Hebrews 9:11,12; 10:20). At the moment of Christ's death upon the cross the veil of separation was rent by God Himself, thus signifying that the way into the Holiest was now made manifest. It was the hour of the offering of the evening incense, when the priest would be ministering at the golden altar just outside the veil. With what awe and consternation would he have beheld the Holy of Holies opened up to his gaze! Christ can bring us into the Holies in no other way than He went in Himself, through His own blood. The priests must have patched together the veil that God had rent, for the temple services went on yet for nearly forty years. That patched veil was the attempt to put saint or sinner back under the law.

7. In the Holy of Holies was the ark and mercy-seat (25:10-22) - The ark was a chest of shittim wood, overlaid within and without with gold. It had a golden crown round about the top to hold securely the mercy-seat which rested on the ark and formed a cover to it. At the ends of the mercy-seat were cherubim with outstretched wings, their faces toward the mercy-seat; between them the glory of the Lord's presence rested on the mercy-seat. Within the ark were the two tablets of the law; later the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod which budded were also placed within the ark. There was nothing else within the Holy of Holies. The holiest was never entered except once a year, on the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest alone entered and sprinkled blood upon the mercy-seat (Leviticus 16:29-33; 23:27).

The ark speaks of God's righteousness (the law) and His mercy; but the tables of the law were covered by the mercy-seat, a slab of pure gold which covered the ark completely - a picture of Christ Who is our Mercy-seat. God's righteousness and mercy are united in Christ.

The staves always remained in the rings of the ark, ready for the march. Only when the ark found its final resting place in Solomon's temple, were they removed from it and kept as a memorial in the temple (1 Kings 8:8).

8. *"There I will meet with thee"* (25:22; Hebrews 1:1,2) - The teaching of the tabernacle and the object of the atonement are to bring us to Himself - *"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God"* (1 Peter 3:18). *"We were made nigh by the blood of Christ"* (Ephesians 2:13-22; Revelation 21:3).

The teaching of the tabernacle should be an aid to us in our times of quiet waiting on the Lord, whether alone or with others. We may come into His very presence; but our minds have been filled with the daily duties and the noise and bustle of the outside. Step by step we may make our way into His presence, reminding ourselves of Christ, our Way. In front of us is the curtain, called the Gate. This is Jesus through Whom we make our entrance into the court. As we lift the curtain we are surrounded on all sides

by the white curtains of the court - the righteousness of Christ - we are accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). Then we stand at the brazen altar of sacrifice. This is Calvary and the place of our acceptance for we have *“made peace through the blood of the cross”* (Colossians 1:20). As we come to the laver, we rejoice that God has made provision for our continual cleansing through the Word and the renewing of the Holy Spirit... Still we press on through Christ, the Door, and find ourselves in the Holy Place. Christ our Light shines upon us; Christ the Bread of Life is there. The golden altar speaks of His continual intercession for us and by Him we offer the sacrifice of praise and prayer.... Now the way is open right into the Holies of all, through the rent veil, His body broken us (Hebrews 10:19,20) and His blood shed for us. Thus we enter into the place of deepest communion where the glory of the living God is upon the mercy-seat: *“There I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat”* (Exodus 25:22). This is God’s purpose in our daily meditation and quiet waiting before Him. Do we reach it every day?

## Chapter 32

Verse 1: How long this was before the end of the forty days, we do not know. Though Moses had delayed, they had been well provided for through the commissioning of Aaron and Hur (24:14) to look after them. *“gods which shall go before us”* (32:23) - they were not willing to limit their worship to an invisible God; it was the same when the people requested a king before Samuel (1 Samuel 8:19,20).

Verse 2: The spoil which had been granted them by the mercy and providence of God, they used now for base idolatry.

Verse 4: We do not find that Aaron reproved them; what induced him to make the image at the request of the people, we do not know. He does not seem to have introduced a worship to take the place of the worship of Jehovah for he proclaimed the feast of the Lord on the following day (32:5). At that time the proper rites of the true worship were observed (32:6,7). Apparently Aaron intended the worship of the true God but permitted the medium of the golden calf. It is supposed that this calf was in the image of the Egyptian Apis, worshipped under the form of an ox. No doubt the Israelites had seen this practiced often in Egypt.

Verse 6: They went beyond eating and drinking to excess - the word seems to imply fornication (see 32:35).

Verses 7,8: They corrupted themselves by breaking the covenant which marked them as God’s people.

Verse 9: *“Stiff-necked”* - an allusion to the stiff-necked ox, the object of their worship.

Verses 11-14: The intercession of Moses is based on the promise of God. Moses speaks of them as God’s people; God had spoken of them as Moses’ people in verse 7. This shows God’s willingness to forgive.

Verse 16: Such a law could proceed only from God Himself. He was not only the Author but also the Writer.

Verse 17: Joshua was a military man so he thought the noise was the noise of war.

Verse 19: He might have done this through distress and anguish of spirit; or he probably



did it to show that by their present conduct they had broken the laws of their Maker.

Verse 20: He melted it down and filed it to dust which he put upon the water which they drank (Deuteronomy 9:21). Thus all could see that the image which they worshipped could not save itself, to say nothing of working in their behalf.

Verses 21-24: Though not first in the transgression, Aaron was dealt with first. Aaron deserved to die, but Moses had interceded especially for him (Deuteronomy 9:20). Also his sin was not premeditated as was that of the people who had planned and requested this idolatrous act. Thus we see that even the priesthood was given to Aaron through grace; he deserved no such favor from God.

Verses 26-28: It seems that Levi had no part in this idolatry.

Verses 30-32: In the public registers all that were born of a particular tribe were entered in the list of their respective families under that tribe. Moses prayed, *"If Thou wilt blot out their names from this register and never allow them to enter Canaan, blot me out also; I cannot enjoy that blessing while my people are excluded."* Moses felt he could not survive the destruction of his people by the neighboring nations nor their exclusion from the promised land. The apostle Paul was willing to be deprived of every earthly blessing and even become a sacrifice for his people if they were to be cut off for the rejection of the Gospel (Romans 9:3).

Verse 33: As far as justice would permit, mercy extended; as far as mercy would permit, justice proceeded.

Verse 34: The word "place" is not in the original. Moses led them towards the place; Joshua and Caleb led them in. They were to fall in the wilderness, but their posterity would enter the land.

Verse 35: Perhaps this refers to a disease of plague.

### **Chapter 33**

Verses 2-6: In 23:20 God promised to send an angel to conduct them into the land; the angel of the covenant. Here nothing special is specified of the angel that was to go with them. Could it be that this was not the special angel mentioned before? So the people seemed to understand it, for they mourned. In humiliation they put off their upper and more beautiful garments as they did at times of mourning.

Verse 7,8: The tabernacle was not yet built; this refers to the tent in which Moses gave audience to the people and wherein he inquired of God. It is probable that after the making of the golden calf, the cloudy pillar had lifted itself from their midst. Now it again descended and rested at the door of the tabernacle; this was not over the camp, but at the distance where Moses was. Thus God ratified all that Moses had said.

Verses 9-11: This implies the familiarity and confidence with which God treated His servant. Probably no shape or form was seen, but God spoke to him in sounds of his own language...Joshua was about fifty-three at this time; but young in comparison to Moses.

Verses 12,13: The humble request of a true servant of the Lord.

Verses 14-16: Without supernatural assistance Moses knew it would be impossible either

to govern such a people or to provide for them in the desert. “*So shall we be separated*” - by divine protection only could they be saved from idolatry and preserve the worship of the true God. All the nations of the world were idolaters at this time.

Verse 17: God promised to go with them and to keep them separate from all the people of the earth. Both of these promises were remarkably fulfilled.

Verses 19-23: Moses desired a sight of God’s glory as a token of His reconciliation and an earnest of the Presence He had promised; but he knew not what he asked. God denied what was not fit to be granted and which Moses could not bear (33:20).

## Chapter 34

Verses 1,2: To remind the people of the sin through which the former tables had been broken (24:12), the Lord would not prepare these Himself, but Moses was ordered to prepare them for writing. Yet the whole writing was the Lord’s as the law came from Him. In the writing of the law on the heart of man in innocence, both the tables and writings were the work of God (2 Corinthians 3:3); but when those were broken and defaced by sin, the divine law was to be preserved in the Scriptures; God therein made use of the ministry of man, Moses being the first. The prophets and the apostles only “*hewed the tables*” as it were’ the writing was God’s still.

Verses 4,5: Moses did what God commanded and God did as He promised.

Verses 6,7: God made Himself known in the glory of His self-existence and self-sufficiency when He proclaimed Himself “*I Am that I Am*” (Exodus 3:14); now He makes Himself known in the glory of His grace and goodness and all-sufficiency. These attributes are included in the name Jehovah. They are the proper interpretation of that name.

Verses 8,9: Again Moses intercedes for God’s people.

Verses 10,11: God’s part of the covenant - also verse 24.

Verses 12-26: Israel’s part of the covenant.

Verses 27,28: Probably Moses was commanded to write a transcript of the whole law, or the words included from verse 11 to verse 26. God certainly wrote the commandments on the table which Moses had prepared (Deuteronomy 10:1-4).

Verses 29-35: Having been long in the divine presence, Moses’ look expressed the light and life which dwelt within him. The sight of his face alarmed the children of Israel; their consciences were still guilty from their late transgression (2 Corinthians 3:7ff). As Moses was glorified in the eyes of the Israelites and that glory was absorbed and lost in the splendor of God when he entered the tabernacle or went to meet the Lord in the mount; so the brightness and excellence of the Mosaic dispensation are eclipsed and absorbed in the brightness of the Gospel of Christ.

1. Moses was not aware of it.
2. Aaron and the children of Israel were afraid.
3. Moses put a veil upon his face when he stood before the children of Israel.
4. He put off the veil when he went in before the Lord.

This was an honor to Moses that the people might never again question his mission. It was a favor and encouragement to the people to see that God had put His honor upon their intercessor and mediator.

This shows the darkness of that dispensation ; also the intellectual darkness into which the Jews fell through the rejection of their Messiah.

## **Chapter 40**

Verses 1,2: Though the work was finished and every thing ready for rearing, Moses did not do it until the direct command came from God. "*As the Lord commanded Moses*" appears eight times between verse 16 and verse 32 (16,19,21,23,25,27,29,32).

On the 15th day of the first month, the Israelites came out of Egypt; on the 50th day after that event, the law was given; and, with several intervening delays, Moses spent at least 80 days on the mount. About half the year must therefore have passed before they began to work on the tabernacle. As the work was finished about the end of the first year after their exodus, they spent about six months making it; so that the tabernacle was erected one year less fifteen days after they left Egypt. Such a building with such costly and intricate workmanship, was not entirely the work of man. It was too much for them. It was the work of the Lord and the people did service as unto the Lord; for the people had a mind to work.

Verse 15: By this anointing the right was given to Aaron and his family to be high priests among the Jews forever; so that all who should be born of this family should have a right to the priesthood without the repetition of this anointing; although it appears that the high priest on his consecration, did receive the holy anointing (Leviticus 4:3; 6:22; 21:10).

Verse 34: The cloud was:

1. A token of God's constant presence (Leviticus 1:1)
2. A concealment of the tabernacle and the glory of God in it.
3. A protection of the tabernacle.
4. A guide to the camp of Israel in their march.

Previously the cloud of the divine glory had rested upon the tent or tabernacle which Moses had pitched without the camp (33:7-10), after the transgression in the matter of the golden calf; but now the cloud removed from that tabernacle and rested upon this one, which was made by the command and under the directions of God Himself. There is reason to believe that this tabernacle was pitched in the center of the camp, all the twelve tribes pitching their different tents in a certain order around it.

Thus Solomon's temple filled (1 Kings 8:10,11).

Moses could not enter; but what Moses could not do in that he was weak through the flesh, our Lord Jesus has done (Romans 8:3). Thus Moses is but a weak shadow of that which he typifies.