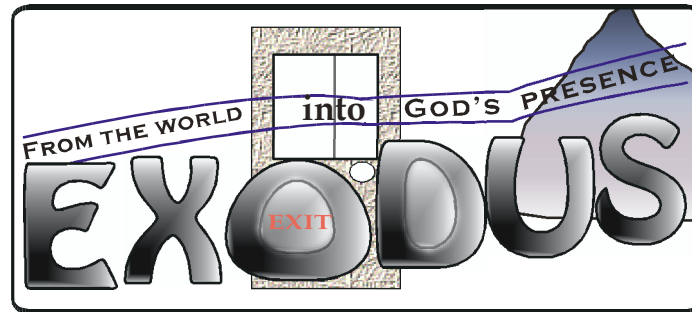


An Introduction to the Book of Exodus

Journeying into God's Presence

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The English name 'Exodus' comes from the Latin, literally meaning 'a road out.' In the Book of Genesis, the first book of Moses, the Israelite people entered Egypt, then the world empire. After the Israelites were oppressed and turned

The Books of Moses
The Law
The Torah
The Pentateuch

1. Genesis
2. Exodus ←
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

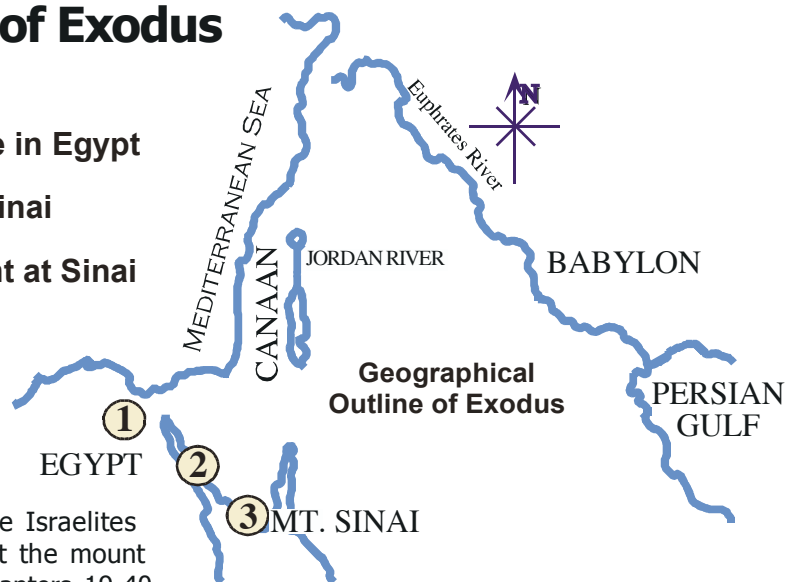
into slaves, they began to seek a way out of their distressing situation. Exodus records their cry for help and how God around 1500 BC came to their rescue. In a most dramatic way God led them out of Egypt, a figure for the world, and brought them into His own Heavenly presence. This was done only through the establishing of an austere agreement with them, called the Old Covenant. The Ten Commandments on the two God-carved tablets of stone stand at the heart of that covenant.

Geographical Outline of Exodus

- ① Exodus 1-12 The Bondage in Egypt
- ② Exodus 13-18 The Trip to Sinai
- ③ Exodus 19-40 The Covenant at Sinai

Exodus has three sections if divided by where they were located. In stage #1, chapters 1-12, the Israelites were in Egypt. They faced much oppression there. In stage #2, chapters 13-18, the Israelites leave Egypt and journey to meet God at the mount God appointed. The rest of the book, chapters 19-40, record what happened there at Mt Sinai before the living God.

We must remember that thousands of years were covered in the Book of Genesis, but when we come to this last section, time slows way down. They pause before the Lord at Mt. Sinai and learn of Him and His ways.



Thematic Outline of Exodus

Delivered by God to be His holy possession.

① Delivered from the World (Exodus 1-18)

1. Their Slavery (1-4)
2. Their Showdown (5-11)
3. Their Salvation (12-18)

② Brought into God's Presence (Exodus 19-40)

1. The Covenant (19-24)
2. The Tabernacle (25-40)

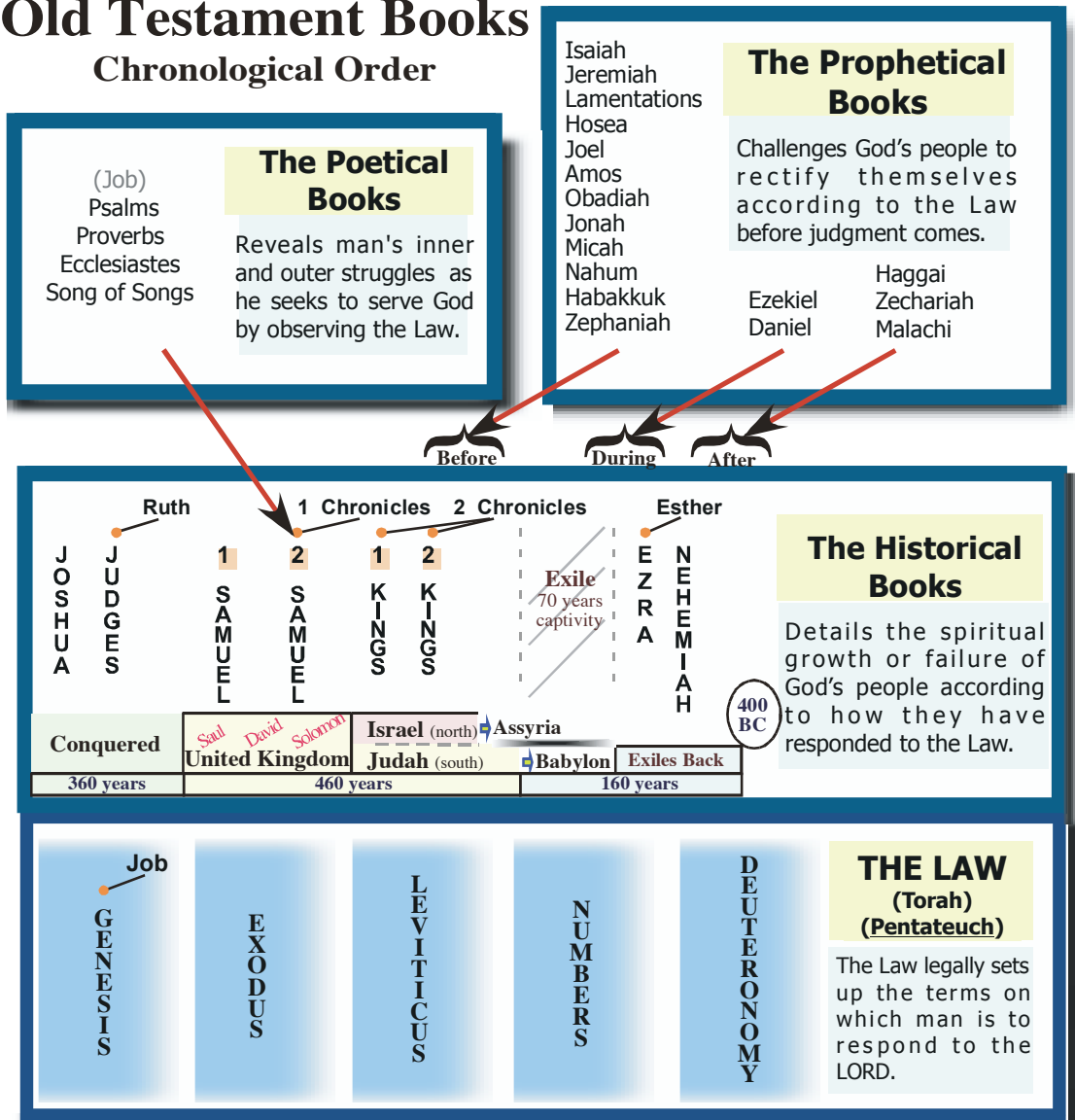
The thematic outline of Exodus clearly reveals the purpose of the book: Delivered by God to be His holy possession.

Redemption means purchased. Israel, bought by God, became His people. They were no longer their own. The first 18 chapters emphasize this delivery and the second half, chapters 19-40, elaborate the special agreement the Israelites now had to live under.

Throughout the book, the unbelief of God's people show how undeserving they are to be called God's people and live in His presence.

Old Testament Books

Chronological Order



The Symbolism of Christ in Exodus

The Book of Exodus provides us a wonderful picture of salvation.

(1) The Israelites' bondage to Egypt shows us how apart from God's grace we are oppressed slaves to the world (1 John 2:14-16).

(2) The Angel of Death gives us a picture as to how the wrath of God will come upon all who live in the world (firstborn – not born again) unless he comes under God's protection (Romans 5:9,12; 1 John 3).

(3) The Passover and the need to be under the blood shows how we need to be saved (Hebrews 9:15-16). Death is necessary for the covenant.

(4) The death of the Passover lamb symbolizes how Jesus would suffer for us (Hebrews 9:12-14). "Christ is our Passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

(5) Their escape through the sea represents repentance and baptism (cutting off the old and living by the new) (1 Corinthians 10:2).

(6) The Old Covenant (at Sinai) foreshadows the greater New Covenant through Christ (Hebrews 12:18-25).

(7) The laws reveal God's standard of holiness summed up by Christ's command of love (Romans 13:9).

(8) The tabernacle (tent) foreshadows Christ through whom Christ lived among men (Acts 15:16; Hebrews 9:11; Revelation 21:3).

(9) Christ is prefigured by the High Priest who could enter God's presence and intercede for the people (Hebrews 5:5-10; 8:1).

(10) Christ was both the priest but also the offering of the priest that appeases God's wrath (Hebrews 8:3-6).

There is no doubt that the book of Exodus is written to help us better understand the glories of Christ Jesus. There might be some debate as to the extent the symbolic pictures of the tent, priests, etc. are to be used and even what they are to communicate. But even these issues should not hold us back from seeing the glories of Christ revealed in the Book of Exodus.

God's redemptive story is so important and the truths so foundational that they are planted deep into redemptive history. Exodus' two key themes, her departure from Egypt and the Old Covenant, greatly expand our appreciation and understanding of parallel teachings in the New Testament.

3 'WHYS' IN EXODUS

1. Why is there a genealogy in Exodus 6:14-27?

Why does it leave out so much and include so comprehensively Levi's genealogy?

Genealogies are not rare in the scriptures but the placing of this one in Exodus 6 and especially its specialized content make us wonder if there is a special significance to these verses. Normally, as in this case, the scriptures do not explain why this or that is put in the scriptures. God wants to us meditate on it.

This genealogy distinguishes itself by connecting the chronology of Genesis with the new one starting in Exodus (Exodus 12:1-2). Up to this point, God used the genealogies to help us form a chronology. We knew, for example, how old Noah's father was when Noah was born.

"Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son." Genesis 5:28.

"Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth." Gen 5:32.

But when it comes to the sons of Jacob, this all changed. That information was no longer included. We have information on their descendant's names, but other key information was absent. This is true except for one son of Israel, that is Levi. Exodus 6:14-27 gives us that information on Levi's descendants for two reasons, both of which establish God's faithfulness.

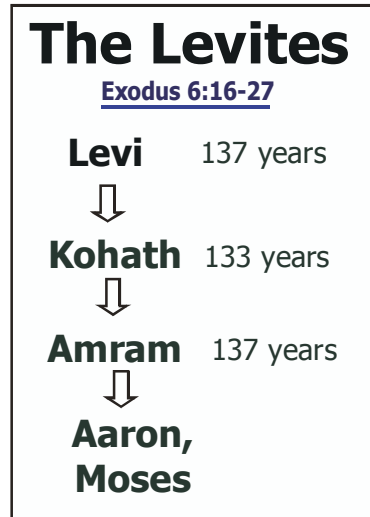
(1) It confirms the lineage of Moses and Aaron.

It was the same Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their hosts." (Exodus 6:26).

(2) It provides insight into the prophecy of Genesis 15.

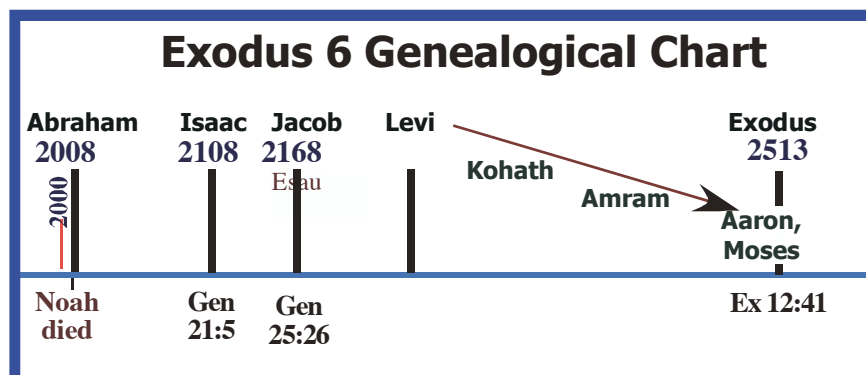
This continuation confirms how God fulfilled His promises to Jacob and his sons.

"And God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions. "And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. "Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." Genesis 15:13-16.



God's promise to Abraham was important. Note three aspects of its specificity, all of which were amazingly fulfilled.

- (1) The Lord predicted the captivity of Abram's descendants. This promise happened when Abram still had no children (Genesis 15:2)!
- (2) Abram's descendants would be oppressed for four hundred years (started before they descended into Egypt). They came out 430 years to the day!
- (3) They came out in the fourth generation (i.e. Moses). This is seen in the Levitical genealogy.



3 'WHYS' IN EXODUS

2. Why is Jethro mentioned in Exodus 18:13-27?

Why does Moses follow the advice of a Gentile (non-Jew)?

Exodus 18 is a wonderful passage modeling how God wants to work through the lives of qualified leaders. God wants all of His people to be shaped by His truths. Once a person is shaped by His truths, then they can help others (notice the qualifications 18:21,25) in the process. This incident gives us a proper picture of delegated authority. Those that are qualified can judge. This is a simple implementation of what the Lord started through Adam himself. Adam and his descendants were to rule over the earth and so carry out God's will.

In the New Testament we find Jesus distributing God's Word through His disciples. The truth was entrusted to those disciples, and they in turn passed it on to others (2 Timothy 2:2). We have only one high priest and prophet, but the fact is that the Word of God has come nigh and transformed our lives. We all need to grow through God's Word and then, in our God-given positions, minister to others (Titus 2:1-7).

Questions for Leaders

- Do you like to keep all your authority to yourself? Why? What are some problems with doing this?
- How did Jesus distribute His authority to His disciples? Did it work? What problems occurred?
- What are the advantages of carefully delegating authority?
- What are the conditions in which one might delegate his authority? Consider the qualifications and conditions for those assisting Moses.
- How do spiritual gifts and their distribution consistent or inconsistent with this passage?
- Does what Moses did here at all relate to what happened in Numbers 11:23-30? If so, how?

Interpretations

There are two interpretations of this Exodus 18 passage.

(1) Jethro's advice is wrong. Moses made a mistake by appointing judges. He did not allow God to direct him and as a result would have a number of problems with insubordinate leaders in the future. The Lord is quite able to hear Moses' need for assistance as Numbers 11 proves but Moses did not ask God for help.

(2) Jethro's advice was great. Moses was humble and wise to learn from others. For a man in authority to take advice from others is quite significant. This incident also shows us how he honored his father-in-law (18:24). As a result, more people learned God's ways, and a greater number of people were helped.

3 'WHYS' IN EXODUS

3. Why is the temple description broken by Exodus 32-34?

We need to look at the broader context first (Exodus 19-40) and then return and specifically speak about these three 'interruptive' chapters (Exodus 32-34).

Exodus (1-40)	
Delivered (1-18)	Sanctified (19-40)

We are interested in this second section. The first 18 chapters are largely sequential, but this later section has a big portion that is 'out of place.' Chapters 19-24 make a lot of sense. This is the actual meeting God told them to have with Him on Mount Sinai. The laws were simply the standards that they were to live by so they could live in communion with God.

Chapter 25-31 is the description and instructions given to Moses regarding the tabernacle. We could look at this section as a special subset of laws and directives, but it also has a special focus on building the tabernacle. The Lord described what Moses needed to do: to ready the tabernacle, its furniture, offerings, high priest's garments, equipment, priests' garments and the consecration of them. Starting in chapter 35 the erecting of the tabernacle takes place starting with the offering. But what are the three chapters in between?

Giving of Covenant (19-24)	Describe Tabernacle (25-31)	Rebellion of Man (32-34)	Erection of Tabernacle (35-40)
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Chapters 32-34 seems to speak about a topic different from the building of the tabernacle. But in fact, it shows us much of the character and patience of the one who is initiating this Tabernacle project. These chapters show us the obstinate character of God's people. While Moses was on the mountain with God, the people were committing revelry and idolatry. Although this passage seems misplaced, we see how Moses is more and more taking up that role of intercessor. Moses was not the Christ, but certainly he is a type of the One who would come. We see both his pleading on the behalf of the people and his success in gaining God's favor despite their sin.

Moses truly is a picture of Christ and the way He interceded for God's people. From these chapters, we can learn a number of important lessons for our lives, especially for leaders.

Questions for Leaders

- Can you see the sin of the people you minister to?
- How do you respond to this sin? Do you minimize it? Avoid it? Or plead God's mercy?
- Do you lose hope in ministry rather easy? Why didn't Moses lose hope? What did he do instead?
- How did the people respond when they heard that the Lord would not go with them into the land (ch. 33)? How did Moses respond to it (33:12-23)?
- From chapter 34 what attitude does God have toward Moses and His people?