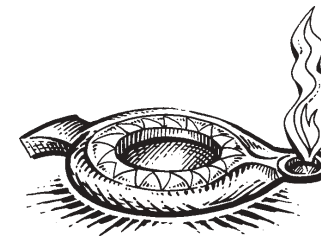


BASIC BIBLE STUDY

An Introductory Guide To Understanding The Scriptures

PART SIX

The Exodus Era



"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path"
PSALM 119:105

Films and picture story books have sometimes portrayed The Exodus as a little band of nomads roaming about the desert, camping under palm trees and singing Hebrew folk songs around a small campfire.

That picture could hardly be further from the truth. The book of Numbers tells us that when the Israelites left Egypt, there were 600,000 fighting men. It is reasonable to assume that if there were 600,000 fighting men, there were also 600,000 women. That is 1,200,000. Each of those families may have had at least two children. That is another 1,200,000. In addition there were the men who were too old to fight, and their wives. There was the priestly tribe, the Levites, who did not fight, and their wives and their children. There were, conservatively speaking, between two and a half to three million people who left Egypt during this "exodus." Far from this being a little tribe of nomads roaming about the desert, it was a nation on the move! Instead of looking for a flat spot under a palm tree to camp, they had to look for a valley 10 miles square!

THE ARC OF BIBLE HISTORY

#3 ... THE EXODUS ERA

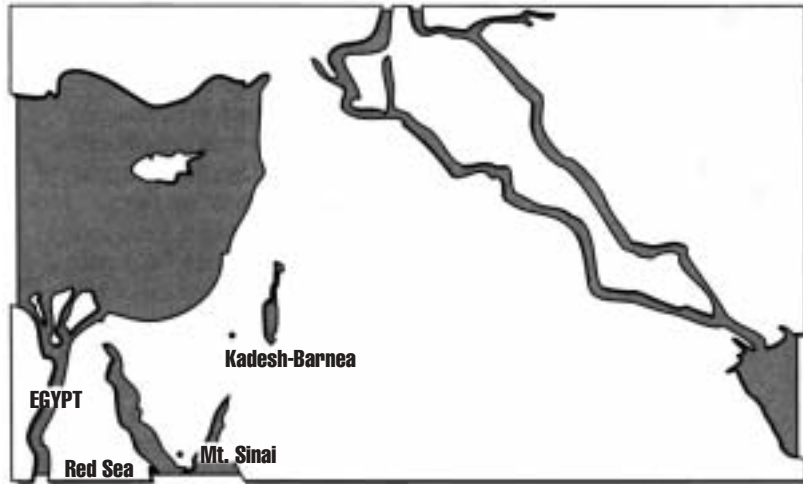


I. Review:

Fill in the blanks to bring the chart up-to-date with this era.

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORYLINE SUMMARY
_____	_____	_____	Adam is created by God, but he _____ and _____ God's original _____ for man.
_____	_____	_____	Abraham is _____ by God to _____ a people to _____ God to the world.
_____	_____	_____	To be completed in this study.

3 ... **The Geography of the Exodus Era** (Draw an arrow from Egypt through the Red Sea to Mount Sinai to Kadesh-barnea, and then to the top of the Dead Sea on the east side of the Jordan River. This represents the geographical movement of the Exodus Era).



II. Story-Line Summary:

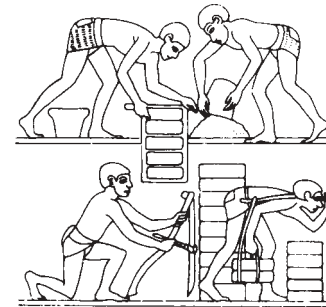
Moses delivers the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt and then gives them the Law.

III. Story-Line Expansion: There are four major events in the Exodus Era:

1. Deliverance
2. The Law
3. Kadesh Barnea
4. Forty Years of Wandering

**1. DELIVERANCE:
FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY IN EGYPT
(Exodus 1-18)**

The Hebrews have languished under slavery in Egypt for 400 years when they cry out to God for deliverance. God raises up Moses as His spokesman to Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, asking for spiritual freedom for the Hebrew people. Pharaoh refuses, and a series of ten plagues is levied on Egypt to prompt Pharaoh to let the people go. The plagues start out bad and they get worse from water turned to blood, to frogs, to gnats, to the death of the firstborn in every household of Egypt. Finally, Pharaoh consents to let the Hebrews leave Egypt. After they have gone, he changes his mind and attempts to recapture them. They are as far as the Red Sea when God parts the Red Sea and the Hebrew people cross over to the other side. The waters come together again, protecting them from the Egyptian army, and from a return to slavery in Egypt. God, of course, has only one destination for them: the Promised Land of Canaan ... the land "flowing with milk and honey." The land that their father Abraham had first settled is again to be their home.



and from a return to slavery in Egypt. God, of course, has only one destination for them: the Promised Land of Canaan ... the land "flowing with milk and honey." The land that their father Abraham had first settled is again to be their home.

At the close of **Genesis** the chosen family are living in Goshen, and Joseph occupies a position of great influence and power in Egypt. A period of 430 years elapses between the time of Jacob's descent into

Egypt and the events recorded in the book of Exodus (**Exodus 12:40&41; Acts 7:6; Galatians 3:17**). During this period the nation multiplied to a phenomenal extent (**Exodus 1:12**) and were perceived as a threat by the new government in Egypt (**Exodus 1:8**). Eighteen dynasties have risen and fallen by the time Moses comes on the scene - and the king who was sitting on the throne belonged to a dynasty that had long forgotten Egypt's debt to Joseph (believed to have been Rameses II - the 3rd king of the 19th dynasty; a man who distinguished himself as a warrior and a builder, using the Israelites as a ready-made, economic labour force).

However, now is the time for the dawn of Deliverance. It is interesting to note that the words, "let go," (or their equivalent) occur no less than 57 times in **the first twelve chapters of Exodus**. This clearly indicates that the burden of the message was deliverance.

The story of Israel in the land of Egypt can be studied in three basic sections.

- 1. PERSECUTION**
- 2. PREPARATION**
- 3. PLAN & PROGRESS.**

1. THE PERSECUTION OF THE PEOPLE.

Israel's condition is pitiful. They knew national expansion (**Exodus 1:1-7**), but then were forced to endure cruel affliction under Pharaoh (**Exodus 1:8-14**) - an affliction that escalated to the attempted curtailing of the nation by the murder of all new-born males. In spite of these brutal attacks, the people multiplied and grew, just as the bush which Moses encountered, though enveloped in flame, remained unconsumed. There was only one reason behind an unconsumed bush and a spared people ... God was in their midst!

2. THE PREPARATION OF A SAVIOUR.

God raised up Moses as the leader of the nation, to bring them out of bondage into liberty. Moses is presented to us as:

i. Scholar: born in troublous times, he was hidden by his parents in an ark of bulrushes, discovered by Pharaoh's daughter, weaned by his mother (Jochebed), adopted by the princess, and educated in the court of Pharaoh. **Acts 7:22** informs us that Moses was skilled in all the knowledge of the Egyptians. His education in all

The twin keys to open up the book are "Remember!" and "Obey!"

Another outline of the book could be:

- (A) THE PAST; chs 1-4 ... The Retrospection of Love.
- (B) THE PRESENT; chs 5-26 ... The Requirements of Love.
- (C) THE FUTURE; chs 27-34 ... The Revelation of Love.

We do not find a mention of the love of God in the first four books of Moses; it is only in this book (which reviews the 40 years of Israel's history from their exit from Egypt to their second approach to Canaan) that God's love is not only grandly displayed, but graciously declared (cf. **Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:7&8; 10:15; 23:5**).

The latter part of this book speaks prophetically of the future history of Israel. Specific details are given - which were later fulfilled to the letter by this persistently rebellious people.

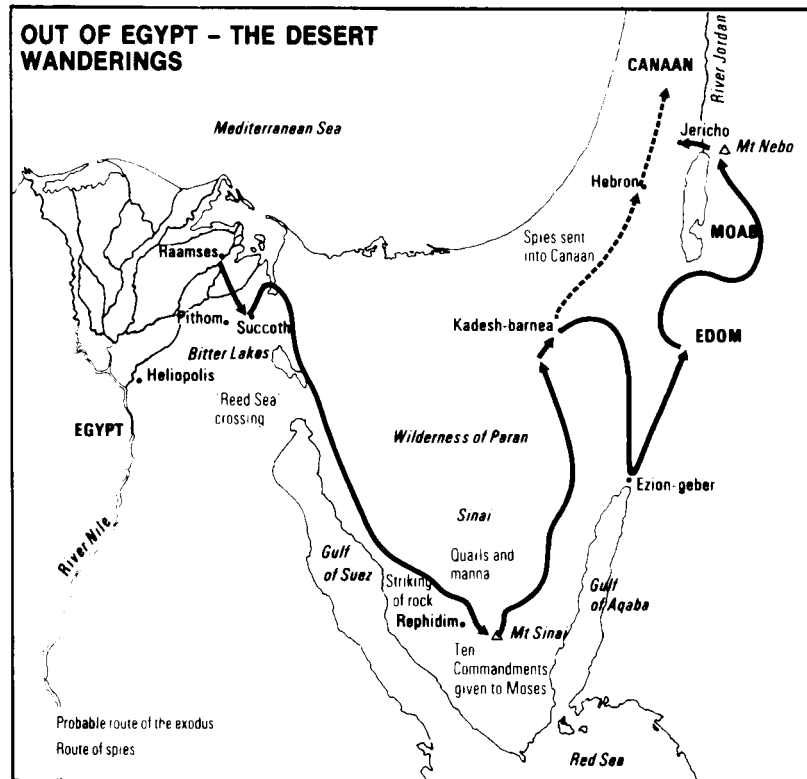
TESTS

#1 ... Four Major Events in the Exodus Era (Write in the correct name from the options at left.)

OPTIONS:	EVENT:	DESCRIPTION:
Deliverance	_____	God's commandments at Mount Sinai
The Law	_____	Place of rebellion against God
Kadesh Barnea	_____	Consequences of rebelling against God
Forty years of Wandering	_____	Freedom from slavery in Egypt

#2 ... Story-line Summary.

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORYLINE SUMMARY
_____	_____	_____	Moses _____ the Hebrew people from _____ in Egypt and then gives them the _____.



BACK TO KADESH-BARNEA

Not a man of those who left Egypt (20 years old and above) was left living at the end of the wanderings in the wilderness, apart from Caleb and Joshua. A new generation returned to Kadesh-barnea, some 38 years after their fathers had transgressed on that very spot. W.G. Scroggie has noted: "There is no royal road into blessing; where the people of God fall they must rise; where they deny they must confess, and to the point from which they wander from God they must return; blessing can be found only where it was lost."

OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY

The book of Deuteronomy supplies us with:

1. A Review of the Wilderness Wanderings;
2. A Repetition of the Divine Law;
3. A Revelation of God's future dealings with His people;
4. A Record of the closing scenes of Moses' life.

fields - social, philosophical, architectural and military - was essentially Egyptian. By the time Moses reached forty, it is more than likely that no one in the land of Egypt showed a greater capacity for leadership in the entire country than him. Potentially, Moses was the next Pharaoh. However, the events recorded in **Exodus 2:11-15** ensure that never took place. Involved in a small-scale act of deliverance (he slays the Egyptian that was persecuting one of the Hebrews), Moses remonstrates with two of his own people, and then flees from the face of Pharaoh into the wilderness. He would learn from those early experiences that the efforts of the flesh cannot further Jehovah's plan and cause.

ii. Shepherd: Moses fled to the land of Midian and married Zipporah. He served his father-in-law (Jethro or Reuel), tending sheep. (The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through his second wife, Keturah). Staying with these desert-dwellers, Moses could hardly have had better preparation for the wilderness journeys with Israel in years to come.

40 years after he settles in the land of Midian, as Moses was feeding his flock in a remote part of the desert, God came to him, and revealed His purpose to deliver Israel. **Acts 7:30** tells us that Moses was 80 years of age when he met God at the bush (cf. **Exodus 7:7**).

EXCUSES!

Moses' response to this call was to offer four excuses ... but God eradicated every excuse.

1. Moses pleaded lack of fitness ... the Divine Presence was his fitness (**Exodus 3:11&12**);
2. He pleaded lack of a message ... the Divine Name was his message (**Exodus 3:13-18**);
3. He pleaded lack of authority ... the Divine In-working was his authority: God gave Moses three signs with which to convince the people (**Exodus 4:1-9**);
4. He pleaded lack of capacity ... the Divine Power was his capacity (**Exodus 4:10-12**).

When these excuses had been stripped from him, the real reason why Moses was unwilling to approach Pharaoh became evident - a tragic lack of faith (**Exodus 4:13-16**). Moses effectively says, "Please send someone else." Through that lack of faith, the blessing that would have been Moses' exclusively was to be shared with his brother, Aaron.

iii. Saviour of his people. Leaving the wilderness of Horeb, Moses re-enters public life, appearing before Pharaoh as the saviour of the Hebrew people.

A GREAT CHANGE

He is a changed man! There is a tremendous contrast between Moses as he left Egypt at 40 years of age and when he returns to it at the age of 80!

- For the first 40 years of his life Moses had been trained in the ways of the Egyptians; **Acts 7** says that he was mighty in words and deeds by the time he was compelled to flee from Egypt.
- However, as he goes back, he is a man who has no confidence in his own abilities. He now claims to be slow of speech. He sees no qualities in himself to justify God calling him to be the leader of the Hebrew people.

We should not be surprised to note this contrast. There is a very definite scriptural pattern here. **1 Corinthians 1:26-29** lays down the principle. God always delights in using the 'base' things. This was not merely something He began in the days of the New Testament Church: even in the Old Testament God worked according to this pattern.

- In Gideon's case, He reduces the numbers so that man cannot 'cream off the credit' (e.g. **Judges 7, esp. v2**).
- In David's case, He uses those individuals who are least likely to succeed (e.g. **1 Samuel 16:6-12; 1 Samuel 17**).

This was the reason behind the 40 years which Moses spent in the deserts of Midian. It was an operation by which God extracted the confidence Moses had in himself as a result of his training in Egypt. Shorn of his boldness, stumbling in speech, emptied of self, Moses meets God at the burning bush. God shows him how, with a mean shepherd's crook, He will engineer the defeat of the most influential nation of that era (**Exodus 4:2-5**).

INITIAL RESPONSE

The response to Moses' first appeal was hardly encouraging ... Pharaoh imposed heavier burdens on the people. It is at this point that God reveals Himself to Moses as Jehovah - the covenant God - promising to bring His people out of Egypt and into a better land.

- In **Exodus 6:1** He pledged Himself to force Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go from his land;
- in **Exodus 6:2**, God reconfirms His existence to Moses;
- He reveals Himself to Moses by the great title 'Jehovah' (**Exodus 6:3**);
- He reminds Moses of the surety of the covenant and of His acknowledgment of the groanings of His people ... then He embarks on a thrilling series of "I wills" (**Exodus 6:6-8**).

exactly what He proposes to do with His people (who, having seen His glory, had proceeded to tempt Him ten times). In a few devastating sentences, He rings out the death knell of that entire generation. "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it" (**Numbers 14:21-24**). The men responsible for the evil report died immediately; **Numbers 14:36&37**.

ONE UNBROKEN FUNERAL PROCESSION

It should be considered that the numbered men amounted to 600,000. The total number of days spent in the wilderness would be 14,508 days (38½ years); therefore, on average, 42-43 men would die each day (3-4 men per hour). The next 38½ years in the wilderness would be a constant funeral dirge: Israel's presence there would be most distinctive via the cry of her widows and orphans!

From that day, the people of Israel went back into the desert: the march ended, and the wandering began.

4. FORTY YEARS OF WANDERING: CONSEQUENCES OF REBELLING AGAINST GOD (Numbers 20-36).

As a consequence of rebelling against God at Kadesh Barnea, the "exodus" generation is condemned to wander in the wilderness until everyone who was 20 years old or older at the time dies. In the ensuing 40 years, a new generation comes to leadership; it is willing to follow their leaders into the land. Moses leads them to the north of the Dead Sea near Jericho, the eastern gateway to the Promised Land. Moses encourages the people, gives them additional instruction found in the Book of Deuteronomy, and then dies.

The only record we have of this period is a bare list of place names where Israel stopped. Their experience during these tortuous years underlines the truth that time spent outside the circle of God's will finds no place in His calendar; that a disobedient life is a wasted life.

blessing, the people rebel, and are despatched back into the wilderness for a further 38 years (making 40 in all). In spite of their sins at Taberah (**Numbers 11:3; Deuteronomy 9:22**), Kibroth-Hattavah (**Numbers 11**), and Hazeroth (**Numbers 11:35 ff**), the Hebrew nation was largely walking in the way of God's purposes for them. But now, at Kadesh, through a terrible act of unbelief, they "caused the tides of their history to run back for a whole generation, and for a like period suspended the purposes of God for them" (Dr. W.G. Scroggie).

REPORT OF THE SPIES

Twelve spies had been sent into the land of Canaan to survey it, and report back to the people. They spent 40 days searching the land (**Numbers 13:25**) - and discovered that the land was just as God had told them. They were able to cut such a massive cluster of grapes in the valley of Eshcol that they had to carry it on a pole between two men. Their report was uniform (each one told of a land that flowed with milk and honey; a land which contained walled cities and was inhabited in part by giants); it was the response to that report that brought about a division among the spies. Two of them recommended that Israel should "go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (**Numbers 13:30**); the other ten gave a contrary view: "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we" (**Numbers 13:31**). The essential difference was this. Two of them, while not depreciating the enemy, appreciated the Lord - but ten of them depreciated the Lord, and appreciated the enemy. Two of them looked at their difficulties through God - but the ten looked at God through their difficulties, and wrongly perceived Him nullified by distance and withered in power. The nation were so determined not to go forward and follow the advice of the ten spies who gave an "evil" report, that they actually proposed appointing a captain who would take them back to Egypt (**Numbers 14:4**)! The people were so stirred up against Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb that "all the congregation bade stone them with stones" (**Numbers 14:10**). In the centre of that vile activity, the glory of the Lord appeared. He promised swift and decisive judgment (pestilence) - and spoke of disinheriting the people to raise up a nation "greater and mightier than they" (**Numbers 14:12**).

Moses interceded for the people, imploring the Lord to show His greatness in the realm of pardon, rather than in the realm of punishment (**Numbers 14:13-19**), but, while the Lord hears him to the extent that He does not utterly disown Israel, He tells His servant

3. THE PLAN AND PROGRESS OF REDEMPTION.

It is most instructive to mark the number and order of the plagues that fell on the land of Egypt.

THE PARTICULARS OF THE PLAGUES

1. The turning of the waters of Egypt into blood - the great supply line of Egypt, the Nile, was utterly contaminated (cf. **Exodus 7:16-25** + Notes in BBS#2: 'The Geography of The Old Testament', pp.3-4). This plague persisted in Egypt for seven days (**Exodus 7:25**).

2. Frogs. When Aaron stretched forth his hand with his rod over the rivers and the ponds, frogs came forth "abundantly." They invaded everywhere (**Exodus 8:1-14**)!

3. Lice. Aaron smote the dust of the land and it became lice. The lice affected both man and beast and, though the magicians of Egypt had been able to imitate the previous two plagues, they were forced to concede defeat before this one. "This is the finger of God" they confessed. (**Exodus 8:15-20**).

4. Flies. A grievous swarm of flies were sent over all the land of Egypt, corrupting it. Only in the land of Goshen (where the Israelites dwelt) was there an absence of flies, "to the end thou [Pharaoh] mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth" (**Exodus 8:21-31**).

5. A very grievous murrain. This affected the animals of the Egyptians. Again this was a discriminate plague: Israel's cattle were unaffected (**Exodus 9:1-6**).

6. Boils. Moses and Aaron were instructed to take handfuls of ashes of the furnace (irony - this was symbol of the Hebrews' distress/bondage). Moses was to sprinkle these toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh - they would become small dust in the land of Egypt, taking the form of a boil breaking forth with blains (**Exodus 9:10-14**).

7. Pestilence, (comprising thunder, hail and fire; **Exodus 9:15-35**). The severity of this plague appears from **Exodus 9:23-25**.

8. Locusts. Brought into the land by an east wind, the locusts ate every green thing that the thunder, fire and hail had left (**Exodus 10:4-19**).

9. Darkness. This darkness, persisting for three days in Egypt, was described as "thick darkness" and "darkness which may be felt." Only the children of Israel had light in their dwellings (**Exodus 10:21-29**).

10. The slaying of the firstborn. At midnight, the Lord went through the land of Egypt and slew all the firstborn. The Israelites, protected by the sprinkled blood on the lintels and door posts of their houses (**Exodus 12**), were safe (cf. **Exodus 11:7**)!

THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAGUES

These plagues were sent for three basic reasons:

- i. To reveal the power of God over His enemies
- ii. To demonstrate that Israel belonged to the Lord, and not to Pharaoh
- iii. To establish the faith of Israel in God.

By means of the plagues, the omnipotent power of Jehovah and the absolute, embarrassing impotence of the collection of puny idols Pharaoh had chosen to worship, were revealed!

Romans 9:17 tells us that when God sent the plagues into Egypt, He did so to "shew His power ... and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth." **In other words, the 10 plagues demonstrated that He was everything while the little false gods that the Egyptians worshipped were absolutely nothing!**



The plagues were really contests between God and the idols. (They were like '10 rounds in a boxing bout'). In every plague He sent into the land of Egypt, God was exposing the inadequacies and the falsehood of the Egyptian gods and goddesses.

For instance:

Plague 1. The Egyptians believed that several gods and goddesses guarded the Nile River. But when God turned the Nile into blood, it showed their total inability to guard that river.

Plague 2. They had a frog-faced god called Osiris. But Jehovah showed up the powerlessness of Osiris when He sent swarms of frogs to invade Egypt.

Plague 5. Some of the Egyptian gods were meant to protect the animals. How could the livestock be wiped out (as they were in the fifth plague) if the Egyptian god Hathor, with a cowhead, protected the cows, and if they were looked after by that famous Egyptian cow god Apis, a symbol of fertility? God clearly demonstrated, in this plague, that both Hathor and Apis were false gods.

Plague 7. In the seventh plague, God sent hail, thunder and fire and destroyed the Egyptians' crops - again showing that several gods and goddesses of the Egyptians were unable to control the storms in the sky and prevent crop failure. These included the sky goddess Nut; Osiris, the god of crop fertility; and Set, the god of storms.

The necessity for personal holiness is emphasised through the various instructions that are given regarding pure food, clothing, person, house and nation laid down throughout the book of **Leviticus**.

The priesthood is presented as the vehicle of mediation.

- In the Passover we see the GROUND of Redemption ... Divine Grace;
- In the Law we see the NEED of Redemption ... Divine Will;
- In the Tabernacle we see the MEANS of Redemption ... Divine Presence;
- In the Priesthood we see the MAINTENANCE of Redemption ... Divine Faithfulness;
- In the Offerings we see the DOCTRINE of Redemption ... Divine Holiness.

3. KADESH BARNEA: PLACE OF REBELLION AGAINST GOD (Numbers 10-14).

Israel leaves Mount Sinai and migrates north to an oasis, Kadesh Barnea, which is the southern gateway into the Promised Land. From this vantage point, twelve spies are sent into the Promised Land, one spy from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The land is inhabited by the Canaanites, who would not take kindly to an Israelite horde coming back into the land. When the spies return, they have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that the land is beautiful and bountiful, "flowing with milk and honey." The bad news is that there are giants and hostile armies throughout the land. Ten spies report that the land is indomitable (in spite of the fact that God has promised to give them victory over any opposing forces). Two spies, Joshua and Caleb, exhort the people to believe God and go into the land. The people believe the majority report and refuse to follow Moses into the land. Thus, this becomes known as a place of rebellion against God.

Depending on how we view it, this is a story that is both depressing and inspiring. The shameful unbelief of man depresses us; the sight of the unfailing love of God that we catch here inspires us.

The people, chosen of God in **Genesis**, redeemed in **Exodus**, and instructed in **Leviticus**, have been brought to the south-western border of the promised land. The little flock of Jehovah has become an army: everything is in place for an assault upon the tribes of Canaan and possession of the land. Tragically, at the very gate of

- ii. The walk with God by Sanctification.

No part of the Bible sets out so repeatedly or clearly the holiness of our God - and the need for man to experience cleansing. If the **book of Leviticus** were to be removed from Scripture, whole areas of the Bible would become inexplicable (including the key event of all time - the death of the Lord Jesus Christ). The ritual and rules contained in Leviticus were never designed to be simply an end in themselves. As the sacrifices were performed day after day, year after year; as the great Day of Atonement came and went (**Leviticus 16**); Israel was constantly reminded of the sin which cut them off from God's presence - and of the substitute that God would accept (and provide) instead of the death of the offender.

**As we look back through the ages,
Where the kings and prophets trod,
We may see their altars reeking with the sacrifice and blood:
But those types were only pointing
To the Paschal Lamb of God,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I'm depending on the blood!**

A fivefold aspect of the Atoning Sacrifice is outlined in:

- a. The Burnt Offering (**Leviticus 1; 6:8-13**)
- b. The Meal Offering (**Leviticus 2; 6:14-18**)
- c. The Peace Offering (**Leviticus 3; 7:11-36**)
- d. The Sin Offering (**Leviticus 4:1-5:13**)
- e. The Trespass Offering (**Leviticus 5:14-6:7; 7:1-10**).

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Chs 8-10 ... The Consecration of Aaron and his sons
Chs 11-15 ... Laws for daily life: purity and impurity
Ch 16 ... The Day of Atonement (the 10th day of the 7th month, Tishri - September/October). Compare **Hebrews 9&10** for a New Testament treatment of the Day of Atonement.
Ch 17 ... Further regulations about sacrifice
Chs 18-20 ... Ethical and moral laws
Chs 21&22 ... Rules for the priests
Ch 23 ... The Set Feasts: the Sabbath, Passover, Firstfruits, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles (Booths)
Ch 24 ... The lamp, shewbread, and the sin of blasphemy
Ch 25 ... The 7th and 50th years: Sabbath and Jubilee
Ch 26 ... Promise and Warning - Blessing and Cursing
Ch 27 ... Vows and Tithes.

Plague 10. In the tenth plague one of the leading goddesses, Isis, who supposedly protected children, was incapable of preventing the death of the firstborn child in each Egyptian home.

Those 10 plagues were actually 'showdowns' between Jehovah and the false gods of Egypt. The message that kept coming through was this:- **The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!** On each occasion, the plagues trumpeted, with one voice, that God was on the throne! He ruled and reigned – and He alone!

Pharaoh, under pressure from the plagues, talked of a compromise. Four compromises, in fact.

- i. He told the Hebrew people to sacrifice in the land;
- ii. He commanded that they should not go far away;
- iii. He suggested that only the men should go;
- iv. He told the people to go - but leave their flocks.

HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART

Some have stumbled over the statement that "God hardened Pharaoh's heart." It must be remembered that it is also declared that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, and the action of God did not precede, but followed, the action of Pharaoh (just as Jesus did not render the fig tree barren, but sealed it in its barrenness; **Matthew 21:19**).

THE PASSOVER

The Passover (while it was plague no.10), marks the institution of a feast. **We cannot attach too much importance to it since it marks the greatest crisis of the Hebrew nation, and typifies the greatest fact in the history of the world (i.e. redemption through the blood of Christ our Lamb).** It was commanded that all the males of the chosen people should appear before the Lord three times a year in a place chosen by Him. Those occasions were:

- at the feast of Passover, Nisan 14;
- at the feast of Pentecost, Sivan, 6th;
- at the feast of Tabernacles, Tisri, 15-21.

Of these feasts, the first and the third are the most important, forming the spiritual foci of the Jewish year. One was held in the spring (Passover) to celebrate Israel's redemption; the other (Tabernacles) in the autumn, to commemorate their preservation. (There were 7 great Passover feasts observed in Jewish history: **Exodus 12; Numbers 9; Joshua 5; 2 Chronicles 30 and 35; Ezra 6; Matthew 26**).

JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

The period of time covered by the march from Egypt to Sinai was approximately two months. It was comprised of a number of stages.

1. To the Red Sea (**Exodus 12:37-14:4**): the first three stages of the journey.

2. Through the Red Sea (**Exodus 14:5-15:21**): fourth stage of the journey. This was the first big test of Israel's faith - and they panicked!

3. From the Red Sea (**Exodus 15:22-19:2**): fifth to ninth stages of the journey.

THE PASSAGE THROUGH THE RED SEA

A common fallacy is that the distance between the 'watery walls' of the Red Sea was quite small. We must remember that 600,000 men on foot (plus women and children) came up out of Egypt and passed through the Red Sea (**Exodus 12:37**). That computes to a crowd in the region of 2.5/3 million people. If each row had comprised of 15 persons abreast, there would have been 166,666 rows. If the rows of people were three feet apart, the length of the column going through the Red Sea would have been 500,000 feet (95 miles). Therefore, by the time the tail-end of the column got out of the land of Egypt and through the Red Sea, the head of the column would have been in the land of Canaan.

It is readily seen, from the consideration of these facts, that the crossing of the Red Sea was a far greater miracle than most imagine. It has been suggested that the Red Sea was opened up about a mile wide, enabling the people to go through in a very short period of time.

An earthquake, or tidal wave, was obviously not responsible. The opening of the Red Sea was a stupendous miracle. The ground on which they walked was solid: not muddy, but frozen. (**Exodus 14:21&22; 29-31**).

This same miracle - which spelled deliverance for Israel - crushed the pride of the Egyptian army (**Exodus 14:26-28**). It resulted in:

- the people fearing the Lord (**Exodus 14:31**),
- the people believing in the Lord (**Exodus 14:31**),
- the people expressing confidence in Moses (**Exodus 14:31**), and,
- in a joyous and glorious celebration of victory (**Exodus 15**).

If ever a victory deserves to be recorded for posterity, this one does. This song is a fine example of ancient Semitic poetry.

6-fold Revelation of His Purpose

During the course of this 2-month march, Jehovah showed His people the evidence of His power and purpose in a six-fold way:

During the wanderings of the people through the wilderness, and throughout the different stages of their victories in the land of Canaan, the tabernacle accompanied them. When the inhabitants of Canaan were subdued, the tabernacle was fixed in Shiloh (**Joshua 18:1**).

The tabernacle is still in Shiloh over 450 years later (**1 Samuel 1:3**) - but its days are drawing to a close. The Israelites took the ark from its resting place when they went to battle against the Philistines (**1 Samuel 4**), and it was never returned to the tabernacle. Less than 90 years later, when Solomon constructed the Temple, this 'Tent of Meeting' between God and Israel disappeared altogether. It had served its purpose for almost 500 years.

v. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TABERNACLE.

The tabernacle stood for a double-sided truth: 1. the fact of God's approach to man; 2. the way of man's approach to God.

As the tabernacle typifies Christ, we can say that it speaks of the fact of God's approach to us, in Christ's Incarnation, Preparation, and Ministration ... and the way of our approach to God, through His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension.

(C) THE ORDINATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD: Exodus 28-30

The entire idea of priesthood is rooted in the human consciousness of sin. Men know that they have broken a law, but God is holier than they are, and they dare not approach Him in their sin. They crave for the intervention of someone who is more acceptable than themselves; he must offer up their prayers, thanksgivings, and sacrifices. He becomes their representative in all things pertaining to God. While other nations around Israel were operating a priestly caste and system (e.g. Egypt, **Genesis 41:45; 47:26**) an effectual priesthood was the exclusive privilege of a chosen line, represented by Abel, Noah, Abraham, Israel and the spiritual seed (cf. Christ; **Hebrews 7**).

**(D) THE PRESCRIPTION OF THE OFFERINGS: Leviticus 1-7**

The subject of the **Book of Leviticus** may be summarised as:

- The way to God by Sacrifice, and

iii. THE FORM OF THE TABERNACLE.

The Structure

1. The Court, 100 x 50 cubits
2. The Tabernacle, 30 x 10
 - (i) The Holy Place, 20 x 10
 - (ii) The Holiest of All, 10 x 10
3. The Tent over the Tabernacle
4. The Covering over the Tent.

The Furniture

1. In the Court

- (i) The Brazen Altar ...
Regeneration
- (ii) The Laver ... Purification

2. In the Holy Place

- (iii) The Golden Lampstand ...
Illumination
- (iv) The Table of Shewbread ...
Provision
- (v) The Altar of Incense ...
Intercession

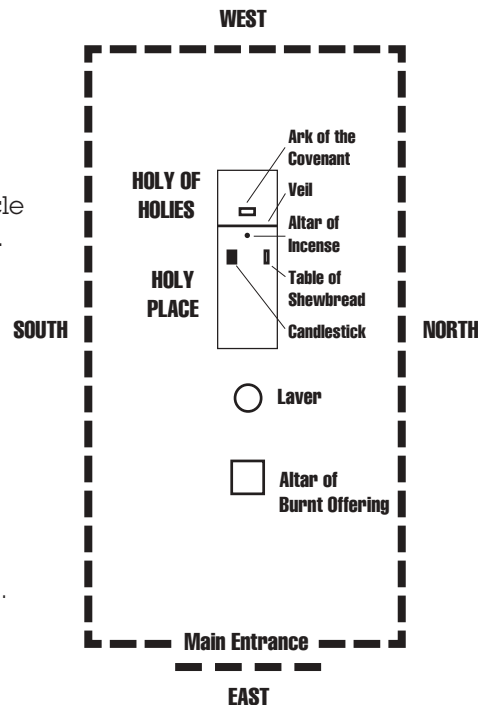
3. In the Holiest of All

- (vi) The Ark ... Representation
- (vii) The Mercy Seat and Cherubim ... Consecration

This tremendous structure was positioned in the middle of the camp, and was the personal, social, political and religious centre of the people. Each piece of tabernacle furniture (as indeed the entire tabernacle) is of profound spiritual significance and speaks to us of Regeneration, Purification, Illumination, Provision, Intercession, Representation, and Consecration. All of these are to be found in Christ - the Word who "became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us" (**John 1:14**).

iv. THE HISTORY OF THE TABERNACLE.

The Tabernacle makes its first appearance at Sinai, where the instructions given to Moses (and repeated 8 times) were carried out a fortnight short of twelve months from the time that Israel left Egypt (**Exodus 40:2&17**).



- i. In Redemption, by means of the Passover
- ii. In Guidance, by means of the fiery and cloudy pillar
- iii. In Salvation, by means of the passage through the Red Sea
- iv. In Provision, by means of the supply of manna and water
(**Exodus 16:31; 17:6**)

- v. In Victory, by means of the overthrow of Amalek (**Ex. 17**)
 - vi. In Government, by means of the 70 rulers who were appointed to assist Moses in the discharge of his duties (**Exodus 18**).
- These chapters are packed with spiritual significance. A careful and prayerful study will reveal Christ Himself as our Redemption, Guidance, Salvation, Provision, Victory and Governor.

**[2] THE LAW:
GOD'S COMMANDMENTS AT MOUNT SINAI
(Exodus 19-40).**

The Hebrew people now begin to take on a national identity as Israel. From the Red Sea, the Israelites travel south to the bottom of the Sinai Peninsula and camp at Mount Sinai. They receive God's commandments at Mount Sinai. Moses meets with God alone at the top of Mount Sinai, where he receives the Ten Commandments written in tablets of stone by the finger of God. Moses also receives a full revelation of the Law that is to govern Israel's national life as well as her relationship to God. God promises to bless her abundantly for obedience and curse her soundly for disobedience.

THE ENCAMPMENT AT SINAI

- 1. Revelation of the Lord; Exodus 19:3-25.**
- 2. Constitution of the Nation; Exodus 20-Leviticus 27.**
- 3. Preparation for the Journey; Numbers 1-10:10.**

These 58 chapters are occupied with the history of a single year ... but it is unquestionably the most momentous year in the history of Israel and of the world. During this time, the righteous character and holy requirements of God were revealed. This revelation came in four main parts.

(A) THE FORMULATION OF THE LAW: Exodus 20:1-24:18

α. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: Exodus 20:1-21.

Written on stone tablets, preserved in the ark of the covenant, the ten 'words' were the basis of Israel's law. The first four commandments are concerned with man's relationship to God; the remaining six

govern man's relationship with his fellow-men. (cf. Jesus' two-clause summary of the Ten Commandments in **Matthew 22:37-40**). The commandments show God's concern for the whole of life. He sets out standards which govern worship, family relationships, human life, physical relationships, property, speech and thought.



The revelation contained in the law of God was a revelation of Divine Righteousness and Human Depravity. It spelled out what God, in His holiness, required - and what man, because of his sin, was not able to give.

b. GOD'S LAW-CODE FOR ISRAEL: **Exodus 20:22-23:33**.

This section - known as "the book of the covenant," is the oldest record we have of Jewish law. It consists of judgments (i.e. case-laws) and statutes (straightforward commands).

There were several distinctive features of this Jewish code:

- The whole code rests on the authority of God, not of a king.
- There is one law for all, whatever a man's status in life. Regulations designed to protect the weak and helpless (slaves, orphans, widows and foreigners) are worthy of particular note.
- A high view of human life is demonstrated by fixed penalties - one crime; one punishment.

This law-code may be divided into three parts:

Civil (**Exodus 21:1-23:13**)

Ceremonial (**Exodus 23:14-19**)

Constitutional (**Exodus 23:30-33**).

In each of these four parts the basic two-pronged truth appears (i.e. Divine Righteousness and Human Depravity). It should be underlined that nothing was arbitrary about God's commandments. They reflected what God was and what He required. While many of these laws are no longer obligatory, it should be noted that propping up the local and temporary laws designed specifically for Israel, were broad and eternal principles, which apply equally to us, as to them.

CHRIST THE FULFILMENT OF THE LAW

When God's requirements were made known to the people, they said, "All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient" (**Exodus 24:7**) ... but their history is a sad comment on their misplaced self-confidence. The law, which could never be a father whom they could love, became their schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. The

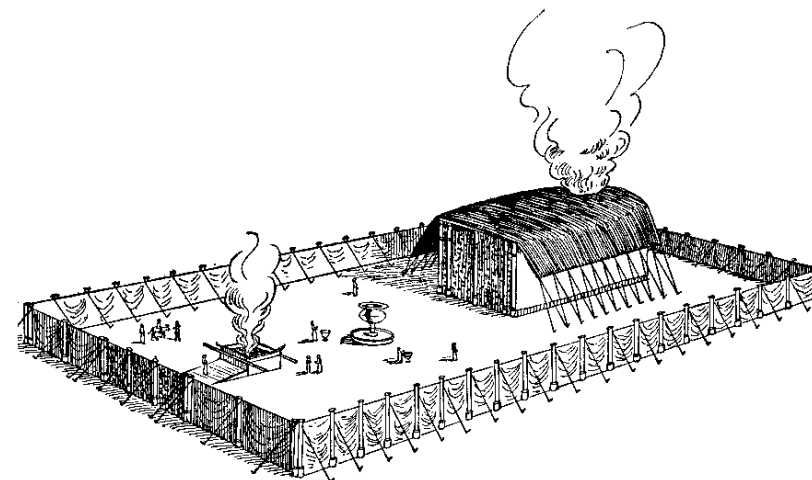
law was hid in the heart of Christ; He perfectly set forth the will of God; He was the end (or realisation) of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

(B) THE INSTITUTION OF THE TABERNACLE: Exodus 25-40

i. THE NAME OF THE TABERNACLE.

It was called:

- "the Tabernacle" (**Exodus 25:9**) because God dwelt there in the middle of His people;
- "the Tent of Meeting" (**Exodus 29:44**), because God met with His people there;
- and "the Tabernacle of Testimony" (**Exodus 25:21**), because there the Tables of the Law were kept.



ii. THE ORIGIN OF THE TABERNACLE.

God gave Moses minute instructions concerning the tabernacle (its form and purpose) while he was on Mount Sinai "According to all that I shew thee, after the **pattern** of the tabernacle, and the **pattern** of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (**Exodus 25:9**). That word "pattern" means type of model - and proves that Moses was not left to his own ideas about any part of the construction of the tabernacle - the dimensions and relations were part of a direct and complete revelation ... just like the giving of the law at the same time and in the same place.