

The God who keeps his promises

Getting started

Starting to read Exodus can be a bit like starting to watch a movie when its already half way through. Certain things have already happened which we need to be aware of. If we aren't aware of them we may not be able to make full sense of what's going on in Exodus. In particular we need to be aware of some promises that God has made to a person named Abram. Read Genesis 12:1-9. What sorts of things has God promised Abram (later on in Genesis God gives Abram the name Abraham).

How do you think Abram would have felt about these promises?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 1:1-7

- 1 What do these verses tell us about Abraham's descendants? (The Israel mentioned in Exodus 1:1 is the grandson of Abraham)
- 2 Why shouldn't Exodus 1:7 surprise us, in the light of what we discovered in our "Getting Started" question?

Read Exodus 1:8-22

- 3 Why does Pharaoh become concerned about the Israelites? (Exodus 1:10)
- 4 What sorts of things does Pharaoh do to try and stop the Israelites from increasing? (Exodus 1:11, 15-16, 22).

5. How successful is Pharaoh in his plans? (Exodus 1:12,17,20-21)
6. Why shouldn't the previous answer surprise us, in the light of what we discovered in our "Getting Started" question?
7. In what ways are the mid-wives are good example for us?

Read Exodus 2:1-25

8. This chapter opens and closes with someone crying out for help - Moses (Exodus 2:6) and Israel (Exodus 2:23). What happens to Moses when his crying is heard? (Exodus 2:7-10)
9. In what way does Moses' rescue show that Pharaoh can't possibly stop God from keeping his promises to Abraham?
10. Given what happens to Moses, what do you think might be going to happen to the Israel? (Exodus 2:23-25)

To finish

The New Testament tells us that Jesus is the fullest revelation of God. What characteristics of God from Ex 1-2 do you see revealed in Jesus here?

In what ways should this characteristic of God shape the way we live now in light of eternity?

Pray

Thank God for the times when you have especially noticed his reliability and faithfulness in your life.

“This universe is so big and I am so small by comparison. I can’t believe that God could possibly be interested in me.” How might you answer a comment like this?

Read Exodus 3:1-10

1. In what way does God get Moses' attention?
2. How does God introduce himself to Moses and what reaction does this produce in Moses? (Exodus 3:5-6)
3. What does God say he has done and will do? (Exodus 3:7-10)

Read Exodus 3:11-4:17

4. List the excuses which Moses gives to God. In each case how does God respond?

Moses' excuse

God's response

Exodus 3:11-12

Exodus 3:13-22

Moses' excuse

God's response

Exodus 4:1-9

Exodus 4:10-13

Exodus 4:14-17

5. What sorts of excuses do you come up with for not doing what God wants you to do?

6. What impression do you get of Moses from these verses?

7. What impression do you get of God from these verses?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus?

How does this impact how we think about life now and for eternity?

Pray

Thank God that he is a personal God who is concerned about our lives. There may even be some specific life struggles that you would like to share and talk to God about.

The God who is determined

Getting started

Is God an extrovert? What do you think?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 4:18-31

- 1 In these verses Moses tells Jethro, Aaron and the Israelite elders about God's plan to rescue Israel from Egypt. In each case what is the reaction to the news?
- 2 Verses 24-25 are difficult to understand and different people have different views about them. It seems that God is angry with Moses because his son is not circumcised. Given that circumcision was a sign of God's covenant with Abraham, why do you think God might be angry that Moses' son isn't circumcised?

Read Exodus 5:1-21

- 3 What is Pharaoh's reaction to Moses' request?
- 4 How does Pharaoh's reaction in fact confirm that God is in control (look back at 3:18-19)

5. What effect does Pharaoh's reaction have on the Israelites?

6. How do you handle the hardships of life? In what ways have you been like Israel and/or Moses in your reactions to:
 - a) other people?

 - b) God?

Read Exodus 5:22-7:7

8. In these verses God reaffirms his intentions. What will this mean for:
 - a) Israel (6:6-8)

 - b) Pharaoh (7:2-5)

To finish

Consider what God reveals about himself in these verses. How does Jesus reveal these same truths?

In what ways should these truths impact how we live now as we wait for Jesus to return?

Pray

Give thanks that as Christians we will "know" God as our saviour on the Day of Judgment.

The God who is boss

Getting started

"I don't think God ever gets angry or punishes people. The God who Jesus taught about is a God of love." Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 7:8-8:19

- 1 What plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?
- 2 How do these verses describe Pharaoh's response?
- 3 What does the competition between Moses & the magicians show us about God?

Read Exodus 8:20-9:12

- 4 What further plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?
- 5 How do these verses describe Pharaoh's response?

6. Do you think it's fair for God to punish Pharaoh since it's God who is hardening his heart? (9:12)

7. What happens to the Israelites during these plagues? What does this show about God?

Read Exodus 9:13-10:29

8. What further plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?

9. How do these verses describe Pharaoh's response?

10. What are some of the reasons that we "hardened our heart" against God?

To finish

Consider a truth that God reveals about himself in these verses. How does Jesus reveal this same truth?

How will this truth help us to challenge the temptation to 'harden our heart' against God as we wait for Jesus to return?

Pray

Pray for a soft heart which is humble and obedient before God as we wait for Jesus to return.

The God who saves (part 1)

Getting started

Have you had an especially important event in your life? What was it and what made it so important?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 11

1 What final plague is God going to bring on Egypt?

2. What effect will this plague have on

a) Pharaoh?

b) Israel?

Read Exodus 12

3. Why do you think God wants the Passover to be the start of each year? (v1-8)

4. According to 12:21-23 what caused God's judgment to "pass over" a house?
5. In what way does your answer to Question 4 remind you of what happened when Jesus died on the cross?
6. As well as being set free what else happened to the Israelites in 12:33-36?
7. Why do you think its important for foreigners to become Israelites in order to share in the celebration of the Exodus?

To finish

1 Corinthians 5:7 calls Christ "our Passover lamb" who has been sacrificed to ultimately save us. In what ways should this shape the way we live now as we wait for eternity?

Pray

Give thanks that, through Jesus' death as our Passover lamb, we have been set free from sin and death and have been made rich with spiritual blessings.

The God who saves (part 2)

Getting started

Has there been a time in your life when you were rescued?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 13:17-14:13

- 1 In what ways is Israel's reaction to the Egyptian army
 - a) understandable?
 - b) terrible?
- 2 In what ways might we be tempted to have a similar reaction to our sin and the coming judgment of God?
- 3 For you, what's the best thing about Moses' response to Israel's fear?

4 In what ways is the word of Christ to us a similar word of encouragement?

Read Exodus 14:15-31

5 What words would you use to describe what God does to rescue his people?

Read Exodus 15:1-21

6. What are Israel's conclusions about God given his rescue of them?

7 Is there anything troubling to you in Israel's song of praise?

To finish

Exodus 15:18 says, "'The LORD reigns for ever and ever.'" How is that fully demonstrated in the reign of King Jesus?

How will the knowledge of Jesus' eternal kingdom shape your choices this week?

Pray

Praise God for his eternal salvation of us through his mighty works in Christ's death and resurrection on our behalf.

The God who provides

Getting started

"Of all the things in life, contentment is the most elusive." Do you agree or disagree with this statement. Why?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 16

- 1 What does Israel complain about in these verse?

2. What does God do in response?

3. Why do you think God solved Israel's problem the way he does?

Read Exodus 17:1-7

- 4 What does Israel complain about in these verse?

5. What does God do in response?

6. Why do you think God solved Israel's problem the way he does?

Read Exodus 17:8-18:27

7. What 2 things threaten Israel in these verses?

Threat 1 (17:8)

Threat 2 (17:17-18)

8. How are these 2 threats solved?

9. How is God involved in the solutions?

To finish

Israel is distracted by temporary concerns and threats (water, food and human enemies). What are the concerns of this world that can distract you from Jesus's eternal kingdom?

God's provision and protection of his people is evident in these chapters. How is this ultimately demonstrated in Jesus?

How can this encourage us as we strive to live now for eternity?

Pray

Give thanks for God's loving patience with his children.

The God who is holy

Getting started

In what ways can we be too casual in how we treat God? What is the danger of this?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 19

- 1 What HAS God done for Israel?
2. What does God expect of Israel?
3. What is God's plan for Israel?
4. How is the holiness of God reflected in v9-25?
5. What special role is Moses to have for Israel?

Read Exodus 20

6. Why do you think its significant that God says v2 before he starts to give his commandments?

- 7 In the 10 commandments, what things are said about:
 - a) how Israel are to treat God?

 - b) how Israel are to treat each other?

8. "The 10 commandments are irrelevant to us nowadays. They were given to Israel but we don't have to become an Israelite to be one of God's people anymore." What is true and what is false about this statement?

To finish

God reminds Israel that he was the one who saved them from slavery before calling them to live for him with the 10 commandments. As Christian's now, how does looking back to the ultimate salvation moment of Jesus on the cross inform how we will live now as we wait for eternity?

Pray

Ask for the obedience and endurance to live a life worthy of the salvation that you have received in Christ.

The God who is to be obeyed

Getting started

Has there ever been a time when you were terrified?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 20:18-21

1 Why were the people so afraid?

Moses agrees to their request and heads up alone into the darkness to hear God's laws for his people. In chapters 21 to 23 God gives the second instalment of his law. In many ways these chapters are putting flesh on the bones of the 10 commandments.

2 Read the following verses and fill in the table to see how these chapters are filling out the 10 commandments for the Old Testament Israelites.

Verses	Which of the 10 commandments are being fleshed out?
21:12-19	
21:28-32	
22:1-5	
22:7-9	
23:1-3	
23:4-5	
23:6-8	
23:10-13	

- 3 What's appealing about these laws? How was being commanded to live in obedience to God a good thing for his people?

Read Exodus 24:1-8

- 4 What did Israel think of being called on to submit to their God?

Read Titus 3:3-8

- 5 There's strong similarities between our experience of God and his salvation and what we've read in Exodus. But in what ways are we so much better off than the Old Testament Israelites?

- 6 What helps you to see that obeying your God is 'excellent and profitable'?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus?

In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live now for eternity?

Pray

Ask God to empower you by his Spirit to gladly give yourself to him in every way in wholehearted humble obedience.

The God who draws near

Getting started

Do you have a story of being able to be with a 'hard to get to' person? e.g. the prime minister, a pop star, a famous musician, a sports star etc. What did you have to do to get an audience with them?

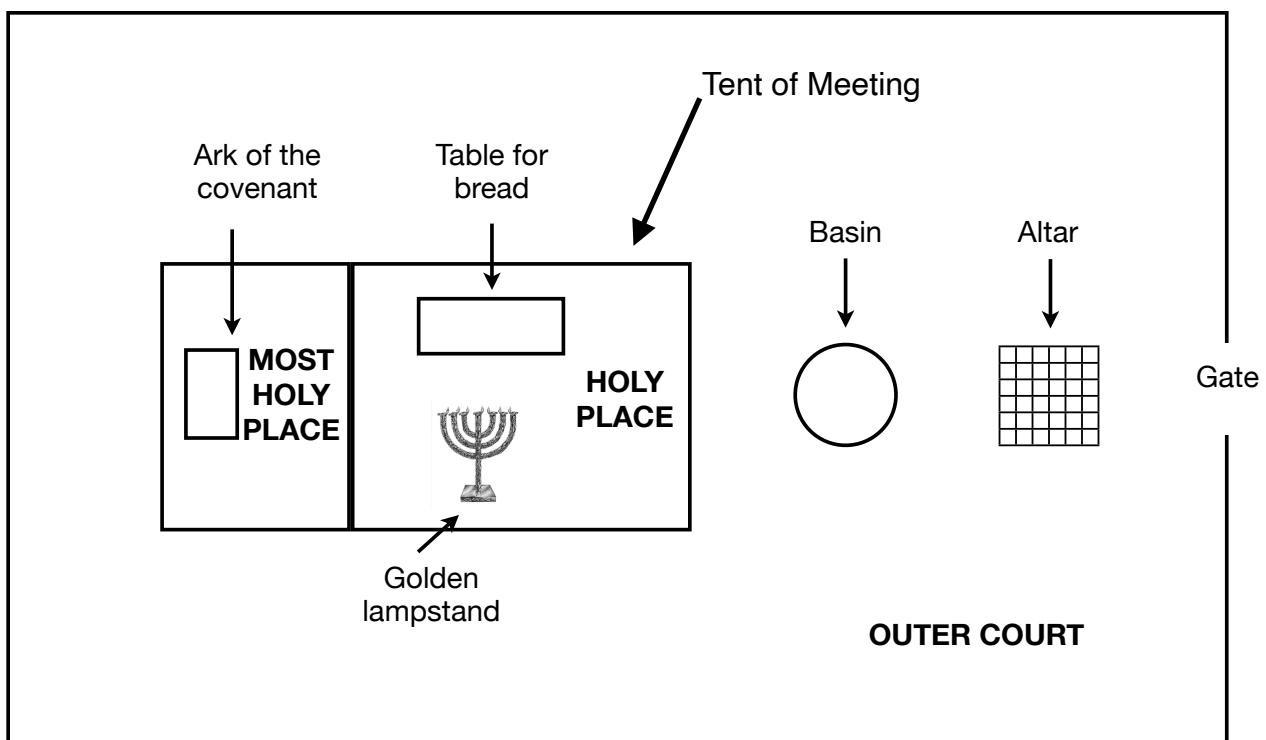
Chapters 25-31 of Exodus are all about God getting his people to build him a tabernacle, a giant tent structure, so that he and his people could be close.

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 25:8-9

- 1 What was the point of the tabernacle?
- 2 In chapters 25-31 God gives all the details for the tabernacle. Below is a diagram of it. God dwelt in the Most Holy Place. Over the page, fill in the table to see different things about it.

The tabernacle



Verses	object / person	question
25:11-13	Ark of the covenant	Where was the ark located? What was it to be made of?
25:17-18	Cover for the Ark	Where was the cover located? What was it to be made of?
25:23-30	Table for the bread of the Presence	Where was the cover located? What was it to be made of?
27:1-8	altar	Where was the altar located? What was it to be made of?
27:19	all other articles	What were they to be made of?
28:31-43 29:29-30 30:19-21	the priests	Where were they allowed to go that the regular Israelites weren't allowed to enter?

3 What does all of this teach us about God and how to relate to him?

To finish... Read Hebrews 10:19-25

How has Jesus brought true intimacy between us and God? How should this shape the way we live?

Pray

Thank God for drawing near to us in Christ in such a way that now we can draw near to him with confidence.

The God who is jealous

Getting started

Can you remember a time when you weren't sure whether you should be nice or stern? Kind or just? Merciful or forgiving?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 32

1 How do we see God's justice?

2 How do we see God's mercy?

3 In what ways are God's justice and mercy in tension?

Read Exodus 32:7; 33:1-6

4 In what ways is God distancing himself from his people?

Read Exodus 33:1-14

- 5 In what ways have we seen God live up to his name in chapters 32-34?

- 6 How have these chapters shown us the jealousy of God?

- 7 In what ways does the Lord Jesus resolve God's own inner tension in being BOTH the merciful AND just God when dealing with sinners?

To finish

How should knowing the mercy and justice of God in Christ shape the way we think about our own sinful tendencies?

Pray

Give thanks that in Christ and his death and resurrection we receive the mercy of God while he at the same time justly deals with all our sin

The God who is glorious

Getting started

Who is someone you would love to meet or go with them on holidays?

Chapters 35-40 are all about God having the Israelites build for him a tabernacle.

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 25:8-9

1 What's the significance of the tabernacle?

Read Exodus 35:4-29

2 Given what we looked at last week in chapters 32-34, why is this surprising?

*Chapters 36-39 are all about the different pieces of the tabernacle being made.
In chapter 40 we get to the point of the tabernacle being assembled.*

Read Exodus 40:33-38

3 For the Israelites at the time, what was the significance of God being in the tabernacle?

These chapters show us that despite the sin of his people, God is eager to dwell with them.

Read John 1:14

4 How is God's eagerness to dwell with us amplified in this verse?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 and Ephesians 2:19-22

5 How do we see God dwelling with his people today?

Read Revelation 21:1-4

6 What will it be like for God to dwell with us in the new creation?

To finish

In what ways should the presence of God with us right now by his Spirit, and the hope of even more to come in the new creation, shape the way we live?

Pray

Thank God by the Spirit of his Son he dwells us right now and pray that we will continue in our faith in Christ, not moved by the hope held out to us in him that one day we will be with God, and he with us, face to face.