

Bible Challenge 2018

Weeks 3&4: January 14-27

Outline of Exodus:

Exodus 1: From Joseph to a King that did not know Joseph
Exodus 2:1-10: The Birth of Moses
Exodus 2:11-22: The first 40 years of Moses' Life
Exodus 2:23-25: The second 40 years of Moses' Life
Exodus 3-4: Moses' Call
Exodus 5-6: Moses confronting the People of Israel and Pharaoh
Exodus 7-12: The Ten Plagues
(Exodus 12: Passover Instituted)
Exodus 13-15: From Egypt to the Red Sea
Exodus 16-19: From the Red Sea to Sinai
Exodus 20: The Ten Commandments and Worship
Exodus 21-23: Civil Laws
Exodus 24: Confirming the Covenant
Exodus 25-31: The Tabernacle and its Worship
Exodus 32: The Golden Calf Incident
Exodus 33-34: Moses' Intercession and God Passing by Moses on the Mountain
Exodus 35-40: The Construction of the Tabernacle and The Glory Cloud

From Joseph to a King that did not know Joseph

The book of Exodus — in Hebrew, "And These are the Names" — is ultimately a book about God's deliverance of his people from Egypt. Chapter 1 begins with transitions. Genesis ends with the children of Jacob having settled in Egypt. Thus, Exodus begins with the families multiplying over 400 years in the land of Goshen and its surrounding areas. Yet, verse 8 gives us the transitional language of a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph.

Historically, about the time of Joseph, there was a kingdom of rulers who had come from outside of Egypt and they were much more open to people of other nationalities. Yet, during the era between Joseph and Moses was a time when the Egyptian Priests rose up and had a kind of ethnic cleansing, explaining the change in attitude toward the descendants of Jacob. And thus the Pharaoh's mandate that Hebrew boys should be destroyed (implying that the girls should then marry Egyptian men, becoming culturally Egyptians).

The Birth of Moses and the First 80 Years of Moses' Life

The birth of Moses is a well known story. We should note that Moses' life can be broken up into 3 periods of 40 years. The first 40 years Moses spent in Egypt, the second 40 years was spent in the wilderness tending his father-in-law's sheep, and then the third 40 years he spent leading the Israelites through the wilderness. Interestingly, the first 80 years of Moses' life has very little written about it; it is the last 40 years that is of most importance.

Moses' Call

While Moses is pasturing his father-in-law's flocks at Mount Horeb (also known as Mount Sinai), God appears in a burning bush and utters one of the most significant statements about his character. He says that his name is Yahweh (older writers will write, "Jehovah" based on a misunderstanding of the pronunciation of several Hebrew letters), which means "I am that I am" or "I am who I am."

Confrontation and the Ten Plagues

It is not just Pharaoh that Moses needs to confront, but it is the people of Israel as well; they will be the ones taking the brunt of Pharaoh's wrath. The plagues are both Judgments against the people of Egypt and they are attacks against the "gods" of the people. They worshiped the river Nile (which was turned to blood), frogs (that overran them), and even the firstborn of Pharaoh. God was demonstrating his sovereignty over the things that Egypt worshiped, a reminder that He is the great God to whom adoration and worship is due.

Passover

Passover is instituted in the midst of God's judgment of the Egyptians. Given that the Passover foreshadows the Lord's Table and the sacrifice of Christ (the great Passover Lamb — 1 Corinthians 5:7), it should be noted that Jesus' last Supper was also instituted in the midst of God's judgment being poured out. It would be poured out on his son on behalf of the Elect and it would be poured out on the Reprobate in full — their judgment was sealed.

Passover is the single-most important festival of the Jewish year and is one of the only ones that translates almost directly into the Christian calendar — most prominently on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and then into the sacrament of Communion. Thus, every time we come to the Lord's Table we are reminding ourselves of our need to be covered by the

blood of Christ lest we face the judgment of God, which is eternal Death.

From Egypt to the Red Sea

After the 10th plague, Israel fled from Egypt, taking with them the wealth of the people as God had commanded (also taking with them the body of Joseph to be buried in the Promised Land. And thus, they traveled in the direction of the Red Sea (literally, "The Sea of Reeds"). Once at the Sea of Reeds, they learn that Pharaoh's army is closing in on them (the Pharaoh having had a change of mind) and they found themselves trapped against the large water body. God promises the people a miracle of deliverance, but teaches the people patience and trust at the same time. Rather than opening the Sea all at once, God opens the sea up, slowly, starting from the other side, and has the people wait through the night. God moves his cloud and his angel over in between his people and the army of Egypt to protect his own. Then, in the morning, the sea is opened for the people to cross on dry ground. And, once across, God releases the waters and destroys the pursuing Egyptians. And this deliverance at the Red Sea becomes one of the most frequently cited texts in the Bible.

From the Red Sea to Sinai

Having crossed the Red Sea and having worshiped God at the destruction God wrought against Pharaoh's army, the people begin their travels to Sinai. What marks their travels are the challenges of basic needs (food and water) for which God miraculously provides. In the meantime, the complaining begins. It will take the people three months to traverse the desert to arrive at Sinai (Exodus 19:1).

The Ten Commandments and Worship

Once at Sinai, the people receive the moral law of God: the Ten Commandments (also known as the "Decalogue"). Does this mean that the people did not know God's expectations prior to the giving of the Law? No, clearly God's expectations have been commanded to the people since the earliest days (Cain knew that the murder of his brother was wrong, for instance). Here we simply find that the Law of God is codified for the people. And the people's response to this law (the legal aspect of God's covenant with us) is to recognize that they are unworthy to be in God's presence. Thus, what follows is instruction about sacrifice and how one must approach a holy God.

Civil Laws

It may seem strange to us to see such a long string of civil laws coming right after the Ten Commandments, but these laws represent types of ways that the Ten Commandments could be applied to individual cases. While every culture ends up developing a body of case law with which to work, this provided the people of Israel some basic case law that was part of God's inspired word. More such laws will arise elsewhere, but the immediate application of the Ten Commandments is found within these laws. Does that mean that these case laws should bind us today just as the Ten Commandments do? No, for these case laws applied to a specific people at a specific time where God's people also existed as a national state (which we no longer do today). Yet, we can learn principles about moral government from such laws which ought to be brought to bear today.

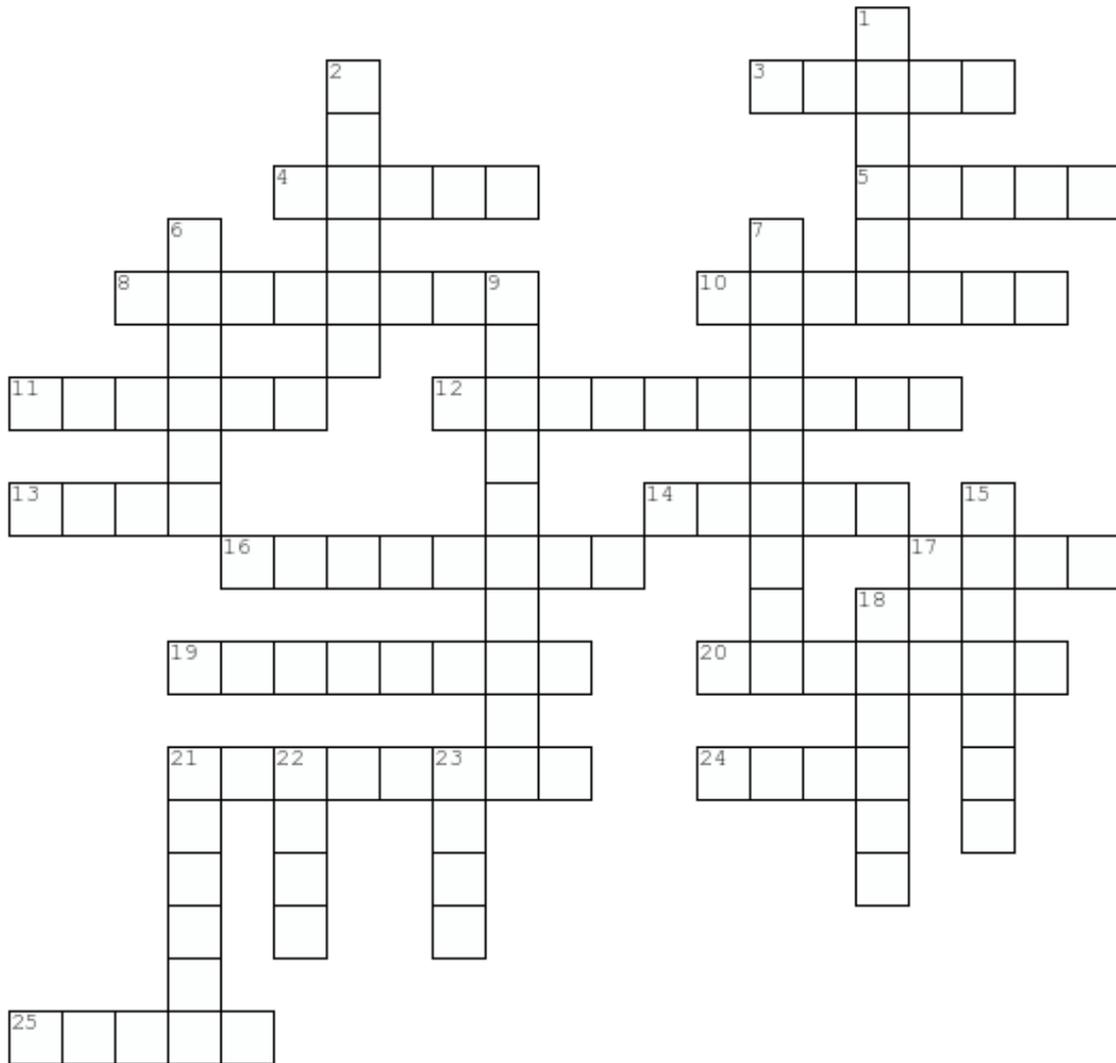
Confirming the Covenant and the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle itself was designed to be a reminder of God's presence with his people and thus it becomes not only a place of worship, but it is also the context in which God renews his covenant with his people. What is interesting is the grand detail that is presented here; based on the description, we could reconstruct the Tabernacle and its furnishings with very little difficulty. It is a testimony as to just how seriously that God takes his worship.

The Golden Calf, Moses' Intercession, and the Glory of God Passing By

The incident with the Golden calf is familiar to most of us, the people getting restless and seeking an object to worship rather than the unseen God (how commonly we are quicker to worship what we see than what we cannot see, yet faith is the conviction of things not seen). Moses intercedes for the people and asks God for a single blessing: to see his glory. God's response is to pass his "goodness" before Moses and to permit Moses to see him from behind (not to see his face). In many ways, this is the highpoint of the book of Exodus and the seal of God's presence. After this, the Tabernacle would be finished and the people would witness God's glory descend to fill it.

Weeks 3&4



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Across

3. Another name for Mount Sinai.
4. This means 'What is it?' in Hebrew.
5. After the Moral law comes a series of ____ or case laws.
8. These women were honored because they protected the infant boys of the Israelite women.
10. The name of Moses' firstborn son.
11. Moses' father-in-law is best known by this name.
12. This tent represented God's presence with the people.
13. Moses desired that God pass of of his _____ before his face.
14. In this plague, this green critter covered the land. (It's not easy being this creature)
16. The name of Moses' wife, meaning 'bird.'
17. Moses and Aaron are both descendants of this tribe.
19. This important festival takes place in the first month of the year.
20. An older spelling of God's covenant name: Yahweh.
21. This plague covered all of the land except for where the Israelites lived.
24. This part of Moses would shine with glory after speaking with God.
25. He was given this name because he was drawn from the water.

Down

1. As punishment for Moses' interference, Pharaoh made the Israelites make this but they had to gather their own straw.
2. The Ark of the Covenant was made from this kind of wood and overlaid with gold.
6. How old was Moses when he led the People out of Egypt?
7. Another name for the Ten Commandments.
9. The Red Sea is also known as this (3 words).
15. One of the craftsmen in charge of building the Tabernacle.
18. Exodus really begins when a king arises that does not remember this man.
21. If a man steals his neighbor's goods, he is to be fined _____ its value.
22. God gave the Israelites water from this while they were in the wilderness.
23. From what side did God begin to part the red sea?