

Exodus

The Name	In the Hebrew Bible, the second book of the Pentateuch (Torah) is called <i>Shemot Misrayim</i> (outgoing from Egypt). Our Bibles shorten the phrase and label it <i>Exodus</i> , meaning “from out of” and/or “departure.”
Where We Are in the Narrative	Genesis 12-Deuteronomy 34, as we learned previously, is one continuous narrative. It began with the calling of Abraham from the land of Ur of the Chaldeans. The book of Genesis ends with Joseph in a position of leadership in Egypt and his brothers and his father, Jacob, making the sojourn to Egypt from Canaan during a famine. In the first chapter of Exodus, considerable time has passed (300-400 years). The Israelites have grown numerically and are now enslaved in Egypt.
Where We Travel in the Narrative	The Book of Exodus begins in Egypt. After the 10th plague, the Israelites <u>do not</u> take a northwestern direct route to the Promised Land. Instead, they journey southward to the Sinai Peninsula (we’ll get into the reasons for this). When they get to Mt. Sinai, they are encamped at the base of the mountain from Exodus 19 until Numbers 10 when they leave for Canaan. In other words, from the middle of Exodus, for the entirety of Leviticus, and for the first part of Numbers, the Israelites are encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai.
Which Pharaoh?	The Book of Exodus devotes considerable ink to the interactions of Moses and the Egyptian Pharaoh. The identity of the Pharaoh isn’t named and that’s most likely deliberate. Egyptian Pharaohs cared immensely about their legacy. The Pharaoh’s deliberate obscurity in the Jewish Torah would have certainly been an indictment on the Pharaoh. Nonetheless, we can try to figure it out. There are two options: Rameses II or Amenhotep II. The former is known as Rameses “the Great.” The theory for this is that the two cities the Israelites were building through forced labor, Pithom and Rameses, would have been completed before the Exodus and Rameses I would have been dead, thereby making Rameses II the Pharaoh of the Exodus. On the other hand, Amenhotep II fits the historical circumstances better. Egyptian archives inform us that Amenhotep’s successor, Thutmose IV (King Tut), was not a true heir to the throne. That would be true if Amenhotep’s firstborn son and legitimate heir died during the 10 th plague.
Major Narratives Within the Narrative	As we discovered in Genesis, there are two main narratives in the Pentateuch: Genesis 1-11 and Genesis 12-Deuteronomy 34. The second has many narratives within the main narrative. Exodus is a good example. We see considerable time devoted to the (1) story of Moses and his calling; (2) the plagues; (3) the giving of the law (ex. 10 commandments); and the (4) giving of the law for the construction of a tabernacle. All these are <u>very, very, very important</u> for understanding <u>how God works</u> and <u>how our relationship</u> with him should work and be viewed.

The Call of Moses, the Great Deliverer (Ex 1-4)

1. Raised in a Palace (2:9-10)

⁹Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.” So the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, “I drew him out of the water.”

2. To be Used by God in the Desert (3:9-10)

Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God.’ ¹⁹But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. ²⁰So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

3. A Most Unlikely Spokesman (4:10-12)

¹⁰Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” ¹¹The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? ¹²Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

4. Why This Is Important for Us (Hebrews 11:24-26)

²⁴By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. ²⁵He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

The Plagues (Exodus 5-11)

All of the plagues instituted and brought about by YHWH are an assault on Egypt’s “gods.” They are in three sets and grow in severity. Some

1. Water to Blood – Against Hapi and Osiris, the Egyptian gods of the Nile.
2. Frogs – Against Heqet, the Egyptian god of fertility who had the head of a frog.
3. Gnats – Against Geb, the Egyptian god over the dust of the earth (where the gnats came from).

4. Flies – Against Khepri, the Egyptian god who had the head of a fly. (Israelites spared)
5. Livestock – Against Apis, the Egyptian god of livestock. (Israelites spared)
6. Boils – Against Isis, the Egyptian goddess of medicine and peace.
7. Hail – Against Nut, the Egyptian goddess of the sky.
8. Locusts – Against Seth – the Egyptian god of storms and disorder (the locusts are sent from the sky)
9. Darkness – Against Ra, the Egyptian sun god
10. Death of First Born – Against the Ultimate Power of Egypt: Pharaoh (Israelites were spared if they followed Passover instructions)

The Passover and the Exodus (Exodus 12-15)

1. By the Blood of the Lamb (12:13)

¹³The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

The Event Represents Salvation: Our relationship with God begins with salvation. Before he teaches us how to behave (10 Commandments), he saves us.

The Giving of the Law (*Exodus 19-20* Main Text)

The commands follow a particular formula:

Love God:

1. No other gods
2. No idols
3. No misuse of the name of the Lord
4. Remember the Sabbath

Bridge Command:

5. Honor father and mother.

Love Neighbor:

6. No murder
7. No adultery
8. No stealing
9. No false witnessing
10. No coveting

The Giving of the Law Represents Righteousness: It occurs after salvation, not before or without salvation. You can't teach an unsaved person how to live a righteous life that pleases God. Also, if you put righteousness before salvation, you have legalism. That's not what God intended. On the other hand, God doesn't save you to keep you where you are. He expects something of you.

The Giving of the Law Continued with Instructions for the Tabernacle (Exodus 33-40)

The Israelites couldn't build a temple to worship the Lord in their land because they weren't there yet. So God gave them instructions for building a portable temple: a tabernacle.

1. They Built it with Specific Colors (36:8)

⁸All those who were skilled among the workers made the tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, with cherubim woven into them by expert hands.

2. Why They Built It Other Than the Fact God Told Them To (40:34)

³⁴Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

The Tabernacle Represents Worship: Worship doesn't make sense if you are not saved. And worship won't happen if a saved person stops living for Jesus. You can't change the order of the paradigm either: salvation, righteousness, worship.