

EXODUS

INTRODUCTION

The book of Exodus records the beginning of the national life of Israel, the chosen people of God. Exodus covers the historical period from the death of Joseph to the setting up of the Tabernacle at Mount Sinai, 1450 B.C.

The main theme of this book is redemption. It shows God's faithfulness to the covenant he made with Abraham to make his descendants great and to give them a promised land.

Moses and the people remained at Sinai for a year to receive the Law and to learn their new institutional duties.

The Tabernacle symbolized God's presence among the people, and was the center of worship for the people.

According to Numbers 1:45-46, there were more than 600,000 fighting men. Add to that an equal number of women, plus children, and that would equal about 3,600,000 people exiting from Egyptian captivity. Remember, the Egyptians were afraid because the Israelites were multiplying so rapidly. (Exodus 1:7-10)

Exodus means a "going out" or a "going forth." (Exodus 19:1) Nearly all the foundation on which the Jewish life is built, the Ten Commandments, the historic festivals, the leading principles of civil law, are contained in the book of Exodus.

Moses is the author of the book of Exodus. He wrote the book of Exodus in about the year of 1450 B.C.

CHAPTER 1

Verses 1-14

The children of Israel settled in the land of Goshen, a broad valley stretching from the Nile River to the line of the present Suez Canal.

Taskmasters inflicted the Israelites with hard labor. (Exodus 1:11) This indicates a cruelty in the rulers of Egypt. The Egyptians hoped that the hard labor would hold down Israel's birth rate and weaken their ability and desire to resist. The bondage began to take the love of Egypt out of the Israelites. Egypt had been their only home for nearly four hundred years. They had to be weaned from Egypt.

As the cruelty increased, the Israelites were required to make more bricks and were to transport the bricks by unaided manpower.

Verses 15-22

Hard labor did not suppress Israel's growth, so the Egyptians asked the midwives to kill the male babies whenever they assisted a Hebrew woman in giving birth.

The fear of God caused the midwives to disobey Pharaoh. As a reward God made for the mid-wives households. They married Israelites and raised families.

CHAPTER 2

Verses 1-5

Moses' parents were his father Amram and his mother Jochebed. They were of the tribe of the Levites. When Moses was born he was hidden because all male Israelite babies were to be killed. His mother built a basket of reeds and placed Moses in the basket and hid him in the river.

Verses 6-10

Pharaoh's daughter came to the Nile River to bath and found Moses and took him to be her son, giving him a new name that means "son of the water."

Verses 11-15

Years later Moses killed one of the taskmasters who was beating a Hebrew and then fled to the land of Midian.

There were three forty-year periods in Moses' life.

1. In Egypt, as a prince.
2. In Midian, as a shepherd.
3. And in the wilderness, as a leader of Israel.

Verses 16-25

In Midian, Moses ate bread with Jethro. Eating bread means more than hospitality. It involved a personal pledge of friendship and protection.

Moses was given a wife named Zipporah. She was not loyal to Abraham's covenant to see that her son was circumcised so Moses sent her back to her father's house when he went back to Egypt to lead Israel out on their journey to the Promised Land.

CHAPTER 3

Verses 1-22

Moses was pasturing his father-in-law's flock on the west side of Mount Sinai when God appeared to him in a burning bush that was not consumed by fire.

God directed Moses to remove his sandals. This was a sign of reverence and humbleness before God. Moses was then instructed to return to Egypt and to lead the Israelites to the land of Canaan.

CHAPTER 4

Verses 1-31

Moses felt there was no reason why the Israelites should believe a long absent, sheep-herding fugitive, who had already failed in one attempt to deliver them.

Moses used the excuse that he was not an eloquent speaker, but it was a miserable excuse that God did not accept.

Moses became deathly sick, so sick that he could not arise from his bed. He had neglected to circumcise one of his sons. If he was to be the leader of Israel, and if a leader he had to first be a follower of God in his own house.

Zipporah took a sharp flint and circumcised her son and threw the foreskin at Moses' feet in abhorrence of the rite of circumcision.

Moses and Aaron met at Mount Sinai and the two went to the Israelites who believed the news of their deliverance and bowed their heads in worship.

CHAPTER 5

Verses 1-23

A conflict arose between God and the gods of Egypt. It took courage for Moses to go before Pharaoh and request permission to celebrate a feast to God in the wilderness. Israel had to go into the wilderness for the sacrifice because they would sacrifice animals sacred to the Egyptians.

The Egyptians could not tolerate idleness so it issued a new work-order causing the Hebrews to go find straw for making bricks. Being unable to fulfill the heavier work demands, the Hebrew "straw bosses" were beaten with sticks by the Egyptians because their crews did not make their daily quotas of bricks.

The Israelites felt that Moses had made them "odious in Pharaoh's sight." "Odious" means stink or smell meaning reputation or standing, and that Moses had put a sword in Pharaoh's hands to kill them.

CHAPTER 6

Verses 1-30

Chapter 6 records how God strengthened and reassured Moses after he became downcast because the people of Israel and Pharaoh had rejected him.

In verse 2 God said to Moses, "I am the Lord" and in verse 6 God said, "I will also redeem you." Redeem means, "to buy back something that has been forfeited or sold."

God chose Israel even though they were a stiff-necked rebellious people. This act of incredible grace took place officially at Mount Sinai.

CHAPTER 7

Verses 1-25

Chapter 7 records the battle that began between God and Pharaoh. The battle consists of ten plagues and God wins the battle. “Plague” is not just a disease or epidemic, but any event that afflicts, smites, troubles, or harasses. The plagues were to teach something, as well as to punish.

The purpose of the plagues was to force Pharaoh to let Israel go and to show that God was the Lord.

They also punished Pharaoh and the Egyptians for their mistreatment of Israel and executed judgment upon the gods of Egypt. In addition, these plagues strengthened Israel’s faith.

The moral significance of the plagues showed that God meant business and that God is certainly going to win in His conflict with Satan. Also, the plagues show that God will punish those who defy Him and refuse to receive the truth.

The plagues show that God will harden those who set themselves to defy Him and then punish them doubly.

The first plague performed in Pharaoh’s presence was Moses changing his rod into a serpent. (Verse 9)

In the Hebrew language, a serpent is *tannin*, meaning a large reptile, sea or river monster. Jewish commentators rendered it as “crocodile.” The Hebrews word for “snake” is *nahash*.

Pharaoh’s magicians duplicated Moses’ plague. That convinced Pharaoh that Moses had no power any different from those of the Egyptian magicians. However, Moses’ crocodile ate up the Egyptian crocodiles. Paul called these magicians James and Jambres in 2 Timothy 3:8.

The next plague was that Moses turned the Nile River to blood and the fish died. Drinking water was difficult to find. Even the streams, pools, and reservoirs became blood. Pharaoh’s magicians did the same with their secret arts.

The plagues seem to have covered a period of time lasting six months (October through March). The ten plagues were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. River to blood | 6. Boils |
| 2. Frogs | 7. Hail |
| 3. Lice (gnats) | 8. Locusts |
| 4. Flies | 9. Darkness |
| 5. Death of livestock | 10. Death of firstborn |

CHAPTER 8

Verses 1-32

Three more plagues, the frogs, the gnats, and swarms of insects (flies) are contained in chapter 8. Egypt regarded the frogs highly. Each September after the summer overflowing of the Nile River, frogs became numerous in the ponds of water. Their croaking was a reminder that their gods had done their duty again and another fruitful year was before them.

In Egyptian mythology the frog was the embodiment of life-giving power. The frog was the symbol of the goddess *Hekt* who was thought to blow the breath of life into the nostrils of the bodies of men that her husband *Khnum* fashioned on the potters-wheel from the dust of the earth.

The frogs were offensive to the clean Egyptians as they entered their homes, bedrooms, and kneading-bowls. They were everywhere. The popularity of the frog-goddess *Hekt* must have dropped to near zero after this plague. Pharaoh wanted them removed, but not until tomorrow.

Next Moses turned the dust of the earth into gnats. The magicians tried but could not duplicate this plague.

The next plague was a swarm of insects. Swarm in the Greek, *kunomia*, means a dog-fly or stable fly because of its presence in the stables. It has a sharp and painful bite that may cause inflammation. This plague brought Pharaoh to Moses with a compromise. This was one of four compromises all of which prevented Israel from leaving the land permanently.

1. Go sacrifice in the land of Egypt (8:25).
2. Go out of the land, but do not go far (8:28).
3. The men alone may go sacrifice (10:8, 11).
4. Everyone may go, but leave the flocks and herds in Egypt (10:24).

Israel could not sacrifice in Egypt because that would have been an abomination to the Egyptians and they would have stoned them. Also, God had said they were to go a three-day's journey out of the land.

CHAPTER 9

Verses 1-35

The next plague was that a severe pestilence would come upon the livestock that are in the fields. It did not kill Israel's cattle. The cow had a sacred association to the Egyptians because the goddess *Hathor* was pictured in the form of a cow.

God destroyed Egypt's cattle and its crops, which really cut off its food-supply and changed the people's comfort to economic disaster.

Moses then takes handfuls of soot from the kiln and threw it into the sky in the sight of Pharaoh causing sores or boils that became blisters, or running sores to break out on man and beast.

Hailstorms are rare in Egypt. Only those men and beasts that were sheltered would be saved from the hail. There was hail, thunder, and lightning like Egypt has never seen before, but no hail fell in Goshen.

Pharaoh was summoned, confessed his sin, and asked for prayer that the hail stop. The desperate Egyptians were in sorrow and fright. Their sky-goddess *Nut* could not protect them from hail. *Nut* is often pictured as a lankly nude female arching from horizon to horizon across the sky touching the ground with fingertips and toes.

The goddess *Isis* and the god *Seth* also were thought to have care over agricultural production, but they remained silent.

CHAPTER 10

Verses 1:29

Pharaoh had gone so far in disobedience that there was no opportunity for him to turn and change his ways.

The next plague was the locusts that would blanket the land eating up the vegetation left by the hail. This would grieve the Egyptians because they were fond of trees.

Locusts usually came into Egypt from the south, but God caused them to come from the east, Arabia. They covered the ground and ate everything. (Joel 2:9-10) A locust can eat its own weight daily. They can fly up to twenty hours continuously at ten to twelve miles per hour.

Pharaoh again summoned Moses and confessed that he had sinned and begged for forgiveness and to pray for God to remove the locusts. God caused a very strong wind to blow the locusts into the Red Sea.

The next plague was darkness, so dark that it could be felt. The Israelites had light while the Egyptians had darkness. Darkness was a direct attack on some of Egypt's main gods. *Ra*, the sun god, was the creator of gods and men; his emblem was the sun's disk. Pharaoh himself was thought to be the embodiment of that god.

Pharaoh ordered Moses to leave his presence and if he came back he would be killed. Before leaving Pharaoh's palace, Moses warned Pharaoh of the final plague, the death of all first-born of man and cattle.

Pharaoh had one opportunity after another to repent but his heart was hardened.

CHAPTER 11

God's last warning to Pharaoh was the death of Egypt's firstborn. Verse 1 says, "One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh." The word for "plague" in verse 1 is not used elsewhere in the book of Exodus. It means a "blow or striking." It was to be the final decisive blow.

This plague was to happen “about midnight.” In Egyptian mythology the sun god *Ra* was supposed to fight each night with *Apepi*, the monster serpent, and his army of fiends, who tried to overthrow *Ra*. *Ra* always conquered and thus the sun rose day after day in the sky.

The occurrence of the death of the firstborn at night might have made some Egyptians sense that God could enter the nighttime arena of combat with Egypt’s gods, and so utterly overwhelm them that it was evident that they never had existed at all.

CHAPTER 12

Verses 1-51

The first of the three major Jewish feasts, the Passover, was instituted in Egypt. The month of the Passover then became the first month of the Israelites’ religious year because the Passover was the occasion of Israel’s liberation from Egypt.

Each family was to select its own lamb on the tenth day of the month. This directed the people’s mind toward the coming feast and stimulated the people to do the necessary jobs in preparation for the coming feast of departure.

The first use of the term “congregation” appears in verse 3. Though there were many families in Israel, they were all one congregation.

The lamb was to be without blemish, having no sores, scars, or deformities. The lamb was to be representatively killed by the whole congregation, in that way all were involved in its death. The lamb was killed about sunset.

(Deuteronomy 16:6) The blood of the lamb was to be placed on the doorposts and on the lintel of the house in which they went to eat the Passover lamb.

Blood on the doorposts and the use of hyssop suggests cleansing and putting out of uncleanness. This was to distinguish the difference between the people of Israel and Egypt.

Unleavened bread is bread made without yeast and would be flat, unraised, and probably pancake shaped. The feast was to be eaten in haste and their clothes were to be packed up ready for travel.

About midnight God performed His judgment against all the gods of Egypt. God passed over the land and death came to the first-born in all of Egypt. In verse 13, the blood was a sign of faith, a sign of sacrifice, a sign of obedience, and a sign for deliverance.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed the Passover during the seven days after the Passover. No leaven of any sort was to be tolerated in the Israelites' houses. Failure to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be punished by being cut off from the congregation of Israel.

While the Israelites traveled from Rameses to Succoth, a distance of thirty-eight miles or three days travel, the Egyptians were burying their dead. Six hundred three thousand, five hundred and fifty men, plus twenty-two thousand Levites, women and children left Egypt along with a mixed multitude of Egyptians who would later become a thorn in the flesh for Israel.

CHAPTER 13

Verses 1-22

This chapter contains the demands and directions to the redeemed. God demanded that all the firstborn be sanctified unto Him. They were regarded as holy and kept for holy use. They were to be dedicated to full-time labor at the tabernacle in administering the sacred services.

God did not direct the Israelites by the shortest route to Canaan because they were not yet ready for war nor were they spiritually prepared to occupy the land of Canaan.

They had to be converted from the idolatry of Egypt and converted to the service of God. They were to be transferred from slaves to spiritual leaders. The Sinai Desert became a demonstration area and a school where they could see God's power and care, and learn to rely totally upon Him.

Verse 18 says that the Israelites left Egypt armed with weapons of war.

A pillar of cloud led the Israelites during the day and a pillar of fire by night. The rising cloud was a signal for the people to prepare to move. Its descent towards the ground was the signal to stop and make camp.

The pillar of fire gave light to the people by night. The same pillar of fire that gave light to Israel was darkness to the Egyptians.

CHAPTER 14

Verses 1-31

Chapter 14 tells of Israel's miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and the destruction of the Egyptians who pursued them. Until the crossing of the Red Sea, Israel was in Egyptian territory and in danger from Egypt.

God told Moses to go towards the sea. They were to camp in a vulnerable place appearing as if wandering aimlessly.

When Pharaoh heard of the Israelites' position he prepared his chariots, taking six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt, horses and horsemen, and an army and pursued Israel.

Israel was in great fear when they saw the Egyptians approaching. In verses 13-14 God told the people to "stand by and see the salvation of the Lord." Then in verses 15-16 God told the people of Israel, "To go forward."

The sea was divided by Moses' rod, the Lord, and a strong east wind that blew all night and made the sea before the Israelites to be dry land. In verse 25, the Egyptians learned, "The Lord is fighting for them." This was the last word from the Egyptians before God destroyed them in the sea.

CHAPTER 15

Chapter 15 contains the song of Moses and the children of Israel declaring the greatness of God in bringing Israel across the Red Sea. Israel left the Red Sea and entered the Wilderness of Shur traveling thirty-seven miles to Marah where they found a spring of bitter water with laxative qualities. God sweetened the water by casting a tree into it. Moving on to Elim they camped by the waters of twelve springs in an area graced by seventy palm trees.

CHAPTER 16

Verses 1-36

Chapter 16 deals with God giving the manna to the Israelites, the bread from heaven. In the wilderness of Sin, Israel complained because of a lack of food. They accused Moses of bringing them into the wilderness to die of starvation.

God rained bread from heaven upon them. A day's portion of manna was to be gathered on each day and in the evening He provided them with quail. The manna could not be stored up. On the sixth day the manna was twice as plentiful because no manna appeared on the Sabbath. "Sabbath" means seventh day. It is a word derived from the Hebrew word *shabath*, meaning to cease or to rest.

CHAPTER 17

Chapter 17 deals with the giving of water from the rock for Israel and Israel's battle with Amalek. The Israelites had no water and they demanded that Moses give them water. In verse 2 they test God by saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?" (1 Corinthians 10:4) Christ provided the stream of water because He was the spiritual rock.

The hostile tribe, the Amalekites, fought Israel at Rephidim. Amalek was a grandson of Esau who killed the stragglers at the rear of the column when they were weary and faint.

Moses sent Joshua to fight the Amalekites while he went to the top of a hill where Aaron and Hur held his arms uplifted. The battle lasted all day but Israel prevailed using the weapons they took with them while leaving Egypt.

God told Moses that He would blot out the memory of the Amalekites forever and we read no more of them after 696 B.C.

CHAPTER 18

Verses 1-27

Chapter 18 tells of the coming of Jethro with Moses' wife and sons to Moses and of Moses' appointment of judges to help him govern the people. Moses was

to appoint at Mount Sinai seventy men who were able, God fearing, men of truth, and men who hated bribes, to help him.

CHAPTER 19

Verses 1-25

Chapter 19 deals with the things that occurred just before the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai.

Three months after leaving Egypt, Israel arrived at Mount Sinai where God called Moses to come up to Him on the mountain.

In verse 4 God says to Moses, "I bore you on eagle's wings." This is a description of the strong and loving care of God. Israel was to keep God's covenant and to become a covenant people.

God as a ruler makes certain promises and then demands particular acts of obedience. God said He would propose three things to the Israelites if they would keep His covenants: My own possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. (Verses 5-6) This same proposal is made to Christians today. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

At the blowing of the trumpets Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God and they stood at the lower part of the mountain because God had forbid them or their cattle to come upon the mountain.

There was thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, and the sound of a trumpet when God descended on the mount.

In all, Moses made seven trips up the mountain to be before God. (Exodus 19:3, 20, 21, 24; 24:9, 13; 32:30-31; 34:4)

CHAPTER 20

Verses 1-26

God communicated the Ten Commandments, through angels. (Acts 7:53, Galatians 3:19, Deuteronomy 33:2)

In verse 3 God is saying, “You shall have no other gods before Me.” God will not tolerate recognition of any god except Himself. Graven images are any image carved from wood, stone, or any such material.

Taking the Lord’s name in vain consists of using God’s name to back up a lie. The word “lies” is the same Hebrew word as “vain.” *shav*.

It also means to use God’s name in an idle, useless, flippant, irreverent utterance. (Malachi 3:14) “In vain” also means to use God’s name for any wicked purpose, in defiance, or blasphemy. (Psalm 139:20)

“Remember the “Sabbath Day” means to observe it faithfully.

Parents were to be honored, not cursed or struck but to be shown respect and obeyed and even cared for in their advanced years.

“Thou shall not murder” forbids murder, manslaughter, and suicide. The Hebrew word *ratsah* translated “kill” refers to murder and manslaughter. “Thou shall not murder” does not forbid capital punishment when authorized judges following God’s instructions administer the punishment. (Romans 13:3-4) Neither does it forbid war. God Himself frequently instituted wars.

The Ten Commandments are individual laws and laws concerning capital punishment are social or national laws.

Adultery is sexual relations between a man and a married woman other than his wife or a betrothed woman. The word adultery also deals with other types of sexual offenses such as bestiality, homosexuality (sodomy), incest, and rape.

“Thou shall not steal” is every unlawful acquisition of property by violence, cheating, embezzlement, forgery, and is forbidden.

“Bearing false witness,” means lying in court, or perjury. It also means lying in daily conversations, the flattery of a false tongue, and even tattling and unfounded unkind gossip.

“Coveting,” means to desire. Sin begins with wrong thoughts and wrong desires.

The command not to make any gods of silver or gold was necessary because Israel was about to encounter many pagan peoples of that region. They all had

their own religions, idols, altars, and temples. Israel might pick up these practices and corrupt her own true worship.

CHAPTER 21

Verses 1-36

Chapter 21 contains some of the ordinances of God concerning slaves, crimes requiring the death penalty, offenses involving injuries, and property losses.

Some people try to say that the Ten Commandments are the permanent Moral Law and that this was not done away with, as were the ceremonial laws when Christ died on the cross. This verse (verse 1) says there is no division of the law.

CHAPTER 22

Verses 1-31

Chapter 22 continues God's covenant ordinances dealing with the punishment of thieves, damage to field produce, and goods left in care of a non-owner.

In verse 18 we read, "You shall not allow a sorceress to live." Sorceresses or witches were not allowed to live. Witchcraft has always been a forbidden practice for the people of God.

Verses 29-30 say the first fruits and the first-born were to be given to the Lord. Giving five shekels of silver to the Lord could redeem the first-born. The first-born animal was left with its mother for seven days then on the eighth day, it was offered as a sacrifice.

The reason God gave these ordinances was that the Israelites were to be holy people. They were not to eat of the flesh of an animal that had been killed or torn-up in the field. This law may have been given because it is difficult to properly drain the blood from the animal while in the field.

CHAPTER 23

Verses 1-33

Chapter 23 deals with three main themes: justice and goodness for all men, the sacred seasons and feasts, and conquering the Canaanites. The Israelites

were to promote justice. Justice favors neither the poor nor the rich, nor does it disfavor either the poor or the rich.

All male Israelites were required to come before the Lord for three feasts each year. Though not required, women and children often went with the men to the feasts.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was a seven-day observance following the Passover.

The Feast of Harvest (Pentecost) was also called the feast of weeks. It came fifty days after the first grain was harvested. It was a harvest feast of dedication and thanks to God.

The Feast of Ingathering (Booths or Tabernacles) occurred in late September. This feast commemorated the end of the harvesting of the olives and the grapes. The Israelites lived in booths to remind them year by year of their wilderness wandering experiences.

The goat kids were not to be cooked in the milk of their mother because it was a Canaanite religious practice in which the kid was boiled in its mother's milk. This practice was included in the rituals at Ugarit, when such a dish was prepared at festal ceremonies pertaining to the fertility of the soil.

In verses 25-26 God said He would bless Israel if Israel would serve Him. He would bless their bread, their water, and their health. Their bread would be their grain harvest. The water would be the needed rainfall. He promised to protect the Israelites from sickness.

God would help Israel to conquer Canaan by sending a "terror" (hornets) that would throw Canaan into confusion and cause them to flee. The word "hornet" is singular and seems to have a figurative meaning referring to anything which helped Israel to be victorious like a psychological terror, storms, or such. Joshua 24:12 reads that God did send the "hornet."

Israel was to make no covenant with Canaan or with their gods because their gods would cause Israel to sin against God and be a snare. Israel did fall into this snare. (Psalm 106:36-37)

CHAPTER 24

Verses 1-18

Chapter 24 deals with the call to Israel's representatives to come up to God. This indicates the achievement of direct fellowship with God. This chapter tells of the fulfillment of the promise God made to take Israel as His special people—a holy nation.

Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy men from the elders of Israel were summoned to come and worship at a distance. The people's response after Moses returned and told them of God's words and ordinances were, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do." In less than forty days the golden calf was made.

In verse 8, Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar (an act of reaching out for God's acceptance). Moses read to the people the entire book of the covenant that he had written. After reading, Moses sprinkled the blood upon the people (or in the direction of the people). He also sprinkled the book.

The blood was used in ratifying the covenant for four reasons.

1. The blood was a means of enactment. For a will (or testament, or covenant) to be in force, a death must have occurred. The offering of blood is possible only when a death occurred.
2. Blood has always been used in connection with the forgiveness of sins. Without the shedding of blood Israel could not have been accepted as a people.
3. Also blood served as a visual warning to the people that they must keep the terms of the covenant or face death.
4. The blood functioned also as a means of bringing unity between God and Israel.

The Law of Moses was never given as a means for justifying men from sin. It only pointed out sin, with the goal of curbing the practice of sin.

CHAPTER 25

Verses 1-40

Moses was before God for forty days and nights receiving information about the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the covenants.

The Tabernacle was a beautiful place of worship made by the children of Israel in the days of Moses. It was a sanctuary, a holy place set apart for God. God showed His presence at the tabernacle, and there received the worship of the people. It was a portable house of worship.

Verse 8 tells us the purpose for the sanctuary was that God might dwell among the Israelites. The rest of the chapter tells us how God wanted the tabernacle built and how He wanted it equipped.

CHAPTER 26

Verses 1-37

Chapter 26 contains God's instructions to Moses about how to make the enclosings of the tabernacle, the curtains and coverings over it, the boards and its walls.

The instructions also concerned the veil that separated the two rooms, and the screen that closed the entrance.

CHAPTER 27

Verses 1-21

Chapter 27 gives the instructions for making the altar of burnt offering, and the making the pillars and hangings around the courtyard of the tabernacle.

Horns were to be placed on the corners of the altar as a symbol of power and strength. The horns indicate the power in the blood atonement—power to remove condemnation and power to cleanse the life of the transgressor.

CHAPTER 28

Verses 1-43

Chapter 28 deals with the garments of the high priest and the other priests.

Until this time the priestly function had been conducted by the head of each family or tribe. Priestly duties are now assigned as to how to burn incense, offer daily sacrifices, bless the people, the blowing of the silver trumpets, testing for adultery, and the teaching of the people.

The breastplate of the priest contained the Urim and Thummin that functioned as a means of discerning facts about the will of God not otherwise knowable.

CHAPTER 29

Verses 1-46

Chapter 29 deals with the consecration of Aaron, the high priest, and his sons as ordinary priests. A number of items were used in the priest's consecration.

1. A young bull for a sin offering. (Verse 10)
2. Two rams, one for a burnt offering and the other for the ram of consecration. (Verse 22)
3. Unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil. (Verse 32)

CHAPTER 30

Verses 1-38

Chapter 30 contains a mixture of subjects: the incense altar, the atonement money, the laver, the anointing oil, and the incense formula.

The incense oil symbolized prayer. Incense functioned also as a sort of a sacrifice. The fact that it was offered on an altar suggests the sacrificial quality in prayer.

CHAPTER 31

Verses 1-18

Chapter 31 tells of God's calling the skilled workmen to make the tabernacle and its furniture. Then it commands the keeping of the Sabbath and closes with God giving the Ten Commandments on the stone tablets to Moses.

CHAPTER 32

Verses 1-35

Chapter 32 contains the familiar story of the making of the golden calf, God's anger, and Moses breaking the tablets of stone. The people requested that Aaron make them a "god" that would go before them. When it was finished they were very excited. "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

Rising up early the next morning they "broke loose." They offered burnt and peace offerings, then they sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play. The "play" included singing and dancing, laughter, probably loud and up roaring. The Hebrew word translated "play" *tsachaq* means to laugh, jest, mock, or make sport of. *tsachaq* does not refer to sex acts.

God was angry enough to destroy them. He referred to them as "Moses' people," for at that moment He disowned them and threatened to consume them with fire. Moses refused to leave God alone until he received a blessing from God. God then placed the fate of the whole nation into the hands of Moses.

In verse 14 God changed His mind about the anger He had when the Israelites worshiped the golden calf. The King James Version of the Bible says that God "repented." The Hebrew word translated "repent" *nacham* most often means to have compassion, to pity, to be comforted, to console. God was totally just in being angry over Israel's idolatry. God would be unworthy of our worship if He did not abhor evil. God left the door open for Moses' intercession.

Moses destroyed the golden calf by grinding it to powder, placed it in the Israelites drinking water and made them drink it.

Moses instructed the Levites to put on their sword and go through the camp slaying people. About 3000 died that day. The command to slay was a drastic test of faith for the Levites, but the punishment was just.

CHAPTER 33

Verses 1-23

Chapter 33 deals with the tense period between Moses' prayer for Israel and God's acceptance of Israel. God's wrath had been softened by Moses' intercession. God was now allowing them to go towards the Promised Land but He was not going up with them lest He consume them.

Moses pitches his tent outside some distance away from the camp. A pillar of cloud over the tent of meeting indicated God's presence.

CHAPTER 34

Verses 1-35

Chapter 34 tells of God's making a covenant anew with Moses and Israel. The broken tablets of the Ten Commandments were replaced. When Moses came down the mountain to the people with God's covenants, his face was glowing. Moses veiled his face after uttering God's word to the people.

CHAPTERS 35-39

Chapters 35-39 repeat the material already given in chapters 25-31, almost word for word. The earlier chapters gave God's instructions as to how to build the tabernacle. These chapters tell how it was built following God's instructions.

CHAPTER 40

Verses 1-38

Chapter 40 deals with the setting up of the tabernacle. It tells of God's commands about how it was to be set up and tells of Moses' compliance.