

The Pentateuch

Lesson 11

An Overview of Exodus

Lesson Guide



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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON GUIDE

This lesson guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video. If you do not have access to the video, the lesson guide will also work with the audio and/or manuscript versions of the lesson. Additionally, the video and lesson guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule viewing** — The Notes section of the lesson guide has been divided into segments that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Take notes** — The Notes section of the lesson guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each segment and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Notes

I. Introduction (0:20)

II. Initial Considerations (1:37)

A. Authorship (2:33)

Exodus repeatedly claims that God revealed much of it directly to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Most critical scholars have rejected Moses' authorship.

Evangelicals believe that Moses was the "fundamental," "real," or "essential" author of Exodus.

Moses likely employed "amanuenses" or scribes to write the book under his direction.

B. Occasion (6:56)

Exodus was completed while Israel was encamped on the border of the Promised Land (Exodus 16:35; 40:38).

C. Original Meaning (8:46)

The book of Exodus is:

- doxological – it led Israel to worship God.
- theological – it explains truths about God.
- political – it shaped the nation of Israel.
- polemical – it opposes false views.
- moral – it defines obedience to God.
- motivational – it encourages loyalty to God and discourages disloyalty.

The book of Exodus vindicated Moses' divinely-ordained authority over the first generation of the exodus to direct the second generation to acknowledge Moses' abiding authority over their lives.

Exodus was written *about* the first generation of the exodus (“that world”), but *for* the second generation of the exodus (“their world”).

- Moses wrote Exodus primarily for the leaders of Israel.
- Most of Moses' attention to “their world” remained implicit, but he still wrote with the second generation in mind (Exodus 16:35; 40:38; 6:13-27).

Everything Exodus said about the first generation was written to *direct* the second generation.

Moses made connections between his original audience and their forebears:

1. **Backgrounds (13:43)**

Passages that focused on the historical roots of the Israelites' privileges and responsibilities (Exodus 3:8, 20:1-17).

2. **Models (14:52)**

Historical models for the Israelites to emulate or reject:

- negative models (Exodus 15:24; 16:2-12; 17:3)
- positive models (Exodus 36:8-38)
- mixed models (Exodus 7:8-13; 32:1-35)

3. **Foreshadows (16:43)**

Past events described in ways that almost perfectly matched the experiences of Moses' original audience.

- Israel's military arrangement (Exodus 13:18)
- Presence of God (Exodus 40:34-38)

Exodus was written to vindicate Moses' divinely-ordained and abiding authority over his second-generation audience.

Two ways Exodus emphasizes Moses' authority over Israel:

- Everything that happens in the book is somehow explicitly tied to Moses.

- The book of Exodus repeatedly highlights Moses' authority over Israel:
 - Israelites questioned Moses' authority (Exodus 2:14; 5:21; 15:24; 16:2-3; 17:2).

 - Israelites acknowledged Moses' authority (Exodus 4:31; 14:31; 20:19).

 - God ordained Moses as Israel's leader (Exodus 6:1-8, 10-13; 24:2; 34:1-4; 19:9).

D. Modern Application (25:23)

Exodus is referred to in the New Testament approximately 240 times (e.g., 1 Corinthians 10:1-5).

The book of Exodus is relevant for modern Christians for its examples and warnings for us (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Christians now live in the time when God's plan for history is reaching its end or goal ("τέλος") in Christ.

The eschatological age, or the last days in Christ, unfolds in three stages:

- Inauguration – Christ's life and earthly ministry.
- Continuation – Living in union with Christ throughout church history.
- Consummation – Christ's glorious return; the new heavens and new earth.

We should apply every theme in Exodus in light of these three stages.

- Covenant – Christians enter into the new covenant in Christ.
 - Began with Christ's first advent
 - Continues now
 - Will be completed at Christ's second advent
- God's presence – God's presence is even greater in Christ.
 - Jesus dwelt among us in the inauguration of his kingdom.
 - The Holy Spirit now dwells in individual believers and corporately in the church.
 - God's glory will fill everything in the new creation.

- God's enemies – Christ has defeated sin and death.
 - Christ began the defeat as God's mighty warrior in his first advent.
 - The church follows Christ as his army in spiritual warfare.
 - When he returns, Christ will complete his great cosmic war against God's enemies.

- Inheritance – Christians gain their inheritance in Christ.
 - Christ secured his inheritance in the inauguration of his kingdom.
 - Christians continue to enjoy the down-payment of our inheritance in the Holy Spirit.
 - When Christ returns, he (and we in him) will inherit all things.

III. Structure & Content (32:37)

A. Deliverance from Egypt (33:23)

1. Before Deliverance (34:00)

a. Birth and Upbringing, 1:1–2:10

Moses spent his youth in the courts of Egypt.

Pharaoh's daughter foiled her father's plan by rescuing Moses from the Nile.

Pharaoh's daughter chose the name "Moses" because it sounded like the Hebrew verb "*mashah*" ("to draw out").

b. Rise to Leadership, 2:11–4:31

The Israelites questioned Moses' authority over them (Exodus 2:14).

Chiastic structure of Moses' rise to leadership:

- Flight from Egypt (2:11-15)

Moses fled from Egypt because he had killed an Egyptian in defense of an Israelite slave.

- Joined Midianite Family (2:16-22)

Moses joined a Midianite family, but never lost sight of his true Israelite identity.

- Remembrance of Covenant (2:23-25)

God responded to the Israelites' by remembering his promise to Israel's patriarchs.

- Commission to Moses (3:1–4:17)

God called Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

- Departure from Midianite Family (4:18-26)

God responded with mercy when Moses failed him.

- Moses' Return to Egypt (4:27-31)

The Israelites believed and worshiped God because he had sent them Moses.

2. During Deliverance (40:29)

a. In Egypt, 5:1–13:16

Pattern of two episodes involving Moses' leadership:

- First sequence (5:1–6:8):
 - Israel's rejection of Moses for provoking Pharaoh against them
 - Moses' lament
 - God's reassurance of Moses' call to lead Israel
- Second sequence (6:9–27):
 - Israel's rejection of Moses
 - Moses' lament
 - God's reassurance in the form of a genealogy from Levi to Phineas

Moses played a crucial role in God's supernatural acts of judgment against the Egyptians (6:28–13:16):

- Introductory judgment (6:28–7:13)
 - Snakes

- First Series (7:14–8:19)
 - blood
 - frogs
 - gnats

- Second Series (8:20–9:12)
 - flies
 - livestock
 - boils

- Third Series (9:13–10:29)
 - hail
 - locusts
 - darkness

- Last judgment (11:1–13:16)
 - Passover

After God killed every firstborn son in Egypt, Pharaoh finally agreed to let Israel go.

b. In the March, 13:17–18:27

- at the Sea (13:17–15:21)

Moses' authority was vindicated after Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry land (Exodus 14:31).

- desert of Shur (15:22-27)

God provided water to the grumbling Israelites through Moses.

- desert of Sin (16:1-36)

God vindicated Moses by granting Israel quail and manna in response to their complaints about food.

- Rephidim (17:1–18:27)

Israel tested God with their grumbling (17:1-7).

God cursed the Amalekites (17:8-16).

Jethro came in peace and was blessed by God (18:1-27).

B. Preparation for Canaan (50:35)**1. Israel's Covenant (51:37)****a. Initiation of covenant, 19:1-8a**

God had shown benevolence; he required Israel's loyalty; they would be blessed if they obeyed.

b. Israel's trust in Moses, 19:8b–20:20

God promised his special favor to Moses so the Israelites would always trust him (19:9).

Pattern of God's fulfillment of this promise:

- First series (19:10-19)
 - God's instruction for Moses to prepare Israel
 - Moses' obedience to God's instruction
 - God's theophany (the glorious, visible and audible manifestation of his presence)

- Second series (19:20–20:17)
 - God's instruction for Moses to prepare Israel
 - Moses' obedience to God's instruction
 - God's theophany (God spoke the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai)

God's promise to Moses was fulfilled (20:18-20).

c. Moses' covenant law, 20:21–23:33

God himself commanded Moses to deliver the law to Israel.

- Laws for worship (20:21 – 26)
- Book of the Covenant (21:1 – 23:33)

God's twofold covenant law:

- Ten Commandments: statutory laws or general legal principles.
- Book of the Covenant: legal precedents for Israel's judges ("hammishpatim").

d. Ratification of covenant, 24:1-11

Israel repeated their commitment to do all that God commanded (24:3, 7).

Israel's leaders enjoyed peace and harmony with God when they ascended Mt. Sinai.

2. Israel's Tabernacle (1:01:21)

a. Instructions for tabernacle, 24:12–31:18

- call to receive stone tablets (24:12-18)

- specific instructions (25:1–31:17)
 - furnishings and architecture
 - personnel and practices
 - weekly Sabbath

- reception of stone tablets (31:18)

These directives were also "a lasting ordinance" for future generations (27:21; 28:43; 29:9, 42; 30:21, 31:16).

b. Failure and renewal, 32:1–34:35

- breaking covenant (32:1-35)

- threat of God's absence (33:1-23)

- covenant renewal (34:1-35)

c. Completion of tabernacle, 35:1–40:38

- weekly Sabbath (35:1-3)
- commission to build and operate (35:4–39:43)
- building of the tabernacle (40:1-33)
- God's blessing (40:34-38)

The final scene (40:36-38) encouraged the original audience to submit to Moses by observing all the protocols of God's tabernacle, so that they would receive blessing.

IV. Major Themes (1:11:05)

The book of Exodus is the first book to explicitly refer to God as king (15:18).

A. Covenant Keeper (1:14:10)

Exodus portrays God as the one who "remembered his covenant" (2:24).

Whenever the Scriptures mention God and his covenants, they implicitly focus on him as Israel's divine king.

God identified himself to Israel by his covenant name (3:14-15):

- "I AM WHO I AM"; "I AM"; "the Lord" – variations of the Hebrew verb "*hayah*" ("to be").
- "The Lord" – translates the four-letter Hebrew name of God "YHWH" (the divine "tetragrammaton") or "*Yahweh*."

These names directly pointed to the fact that God was causing his covenant promises to be.

Moses wanted to remind his audience that God was fulfilling his promises in their day.

God keeps the covenants he made with Israel's patriarchs in our past, present and future as well:

- Inauguration – fulfillment began in Christ's first advent (Luke 1:68-73).
- Continuation – we must continue to trust God and his promises (Galatians 3:15-18).
- Consummation – we will receive a glorious eternal reward in fulfillment of God's promises (Romans 4:13).

B. Victorious Warrior (1:22:21)

Divine and human kingship were commonly linked to victory in war.

1. In Egypt (1:23:00)

God's miraculous judgments against Egypt displayed his victory as Israel's royal warrior (12:12).

Yahweh's judgments against Pharaoh and the Egyptians brought victory over one or more of Egypt's false gods.

2. In the March (1:27:11)

God led Israel through hardships on the way to Mount Sinai as their royal warrior (15:3-4; 5:11).

Yahweh's victory over Pharaoh and his false gods gave the second-generation audience confidence.

Modern Christians can reflect on what the New Testament teaches about Christ as our victorious warrior:

- Inauguration – Jesus defeated Satan and offered reconciliation with God (Matthew 12:28-29; John 12:31; Colossians 2:15).
- Continuation – we are to imitate Christ, defeating evil and offering reconciliation with God (1 Corinthians 15:25; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22).
- Consummation – when Christ, the divine royal warrior, returns, his offer of reconciliation will end (2 Thessalonians 1:6-7; Hebrews 10:27; 2 Peter 3:7).

C. **Covenant Lawgiver (1:32:19)**

In the ancient Near East, people believed that both human and divine kings revealed their wisdom through the laws they gave.

Three main uses of the law in the Protestant tradition:

- Pedagogical use (*usus pedagogicus*) – to expose sin and drive human beings to Christ for salvation (Galatians 3:23-26; Romans 3:20; 5:20-21).
- Civic use (*usus civilis*) – to restrain society under threat of God's punishment.
- Normative use (*usus normativus* or *usus didacticus*) – to instruct those already under God's grace (Exodus 19:4, 5-6; 20:2; 24:1-11).

The gracious and beneficial character of God's law in the past alerted the original audience to their need to follow God's law in their own time.

Modern Christians should view God's laws as his gracious, beneficial gift:

- Inauguration – Jesus gave the church new revelations to help us apply Moses' law to our age (Matthew 5:17; Romans 8:4; Hebrews 8:10).
- Continuation – we must apply the law in light of God's revelation in Christ.
- Consummation – we will obey the perfect law of God in the new creation.

D. Present Warrior (1:39:31)

- Israel's tabernacle

Events surrounding the tabernacle emphasized God's presence with his people.

God's "face" ("*panim*") signifies his special, intense, attentive, and often visible presence with his people (Exodus 33:14).

Although God is omnipresent, his special presence resided near and in the tabernacle.

- Failure and renewal

God threatened to remove his special presence from his people (Exodus 32:1–34:35).

Moses asked God not to send Israel ahead without his presence (Exodus 33:15-16; 33:17; 40:38).

The New Testament emphasizes God's special kingly presence for Christ's followers:

- Inauguration – Christ himself was the supernatural royal presence of God with his people (Matthew 18:20; John 2:19-21; John 1:14).
- Continuation – the Holy Spirit indwells his church and guarantees us of God's guidance and victory day by day (Acts 2:17; Romans 5:5).
- Consummation – the entire creation will be filled with the visible glory of our present warrior king (Revelation 21:3).

V. Conclusion (1:47:58)

3. What was the purpose of the book of Exodus? What impact would Exodus have had on Moses' original audience?

4. The fact that New Testament authors often referred to the book of Exodus reminds us that the book is relevant for followers of Christ. How does the book of Exodus provide guidance for our lives today?

9. As the covenant lawgiver, the law God gave through Moses was a gift to his people. According to Protestant tradition, explain what is meant by the normative or instructive use of the law, and describe how God's commands were used primarily to guide Israel toward his blessings.

10. God promised to be present with his people. How and where was his presence displayed? What caused God to threaten to remove his presence, and how did Moses respond?

Application Questions

1. What relevance does God's covenant with Moses have for your life and ministry today?
2. Just as God fulfilled his promise to deliver the Israelites, he has fulfilled his promise to deliver us through Jesus' first coming. How does this encourage you while you are living in the continuation of the kingdom, yet still looking ahead to the final consummation?
3. God will fully defeat his enemies when Jesus returns in judgment. But until that time, how should we respond to injustice? How should we treat our enemies?
4. When Jesus returns, the time for the reconciliation of sinners to God will end. What impact should this have on the way we evangelize?
5. We learn in Exodus that God's laws are his gracious gift to his people. Is it easy or difficult for you to consider God's laws as gracious blessings? Explain your answer.
6. In the new heavens and new earth, we will fully obey God's laws. What hope can you take from this, and what hope can you provide those to whom you minister?
7. God has promised to be present with his people always. Have there been times in your life that you have powerfully experienced the presence of God through his Spirit? If so, explain.
8. We all experience times when it can be difficult to feel God's presence. How might Exodus provide encouragement for you in these low times? How can you minister to others who are experiencing similar difficulties?
9. In the new heavens and new earth, we will experience the fullness of God's presence for all eternity. What do you think this will be like? What experiences in the new heavens and new earth do you look forward to the most?
10. What is the most significant thing you learned in this lesson?

Glossary

adumbrate – Another word for "foreshadow" or "prefigure," used to describe how earlier persons, things, and events foreshadow later persons, things and events

Book of the Covenant – A collection of laws found in Exodus 20:18–23:33 that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai

chiasm – Literary structure in which sections before and after a centerpiece parallel or balance each other

Code of Hammurabi – Ancient Babylonian law code dating to around 1754 B.C.

eschatological – Having to do with the study or doctrine of the last days

ger sham – Hebrew term (transliteration) meaning "a sojourner there"

hammishpatim – Hebrew term (transliteration) meaning legal judgments or case laws

hayah – Hebrew word (transliteration) meaning "to be" or "causes to be"; root of the terms "I am," "I am that I am," and "Lord"

mashah – Hebrew term (transliteration) meaning to draw out; sounds like the name Moses

Moses – Old Testament prophet and deliverer who led the Israelites out of Egypt; man with whom God made a national "covenant of law" and who administered the Ten Commandments and the Book of the Covenant to the Israelites; also appeared with Elijah at Jesus' transfiguration

Sinai – Mountain where God made a covenant with Israel in the time of Moses and gave them the Ten Commandments

suzerain-vassal treaty – A covenant arrangement made between a conquering emperor and a lesser ruler

tetragrammaton – The four-letter Hebrew name for God, "YHWH"

that world – The world that biblical authors wrote about

their world – The world of Scripture's original audience

usus civilis – The civic or political use of the law to restrain sin in society under threat of God's punishment

usus didacticus – The didactic use of the law as the norm or standard to instruct those who are already under God's grace how to live a more ethical life; the "third use of the law" (also called *usus normativus* or the "normative use")

usus normativus – The normative use of the law as the norm or standard to instruct those who are already under God's grace how to live a more ethical life; the "third use of the law" (also called *usus didacticus* or the "didactic use")

usus pedagogicus – The pedagogical (instructive) use of the law to expose sin and drive people to Christ for salvation

Yahweh – Hebrew name for God that comes from the phrase, "I am that I am"; often translated "LORD"