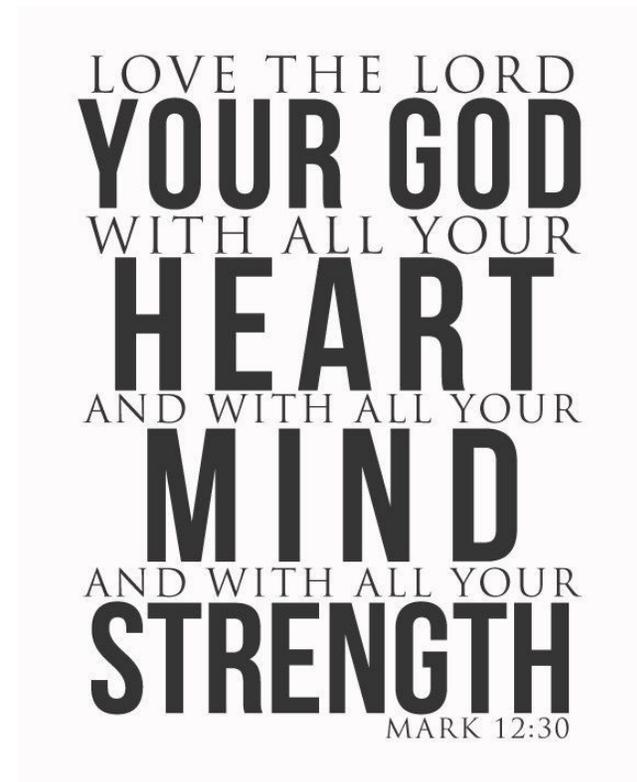
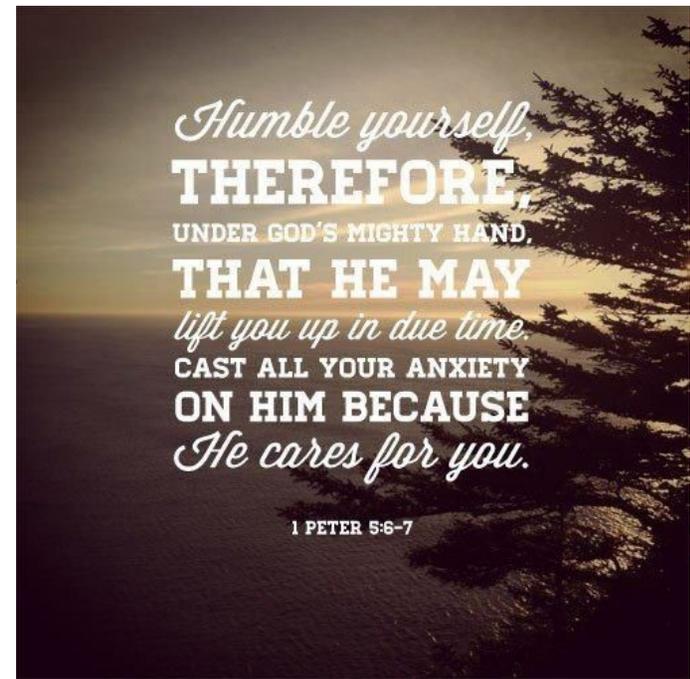




EX
OD
US



December 2019-February 2020





MEMORY VERSE

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Hebrews 11:23-29

ESV

This Quarter's Focus

EXODUS

This quarter we are studying the second book of the Bible: Exodus. The book of Exodus contains some very memorable events/stories of the Bible—the ten plagues, the Red Sea, the ten commandments, etc. There are some major themes this book teaches us—redemption, judgment, the importance of the law, idolatry, hope. Exodus introduces us to Moses—an incredible man of immense faith and character. While the book continues God's story, and sets up further events to be described in the Bible, Exodus is a rich study on the nature and heart of God—a God who draws us out to draw us in.

Tips to make the most of daily devotionals—

- Set a regular time and place for your family to study together
- **MAKE TIME!** Schedules change. Interruptions happen. Make time every day to spend time in the word—just like exercise
- Read the text together (have your children read if they are able)
- Make it interactive! Discuss the reading. Ask questions. Sing songs. Create scenarios. Investigate tough questions together.
- Draw out application for their daily life. Help them see how to make it real for today's living.
- End each devotion with a moment of prayer

As you read and study as a family, try to look at this text with fresh eyes. Enjoy the journey to (and out of) Egypt as you travel with Moses through the Exodus.

- Jordan

Thursday November 28th

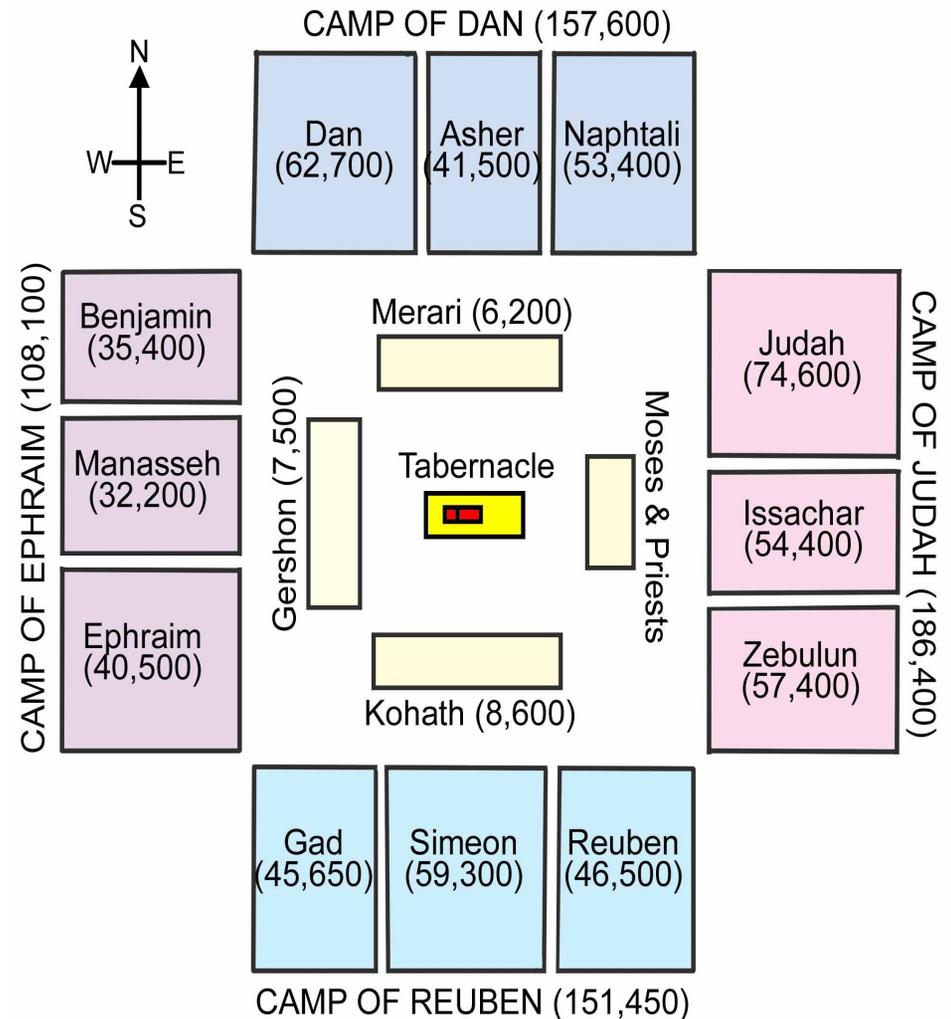
Exodus 1:1-22

The beginning of the Exodus story is dark. Slavery. Abusive hard labor. The murdering of the Hebrew baby boys. Can you picture it? Can you imagine growing up in that time and place? It's at times like these, when things look their worst, that hope shines it's brightest—like a star in the night.

The highlight of this first chapter are these two Hebrew midwives: Shiphrah and Puah. They were given orders from Pharaoh. They knew what was expected of them. They were to kill the Hebrew boys. But they didn't! Why? Didn't they fear Pharaoh, and what he might do to them? The answer is stated twice in this first chapter. In v. 17 and v. 21—they feared God. Out of their deep respect for God they disobeyed the king.

There may be times in your life that you have to make a hard decision. You may be asked to do something you know would not please God. When the pressure is put on, remember—even in Egypt, God comes first. Right is right, no matter who is on the throne, no matter who is giving the orders. Were it not for these two women more babies would have lost their lives. These two women chose to fear God over Pharaoh. Wherever you go, whoever your with, no matter the stakes, God always comes first.

1. God always comes first. What does first mean? How do we put God first?
2. What are some things we may be asked to do that would not please God? Is it right if no one is watching? Where do you think the midwives found the courage to do the right thing?
3. There was once a prayer offered that said, "Lord help me choose the more difficult wrong than the easier right." Why is the right thing often the hard thing? What in this text can help you make the right decisions in life?



Arrangement of the Camp of Israel

Numbers 2:1-3:39

Copyright 2011, Ralph F. Wilson (pastor@joyfulheart.com)
Permission to reprint granted to all so long as copyright line remains

Friday November 29th

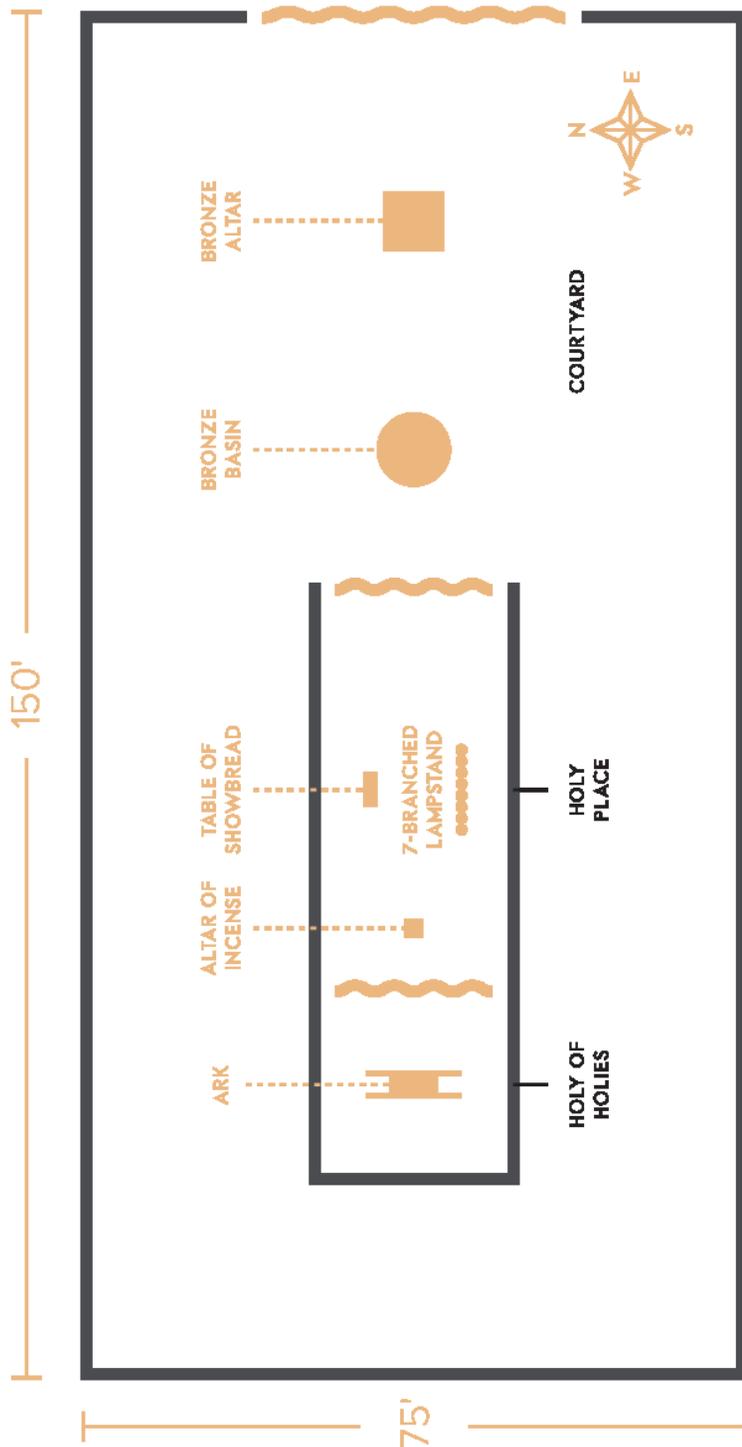
Exodus 2:1-10

Wow—a baby in a basket! Who knew that putting her baby in a basket would work—that he would be kept safe? Who knew that he would end up in the hands of Pharaoh's daughter (of all people), and that she would choose to adopt him as her own? Who knew that this woman would choose Moses' birth mother to come take care of him until he was old enough to live with his new family? God knew.

God had great plans for Moses. God was going to use Moses in some very important ways in the future. But those plans all started with Moses' parents making the brave decision to keep their child alive.

Sometimes it's hard to see how things will all work out. We listen to God and obey His words trusting that He will take care of us, even in hard times. Do you know what we call this? That's faith. Faith is trusting in God, in His Word. Even when the way seems hard, I'll continue to walk with God and put my life in His hands. That can look like praying for a loved one who is sick and hurting, or choosing to live like Jesus even when my peers do not. Sometimes walking by faith looks like a baby in a basket—it's trusting that God will provide a way, even when I don't see that way today.

1. Why do we believe in God?
2. There's a lot of faith in this chapter. How do you see different individuals demonstrating faith? Based on what you see, how would you define faith?
3. What did Moses' mother know to be able to put her baby in that basket? There are times we'll feel desperation—what can we know that would help us put our lives in God's hands?



Saturday November 30th

Hebrews 11:23-29

Today's reading takes us to the New Testament. The writer of Hebrews brings up Moses and his parents as illustrations of great faith. There are some similarities between Moses and his parents, such as the fact they both refused to fear the king (v. 24, 27). But the main point of this passage is how these three people lived by faith.

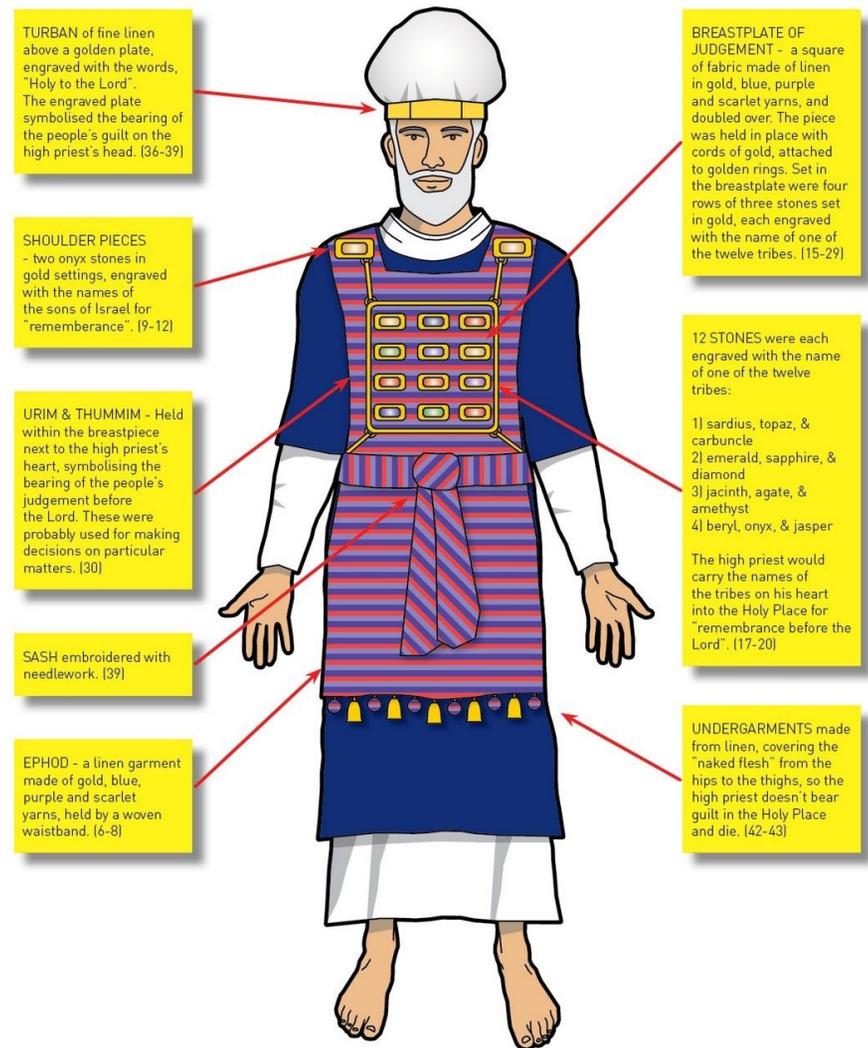
Having enough faith to disobey the evil orders of a king is incredible! But these were able to do so because of their faith in God—faith that God would take care of their child, faith that the rewards of Christ were greater than all the riches Egypt could offer. That's part of what makes faith, faith! It is the ability to see beyond today, to see what is unseen to the eyes (v. 27), to trust in the words and promises of God, realizing that what I see is not all that there is, nor is it all that will be.

Think about that phrase from v. 25-26—Moses chose ill-treatment over passing pleasures. Sin seems promising. It promises a good time with no price-tag. No guilt. No punishments. Just fun. Pleasurable and enjoyable. And it is—for a moment. But once the moment has passed the pleasure is replaced with guilt and shame. Don't buy into it. Trust God's words. God knows what is best for your life. You'll get many offers to do things God wouldn't be pleased with. Remember this—being a prince in Egypt doesn't compare with the rewards of a life lived with God. Be like Moses—make the better choice.

1. Why did Moses choose God over his place in Egypt?
2. What are some examples of the "passing pleasures" of sin? Give an example of how something could be enjoyable for a moment, but not in the long haul. What is advertised with sin—the passing pleasure or the eventual pain? Give examples.
3. Put yourself in Moses' shoes. Young. Wealthy. Could have anything he wanted. How was he able to make this God-honoring decision? What will you need in your life to make the same kind of decisions?

THE HIGH PRIEST'S GARMENTS EXODUS 28

By Mark Barry © 2007 AFES www.afes.org.au Please do not republish without permission, but feel free to copy for personal use.



Exodus 2:11-25

Young Moses had a desire in his heart to do the right thing. Here Moses is around 40 years old, and it's obvious that things are starting to click with him. He's noticing his God-given roots, his people, the Hebrews. He's seeing their oppression. He's feeling the injustice they have received—and he is bound and determined to do something about it.

There's a lesson we learn from here from Moses—about doing the right thing in the wrong way. It was good to seek the welfare of his people—to stand up for them. It was good to seek their deliverance. The problem is that Moses went about it the wrong way. We don't see Moses seeking the Lord's will. Instead, Moses takes the life of an Egyptian, thinking he's doing what's right—all in the defense/deliverance of God's people. That's not how God was going to deliver His people. God had a plan. Moses would be involved. Moses just needed to seek God's plan rather than rushing with his own.

We can get caught in this thinking sometimes—where we want to do the right thing, we just go about it the wrong way. Lying to keep from hurting a friend's feelings, is still lying. Tearing down a bully is still tearing another person down. Remember this, you won't win God's battle when you use Satan's weapons. We don't overcome evil with evil—we overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21).

1. When we have done wrong, should we try and hide it (like Moses did)? What is the right response?
2. Discuss the Robin Hood syndrome—why do the ends not justify the means?
3. Try out some scenarios tonight—a friend who asks to cheat on the test, getting bad grades and afraid to tell my parents, standing up for a kid who has been picked on in class—what are the right and wrong responses to these situations? Why does our response to these matter?

THE TABERNACLE TENT

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30) 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long.

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31–33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–5; 37:25–29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36–37).

The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

Tuesday December 3rd

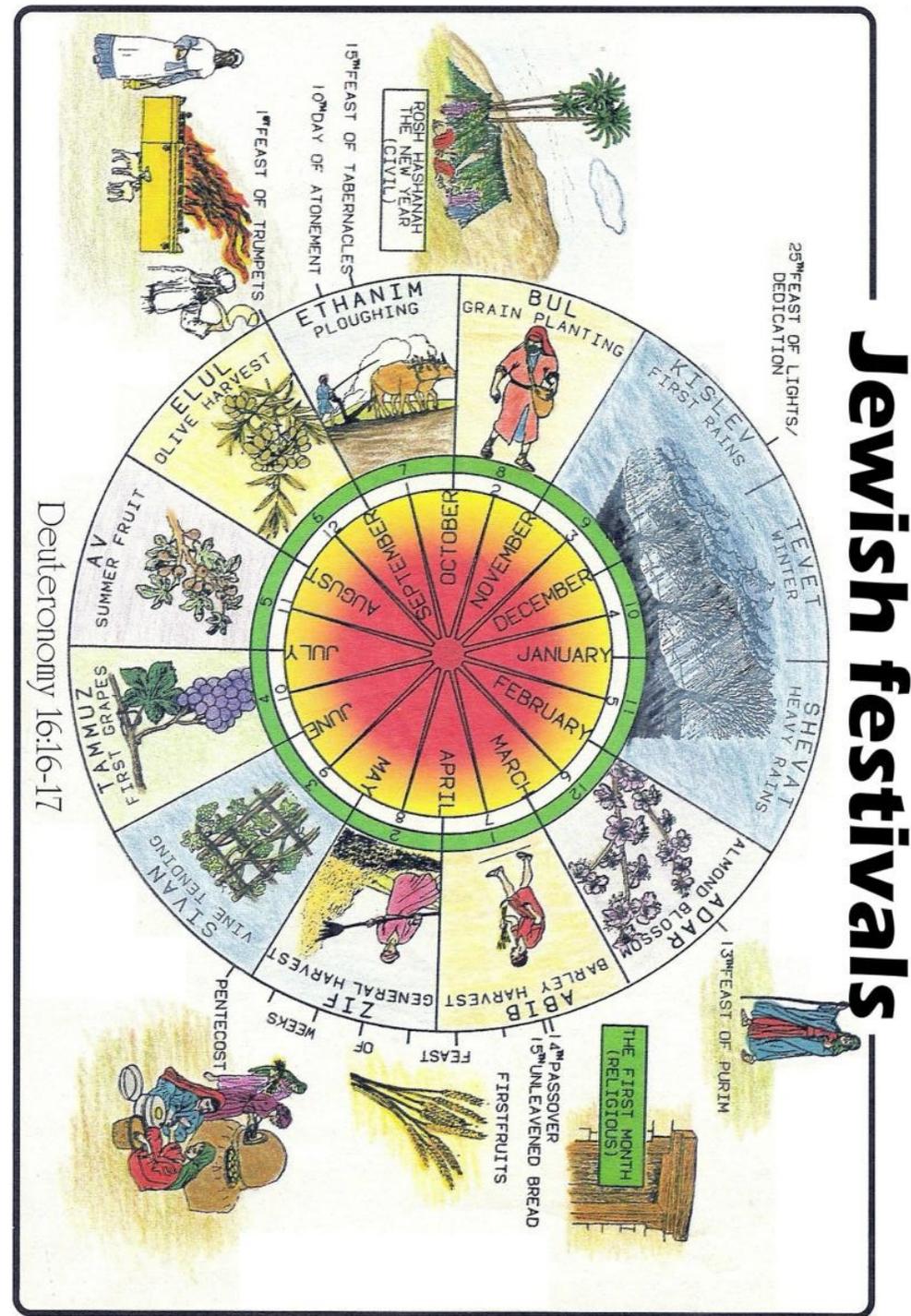
Acts 7:20-29

These verses are part of a sermon that was preached by Stephen. We're given more details about Moses' life. In fact, these 9 verses are a good summary of Moses' first 40 years. It's in this section that we learn more about Moses, that he was mighty in words and deeds, and well educated (v. 22).

Think about this: God chose Moses for His plan of delivering His people. Moses came from a very difficult upbringing. He was raised in troublesome times. There are many who look at the hardships of the life they've experienced as excuses for reasons they cannot serve. Yes, there was tragedy in Moses' story—but there was also much good. Notice God's hand for good—that he lived when many other young baby boys did not; that he was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and nurtured in her care (v. 20); that his birth family taught him about God and that faith stuck with him as he grew; that God gave him various talents.

Here's a hard life lesson: difficult times will come. You'll face pain. You'll encounter disappointments. You'll be hurt. It is part of life in this broken, sinful world. Now you can focus on the bad in the world around you. You can focus on the things that have gone wrong—the times you've been hurt and disappointed. OR, you can see the good. You can notice the ways that God has blessed you, and been with you. You can see the opportunities that God has placed in your path, and choose to make the best of your life by serving God and loving others. Don't stay in the pit. Look for the good and work for the Lord.

1. God blessed Moses with many talents. What are some of your talents?
2. It would be easy to focus on the bad in the story of Moses' early years. But there was also much good. Take an inventory—count some blessings God has placed in your life.
3. Victim vs. Victor. What's the difference in this mentality?



The 10 Plagues - Jehovah Versus the Gods of Egypt

PLAGUE

GODS OF EGYPT

INTERESTING NOTES

PLAGUE	GODS OF EGYPT	INTERESTING NOTES
1 WATER TURNED TO BLOOD Exodus 7:14-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khnum - Guardian of river's source. • Hapi - Spirit of the Nile. • Osiris - Nile was his bloodstream. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplicated by the Egyptians. • Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived. • Dead fish — putrid smell
2 FROGS Exodus 8:1-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hapi } Frog goddess to Egypt. • Heqt } Both related to fertility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplicated by the Egyptians • Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived.
3 LICE Exodus 8:16-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seb - The earth god of Egypt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not duplicated by the Egyptians • Occurs in Goshen where Israelites lived. • Attributed to the "finger of God."
4 FLIES Exodus 8:20-32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uatchit - The fly god of Egypt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God now makes a separation between the Egyptians and the Israelites. • No more plagues will come upon the Israelites.
5 DISEASE ON CATTLE Exodus 9:1-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ptah } Egyptian gods associated with bulls and cows. • Mnevis } • Hathor } • Amon } 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects property. • Death of livestock.
6 BOILS Exodus 9:8-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sekhmet - Egyptian goddess of Epidemics • Serapis } Egyptian gods of healing. • Imhotep } 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects physical bodies. • Pharaoh's magicians cannot even appear in court.
7 HAIL Exodus 9:13-35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nut - Egyptian sky goddess. • Isis & Seth - Egyptian agriculture deities. • Shu - Egyptian god of the atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical uniqueness for such a storm in Egypt. • Pharaoh confesses his sin but later changes his mind.
8 LOCUSTS Exodus 10:1-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serapia - Egyptian deity protector from Locusts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharaoh offers a compromise. • The compromise is rejected. • Pharaoh again confesses his sin.
9 DARKNESS Exodus 10:21-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re } Egyptian sun gods. • Amon-re } • Atum } • Horus } • Thoth - Egyptian moon god. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark in Egypt at midday. • Apparently light was still provided for the Israelites in Goshen.
10 DEATH OF FIRSTBORN Exodus 12:29-36	<p>This plague was a judgment on all of Egypt's gods, including Pharaoh himself. In Exodus 1, Pharaoh had killed the sons of Israel. Now the Lord kills the firstborn sons of the Egyptians (Exodus 11-12). Pharaoh will now let Israel go. He will later loose his army to death in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:4-31).</p>	

Barnes' Bible Charts

Thursday December 5th

Exodus 3:1-4:17

Excuses, excuses, excuses. God chose Moses for a very important task, and though God expressed His confidence in Moses, Moses didn't have confidence in God's plan, nor confidence in himself.

Excuses and procrastination go hand in hand. Rather than accepting the assignment and responsibility, we lean on an excuse to keep us from doing what we know we can (should) do. The first step in overcoming procrastination is to eliminate all excuses and reasons for not making decisive and immediate actions.

There's no excuse for sin—doing wrong. There's never a right reason to do the wrong thing. And similarly, we can excuse away different opportunities and open doors that God places in our path. Satan wants you to believe, "I can't." God says—"You can!" (Philippians 4:13) You can be holy. You can be a light. You can make a difference. You can be strong. You can learn. You can change. You can grow.

God called Moses. Moses said, "I can't." God will open doors for you, knowing you can handle it. Don't give excuses. Just do!

1. Moses had a lot of excuses. Can you name them all?
2. What are some common excuses that can be given to avoid doing God's work? Answer them as if you were answering a friend—encouraging them to action.
3. Have there been some areas you've shown some procrastination? Have you been giving excuses (to others or yourself)? Imagine you have the opportunity to speak with Moses in Exodus 3—what would you tell him? What are some practical steps you can take to drop excuses this week and do what needs to be done?

Friday December 6th

Exodus 4:18-5:23

And so it begins. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh with the demand from God, “Let my people go.” Pharaoh not only refuses, but declares he doesn’t know who this “god” is. Now what is Moses to do?

It gets worse. Pharaoh decides to make life harder for the Hebrew slaves. They’re expected to make bricks without the straw given to them. They’d have to gather the straw AND make the bricks. So much for delivering God’s people out of Egypt.

There’s a lesson for us here in this section. Sometimes things get worse before they get better. Maybe it’s a rough situation at school, and you try to do the right thing—maybe it’s conflict with a friend—maybe it’s trying to overcome a bad choice I made... things don’t always get better overnight. While we can seek God’s forgiveness, and ask for His help in times of trouble, the consequences of bad decisions can grow and spread like ripples on the water.

Don’t give up. Don’t quit. Don’t stop trying to do the right thing. Just because things aren’t fixed right away doesn’t mean you need to throw in the towel. Just imagine if Moses and Aaron gave up after the first try! Some things take time. This arrogant Pharaoh thought he was going to win by making life tough on the Hebrew people. He’s about to get a big introduction to the Lord he “didn’t know.”

-
1. What does it mean to be patient? What are some examples of things that are good to be patient for?
 2. Can you finish this quote, “If at first you don’t succeed...”. How does this apply to Moses and Aaron? Can you think of some examples where this thinking would be important today?
 3. Can you think of an example where one tried to do the right thing, but ended up making the situation harder? What do we learn from those moments?

Saturday February 18th

Hebrews 3:14-4:2

We’re ending our quarter through Exodus and Numbers thinking of something wonderful. There is a place God has prepared for His people—a land of rest. A place of no pain, no sickness, no sorrow, no sin, no temptation—it is perfect. God is there. Jesus is there. It is the true land of promise—Heaven.

You will journey through the wilderness. Your faith will be tested. You will be tempted to quit on your faith. You’ll be tempted to worship golden calves—to follow the crowds and sin against God. Don’t do it. Don’t let fear kill your faith.

Just remember where you’re going. Remember what all this is about. Remember who is with you always. Remember the promises He’s given. Remember Heaven—think of Heaven—dream of Heaven.

When the road is tough—pray. When you need some wisdom—read the Word. When you need some help—lean on your godly friends.

God is calling us out—an exodus out of the world—and is leading us to the true promised land. He sent Jesus to lead the way. Keep following Him. One day, not long from now, we’ll all be there—and what a day that will be!

-
1. What did you learn this quarter from Exodus?
 2. What comes to mind when you think about Heaven?
 3. Why do you think the book of Exodus is important/helpful today?

Monday February 17th

Numbers 14:26-45

The end of Numbers 14 shows us how to make bad things worse. Rather than listening to God and His punishment of wandering for 40 years in the wilderness, some choose to go straight ahead into Canaan. And, they died. Rather than living 40 more years they died immediately.

There's two things to think about today:

If you've been punished for doing wrong, don't make it worse. We can do so through lying (trying to cover it up), or lashing out (blaming others for what happened), or just giving up (doing other things I know that are wrong because—well I'm already getting punished!) . Don't do that. You can be forgiven. You can make good choices. Things can get better. Don't sabotage yourself by piling on bad decisions.

Sometimes the path we take in life leads us through a wilderness. There will be times of happiness and joy, of peace and blessings. But there will also be times of hardship and pain, of suffering and loss. Accept it now, there is pain in this life. You'll have hard days. Just remember, this isn't home. We're headed to Heaven. There'll be a place where there's no pain and suffering, no sin and temptation. Don't give up. Keep walking with God through the wilderness—He's leading you to a wonderful land of rest.

-
1. What is a wilderness like?
 2. What are some examples of how one could make a bad decision worse? Why would they do so? How do you fix it?
 3. James is caught—he's addicted to vaping and he's lied about it to his parents. It's getting out of control. What would you do to help James?

Saturday December 7th

Exodus 6

In today's reading God gives words of hope to a broken hearted people. Because of the harsh treatment in their slavery, they had not only broken backs, they had broken spirits. It's hard to mend a broken heart. But God offers words of healing, by giving His people some amazing promises.

Notice the promises God gives in this chapter:

- I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians (v. 6)
- I will deliver you (v. 6)
- I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, with great acts of judgment (v. 6)
- I will take you to be my people (v. 7)
- I will be your God (v. 7)
- I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v. 7)

When the problems of today seem hard, find some strength and hope through reading and remembering the promises of God!

-
1. What is a promise? Can you name promises that God has given?
 2. What do you think these promises would mean to a Hebrew slave? How could they trust in God's promises? How can we today?
 3. What promises of God mean a lot to you? Why? What do you do to remember those promises?

Monday December 9th

Exodus 7:1-13

Today's reading shows us one of the first signs God demonstrates through Moses and Aaron. The staff turns into a snake, then back to a staff again. And though Pharaoh and his people see this incredible sign, they don't believe or change their minds. Why? Because Pharaoh's heart was hard.

God provided the circumstances and situations for Pharaoh to have a hard heart. Moses came with his demands of freeing the Hebrews. The 10 plagues which were to come mocked Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods they served (we'll study that in a few days). Rather than believing and obeying God, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused.

Hard hearts. Hearts that are closed off to truth. Hearts that refuse to listen, to learn. That's what we see in Pharaoh. We see it in some people's hearts today. Pride/arrogance—those are heart hardeners. Thinking that I already know it—or that I know more than you, or that this doesn't apply to me—pride kills learning. They keep us from receiving God's words—from learning, changing, and growing. How do we soften a hardened heart? With humility. Learn what it means to be humble, selfless, to put others before you. As much as I may know, there's still more I have to learn, more room for me to grow in becoming like Jesus. Like James 1:21 teaches, receive the Word with humility. God is willing to teach if I am willing to learn.

-
1. What are some words you would use to describe Pharaoh's heart?
 2. List some differences between a hard hearted person and a soft hearted person.
 3. Do you find humility difficult or easy? Why? What does it take to receive the Word with humility?

Saturday February 15th

Numbers 14:1-25

The spies give their bad report. They spread their fear all through Israel. And the response is that they want to abandon God's plan of the promised land. That's the problem with fear—it spreads like a wildfire. Rather than listening to their leaders, these people give up. Joshua and Caleb are the minorities. They speak strongly with faith and the people want to stone them. It's hard standing alone.

There will be times you will feel like a minority. You will feel alone. You might be the only one not using certain words. You might be the only one not going to that party. You might be the only one not owning a phone, or on social media, or wearing those immodest clothes. It might seem like you're the only one who prays for their meal. That you're the only one who worships on Sunday. That you're the only one who reads their Bible—who believes in God.

But you're not. You're not alone. There's 400 people in this church who proudly believe in Jesus. There's thousands of saints in Texas who believe in Jesus. There's a countless number of Christians all over the world today who believe in Jesus. There are some today who are risking their lives because of their faith in Jesus.

Yes, we may still be the minority. In some places and situations we may be the lone ones. But remember—it is the narrow gate which leads to life. Don't follow the crowd. Follow Christ. He will lead you home.

-
1. Why did the people not want to go into the land?
 2. What makes the broad path so appealing? (Matt. 7:13-14)
 3. When I feel like I am alone I tend to _____. Instead I need to_____

Friday February 14th

Numbers 13:21-33

The assignment was clear—go get a report of the promised land. The spies went in, and initially were pleasantly surprised with what they saw. The land was lush, the fruit was abundant—this was going to be a great place to live.

Then they saw the enemy. They were big. Their armies were large. Their fortresses were well fortified. There was a race of giants in the land—the Nephilim, which made the spies seem like bugs. And based on this they crumbled in fear.

Remember this—God can do a lot with a little. God beat a giant with a young boy. God saved a nation through one brave queen. God will use Joshua and the smaller nation of Israel to destroy the mighty nations of Canaan.

Nothing is impossible for God. Don't put a ceiling on God. Don't try and put Him in a box. Our God created the world with His voice. He controls the cosmos. He holds the worlds in His hands. Giants in the land of Canaan are nothing to God. And your problems, your storms, your fears—they too are nothing to God.

Don't let your giants squash your faith. Remember who your God is. And remember that HE can do all things! Pray big prayers!

-
1. Why were these spies afraid?
 2. Why are there times we doubt God's strength? What's the answer to this?
 3. Read James 1:5-8. How does this passage fit with our reading in Numbers? How do you overcome doubtful prayers?

Tuesday December 10th

Acts 7:30-34; James 1:13

Things seemed bleak for God's people. They seemed dark. As their situations got worse, and their prayers poured out more and more, they must have wondered, "Where is God? Does He know what's happening? Does He care?" The answer was "YES!" God knew. God cared. God had a plan—and it was through Moses this plan was to be accomplished.

As James shows us, God is not the author of evil. He tempts no one to do wrong. When difficult times come, many seem to blame God. They'll say things like, "If God is good, why is there evil today?" What they've not considered is, "What about all the good in the world—life, health, blessings both physical and spiritual." There's evil in the world because of rebellion, because of Satan, because of sin. Horrible events like what happened to God's people in Egypt happen because of evil men like Pharaoh who choose their own way over God's.

When hard times come remember the things we know! God is on the throne. God is in control. God is ALWAYS good. Today (this present hardship) is not all that has been, or will be. And even though I may be going through a storm, but I won't be going through it alone. God was with His people in Egypt, and God will be you always too!

-
1. List some ways we know that God is good!
 2. Why do you believe many blame God for the bad that happens in the world?
 3. How would you answer a friend who asked the question, "If God is good, why is there evil in the world?"

Thursday December 12th

Exodus 7:14-25; 8:1-15

The plagues begin! Pharaoh said he didn't know who God was. God's response was that He will make Pharaoh drive the people out of the land (6:1). Through these 10 amazing demonstrations of power God is showing the Egyptians and His own people who truly is King.

The plagues were also designed to challenge the Egyptian "gods." The Egyptian people had a multitude of gods they worshipped. Many of the gods were represented by elements of nature like the Sun, or the stars, or even the Nile River. Thus the plagues showed the people that God is the one true God!

In today's reading we saw God turn the Nile to blood, and cover the land with frogs. Can you imagine living there at that time? Can you imagine the smell? The noise? Having to find water to drink because your main source of water turned to blood? That your house, your room, your bed became filled with frogs?

Life was going to get hard in Egypt. But that's the price of sin. That's the cost of a hard heart that won't listen to God. It wasn't just Pharaoh's water that got affected. It wasn't just his bed filled with frogs. The nation of Egypt was facing the consequences of Pharaoh's bad choices. Remember, our choices affect the lives of those around us. Be careful which choices you make!

-
1. What do you think it would be like to live in Egypt during these plagues?
 2. Look at v. 23 and v. 15—what affect did the first two plagues have on Pharaoh?
 3. Look at v. 10. Why did Pharaoh not say immediately? Why would one want to stay in a bad place one more night rather than seeking immediate relief? What does that show us about repentance and turning from sin?

Thursday February 13th

Numbers 13:1-20

The spies are being sent into the promised land. 12 spies, 1 for each of the tribes (Ephraim instead of Levi). Their job was simple—go into the land to get a report on what they were to expect.

There are two spies we know quite well—Joshua and Caleb. These two men are full of faith and very influential among God's people. Joshua will go on to become the next leader of God's people.

This reminds us of a lesson—Joshua goes from a servant of Moses, to a captain in the Israelite army, to a spy searching out the land, to the leader of God's people. Notice what Joshua did as he rose to a role of great responsibility—he learned from those who were older and wiser than him. He accepted smaller roles of responsibility, proving he was capable of greater roles. He refused to go along with the crowd, but made his own mind—holding to his faith and convictions.

Do you want to have greater roles and responsibilities in the future? Start now by learning and growing from those in those roles—from those who are older and wiser than you. Take on small tasks and do them well. Show that you can handle responsibility, and that you are a person of character and integrity.

We need Joshua's today—but Joshua started growing when he was young. Don't wait to grow—start now!

-
1. Who was Joshua?
 2. What are some roles and responsibilities you hope to have in the future?
 3. Based on the 2nd question, form a plan—who are some people you can learn from, what are some smaller roles you can fill now to grow and gain trust?

Tuesday February 11th

Numbers 14:1-5

They got close! This reading points us to the report from the 12 spies that went into the land of Canaan. 2 came back full of faith. 10 came back full of fear. The people listened to the voice of fear, and they gave up on God's plan.

Oh they got so close! They were not far at all from the promised land. There's a lesson here (among many). Stick with it. Don't quit. If God is on your side, victory is a guarantee. Rather than crumbling in fear, go forward by faith!

All of us face fears. Some are afraid of conflict. Some are afraid of the future. Some are afraid of being alone. Here, the people were afraid of the enemies occupying the promised land. Rather than being afraid, they should have gone back and stood on the promises of God. God promised them victory! God promised them the land. Don't listen to the voice of fear—focus on the voice and the promises of God.

You'll hear the voice of fear a lot. "You can't do it" seems to be its motto. Don't listen to fear. God promises victory. God promises blessings. God promises He is with you. Keep walking with God. Keep staying on His path. Don't give up when things get hard. Push through your fears by strengthening your faith in God and His Words.

-
1. What are some things people are afraid of? How do we beat those fears?
 2. What should I do if I want a stronger faith?
 3. "You're not really a Christian are you?" "You don't really believe in creation, in Noah's ark, in Jonah and the whale do you?" These are voices that can cause fear—the fear of not being accepted. How would you answer these?

Friday December 13th

Exodus 8:16-32

Gnats and flies. Everywhere there were gnats and flies. Flies are annoying. They're hard to kill. There's the constant "buzzing" sound. They get on everything. And we're not talking about a few gnats. The dust of the earth became gnats through ALL the land of Egypt (v. 17).

What's amazing is the phrase in v. 19 from Pharaoh's magicians. They can't replicate this miracle. It was beyond their feeble tricks. In fact, notice what they claimed: "This is the finger of God." It was obvious to them that this was a miracle—the true working of God. They believed! And though they were convinced, and the evidence was compelling, Pharaoh missed it because his heart was hard.

The finger of God—what a neat phrase. We might ask the question, "Do we see the finger of God in our lives? Do we see His power? Do we see the evidence of His existence? Maybe through creation. Maybe through answered prayers. Maybe through the incredible words found in the Bible. Lift up your eyes and see the evidence of God all around you, and like these magicians, believe!

And remember this—if the mere finger of God brought flies on Egypt, what does that tell us our God is able to do. Pray big prayers—God can do all things!

-
1. What are some ways we see the evidence of God around us today?
 2. What does Romans 1:20 mean? In what ways are God's invisible attributes clearly seen? Why don't some seem to see them today?
 3. Look in the back resources pages of this book and notice how the plagues corresponded to the false gods of Egypt.

Saturday December 14th

Exodus 9:1-12

Today's reading brings us to plagues 5&6. These plagues keep growing in severity. The livestock are killed (horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and the flock). That's their food, their source of travel and strength in work. And it's not just that they die, but they die with pestilence—you can't eat the meat of your cattle because they've died from a disease.

Then it gets personal. The plagues thus far have affected their water, their comfort, and their food, but now it's affecting their health/bodies. Painful, ugly sore boils were breaking out on the people. It was so severe that the magicians couldn't meet with Moses when he came.

We've pointed to this thought before, but it's worth revisiting. Our sins affect more than just ourselves. God is punishing the Egyptians for their harsh treatment of His people, and for refusing to let them leave. The longer Pharaoh refused to let them go, the longer he and his people suffered. Remember this, my choices affect those around me. They'll affect my family, my friends, my church family in either positive or negative ways. I can be one that brings a blessing on others through making Christ-honoring choices, or I can be like Pharaoh and bring pain on others through making sinful choices. Before I act, before I speak, slow down and think: will this decision help or hurt those in my life? Most importantly, will this decision honor God? Make Christ-pleasing choices today!

1. What are some poor choices Pharaoh made?
2. We've noticed 5 plagues thus far—how has each plague affected more than just Pharaoh?
3. Try out some scenarios tonight—create a scenario where one's choices affect others in either positive ways or negative ways.

Monday February 10th

Numbers 11-12

Moses was many things. He was a leader of God's people. He was a teacher of the law. At one time he was a prince of Egypt, and a shepherd in Midian. There's one other detail about Moses that is remarkable—Moses was humble (12:3).

Do you know what it means to be humble? To be humble is to think of other people as more important than yourself. It is self-forgetfulness. It is thinking about others more and thinking about myself less.

It's easy to get stuck thinking only about me—my feelings, my opinions, my preferences. That's pride. That's arrogance. God hates proud hearts. Proud hearts makes one think they are better than others. It often leads to treating people poorly, like what we read in Numbers 11-12.

Moses shows us something beautiful in these chapters. Though he is the focus of others' complaints, he keeps his kind and humble heart. He rejoices in the talents of others (11:29), and when the prophets were speaking he didn't silence them or defend himself—he had their best, the best of his people in mind. Even when his sister spoke up against him, Moses spoke up on her behalf—not defending himself, but trying to seek her best.

Work on this beautiful quality this week—think of JOY—Jesus, Others, You.

1. What is humility?
2. Why is pride a dangerous quality to possess?
3. How do you humble a proud heart?

Saturday February 8th

Numbers 4-5

In today's reading we number the priests again, and then read about laws regarding defilement. God was serious about sin, and His people were to be too. If anyone was unclean, they were to be removed from the people—from the presence of God.

Something I find fascinating is the section with the priests. Everyone had a role to fill, a job to do. The duties were divided by the families. There were different Levitical families—the Kohathites, Gershonites, and the Merarites (named after Levi's three sons). The priests entered their service at age 25 and retired at the age of 40. What an honor to be able to serve the Lord!

Remember that today all who are in Christ are priests (1 Peter 2:9-10), and there's no retirement from Christ's service. Those who obey the gospel serve Christ the rest of our lives. And what an honor—to be able to serve Christ, using my talents to honor Him and bless others.

Sometimes we can take our service to God for granted, but try to remember what a blessing it is to be able to serve God and worship Him the way we do today. Especially for our young men who lead, or one day want to lead in worship, it is an honor and privilege to do so. Be thankful for the opportunity, and come ready to give your best. Rest well tonight—because tomorrow Sunday's coming!

-
1. What do you like about our Sunday worship?
 2. What are your favorite aspects of our Sunday worship?
 3. If you're inviting a friend to come join us for Sunday worship, what are you telling them about as you try to get them to come?

Monday December 16th

Exodus 9:13-35

The 7th plague has come. Hail and fire rain from the sky. If you've ever been in a hail storm you know how scary and damaging it can be. These hails were so severe that they destroyed man, animals, and even trees. There were some in Egypt who believed, and feared the word of the Lord (v. 20). That was part of God's plan with these plagues, to show the whole world who the one true God is (v. 14, 16).

In today's reading it seemed (at first) that Pharaoh was actually sorrowful for his choices, and was going to repent. He admitted his sin (v. 27). And he agreed to let the people go (v. 28). But as soon as the storm stopped, he changed his mind (v. 34-35). Pharaoh teaches us here about true repentance.

Repentance isn't feeling sorry. It's not feeling guilty because I've been caught in something I shouldn't have done. Repentance is a change of heart that produces a change in behavior. I'm not just so sorry for what I've done, but I am committed to doing the right thing—right away! Pharaoh was sorry for a moment, but once the punishment left he went right back to his sinful ways. That's not true repentance. It wasn't genuine.

Repentance is found all through the NT teaching (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30). If we have sinned, the right response is to stop the sin, ask God for forgiveness, and make decisions that honor and obey God.

-
1. What does the word "repent" mean?
 2. How do I know if I've truly repented? Is saying, "I'm sorry" enough? What will one who had truly repented do? What does this have to do with Matthew 3:8
 3. Confessing sin is a good step (1 JN 1:9), but there must be a change of behavior. Why do you think one would say sorry but not truly repent? Why is being fake a big deal—and how do you see examples of it through your peers today?

Tuesday December 17th

Exodus 10:1-29

Compromise is the bargaining chip of the enemy. Pharaoh continually sought for Moses to compromise on his demands. He said he would let the people go if they would not go far away (8:32), if they would leave their children (9:27-28), if they would leave their possessions (10:24-25).

If Satan cannot lure us to reject Jesus' commands outright, he will tempt us to compromise. "Be part of the church, but don't go too far from the world, don't get too involved with the church." "If you must be a Christian, go ahead, but leave your children. You don't have time to teach/train/lead them to Christ with today's busy schedule." "Your blessings are simply YOURS, don't worry about using them for things that would honor God."

Our response should be the same as Moses': "Not a hoof shall be left behind" (v. 26). There will be no compromise. Great athletes do not quit. Great soldiers do not surrender. Great disciples of Jesus do not compromise or bargain with the enemy. God is calling us out of the world, just like He called His people out of Egypt. Be holy. Be pure. Be more and more like Christ (Rom. 12:1-2).

-
1. What does the word "compromise" mean? How did Pharaoh want the people to compromise?
 2. Work up some examples of ways Satan tries to get Christians today to compromise on God's commands.
 3. It's easy to focus on the negative—why some find being "all-in" with Jesus too constricting or demanding. Imagine you were talking with a friend, trying to explain the joy of being fully committed to Christ. What would you say?

Friday February 7th

Numbers 3

Here in Numbers 3 we find the numbering of the Levites. Remember that they are the Priests who serve in the worship of God. There was a special privilege to being a priest—only they could draw near to God (v. 10).

But being a priest came with a special responsibility—they were to keep God's laws seriously. There were two who didn't. They are mentioned in v. 4—Nadab and Abihu. They offered a fire that God didn't authorize (command). Because of their disobedience, they were killed. We find this story in Leviticus 10:1-3.

Their story reminds us that we need to listen to God's words. We need to be careful to do all that is says. It's just like following a blueprint. When you want to build a house you hand the builders the blueprints. You expect them to build it exactly the way it is designed. They are not to add to it or to take away from it. If they follow it exactly the way it is written you will have the desired result—the house that you designed.

It's the same way with God—He has given us His blueprint through His words. If we follow them exactly as they are written—not adding things we want, or taking away things we don't like (Rev. 22:18-19), but following and obeying them as they say, what we'll have today are Christians who look just like the One's God desires. Follow God's words carefully! (Colossians 3:17)

-
1. Who were Nadab and Abihu?
 2. What does the word authority mean? Why is it important to have authority to do what we want to do?
 3. How would you answer this, "The Bible doesn't say not to...."? Some use this argument with instrumental music in our worship, or taking the Lord's Supper on a Saturday night. How would you answer this argument?

Thursday February 6th

Numbers 2

Today we read from the book of Numbers. The book gets its name because it contains a lot of numbers—a lot of counting the people of God. In this reading we find the arrangement of the camp. Whether if they stayed put or camped out, God gave the order of where the people were to be in the camp. The tribes were grouped according to their responsibilities in order to expedite the setting up and taking down of the camp as they traveled. The Levites were in the center—those who would set up the Tabernacle, serve in the Tabernacle, etc. You can see a picture of this in the back of the book.

What God is doing here is establishing order or structure for the nation. Everyone had a role. Everyone had a place. Everyone had a service. That's our God—a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Do you have your things in order? Do you have a place for your clothes—for your shoes—for your phone/belongings? Order helps us be organized. It can help us be more efficient. Disorder breeds chaos. Maybe that's been your room as of late—a lot of disorder, not sure where anything is. Take a note from Numbers 2 and try to order your things. Get organized. Doing so is a way of taking care of what you have. It also is a way to help be more productive with your time—rather than wasting it by looking for lost things. Work hard and get your things in order!

-
1. Take time this week and organize your room
 2. Once you've organized your room, organize your thoughts—stay focused today
 3. Once you've organized your thoughts—organize your time (what are your priorities)

Thursday December 19th

Exodus 11

One last plague. The 10th plague—the death of the firstborn in the land of Egypt. Egyptian families were about to be devastated. Every home/family would be affected, from the king to the slaves (v. 5). The cry would be so great, there would never be another like it in Egypt (v. 6). Yet in contrast, among the Israelites there will be a deafening sound—the sound of silence. Not even a dog would bark (v. 7).

God sparing Israel proved to Pharaoh that the people of Israel were the Lord's people, and that since they had such a powerful God, Pharaoh should have listened and let them leave. It also showed how much God loved and cared for His people. They had cried for help/deliverance for so long—God sparing them from this painful judgment must have made them feel loved/special.

Judgment is hard. It's hard to see someone suffer. The reality of severe punishment brings people to having a healthy fear of the law. If you break school rules, there's expulsion. If you commit crimes, there's prison. With murder there's the death penalty. The existence of a judgement reminds us to live right—to live lives that honor God.

But remember this, if you are in Jesus, you are part of His special people (1 Pet. 2:9-10). And in Jesus, there's no need to fear the judgement. Rather we can be confident and full of anticipation for His reward because of His wonderful love and amazing grace. LIVE IN JESUS!

-
1. What is judgment? Why will God judge the world?
 2. How does one get "into" Jesus? What does it mean to be saved?
 3. Do some digging and share your thoughts with your family: what does the Bible teach about the final judgment? What is the basis of this judgment (what are they judged for)? What is at stakes? Why is a judgment necessary?

Friday December 20th

Exodus 12:1-21

Today's reading is the establishment of two Jewish feasts—the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. There are several feasts/memorials that God establishes for His people (see the chart in the back of the book). As you read, there are specific requirements with these feasts, from the specific time of the year, to what is to be eaten, even to how they were to eat it (v. 11).

The concept of a “Passover” makes sense in light of what’s happening. When God’s judgment passes through Egypt, God would “pass over” those with the blood on the doorposts. This was the means by which God’s people would be spared from the wrath that had come upon Egypt.

We have memorials. There’s the 4th of July. There’s Memorial day. There’s certain statues and stones across our country which commemorate important moments of our history. And even on the 1st day of the week, Christians eat and drink the Lord’s Supper. The purpose of a Memorial is not merely to keep us from forgetting—it’s more of a celebration of what we do remember—of what we know. It is a way of rekindling the thankfulness and gratitude we have for those who sacrificed much for us. Or, in the case of the Lord’s Supper, or the Passover—to remember the God who saves His people.

-
1. What is a memorial? What is the Lord’s Supper? Why do we take it?
 2. What were the Israelites to remember through observing the Passover? What are we to remember through taking the Lord’s Supper?
 3. What do you think the Passover would have meant to the Israelites a year after Egypt? Take a minute and write down what does the Lord’s Supper mean to you.

Tuesday February 4th

Exodus 40

With the Tabernacle completed and all hung up, something amazing happened—the glory of the Lord shone forth. The cloud covered the tent and remained until the time they were to be on the move. That’s an amazing phrase, “The glory of the Lord filled the temple.” God was pleased with the work they had done. And the people must have been full of joy knowing the presence of the Lord was there!

Have you ever had a night when you woke up afraid? Maybe it was a loud sound or a bad dream. What made you feel better? If you’re like my boys, it was the presence of mom and dad. Just knowing that they’re near by made all the difference. Knowing that the ones who love me and protect me will allow me to be at peace.

Hebrews 13:5-6—the Lord promises that He will never leave us or forsake us, so why should we be afraid. That’s a wonderful promise. There may be times you feel afraid, places that are new or different. You may be in a place with people you don’t know well, feeling alone. Remember—you are never alone. God is always with you. There is nowhere you can go that God is not there.

Look at the questions David asks in Psalm 139:7-9—even there will you be with me? Even in the depth of the sea? Even up high in the heavens? What might we ask—even at the doctors? Even at this new school? Even if I move to a new place? What’s God’s answer in v. 10—even there. God is always with you.

-
1. Sing Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go!
 2. How is knowing God is with us a source of comfort and strength?
 3. Read the rest of Psalm 139—what does God know about you? How can that help you face tough times in the future?

Monday February 3rd

Exodus 39

In today's reading we return to the description of the priests. This reading focuses primarily on his garments. There are lots of details about what he is to wear. There was a robe they were to wear. There was a breastplate they were to wear containing precious stones, there was a linen ephod—a special piece woven to be worn over the robe. You can look at the back pages to see more of what this all looked like. God wants His holy priests to wear the right, holy, pure clothes.

There was a time when we find a priest who was wearing clothes that were stained and filthy. Satan was quick to accuse him. Rather than punishing this prophet God commanded that he be given fresh clean clothes. You can find this in Zechariah 3:2-5.

This neat passage is a picture of what happens today. When we have sinned, we've stained and soiled our garments. It is as if our clothes are stained (JAS 1:27). Satan is quick to accuse us—"Look—he's no longer pure. She's stained from her sins." But when we come to Christ, and put Him on in baptism, it is as if the Lord removed our sinful stained clothes, and put on us the pure, clean, holy clothes of Christ. See how Paul points to this Galatians 3:27.

Don't live in the sinful stained clothes of the world. Be clothed in Christ. Live holy!

1. What do you think about the clothes of the priests?
2. How is one clothed with Christ? What else happens when I make this decision?
3. Your friend Drew feels so shameful for some decisions he's made. He said it's like he's wearing a shirt with the word "lustful" in big letters. What would you tell your friend Drew?

Saturday December 21st

Exodus 12:22-51

Yesterday we read about the establishment of the Passover. Today's reading tells us how they took it—the very first Passover. It would have been quite a night. God's people eating in silence, sandals on ready to travel. Egypt full of loud crying because "there was no home where there was not someone dead" (v. 30). Finally, Pharaoh let's God's people go.

Notice v. 40-41. Those might just seem like little details, but they serve an important purpose. They point us back years ago when God spoke to Abraham. In Genesis 15:13-14 God told Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved in a foreign land for 400 years. And in Genesis 15:5 God pointed Abraham to the stars and promised that his descendants would outnumber those stars. And 400+ years later there's 600,000 men, not counting women and children (Exodus 12:37).

What's all this mean? God keeps His Word. He keeps His promises. God promised to deliver His people. God promised them a special land. God promised, and God delivered. What did Israel need to do? They needed to trust in the words of God, and do as He said. If He said put blood on the doorpost, and eat a special meal wearing sandals, that's exactly what I'll do. Over and over God proves He is trustworthy. He keeps His promises in His time. Make it your aim to always put your trust in God.

1. What promises did God give to Abraham? Which has God fulfilled up to this point?
2. What do you believe God's people learned through these 10 plagues? What do you believe Pharaoh learned?
3. When you sprain your ankle, there comes a time you have to trust the strength of that ankle to hold up your weight by putting pressure on it. How did God's people place a similar trust in God here in the Exodus? And, how are we to do the same today?

Monday December 23rd

Exodus 13:1-10

In today's reading we return to some laws around the feasts—the Passover and Unleavened Bread. When God's people entered the promised land, they were not to forget these memorials—they were not to forget what the Lord had done for them. They weren't delivered from Egypt from their own strength or power, but by the powerful hand of God (v. 3, 9, 14, 16).

One of the features of keeping these memorials was that they were to keep them as a family (v. 8). There's something special about sharing your faith as a family. There's something special about worshipping together as a family. Think about this scene in v. 8. Can you imagine a parent teaching their child about the Passover? Describing the details (what to eat, how to eat), describing the reason (what happened in Egypt, the plagues, what happened that night of the Passover).

The same thing happens today. When parents share their faith with their children, when they teach and explain the Bible, when they model and demonstrate worship, they are helping the next generation trust and obey God. It's what Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

So keep worshipping, keep learning, keep growing—together as a family in Christ!

1. Ask your parents, why do you believe in God/Jesus?
2. Ask your parents what your faith means to you. What difference has Christ made in your life? Why did you give your life to Jesus?
3. Ask your parents what has helped your faith the most? What were times your faith was challenged? How did you overcome it? What do you want me to know by the time I'm your age?

Saturday February 1st

Exodus 38

Finally—the Tabernacle is completed! It took a long time. And, as our reading today showed, it cost a lot of money. We don't have the same equivalents today, but here we read words like "talents" or "shekels." That was their currency back in those days. When you take the time to look at the numbers listed here, it seems like the cost to build the Tabernacle was expensive. While that might have seem as costly, it was certainly worth every shekel. God was worth the best they have to give!

Here's a thought for today—what does it cost to be a Christian today?

In one sense it costs nothing! It cost Jesus His life—His coming to earth, dying on the cross. He purchased the church with His own blood (AC 20:28). Jesus gave His life a ransom for many (MATT 20:28). Though it cost Jesus His life, it is free to us (Rev. 22:17), it is a gift (Rom. 6:23). Christ paid the price for our salvation.

And yet in another sense it costs us everything! When Jesus spoke about counting the cost of discipleship in Luke 14, that's exactly what Jesus said—there is a cost. One must be willing to give up anything that stands in the way of his being a disciple. Giving Jesus everything means that we give ourselves to Him. We take up our crosses daily and give our all—heart, mind, strength and will to Christ.

It might seem like it costs a lot—but God is worth the best we have to give!

1. Why did Jesus die on the cross?
2. Read Luke 14:25-25—what does it take to be a disciple of Jesus'?
3. What does Matthew 10:39 mean? How does Matthew 16:26 fit with this study?

Friday January 31st

Exodus 36-37

There's a lot in the end of this book about the Tabernacle. It was obviously a very important tent. While we read about a lot of details today, let's just think about the furniture in the first room and what we can learn from it. Each piece of furniture was used for worship to God by the priests. But if we were to stop and think about it, we can see elements of those furniture for our daily walk today:

- The lampstand—we today are sustained by the light of the Word (PS 119:105)
- The table of bread—today we are strengthened by the bread (John 6:35)
- The incense—our prayers that ascend to God (Rev. 5:8)

The Tabernacle was a shadow of the heavenly things (Hebrews 8:5). That special tent points us as readers to our relationship with Christ now. We considered this in an earlier lesson, the Old Testament points us to Jesus.

We've seen a lot from the Red Sea to here. There's been a lot of laws and rules. Stop and think—have we read anything that has pointed us to Jesus?

-
1. How is the Word like a light? How is the Word like bread?
 2. How did you see Jesus through Exodus 14-37?
 3. Draw out some similarities between Eden, the Tabernacle/Temple, and Heaven

Tuesday December 24th

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

We're going to the New Testament today. Here Paul writes to the brethren at the church in Corinth, and though he's writing about a specific issue, our two verses connect us back to the Exodus and the Passover. Paul writes that Christ is our Passover.

There are many similarities between Jesus and the Passover lamb. The lamb was innocent. The innocent suffered for the guilty. It was submissive and uncomplaining in death. Not a bone of it was broken. In eating the Passover the Israelites were rescued from death. The lamb was without spot or blemish. God's people were saved through the blood of the lamb.

There are likely more similarities than what's mentioned above, but you get the idea. The Passover lamb points us to the true Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). This is a great reminder—the Bible shows us Jesus. Even in the Old Testament we are taught about Jesus, what He came to do—to fulfill. Keep your eyes open for Jesus. From beginning to end, the Scripture points us to Jesus.

-
1. What does it mean to say that Jesus is the Lamb of God?
 2. What does Galatians 3:24 mean? Are there any similarities between the Passover and the Lord's Supper?
 3. As some have said before—"There's a scarlet thread of redemption that runs through the Bible." Think about this—from Exodus 1-13, how/where have you seen Jesus in these passages?

Thursday December 26th

Exodus 13:11-16

God had an expectation for His people—the 1st belongs to Him. The first of the animals, and the first born among the people. Why? Because of what God did for His people in Egypt. Pharaoh refused to let the people go, therefore God killed the Egyptian firstborn, but spared His own people. So God's people were to dedicate their firstborn to the Lord. The firstborn of the animals were to be sacrificed, and the firstborn of the people were to be redeemed (bought back) by giving their money to the Lord (see Numbers 18:15-16).

There's a good principle for us to learn here—God gets the best. God deserves the best. The first animals. The firstborn. The first-fruits of the land were to belong to the Lord (EX 34:26; LEV 2:12). First is not second. It's not third or fourth. It is the first. Before I enjoy these blessings I will FIRST give them to God. It's a way of giving thanks. It's a way of showing God how He is most important to me.

Think of this—how can I give God the first today? We all know what leftovers are. We usually talk about leftover with food. Rather than a hot, fresh meal, we re-heat the leftovers to extend a meal. Left-over means that greater portions are given to someone (something) else, and whatever remains can now be shared. God deserves better than our leftovers. Colossian 1:18—Jesus is deserving to have the “first place in everything” (NASB). Just like Israel of old, give God your best!

-
1. Why should we give God our best?
 2. Explore this thought—how can I give God the “first” today? What are some examples of things we can give God the “first” of?
 3. Dig deep for this question—why does God want our best? Is it that He needs it? Or is there more to us giving God the best of what we have?

Thursday January 30th

Exodus 35

The people have started building God's house! The people had a willing heart (v. 5) to help and contribute to this incredible project. These people show us a good example of giving. They gave voluntarily—they each brought what they could (v. 5-7). They were united in their giving—everyone was moved to give some (notice the words “all” v. 25-29). They gave gladly, and they gave generously.

It's important to give. Paul quoted Jesus by saying it's better to give than to receive (AC 20:35). Giving is a way of helping another person. Giving reflects on the fact that we have received. Giving helps us be less clingy to our “things” and more focused on how to love and serve other people. It's important to give.

Each Sunday we have a collection, we as members of this local congregation give some of what we have earned back to the Lord. Just like in Exodus 35, we give the money so that the work of the Lord can continue on.

You may not have a lot of money (or any money) but you can still give. Can you give your time? Can you give your talents? Can you give of your kindness to another person? When you've received great blessings (like we have), you can't help but want to share with someone in return. Look for ways this week to give something to someone else!

-
1. What can you give to someone who may be in need?
 2. Why is the attitude of giving just as important as the giving itself?
 3. What is the work of the church? What does the church use its money for?

Tuesday January 28th

Exodus 34:18-35; Hebrews 9:11-12

Moses came down from the mountain and something was different. His face was shining bright. It was so bright that the people couldn't look at him. They made Moses put a veil over his face. It was impressive to see—that Moses was shining because he had been in the presence of God.

When we as God's people today spend time with God through reading His words, through prayer, through worship—God transforms us as well (Romans 12:1-2). He does so in a way that is likely to be visible to others. Just like the Apostles, the world today should recognize that we have been with Jesus (AC 4:13).

The Hebrew writer reminds us unlike that unlike Moses, Jesus has gone into the true holy of holies, into the very presence of God—Heaven. And it is the hope of we who are Christians to go to this same place—to stand in the presence of God and see His glory. That's why the Hebrew writer would say that our hope has entered beyond the veil (Heb. 6:19-20). Jesus prepared the way home to Heaven—keep journeying with Jesus. We'll see a greater glory than Moses did—we'll see the very face of God!

-
1. Why was Moses' face shining?
 2. What are some ways people can recognize we have been with Jesus? What will they see?
 3. Your friend Sarah has a question about whether we should still observe the Sabbath. She wonders if we are still under the old covenant. Look at 2 Corinthians 3, and see how this passage helps answer Sarah's question.

Friday December 27rd

Exodus 13:17-22

The Israelites start their journey to the Promised Land. They're not left to find the way on their own—God is leading them! By a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, God provided His people direction and guidance on their journey.

In v. 17-18, God didn't take them the obvious way. He didn't take them the way many probably thought they would go. It would have been closer to go by the land of the Philistines. But God knew better. That was going to be a rough path. They'd likely end up fighting with the Philistines, and may give up on the journey to Canaan. So God took them through the wilderness.

We may wonder the way God leads us through life. We may question the direction we receive from His words. We might have an easier, quicker route in our minds. But remember, the easiest path in life is not always the best path. God led His people through a detour, through a wilderness, by a dry and desolate place—to keep them safe, to test them to see if they would trust in Him, to cause them to trust even more in Him.

Remember—God's way is always the best way. He knows the beginning from the end, when all I can see is the steps I take today. God is the way-maker (John 14:6), the mountain-mover (Matthew 17:20), the problem-solver and burden-lifter (1 Peter 5:7). Follow God wherever He leads.

-
1. How did God lead His people to Canaan? How does God lead us today?
 2. Look at Matthew 7:13-14—what does this have to do with our study today?
 3. God's path may require patience and waiting for things I want to enjoy today. It may seem like a wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. Give some examples of things I may have/enjoy one day but not today. What can help me stay on God's path and wait for those blessings rather than choosing my path today?

Saturday December 28th

Exodus 14:1-9

It didn't take long—Pharaoh had a change of heart. Think about it, with the Israelites gone who would do all their work? They lost free labor. Life was going to get hard in Egypt. Not for this Pharaoh. He's rallying the troops and is going to chase down those Israelites. God knew it. And now Moses knows it. God had a plan for these angry Egyptians—His people just didn't know it yet.

Pharaoh here is like the bad habit you can't shake, or the shameful guilt you can't overcome, it's the bully who won't go away, the fear that won't let up. I think everyone has some sort of Pharaoh-type problem in their life. It seems like it's solved, only to find out it's still there and coming after you again. You might have these moments in your life where the problems of yesterday keep popping up in your today's and tomorrow's.

What do we do with the problems that won't go away? Remember what else will not leave you—or WHO else won't leave you. God was with His people in Egypt. God saw His people safely through the plagues. And even here, trapped by the sea—God is there. God is with you through your storms. God can see you through your hard times, no matter how long they last. Just remember, however big this storm may seem, or how strong and threatening this Pharaoh may seem, your God is bigger, stronger, and will see you through.

-
1. What should we do when we are afraid?
 2. What are some "Pharaohs" that have popped up in your life? (Things that might cause fear or frustration). What can you do about it?
 3. Your friend Jill is continually burdened by a big mistake from her past. She feels constantly reminded of what she's done (whether by others, or by simply remembering). What advice would you give to Jill about her problem?

Monday January 27th

Exodus 34:1-17

In his anger, Moses threw down the two tablets of stone and they broke. This chapter describes how God had Moses replace the tablets. The people still needed a law. This time it was Moses who prepared and wrote on the tablets. These tablets would last for a long time to come.

Notice v. 6-8. Did you see how God is described? God is loving, compassionate and merciful, and He is also just and wrathful. He forgives, but He does not leave the guilty unpunished. God is both.

To be like God is to be both—law and love. It is to be one who stands for justice, who doesn't tolerate sin, who is serious about keeping the law of the Lord. It is also to be loving and merciful, to be patient and gracious, to be one who gives a second chance. We need both. One without the other isn't right—isn't God. God is both. Jesus was called the fullness of grace and truth (John 1:14). Grace and truth. Love and law. Mercy and justice. It's the balance.

Are you living in that balance? Do you love God's law? Are you trying to please Him by doing what His words say? Do you love others? Are you a patient and merciful person? Are you known for your forgiveness and giving others a second chance? Just like walking across the balance beam—don't lean only on one side. Be like God. Be balanced.

-
1. What is justice? What is mercy?
 2. What happens when a person is only one of those extremes—law or love? What does that look like?
 3. People tend to go from one extreme to the other. Where do most young people tend to line up—law or love? Where do most older people tend to line up—law or love? How can each group help the other to find the balance?

Saturday January 25th

Exodus 33

Bad times come. Hard moments arise. There are consequences. We repent. We learn. And we continue on. That's what happened here—the journey continued. God continued to lead the way to the promised land. If you've stumbled in sin, don't quit. Don't you EVER quit. Repent. Confess. Seek God's forgiveness. Rise up, and keep going.

One of the memorable things from this chapter is the request that Moses made. He asked to see God's glory. Isn't that an amazing request? What may be more amazing is God's response that no man can see God's face and live. That's how awesome He is. So rather than seeing God's face, God let's Moses see His back as He passed by. Don't you wish you could be there with Moses to have seen that!!

Have you ever wondered what God looks like? Have you wondered what His voice sounds like? Have you imagined hearing God say your name, saying "_____ - well done good and faithful servant." There are times it may be hard to serve the invisible God. But remember—there are some who have seen God. No, not God the Father. There were some who saw Jesus—and in seeing Jesus they saw the glory of God (John 1:14). And though we haven't seen Jesus, and witnessed first hand His miracles, we believe (John 20:29). And one day, if we continue faithful to God, we will live in His home—in Heaven, and there we will see God face to face (Revelation 22:4). We will see what Moses never saw—we will see God, and be with Him forever. What a wonderful day that will be!

-
1. What is Heaven? What will it be like?
 2. What did Jesus shows us about God the Father?
 3. Here's an assignment—think about introducing one friend to another friend. How would you describe them? What details would you include? Now here's the task: how would you introduce God to your friend?

Monday December 30th

Exodus 14:10-22

What do you do when you seem trapped and there's no way forward? That's what God's people felt. They were trapped between a giant sea and an angry Egyptian army. But that's when God showed why He's God—He did the impossible and provided a path through the water.

That's our God—able to do the impossible. Breaking down mighty Jericho walls, causing the sun to sit still, killing a giant with a stone, swallowing a prophet with a big fish, parting a sea in two—that's our God. The things that we can't even imagine, that seem impossible, are nothing to God.

This section should be a great reminder that God can do anything. There is nothing too great for God. When you feel like you're facing an impossible situation, remember your God makes all things possible. Is it a sickness? Is it finding a solution to a tough problem? Is it overcoming sin—a bad habit? Is it reaching a lost friend? All things are possible with God. Look at Ephesians 3:20-21—God is able to do more than what I can ask or even think. The point is this—PRAY BIG PRAYERS!

Are you afraid? Pray. Are you needing wisdom/answers? Pray. Are you feeling alone? Pray. Does this situation seem impossible? Pray. The God who parts the seas answers your prayers today.

-
1. Sing—my God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there's nothing my God cannot do
 2. How does the parting of the Red Sea help strengthen your faith?
 3. Give some examples of some big prayers. What does it look like to deepen our prayers? What's the connection between deep prayers and deep faith?

Tuesday December 31st

Exodus 14:23-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

The Apostle Paul wrote that we are to give thanks in everything. The Israelites had great reasons to give thanks to God. They once were slaves of the Egyptians, but thanks to the mighty hand of God they were delivered, rescued, freed! God led them out, God made a path forward, and here in Exodus 14 God defeated their enemies. How great is our God!

This would be a great day to take a little inventory of all the things you have to thank God for. Here's a small list:

- Jesus (the cross, the resurrection, forgiveness of sins, the hope of Heaven)
- The Bible
- Our family, our friends, the church the people who mean the most to us
- Your talents and abilities God gave you
- Your physical blessings—your health, home, clothes, things you enjoy

On and on we could go. Why not take time tonight and give thanks to God!

1. List some things you are thankful to God for.
2. What would make your list if you were an Israelite during the Exodus?
3. Say a prayer tonight of JUST THANKS and thank God for who He is and what He's done in your life!

Friday January 24th

Exodus 32:19-35

Moses is mad. The Moses who pled for the people's mercy before has come down from the mountain and is enraged with their sin. How could they turn their back on God? How could they worship a lifeless statue when they just saw the living God on mount Sinai? Sin is frustrating. It is a disgrace to every nation (PV 14:34).

There are times when we see sin. We see sin pushed through the media, commercials, billboards, music and movies. We hear of some laws passed in our country that allow sin to continue. Maybe we see sin through the choices of those in our lives around us. Remember that sin is never what it seems. It might seem fun. It might seem inviting. It might promise a good time. It might have seemed fun to dance around the golden calf. But those who built and worshipped the calf certainly didn't anticipate having it ground up and having to forcibly drink it (disgusting!). They didn't see that this choice for some ended in their death (v. 35).

It's hard to see some choose sin. It's especially hard when the person is close to me. There are some things that can upset us. There are some things that should bother us. It's never ok to break God's laws. There is never a right reason to sin. There are times, like Moses, that we can be moved with a righteous frustration over the battles that Satan has won in the lives of others. Like Moses—reach out to those who are sinning and help them choose right—choose Christ. Like Moses—lean on the Lord. God knows and understands. Hear this again—there is never a right reason to sin against God.

1. What is sin?
2. Why did these people build this idol? What does the fact these people rebelled so quickly after Sinai teach us about Satan and sin?
3. What does the balance look like—not whitewashing (pretending it's not so bad) sin, but not beating others over the head (cramming truth down their throats)? Why is this balance hard?

Thursday January 23rd

Exodus 32:1-18

This was a bad moment for God's people. Moses is up on the mountain receiving the law from God. The people felt he was taking too long, and in their impatience they decide to make an idol out of gold. Remember, God had just given His people laws that specifically said not to worship idols. Yet, they do. They build a golden calf and worship it as if it was their god—the one who delivered them out of Egypt. And rightfully God was very mad. What a disrespectful, evil and rebellious thing to do.

The one bright moment here is Moses. Moses pleads for these disrespectful and disobedient people. That's the true heart of a leader, always caring for the wellbeing of his people.

Idolatry is a problem. It was a problem then, and still is a problem today. Idolatry isn't merely about golden calves or wooden statues. Idolatry is the sin of misplaced allegiance. Idolatry is loving anything more than God. Money can be an idol (Matt. 6:24). Relationships—friendships, boyfriends or girlfriends, husbands or wives or kids can be idols. Beauty, intellect, physical strength—can all be idols. Jobs—success and power can be an idol. Things—phones, clothes, video games, toys, cars—can all be idols. When I start looking to the people/things in my life for the things that only come from God, I'm struggling with this problem. Nothing on earth can save my soul. Nothing and no one is worthy of my worship except one—God. You may enjoy God's blessings, just remember where they came from, and remember who is most important in this life.

-
1. What was an idol? Why did Israel make idols?
 2. Name the common idols of those your age. How do we overcome idolatry?
 3. There are subtle idols pushed by our culture. What do you feel are being pushed the most? Beauty? Intellect? Acceptance? What happens when one worships these things? Read Psalm 115 and discuss how this psalm helps us have a right perspective.

Thursday January 2nd

Exodus 15:1-19

Today's reading is a song of Moses. Out of joy for their deliverance Moses sings this beautiful song to the Lord. The song provides some great descriptions of who God is: the people's strength (v. 2), His people's song (v. 2), His people's salvation (v. 2), a warrior (v. 3), the Lord (v. 3), the deliverer (v. 4-5), majestic in power (v. 6), the conqueror of His enemies (v. 6), the controller of nature (v. 8), unique—no God can be compared to Him (v. 11), majestic in holiness (v. 11), awesome in praises (v. 11), a wonder-worker (v. 11), a guide (v. 13), a redeemer of His people (v. 13), King over all (v. 18)

Do you like to sing? When most people are happy, they sing! It's a natural response. Even James said that if we find ourselves joyful, we should sing praises (James 5:13). Singing songs of praise to God uses our God-given voice to honor Him. It is connecting our heart with our voice to share our true feelings about God to Him.

We learn through singing—especially when it comes to these songs of praises. Songs like that of Moses' are rich in truths about who God is and what He has done. Certainly our assemblies as a church are filled with singing—but singing to God shouldn't be limited to those assemblies. When you find yourself full of joy, wanting to express your joy and thanks to God, why not try singing a song to Him?

-
1. What are some of your favorites songs about God?
 2. What stood out to you in Moses' song? What lines did you really like? Why?
 3. If you were to write a song about God, what would it say? What direction would you take? What would you include? What kind of song would it be (how would it be sung)?

Friday January 3rd

Exodus 15:20-27

God's people were thirsty on their journey to the Promised Land. The waters they came to were bitter. The problem was not that they were thirsty, but that they complained and grumbled at Moses about it. The waters weren't the only bitter thing in this wilderness. But through the power of God, a tree turns those bitter waters into something sweet.

It seems backwards that in the same chapter you have songs of praise/thanksgiving and then words of grumbling and complaining. But, that's life. One moment you're walking through the parted seas, and the next you're parched in a wilderness. Do you know what helps those bitter moments? Go back in your mind and remember when God has been with you before. Oh had God's people just remembered that He made a way through the sea they would have trusted that God could and would provide for them again.

Your situation may be bitter right now—homework burden too heavy, peers at school behaving meanly towards you, or simply things not going your way. Remember, even though the waters around you may be bitter, your heart doesn't have to be that way. Trust that God knows and cares, and that things won't always be this way. Don't have a bitter heart. Choose joy over bitterness. Choose peace over strife. Choose to trust in God rather than complaining. Choose to be sweet in a bitter moment.

1. How did God provide water for His people?
2. How can Philippians 4:8 help our hearts remain sweet in bitter moments?
3. Our thoughts/attitudes matter to God—true or false. Prove your answer.

Tuesday January 21st

Exodus 29-31

In this reading we look at the consecration of the priests, some of the offerings expected from God's people, the alter of incense, the contribution/tax requirements, and then the organization of the builders (getting the workers together). Whoa—that's a lot of details! God is getting a lot of His laws started here in the wilderness before they get to the promised land. They have a lot to learn if they're going to be who God wants them to be. We do too, don't we?

Do you know who Bezalel is? How about Oholiab? These men are found in chapter 31. They were men skilled in wisdom, knowledge, and in craftsmanship. It is these men who will use their God-given talents to help form and forge all the furniture and equipment for the Tabernacle that we've been reading about for the past few chapters.

Are you good with your hands? Can you build things? How about cooking—are you good at making delicious food? Are you good with words? Can you write letters, books, poems with ease? Are you good with music? Can you sing/play well? Are you a good learner—some subjects come easy to you? Are you a good teacher—you're good with people? Isn't it amazing that God gave each of us different talents and abilities. We're not the same—and that's a good thing! Don't worry about trying to be like someone else, to try and share the same talent as another. What are you good at doing? Can you use your talent to serve the Lord? Can you uplift another's spirit? Can you encourage someone in their walk with God? Can you use your gifts to bless another, pointing them to Jesus? Be like these two hardworking men in Exodus 31 and use your skill for God!

1. What are some talents God has given you?
2. Once you know your talent, what are ways you can put it into use for good? List several examples of how to use your talent to bless another.
3. Sometimes people sit on their talent. They just need the right push/encouragement to put it to use. Tomorrow, go to one who is younger and encourage them to use their talent for the Lord. Help them see ways they can do so.

Monday January 20th

Exodus 26-28

Today's reading is a long reading. It describes the Tabernacle details, and the Priesthood. Can you picture the tent in your mind? Can you imagine the different courts? Can you see the different colored curtains? Can you imagine what the veil would have looked like? Can you imagine the altar? At first it would have been fresh, clean, and bright before it would be worn from fire and blood.

In chapter 28 we read about the priests. They were the ones who were to lead God's people in worship. The priests were mediators. They represented God to the people (teaching His laws), and the people to God (offering sacrifices for their sins to God). The priests came from a special family/tribe—the tribe of Levi. Only those from this family could serve and lead in worship. And only the high priest could enter the room beyond the veil, the holy of holies, where the ark of the covenant rested.

There were special laws about worship at this time. From how to worship, when to worship, who was to lead the worship, what those priests were to wear—lots of laws. But did you know that today, all who are in Jesus are priests? That's what 1 Peter 2:9-10 teaches us. It's no longer a special family or tribe. We are all priests and we all offer our sacrifices to God (Rom. 12:1-2). We are all one in Christ, one people, one nation of priests!

-
1. What was the job description of a priest?
 2. Since we are priests, what does Romans 12:1-2 mean? What does it mean to offer our lives as a "living" sacrifice?
 3. Draw out/diagram the Tabernacle and courts (you can use the back page for an example). What was this all about? How does the Tabernacle represent how one today draws near to the presence of God?

Saturday January 4th

Exodus 16:1-21

Yesterday God's people were thirsty. In today's reading they're hungry! And once again they start grumbling and complaining. What does God do? He provides them food to eat. God gives them bread from the sky (manna), and quail.

The manna, bread from heaven, reminds us that God provides for our needs. When Israel needed a path He made a path through water. When they needed fresh water He gave them a sweet purifier through a tree. And now when hungry God gives His people bread from the sky. God knows what we need, and provides for our needs.

Jesus talked about God knowing what we need in Matthew 6:25-32. Don't worry about the things you need—food and clothing. God knows you need it, and God provides for what we need. Don't worry about the things you need—God provides. If we simply ask (Matthew 6:11), we can trust that God will care for us just as He does the rest of His creation.

Yes, we need to work hard. Yes this means jobs, money, labor, seeking and preparing the food—just like Israel had laws about gathering the manna/quail. But the point is don't worry about the things you need. Trust that God is good. Trust that God provides according to His will. Work hard and put your faith in God!

-
1. What was manna? How did God give it to His people?
 2. Why is it still important to work though we trust that God provides for our needs (see Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:22-25)?
 3. Look at John 6:47-51—Jesus talks about manna and compares it to Himself. What is Jesus' point? How is Jesus similar to manna—how is He different?

Monday January 6th

Exodus 16:22-36

There was something special about the 7th day to God and His people. It was the Sabbath. It was to be a day of rest. Just as God rested from His work in creating the world on the 7th day, God's people were to rest from all their work on the 7th day. In one sense, God is teaching His people about holiness, setting apart a day for God's purposes. In another sense, God is teaching His people about rest.

Rest is important. Often we are really busy—on the run and on the go all the time. Our minds and bodies are so overworked because we don't take the time to stop, slow down, and rest. Notice Ecclesiastes 10:10. What happens if a lumberjack keeps chopping with a dull axe? He won't get as much done. He'll have to work even harder with each swing. He'll get tired quicker. He might get sloppy and have an accident.

The same is true with us. Sometimes we need to just rest. No scheduled activity. No work. No distractions. Just rest. Let your mind and body rest. What you'll find is a sharper mind. You'll find a refreshed body—rejuvenated and full of energy, ready to get back to the work. No, we don't have the Sabbath command today under the law of Christ, but the principle God established is good. Take some time. Slow down. Learn to let your mind and body rest. You'll be glad you did!

-
1. What day was the Sabbath day? What were they to do on the Sabbath?
 2. What do you like to do to rest/relax? What can your parents do to help you have time to rest/relax?
 3. Look ahead, plan on a specific day some specific time to rest. No phone. No texting. Just unwind and be refreshed. Take that time to meditate and talk to God.

Saturday January 18th

Exodus 24-25

We're continuing to look at the law of God. In chapter 24 the people agree to God's covenant. They committed to follow everything it said. Oh that we all could have that same heart and mind about God's laws today! The chapter ends with Moses getting the 10 Commandments written on stone—what an amazing gift—to hold stones written on by the very finger of God!

In chapter 25 we read about a special place God wanted them to build. It was a sanctuary where worship and sacrifices were to be offered. It was a special place where God's presence could dwell among the people. This special tent was called the Tabernacle. In this reading we find the ark of the covenant, the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand. Each of these pieces pertained to important parts of the Tabernacle. The ark represented the presence of God. The table and lampstand were involved in the priest's worship to God.

Here's a thought for today—each piece had very specific requirements. Each had to be made of a certain material, in a certain length/size, covered with gold, finished with specific engravings or borders. What if the builders said, "I know God said make the table two cubits long, but imagine how much bread it could hold if it was 5 cubits long. Let's change it." Would God be pleased? No—because that's not what He wanted. That wasn't what He asked for. The same principle stays with us today—God doesn't want **innovation**, God wants **imitation**—in other words, God wants us to follow the pattern He's given to us in all things (Phil. 4:9).

-
1. What was the Tabernacle? What was it for?
 2. Pull out some specific details. Why do you believe God was so specific? Are there any specific details we are to follow today—found in the New Testament?
 3. Look at Hebrews 9:18-22 and Matthew 26:28. What role does blood play in the inauguration of a covenant? What does the blood of the covenant have to do with Jesus' death on the cross?

Friday January 17th

Exodus 22-23

Today's reading continues our look at the law of God. Remember—God wants His people to be like Him, to be holy. He doesn't want them to be like the world, living however they want to, doing things that would be evil or rebellious. So God gives His people laws to help them learn about respecting God, and loving/respecting one another.

Some of these laws seem like common sense—don't steal what's not yours. If you damage something that belongs to someone else, help make it right/fix it. Live pure. Care for those in need. Keep your word. Remember God's special days of worship.

There was also a section in the end of chapter 23 about God's plan for when they enter the promised land. The land was filled with evil nations. God told His people that they were to go in and drive the people out. Don't try to be like them. They were evil and rebellious. Drive them out and take over the land as yours. We'll see more about this soon.

Can you imagine driving down the road with no traffic signs? No stop signs. No lanes painted on the road. No speed limits. There'd be chaos. Lots of people would get hurt. Rules exist to establish order. Rules exist to maintain peace. There's a reason for God's laws. It wasn't to make life hard for His people. His rules then (just like His laws today) exist to help us live the right, holy lives He wants. While we may not completely understand it now, God's way is always the best way. Build your life on God's words!

-
1. Where were God's people going? Why?
 2. As you read through the laws, were there any that sounded strange to you? Are we under laws today? Where do we read them?
 3. "God has no right to tell me how to live my life." How would you answer this statement?

Tuesday January 7th

Exodus 17:1-16

Everyone needs someone. Moses did! God's people find themselves under attack by Amalek. Joshua the young captain is leading Israel's forces into battle. But the most amazing thing happened—so long as Moses held his hands up, the Israelites prevailed! Try holding your arms up for 1 minute straight—it's hard! They get heavy after a while. Moses needed some help—to rely on someone else's strength to keep his hands up. Aaron and Hur came to his aid, and because of it they won the battle.

There are going to be times in your life when the issues of life may seem real heavy, and you may feel like giving up and quitting. Don't! What you need is someone to help you bear your burden—someone to help lend you strength, to help hold you up when you're tired. You need good, godly friends in your life. You need the kind of friends who are most concerned with your soul, and are willing to help you bear your burdens (Galatians 6:2).

Do you have these kind of friends in your life? Do you have a relationship with older Christians who can offer their kind wisdom and advice in a time of need? Do you have godly peers who will support you in your walk with God? Do you have someone who you can go to in a time of need, who will listen to you and pray with you? Make sure you have good, strong, godly friends in your life—you will need them!

-
1. Who are some of your friends? What makes them good friends? What does it mean to be a good friend?
 2. How do you make friends? How do you keep friends? Who are your close friends?
 3. Proverbs 18:24 seems to be a true statement of today's times with the hundreds of social media friends. While you may have "friends" - who makes up your inner circle. Who would you go to/lean on in a moment of crisis?

Thursday January 9th

Exodus 2:18-22; 3:1

We're going back to Exodus 2-3 for today's reading. We need to refresh ourselves on where Moses traveled to, who he met, and how he started his family. When Pharaoh tried to kill Moses for striking down an Egyptian in defense of a Hebrew, Moses fled to Midian. There Moses comes to the rescue again, protecting some women at a well from some shepherds. Those women were all sisters, daughters of a man named Reul or Jethro. One of those women's name was Zipporah—the woman Moses chooses to marry. They have two sons, and start their family in the land of Midian.

Our stories are important, aren't they? It's interesting how every family has a story how it started. Some stories are very unique. Some are very adventurous (like Moses'). But every family has it's roots, it's starting place, it's own story to tell. What's the story of your family? How did it begin?

God knew what He was doing when He created the home. Family is important. With our family we know that we are safe and loved. We are supported by our family. We share our faith with our family. We honor and serve Christ as a family. If we're ever in need, we can always depend on our family. It's easy to think that Moses was a loner, but that's not true. By his side was his family. Today would be a great day to pause and say a prayer of thanks to God for your family.

-
1. What do you love about your family? What is your family's story?
 2. Does knowing Moses had his family with him change the way you see the story of the exodus? Why is having your family by your side comforting?
 3. What components of our family unit have been important/helpful to you?

Thursday January 16th

Exodus 20-21

In today's reading we see the law of God. There were many components to the law (as you see in chapter 21), but the first laws given are what's called the 10 Commandments

- You Shall have no other gods before Me
- You shall not make for yourself an idol
- You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain
- Remember the Sabbath
- Honor your father and your mother
- Shall not murder
- Shall not commit adultery
- Shall not steal
- Shall not bear false witnesses
- Shall not covet

Laws are important. The law was designed to help God's people live their best lives possible. They were designed to help them love each other and care for each other—to avoid sin and evil. The law was designed to help them become more like God. Life is better (best) when we learn to listen to God and follow His laws.

-
1. Why are laws/rules important? Why can God give us laws?
 2. Look through those 10 commandments. Can you sort them into categories (ones that are alike)? After doing so, what part of our daily lives does the 10 commandments cover?
 3. Are we under the 10 commandments today (under the law of Moses)? How would you answer this question (with book, chapter, and verse)?

Tuesday January 14th

Exodus 19:14-25

What an amazing scene! God comes upon the mountain and there's fire and smoke, loud sounds of a trumpet, the ground is quaking—it would be quite a frightening sight! God came down on the mountain, down to His people, to give them laws to help them be the holy people He expected.

This scene is important. It helps remind us about our role towards God. While our God is loving, and kind, He is also our creator, our Lord, and our King. God is to be respected. He's not like us. He's not like our friends. He is high and holy. He is strong and powerful. We certainly love God and trust God, and should always feel able to approach Him in prayer—but we need to remember who He is and show Him the respect He deserves.

How do we show God respect? In the ways we talk about Him. In the ways we talk to Him. In the way we worship. In how we read/listen/obey His words. In the way we live day to day. Just like with those in positions of authority—parents, teachers, officers—we show God great respect. He is not to be taken lightly. God means what He says. God is serious about His laws. One of the ways we show God that we love Him is by how we honor and respect Him.

-
1. What does respect mean? Give some examples of how to show respect.
 2. Make a list of ways we show respect towards God.
 3. Read Hebrews 12:18-24 and compare/contrast the two mountains—Sinai and Zion. What's the point the Hebrew writer is making? How is this point helpful today?

Friday January 10th

Exodus 18:1-12

This is a really neat moment. Moses shares with his father-in-law about what he experienced through the exodus. Can you imagine telling that story—sharing the details of what you witnessed first hand? Can you imagine the look of surprise and amazement on your listener? Moses shares it with Jethro and his response is one of great faith in God (v. 10-11).

There's nothing said in these chapters about Moses' father. At this point in his life, Moses is 80 years old, and it is likely that his father is dead. But he still has his father-in-law. There's something special about the role of a father. We want to make our father's proud. Good father's are teachers, and their lessons are abundant. They teach us about work, about responsibility, about inner strength, about God.

Here's a challenge for you—take some time this week and have a conversation with your dad. Ask him questions. Ask about his life, his story. Ask what's important to him. Ask him about his faith, about God, about how he keeps his walk with God strong. Share with him what's important to you. Share things you've learned, things you're working on. If you don't have a father, reach out to an older man at our church, one that you look up to and respect, and spend some time with him asking these same kinds of questions. You'll learn a lot, and be glad you did!

-
1. Can you name the members of Moses' family?
 2. Why do you think the role of a father is important? What are some lessons you've learned just from your father (or a father-figure)?
 3. Do some deep digging—Read Ephesians 2:11-16. What do these verses have to do with our reading in Exodus (especially v. 11-12).

Saturday January 11th

Exodus 18:13-27

Today we're continuing our chapter looking at Moses and his father-in-law. Jethro is able to see Moses in his element, as a leader of Israel, and his conclusion is, "the thing that you are doing is not good" (v. 17). It's not that Moses was a bad leader. Moses is an excellent teacher and leader of God's people. The problem is Moses was trying to do too much. This large nation of over 1 million people had only one judge: Moses! That's a lot of work on one person's shoulders.

So Jethro offers some advice, as good fathers do: delegate. Pick men, leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and let them handle all the lesser matters (v. 22).

There are times when we need help. There are times that the work load is too big for one person. When we try to do too much we end up wearing ourselves out (v. 18). It's ok to ask for help. It's ok to pass some opportunities off to someone else so that you can focus on the things you must do—things that may be more important. In order to say "yes" to the most important things in your life, you must learn to say "no" to some lesser important things. Don't over-extend yourself. Don't try to please everyone. Get your priorities set—what is most important? What HAS to be done today? And after setting your priorities, you are ready to make the right decisions, to choose the "best yes" you can without overloading your schedule. Sometimes less is more!

-
1. What was Moses' job?
 2. It's easy to overload our schedules with too many things to do. Sit down today and with the help of your parents create a "priority list." What is most important/what has to be done? Guard those priorities by saying "no" to things that are less important.
 3. Why do you think delegation is an important life principle? In what ways is it beneficial? What are some ways you can utilize delegation for your daily demands?

Monday January 13th

Exodus 19:1-13

God had a special relationship with His people. Notice what God said about the Israelites in v. 5-6:

- My own possession
- A kingdom of priests
- A holy nation

The people were special to God because He chose them all the way back to their ancestor Abraham, to be a special nation. They were special to God because He rescued them from bondage in Egypt. And what God wanted for His special people was to act as such—to be holy, set apart from the rest of the people and nations of the world. They were to be different—to be righteous, to follow God's commands because they were His special people.

Holy. We sing that word in many of our hymns. We hear it spoken in sermons. What is holy? To be holy is to be set apart from everything common and ordinary. It is special. My mother had ordinary dishes we used every day, very plain. But she also had very nice china, only to be used with special guests. They were set apart for a special purpose. That's holy. God is holy—there is no one like Him. He's not ordinary or common. God calls us to be holy—not like the world in the way we think or act, but to be like Him. If you're in Christ you're part of God's special people (1 Pet. 2:9-10). Remember who you are—be holy!

-
1. Define holy. How is God holy?
 2. What was the purpose of God's people being "holy?" What were God's expectations for His people in v. 5-6 and has it changed today?
 3. Christians are supposed to be different. Is that statement true? In what ways is it true? Is there a "wrong" different we are to avoid? What is holiness all about?