

Exodus: A Glimpse of God



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Introduction

Introduction



Why read this book?

A spectacular escape and a hair-raising chase scene are only two of the many stories that fill the pages of Exodus. But this book is much more than an epic adventure; it recounts the supernatural rescue of an entire people by their God. Despite God's intervention, the Israelites seem unable to remain loyal to him—even though he produces miracle after miracle for them. But seeing their faltering faith can actually encourage us with a vivid lesson: Even imperfect people can get to know God, who loves them perfectly.

Who wrote this book?

Moses.

Why was it written?

To remind the Israelites how God had rescued them from oppression.

When was it written?

Approximately 1440 B.C.

What was the historical setting for this book?

Jacob had migrated to Egypt with his family to escape a famine in Canaan some four centuries earlier. But the “land of escape” became a “land of bondage” as the Egyptians sought to maintain their dominance over the increasing number of Israelites by forcing them into slave labor. Shortly before his death in the desert, Moses reflected on and penned the swirling events of Israel's escape from Egypt.

What to look for in Exodus:

Exodus spotlights God's direct involvement in human history—how he goes to astonishing lengths to reach those he loves. He helps Moses overcome an incredible inferiority complex, for example, to become a prophet in Israel. Repeatedly, Exodus shows how much God responds to people who, aware of their weaknesses, trust him as their only hope.

—*From the Quest Study Bible (Zondervan)*



How to use this resource for a group study

How to use this resource for a group study



This Bible study can be used for an individual or a group. If you intend to lead a group study, follow these simple suggestions.

- 1** Make enough copies of the Participant's Guide for everyone in the group. If you would like your group to have more information, feel free to copy the leader's guide for them instead.
- 2** Don't feel that you have to use all the material in the study. Almost all of our studies have more information than you can get through in one session, so feel free to pick and choose the teaching information and questions that will meet the needs of your group. Use the teaching content of the study in any of these ways: for your own background and information; to read aloud (or summarize) to the group; for the group to read silently.
- 3** Make sure your group agrees to complete confidentiality. This is essential to getting people to open up.
- 4** When working through the questions, be willing to make yourself vulnerable. It's important for your group to know that others share their experiences. Make honesty and openness a priority in your group.
- 5** Begin and end the session in prayer.



God Hears

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Hears

No matter how tough our circumstances, we can be certain that God has a plan.

A big part of life is coping with change—and perhaps even more so, seeking to be an agent of change. We also have a crucial need to persevere through trials. Exodus addresses these things and is a foundational book for understanding our desire to control and how easily we are distracted from God (Ex. 12:12).

Moses is credited as the compiler of Exodus (24:4); the book is given this name in the Greek Septuagint, largely because the overriding theme is the “exit” from Egypt and the various calamities that occur to make that happen, as well as the trials and teaching that come along the way as God’s people travel from the place of bondage to the brink of the Promised Land. But most of all, Exodus reveals God’s plan.

Scripture: **Exodus 1–2**

Based On: **The Bible study “Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today’s Mind,” by Dave DeLuca**



God Hears

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

Exodus helps us understand how God calls us (Ex. 3:1–4:17); the fundamentals of faith, including pictorial images of the freedom that comes through the blood (Ex. 12:7–14); the walk of faith and overcoming its challenges (Ex. 13:17–23:33); the process of victory through prayer (Ex. 17:8–13); insight into who God really is (Ex. 19:17–20:26); and the relationship between the law of the Old Testament (Ex. 20:1–23:19) and the mercy given because of the blood sacrifice (Ex. 25:8; Heb. 9:11–15; James 2:13).

Discussion Starters:

[Q] What is your favorite action movie and why? What themes run throughout?

Leader's Note: Answers may include the following: battles of good vs. evil; light overcoming darkness; captives being freed; a continuation of a previous story, etc.

[Q] Why do you think these themes keep running through our stories and our historical accounts?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: To help us think about why the themes we see in Exodus are so relevant today.

Activity: As an alternative to the above questions, compile a list of movies or classic stories that include the above-mentioned themes (battles of good vs. evil; light overcoming darkness; captives being freed; a continuation of a previous story). Write the title of each movie or story on a slip of paper (make sure you have one for each person in your group). Put them in a bowl or hat and ask each person to draw out a slip of paper and read it aloud. After a person reads a title, ask the group what they think the overriding theme of that movie or book is. When finished, discuss how the themes are similar and relate them to the story of the Book of Exodus.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: The Book of Exodus opens with a longing for freedom in the midst of enormous challenges.



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For background as to what is happening in Exodus, read Genesis 50:21–23. At this point, reconciliation has taken place among Joseph and his brothers, and all their needs are cared for. It's quite a contrast to the beginning of Exodus. Read Exodus 1:1–14.

[Q] List the words or phrases in the opening verses that give us perspectives and feelings as this book begins.

[Q] In what sense do you think you're in on a continuation of a story (see Gen. 50:15–22)?

[Q] In Exodus 1:1–14, what changes and why? Note some of the words and phrases, and write down a word that describes your reaction to them:

Exodus 1:8 (new king) _____

Exodus 1:10 (deal shrewdly) _____

Exodus 1:11 (oppress) _____

Exodus 1:11 (forced labor) _____

Exodus 1:13 (ruthlessly) _____

Exodus 1:14 (bitter with hard work) _____

[Q] How do these thoughts seem to reflect the moral climate in our world as you think of:

- How our world has changed since the events of 9/11
- The changes that take place with each new local and national political change
- The rampant sexual explosion in our society
- The breakdown of order in our public schools
- The drug or alcohol problems in our society

Teaching Point Two: God has a timeless understanding of our world.

The size of the Israelite population was a threat to the pharaoh. As we read the beginning of Exodus, we are reminded that the world has always been ruthless, but that people who trust God in the midst of trouble may grow the more they are pressed. Scripture shows us how to live confidently in a tough world.

[Q] What makes Exodus 1:12 somewhat encouraging?

[Q] When have you seen or heard of people who are oppressed actually being strengthened? How did James say this can happen (James 1:2–4)?



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[Q] Read Romans 5:3 and 2 Corinthians 1:4–11. How did Paul say that tribulations affect people?

Teaching Point Three: God prepares his people to be deliverers.

Read Exodus 2:1–25. Look carefully at the attitudes and actions God uses to preserve and prepare a person to be used by him. Notice how well God prepared Moses. He was raised in an Egyptian home so that he understood the culture, but given religious nurturing by his own mother. Then he was driven out into the wilderness to walk a tough path that he would later help others walk through.

[Q] On a whiteboard or poster board, copy the following column titles and verses. Then write the answers as people read and discuss the verses indicated.

Scripture	Person Described	Attitude suggested	Action taken
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Exodus 1:8–14; 2:15

Exodus 1:15–21

Exodus 2:1–7

Exodus 2:4, 7

Exodus 2:5–6

Exodus 2:11

Exodus 2:13

Exodus 2:15

[Q] What was happening behind the scenes that Moses could not see (Ex. 2:23)?

[Q] Though God had already been active, what does the Bible say happened?

a. God _____ (Ex. 2:24a)

b. God _____ (Ex. 2:24b)

c. God _____ (Ex. 2:25a)

d. God _____ (Ex. 2:25b)



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Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Action Points:

- On your own this week, read Ephesians 1:3–6. How does the way God prepared Moses help you better understand being chosen before the creation of the world?

- The people of Exodus 1 were in physical bondage. Most of the people we know are in spiritual bondage. Read the following verses, and describe the spiritual bondage mentioned in each one.

Luke 4:18

1 John 2:15–17

Romans 6:17; 7:15–25

James 3:16–18

Jeremiah 9:23–24

- What circumstances and people did God bring together to prepare you to be his deliverer for the place you live and work in? What wilderness have you walked through that you might be able to help others with?

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon



God Hears

Participant's Guide

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God Hears

No matter how tough our circumstances, we can be certain that God has a plan.

A big part of life is coping with change—and perhaps even more so, seeking to be an agent of change. We also have a crucial need to persevere through trials. Exodus addresses these things and is a foundational book for understanding our desire to control and how easily we are distracted from God (Ex. 12:12).

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Based On: **The Bible study “Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today’s Mind,” by Dave DeLuca**



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Part 1 Identify the Issue

Exodus helps us understand how God calls us (Ex. 3:1–4:17); the fundamentals of faith, including pictorial images of the freedom that comes through the blood (Ex. 12:7–14); the walk of faith and overcoming its challenges (Ex. 13:17–23:33); the process of victory through prayer (Ex. 17:8–13); insight into who God really is (Ex. 19:17–20:26); and the relationship between the law of the Old Testament (Ex. 20:1–23:19) and the mercy given because of the blood sacrifice (Ex. 25:8; Heb. 9:11–15; James 2:13).

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: The Book of Exodus opens with a longing for freedom in the midst of enormous challenges.

Note some of the words and phrases, and write down a word that describes your reaction to them:

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Teaching Point Two: God has a timeless understanding of our world.

Teaching Point Three: God prepares his people to be deliverers.

a. God _____ (Ex. 2:24a)

b. God _____ (Ex. 2:24b)

c. God _____ (Ex. 2:25a)

d. God _____ (Ex. 2:25b)



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God Is Extraordinarily Patient

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Is Extraordinarily Patient

God invites our questions and patiently helps us trust him in the midst of them.

All of us have questions for God. Whether it's as large a question as why there is evil in the world or as small a question as why we faced a disappointment today, we all have questions that remain unanswered. Yet, through Moses, we see that God listens to our questions and lets us struggle as we grope for answers. Hopefully, in the midst of the struggle, we will learn to trust him.

Scripture: **Exodus 3-5**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind,"** by Dave DeLuca



God Is Extraordinarily Patient

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] As we think back to our last lesson and how God preserved and prepared Moses, share who prayed for you and what circumstances led to your meeting God more personally?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: To help us see how God has been working in us all along to bring us to where we are today.

Activity: Divide your life into three equal (or nearly equal) parts. For example, if you are 30 years old, you would break up your life like this: 0–10, 11–20, 21–30. Next, think of one significant event in each of those time periods, and share those events with the rest of the group. Discuss as a group how each of those things helped build you into a person who can minister to others today.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God is patient with our questions and doubts.

Read Exodus 3:1–4:17.

[Q] What things did Moses think might not be in God's control, and thus might need a shove from him (Ex. 2:11–15)?

[Q] Reread Exodus 2:23–25. What do you find ironic about these verses?

[Q] What “big questions” have you always wanted to ask of God?

[Q] Read the following verses and see if any of your questions are similar to Moses' questions. If so, let's talk about those questions.

Exodus 3:11

Exodus 3:13

Exodus 4:1

Exodus 4:13 (implied)



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[Q] How did God respond to Moses' questions?

[Q] In what ways has God responded to your "big questions"?

Teaching Point Two: God assures us along the way.

Read Exodus 4:18–5:23.

[Q] What assurances did God give Moses in what he was called to do?

Exodus 3:12

Exodus 3:14

Exodus 4:5

Exodus 4:11–12

[Q] What similar assurances does God give us? List as many as you find in these verses on a whiteboard or poster board.

1 John 5:13–14, 18, 20

John 10:5, 27, 29

Hebrews 13:5

[Q] Which assurances do you need to be reminded of most frequently?

[Q] Jeremiah 9:23–24 indicates three things in which people put their trust. Which of these most tempt you?

[Q] How do the following verses help us to put trust in God alone: Isaiah 40:6–8; Matthew 6:19–21; 2 Corinthians 4:16.

[Q] Look again at these passages. What elements of life are worth investing in?

[Q] How does that change how we relate to the people around us?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Brandon O'Brien shares the following at PreachingToday.com:

I hail from a long line of worriers. From my dad, I inherited an inability to sleep until I resolve whatever issue is currently on my mind; from my mom, I received a proclivity for stomachaches before exams.



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It's not all bad, I suppose; worry has historically been a powerful motivator for me. One Saturday night I went to sleep unprepared for the sermon I was set to deliver the next morning. I dreamed all my biblical studies professors, previous pastors, and mentors arrived at church to hear me preach, only to discover that I was shooting from the hip. I woke up in a cold sweat and worked on my sermon till morning.

I'd like to think that my tendency to worry is evidence of my unwavering sense of responsibility. Truth is, worry reveals a deep-seated self-reliance. I might say with Oliver Cromwell, "Put your trust in God; but mind to keep your powder dry." But when I remember God's faithfulness in the past, and remember that he alone has brought me through, I am able to replace worry with worship. This simple action ensures that my faith is not in my keeping the powder dry, but in God's promise to secure the victory.

Action Points:

- **What assurance do you need today? What task are you working on that needs special prayer? Share it with the group.**
- **On your own, look again at Exodus 3–4. How does this account make you more impressed with God and his patience toward you and your circumstances?**
- **Make a list of questions you have for God. Over the week, search the Scriptures for answers to these questions and pray for understanding and trust even if you never have all the answers.**

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon



God Is Extraordinarily Patient

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God invites our questions and patiently helps us trust him in the midst of them.

All of us have questions for God. Whether it's as large a question as why there is evil in the world or as small a question as why we faced a disappointment today, we all have questions that remain unanswered. Yet, through Moses, we see that God listens to our questions and lets us struggle as we grope for answers. Hopefully, in the midst of the struggle, we will learn to trust him.



Scripture: **Exodus 3–5**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



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Part 1 Identify the Issue

[Q] As we think back to our last lesson and how God preserved and prepared Moses, share who prayed for you and what circumstances led to your meeting God more personally?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God is patient with our questions and doubts.

Teaching Point Two: God assures us along the way.

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Action Points:

- **What assurance do you need today? What task are you working on that needs special prayer? Share it with the group.**
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God Is Supreme

Leader's Guide

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God Is Supreme



God will honor his name and be victorious in the end.

We have all experienced times when we thought everything was going wrong. What Exodus teaches us is that in spite of all the difficulties, God is always working behind the scenes. And in this case, there were some pretty spectacular results!

Scripture: **Exodus 7–11**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Is Supreme

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] State whether you agree or disagree with the following statements, and explain why:

___ God always gives specifics about his direction so his people are not needlessly surprised.

___ If we won't obey God in the small things he can't use us in the bigger things.

___ When we move with the power of God, God will temper opposition as we proclaim his message.

___ Complaining to God is unbiblical.

Let's see if our opinions on any of these change as we delve further into Exodus.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God is all powerful, but cares about the details of our lives as he works behind the scenes.

Joshua Harris shares this story:

I knew a girl who used to think the stars were tiny specks of light just over her head. I'm not kidding. And she wasn't in grade school when she believed this. She was in college. She was a really sweet, kind, redhead who spoke almost perfect Spanish. She was intelligent in many ways. But one day in a conversation she mentioned that she had just learned that stars in the night sky were actually really far away. I asked her what she meant. She said, "You know, they're not just right up there. They're not just tiny dots. They're really far away."

I was incredulous.

"What did you think they were before?" I asked.

"I thought they were, you know, just right up above us."



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If you were to ask me why it matters that we study the doctrine of God, I'd say for the same reason that it's worth knowing that stars are not tiny pinpricks of light just above our heads. When we know the truth about God, it fills us with wonder. If we fail to understand his true character, we'll never be amazed by him. We'll never feel small as we stare up at him. We'll never worship him as we ought. We'll never run to him for refuge or realize the great love he's shown in the measureless distance he bridged to rescue us.¹

Read Exodus 4:1–31.

[Q] What assurance does God give Moses as he returns to Egypt (Ex. 4:19)?

[Q] Why is Exodus 4:21 significant? Is it important that Moses seems to forget this later on?

- How is knowing this helpful as we deal with those who oppose us? Is it true for us in ministry today, and do we tend to forget it?
- What light does Ephesians 6:10–18 shed on this idea?

[Q] How does Exodus 4:24–27 cut across our conceptions of God? What possible reason could God have for taking such drastic action (see Luke 19:17)?

[Q] As Moses and his wife face this trauma, how does God provide assurance for Moses (Ex. 4:27, 29–30)?

[Q] Have you ever experienced anger from someone you tried to help, like Moses and Aaron did? How can we deal with such attitudes?

Teaching Point Two: God is supreme over nature, life, and death.

Read Exodus 4:18–5:23.

[Q] Do you think if people saw more miracles they would believe God more readily?

Leader's Note: see *Luke 16:30–31*.

Skim Exodus chapters 7–11, or ask group members to see if they can remember all 10 plagues that God brought against the Egyptians.

[Q] These plagues were a battle for God's supremacy over the gods of Egypt (Ex. 12:12). What are some of the gods of our society?

- In what ways have there been breakdowns or “plagues” that show the fallacy of these gods?

¹ Joshua Harris, *Dug Down Deep* (Multnomah, 2010), pp. 48–49.



God Is Supreme

Leader's Guide

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us see how God has been working in us all along to bring us to where we are today.*

Activity: *Write the following on a whiteboard or poster board. Base your answers on Exodus 7:8–11:10.*

Beliefs the Egyptians Held	What Plague or Situation Showed God's Lordship ²
1. The Nile River was sacred.	1.
2. The god Khnum guarded the Nile.	2.
3. Osiris was the god of the underworld and the Nile River was believed to be his bloodstream.	3.
4. The god Hathor was protector of the fish.	4.
5. The frog was a symbol of fruitfulness and was deified as the goddess Heqt.	5.
6. The frog could not intentionally be killed. Involuntary slaughter was punishable by death.	6.
7. Priests were noted for their physical purity.	7.
8. The cow was sacred to the goddess Hathor.	8.
9. Cattle and domestic animals represented the wealth of a person.	9.
10. There was worship of an Apis bull because he was sacred to the god Ptah.	10.

² John Davies, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt* (BMH, 1986).



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Beliefs the Egyptians Held	What Plague or Situation Showed God's Lordship ²
11. Hathor, the goddess of love, beauty, and joy was represented by a cow.	11.
12. The lion headed goddess Sekhmet was supposed to be able to create epidemics and bring them to an end.	12.
13. Serapis was a god of healing.	13.
14. Imhotep was the god of medicine and guardian of all healing.	14.
15. Crops were protected by Nut, the sky goddess.	15.
16. The gods Isis and Seth were responsible for taking care of the fields.	16.
17. The Egyptian peasants prayed to a locust god.	17.
18. The god Re provided the warmth and light of the sun.	18.
19. Aten was the deified sun disc.	19.
20. The pharaoh was a literal god.	20.
21. The firstborn was always the one who would succeed the father to the throne.	21.



God Is Supreme

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Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Eugene Peterson says, “You don’t live in a mechanistic world ruled by necessity; you don’t live in a random world ruled by chance; you live in a world ruled by the God of Exodus and Easter. He will do things in you that neither you nor your friends would have supposed possible.”³

Action Point: On your own this week, read 1 Peter 3:8–17 and jot down how this passage can help you as you represent Christ to those around you. .

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon

³ Eugene H. Peterson, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (William B. Eerdmans, 1992), p. 175.



God Is Supreme

Participant's Guide

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God Is Supreme

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Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind,"** by Dave DeLuca



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Teaching Point One: God is all powerful, but cares about the details of our lives as he works behind the scenes.

Teaching Point Two: God is supreme over nature, life, and death.

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God Protects

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God Protects

God goes to extreme measures to honor his word to his people and to lead them where they should go.

In the events of the Passover and the dramatic way that God led his people out of Egypt, we find principles to apply to our lives today. We see Christ in the Passover and recognize that the way God led Israel is similar to how he leads us today.

Scripture: **Exodus 11:4–14:31**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Protects

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the *Participant's Guide*, included at the end of this study.

In the last study, we looked at the plagues God sent to Egypt on behalf of his people. His protection of his people becomes even clearer in the events of the Passover. Read Exodus 11:7 for an example.

Discussion Starters:

- [Q] Give an example of how you've seen God protect you in the midst of difficulty.
- [Q] Does he always protect us from difficulty? Why or why not?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Jesus is our Passover lamb.

Read Exodus 11:4–12:13.

- [Q] What similarities do you see between the lamb in this passage and Jesus, the sacrificial lamb?
- [Q] Look up these New Testament passages that correspond to the Exodus verses.

Without defect (Ex. 12:5)	1 Peter 1:19
Whoever needs it (Ex. 12:4)	John 3:16
Strange instructions (Ex. 12:7)	1 Cor. 5:7b
With bread (Ex 12:8)	John 6:52–58
With bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8)	John 19:29
No bones broken (Ex. 12:46)	John 19:33
Not leaving any until morning (Ex. 12:10)	John 19:31



God Protects

Leader's Guide

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us further see the connection between Exodus and the New Testament.*

Activity: *What similarity is there between these passages from Exodus and Romans?*

The punishment for disobedience	Exodus 11:4–7; 12:33	Romans 6:23
The prescription for freedom	Exodus 12:21–23	Romans 5:8, 19
The passing over	Exodus 12:12–13, 27	Romans 3:25

Teaching Point Two: God leads his people in his way.

Most of us have wondered or heard others ask why there can't be some shortcuts to spirituality. Why do we have to go through deep waters? Read Exodus 13:17–14:14.

[Q] Imagine you were one of the Israelites fleeing the Egyptians. Describe your emotions as you realize that your entire community has hit a dead end at the Red Sea.

[Q] When have you felt like you hit a “dead end” spiritually? If you have moved beyond that experience, what helped?

[Q] As you look at Exodus 13:17–18 and 14:4, 14, 31, what are some reasons for the way God led his people?

- What insight does that give you into the way God works in your life?

[Q] How was God ultimately victorious in this passage?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

In his book *Exodus and Revolution*, Michael Walzer shares three lessons we can all learn from the Exodus event of the Old Testament:

What the Exodus ... taught: first, that wherever you live, it is probably Egypt. Second, that there is a better place, a world more attractive, a promised land. And third, that “the way to the land is through the wilderness.”



God Protects

Leader's Guide

Action Point: On your own this week, find a map of Israel, such as at biblemap.org, and trace the most direct route from Egypt to Israel. Compare this to the actual route the Israelites took. Consider why God had them take the indirect route, and what he might have been doing in their lives. How might he be working similarly in your life?

—*Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon*



God Protects

Participant's Guide

Participant's Guide

God Protects



God goes to extreme measures to honor his word to his people and to lead them where they should go.

In the events of the Passover and the dramatic way that God led his people out of Egypt, we find principles to apply to our lives today. We see Christ in the Passover and recognize that the way God led Israel is similar to how he leads us today.

Scripture: **Exodus 11:4–14:31**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Protects

Participant's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

In the last study, we looked at the plagues God sent to Egypt on behalf of his people. His protection of his people becomes even clearer in the events of the Passover. Read Exodus 11:7 for an example.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Jesus is our Passover lamb.

[Q] Look up these New Testament passages that correspond to the Exodus verses.

Without defect (Ex. 12:5)	1 Peter 1:19
Whoever needs it (Ex. 12:4)	John 3:16
Strange instructions (Ex. 12:7)	1 Cor. 5:7b
With bread (Ex 12:8)	John 6:52–58
With bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8)	John 19:29
No bones broken (Ex. 12:46)	John 19:33
Not leaving any until morning (Ex. 12:10)	John 19:31

Teaching Point Two: God leads his people in his way.

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God Leads Through Rough Waters

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Leads Through Rough Waters

In his wisdom and love, God leads us into the tough times.

Have you ever heard someone say, "You know, I think I had an easier time of it when I was a non-Christian," or "When I first became a Christian everything seemed simpler," or "This day-to-day stuff is hard. I wish God would give me a ten-year plan." We've all felt that way at times, but God insists on leading us through rough waters.



Scripture: **Exodus 13:17–16:16**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Leads Through Rough Waters

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Agree or disagree with each of the following statements and explain your answers:

Since I came to Christ, my walk with God has continued upward with relatively few difficult periods.

Once the really big temptation to doubt God was dealt with, all my remaining trials have been relatively easy to overcome.

Generally, God's path of obedience leads into tough circumstances which may not be a direct result of my disobedience.

My Christian life best resembles a roller coaster ride.

[Q] Which element of the Christian life has caused you the most trouble?

[Q] Which element of the Christian life has been the most satisfying? Why?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Even when we hit difficulties, God is in charge.

Read Exodus 13:17–14:31.

[Q] How does the idea of following a pillar of cloud or a pillar of fire (Ex. 13:21–22) sound like Jesus' admonition in Matthew 6:34?

[Q] What does God use today to lead us?

Leader's Note: *God uses circumstances, the wisdom of mature Christians, and the Holy Spirit to lead us, but mostly he uses his Word (Ps. 119:105).*

[Q] How is what Pharaoh did in Exodus 14:5–8 similar to what Satan tries to do to Christians?

[Q] How does Moses assure his people of God's faithfulness to them (Ex. 14:13–14)?



God Leads Through Rough Waters

Leader's Guide

[Q] Read Psalm 46:10–11. Have you experienced a moment like this? What would help us all experience such moments more often?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us imagine the extent to which Israel would have had to trust God in their circumstances.*

Activity: *Ask each person in the group to call out what they would have said if they were standing at the edge of the Red Sea watching the Egyptian army approach. Discuss how that might relate to a difficult circumstance any of them are facing today?*

Teaching Point Two: God guides us through the ups and downs.

[Q] Divide into groups of two or three. In your groups, read each of the verses below, which describe a circumstance and corresponding attitude that God's people displayed. Give a general idea of what the passage says, then decide whether the attitude displayed could be characterized as an "up" or a "down." Give a few illustrations of how the same might be experienced today.

Passage	General Idea	Up or Down	Illustration
• Exodus 14:10–12			
• Exodus 14:27–28			
• Exodus 15:1–2			
• Exodus 15:22			
• Exodus 15:23			
• Exodus 15:24			
• Exodus 15:25			
• Exodus 15:27			
• Exodus 16:2–3			
• Exodus 16:6–9			
• Exodus 16:12			
• Exodus 16:13–16			



God Leads Through Rough Waters

Leader's Guide

[Q] The distance between Marah, where there was bitter water, and Elim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees, is at the most 12 miles. What did God's people need to do in order to get there (Ex. 14:15)?

[Q] Why might God take us through a "longer route" when a shorter one is available? Can you share I time he has done that in your life? And if so, why do you think he did that?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Gladys Aylward, missionary to China more than 50 years ago, was forced to flee when the Japanese invaded Yangcheng. But she could not leave her work behind. With only one assistant, she led more than a hundred orphans over the mountains toward Free China.

In their book *The Hidden Price of Greatness*, Ray Besson and Ranelda Mack Hunsicker tell what happened:

During Gladys's harrowing journey out of war-torn Yangcheng ... she grappled with despair as never before. After passing a sleepless night, she faced the morning with no hope of reaching safety. A 13-year-old girl in the group reminded her of their much-loved story of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.

"But I am not Moses," Gladys cried in desperation. "Of course you aren't," the girl said, "but Jehovah is still God!" When Gladys and the orphans made it through, they proved once again that no matter how inadequate we feel, God is still God, and we can trust in him.¹

Action Point: On your own this week, read Psalm 78:38–39. Consider how those verses apply to the way God has dealt with you. Then draw a spring and trace the events of your life onto it to help you see how God is growing and strengthening you.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon

¹ LEADERSHIP JOURNAL, Vol. 16, no. 1.



God Leads Through Rough Waters

Participant's Guide

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Have you ever heard someone say, "You know, I think I had an easier time of it when I was a non-Christian," or "When I first became a Christian everything seemed simpler," or "This day-to-day stuff is hard. I wish God would give me a ten-year plan." We've all felt that way at times, but God insists on leading us through rough waters.



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God Leads Through Rough Waters

Participant's Guide

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Once the really big temptation to doubt God was dealt with, all my remaining trials have been relatively easy to overcome.

Generally, God's path of obedience leads into tough circumstances which may not be a direct result of my disobedience.

My Christian life best resembles a roller coaster ride.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Even when we hit difficulties, God is in charge.

Teaching Point Two: God guides us through the ups and downs.

[Q] Divide into groups of two or three. In your groups, read each of the verses below, which describe a circumstance and corresponding attitude that God's people displayed. Give a general idea of what the passage says, then decide whether the attitude displayed could be characterized as an "up" or a "down." Give a few illustrations of how the same might be experienced today.

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• Exodus 15:23			
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• Exodus 15:25			



God Leads Through Rough Waters

Participant's Guide

Passage	General Idea	Up or Down	Illustration
• Exodus 15:27			
• Exodus 16:2–3			
• Exodus 16:6–9			
• Exodus 16:12			
• Exodus 16:13–16			

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God Provides

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Provides

By his grace and mercy, God cares for his people and makes them victorious.

As we learn to connect with God on a regular basis, he will lead and guide us into the ways he wants to provide for us and give us victory over what plagues us. We just have to trust him.

Scripture: **Exodus 16–17**

Based On: **The Bible study “Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today’s Mind,” by Dave DeLuca**



God Provides

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

John Koessler shares the following in a sermon on PreachingToday.com:

Spiritual hunger is a precondition to God's blessing. The problem is, we are in denial about our condition—or we are taught to be in denial. When I was growing up, my mom would occasionally take me with her when she visited friends. Sitting on the couch next to her with my hands folded in my lap, listening to conversation that was meaningless to me as a small boy, was an excruciatingly dull experience. At some point in the visit the host would eventually break the monotony and ask me if I wanted something to drink. I longed for that moment the way a prisoner longs to hear the sound of the key in the prison cell door.

Unfortunately, my mother had a basic rule of etiquette whenever we went visiting. “If the host offers you anything to eat or drink,” she told me, “you say, ‘No, thank you.’ If the host offers again, you accept.” What kind of rule is that? Maybe she didn't want me to appear greedy. Perhaps it had something to do with growing up during the Great Depression. Of course, the problem with this little game was that nobody seemed to have informed the host or hostess of the rules. They would say, “Would you like a cookie?” or, “Would like a glass of lemonade?” I would say, “No, thank you.” They would take me at my word and put the cookies away.

But the fundamental problem with this little ploy was that it was essentially a lie. This is the problem we face when it comes to spiritual hunger. Jesus says the blessing of righteousness comes only to those who hunger and thirst for it, but our natural state is one of denial.

Discussion Starters:

- [Q] What do you think it means to hunger and thirst after righteousness?
- [Q] What have you been taught about a daily devotional or quiet time?
- [Q] On a scale of 1 to 10, how has your daily time with God been going?



God Provides

Leader's Guide

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God takes care of his people.

We don't know exactly what manna was, but we do know that it was a food that God miraculously supplied and that it adequately provided the Israelite's needs. In Ezekiel 2:8–3:4, Ezekiel was given a scroll to eat that tasted sweet as honey, and then he was told to speak the Spirit's words to Israel. Perhaps it tasted similar to manna.

Read Exodus 16:1–5, 13–36.

[Q] What does the story of the manna tell us about God's provision for his people? What can we apply from this account to our lives?

[Q] What are the connections between manna (physical food needed for the wilderness journey), and the time we spend daily with God?

[Q] Exodus 16:21 says that when the sun grew hot, the manna melted away and they'd lost their opportunity to gather it, so they had to gather it daily rather than stockpile it. How might that be similar to the way we approach our spiritual formation?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us learn to gather the "manna" of God's Word.*

Activity: *Break into groups of three or four and work through the following using Joshua 1:1-9. Under "Meditate" write what is the main point of the passage. Under "Needs & Transformation" write what this passage says about the needs you are facing or an area that needs changing. These can include sins to confess, promises to claim, actions to avoid, commands to obey, and examples to follow. Under "Apply" write what actions you could take as a result of the passage. Discuss all the groups' results with the whole group when finished.*

Meditate	Needs & Transformation	Apply
	Sins to confess	
	promises to claim	
	actions to avoid	



God Provides

Leader's Guide

Meditate	Needs & Transformation	Apply
	commands to obey	
	examples to follow	

Teaching Point Two: God deals with the “sneak attacks.”

Read Exodus 17.

[Q] Which of the following major “attacks” do you regularly face?

- Doctrinal difficulties—knowing what I really believe
- Temptations—dishonesty, compromise, sex, material goods, etc.
- Critical spirit toward others
- Self-pity—why does everything happen to me?
- Other

[Q] What events in chapter 17 sound like modern-day parables?

[Q] Read Deuteronomy 25:17–18 and describe the Amalekites.

[Q] When you’ve met “Amalekites” in your past, how did you deal with them?

[Q] Looking at Exodus 17:8–16, who do most identify with?

- Moses, because I’m praying for another person going through a rough time.
- Joshua, because I’m going through some battles and I’ve asked other people to pray for me.
- Aaron and Hur, because I’m trying to encourage someone who is trying to encourage someone else.
- Other, because _____.



God Provides

Leader's Guide

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Scott Hafemann says in his book *The God of Promise and the Life of Faith*:

Every command of God is built upon a promise from God. Every divine call to action (obedience) is, at the same time, a divine summons to trust in God's promises (faith). The promises of God are commands in disguise, and vice versa. God commands what he commands because he promises. After the Exodus, God promised Israel that it would rain bread from heaven every day except the Sabbath. God therefore commanded Israel not to gather more than their daily ration, except on Friday. God's promise was inextricably linked with a prohibition. Conversely, trust in God's promise would mean obedience to his commands.

Disbelief always shows up as an act of disobedience, since every promise carries with it a command. Every time we disobey God, it is because we are not trusting his promises.

Action Point: On your own this week, use the chart in the Optional Activity to study Ephesians 6:10–18. Call someone to share what you learned through that exercise.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon



God Provides

Participant's Guide

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Participant's Guide

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God Uses Relationships

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Uses Relationships



God gives us relationships to mold and grow us.

Relationships can be our greatest joy or our bitterest burden. But no matter what the relationship, God wants to use it to mold us into the people he wants us to be.

Scripture: **Exodus 18**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Uses Relationships

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the *Participant's Guide*, included at the end of this study.

We often don't get to choose our relationships. We often get stuck in families that aren't what we'd like them to be. And in-law relationships can get even trickier.

Evidently Moses didn't have a problem in that area. His father-in-law appeared to be a confidant and friend. But even when our family members or friends aren't perfect, God can use them. Carmen Renee Berry says in *The Unauthorized Guide to Choosing a Church*:

Where human frailty once served as a reason for me to withdraw from the church, with its unruly and divergent congregants, this is now what compels me back to spiritual community. I had overlooked one essential factor—that I am as finite and flawed as everyone else.

Discussion Starters:

- [Q]** Why is it so much easier to see others' faults rather than our own?
- [Q]** Name a time when someone in your circle of relationships gave you much-needed wisdom.
- [Q]** Share a time God used you to help give someone else wisdom or perspective.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God wants to use our relationships.

Leader's Note: To help engage people before they read, write the following on a whiteboard or poster board. Ask the group to put the events in order after reading Exodus 18:1–12.

- ___ Moses' father-in-law recognized that the Lord was greater than other gods.
- ___ Moses told his father-in-law all that God had done.
- ___ Moses' father-in-law heard what God had done.
- ___ Moses' father-in-law offered sacrifices.
- ___ Moses kissed his father-in-law.



God Uses Relationships

Leader's Guide

[Q] Moses had a good relationship with his father-in-law. Based on this passage, what kind of attitudes did they have toward each other?

[Q] Relationships are tricky, and we all have trouble with someone in our lives. Answer the following and explain your choice.

It's easier for me to accept a suggestion...

- ___ from one of my peers.
- ___ from my parents.
- ___ from my children.
- ___ from a Christian I respect.
- ___ from my pastor.
- ___ from one of my relatives.
- ___ other.

Is it really hard to accept a suggestion from any of the above? If so, why?

Teaching Point Two: Moses let God mold him through his relationships.

Read Exodus 18:11–27.

[Q] What observations did Jethro make?

[Q] What suggestions did Jethro offer?

[Q] How did Moses respond?

[Q] Do Jethro's observations and suggestions have any application for Christians today? Why or why not?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us learn how Scripture addresses our relationships.*

Activity: *Break into groups of three or four. Assign each group at least one of the following Scriptures. Ask them to act out, draw, or write a song demonstrating the truth of that verse or passage: Job 12:12; Proverbs 9:8; Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 13:1; Proverbs 24:6; Ephesians 6:1–2.*

If the group doesn't enjoy such creative activities, just have them look up the verses and share with the rest of the group how these verses could help give them perspective on their relationships.



God Uses Relationships

Leader's Guide

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Joshua Wolf Shenk shares:

In 1937, a researcher at Harvard University began a study (originally named The Harvard Study of Adult Development) on what factors contribute to human well-being and happiness. The research team selected 268 male Harvard students who seemed healthy and well adjusted to be part of what is called a longitudinal study, which means that the researchers would study the lives of these men not just at one point in time, but rather over a period of time. In this case ... 72 years. ... For the last 42 years, the director has been psychiatrist George Vaillant. In 2008 someone asked Dr. Vaillant what he had learned about human health and happiness from his years of poring over the data on these 268 men. You would expect a complex answer from a Harvard social scientist, but his secret to happiness was breathtakingly simple: “The only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people.”¹

Action Point: What relationships are you struggling with right now? Ask the group to pray that you will be able to love those people and act with wisdom toward them.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon

¹ Joshua Wolf Shenk, “What Makes Us Happy?” *The Atlantic* (June 2009), pp. 36–53.



God Uses Relationships

Participant's Guide

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Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Joshua Wolf Shenk shares:

In 1937, a researcher at Harvard University began a study (originally named The Harvard Study of Adult Development) on what factors contribute to human well-being and happiness. The research team selected 268 male Harvard students who seemed healthy and well adjusted to be part of what is called a longitudinal study, which means that the researchers would study the lives of these men not just at one point in time, but rather over a period of time. In this case ... 72 years. ... For the last 42 years, the director has



God Uses Relationships

Participant's Guide

been psychiatrist George Vaillant. In 2008 someone asked Dr. Vaillant what he had learned about human health and happiness from his years of poring over the data on these 268 men. You would expect a complex answer from a Harvard social scientist, but his secret to happiness was breathtakingly simple: “The only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people.”¹

Action Point: What relationships are you struggling with right now? Ask the group to pray that you will be able to love those people and act with wisdom toward them.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon

¹ Joshua Wolf Shenk, “What Makes Us Happy?” *The Atlantic* (June 2009), pp. 36–53.



God Commands

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Commands



In the Ten Commandments, God reveals his goodness in contrast to our evil.

G. K. Chesterton said, "If men will not be governed by the Ten Commandments, they shall be governed by the ten thousand commandments." In other words, if we break the Ten, we need many more rules to govern our behavior—a fact made more than abundantly clear as we observe the world around us.

Chesterton also said, "Men do not differ much about what things they will call evils; they differ enormously about what evils they will call excusable." The Ten Commandments help point out the evil of our hearts.

Scripture: **Exodus 19–20**

Based On: **The Bible study "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Commands

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: *Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.*

Troy Dean makes this observation:

There were once no laws in the U.S. about child safety seats and automobile restraint systems. Tragically, many young children were not safely belted in their seats, and they died in car accidents. Today, though, laws prohibit children from riding in a car without a child seat facing the right direction and properly installed. Even new mothers need to have the seat installed before taking a child home from the hospital.

Of all the expressions of human love, there is probably no more pure and beautiful love than that of a parent for a child. Yet, when a child's safety is at stake, it seems a parent's love is not always enough. Parents did not always do what was best for their children. Many parents needed a law or boundary to ensure that their love for their children did not fall short of perfect love.

God knows the same is true of our love and devotion toward him and other people. He knows our feelings are not enough. We needed laws and boundaries in the form of commands to aid us in loving him and other people fully.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Can you remember any specific sayings or phrases that your parents used to explain the necessity of rules when you were a child?

[Q] How many of the Ten Commandments can we, as a group, name without looking them up?

[Q] Why are these specific commandments so basic?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God introduces himself through the Ten Commandments.



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Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us think about how we describe ourselves in contrast with how God describes himself.*

Activity: *Give everyone an index card and say: Write a short message (10–15 words) about who you are. Don't write your names on the cards. When you are done, give me the cards. I'll shuffle them and pass them out so that each person gets another person's card. We'll take turns having each person read aloud what their card says, and have the group guess who wrote it.*

Read Exodus 19:1–20:2.

[Q] What preparation is Israel to make before meeting God? Why?

[Q] The commandments here are God's way of introducing himself. How does he introduce himself in Exodus 20:1?

[Q] Can you remember the first time you were “introduced” to God?

[Q] From what we've studied so far in Exodus, how had God already demonstrated to Israel that he is Lord?

Leader's Note: *The following passages can help answer this question: Exodus 6:2, 7, 28; 7:5, 10; 9:14.*

[Q] God wants people to rely completely on him. In Exodus 20:1–7, how does God remind his people:

- About his position: I am the _____ (v. 2)
- About his personality: Showing _____ (v. 6)
- About his holiness: _____ (vv. 6–7)

Teaching Point Two: Loving God increases our love for others.

Read Exodus 20:1–17.

[Q] Notice how the first four commandments are about how we relate to God. The rest are about how we relate to other people. Why do you think they are in that order?

It's a paradox that as we learn to love God more, we love others more also—a truth reflected in the order of the Ten Commandments. At the end of a long letter, C. S. Lewis wrote:



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When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now. Insofar as I learn to love my earthly dearest at the expense of God and instead of God, I shall be moving toward the state in which I shall not love my earthly dearest at all. When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased.¹

[Q] Can you give an example of how that has worked out in your own life? How has loving God more helped you to love those around you more?

Teaching Point Three: God shows his love through his discipline and boundaries.

[Q] Exodus 20:5 says God is jealous. What do you suppose that means?

Leader's Note: *God has an intense care for his people and is jealous for time with us. This isn't the selfish jealousy we humans experience, but demonstrates that he knows we are happiest when we spend time with him and put him first.*

He also lets us face the consequences of our sin in order to deter the evil we seem determined to commit. Recent studies have shown that addictions actually change the body's chemistry and are passed down to our heirs for several generations, which may help explain the latter part of verse 5.

[Q] How can discipline show love? Give some examples.

[Q] Can you describe a time when you have had to set boundaries for another person? What made the experience difficult? What were the benefits you were hoping for?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

[Q] According to Galatians 3:23–24, what is the purpose of the law?

- How might the law lead us to Christ?

[Q] How does Paul say the law is fulfilled (Rom. 13:8–10)?

¹ C. S. Lewis, Pruetts.com.



God Commands

Leader's Guide

Action Point: On your own this week, pick one of the Ten Commandments that you struggle to obey. Be honest with yourself. For example, maybe you don't rob banks, but you do violate the command not to steal by cheating on your income tax or by failing to tithe your money (so you are stealing from God). Do a Scripture word search, using a tool like BibleGateway.com, to find what the Bible has to say on the subject. And ask God to help you in that area. You may even want to share what you learned with a friend and ask them to pray for you in that area as well.

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God Commands

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God Is in the Details

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Is in the Details

From the intricate laws to the promise of an angel, God cares about the details.

We can feel like we are alone in the universe even when we are in a room full of people. But God cared about Israel enough to tell them in great detail how they should be different from the neighboring peoples. From his instruction, we learn how much he cares for us as well.

Scripture: **Exodus 21–23**

Based On: **The Bible study “Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today’s Mind,” by Dave DeLuca**



God Is in the Details

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the *Participant's Guide*, included at the end of this study.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] How would you explain the difference between the Old and New Testaments?

[Q] How would you explain the difference between living under the law and living under grace?

These chapters of Exodus contain detailed laws that we can learn from, because they are the foundation of our present faith. Scot McKnight says the following about the law in *The NIV Application Commentary*:

I often compare the role of the law in history to the role typewriters have played in the development of word processing. The technology and idea of a typewriter was eventually developed into an electronic, faster, and far more complex computer that does word processing. But when typing on a computer, we realize that we are still using the old manual typewriter's technology. Further, we realize that the computer far transcends the typewriter. Everything that a typewriter wanted to be when it was a little boy (and more!) is now found in the computer. This compares to the law. Everything the law wanted to be when it was young (as revealed to Moses) is found now in Christ and in the life of the Spirit. Thus, when a Christian lives in the Spirit and under Christ, that Christian is not living contrary to the law, but is living in transcendence of the law. It is for this very reason that life lived primarily under the law is wrong.

When the computer age arrived, we put away our manual typewriters because they belonged to the former era. Paul's critique of the Judaizers is that they are typing on manual typewriters after computers are on the desk! He calls them to put the manual typewriters away. But in putting them away, we do not destroy them. We fulfill them by typing on the computers. Every maneuver on a computer is the final hope of the manual typewriter. "Now that faith/Christ has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law"—but not because the law is contrary to the promises; rather, it is because the law is fulfilled in Christ and the Spirit in a manner similar to the way a typewriter is fulfilled in the technology of a computer. And I am profoundly thankful for both!



God Is in the Details

Leader's Guide

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Laws regarding Hebrew servants teach us about being a servant of Christ.

Read Exodus 21:1–11.

[Q] What about this passage seems just to our 21st-century sensibilities? What seems unjust?

Leader's Note: *We may not know all the reasons for this instruction, but Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary says, "The laws in this chapter relate to the fifth and sixth commandments; and though they differ from our times and customs, nor are they binding on us, yet they explain the moral law, and the rules of natural justice. The servant, in the state of servitude, was an emblem of that state of bondage to sin, Satan, and the law, which man is brought into by robbing God of his glory, by the transgression of his precepts. Likewise in being made free, he was an emblem of that liberty wherewith Christ, the Son of God, makes free from bondage his people, who are free indeed; and made so freely, without money and without price, of free grace."*

[Q] How might we apply verses 5–6 to our relationship with Christ?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us think about what our standards are and how they have been influenced by these original laws.*

Activity: *Break into groups of three or four and write down the main points in Exodus 21:1–11 describing the treatment of servants. As a group, decide what you think is a good idea and what appears to be a bad idea. Discuss why you think God made these rules. When finished, compare the small groups' answers.*

Teaching Point Two: We see God's mercy and justice in his laws for his people.

Divide up into three different groups. Ask each group to read one of the following passages and to report back the gist of what it's about: Exodus 21:12–36; Exodus 22; Exodus 23:1–19.

[Q] What stood out to you in the passage you read?

[Q] What questions did that passage bring to mind?

[Q] Most of the instructions in these chapters are about practical matters. Why would God care about these things?



God Is in the Details

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[Q] How are justice and mercy balanced out in these chapters?

[Q] How much of our modern law is drawn from these teachings?

[Q] How are the laws for running a country different from the standards we might have for our own personal relationships?

Teaching Point Three: God always prepares the way for his people.

Read Exodus 23:20–33 and list God's directives or commands on a whiteboard or poster board (things such as: I am sending; Pay attention; Do not rebel; etc.)

[Q] What do these directives tell you about God?

[Q] What in this passage encourages you most?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

God is in the details. And in those details we see his mercy, love, and justice. We also see that he always prepares the way for us, keeping his promises and watching over us as a loving parent does.

Action Point: On your own this week, read Exodus 23:20. The Hebrew people were given an angel. In John 14:16 what does God give the disciples? What promises are made (John 14:1–3, 16, 18–19, 25–27)?

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When the computer age arrived, we put away our manual typewriters because they belonged to the former era. Paul's critique of the Judaizers is that they are typing on manual typewriters after computers are on the desk! He calls them to put the manual typewriters away. But in putting them away, we do not destroy them. We fulfill them by typing on the computers. Every maneuver on a computer is the final hope of the manual typewriter. "Now that faith/Christ has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law"—but not because the law is contrary to the promises; rather, it is because the law is fulfilled in Christ and the Spirit in a manner similar to the way a typewriter is fulfilled in the technology of a computer. And I am profoundly thankful for both!

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God Is Glorified

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Is Glorified



In the construction of the tabernacle, God reveals his glory.

Augustine said, "Idolatry is worshipping anything that ought to be used, or using anything that is meant to be worshiped." The nation of Israel was leaving a pagan environment and establishing a new nation with God as the center and head. They were to leave the idols of the past and move on to worshipping the true God who was above all and over all. To do that, they had to understand how glorious and holy (set apart) he was. The section of Exodus we cover in this study is all about the glory of God.

Scripture: **Exodus 24–30**

Based On: **The Bible studies "Developing a Passion for God" and "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Is Glorified

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the *Participant's Guide*, included at the end of this study.

Marva Dawn shares this perspective on the awesomeness of God's glory:

I remember an animated discussion with my high school freshman English teacher over the word awful. I insisted on using awe-full to describe something so exalted as to arouse reverence. She preferred that I stick with the word's common spelling and its usage to designate something dreadful.

We should have looked in the dictionary. My old *Webster's* lists as its first definition "inspiring awe; highly impressive." Not until its fourth entry does it supply the definition usually assumed in idiomatic English: "very bad, ugly, unpleasant."

But the teacher had the final word that day in class. Even at age 14 I felt that a vital perception was being lost—the sense that something, someone, was higher than we. I longed to verbalize awe-full-ness; my teacher made class awful.

Today teenagers apply the related word awesome to clothes, food, music, and cinematic effects. The word is so overused that when people sing Rich Mullins's "Awesome God," they seem to trivialize the Awe-full One and put the Trinity on the same level as toothpaste and togs.

As our culture has worked hard to establish equality among persons, we've somehow put God into that parity and gradually reduced our sense that this is a breathtakingly transcendent GOD we're talking about.¹

Discussion Starters:

- [Q] What is the most glorious thing you've ever seen?
- [Q] What's the best definition of the word *glory* you could give to a seven-year-old?
- [Q] How is God glorified? Give examples.

¹ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down* (William B. Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 98-99.



God Is Glorified

Leader's Guide

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God wants us to recognize the importance of his glory.

Pastor, scholar, author, and poet Eugene Peterson says,

“Sometimes I think that all religious sites should be posted with signs reading, ‘Beware the God.’ The places and occasions that people gather to attend to God are dangerous. They’re glorious places and occasions, true, but they’re also dangerous. Danger signs should be conspicuously placed, as they are at nuclear power stations. Religion is the death of some people.”²

That is similar to the purpose of the original tabernacle. Read Exodus 24.

[Q] Name the ways that God’s glory is displayed in this chapter.

[Q] Read Romans 1:18–32 and 3:23. In what way is God’s glory central to our relationship with him?

[Q] How can we have hope if we fall short of God’s glory? What does the New Covenant offer that the Old Covenant couldn’t?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *Use balloons to help group members identify God’s attributes, which reveal his glory.*

Activity: *Bring one balloon for each person in your group and several permanent markers. Give each person a balloon to blow up and tie. Tell your group: “Think of one attribute of God and write it on your balloon. Then share with the group what you wrote and how that reveals God’s glory.”*

Teaching Point Two: The tabernacle was a means to reveal God’s glory and receive his mercy, but it was only temporary.

Read through the headings of Exodus 25–30, writing them down on a whiteboard or poster board. Now read Hebrews 9:1–7 to get an overview of what resulted from these instructions and how they reveal God’s glory and mercy.

[Q] Read Hebrews 9:8–9. What limitations did the tabernacle of Exodus have?

- So what purpose did it serve?

² Eugene Peterson, *Leap over a Wall* (HarperOne, 1998), p. 144.



God Is Glorified

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[Q] Read Hebrews 9:11–14. What did Christ do that the old tabernacle system could never do?

[Q] Give an example of how Christ has done this for us.

[Q] Read Exodus 25:30. How is this similar to how Christ describes himself in John 6:35, 51?

[Q] Read about the lampstand in Exodus 25:31–40. How is this similar to how Christ describes himself in John 9:5?

- How might it describe us (Matt. 5:16)?
- What are some ways you can be a light in this dark world?

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

God is in the details. And in those details we see his mercy, love, and justice. We also see that he always prepares the way for us, keeping his promises and watching over us as a loving parent does.

Action Point: On your own this week, read Exodus 24–30. Jot down how the tabernacle and its rituals represented God's glory among his people, and what has taken its place today. Why do you think the tabernacle had three basic parts (outer court, holy place, holy of holies) within one unit? Consider that you have access to the holy of holies because of Christ's death on the cross (Matt. 27:50–51).

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God Demands Our Faith

Leader's Guide

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God Demands Our Faith

Even though we don't see God, we are to trust him.

God wants us to know him and trust him. That's what keeps coming through in these chapters in Exodus. And the penalty for ignoring him when he reaches out to us is severe. Yet, we are given many chances to respond to his offer of himself.

Scripture: **Exodus 31–32**

Based On: The Bible studies "Developing a Passion for God" and "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca



God Demands Our Faith

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

Faith is central to all of life, whether you realize it or not. You go to a doctor whose degree you've never verified. He gives you a prescription you can't read. You take it to a pharmacist you have never seen before. He gives you a chemical compound you do not understand. Then you go home and take the pill according to the instructions on the bottle.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Give some other examples of ways we exercise faith in everyday life.

[Q] What in your life thus far has most severely tested your faith in God—when was it hardest for you to trust him?

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us see that God wants to break through the darkness of our lives with his presence and truth.*

Activity: *Turn off all the lights in your meeting place and ask, "How do you feel when you are in the dark? Are you afraid, anxious, or content? Think about what kinds of behaviors and attitudes love the darkness."*

Now hand everyone a candle and ask, "Where would you like to be a light in the darkness (i.e. workplace, neighborhood, foreign country, etc.)?" As they answer that question, pass around a lighter and have them light their candles. As each person lights their candle, the room will grow brighter. This is your opportunity to ask, "What happened as each of us lit our candles? What does this simple exercise illustrate about God?"

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God wants us to trust him.

God wants to be intricately involved in the details of our lives. He reveals that to Israel through all the details of his law and the tabernacle. Read Exodus 31:1–11.



God Demands Our Faith

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[Q] On a whiteboard or poster board, list all the times God says, “I have” in this passage. For example, “I have chosen” (v. 2), “I have filled” (v. 3), etc. Then discuss what this communicates about God.

- Which of these do you most need to hear from God today? Why?
- Form pairs and pray for each other regarding your answers to the last question.

Teaching Point Two: God reveals the importance of the Sabbath as a way to demonstrate trust in his covenant with Israel.

God has already made clear the importance of the Sabbath by including it in the Ten Commandments. Now he reinforces it even further. Read Exodus 31:12–18.

[Q] Why was it so important for Israel to observe the Sabbath?

[Q] We tend to think of the Sabbath as merely a day of rest. What more does this passage tell us about its purpose?

[Q] Is it still important for us to observe the Sabbath? Why or why not?

Teaching Point Three: God wants us to trust him, the unseen God, not just what we can see.

God allowed Israel the great privilege of hearing directly from him—something almost everyone has wanted throughout history. And yet, they spit in the face of his generosity in Exodus 32.

The nation failed to recognize that God had already provided for them in amazing ways. Because of that, they acted on what they could see, rather than on what was promised. It was easier to trust a person than God, so they made demands rather than waiting on God's resources. They also confused a strong desire to do something with faith. Finally they rationalized and blamed others. Read Exodus 32.

[Q] God gave them a second chance (v. 26), but only the Levites came. Why was this such a serious sin at the beginning of a new nation? Why do you think the penalty was so severe for those who didn't come?

[Q] Out of all the things the Israelites did wrong, which ones do you struggle with most? Why?

- Failure to recognize God's provision
- Acting on what is seen rather than on God's promises



God Demands Our Faith

Leader's Guide

- Trusting a person rather than God
- Making demands rather than waiting on God's resources
- Confusing strong desire to do something with faith
- Rationalizing and blaming others

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

We all want our own way. As someone wise said, “About half our troubles come from wanting our way ... the other half comes from being allowed to have it!” But it doesn't have to be that way. We can trust God's way instead.

Action Point: On your own this week, jot down what you learn about God from Exodus 31–32. Then take time to praise him for those attributes.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon



God Demands Our Faith

Participant's Guide

Participant's Guide

God Demands Our Faith

Even though we don't see God, we are to trust him.

God wants us to know him and trust him. That's what keeps coming through in these chapters in Exodus. And the penalty for ignoring him when he reaches out to us is severe. Yet, we are given many chances to respond to his offer of himself.

Scripture: **Exodus 31–32**

Based On: **The Bible studies "Developing a Passion for God" and "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca**



God Demands Our Faith

Participant's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Faith is central to all of life, whether you realize it or not. You go to a doctor whose degree you've never verified. He gives you a prescription you can't read. You take it to a pharmacist you have never seen before. He gives you a chemical compound you do not understand. Then you go home and take the pill according to the instructions on the bottle.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God wants us to trust him.

Teaching Point Two: God reveals the importance of the Sabbath as a way to demonstrate trust in his covenant with Israel.

Teaching Point Three: God wants us to trust him, the unseen God, not just what we can see.

[Q] Out of all the things the Israelites did wrong, which ones do you struggle with most? Why?

- Failure to recognize God's provision
- Acting on what is seen rather than on God's promises
- Trusting a person rather than God
- Making demands rather than waiting on God's resources
- Confusing strong desire to do something with faith
- Rationalizing and blaming others

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

We all want our own way. As someone wise said, "About half our troubles come from wanting our way ... the other half comes from being allowed to have it!" But it doesn't have to be that way. We can trust God's way instead.

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God Reveals Himself

Leader's Guide

Leader's Guide

God Reveals Himself

Even though we don't physically see God, he reveals himself to his people.

Everyone wants to know more about God. However, we would like to know him on our terms. God will have none of that. He reveals himself his way, but reveal himself he does. We just have to seek him and recognize him in that revelation.

Scripture: **Exodus 33–40**

Based On: The Bible studies "Developing a Passion for God" and "Must Reading for Revolutionary Thinkers: The Book of Exodus for Today's Mind," by Dave DeLuca



God Reveals Himself

Leader's Guide

Part 1 Identify the Issue

Note to Leader: Provide each person with the Participant's Guide, included at the end of this study.

God wants to guide us. But to follow, we must trust him.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Give each person an index card. Ask them to imagine that they are going on a backpacking trip through the wilderness, and have them list three characteristics that a guide they'd hire would have to possess (i.e. compassion, toughness, vision, etc.). When finished, share your answers with the group.

[Q] Israel is on a wilderness journey and God is their guide. How many of the qualities you listed does he possess?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God reveals himself to his people.

Moses' world has come crashing down, and yet God patiently encourages him as he continues to meet with him in the Tent of Meeting. Read Exodus 33–34:9.

[Q] What do you find discouraging about this passage?

[Q] What do you find encouraging about this passage?

[Q] Moses asks to see God's glory (Ex. 33:18). Why would seeing God's glory help him?

- How can we see God's glory today, since we don't have a Tent of Meeting like Moses did? What has taken its place?

[Q] Focus on the attributes mentioned in Exodus 34:6–7. How have we seen these qualities as we've read through Exodus?

- How have you seen these attributes of God displayed in your life?



God Reveals Himself

Leader's Guide

Optional Activity:

Purpose: *To help us see how we think about God and evaluate whether our view is accurate.*

Activity: *On your own, circle the thing in each pair that you think best describes what God is like:*

- black coffee or a latte
- Jaguar or a Volkswagen
- kitty cat or a mountain lion
- print or cursive
- roses or daisies
- 10 speed bike or Harley Davidson motorcycle
- hammer or jigsaw
- ruler or eraser

When everyone has finished, discuss their answers. There are no right or wrong answers—these are merely our perceptions. Talk about how our perceptions affect our relationship with God.

Teaching Point Two: God gives sinners a second chance.

In spite of Israel's gross rebellion, God gives them a second chance. He makes new stone tablets and continues to give Israel specific instructions for the tabernacle, so they will know how to worship him and walk with him.

[Q] Break into three different groups. Give each group one of these passages:

- Exodus 34:10–36:7
- Exodus 36:8–38:31
- Exodus 39–40

Ask each group to summarize what is going on in their passage and to write down the main message. When finished, share your results with the whole group.



God Reveals Himself

Leader's Guide

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Exodus closes with God being present in the Tent of Meeting. Everyone would constantly be reminded that he was dwelling with them. He also led them day and night in the way he wanted them to go.

[Q] What did you most enjoy about this 12-week study? Or what was one thing you learned?

Action Point: On your own this week, look through the New Testament to see how God is with his people and leads them today, even though we don't have a Tent of Meeting. Share your findings with a friend.

—Study by Dave DeLuca, with JoHannah Reardon



God Reveals Himself

Participant's Guide

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