

GETTING TO KNOW GOD

**8 HOME GROUP STUDIES EXPLORING
THE BOOK OF EXODUS**

COMPANION TO OUR "RESCUE. MISSION." SERIES

GETTING TO KNOW GOD

Exodus chapters 1-20

A note from the author

Have you ever noticed the uncomfortable challenge in these famous words of Paul?

“... and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:15-17; ESV)

I'm not talking about the challenge to read our Bibles, and to sit under the teaching, rebuking, correcting work of the Scriptures. I'm not even talking about the challenge to get out there and do good works, having been thoroughly equipped for them by God's word. The challenge we often miss in these verses is that the 'Scripture' Paul speaks of is primarily the Old Testament.

The books of the Old Testament were the “sacred writings” that Timothy had known since childhood (v. 15). These were the God-breathed words that were so profitable, and that were able to equip the man of God for every good work.

The uncomfortable challenge for us is: Would we ever describe the Old Testament like this? Do we see it as a rich source of teaching, correction and practical training in righteousness? Do we mine it regularly to learn about God and his ways? Or do we regard the Old Testament as a foreign country, and its God as somehow more distant and scary than the loving Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

In this series of studies, we're going to study the first 20 chapters of Exodus and, as we do so, we'll find that Paul's words about the ancient Hebrew Scriptures are stunningly true. The God we meet in these momentous chapters is the true and living God who makes and keeps promises, who judges and saves and triumphs, who provides for his people and teaches them his holy ways. In Exodus 1-20, we'll get to know this God afresh, and experience for ourselves the truth of 2 Timothy 3—that this is the God who has saved us through Jesus Christ, who teaches, rebukes, corrects and trains us through the powerful words which he breathes out.

Bryson Smith
January 2006

A note from some other guy

Hey everyone! These studies have been printed under license from Matthias Media, an evangelical Anglican organization based in Sydney. We are using these studies as a companion to our “Rescue. Mission.” series of Bible talks at church on Sunday. We hope careful use of these studies will encourage you to know and enjoy the God of the universe who is supremely revealed in Jesus! A huge thanks goes to Alan Shanks who helped fine-tune these studies.

May God help you to know him more, and in doing so, grow your faith, hope, and love.

Matt Viney
January 2019

1. THE GOD WHO KEEPS HIS PROMISES

Exodus 1-2

Getting started

Starting to read Exodus can be a bit like starting to watch a movie when it's already halfway through. Certain things have already happened and, if we aren't aware of them, we may not be able to make sense of what's going on in Exodus. In particular, we need to be aware of some promises that God made to a person named Abram.

Read Genesis 12:1-9

1. What sorts of things did God promise Abram? (Later on in Genesis God gives Abram the name Abraham.)
2. How do you think Abram would have felt about these promises?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 1:1-7

3. What do these verses tell us about Abraham's descendants? (The 'Israel' mentioned in Exodus 1:1 is the grandson of Abraham.)
4. Why shouldn't Exodus 1:7 surprise us, in light of what we read in Genesis chapter 12?

Read Exodus 1:8-22

5. Why does Pharaoh become concerned about the Israelites (Exodus 1:10)?
6. How does Pharaoh (unsuccessfully) try to stop the Israelites from increasing (Exodus 1:11, 15-16, 22)?
7. In what ways are the midwives a good example for us?

Read Exodus 2:1-25

8. What does the rescue of Moses show us about who's ultimately in charge in Egypt?

9. What would Moses gain by growing up in the Egyptian royal family?

10. Which couple of words are crucial in v. 11? What do they tell us about Moses?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic of God also revealed in Jesus? (The New Testament tells us that Jesus is the fullest revelation of God.) In what ways should this characteristic of God shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Thank God for his never-failing faithfulness. Thank him also for the times when you have especially noticed his reliability and faithfulness in your life.
- Pray that you would trust this faithful God in everything. Pray also that your life would reflect his character.

2. THE GOD WHO IS PERSONAL

Exodus 3-4:17

Getting started

“This universe is so big and I am so small by comparison. I can’t believe that God could possibly be interested in me.” How might you answer a comment like this?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 3:1-10

1. How does God attract and introduce himself to Moses, and what reaction does this produce in Moses (Exodus 3:5-6)?
2. What does God say he has seen and will do (Exodus 3:7-10)? Remember that it is about 400 years since God spoke to an Israelite.
3. Read through Exodus 3:11-4:17, listing the excuses which Moses gives to God. In each case how does God respond?

	Moses' excuse	God's Response
Exodus 3:11-12		
Exodus 3:13-22		
Exodus 4:1-9		
Exodus 4:10-12		
Exodus 4:13-17		

3. THE GOD WHO IS DETERMINED

Exodus 4:18-7:7

Getting started

“The God of the Bible is a control freak.” What do you think of this statement?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 4:18-31

1. In these verses Moses tells Jethro, Aaron and the Israelite elders about God’s plan to rescue Israel from Egypt. In each case what is the reaction to the news?
2. Verses 24-25 are difficult to understand and different people have different views about them. It seems that God is angry with Moses because his son is not circumcised. Given that circumcision was a sign of God’s covenant with Abraham, why do you think God might be angry that Moses’ son isn’t circumcised?

Read Exodus 5:1-21

3. What is Pharaoh’s reaction to Moses’ request?
4. How does Pharaoh’s reaction in fact *confirm* that God is in control? (Look back at 3:18-19.)
5. What effect does Pharaoh’s reaction have on the Israelites?
6. How do you handle the hardships of life? How have you responded to
 - a. other people?
 - b. God?



Read Exodus 5:22-6:8 + 6:28-7:7

7. In these verses God reaffirms his intentions. What will this mean for:

a) Israel (6:6-8)?

b) Pharaoh (7:2-5)?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Give thanks that as Christians we will 'know' God as our saviour on the day of judgement.
- Pray about the way you handle hardships and ask God to help you put into practice what you have learnt in this study.

4. THE GOD WHO IS BOSS

Exodus 7:8-10:29

Getting started

“I don’t think God ever gets angry or punishes people. The God who Jesus taught about is a God of love.”
Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 7:8-8:19

1. What plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?
2. How do these verses describe Pharaoh’s response?

Read Exodus 8:20-9:12

3. What further plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?
4. Why would God “harden” Pharaoh’s heart?
5. What happens to the Israelites during these plagues? What does this show us about God?

Read Exodus 9:13-10:29

6. What further plagues does God perform in order to try and force Pharaoh to free the Israelites?

7. If you were Pharaoh, what internal debate would you be having?

8. What are some of the reasons that we 'harden our hearts' against God?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Thank God for his sovereign power over all things.
- Pray for a soft heart which is humble and obedient before God.

5. THE GOD WHO SAVES

Exodus 11-12

Getting started

Have you had an especially important event in your life? What was it and what made it so important?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 11

1. What final plague is God going to bring on Egypt?
 - a) Pharaoh (v. 1)?
 - b) Israel?
2. What will be the repercussions of these actions for:
 - a) Pharaoh (v. 1)?
 - b) Israel?
3. What would make the Egyptians 'favourably disposed' to the Israelites (v. 3)?

Read Exodus 12

4. Why do you think God wants the Passover to be at the start of each year (v. 1)?
4. According to 12:21-23, what caused God's judgement to "pass over" a house?
5. What connections can you draw between the "Passover meal" and our celebration of the "The Lord's Supper" (Communion)?

6. As well as being set free, what else happened to the Israelites in 12:33-36?

7. Why do you think it's important for foreigners to become Jews in order to share in the celebration of the Exodus (vv. 43-49)? Is there the same sort of "rule" with Communion?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Give thanks that, through Jesus' death as our Passover lamb, we have been set free from sin and death and have been made rich with spiritual blessings.
- Pray that God's salvation in Christ would grip you, motivate you and change your life.

6. THE GOD WHO TRIUMPHS

Exodus 13-15

Getting started

This is a crucial part of the story of the Israelite nation. Have you had a defining moment in your life? Tell the group about it.

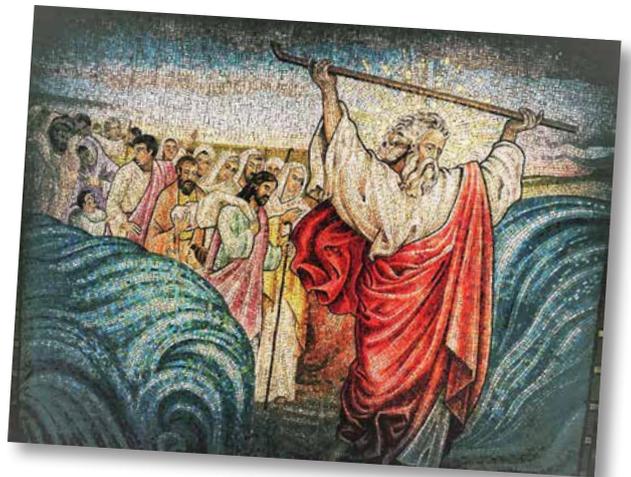
Light from the Word

Read Exodus 13:17-14:14

1. List all the ways in which God is seen to be in command in these verses.
2. Compare the way in which Joseph is a good example for us (13:19 and Heb 11:22) and Israel is a poor example for us (14:10-12). Does Israel's response in these verses surprise you?
3. Does Pharaoh's response (14:5-10) surprise you?
4. What does Moses urge Israel to do (14:13-14)? Would you use this promise to guide you in your difficulties?

Read Exodus 14:15-31

5. How does God ultimately triumph over Pharaoh and his army?
6. Is Israel's response in 14:31 your response when God demonstrates his power in your life? Explain.



Read Exodus 15

7. After the Lord's stunning victory, the Israelites erupt into jubilant song—a song about what God has done (vv. 1-12) and what he will do (vv. 13-18). It's a great song! Pick a verse which especially encourages you and explain why.
8. How can we as Christians also look back on what God has done in order to fill us with enthusiasm about what he will do?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Give thanks that “the Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation” (Exo. 15:2).
- Pray that we would “fear the Lord” and believe in him.

7. THE GOD WHO PROVIDES

Exodus 16-18

Getting started

“Of all the things in life, contentment is the most elusive.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 16 and 17:1-7

1. What does Israel complain about in these verses?
2. In the light of God’s actions in Israel’s immediate past can you believe it? Do we also behave like this?
3. Why do you think God solves Israel’s problem the way he does?



Read Exodus 17:8-18:27

Two things threaten Israel in different ways in these verses.

- External threat – the Amalekites (17:8)
 - Internal threat – Moses’ possible burnout (18:17-18)
4. How is God involved in the solutions?
 5. Jethro’s criticism of Moses is constructive. How do you handle criticism?

6. How do you determine whose advice to take?

7. The battle with the Amalekites is only won as Moses' hands are uplifted to God, seeking his assistance. Apparently, winning the battle depended on Moses spiritual fight and not on Joshua's sword. Is the Church's mission only successful as its people are strong in their faith and fervent in their prayer? How do you go in this area?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you've learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Give thanks for God's loving patience with his children.
- Pray that we would not complain, but trust God's goodness and provision.

8. THE GOD WHO IS HOLY

Exodus 19-20

Getting started

In what ways can we be too casual in how we treat God? What is the danger of this?

Light from the Word

Read Exodus 19:1-6

1. What has God done for Israel?
2. What does God expect of Israel?
3. What is God's plan for Israel?

Read Exodus 19:9-25

4. How is the holiness of God reflected in verses 9-25? What is the purpose of the purification ritual, the limitations on going up the mountain, and the 'special effects'?
5. What barriers has Jesus set aside so that we can approach God with confidence?

Read Exodus 20

6. Why do you think it's significant that God says the words in verse 2 before he starts to give his commandments?

7. In the ten commandments, what things are said about:
- c) How the Israelites are to treat God (20:3-11)?
 - d) How the Israelites are to treat each other (20:12-17)?
8. What defines an “idol” (20:3)? What defines “coveting” (20:17)?
9. “The ten commandments are irrelevant to us nowadays. They were given to Israel but we don’t have to become an Israelite to be one of God’s people anymore.” What is true and what is false about this statement?

To finish

Pick one characteristic of God that you’ve learnt from these verses. In what ways do you see this characteristic revealed in Jesus? In what ways should this characteristic shape the way we live?

Give thanks and pray

- Thank God for his goodness and holiness, and for his gracious salvation he has given us in Christ.
- Ask for the obedience and endurance to live a life worthy of our salvation.

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Pathway Bible Guides: Exodus 1-20

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