

THE BIBLE

< 5 Books of Torah >

God Creates the Universe and Calls a People



Fall Chapel-wide Study

Our Annual Focus for the coming year is, *The Bible: God's Story of Creation, Rebellion, Redemption, and New Creation With Jesus at the Center.*

The first sermon series in the Annual Focus provides the basis for our fall Chapel-wide study, *5 Books of Torah: God Creates the Universe and Calls a People.*

INTRODUCTION >

We will use “The E100: Essential 100 Bible Reading Plan” to structure our study. We will have print copies of the E100 plan available throughout the church building. For those who prefer, free electronic versions are also available through the Youversion Bible app and its companion website bible.com. To access the plan using either application, click on “reading plans” and type “Essential 100” in the search box.

We hope that through this study, we will see connections between individual Bible stories and between the Old and New Testaments that we may have missed before.

Since the first Christians came from a Jewish background, they saw those links more easily. For example, in 1 Corinthians 15:3, the Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian Christians about the gospel he had preached to them. He wrote, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.” “The Scriptures” that Paul referred to were the Hebrew Scriptures, what Christians often call the Old Testament. The books of Genesis through Malachi were the only Scriptures the earliest church recognized.

Paul is not the only one to call attention to how the Old Testament Scriptures pointed to the gospel of Jesus the Messiah. Jesus, himself, challenged religious leaders of his day by saying, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.” The gospel-writer, Luke, describes Jesus’ encounter with two men along the road after his death and resurrection, “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself ... Then he said to them, ‘These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled’” (Luke 24:27,44). For other examples of Christians in the New Testament using Old Testament Scriptures to explain the gospel of Jesus, see Acts 7; 8:25; 26:22, and 28:23.

Our Fall Chapel-wide Study will major on how the writings of Moses in the Torah do speak about Jesus just as He claimed. Augustine of Hippo wrote, “In the Old Testament the New is concealed, in the New the Old is revealed” (*Seven Questions Concerning the Heptateuch*, AD 420–21). Many casual readers of the Bible mistakenly conclude that the Old Testament describes God as judgmental and wrathful, but then in the New Testament God had a change of heart to become merciful and loving. In the Fall Study and throughout our Annual Focus, we will see that in the midst of God’s judgment and wrath in the Old Testament, He was also demonstrating mercy and love. In the New Testament, God put His mercy and love on display in Jesus, yet His judgment and wrath are never demonstrated more clearly than on the cross where Jesus bore God’s wrath and judgment against sin.

Over the course of the next 8 weeks, we will digest three major stories each week. This will take us through the first 24 of the 100 stories in the E100 plan. The stories will roughly coincide with the Sunday sermon topics. We will also read some stories that the sermons will not cover in detail. We will normally read the stories in advance of the sermons that correspond to them. However, our small groups will meet during the week after the sermon.

In this Fall Study Guide you will find bulleted points corresponding to each story. These points will outline key building blocks to the overall message of God’s mission and redemptive work recorded throughout the Bible. We will connect some of the dots between individual stories and see them more clearly as unified elements of the larger “God’s Story of Creation, Rebellion, Redemption, and New Creation, With Jesus at the Center.”

In addition to this Study Guide, you will find extra materials related to each week’s sermon by going to the home page of the Chapel website -- wcchapel.org. Simply click on the Box at the bottom of the page that says, “Sermon Follow-up.” Extra resources for Small Group Leaders can be accessed on the Group Leader Resources page.

Now, let’s start where the Torah does, “In the beginning . . .”

WEEK 1
< September 8 – 14 >

#1 – Genesis 1:1–2:25 – Creation

- God spoke the universe into existence by the power of his word (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26). Later, in John 1, we see God beginning a new creation. To accomplish that new creation, God himself becomes the incarnate Living Word in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.
- We find two of the three persons of the Trinity referenced on the first page of the Bible. In addition to the word “God,” we see “the Spirit of God” hovering over the waters. In the New Testament, we also find passages that present Jesus as active in the original Creation (John 1:1–3, 14; Col 2:16). Since we have the advantage of possessing the complete canon of the Bible, we can see, in ways previous generations could not, that the plural, “Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness” (Gen 1:26), is arguably the first evidence of God as a Trinity in the Bible – one God in three persons.
- God created humans as male and female with the capacity and purpose of procreation, just as he did other creatures. However, Adam and Eve in particular, and other human beings by extension, were created in the image of God, setting them apart from every other classification of living beings (Gen 1:27).
- God gave the first humans a mission: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (1:28). This verse is known as the “cultural mandate.” Essentially, God was instructing Adam and Eve to create culture throughout the world that reflected His image as His sub-rulers over the rest of creation.
- The example of God resting from His work on the 7th day (Gen 2:2–3) becomes the example and basis for Sabbath rest later in Scripture, as seen in the fourth commandment (Exo 20:8–11).
- God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with instructions to “work and keep it” (Gen 2:15). They were free to eat from any tree except for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eating from that tree would bring death to

the humans (Gen 2:16–17).

- At that time, Adam and Eve were both naked and unashamed. (2:25).

#2 – Genesis 3:1–24 – The Fall (Rebellion Against God)

- The sin of Adam and Eve came as a result of distrusting God's word and character (3:1–6). Instead of trusting God, Eve allowed Satan, in the form of a talking serpent, to deceive her (3:13). Adam then listened to the voice of Eve rather than God's voice (3:27). They both followed their appetites and ate the fruit God forbade them to eat (Gen 3:6). The root of all sin is rebelling against God's rule in our lives. When we trust other voices instead of God's word, we usurp His role as the arbiter of truth and ruler of our lives. We are then likely to follow our appetites, seeking our pleasure more than we seek His pleasure.
- Adam and Eve were ashamed. They covered themselves with fig leaves and hid when they heard the Lord coming near (3:7–10).
- The curses and consequences of sin impacted all of creation (3:14–19). Adam and Eve suffered spiritual death (having an estranged relationship with God) and later both physically died. Yet, this is an example of God showing mercy in the midst of judgment. God was merciful in not having Adam and Eve die immediately, which would have snuffed out the human race.
- In Genesis 3:15, God promised that a descendant of Eve would kill Satan, represented by the serpent. The serpent would bite the descendant's heel but the descendant would bruise/crush the serpent's head. This is known as "The Proto-Evangelium" or the Proto-Gospel." This is the first hint of the gospel that foreshadows Jesus suffering on the cross and His resurrection that conquers death and Satan who was the original enemy of God and humanity.
- God clothed them with animal skins in place of fig leaves (3:21). God's kind act foreshadowed that the covering of sin required a substitutionary death and the shedding of blood. We'll see this both in the story of Abraham and Isaac (Gen 22), the priestly sacrificial system (Exodus and Leviticus), and ultimately in Jesus as the Lamb of God who

takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

- The Lord cast Adam and Eve out of the garden following their distrust and rebellion. It was as much an act of mercy as it was of punishment so that they would not eat from the tree of life and live forever in their fallen state. (3:24)

#3 – Genesis 6:5–7:24 – The Flood

- We see a dramatic decline from Genesis 1:31 where God saw all that He had made and that “it is very good”, to Genesis 6:5 where God saw “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
- Because of sin’s corrupting and violent effects, God chose to destroy all terrestrial life with a catastrophic flood (6:5–7, 11–13).
- Noah was not sinless but he did “find favor in the eyes of the Lord” (6:8). The word “favor” may also be translated as “grace.” God also shows favor to Abraham (Gen 18:3, 10, 33) and Moses (Exodus 33:12–13, 16–17).
- Noah’s three sons were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. God chose to bring the Messiah through the lineage of Shem. Shem’s descendants are known as “Semitic,” deriving from his name. Although “Semitic” is popularly used today as synonymous with Jewish peoples, technically, Muslim peoples who trace their lineage through Abraham’s son Ishmael are also Semitic peoples.
- Noah trusted God and obeyed all that God commanded him (6:22 & 7:5), which was a stark contrast to those around him.
- In this most catastrophic judgment of God against humanity’s sinful rebellion, God demonstrated His grace and extended salvation to and through Noah and his family.
- God commanded Noah to construct an ark which He used to save Noah’s family and terrestrial wildlife, allowing creation to survive.
- Genesis 7:11 mentions the “fountains of the great deep burst[ing] forth” and “the windows of the heavens opened.” The vast amount of water came from below the earth as well as the rains from above. It took 150 days for the waters to recede.

NOTES

WEEK 2
< September 15-21 >

#4 – Genesis 8:1–9:17 – God’s Covenant with Noah

- Noah and his family’s fresh start as the only human beings on earth was essentially a “new creation.”
- In 9:1 & 7, God essentially gave Noah and his family the same instructions He gave Adam and Eve in the cultural mandate of Gen 1:26 – to be fruitful and multiply, filling the earth as God’s image bearers, and ruling over it as His sub-rulers.
- Perhaps in light of the violence that was epidemic before the flood, God instituted human retribution for bloodshed that took the life of another human. God based the punishment on the fact that He had created human beings “in his own image,” (Gen 9:6), referring back to the original creation in Gen 1:27.
- God gave the rainbow to be a sign (9:8–13) of His covenant promise that He would never destroy all living creatures again with a flood.

#5 – Genesis 11:1–9 – Tower of Babel

- Up to this point everyone had been a descendant of Noah. They comprised one people with one language (11:1).
- The people wanted to make a name for themselves rather than making God’s name known by spreading out as He had commanded them (11:4). Their explicit reason for building the tower and city was that they would not have to be “dispersed over the face of the whole earth” as God had told Noah and his descendants to do back in Gen 9:1 & 7.
- God turned the one people with one language into many peoples with many languages. They dispersed over the earth and left off building the city (11:6–9).
- The place was called Babel which sounds like the Hebrew word for “confused.”

6 – Genesis 12:1–20 – The Call of Abram

- Abram (who would later be called Abraham) was living in Haran when God called him to leave his family and homeland to go to a place that He would show Abram. It doesn’t appear that Abram knew the destination (12:1).

- We find that Abram grew up in Ur of the Chaldees (Gen 11:31). A later passage, Joshua 24:2 reveals, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.’” God’s call to Abram was not based on his previous worship of the LORD God YHWH. God’s revelation of Himself and call to Abram was a result of God’s election and grace, not Abram’s merits.
- God did not require Abram to keep any rules in order to be accepted. God only required that Abram trust Him enough to leave behind his family and their gods in order to follow Him.
- God promised to bless Abraham, his family, and all the families of the earth through him. (12:3).
- Although God promised Abram offspring that would form a nation, Abram was 75 years old with no children when he left his homeland with his wife, Sarai, his nephew, Lot, and his servants to follow God’s direction (12:4).
- God appeared to Abram at Shechem in the land of Canaan at that time. Shechem corresponds to modern-day Nablus, about 34 miles north of Jerusalem. The Lord declared that Shechem was part of the land that He would give Abram and his descendants (12:6–7).
- Abram and his companions went to Egypt due to a famine in Canaan (12:10).
- Abram had Sarai pretend she was his sister instead of his wife because he was afraid someone in Egypt might kill him to have Sarai if they knew she was his wife. Abram’s deception allowed Sarai to be taken by Egypt’s king as one of his wives (12:19). Although Abraham (still Abram here) is known in the New Testament for his great faith, this episode shows his faith was not always consistent.
- God plagued the king and his household because of taking Sarai for his wife so the king gave Sarai back to Abram and sent them away (12:17–20)

NOTES

WEEK 3
< September 22–28 >

7 – Genesis 15:1–21 – God’s Covenant with Abram

- Abram was questioning God because even though God had promised Abram many descendants, he and his wife still didn’t have any children. When God reiterated His promise to give Abram and Sarai innumerable descendants, Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted Abram’s trust as righteousness (Gen 15:2–6). We saw back in Genesis 12 that Abraham had been both untrusting and unrighteous in sacrificing his wife’s well-being for his own, but God considered Abram righteous because of his faith to trust God’s promise. This truth will be referred to in the New Testament (Romans 4:3–9; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23).
- After Abram trusted God about descendants, he still had questions about how he would inherit the land that was still filled with Canaanites. In response, God made a covenant with Abram that involved the sacrifice and blood of animals (Gen 15:7–11).
- God foretold to Abram that his descendants would spend 400 years in Egypt where they would be slaves. However, at the end God would bring them out with many possessions. We will see this promise/warning played out in the Book of Exodus.
- God himself walked between the cut halves of the animals and promised Abram the land. This was an unconditional covenant backed by God’s word and actions. All Abram had to do in this covenant was watch and believe.

#8 – Genesis 21:1–22:19 – Isaac’s Birth and Sacrifice

- We want to note that Abram is now called Abraham and Sarai is now called Sarah. We can look back to Gen 17:1–5 and Gen 17:15–16 to see when God changed their names. Abram means “exalted father” and Abraham means “father of a multitude.”
- When Abraham was 100 years old, God enabled Sarah and Abraham to have a son they named Isaac. That was 25 years after God called Abraham to leave his home to follow Him (Gen 12 in story #6)

- Abraham had a son named Ishmael by Sarah's Egyptian servant Hagar. (You can find that story in Genesis 16.) Here in Genesis 21, God protected Ishmael when Sarah demanded that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away. Hagar found a wife for Ishmael in Egypt. Muslim peoples trace their ancestry back to Abraham through Ishmael. There will be an interesting Egyptian connection later in the Joseph story. Sarah likely acquired Hagar during her and Abraham's stay in Egypt that we read about earlier in Genesis 12.
- God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to sacrifice Isaac, his one and only son. We see two important truths here.
 - Abraham trusted that God would do something to save his son. In Gen 22:5 Abraham says, "I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." Hebrews 11:19 looks back on this event and explains, Abraham "considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back."
 - In response to Abraham's faith, God provided a substitute ram in place of Isaac. We now know that this substitutionary sacrifice pointed to God's sacrifice of his one and only Son--the "Spotless Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36). Jesus became the God-provided substitute for us, and God did raise him from the dead.

#9 – Genesis 27:1–28:22 – Jacob and Esau Compete

- Isaac's wife Rebekah led her youngest Son Jacob to deceive Isaac in order to get the blessing intended for the first-born son. This reversed the natural order, allowing the greater blessing to go to the youngest son. God chose Jacob's lineage to bring the promised Messiah, not because of Jacob's righteousness but because of God's grace. The Apostle Paul will make a major point of this truth in Romans 9.
- In Gen 28:36 Esau mentioned his brother cheating him two times. In Gen 25:29–34, we see that Esau traded his birthright as firstborn to his younger brother Jacob for a bowl of porridge.
- Rebekah sent Jacob away to protect him from Esau who wanted to kill him.
- Esau married a descendant of Ishmael. His descendants

became the Edomites who later had ongoing conflict with Jacob's descendants--the Israelites.

- The Lord appeared to Jacob and gave him the promise of land and descendants along with the promise that through him all families of the earth would be blessed. This is the same promise given to his grandfather Abraham (Gen 12).

NOTES

WEEK 4

< September 29 – October 5 >

#10 – Gen 32:1–33:20 – Jacob and Esau Reconcile

- We are led to believe that Jacob's wrestling match with "a man" (Gen 32:24) was actually with the Lord Himself in some incarnate form. The superior being says as much in giving Jacob the new name, Israel, which means "he strives with God" or "God strives" (Gen 32:28). Jacob also concluded that he was wrestling with God: "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered" (Gen 32:30).
- Jacob and Esau met and were reconciled.
- Jacob arrived safely in Shechem. Shechem was the city where God first promised Abraham the land of Canaan (Story #6). Here, Jacob bought his first tract of land in the Promised land at the very place God had promised to give it to his grandfather.

11 – Gen 37:1–36 – Joseph Sold Into Slavery

- By this time, Jacob had 12 sons who are also known as the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- Joseph was the next to the youngest and the favorite of his father Jacob. The Bible shows the human and relational costs that occur when parents favor one child over others. Jacob had been the favorite of his mother and Esau the favorite of his father. Here, the pattern continued with Joseph being the favorite of Jacob.
- This passage describes the first two of a number of dreams associated with Joseph.
- Joseph's brothers sold him to a band of Ishmaelites. We don't want to miss that these Ishmaelites were sons or grandsons of Ishmael--the son of Abraham by the slave Hagar. Abraham had been the owner of Hagar and had allowed Sarah to send her and Ishmael away where they both would have died without the LORD rescuing them. Here, we see descendants of the slave woman Hagar ended up purchasing the great-grandson of Abraham for 20 shekels of silver.
 - It seems the Midianites were a subset of the Ishmaelites, or the two were used interchangeably.

- Potiphar, the captain of the guard serving the Egyptian King Pharaoh, bought Joseph as his slave from the Ishmaelites. God would use Joseph's proximity to power during his slavery to place Joseph exactly where He wanted him.

#12 – Gen 39:1–41:57 – Prison and a Promotion

- The Lord was with Joseph and gave him favor with his master so that he became overseer of the entire household, second in command to the owner himself.
- Joseph's behavior displays integrity and faithfulness to his master but he is falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and imprisoned as a result.
- We see an almost instant replay of Joseph's early experience with Potiphar. The Lord was with Joseph in prison and gave him favor with the keeper of the prison so that Joseph became second in command of the prison.
- We see three more dream descriptions that God used to give Joseph favor with the King Pharaoh. Those dream interpretations gave Joseph favor with the King and set Joseph up to become second in command over all of Egypt.
- Three times we see Joseph displaying integrity and faithful service to those who rule over him and all three times the Lord God gave him favor with his masters, causing Joseph to become second in command in a household, in the prison, and in the nation.

NOTES

WEEK 5
< October 6–12 >

#13 – Gen 42:1–38 – Ten Brothers Go to Egypt

- God used the famine about which Joseph had foretold through a dream interpretation.
- Joseph devised a plan of storing extra grain to prepare Egypt for the coming famine, which gave him favor with Pharaoh, leading Joseph to become second in command over all of Egypt.
- When the famine came it also plagued the Promised Land of Canaan, leading Joseph's brothers to seek food from Egypt. God led the brothers before Joseph who recognized them. However, they did not recognize him.
- Joseph kept one of his brothers, Simeon, as a sort of collateral to get the other brothers to return with his younger brother Benjamin. He sent the other brothers back with food and also returned their money to them.

#14 – Gen 43:1–44:34 – The Brothers Return

- The brothers returned to Egypt with Benjamin to get more food and gain the release of Simeon. They brought twice the amount of money they owed to make up for the money that had been returned to them in their bags the previous time.
- Joseph planted a silver cup in the youngest brother Benjamin's bag as a ploy to get them to leave Benjamin with him.
- However, Judah offered to substitute himself for Benjamin so that Benjamin could return to his father who would have been devastated without him. Judah was one of the older brothers who had earlier tried to prevent the other brothers from killing Joseph (Story #11, Gen 37:26).
 - Jesus would later be born from the line of Judah and would substitute himself to save others that they might be with their heavenly Father.

#15 – Gen 45:1–46:7 – Joseph Reveals His Identity

- Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and showed them mercy and grace. He credited God for sovereignly using their evil against him for a greater plan: "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be

distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt” (Gen 45:4–8).

- Joseph’s father, brothers, and entire household moved to Egypt where they received both food and pasture lands. Unbeknownst to any of them at the time, this move would play a pivotal role in fulfilling the prophecy God gave Abraham (Story #7, Gen 15:13) that his descendants would spend 400 years in Egypt.
- Later in Gen 50:20 Joseph told his brothers, “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.” Joseph suffered repeated injustices over many years—sold into slavery, carried to a foreign land with foreign gods, falsely accused, and imprisoned. God used the unjust sufferings of Joseph for His saving purposes. The LORD showed grace to Joseph in the middle of his suffering and placed him in positions of responsibility to save many people from death. Joseph’s life pointed ahead to Jesus as One who suffered unjustly for sins he did not commit so that many would be saved.

NOTES

WEEK 6
< October 13-19 >

#16 – Exodus 1:1-2:25 – Birth of Moses

- We hear echoes of God's commands to Adam and Noah to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." The family of Jacob "multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them" (Exodus 1:7).
- The passage doesn't tell us how long the Israelites had been in Egypt, but we see that both Joseph, and the Pharaoh whom he served as second in command, had died. A new Pharaoh came to power "who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8).
- Fearing that the growing numbers and strength of the Israelites might result in their uprising against the Egyptians, Pharaoh forced them into slave labor. He took them out of their primary vocations as shepherds and made them field workers and brick fabricators.
- Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all males that were born, but to let the girls live (Exodus 1:16). At risk to their own lives, the midwives honored God and disobeyed the Pharaoh's order. Therefore, God blessed them.
- When the midwives did not kill the baby boys, Pharaoh enlisted the Egyptian people to do the job by throwing baby boys into the Nile River.
- Descendants from the Tribe of Levi gave birth to a son and named him Moses, which means "from the water" (Exodus 2:10). When Moses was 3 months old, his mother placed him in a floating basket at the edge of the Nile where God led Pharaoh's daughter to find him. In God's providence, he arranged for Moses' mother to become his nursemaid with compensation.
- After being raised in the household of Pharaoh, Moses killed an Egyptian for beating a fellow Hebrew. Moses had grown up as an Egyptian of privilege and even royalty. He looked like an Egyptian in his dress and hair, and he spoke like an Egyptian. However, in killing the Egyptian he sided with his own oppressed Hebrew people.
- So Moses fled Egypt and went to Midian, a region along the Sinai peninsula. The Midianites were known to be descendants of Abraham through his second wife Keturah.

Midianites were also associated with descendants of Ishmael in Gen 37 (Story # 11).

#17 – Exodus 3:1–4:17 – The Burning Bush

- When the Lord called Moses, He identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- Exodus 3:2 refers to the “angel of the LORD,” which many Bible scholars believe to be a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.
- In the previous story, Moses tried to intervene and help a mistreated Hebrew slave. However, Moses had been operating in his own anger and strength. Now God called Moses to go back to Egypt to serve as His leader in delivering the Hebrew people from their Egyptian slavery.
- The Lord not only promised to deliver the Israelites. He also promised to return them to the Land of Promise they left 400 years earlier during a famine (Story 13). By this time, the Promised Land was not suffering famine but was “good and broad” and “flowing with milk and honey.” (Exo 3:8)
- The Lord called to Moses out of a burning bush on Mt. Sinai. The Lord promised Moses that he would serve the Lord at this same spot with the people of Israel after they were set free from Egypt.
- The Lord further identified Himself to Moses as “I AM WHO I AM” (Exo 3:14). This is God’s special name he used with His covenant people. It is literally four Hebrew letters, YHWH. Anytime we see the word “LORD” in all capital letters in our Bibles, it translates this special name of YHWH.

#18 – Exodus 6:38–11:10 – The Ten Plagues

- The Lord made clear to Moses that He was in the process of forming a new covenant people for Himself. He had previously revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as “God Almighty” but He had never identified Himself to them as YHWH --THE LORD. God was doing something new with Moses.
- The Lord emphasized to Moses and the people that they would be His people, in His place, under His rule (Exodus 6:7–8). This will be a recurring theme throughout the Bible--God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule. We will see various degrees of that reality in the Bible and

throughout history, but it will not be perfectly realized until heaven. Only God's people will be in heaven, and they will be in perfect accord with His rule.

- Pharaoh's magicians seemed to be able to reproduce the first two plagues, but not the following 8.
- To make a clear distinction between God's people and the people of Egypt, the LORD God spared the Hebrew people from plagues 4–10.
- The Lord actually told Moses back in Exodus 4:22–23 that He would send the 10th plague on all the firstborn in Egypt.

NOTES

WEEK 7
< October 20–26 >

#19 – Exodus 12:1–42 – Passover and Exodus

- The Hebrew people spread the blood of an unblemished lamb over their doorways as a sign for the angel of death to not touch any of the Israelite firstborn. The angel would “pass over” those who were under the sign of the lamb’s blood. This event was the basis for the celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
 - Passover was a celebration of deliverance and salvation and the LORD commanded, “You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast” (Exo. 12:14).
 - John the Baptist later refers to Jesus as “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29, 36). The Apostle Paul writes, “For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed” (2 Cor 5:7).
- The 10th plague on the firstborn became the basis for Israel’s Passover and unleavened bread celebrations. Again we see the Lord wanting the Egyptians to know that the LORD makes a distinction between His people Israel and the Egyptians (Exodus 12:7).
- Again, we see the Lord giving favor to His people. In this case the Egyptians gave the Israelites whatever they asked for so that the Hebrew people “plundered the Egyptians” (Exo 12:36) without a battle.
- “A mixed multitude also went with them” (Exo 12:38) indicates that non-Hebrew people accompanied the Israelites out of Egypt. Having seen the works of the LORD in the plagues, they cast their lot with the Israelites and their God YHWH.

#20 – Exodus 13:17–14:31 – Crossing the Red Sea

- Exodus 13:15 explains that the LORD killed all of the firstborn in Egypt because, “Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go.” We repeatedly see the LORD demanding that Pharaoh let His people go to worship Him and offer sacrifices to Him in the wilderness (Exo 5:1; 7:16; 8:1, 8, 20, 21; 9:13, 17; 10:3).

- The LORD manifested His presence as a cloud that shielded and guided the Israelites by day and a pillar of fire that lit their path by night. During the crossing the Lord gave light to the Israelites and kept the Egyptians in darkness.
- Before leaving Egypt, Moses retrieved Joseph's bones (Exo 13:19) and carried them back to Israel to honor Joseph's directive recorded in Gen 50:24-25.
- Pharaoh's army thought they had the Israelites trapped with their backs to the sea. However, the LORD was actually enticing the Egyptians into a trap.
- The LORD demonstrated His sovereign power over nature by parting the sea so that the Hebrew people could cross on dry land. Then He released the seas to drown the ensuing Egyptians.
- We read that after this event, the people of Israel "believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses" (Exo 14:31).
- All the Hebrew people had to do to be saved was trust God enough to walk on the dry ground and watch Him work salvation on their behalf.

#21 – Exodus 19:1–20:21 – The Ten Commandments

- After the Passover and up to this point, the main thing the Israelites had to do was to follow the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night wherever the Lord led them. It was an act of trusting faith that He would lead them to safety.
- It's important to see that the Ten Commandments and the Law came after God had already saved his people from their slavery in Egypt. They did not have to obey the commandments in order to be saved or to be the people of God. Rather the commandments laid out for them how the people of God were to live in a way that honored and pleased Him. Obeying the commandments was one way the LORD's people were to worship Him as their Savior and Ruler.
- There were times the Lord called Moses to meet Him on the mountain to receive words to later deliver to the people at the bottom of the mountain. However, God spoke the 10 commandments audibly from the mountain so all of the people heard them directly without an intermediary.
- The first 5 commandments of the 10 revolved around the people's relationship with God. The next 5 commandments dealt with their relationships among themselves.

NOTES

WEEK 8

< October 27 – November 2 >

#22 – Exodus 32:1–34:35 – The Golden Calf

- Exodus 24:18 tells us Moses was on the mountain for 40 days. This means the people made a golden calf idol and worshipped it within 40 days of God directly speaking the 10 commandments to them.
- The bottom of the mountain is the area of worship where the people had worshiped the Lord. Now they were worshipping the golden calf at that place of worship. That is the place Moses smashed and broke the tablets with the commandments.
- Moses called out asking who would be for the Lord and all of the Levites stepped forward. Moses called them to kill some within the camp. It is clear that Aaron and some of the Levites were involved in the golden calf incident, yet not all of them were killed. It seems some were spared because they turned to the Lord and again promised to be faithful to Him. We are left to think that the 3,000 who were killed did not repent of their idolatry. The LORD was making it clear how serious an offense idolatry is to Him, an offense worthy of the death penalty.
- The LORD renewed His covenant of the Law with the people, gave them new tablets with the commandments, and promised to go before them in giving them the Promised Land.
- Even after their idolatry, the Lord did not forsake them as His people. However, in order to keep unrepentant sin from further harming His people, the Lord brought judgment on those who refused to repent.

#23 – Joshua 1:1–18 – Joshua Succeeds Moses

- Joshua was the leader to succeed Moses and the people recognized him as such. The LORD reassured Joshua that He would be with him just as He had been with Moses.
- The LORD promised to fulfill promises about the land made to Joshua's forefathers.
- The first land upon crossing the Jordan River was allocated to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. Upon arrival, the men from those tribes could leave their

families and livestock there, but they needed to continue on to fight for the land of the other tribes. They were not to return to their own families and land until the land had been secured for everyone.

#24 – Joshua 3:1–4:24 – Crossing the Jordan

- Priests carried the Ark of the Covenant, symbolizing the presence of the LORD, before the people. As the priests entered the waters of the Jordan with the Ark, the LORD parted the waters of the river in a way reminiscent of the parting of the Red Sea with Moses (Story #20 – Exodus 13:17–14:31).
- The priests kept holding the Ark of the Covenant as they were in the middle of the river until all of the people had crossed over on dry ground.
- The LORD commanded a member from each of the 12 tribes to carry a stone from the middle of the riverbed to set up as a memorial of what God had done in parting the waters of the Jordan and leading them into the Promised Land. Parting the waters of the river, with Joshua as their human leader, was a clear reminder of the LORD parting the Red Sea 40 years earlier when Moses was their human leader.

NOTES



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