

LECTURE 4: EXODUS
“The God Who Is Present to Bear Witness to His Name”
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I. Introduction

A. Orienting Data:

1. *Content*: Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, her constitution as a people through covenant, and instructions for and construction of the tabernacle—the place of God’s presence
2. *Historical coverage*: from Joseph’s death (ca. 1800 B.C.?) to Israel’s encampment at Sinai (ca. 1446 B.C. [though some evangelicals still posit 1290 B.C.])
3. *Emphases*:
 - a. God’s exaltation and revelation of himself through:
 - i. His forming of Israel as a people/nation in fulfillment of his promise given to Abraham;
 - ii. His miraculous rescue of Israel from Egypt at the direction of Moses;
 - iii. The manifestation of his presence, power, and will among his people;
 - iv. The judgment and mercy shown Israel when they rebel.
 - b. Israel established as people/nation of God
 - c. Covenant instructions given at Mount Sinai
 - d. Sacred space (the tabernacle as the place of God’s presence) and Israel’s proper worship

B. Covenant Continuity

1. The language of God “blessing” and of mankind being “fruitful” and “multiplying”
 - a. To Adam and Eve:

- Gen. 1:28. And God *blessed* them. And God said to them, “Be *fruitful* and *multiply* and fill the earth and subdue it...”
 - b. To Noah:
 - Gen. 9:1–7. And God *blessed* Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be *fruitful* and *multiply* and fill the earth. . . . ⁷And you, be *fruitful* and *multiply*, teem on the earth and *multiply* in it.”
 - c. To Abraham:
 - Gen. 12:2–3. so that I may make you a great nation, and so that I may *bless* you, and so that I may make your name great. And be a *blessing*, so that I may *bless* those who *bless* you, and him who declares a curse on you I will bind with a curse, and so that in you all the families of the earth shall be *blessed*.
 - Gen. 17:2, 6. that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may *multiply* you greatly. . . . ⁶ I will make you exceedingly *fruitful*, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.
 - Gen. 22:16–18. Because you have done this . . . ¹⁷ I will surely *bless* you, and I will surely *multiply* your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be *blessed*, because you have obeyed my voice.
 - Gen. 26:3–4. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will *bless* you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ I will *multiply* your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be *blessed*.
 - Gen. 26:24. Fear not, for I am with you and will *bless* you and *multiply* your offspring for my servant Abraham’s sake.
 - Gen. 28:3–4. God Almighty *bless* you and make you *fruitful* and *multiply* you, that you may become a company of peoples. ⁴May he give the *blessing* of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you.
 - d. To Jacob:
 - Gen. 35:9, 11–12. And [God] *blessed* him... ¹¹And God said to him, “...Be *fruitful* and *multiply*. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. ¹²The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you.”
 - Gen 48:3–4. God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and *blessed* me, ⁴and said to me, “Behold, I will make you *fruitful* and *multiply* you, and I will make of you a company of peoples and will give this land to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.”
 - e. To/of Israel:
 - Gen. 47:27. Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were *fruitful* and *multiplied* greatly.
 - Exod. 1:7. But the people of Israel were *fruitful* and increased greatly; they *multiplied* and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.
 - Lev. 26:9. I will turn to you and make you *fruitful* and *multiply* you and I will confirm my covenant with you.
 - Deut. 1:10–11. Yahweh your God has *multiplied* you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. ¹¹May Yahweh, the God your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and *bless* you, as he has promised you!
2. The explicit recollection of the Abrahamic covenant promises
- a. Yahweh, the God of the patriarchs
 - i. Exod 3:6, 15–16. And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. . . . ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God

of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. ¹⁶ Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt.’”

- ii. Exod 4:5. “. . . that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.”
- b. God’s remembering the covenant with the patriarchs
 - i. Exod 2:24. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
 - ii. Exod 6:3–5, 8. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. . . . ⁸ I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.”
 - iii. Exod 32:13. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, “I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.”
 - iv. Exod 33:1. The LORD said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring I will give it.’”
3. Conclusion:
 - a. After observing the trail of the terms “bless, “fruitful,” and “multiply” in Genesis and the beginning of Exodus, N. T. Wright has concluded (*The Climax of the Covenant*, 21–23): “Thus at key moments—Abraham’s call, his circumcision, the offering of Isaac, the transition from Abraham to Isaac and from Isaac to Jacob, and in the sojourn in Egypt—the narrative quietly makes the point that Abraham and his family inherit, in a measure, the role of Adam and Eve. The differences are not, however, insignificant. Except for 35.11 f., echoed in 48.3 f., the command (‘be fruitful . . .’) has turned into a promise (‘I will make you fruitful . . .’). The word ‘exceedingly’ is added in ch. 17. And, most importantly, possession of the land of Canaan, and supremacy over enemies, has taken the place of the dominion over nature given in 1.28. We could sum up this aspect of Genesis by saying: Abraham’s children are God’s true humanity, and their homeland is the new Eden.”
 - b. God’s working for Israel at the exodus is a direct overflow of the promises he made with the patriarchs. Israel’s deliverance comes because “God remembered” his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod 2:24; 6:5). In Exod 19:5, Israel is called upon to “hear my voice and keep my covenant,” which clearly anticipates the revelation of the Ten Words that follows and that are introduced by statement, “And God spoke all these words” (20:1) and then called “the words of the covenant” (34:28). Nevertheless, up until 19:5 the only “covenant” mentioned in the book was the one made with the patriarchs (2:24; 6:4–5), which supports the view that the Sinai covenant is actually Stage 1 fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.

C. An Overview of the Message:

1. *Background:* Exodus builds upon the messianic and missiological plan set forth in Genesis, showing initial fulfillments of the patriarchal promises and defining more clearly the role of Israel as God's "son" in the Lord's global kingdom purposes.
 - a. God promised to multiply Abraham's descendants into a great nation (Gen. 15:5 with Exod. 1:7).
 - b. God promised to rescue Israel from slavery in Egypt so as to move them to the Promised Land (Gen. 15:13–16; 50:24–25 with Exod. 1–15)
 - c. God promised that the world's curse would be overcome by a male, royal descendant of the woman (3:15), and Genesis is controlled by this hope for a son of Adam and son of God (5:1–3), who would also be an offspring of Abraham (22:17b–18). Israel's designation as God's "son" portrays the nation as a corporate "Adam," which, much like Noah and the Patriarchs, prefigures the coming agent of blessing, the future son of God (4:22–23; cf. Luke 3:38). Israel's divine sonship is also contrasted with Pharaoh and his firstborn son, which echoes the contrast between the serpent and his offspring and the offspring of the woman, thus clearly placing the exodus from Egypt into God's kingdom-building purposes. (For the portrayal of Yahweh's victory over Pharaoh at the sea as the slaying of the dragon Leviathan, see Ps. 74:13–14; 78:53–54; Isa. 27:1; 51:9–11; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2.)
 - d. Through the Mosaic covenant at Mount Sinai, God reaffirmed his lasting commitment to Israel established with Abraham (Gen. 17:7–8 with Exod. 19–24).
2. *Two Key Questions:* Exodus addresses theology in its purest form, for it is a study on the name/nature of God:
 - a. From Israel: "What is his name?" (Exod. 3:13)
 - b. From Pharaoh: "Who is Yahweh that I should obey him?" (5:2)
3. *The Answer to the Questions in Exodus.* In Exodus 34:14, Moses declared, "You shall worship no other god, for Yahweh is jealous with respect to his name; he is a jealous God" (DeRouchie's translation). God is passionate to be known and worshipped for who he is, so it is to be expected that he would answer both Israel and Pharaoh's pressing questions. In Exodus, he does so in three ways:
 - a. Yahweh's miraculous, self-exalting deliverance of his people from slavery;
 - b. Yahweh's self-clarifying gift of torah as a means of sustaining relationship and fulfilling his covenantal mission for them;
 - c. Yahweh's self-exalting presence as the key element that distinguishes Israel from the other peoples of the earth and that enables, when working through the word, Israel's godly witness.
4. *Key Theme:* Yahweh's self-exalting, gracious redemption and relationship with his people.

D. Structural Overview:

1. Yahweh's Self-Exalting, Gracious Redemption of His People (1:1–18:27)
 - a. Historical Background to Redemption (1:1–4:31)
 - i. Setting the stage for redemption (1:1–2:25)

- ii. Calling of God's messenger of redemption (3:1–4:31)
 - b. The Call for and Experience of Redemption (5:1–15:21)
 - i. Moses' challenge to Pharaoh and Israel (5:1–6:27)
 - ii. 10 Plagues: proclaiming the power and presence of Yahweh (6:28–11:10)
 - iii. Memorializing redemption: the Passover (12:1–36)
 - iv. Experiencing redemption (12:37–14:31)
 - v. Celebrating redemption (15:1–21)
 - c. The Ramifications of Redemption (15:22–18:27)
 - i. For Israel: the life of faith as trust for provision (15:22–17:16)
 - ii. For Moses: the life of faith as trust for guidance (18:1–27)
- 2. Yahweh's Self-Exalting, Gracious Relationship with His People (19:1–40:38)
 - a. The Covenant Embodying Yahweh's Relationship with His People (19:1–24:11)
 - i. The revelation of the initiator and parameters of the covenant relationship (19:1–20:21)
 - ii. The expounding of the parameters of the covenant relationship (20:22–23:33)
 - iii. The ratification of the covenant relationship (24:1–11)
 - b. The Divine Presence and Residence as the Locus of Yahweh's Relationship with His People (24:12–40:38)
 - i. The revelation of the divine presence and description of the divine residence (24:12–31:18)
 - ii. Yahweh's response to Israel's failure to reckon with his presence (32:1–34:5)
 - iii. Yahweh's gracious manifestation of his presence in his residence among his people (35:1–40:38)

II. Excursus: Date of the Exodus and the Length of Conquest

A. A Basic Argument for an Early Date of the Exodus: 1446 BC

1. Key Texts:

- 1 Kgs. 6:1. In the *four hundred and eightieth year* of/to the people of Israel coming out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of Yahweh.
- Judg. 11:26. While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, *300 years*, why did you not deliver them within that time?
- Deut. 6:10–12. And when Yahweh your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build,¹¹ and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full,¹² then take care lest you forget Yahweh, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- Deut. 7:22. Yahweh your God will clear away these nations before you *little by little*. You may not make an end of them at once, lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you.
- Neh. 9:25. And they captured fortified cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

- Note: In Acts 13:20 Paul asserts “all this took about 450 years,” but his reference appears to be to the length of the exile in Egypt (400 years) + the time in the wilderness (40 years) + the initial conquest of the seven nations (10 years). The period of the judges and initial kingdom follows without any dates. As such, the reference in Acts is of little help in dating the exodus.
2. **Conclusions:**
 - 4th year of Solomon’s reign (971–932 B.C.) = 967 B.C.
 - Date of the Exodus: 967 B.C. + 479 yrs = 1446 B.C. (text reads “in the midst of the 480th year,” not “after the 480th year”)
 - 40 years in the wilderness = 1446–1406 B.C.
 - Joshua’s Conquest = 1406–1380 B.C.
 - Period of the Judges = 1380–1050 B.C. (death of Joshua to reign of Saul)
- B. But What about the Lack of Destruction Layers during this Period?**
1. Moses anticipated neither immediate nor mass destruction during the conquest, because quick annihilation of the Canaanite population would result in not enough people to keep the wild beasts under control and because Israel was to live in the very land they were overtaking.
 - Deut. 6:10–12. And when Yahweh your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, then take care lest you forget Yahweh, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
 - Deut. 7:22. Yahweh your God will clear away these nations before you little by little. You may not make an end of them at once, lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you.
 - Deut. 20:19–20. When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you? Only the trees that you know are not trees for food, you may destroy and cut down, that you may build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.
 - Josh 24:13. I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.
 2. Joshua only burnt completely three cities on mounds (*Jericho*, Josh. 6:24; *Ai*, 8:28; *Hazor*, 11:13), though cities like Jerusalem were also set ablaze (Judg. 1:8; cf. 18:27; 20:48).
 - Josh. 11:12–13. And all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua captured, and struck them with the edge of the sword, devoting them to destruction, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded. But none of the cities that stood on mounds did Israel burn, except Hazor alone; that Joshua burned.
 3. As such, we should not expect archaeological excavations to uncover mass destruction layers, and there is no compelling reason not to read the biblical text at face value and to hold to an early 1446 B.C. date for the exodus.

III. Excursus: The Location of the Red Sea Miracle

A. Introduction

1. Next to the saving work of Jesus, the greatest redemptive event in history was when Yahweh delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage—an entire nation set free from slavery to the greatest known power on earth. As Moses himself declared, “For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that

God create man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great things as this has ever happened or was ever heard of.... Has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him" (Deut 4:32, 34–35).

2. The sea crossing intentionally stands as a type for Jesus's saving work (see Luke 9:31), as it both clarifies and predicts how the Lord would save his people from every future enemy. Thus, the second half of the prophetess Miriam's song that Israel sung at the sea foretells that the surrounding nations were already trembling at God's majestic display of saving power (Exod 15:13–18). And the prophets speak of the greater deliverance from the curse as a second exodus that a Davidic ruler will lead on behalf of the world (e.g., Isa 11:10–12:6; Jer 16:14–15; 23:5–8; Hos 3:5).
3. Why the location of the sea crossing matters:
 - a. Just before the seventh plague, the Lord declared to Pharaoh, "This time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth!" (Exod 9:14–16). Then, after Pharaoh's son was dead and all the plagues were done and after Pharaoh and his armies had pursued Israel to the sea, Moses told the people that Yahweh would fight for them (Exod 14:14). And the Lord told Moses, "I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen" (Exod 14:17–18). So it was that God did fight for Israel, and whereas they went through the parted waters on dry ground, Yahweh caused the waters to fall upon their pursuers. "The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained" (Exod 14:28).
 - b. Israel experienced Yahweh's saving power, moving them to declare, "Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" (Exod 15:11). And as God purposed, so his fame spread ... immediately to Jethro in Midian, who "heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt," and who declared, "Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods" (Exod 18:1, 11). Forty years later the event was still impacting the nations, as Rahab in Jericho first testifies (Josh 2:9–11) and then the deceiving Gibeonites reaffirm (Joshua 8:9). Even more, centuries later God's saving work was still moving the Philistines to tremble (1 Sam 4:8), and a millennium later first Daniel and then Nehemiah continued to draw attention to the amazing power of the

living God displayed in this one saving event: "And you made a name for yourself, even (unto) this day" (Dan 9:15; Neh 9:9–10).

- c. With allusions to the song at the Sea (esp. Exod 15:1–2), Isaiah notes that those whom Yahweh redeems through his Spirit-empowered servant-King will once again sing a song of deliverance (Isa 12:1–6), which John tags "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" (Rev 15:3–4). The Red Sea Miracle is worth proclaiming, and the conclusions we draw about it *must* work to magnify the greatness and fame of the redeeming God. Indeed, with Jude we must remember "that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe" (Jude 5). The Red Sea Miracle is a serious matter to God, and it should matter to us.
4. There are three basic views related to the sea crossing:
 - a. **Option 1: A Small Lake in Egypt's Nile Delta.** This approach portrays the miracle on a smaller scale and places the decimation and crossing at one of the small lakes in the northeastern Nile Delta between the northern tip of the Gulf of Suez and the Mediterranean Sea. Scholars following this approach see the numbers of Israelites as much smaller than our English translations suggest, and they stress that the Hebrew *Yam Suph* means not "Red Sea" but "Reed Sea," thus allowing for Yahweh to deliver through a smaller lake.
 - b. **Option 2: The Gulf of Aqaba on the eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula.** This view asserts that the Bible itself points both to a sea crossing further away from Egypt at a location that demands a miracle of unparalleled proportions. After leaving Egypt in haste and journeying across the Sinai Peninsula, Yahweh parted the waters at the Gulf of Aqaba, and then Israel journeyed on to a Mt. Sinai located not in the Sinai Peninsula but in Midian in the northeastern part of the Arabian Peninsula.
 - c. **Option 3: The Gulf of Suez on the western side of the Sinai Peninsula.** This view equally magnifies the greatness of the miracle of deliverance but places the sea crossing at the northern tip of the Gulf of Suez. While this was the predominant view of the last two thousand years, the view itself appears to have been highly influenced by early Greek geography that did not even account for the Gulf of Aqaba.

B. **Biblical Reasons for Placing *Yam Suph* at the Gulf of Aqaba and Mt. Sinai in Midian**

1. ***Yam Suph was a massive body of water east of Egypt.*** *Yam Suph*, the Hebrew name commonly translated "Red Sea," was east of Egypt and large enough both to collect all the locusts from the entire land (Exod 10:14, 19) and to destroy the entire army of Egypt, the greatest world empire of the day (Exod 14:27–28). These facts make a small border lake in the Nile Delta an unlikely candidate for the crossing, whereas either the Gulf of Suez or the Gulf of Aqaba would work.
2. ***The size of the miracle at Yam Suph must match the greatness of Yahweh's name that he sought to exalt.*** The miracle at *Yam Suph* has to be of unprecedented proportion, for Scripture testifies that the purpose for Yahweh's delivering Israel from Egypt's grip was to magnify his greatness to the ends of the earth. This is why Yahweh promised to save Israel (Exod 6:7; 7:5), why he

brought the plagues on Egypt (Exod 8:10, 22; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 11:17), why he raised up Pharaoh and extended the process of bringing him to ruin (Exod 9:16–17), and why he dried up the sea (Exod 14:4, 17–18). As Joshua later declared as Israel was entering the Promised Land, "The LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever" (Josh 4:23–24). And Yahweh's fame did spread, first to Israel (Exod 14:31; 15:11–12) and then on to the neighboring nations (Exod 15:13–18). This is clear immediately for Jethro in Midian (Exod 18:1, 11), forty years later for the Canaanites in Jericho and Gibeon (Josh 2:9–11; 9:9), centuries later among the Philistines (1 Sam 4:7–8), in the eighth century to the prophet Isaiah (Isa 63:12), and a millennium later to both Daniel and Nehemiah (Dan 9:15; Neh 9:9–10). No salvation of such magnitude had ever happened in the history of the world (Deut 4:32, 34–35), and for this reason I believe *Yam Suph* cannot be a small lake but must be a great sea.

3. ***Scripture describes the parting of the waters at Yam Suph in ways that identify Yahweh's hand divided a great sea and not a small lake.*** At the blast of Yahweh's nostrils "the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea" (Exod 15:8). The waters themselves were for the Israelites like "a wall to them on their right hand and on their left" (Exod 14:22), but the Egyptians "sunk in *Yam Suph*"; indeed, "the floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.... They sank like lead in the mighty waters." (Exod 15:4–5, 10). "Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were laid bare" (Ps 18:15 [16]). At the sight of Yahweh, "the deep trembled" (Ps 77:16 [17]), and God's path was through "great waters" (Ps 77:19 [20]), through "the mighty waters" (Isa 43:16).
4. ***The miracle at Yam Suph must happen in the wilderness, far from Egypt.*** Israel had three known camping spots en route to *Yam Suph* after leaving Raamses (Avaris): Succoth (Exod 12:37), Etham ("on the edge of the wilderness," Exod 13:20), and Pi-hahiroth (to which they turned and encamped in front of, "between Migdol [connected to the Hebrew term for "tower"] and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon," Exod 14:2). The fact that Etham was already "on the edge of the wilderness" (Exod 13:20) identifies that Israel's journey was outside the borders of the country and far from residential spheres. Furthermore, Pharaoh only journeyed after Israel once they had "fled" (Exod 14:5), which suggests a full departure from the land, and Israel viewed their placement at the sea as being "in the wilderness" outside of Egypt (Exod 14:11). It is difficult to reconcile any of these statements with a sea crossing anywhere near the Nile Delta.
5. ***The only clear body of water that the Bible identifies as Yam Suph is the Gulf of Aqaba.*** *Yam Suph* was the terminus of "the way of the wilderness," upon which Israel journeyed from Egypt (Exod 13:18). Yahweh did not lead them the northern route up the coast tagged "the way of the Philistines" (Exod 3:17), nor did he lead them simply into the southern Negev. Instead, the road they journeyed went to *Yam Suph*, which Exodus itself identifies as the Gulf of Aqaba

when describing the Promised Land's borders: “And I will set your border from the *Yam Suph* [Israel’s southeast border] to the Sea of the Philistines [the bend of the Mediterranean Sea near Gaza, Israel’s southwest border], and from the wilderness [near the Negev, Israel’s southern border] to the Euphrates [Israel’s northern limit], for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you” (Exod 23:31). In this overview, *Yam Suph* cannot be either Egypt's Delta region or the Gulf of Suez but must be the Gulf of Aqaba. It was this site that served as the location of King Solomon's southern fleet (1 Kgs 9:26), and it was this site that was closely associated with Mount Sier and the area of Edom, which is east and southeast of Kadesh (Deut 2:1; Jer 49:20–21).



6. ***Israel's goal upon leaving Egypt was the mountain of God, which was most likely in Midian on the other side of the Gulf of Aqaba.***
 - a. Moses was shepherding in the land of Midian when he went out into the wilderness and met Yahweh at Horeb, the mountain of God (Exod 2:15; 3:1), and it was to this mountain that Yahweh was leading Israel (Exod

3:12). We know that "it is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea" (Deut 1:2). This statement identifies that the mountain must be quite a distance from Israel's southern border, which is further affirmed by the fact that Elijah would later take forty days to travel from Beersheba (further north of Kadesh in the Negeb) to Horeb (1 Kgs 19:3, 8). Furthermore, the statement in Deuteronomy also highlights that the path Israel would have taken from the mountain to the Promised Land's southern border led out of the south to Mount Seir. Mount Seir is associated with highlands connected to southern Edom in the Arabah stretching south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba on the east side of the rift. Israel would follow Yahweh's presence along this path from Horeb (Mount Sinai) through Mount Seir to Kadesh, which was part of the wilderness of Paran (Num 13:26): "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand" (Deuteronomy 33:2).

- b. Furthermore, the journey to God's mountain included *two* stoppings at *Yam Suph*—the first linked to the miraculous sea crossing and the second connected with their journey from the sea to Horeb. We should not consider the two mentions of *Yam Suph* as different bodies of water (contra Hoffmeier) but as two different locations on the same body of water, so that Israel is journeying longways down a large sea en route to Horeb. "So the people of Israel set out from Rameses and camped at Succoth. 6 And they set out from Succoth and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness. 7 And they set out from Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, which is east of Baal-zephon, and they camped before Migdol. 8 And they set out from before Hahiroth and passed *through the midst of the sea* into the wilderness, and they went a three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah. 9 And they set out from Marah and came to Elim; at Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there. 10 And they set out from Elim and camped by *Yam Suph*. 11 And they set out from *Yam Suph* and camped in the wilderness of Sin. 12 And they set out from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. 13 And they set out from Dophkah and camped at Alush. 14 And they set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. 15 And they set out from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai" (Num 33:5–15). That Israel arrived at Etham, turned to Pi-hahiroth, journeyed through the sea, and then set out "three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham" suggests that they almost passed around the top of a great body of water, went back in order to journey through it, and then picked up around the spot where they had originally journeyed. In light of the fact that they will need to journey on "the way of Mount Seir" from Horeb, this suggests *Yam Suph* is the Gulf of Aqaba and that Horeb is in Midian of Arabia.

7. **Paul identifies Mount Sinai with Arabia.** Paul identifies that "Mount Sinai [is] in Arabia" (Gal 4:25), which most likely meant either the Arabah of Edom (Arabia Petra) or what we consider the Arabian Peninsula (Arabia Felix), though

he could have meant any area to the south including something in Egypt or the Sinai (cf. LXX Gen 45:10; 46:34).

C. Some Responses to Objections

1. ***Would not Egypt's military fortifications have influenced Israel's path of departure?*** Pharaoh gave permission for Israel to leave the country (Exod 12:31–32), and “the Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste” (Exod 12:33). Indeed, Israel left boldly with no reserve (Exod 14:8). As such, in contrast to Hoffmeier, we should not think Israel needed to fear Egyptian military units at the front end of their journey. Indeed, it was only once Israel reached Pi-hahiroth that God tells Moses that he will harden Pharaoh’s heart and move him to pursue Israel (Exod 14:2–4). Israel was “equipped for battle” (Exod 13:18), but they were not anticipating any battle against the Egyptians. They were not allowed to go the northern route because war could have broken out against the Philistines, and the people might “change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt” (Exod 13:17).
2. ***Does not the Hebrew Suph in the phrase Yam Suph require a marshy location rather than something like the Red Sea?*** Scholars commonly associate the term *suph* [סֹפֶה] in the Hebrew location *Yam Suph* [יַם סוּפֶה] with the term “reed,” which they associate with papyrus, note that salt seas like the Red Sea have no papyrus, and conclude that the crossing more likely occurred at a small fresh-water lake in the Delta region. However, limiting the meaning of Hebrew *suph* to “papyrus” is too precise in light of the Hebrew usage. Outside its occurrences in the phrase *Yam Suph*, it appears in three contexts, which clarify that it does not mean papyrus and that it means any type of aquatic plant. We see it in Isaiah 19:6 alongside *kaneh* [קַנְהָ] where it refers to a fresh-water plant, but in Jonah 2:6 it points to a plant found in the bottom of Mediterranean Sea (i.e., a salt-water plant). Most importantly, in Exod 2:3, 5 it refers to a fresh water plant that held the basket holding Moses in place but is distinguished from the papyrus [סֹפֶה] with which Moses’s mother made the basket (Exod 2:3). Isaiah 18:2 uses the same term for papyrus boats, and Job 8:11 tells us that the particular plant grows in a marsh. The point here is that the term *suph* in Hebrew could point to either a fresh-water or salt-water area and should not be limited to papyrus that grows solely in fresh-water areas.
3. ***There were only three campsites before Israel arrived at Yam Suph and the second was "on the edge of the wilderness," so how could the sea crossing happen so far from Egypt at the Gulf of Aqaba?*** Both Exodus and Numbers (Exod 12:37; 13:20; 14:1; Num 33:5–8) identify only three camping locations between Raamses and *Yam Suph*: Succoth, Etham (“on the edge of the wilderness”), and Pi-hahiroth (which was “between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon”). There are then some seven more sites before they arrive at the mountain, three months after departing Egypt (Num 33:8–15 with Exod 19:1). “The way of the wilderness toward *Yam Suph*” was likely a well-known travel route, but it was still through the *wilderness*. As such, the only reason to list specific camping sites was (1) if something important happened there or (2) if the campsite was in close proximity to a known location. The fact that only three

sites are listed between Egypt and *Yam Suph* does not necessarily imply only three respite points.

4. ***How could such a large population have survived a journey of over 150 miles across the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula?*** At times they traveled day and night, so even with large crowds, they could have journeyed far in a short amount of time (Exod 13:21–22), as when Jacob took all his family and flocks some 350 miles in ten days (Gen 31:17–25). Furthermore, we know God supplied them ample water on their journey, whether by rain (Ps 68:7–10 [8–11]), springs (Exod 15:22–27), or water from the rock (Exod 17:1–7).

IV. Yahweh’s Self-Exalting, Gracious Redemption of Israel

A. Yahweh, the Causer of All (Exod. 3:13–15)

Exod. 3:13–15. Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

1. Context:
 - a. God’s has been faithful to his promise to multiply and establish Israel as a nation (Exod. 1:7; cf. 33:13).
 - b. The problem: Israel has multiplied > Egyptian fear > affliction of Israelites > multiplication of Israelites > greater Egyptian fear and affliction of Israelites (Exod. 1:8–2:25)
 - c. Israel’s need: deliverance (2:23–25)
2. Goal: Instill confidence and hope in the present generation, for the God who made promises to the patriarchs is now working for them through Moses his prophet to bring about stage 1 fulfillment—a nation in the land (Gen. 15:13–16).
3. The Nature of the Question, “What is his name?” The question restated: Who is the source of this message? What is his character, and by what authority does he come?
 - a. A personal name connotes personhood, character, reputation, and authority; the name can signify and encompass the whole person.
 - b. Two roles of a “name”: (1) theological meaning; (2) signifies the hopes or expectations for a person. Examples:
 - Gen. 17:5, 15. No longer shall your name be called Abram [exalted father], but your name shall be Abraham [father of a multitude], for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations... ¹⁵As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah [princess] shall be her name.
 - Gen. 32:28. [Yahweh] said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel [he who strives with God], for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.”
 - Cf. Hos. 1:2–8; Isa. 8:3; 9:6–7; Matt. 1:21
4. The Nature of the Answer: “I am who I am . . . Yahweh”
 - a. Yahweh and the verb “to be”:
 - i. Introductory comments:
 - (1) The name “Yahweh” is a form of the verb “to be” and thus stands as a word play with the double use of this verb in the statement, “I am who I am” (or “I will be who I will be”) (both “Yahweh”

and “I will be” are manifestations of the Hebrew imperfective verb = *yiqtol*).

- (2) The relationship is highlighted in the spelling of the forms. The verb “to be” is the Hebrew *hyh*, which in Moses’ day would have been spelled *hwh*:
 - (a) 3:14 – *ʔhwh* (the verb) = 1st person form of “to be”: “I am/will be”
 - (b) 3:15 – *yhwh* (the proper name) = 3rd person form of “to be,” likely in causative stem: “He causes to be”
 - (3) The same verb occurs in 3:12 “*I will be* with you” and 3:14b in the statement “*I am* has sent me.”
- ii. The pronunciation of YHWH
- (1) Names or phrases that derive from or include the name of Israel’s God very often include an “a-vowel” after the “y” of *yhwh*, suggesting the proper spelling is YaHWeH from the causative stem, meaning “he causes to be” or “he causes to exist.”
 - (a) *ʔēlîyāhû* (“Elijah”): “My God is Yah”
 - (b) *zēkaryâ* (“Zechariah”): “Yah remembers”
 - (c) *ʔzaryāhû* (“Azariah”): “Yah has helped”
 - (d) *ʔdōnîyāhû* (“Adonijah”): “My lord is Yah”
 - (e) *halʔlû yâh* (“Hallelujah”): Praise Yah!
 - (2) At least since the late Persian period (350 B.C. = the initial work on the Septuagint/LXX), Jews have read the word *ʔdōnāy* (= *adonai*, “lord”) in place of the divine name Yahweh, because they considered it too holy to pronounce.
 - (3) Originally the Hebrew OT was written only with consonants, so the name of God was simply spelled YHWH, and the reader was expected to supply the vowel pattern that had been faithfully passed down to them through from the previous generation. When the vowels were added to the Hebrew text between A.D. 500–1000, the basic vowels of *ʔdōnāy* “lord, master” were placed between the four Hebrew consonants of the Tetragrammaton to bring to remembrance the “proper” reading. That is, while the Jews would not alter the sacred text (they left the consonants), they included the vowels of *ʔdōnāy* to call the reader to substitute the divine name with “the lord.” The divine name was thus spelled *YʔHoWaH*, which unfortunately led some interpreters to pronounce the name Jehovah. However, Most modern translations use the phrase “the LORD” in all caps to distinguish the name from “lord.”
 - (4) Synthesis: “Jehovah” is *not* the correct pronunciation of God’s name, for it is merely a Germanic Jewish signal to read the name as “Lord,” using the vowels of *ʔdōnāy*. The most likely pronunciation is “Yahweh,” for the “a-vowel” found in theophoric names and phrases includes the “a” after the “Y” and

points to the third masculine singular causative form of the verb to “be” meaning “he causes to be.”

- iii. The meaning of God’s name
 - (1) Whereas God declared of himself, “I AM,” he calls us to refer to him as “Yahweh,” which means, “He causes to be.”
 - (2) God is more than the causer of all (thus, his own title “I AM”), just like C.S. Lewis is more than the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. But if Lewis had written himself into his story, like God has entered into ours, the other characters in Narnia would declare Lewis to be the causer (author) of everything. Thus by calling God Yahweh we are doing more than declaring him the self-existent one; we are indeed stressing that *everything* finds its source and meaning and purpose in him—he is “the founder and perfecter of our faith” (Heb. 12:2). This amazing portrait of God as the one from whom, through whom, and to whom everything is (Rom. 11:36; cf. Col. 1:16) is massive in the book of Exodus.
 - (3) In Exodus, Yahweh is the one who makes man’s mouth, hardens hearts, and controls nature including the bringing of plagues and the parting of water. He is the one who punishes Egypt, saves Israel, appears as a consuming fire, and graciously gives instructions to his people. In Exodus, Yahweh is both angry at sin and yet forgiving of it; he stands over all things and yet is personally involved in everything. To declare God by his name Yahweh is to affirm him the absolute sovereign of the universe, the one from whom and through whom, and, by implication, to whom all things exist. “Yahweh” means “he causes to be.”
- iv. Synthesis:
 - (1) Within the context of deliverance and judgment found in Exodus, the link between the name Yahweh and the verb “to be” suggests that God’s name points to him as the creator and sustainer of all things in space (matter) and time (history), specifically on behalf of his people.
 - (2) When the eternally existing Sovereign of all things (thus “I AM”) enters into our world, we refer to him as the causer or author of all (thus “He causes to be”). Yahweh is the all-powerful overseer, fulfilling his promises to the patriarchs, controlling nature in the plagues, conquering Egypt, forgiving Israel’s sins, revealing his will, and being all Israel needs all the time and in every way!
 - (3) Yahweh alone makes Israel distinct from the nations (33:16), and he alone can provide the salvation Israel so desperately needs (34:9). Israel should, therefore, trust and follow him, treasure and celebrate him.
- b. God’s passion for his name to be known and remembered:
 - i. God explicitly declared that “[Yahweh] is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations” (Exod. 3:15). Similarly, at the end of the book, Moses asserted, “You shall worship

- no other god, for *Yahweh is jealous with respect to his name*; he is a jealous God” (34:14; DeRouchie’s translation). Echoing Exodus 3:15, Hosea proclaimed, “Yahweh, the God of hosts, Yahweh is his memorial name” (Hos. 12:5).
- ii. God’s call for us to recognize him as the causer of all is right, necessary, and loving. It is right because Yahweh alone is supreme over all things and is therefore worthy of worship (Exod. 34:14; Deut. 32:39). It is necessary because if Yahweh gave his glory to another, declaring something else as being worthy of his own worship, he would stop being God (Isa. 42:8; 48:11). It is loving because Yahweh alone can save (43:10–12) and because in his presence is fullness of joy forever (Ps. 16:11).
 - iii. Only if Moses heard God’s name as *yhwh* in 3:15 would he have recognized the word-play with *yhwh* in 3:14. Furthermore, at least three features clearly suggest that Moses and the prophets were calling God by his name: (1) God’s call to remember his name Yahweh, (2) the use of Yahweh in theophoric words, (3) the maintaining of the Hebrew spelling with the four consonants all throughout the OT, and the use of the shortened form alongside the longer form (e.g., Isa. 12:2; 26:4; Pss. 89:8[9]; 106:48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 116:19; 117:2; 122:4; 135:1, 3, 21; 148:1; 149:1).
 - iv. Nevertheless, by the time of the Septuagint (LXX), it appears the Jews had stopped pronouncing Yahweh’s name, so in the NT every OT quotation with Yahweh is translated *kurios*, except in technical terms like “Hallelujah” (Rev. 19:1, 3–4, 6). In light of point iii above, however, it seems clear that even the NT authors knew Yahweh by his name.
 - v. I suggest that we read every LORD as Yahweh in the Old Testament, for in a text that was intended to be *heard*, the shift from Lord to LORD goes unnoticed. The following examples show the clarity and significance of pronouncing Yahweh rather than simply saying LORD. Read the parallels out loud to yourself, and note how the right column resonates differently in your soul, keeping in mind that the name Yahweh points to him as the causer of all.

Isa 12:2	Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.	Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for Yah, Yahweh is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.
Ps 8:1	O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.	O Yahweh, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.
Ps 110:1	The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”	Yahweh says to my Sovereign: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”
Dan 9:3–4	Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying,	Then I turned my face to the Sovereign God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. ⁴ I prayed to Yahweh my God and made confession, saying,

	“O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,”	“O Sovereign, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,”
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- c. Meditations on Yahweh’s name later in Scripture
- i. Following the golden calf episode and God’s covenant renewal with Israel, a development of Exodus 3:13–15 is found in God’s declaration to Moses in **33:18–19**: “I will proclaim before you my name ‘Yahweh.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” He then goes on to say (**34:6–7**), “Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious. . . .”
 - (1) “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious” patterns the unique grammatical structure found in Exodus 3:14, “I am who I am.”
 - (2) With this, the repetition of the name Yahweh in 34:6, followed by a list of nominals, suggests that the list stands in apposition to the name, thus providing description to it (see below).
 - ii. The Song of Moses in **Deuteronomy 32** is set forth as a meditation on God’s name: “I will proclaim the name of Yahweh; ascribe greatness to our God” (32:3). What follows, then, unpacks the significance of God’s name:
 - The Rock, whose work is perfect (v. 4)
 - Faithful, sinless, and just (v. 4)
 - Israel’s Father-creator (v. 6; cf. vv. 18–19)
 - The overseer of nations and people groups, yet with special affection for Israel (vv. 8–9)
 - Israel’s guide and protector (vv. 12–14)
 - The Rock, Israel’s savior (v. 15)
 - Rightfully jealous (vv. 16, 21), for nothing else and no one else deserves worship (v. 17)
 - He promises to create jealousy among Israel toward the nations (v. 21) and to remove both provision and protection from Israel due her sin (vv. 22–25)
 - Concerned with his reputation (vv. 26–27)
 - Controls Israel’s future (vv. 28–29)
 - Outside of his control, nothing can harm his own (v. 30)
 - A unique source of pure life, not poisoned death (vv. 32–33)
 - Promises to be vengeful upon all who harm his people (v. 35)
 - Promises to show compassion on the humble (v. 36)
 - The only supreme power over all: “See now that I, even, I am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver our of my hand” (v. 39)
 - The One who moves the world to joy and is worthy of the worship of all (v. 43)

- iii. In the context of divine judgment against Israel, **Hosea 1:9** and **Psalm 50:21** use a striking phrase that may have direct parallel with Exodus 3:14.
- (1) While clearly an echo of the covenant formula, “I will be your God, and you will be my people” (see Hos. 2:23; cf. Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 29:13; Jer. 7:23; 30:22; Ezek. 36:28), the literal wording of Hosea 1:9 breaks this expected pattern, with Yahweh declaring either, “Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, *and I am not yours*” (so ESV footnote) or “*and I am not ‘I am’ [ʔhyh] to you.*” If the latter interpretation is correct, what would the significance be for the audience?

THINK!

If Hosea 1:9 intentionally echoes Exodus 3:14 and is best translated, “Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not ‘I am’ [ʔhyh] to you,” what would the significance be for the audience? Why would God say it this way?

- (2) In Psalm 50, Yahweh confronts “the wicked” who “hate discipline” and “cast my words behind you” and yet “recite my statutes” and “take my covenant on your lips” (Ps. 50:16–17). To this group God declares in v. 21: “These things you have done, and I have been silent; you considered *I am [ʔhyh]* to be like you. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you” (so ESV footnote). To do so is to “forget God” and the result is that God will “tear you apart, and there be none to deliver!” (50:22). May we never make God small, acting as though he is as indifferent toward our sin as we are. Instead, let us live in gratitude and dependence, seeing God as our only hope. “The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God” (50:23).
- iv. In **Psalm 135**, the psalmist calls his audience to praise the *name* of Yahweh, and viewing this name as focusing on his causation of all makes good sense in the context.
- (1) The person of God is mentioned 21x (7x3) in the psalm, the name Yahweh showing up 19x and the titles Elohim and Adonai each 1x.
- (2) The psalm is framed by calls to praise him, grounded in Yahweh’s election of Israel, which proves his goodness and beauty and highlights the worth of the One dwelling in Zion (135:1–4, 19–21).
- (3) The main body of the psalm stresses that “Yahweh is great,” the sovereign “above all gods” (135:5). Indeed, “whatever Yahweh pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps” (135:6).
- (a) He alone shapes the weather patterns (135:7).
- (b) He oversaw the destruction of Egypt at the Exodus, including the taking the life of Pharaoh’s son (135:8–9).

- (c) He gave Israel the Promised Land, overcoming Sihon and Og (135:10–12).
 - (d) His name is equated with his fame, which endures forever, because Yahweh has vindicated his people (135:13–14).
 - (e) In contrast to Yahweh, the idols are lifeless and inanimate, and trusting them will make people lifeless and inanimate as well (135:15–18).
- v. In **Psalm 145**, the final psalm before the doxological conclusion to the book, the psalmist provided an extended meditation on the character of Yahweh.
- (1) While not clear in the ESV, the psalm appears to include two prayers that God would enable the psalmist (145:1–2) and the rest of creation (145:10–13b) to praise Yahweh, and each prayer is followed by two reasons for praise.
 - (a) The psalmist is to praise Yahweh because “Yahweh is great and to be exceedingly praised” (145:3) and because “Yahweh is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in loyalty” (145:8). The latter is a direct echo of Exodus 34:6.
 - (b) The creation is to praise Yahweh because “Yahweh is faithful in all his words and loyal in all his works” (145:13c[lost verse added from DSS]) and because “Yahweh is righteous in all his ways and loyal in all his works” (145:17).
 - (2) In total the name “Yahweh” occurs 10x, 3x in part 1 and 7x in part 2 + the conclusion.
 - (3) In the introduction the psalmist prays, “May I bless your *name* forever and ever” (145:2), and in the conclusion he prays, “May all flesh bless his holy *name* forever and ever” (145:21).
- vi. Whereas God can simply declare, “I am who I am” (Exod. 3:14) and “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy” (33:19), Paul declared, “*By the grace of God I am what I am* and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.” (**1 Cor. 15:10**). Humanity’s existence is fully derivative and dependent, as is our work and success.
- vii. As the **Gospel of John** stresses, through Jesus’ earthly ministry, he regularly identified himself with Yahweh of the OT by echoing the “I AM” statement of Exodus 3:14.
- (1) The One with authority over the storm and who calms fear:
 - John 6:20. *I am [ego eimi]*; do not be afraid. (Cf. Matt. 14:27; Mark 6:50.)
 - (2) The all-satisfying One:
 - John 6:35. “*I am* the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” (Cf. 6:41, 48, 51.)
 - (3) The Light, the ultimate guide and enabler (spoken at the end of the Feast of Booths/Tabernacles, the celebration of God’s guidance of Israel through the wilderness by his cloud and fire):

- John 8:12. *I am* the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.
- (4) The One in whom you must believe to be saved:
 - John 8:24. I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that *I am*, you will die in your sins.
 - (5) The One you will recognize as the God of Exodus 3:14 *after* my death and resurrection:
 - John 8:28. When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that *I am*, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.
 - John 13:19. I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that *I am*.
 - (6) The One who existed before Abraham:
 - John 8:58. Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, *I am*.” So they picked up stones to throw at him.
 - (7) The only door to refuge:
 - John 10:7, 9. Truly, truly, I say to you, *I am* the door of the sheep.... *I am* the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.
 - (8) The Good Shepherd, the ultimate provider and protector who gives himself for his own:
 - John 10:11, 14. *I am* the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.... *I am* the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.
 - (9) The One who provides eternal life and the only access to the Father:
 - John 11:25. *I am* the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.
 - John 14:6. *I am* the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - (10) The source from which all good fruit is produced:
 - John 15:1, 5. I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.... I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
 - (11) The One whose identity demands homage:
 - John 18:5–6. Jesus said, “*I am*.”... When Jesus said, “*I am*,” they drew back and fell to the ground.”
- viii. In **Revelation**, John records Jesus declaring himself as the great ever-existent and all sovereign “I AM”:
- (1) The absolute Sovereign over all, the Source, Sustainer, and Goal of everything:
 - Rev. 1:17–18. Fear not, *I am* the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold *I am* alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.
 - Rev. 21:6. It is done! *I am* the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.
 - (2) The messiah anticipated from the line of David:
 - Rev. 22:16. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. *I am* the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.

Fig. 4.1. Some Names/Titles Associated with God in the OT

Name/Title	Significance
^ʔ lōhîm (“God”)	The most general title of the transcendent Creator of all that exists (Gen. 1:1)
ʔēl ʿelyōn (“God Most High”)	Indicates God’s superior position above all gods of the nations (Gen. 14:18–20)
yhw̄h (“the LORD”)	God’s personal name, which points to his being the Creator and Sustainer of all that exists in space (visible and invisible universe) and time (history) (Exod. 3:14–15; 34:6–7)
^ʔ dōnāy (“Lord, Master, Sovereign”)	Reveals God as the owner, overseer, and master of all creation (Gen. 15:2; Josh. 3:11)
ʔēl šadday (“God Almighty”)	Recalls God’s power in creating and sustaining life (Gen. 17:1)
ʔēl ʿōlām (“God Everlasting”)	Emphasizes God’s immensity and eternity (Gen. 21:33)
ʔēl rʾî (“The God of Sight”)	Reveals God’s beneficent omniscience as one who sees the needs of his people and cares enough to respond with help and deliverance (Gen. 16:13)
ʔēl ^ʔ lōhē yisrāʔēl (“God, the God of Israel”)	Attests to God’s sovereignty and providential watch over Israel as his elect people (Gen. 33:19–20)
yhw̄h yērāʔeh (“Yahweh will see/provide”)	A place name that witnesses to God’s ever-watching care of those who fear him through trial (Gen. 22:14)
yhw̄h šʿbāʔōt (“Yahweh of Hosts”)	Designates God as the Creator and Leader of heaven’s angelic armies (1 Sam. 1:11; 17:45)

Adapted from J. H. Walton and A. E. Hill, *Old Testament Today* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 73.

B. Yahweh, the Causer—The Maker of Mouths and Deliverer

- Disability and health, inability and enablement come from God (Exod. 4:11; cf. Deut. 32:39). Therefore, God is to be glorified through all ability to fulfill God’s calling in one’s life (see 1 Pet. 4:11).
 - Exod. 4:11. Then Yahweh said to [Moses], “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, Yahweh?”
 - Deut. 32:39. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.
- Yahweh’s identity and his promise to redeem and establish Israel as his people (Exod. 6:2–8).
 - Exod. 6:2–8. God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am Yahweh. ³I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them. ⁴I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. ⁷I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am Yahweh.’”
 - Context:
 - Moses’ mission has felt resistance from God (4:24–26), from Pharaoh (5:1–2), and from Israel (5:21).
 - Moses’ theological complaint: Exod. 5:22–23. “O Yahweh, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? ²³For since I

- came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.”
- b. The Frame: The divine declaration “I am Yahweh” bookends the statement of redemption, as if to stress God is the generator and goal of it all and all God’s past and future actions are grounded in the nature of his character.
 - c. The 4-Part Promise (so E. Martens, *God’s Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology*):
 - i. Deliverance (v. 6): “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.”
 - ii. Communion (v. 7a): “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God.”
 - iii. Knowledge of God (v. 7b): “And you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”
 - iv. Abundant Life (v. 8): “I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession.”
 - d. The Covenant Formula throughout Scripture—A relational expression of both obligation and promise (Gen. 17:7–8; Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:11–12; 2 Sam. 7:24; Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33; 32:38; Ezek. 11:19–20; 14:10–11; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Hos. 1:9–10; 2:23; Zech. 8:8; 13:9; 1 Chr. 17:22; Rom. 9:25–26; 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 8:10; Rev. 21:3).
 - Gen. 17:7–8. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.
 - Exod. 6:7. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
 - Lev. 26:11–12. I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. ¹²And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people. 2 Cor. 6:6. What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Rev. 21:3. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.
 - 2 Sam. 7:24. And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O Yahweh, became their God. 1 Chr. 17:22. And you made your people Israel to be your people forever, and you, O Yahweh, became their God.
 - Jer. 7:23. But this command I gave them: “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.”
 - Jer. 11:4. Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God.
 - Jer. 24:7. I will give them a heart to know that I am Yahweh, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.
 - Jer. 30:22. And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

- Jer. 31:1, 33. At that time, declares Yahweh, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people. . . .³³For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Yahweh: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Heb. 8:10. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 - Jer. 32:38. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
 - Ezek. 11:19–20. And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,²⁰that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
 - Ezek. 14:10–11. And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the prophet and the punishment of the inquirer shall be alike—¹¹that the house of Israel may no more go astray from me, nor defile themselves anymore with all their transgressions, but that they may be my people and I may be their God, declares the Lord Yahweh.
 - Ezek. 36:28. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.
 - Ezek. 37:23, 27. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. . . .²⁷ My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 - Hos. 1:9–10; 2:23. And Yahweh said, “Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not “I Am” to you. 10 Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ it shall be said to them, ‘Children of the living God.’ . . .^{2:23}And I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, “You are my people”; and he shall say, “You are my God.” Rom. 9:25–26. And indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will ‘beloved.’ And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”
 - Zech. 8:8. And I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.
 - Zech. 13:9. And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, “They are my people”; and they will say, “Yahweh is my God.”
- e. Question: The ESV renders 6:3, “I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, *but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them.*” How do we reconcile this with the numerous references to “Yahweh” in the patriarchal history?
- i. The name Yahweh occurs 165x in Genesis, 117x of which are in the patriarchal narratives (Gen. 11:9–50:26).
 - ii. Along with the numerous instances in the mouth of the narrator, we are told that the patriarchs called on the name of Yahweh, and the name Yahweh is also used in their speeches. Examples from Genesis 12–22 are as follows:
 - Gen. 12:8. There [Abram] built an altar to Yahweh and called upon the name of Yahweh (cf. 13:4; 21:33; also 4:26).
 - Gen. 15:2. Abram said, “O Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, for I continue childless?” (cf. 14:22; 15:8; 22:14).

- Gen. 15:7. And [Yahweh] said to him, “I am Yahweh who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess” (cf. 18:14 with 16:11; 19:13–14).
 - See 16:2, 5 in the mouth of Sarai and 16:11 and 19:13, 14 in the mouth of divine messengers.
- iii. Possible Solutions:
- (1) *Editorial Updating*. Moses as the narrator added the name Yahweh into the Genesis materials to stress Israel’s continuity with the patriarchs. (This is the least likely solution, in light of the inclusion of Yahweh’s name in the speeches themselves.)
 - (2) *Not “New” but “Nuanced” Revelation*. The point is not to say that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not know Yahweh by his name but that they didn’t know his character to the extent that Yahweh was now disclosing it to Moses and Israel. Not “new” but a “nuanced” name/revelation.
 - (3) *Different Translation*: Questions are not always marked with interrogative particles, so we may actually have a rhetorical question here that simply reverses the order of the first half of the verse:

<i>Structure</i>		<i>Translation</i>
A	Audience	I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob
B	Divine Identification	as God Almighty,
B'	Divine Identification	and by my name Yahweh
A'	Audience	did I not appear to them?

C. Yahweh, the Causer—The Hardener of Hearts

1. Overview of the issue:
 - a. Initial texts (4:21 with 5:2)
 - Exod. 3:15, 18–19; 4:21–23 with 5:1–2. ^{3:15}God also said to Moses, “... ¹⁸You and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to Yahweh our God.’ ¹⁹But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.” . . . ^{4:21}And Yahweh said to Moses, “When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.” ²²Then you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says Yahweh, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, ‘Let my son go that he may serve me.’ If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.”. . . ^{5:1}Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” ²But Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh, and moreover, I will not let Israel go.”
 - b. Are we to read the promise of Yahweh’s hardening Pharaoh as being fulfilled in Pharaoh’s refusal to let Israel go? If so, how are we to understand this portrayal of God? Why would God command but not enable, and is he justified in doing such a thing?
2. One Evangelical Perspective: Walter C. Kaiser Jr. (“Exodus,” 2nd ed., *EBC*, 382).
 - a. There are 10 places where it is said “God” hardened Pharaoh’s heart (4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17).

- b. There are also 10 passages where it states either that Pharaoh's heart was hard (7:13, 14, 22; 8:19; 9:7, 35; 13:15) or that he hardened his heart (8:15, 32; 9:34).
 - c. Kaiser concludes: "Thus the hardening is as much Pharaoh's own act as it is the work of God. Even more significant is the fact that Pharaoh alone is the agent of the hardening in the first sign and in the first five plagues. Not until the sixth plague ... is it stated that God actually moves in and hardens Pharaoh's heart (9:12)."
3. DeRouchie's response:
- a. General Overview:
 - i. In Exodus, Egypt's hostility against Israel (Exod. 1) demanded punishment (Gen. 12:3), so God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart is rightly seen as judgment—giving him over to his evil passions and debased mind (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).
 - ii. Nevertheless, Genesis shows that Egypt's hostility against God and his people was part of God's plan, well before Israel was even in Egypt (Gen. 15:14).
 - iii. While it is not until the 6th plague that we get an explicit statement that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, even before the plagues Pharaoh's hardness is treated as direct fulfillment of God's promise to act.
 - (1) God promises to harden in 4:21; 7:3; 14:4, 17.
 - (2) After Yahweh's first promise in 4:21 that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, the initial encounter with Pharaoh and his refusal to let God's people go (5:2) is best viewed as direct fulfillment.
 - (3) Confirmation of this is seen when the promise to harden Pharaoh's heart is repeated in 7:3 and then in 7:13 we read, "Still Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he would not listen to [Moses and Aaron], *as Yahweh had said.*" It is noteworthy that Kaiser makes no comment on this fulfillment phrase in his commentary!
 - (4) The rest of the deliverance narrative reiterates again and again that Pharaoh's hardness is ultimately due to God's ordination.
 - Exod. 7:13. Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, *as Yahweh had said.*
 - Exod. 7:22. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, *as Yahweh had said.*
 - Exod. 8:15. But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, *as Yahweh had said.*
 - Exod. 8:19. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, *as Yahweh had said.*
 - Exod. 9:12. But *Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh*, and he did not listen to them, *as Yahweh had spoken to Moses.*
 - Exod. 9:16. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.
 - Exod. 9:35. So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go, *just as Yahweh had spoken through Moses.*
 - Exod. 10:20. But *Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart*, and he did not let the people of Israel go.

- Exod. 10:27. But *Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart*, and he would not let them go.
- Exod. 11:10. Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and *Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart*, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.
- Exod. 14:4, 8. “And *I will harden Pharaoh's heart*, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh.”... ⁸And *Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh* king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.
- Exod. 14:17–18. And *I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians* so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

Fig. 4.3. Yahweh's Mighty Acts Against Egypt

Cycle	Act/Episode	Bible Reference	Explicit Agent of Heart Hardening (ND = non-descriptive)	Fulfillment Formula ("as Yahweh said")
1	Nile to blood	7:14–25	ND (7:14, 22)	7:13, 22
	Frogs	8:1–15	Pharaoh (8:15)	8:15
	Gnats	8:16–19	ND (8:19)	8:19
2	Flies	8:20–32	Pharaoh (8:32)	–
	Death of livestock	9:1–7	ND (9:7)	–
	Boils	9:8–12	Yahweh (9:12)	9:12
3	Hail	9:13–35	Pharaoh (9:34); ND (9:35)	9:35
	Locusts	10:1–20	Yahweh (10:20)	–
	Darkness	10:21–29	Yahweh (10:27)	–
Climax	Death of firstborn	11:1–10; 12:29–32	Yahweh (11:10)	–

Prepared by Kenneth J. Turner, "Exodus," *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About*.

- iv. In fulfillment of his purposes, God in Exodus commands obedience but does not enable it and then punishes for stubbornness and rebellion (4:21; 5:1; 7:3, 13; 8:1).
 - v. Conversion and holiness are here seen as fully dependent on God, which means they will happen by faith alone, so that God alone gets all glory. He is the causer of *all*.
- b. Elsewhere we see many examples of God's hardening various peoples.
 - i. Sihon, the king of the Amorites:
 - Deut 2:30. But Sihon the king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that he might give him into your hand, as he is this day.
 - ii. The Canaanites within Canaan:
 - Josh 11:20. For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, in order that they should be devoted to destruction and should receive no mercy but be destroyed, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

- iii. Rehoboam, the king of Judah:
- 1 Kgs 12:15. So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
- iv. Israel:
- John 12:37–40. Though [Jesus] had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” Cf. Isa. 53:1; 6:10.
 - Rom 11:7–8. Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.” Cf. Isa 29:10; Deut 29:4; see also Isa 63:17.
 - 2 Cor 3:14. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.
- c. Why would God harden Pharaoh’s heart? Answer: By exalting himself as the God of all creation, Yahweh would answer Pharaoh’s question (“Who is Yahweh?” 5:2).
- **Before the plagues:** Exod. 7:3–5. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, ⁴Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. ⁵*The Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh*, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.
 - **Before the 7th plague:** Exod. 9:15–16. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶But for this purpose I have raised you up, *to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*
 - **Before the 8th plague:** Exod. 10:1–2. Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, *that I may show these signs of mine among them,* ²*and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your grandson how I have dealt harshly with the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them, that you may know that I am Yahweh.*
 - **Before the 10th plague:** Exod. 11:9. Pharaoh will not listen to you, *that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.*
 - **Concerning the crossing of the sea:** Exod. 14:17–18. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸*And the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh*, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.
 - **Fulfillment—the Egyptians KNOW:** Exod. 14:25. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for *Yahweh* fights for them against the Egyptians.”
 - **Later reflections:** Isa. 63:11–14. Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹² who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them *to make for himself an everlasting name,* ¹³ who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. ¹⁴ Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So you led your people, *to make for yourself a glorious name.* Ps. 106:6–8. Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness. ⁷Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not

consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.⁸ Yet he saved them *for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.*

- d. Is God justified in his self-exaltation through the hardening? How could he hold Pharaoh responsible? Answer: God is always justified in his actions because he is God (Deut 32:4; Rom 9:10–24), and Pharaoh was responsible because he willed rebellion against Yahweh.
- Deut 32:4. The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.
 - Rom. 9:10–24. And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—¹²she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”¹³ As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”¹⁴What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! ¹⁵For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”¹⁶ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. ¹⁷For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”¹⁸ So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.
¹⁹You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?”²⁰ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?”²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? ²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—²⁴even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?
- e. How can God will the very thing he desires not to happen? Are there two “wills” in God?
- i. Other examples of God ordaining what he hates:
- (1) God opposes hatred toward his people, yet ordained that his people be hated in Egypt (Gen. 12:3; Ps 105:25 – “He turned their hearts to hate his people”).
 - (2) God makes plain that it is sin for David to take a military census of his people, but he ordains that he do it (2 Sam. 24:1, 10; cf. 1 Chr. 21:1).
 - (3) God views false teaching as evil and will destroy it, but he ordains it to test his people (Rom. 16:17–20 and Gal. 1:6–9 with Deut. 13:1–5).
 - (4) God opposes adultery but ordains that Absalom should sleep with his father's wives (Exod. 20:14; 2 Sam. 12:11).
 - (5) God forbids rebellion and insubordination against the king, but he ordains that Jeroboam and the ten tribes rebel against Rehoboam (Rom. 13:1; 1 Sam. 15:23; 1 Kgs. 12:15–16).
 - (6) God opposes unjust killing and the hatred and abuse that accompany it, but he ordains the unjustified killing of his Son (Exod. 20:13; Acts 4:28).

- (7) In the vision of Revelation, the kings of the earth will surrender their lives to the beast, making war on the Lamb, and they will do so “for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind . . . until the words of God are fulfilled” (Rev. 17:14, 17).
- (8) God desires all men to be saved, but he effectually calls only some (1 Tim. 2:4; 1 Cor. 1:26–30; 2 Tim. 2:25–26; cf. John 3:5–8; 6:61–65; Rom. 9:6–24).
- ii. Does this mean that God is the “author” of sin?
- (1) We cannot hold that God is the “author” of sin, if by this we mean that his actions taint his character, accuse him, or render him something other than perfect, just, and upright.
- Deut. 32:4. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.
 - Dan 4:37. Now, I Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just.
 - Ps. 5:4. For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you.
 - Ps. 100:5. For Yahweh is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.
 - Job 34:10. Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should do wrong.
 - Luke 18:19. No one is good except God alone. Cf. 11:13.
 - 1 John 1:5. God is Light, and in him there is no darkness at all.
- (2) Nevertheless, God has established a world in which sin will indeed necessarily come to pass in accordance with purpose, foreordination, and permission (e.g., he actively hardens Pharaoh’s heart).
- Deut 32:39. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.
 - Judg 2:15. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm [= “evil”], as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.
 - Isa 45:7. I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity [= “evil”]; I am the LORD, who does all these things.
- (3) I propose that, while all that God’s purposes align with his active providence against which no created power can stand (Job 42:2; Eph 1:11), we must distinguish his positive and negative agency. That is, for the Lord to remain untainted by evil yet be the creator of it, he must ordain that evil be by creating a world and/or a set of situations wherein the evil or sin will necessarily and naturally occur due to the absence of his positive influence. Jonathon Edwards offers the following reflections in his treatise *Freedom of the Will*:
- (a) “[God is] the permitter . . . of sin; and at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent end and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted . . . will certainly and infallibly follow” (399).

- (b) By analogy, the sun positively brings about light and warmth by its essential nature, but only negatively brings about dark and cold by dropping below the horizon.
 - (c) “Sin is not the fruit of any positive agency or influence of the most High, but on the contrary, arises from the withholding of his action and energy, and under certain circumstances, necessarily follows on the want of his influence” (404).
- iii. Two “wills” in God: God at times wills (or decrees/ordains) that which he hates (e.g., sin) in view of the ultimate universal consequences—namely, the fame of his name, which is right, necessary, and loving.
- (1) God’s two wills seen in Scripture:
 - (a) God’s will of decree, secret will, or sovereign will, which can in no way be thwarted by Satan or sin (i.e., divine foreordination)
 - (b) God’s will of command, revealed will, or directive will (i.e., as found in the instructions of Scripture).
 - (2) According to Edwards, God’s will of command (e.g., God wills virtue) refers to God’s inclination to a thing absolutely and simply (*Concerning Divine Decrees*, 528). He declares, “I hate lying and I love truth-telling.” In contrast, “His will of decree is his inclination to a thing not as to that thing absolutely and simply, but with reference to the universality of things. So God, though he hates a thing as it is simply [whether the death of his saints or the sins of humanity], may incline to it with reference to the universality of things [i.e., the greatest good].”

Fig. 4.4. God’s Two “Wills”



- f. Conclusion:
- i. If God ordains evil in view of a greater good, what is this good and how does the existence of evil serve this good end? *General Answer:* God is driven to preserve and display his glory!
 - ii. How could God preserve and display his glory better through ordaining a world where evil be and where the cross was therefore necessary?
 - (1) God is infinitely glorious and sin is infinitely ugly. Every time we see a result of the curse—whether in sin, death, or destruction, it

should remind us how much God hates sin and takes sin seriously.

(2) Is God in Christ less glorious because he ordained that evil be (whether natural or moral)? By no means! Rather, just the opposite is true, because in creating a world where he permits and ultimately ordains that evil happen, he is shown and experienced as more glorious through his expression of mercy, justice, and freedom. And knowing God in *all* his glories is the greatest love he could give us.

- Col. 1:16, 18. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him... ¹⁸that in everything he might be preeminent.
- Rom. 9:22–24. What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—²⁴even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?
- Eph. 1:4–10. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

“It is a proper and excellent thing for infinite glory to shine forth; and for the same reason, it is proper that the shining forth of God’s glory should be complete; that is, that all parts of his glory should shine forth, that every beauty should be proportionately effulgent, that the beholder may have a proper notion of God. It is not proper that one glory should be exceedingly manifested, and another not at all. . . . Thus it is necessary, that God’s awful majesty, his authority and dreadful greatness, justice, and holiness, should be manifested. But this could not be, unless sin and punishment had been decreed; so that the shining forth of God’s glory would be very imperfect, both because these parts of divine glory would not shine forth as the others do, and also the glory of his goodness, love, and holiness would be faint without them; nay, they could scarcely shine forth at all. If it were not right that God should decree and permit and punish sin, there could be no manifestation of God’s holiness in hatred of sin, or in showing any preference, in his providence, of godliness before it. There would be no manifestation of God’s grace or true goodness, if there was no sin to be pardoned, no misery to be saved from. How much happiness so ever he bestowed, his goodness would not be so much prized and admired. So evil is necessary, in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world; because the creature’s happiness consists in the knowledge of God, and the sense of his love. And if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness of the creature must be proportionately imperfect.” (Jonathan Edward, *Concerning the Divine Decrees*, 528)

D. Yahweh, the Causer—The Overseer of Nature and Defeater of Egypt’s “Gods”

1. Pharaoh had asked (Exod. 5:2), “Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?” The plagues provided a systematic response from God to Pharaoh’s question. Intriguingly, the Pharaoh of the exodus is never named; Yahweh’s identity is made known but not Pharaoh’s, thus establishing the true Supreme Power of the world.

2. The text stresses that the battle in Egypt took place in the heavenlies—it was a battle of the gods, wherein Yahweh proved himself over all things, the causer of nature and the defeater of Egypt’s powers.
- Exod. 12:12. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on *all the gods of Egypt* I will execute judgments: I am Yahweh.
 - Num. 33:3–4. On the day after the Passover, the people of Israel went out triumphantly in the sight of all the Egyptians, ⁴while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom Yahweh had struck down among them. On *their gods* also Yahweh executed judgments.
 - 2 Sam. 7:23. And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people for yourself from Egypt, *a nation and its gods?*

Fig. 4.2. The Ten Plagues and the “Gods” of Egypt

<i>Plague</i>	<i>Egyptian Deity Targeted*</i>
Nile to blood (Exod. 7:14–25)	Khnum : guardian of the Nile; Hapi : spirit of the Nile; Osiris : giver of life whose bloodstream was the Nile; Pharaoh’s personal deity
Frogs (8:1–15)	Hegt : form of a frog; god of resurrection
Gnats or mosquitoes (8:16–19)	?
Flies (8:20–32)	?
Death of livestock (9:1–7)	Hathor : mother-goddess; form of a cow; Apis : bull of god Ptah; symbol of fertility; Mnevis : sacred bull of Heliopolis
Boils (9:8–12)	**Imhotep : god of medicine
Hail (9:13–35)	Nut : sky goddess; Isis : goddess of life; Seth : protector of crops
Locusts (10:1–20)	Isis : goddess of life; Seth : protector of crops
Darkness (10:21–29)	Re, Aten, Atum, Horus : all types of sun gods
Death of firstborn (11:1–12:29)	Osiris , giver of life; Pharaoh’s personal deity
*These are only some of the gods whom the plagues may have been directed against; the list is not necessarily conclusive.	
**Perhaps too early for this deity to have been involved.	
Adapted from John H. Walton, <i>Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament</i> (Zondervan, 1994): 85.	

3. Through the plagues, Yahweh not only confronted Egypt’s gods but also did so by intentionally setting Israel apart from these judgments.
- *The 4th plague—flies*: Exod. 8:22–23. But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am Yahweh in the midst of the earth. ²³ Thus I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall happen.”””
 - *The 5th plague—death of livestock*: Exod. 9:4, 6. “But Yahweh will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing of all that belongs to the people of Israel shall die.” . . . ⁶ And the next day Yahweh did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died.
 - *The 7th plague—hail*: Exod. 9:26. Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.
 - *The 9th plague—darkness*: Exod. 10:23. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel had light where they lived.
 - *The 10th plague—death to firstborn*: Exod. 11:7. But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that Yahweh makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.’

4. God's working on Israel's behalf moved both Israel and others to recognize Yahweh's supremacy over all earthly and heavenly powers through the exodus:
 - Exod. 12:12. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on *all the gods of Egypt* I will execute judgments: I am Yahweh.
 - Exod. 15:11. Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?
 - Exod. 18:10–11. Blessed be Yahweh, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all gods.
 - Num. 33:3–4. On the day after the Passover, the people of Israel went out triumphantly in the sight of all the Egyptians, ⁴while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom Yahweh had struck down among them. On their gods also Yahweh executed judgments.
 - 2 Sam. 7:23. And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods?
5. Frank Thielman (*New Testament Theology*, 351) has observed how Jewish tradition considered God's punishment of the Egyptians through the plagues as befitting their irrational wisdom. "Thus the very creatures that they worshipped rose up to afflict them, 'so that they might learn that one is punished by the very thing by which one sins' (Wisd. 11:15–16; *cf.* 12:23; 15:18–16:1)."
6. Exodus portrays Yahweh as being supreme over all elements and all powers, whether good or evil.

E. Yahweh, the Causer—The Redeemer of Israel Despite Their Sin

1. Yahweh's Unmerited, Substitutionary Pardon: the Passover and feast of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12:1–37)
 - a. The title "Passover" derives from the imagery of the "destroyer" (Yahweh's judgment-presence) "passing over" his people instead of punishing them through the killing of their first-born representative like he did to the Egyptians (12:12–13, 23, 27).
 - i. The final plague—death of the firstborn—appears to stand in direct response to Pharaoh's unwillingness to free Yahweh's "firstborn son," Israel (4:22).
 - ii. This protection happened only by means of the blood of an unblemished lamb being placed on the doorposts as a "sign" to Yahweh (12:5–7, 13, 21–22), somewhat comparable to the way the sign of the rainbow reminds Yahweh of his covenantal promises (Gen. 9:12–17).
 - iii. In Exod 34:25 and Lev 23:5, this bloody event is called a "sacrifice," and it suggests a salvation made possible only through penal substitution—the unblemished lamb dying in the place of the representative firstborn, and the firstborn having sustained life only by an imputation of the unblemished perfection of the lamb.
 - iv. Parallels with the consecration of the Aaronic priests (Exod 29:20–34; Lev. 8:23–32) further suggests that Passover may have served as a consecrating act, that set Israel apart for Yahweh and served as a first step to ready her for the Mosaic-Sinai covenant.

- v. The stress on unleavened bread (Exod. 12:8, 17–20) and Israel’s need to eat in haste and to be ready (12:11) highlights the theme of deliverance.
- vi. The fact that the delivered generation is called upon to celebrate Passover in the Promised Land (13:5, 11–16) highlights that their inheritance is fully dependent on a surrendered trust in Yahweh through his provision of a substitute.
- b. The “Passover” as a memorial feast.
 - i. “Yahweh’s Passover” (Exod. 12:11) was to become a memorial feast for Israel that recalled not simply their great deliverance from slavery but symbolized that relationship with God is only sustained through atonement from sin (Exod. 12:14–20, 24–27, esp. vv. 14, 17; cf. 13:3–10; Deut. 16:1–8).
 - ii. While the blood was a “sign” to Yahweh, the regular celebration of Passover was to serve as a “sign” and “memorial” to Israel in order “that the law of Yahweh may be in your mouth” (13:9; cf. v. 16). That is, the reminder of the depth of God’s love shown in past redemption was to fuel radical God-centeredness in their action (“hand”), perception (“eyes”), and profession (“mouth”).
 - iii. In Num 9:11–12, the theme of Passover as a family “meal” shared before God takes focus over the sacrificial element, and in Deut 16:1–8 and Josh 5:10–12 the celebration moves from homes to the central sanctuary. This sets the stage for the temple being the central place for communal worship and identifies the substitutionary act visualized in the Passover sacrifice with the substitutionary sacrifices of the temple. The Passover has become a communal sacrifice offered by the priests and enjoyed by the people at the temple (cf. 2 Chr 30, 35//2 Kgs 23; Ezra 6:19–21).
- 2. Yahweh’s Merciful Deliverance through Sea (Exod. 12:37–15:21)
 - a. The exodus as new creation.
 - i. The language of darkness and light, waters divided by the “wind,” and the appearance of dry land all connect the exodus narrative with the images of creation in Genesis (Exod. 14:20–21; cf. Gen. 1:2–4, 9–10; 8:3–4; see also the imagery of “hovering” in both Gen. 1:2 and Deut. 32:10–11).
 - ii. Indeed, as the flood judgment of Noah’s day portrayed a de-creation and its aftermath a recreation (recall all the parallels that established Noah as a second “Adam”), so too the water judgment on Pharaoh and the Egyptians shapes the climactical image of de-creation (as the definitive end to the progressive chaotic deterioration of the natural order through the plagues) through which God establishes new creation.
 - iii. R. E. Watts perceptively notes, “Having drowned a potential Israelite army in the Nile [Exod. 1:22], [Pharaoh] now witnesses the watery demise of his own forces while Israel, like the child Moses, passes to safety” (“Exodus,” *NDBT*, 480).

- iv. Furthermore support for this connection is seen in the fact that the Sabbath command in Exod. 20:11 is grounded in God's original creation of the world, whereas the parallel command in Deut. 5:15 is grounded in Yahweh's new creation of a people, that is, the exodus.
- b. The exodus as God-exaltation.
- i. Before Israel is ever delivered, Moses establishes for them that Yahweh is the one who will fight for them:
- Exod. 14:13–14. Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of Yahweh, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians who you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴Yahweh will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.
- ii. Yahweh himself declares that the Egyptians' stubbornness, which is seen in their pursuing Israel, is God-wrought and ultimately intended to display Yahweh glorious supremacy over all. It is through the destruction of Egypt's forces that the answer to Pharaoh's original question ("Who is Yahweh, that I should obey his voice?" 5:2) will finally be appreciated by the Egyptians.
- Exod. 14:17–18. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after [my people], and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.
- iii. The text stresses that both Egypt and Israel gained answers to their original questions regarding who Yahweh was (see 3:13; 5:2).
- Exod. 14:24–25. And in the morning watch Yahweh in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for Yahweh fights for them against the Egyptians."
 - Exod. 14:30–31. Thus Yahweh saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹Israel saw the great power that Yahweh used against the Egyptians, so the people feared Yahweh, and they believed in Yahweh and in his servant Moses.
 - Exod. 15:1, 11. Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to Yahweh, saying, ". . . ¹¹Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"
- c. The Song of Moses and the people in Exodus 15 fuses motifs of creation and conquest, with Yahweh standing as the great warrior who redeems his son Israel from the serpent Pharaoh in order to lead his people to his Edenic holy mountain.
- Exod. 15:1–3, 17–18. Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to Yahweh, saying, "I will sing to Yahweh, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. ²Yahweh is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³Yahweh is a man of war; Yahweh is his name. . . . ¹⁷You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O Yahweh, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. ¹⁸The Yahweh will reign forever and ever."
 - Job 26:12–13. By his power he stilled the sea; by his understanding he shattered Rahab. ¹³By his wind the heavens were made fair; his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
 - Ps. 74:13–14. You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters. ¹⁴You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.

- Ps. 78:53–54. He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid, but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. ⁵⁴ And he brought them to his holy land, to the mountain which his right hand had won.
 - Isa. 27:1. In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.
 - Isa. 51:9–11. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of Yahweh; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon? ¹⁰ Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over? ¹¹ And the ransomed of Yahweh shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
 - Ezek. 29:3. speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, ‘My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.’”
 - Ezek. 32:2. Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: “You consider yourself a lion of the nations, but you are like a dragon in the seas; you burst forth in your rivers, trouble the waters with your feet, and foul their rivers.”
- d. The typological nature of the exodus.
- i. Introduction.
- (1) Part of God’s expressed purpose in manifesting ten plagues (rather than just one) was so that his fame might reach to the ends of the earth.
 - Exod. 9:15–16. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so *that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth*.
 - Isa. 63:11–13. Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹²who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them *to make for himself an everlasting name*, ¹³who led them through the depths?
 - (2) The spread of Yahweh’s fame from the exodus is intentionally highlighted in the plot of Scripture.
 - *By Moses’ father-in-law Jethro, soon after the exodus: Exod. 18:10–11*. Jethro said, “Blessed be Yahweh, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh and has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all gods, because in this affair they dealt arrogantly with his people.”
 - *By Rahab the harlot, 40 years after the exodus: Josh. 2:9–11*. And [Rahab] said to the men, “I know that Yahweh has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how Yahweh dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for Yahweh your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.
 - *By the Gibeonites, 40 years after the exodus: Josh. 9:9–10*. From a very distant country your servants have come, because of the name of Yahweh your God. ¹⁰For we have heard a report of him, and all that he did in

Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth.

- *By the Philistines, several hundred years after the exodus: 1 Sam. 4:7–8.* The Philistines were afraid, for they said, “A god has come into the camp.” And they said, “Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. ⁸Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness.”
 - *By Nehemiah, nearly 1,000 years later! Neh 9:9–10.* And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, ¹⁰ and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day.
- ii. The structure of Exodus 15: The song of the exodus in Exodus 15 appears to be shaped in an A-B-A' pattern to depict the walls of watery judgment piled up around the life-sustaining presence of God.
- (1) Prologue: Celebration of Yahweh the Warrior (15:1–3)
 - (2) A: Exposition of Yahweh the Warrior's Present Deliverance (15:4–10)
 - (3) B: Declaration of Yahweh the Warrior's Absolute Supremacy (15:11–12)
 - (4) A': Exposition of Yahweh the Warrior's Future Deliverance (15:13–17)
 - (5) Epilogue: Declaration of Yahweh the King (15:18)

Exodus 15:4–18

15:4 “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

15:5 The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.

15:6 Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

15:7 In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.

15:8 At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

15:9 The enemy said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.’

15:10 You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

15:11 “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

15:12 You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them.

15:13 “You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

15:14 The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

15:15 Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

15:16 Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased.

15:17 You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

15:18 The LORD will reign forever and ever.”

iii. Interpretation:

- (1) The biblical narrative suggests that Israel sang this song directly after their deliverance from Egypt (Exod. 15:1, 20–21) but *before* the global terror described in vv. 13–17 would have taken place. Vv. 13–15 even speak as if Israel has already overcome all their enemies and been established in the new Edenic sanctuary on the holy mountain of God (cf. Gen 2:10–14).
- (2) There is something significant here for our understanding of how the biblical author's viewed redemptive history. Specifically, Israel's experience of the exodus is here serving as a typological event that predicts or anticipates future victories over all enemies until God's people are brought (even restored) to complete rest in God's mountain sanctuary.
- (3) Exegesis of Exodus 15 suggests that a proper interpretation of the first exodus account should lead one to anticipate future deliverances on par with the exodus deliverance. Furthermore, the past grace of the exodus is here seen to establish absolute confidence that future grace will come in the form of needed deliverance (see Rom. 8:31–32: "If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously given us all things?").
- (4) The appropriation of the exodus imagery by the prophets in order to depict the new covenant restoration is, therefore, exegetically warranted in the account of the original exodus event! Note especially Isaiah 12:2 and 5, which quotes from Exodus 15:1–2!
 - Jer. 16:14–15. Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, when it shall no longer be said, "As Yahweh lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,"¹⁵ but "As Yahweh lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them." For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. (Cf. 23:7–8.)
 - Ezek. 20:36–38, 41–42. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord Yahweh.³⁷ I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.³⁸ I will purge out the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against me. I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am Yahweh. . . .⁴¹ As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations.⁴² And you shall know that I am Yahweh, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your fathers.
 - Isa. 11:11–12, 15–12:6. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.¹² He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. . . .¹⁵ And Yahweh

will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt, and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals. ¹⁶ And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt. ^{12:1} You will say in that day: “I will give thanks to you, O Yahweh, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. ² “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for Yah–Yawheh is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” ³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that day: “Give thanks to Yahweh, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. ⁵ “Sing praises to Yahweh, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. ⁶ Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

- Mic. 7:15. As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them marvelous things.

(5) In the NT, Christ’s redeeming work is magnified as the ultimate exodus from enslavement, the climactic antitype to the original offspring promise (Gen 3:15), the exodus event (wherein Israel as son of God trampled the serpent Egypt), and all other deliverance events built upon them.

- Luke 9:30–31. And behold, two men were talking with [Jesus], Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure [lit., exodus], which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.
- Ps 18:6–19. In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I cried for help. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears. ⁷ Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry. ⁸ Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. ⁹ He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. ¹⁰ He rode on a cherub and flew; he came swiftly on the wings of the wind. ¹¹ He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him, thick clouds dark with water. ¹² Out of the brightness before him hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds. ¹³ The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. ¹⁴ And he sent out his arrows and scattered them; he flashed forth lightnings and routed them. ¹⁵ Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were laid bare at your rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils. ¹⁶ He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters. ¹⁷ He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. ¹⁸ They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support. ¹⁹ He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.
- Eph. 1:7. In [Jesus Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.
- Col. 1:13–14. [The Father] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

3. Yahweh’s Gracious Perseverance with Israel from the Sea to Sinai (Exod 15:22–18:27)
 - a. Grumbings of doubt and divine provision: no water (15:22–27, esp. v. 26); no food (16:1–36, esp. v. 12)

- b. God on trial and his grace-filled response (17:1–7; cf. 1 Cor. 10:4)
 - i. Background:
 - (1) God had promised that he would curse anyone who cursed his people (Gen. 12:3); he also bound himself on oath to fulfill all the promises of offspring, land, and blessing (Gen. 15:18; 22:17–18).
 - (2) In time, the Israelites would sin, thus requiring the curses of the covenant. God would have to curse them, cutting them off. However, to be true to his word, he would also have to curse himself. In the end, God would stand as the substitute for the people.
 - ii. Apart from the provision of a substitute in Genesis 22, the first clear image of God standing as a substitute for his people is in Exod. 17:1–7, where Israel puts God on trial (*rib*), charging him with faithlessness—“Is Yahweh among us, or not?” (17:7).
 - iii. God calls Moses to stand as judge; he has his staff of judgment and is encircled by the elders of the community. But where Israel should have received divine judgment, God himself appears to bear the judgment on their behalf. God declares, “I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people will drink” (Exod. 17:6).
 - iv. Paul asserted that “they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ” (1 Cor. 10:4).

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V. Yahweh's Self-Exalting, Gracious Relationship with His People (19:1–40:38)

A. A Review of the Book's Structure:

1. Yahweh's Self-Exalting, Gracious Redemption of His People (1:1–18:27)
 - a. Historical Background to Redemption (1:1–4:31)
 - b. The Call for and Experience of Redemption (5:1–15:21)
 - c. The Ramifications of Redemption (15:22–18:27)
2. Yahweh's Self-Exalting, Gracious Relationship with His People (19:1–40:38)
 - a. The Covenant Embodying Yahweh's Relationship with Israel (20:18–24:11)
 - i. The manifestation of and response to Yahweh's presence and "Words" (19:1–20:21)
 - ii. The nature of the relationship expounded through the "Rules" (20:22–23:33)
 - iii. The ratification of the covenant by which Moses sets before Israel the "Words and Rules" (24:1–11)
 - b. Sacred Space as the Context for Yahweh's Relationship with Israel (24:12–40:38)
 - i. The manifestation of God's glory and the description of sacred space (24:12–31:18)
 - ii. Yahweh's response to Israel's failure to reckon with his presence (32:1–34:5)

- iii. Yahweh's gracious manifestation of his presence among his people (35:1–40:38)

B. Overview:

1. Redemption and relationship through covenant and divine presence are the hallmarks of the way Yahweh discloses himself in Exodus. The same God had promised that he would be with the patriarchs and their offspring (Gen 26:3; 31:3; 48:21), and he may have even promised that he would dwell in the tents of Shem (9:27; though the text is more likely speaking of Japheth). He had also promised Abra(ha)m that he would redeem Israel from slavery after four hundred years, returning them to the Promised Land (15:14, 18)—a promise hoped for by Joseph (50:24–25). Finally, Yahweh had declared to Abraham, “I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you and throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you” (17:7). Genesis itself, therefore, anticipated all the major movements in the book of Exodus.
2. Chapters 19–40 shape the body of Exodus, not simply because they carry the most literary weight but because the narrative itself has been anticipating Israel's arrival at Mount Sinai since 3:12, where God declared to Moses at the burning bush, “I will be with you, and this will be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve/worship God on this mountain.” The “mountain of God,” however, is also known to be but a temporary resting place *en route* to the Promised Land and in anticipation of the ultimate reversal of the world's curse by the coming royal deliverer.
3. Chapters 19–40 address two general topics, both related to Yahweh's relationship with Israel:
 - a. The Mosaic [old] covenant (19:1–24:11) defined the boundaries and purpose of Israel's relationship with Yahweh.
 - b. The tabernacle (25:1–40:38) provided the context wherein Israel would relate with God. It gave focus to their object of worship and helped to distinguish Israel from all other peoples.

VI. The Covenant Embodying Yahweh's Relationship with Israel (19:1–24:11)

A. Introductory Comments:

1. The covenant God made with Abraham and his offspring demanded confirmation and progression/development at key points en route to complete fulfillment.
 - a. *Offspring promise.* After the offspring multiplied into a nation, we get the Mosaic covenant at Sinai (see Exod 1:7).
 - b. *Land promise.* After Israel made it into the land, we get the Davidic covenant (see 2 Sam 7:1).
 - c. *Blessing promise.* After Israel in the person of Christ operates as a blessing and serves as a channel of blessing to the nations, we get the new covenant.
2. Movement towards covenant renewal with the new people of God
 - Exod. 1:7. The people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them. (Cf. 33:13 – Israel is a “nation”)
 - Exod. 2:24–3:1, 12. And God heard their groaning, and *God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.* ²⁵God saw the people of Israel—and God knew. ^{3:1}Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God...

¹²[Yahweh] said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

- Exod. 6:2–8. God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am Yahweh. ³I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them. ⁴*I also established my covenant with them* to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and *I have remembered my covenant*. ⁶Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. ⁷I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am Yahweh.’”
- Exod. 19:4–6. You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed heed my voice and *keep my covenant* and be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, ⁶then you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

B. Exodus 19:1–20:21—The Formal Establishment of the Covenant Relationship

1. The Setting

- a. God had announced to Moses that Israel would “serve/worship God on this mountain” (Exod. 3:12). The statement in 19:2 that Israel encamped “before the mountain” calls the reader to seek clarity on the nature of worship in what follows.
- b. Three months have passed since God redeemed Israel from Egyptian bondage, bringing them through the Reed Sea on dry ground following 10 massive displays of his power and grace. During these three months, Israel tested God no less than *six* times, either questioning his faithfulness or disobeying his voice. The first act of disloyalty took place even before they passed through the Reed Sea.
 - i. Israel expressed fear at the Sea, as Pharaoh approached (Exod. 14:11–12).
 - ii. Three days into the journey, in the wilderness of Mara, Israel complained that the spring was bitter and that they were thirsty (15:24).
 - iii. Two and a half months into the journey, in the wilderness of Sin, Israel complained that they were hungry (16:2–3).
 - iv. Some in Israel fail to eat their daily allotment of manna (16:20).
 - v. Some in Israel fail to gather enough manna to sustain through the Sabbath rest (16:27).
 - vi. At Rephidim, when the people were thirsty, they quarreled with Moses and God (17:1–2).
- c. For God to encounter Israel at Mount Sinai for the purpose of covenant development is clearly driven by his amazing grace and faithfulness and *not* due to Israel’s own merit. The divine promise drives the narrative.

2. Israel’s Great Commission (Exod. 19:4–6)

Exod. 19:4–6. You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant and be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine, ⁶then you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (DeRouchie’s translation)

- a. Main idea: In light of God’s gracious redemption, God’s people are called to a task of mediating and displaying God to the world through covenant loyalty.
- b. The structure:
 - i. The basis of God’s calling for his people: gracious (external) salvation (19:4)
 - ii. The nature of God’s calling for his people: divine exaltation in the context of the world (19:5–6)
 - (1) The means for fulfilling the calling – *protasis* (v. 5)
 - (a) Heed God’s voice
 - (b) Keep God’s covenant (Abrahamic or Mosaic? See Exod. 6:4–5 for the last use of “covenant”)
 - (c) Be God’s treasured possession in the midst of the world
 - (2) The essence of the calling itself – *apodosis* (v. 6)
 - (a) Kingdom of priests: mediators of God’s blessing
 - (b) Holy nation: displayers of God’s glory
- c. Which “covenant”?
 - i. In Exod 19:5, Yahweh calls Israel to “keep *my covenant*.” Since God’s dealings with Noah, the Lord has called his various relationships with humans “covenants” (Gen 6:8; 9:9–17; 15:18; 17:2–22; Exod 2:24; 6:4–5). This implies both his fatherly and sovereign authority and his intention to relate with the people of his creation. When we arrive at Exod 19:5, the only two divine-human relationships tagged as “covenants” are the Noahic and Abrahamic. Now in Exod 19–20, God is establishing he later calls a “covenant” (Exod 24:8; 34:10, 27–28) specifically associated with Horeb, or Mount Sinai (Deut 5:2; 29:1[28:26]). What historical covenant is God pointing to in Exod 19:5?
 - ii. In Exodus, the narrator opens the story of deliverance by saying, “God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob” (Exod 2:24). Then in Exod 6:4–5, Yahweh himself asserts, “I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.” Yahweh promised Abraham in Gen 12:2 that he would make him into a renowned nation, and then in 17:7–8 he promised, “And I will establish *my covenant* between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” These promises find their fulfillment in the Mosaic covenant established at Sinai.
 - iii. William Dumbrell has argued that because Exodus has mentioned only the Abrahamic covenant to this point, God is calling Israel in 19:5 to keep the Abrahamic covenant (*Covenant and Creation*, 2nd ed., 110–

- 11). Other scholars struggle with this because Exod 19–20 is the very content in which God makes the Sinai covenant. Indeed, the call to “listen to [his] voice” in 19:5 appears to anticipate the introduction to the Ten Words in 20:1, where we read, “And God spoke all these words, saying....”
- iv. I suggest that we do not need to choose between the two, for Genesis anticipates that God’s relationship with Israel established at Sinai is actually the fulfillment of stage 1 of his promises to Abraham—those promises directly related to Israel’s nationhood and tenure in the land. Stage 2 of the Abrahamic covenant, which includes blessing reaching the nations through a male deliverer (Gen 12:3; 22:17b–18) and Abraham’s standing as the father of a multitude of nations (17:4–6), is developed in the Mosaic covenant but specifically fulfilled only in the new covenant in Christ (Acts 3:25–26; Rom 4:13–18; Gal 3:7–29). In Exod 19:5 God is calling Israel to work out stage 1 of the Abrahamic covenant, which will mean the need to abide by the Ten Words and all other regulations, all in order to mediate and display the holiness of God to the world.
- d. The start of the apodosis—19:5c or 19:6?
- i. While many interpreters start the apodosis with the statement about the “treasured possession” in v. 5c (so ESV), no signal is found in the Hebrew grammar until v. 6 that the apodosis has begun.
- ii. Furthermore, Deuteronomy 26:17–19 suggests Israel’s being a “treasured possession” is part of the means and not the goal with respect to Israel’s mission.
- Deut. 26:17–19. You have today confirmed the declaration of Yahweh to be your God and to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his judgments, and to heed his voice.¹⁸ And Yahweh has today confirmed your declaration to be a people of treasured possession, just as he declared to you, and to keep all his commandments,¹⁹ and to place you high over all nations for praise and for fame and for beauty and to be a people holy to Yahweh your God, just as he promised. (DeRouchie translation)
- (1) You have today confirmed the declaration of Yahweh (v. 17):
- (a) Yahweh’s commitment: To be God to you
- (b) Yahweh’s expectations:
- (i) To walk in his ways
- (ii) To keep his statutes, commands, and judgments
- (iii) To heed his voice
- (2) Yahweh has today confirmed your declaration (vv. 18–19):
- (a) Israel’s commitment (v. 18):
- (i) To be a treasured possession for Yahweh
- (ii) To keep all his commands
- (b) Israel’s expectations (v. 19):
- (i) To set Israel high above the nations
- (ii) To be a holy people to Yahweh

- e. The nature of Israel's calling:
- i. *Theological geography.* God placed Israel in the center of the world in order that they might serve as mediators of God's presence and blessing and as witnesses to God's holiness among the nations.
 - Gen. 12:3. In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
 - Exod. 19:5–6. Now therefore, if you will indeed heed my voice and keep my covenant and be to me *a treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine,* ⁶then you shall be to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
 - Lev. 20:26. You shall be holy to me, for I Yahweh am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.
 - Deut. 4:5–8. See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." ⁷For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Yahweh our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?
 - Ezek. 5:5. This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her (cf. 38:12).



- ii. Just as Israel's priests stood as the mediators between the people and God (cf. Exod. 19:22, 24), so too the entire nation of Israel was consecrated as priests for the world to meet God (24:3–8; cf. 1 Pet. 1:1–2, "for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood").
 - Exod. 24:3–8. Moses came and told the people all the words of Yahweh and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that Yahweh has spoken we will do." ⁴And Moses wrote down all the words of Yahweh. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to Yahweh. ⁶And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And

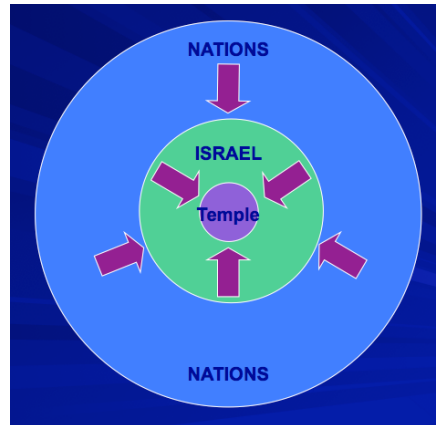
they said, “All that Yahweh has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.”

⁸And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that Yahweh has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

iii. As imagers of God’s greatness, Israel was to proclaim his glory through lives of obedience and surrender. And while God declared that he would one day take away Israel’s priestly status due to their sin (Hos 4:6), he also declared that his people would enjoy it again in the future—a people made up of not only Jews but all those from among the nations.

- Hos. 4:6; 6:2. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of God, I also will forget your children. . . . After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. (Cf. 2:16–23.)
- Ezek. 36:23. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am Yahweh. . . . when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.
- Isa. 56:6–7. And the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to him, to love the name of Yahweh, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer, their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.
- Isa. 61:5–7. Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks; foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers; ⁶ but you shall be called the priests of Yahweh; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast. ⁷ Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy.
- Isa. 62:12. And they shall be called The Holy People, The Redeemed of Yahweh; and you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.
- Isa. 66:20–21. And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to Yahweh, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says Yahweh, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of Yahweh. ²¹And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says Yahweh.
- Zeph 3:9–10. For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of Yahweh and serve him with one accord. ¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, the daughter of my dispersed ones, shall bring my offering.
- 1 Pet. 2:9. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- Rev. 5:9–10. Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth (cf. 1:6).

Fig. 4.5. Israel's "Come and See" Witness in the World



- iv. *NT fulfillment.* Whereas God called Israel to serve as his witnesses in the world through their lifestyle (Exod 19:5–6), he now empowers the church to this end (1 Pet 2:9). Not only this, in the new covenant he adds an intentional mission to convert the nations that was not apparent in the old covenant. With the coming of Christ (John 1:14) and the pouring out of his resurrection Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:8), the renewed dwelling of God with man that was anticipated in the OT prophets (e.g., Ezek 37:27–28; Joel 2:28–29; Hag 2:4–9; Zech. 6:13–15; cf. Lev 26:11) begins to be fulfilled, spiritually now (2 Cor 6:16) and one day materially in space and time (Rev 21:3; cf. Eph 1:3, 13–14). In light of this inaugurated fulfillment, with Jesus (John 2:21) and his church (1 Cor 6:19; Eph 2:20) serving as God’s temple, the initial vision of the Garden of Eden and with it the image of God expanding over the globe (Gen 1:28) is now being realized through the mission of the church (Acts 1:8; 1 Pet 2:9). Because God’s presence was localized at the central sanctuary in the OT, the nations had to “come and see” the greatness of God displayed at the temple and through his people; the old covenant included no call to evangelize the nations. In contrast, the new covenant is both “come and see” and “go and tell.” On the one hand, the temple of God is going global, and it will continue to expand until the new Jerusalem is realized and the whole earth is filled with God’s glory as the waters cover the sea (Rev 21:22–27; cf. Num 14:21; Ps 72:19; Hab 2:14). On the other hand, the church is explicitly called to make disciples of the nations, proclaiming the good news that the reigning God saves and satisfies believing sinners by Christ Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. The news is fresh to the new covenant, and it is what places a “go and tell” thrust to the church.
3. The Revelation of the Initiator and Parameters of the Covenant Relationship: An Overview (Exod. 19–20)
- a. *The Structure:*
- i. *Preparations for the revelation (19:1–15).* With Moses recalling Israel’s redemption and call to global mission, the people vow to

- display God's image and then make necessary preparations for meeting God.
- ii. *The experience of the revelation (19:16–20:17)*. Israel encounters God's presence and word in a powerful way—smoke, thunder, lightning, fire, trumpet call, darkness, and the divine voice giving structure to the covenant.
 - iii. *The goal of the revelation (20:18–21)*. The goal of the encounter is clarified. “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin” (20:20).
- b. *Preparations for the Revelation:*
- i. Before Yahweh's arrival:
 - (1) Consecration and the washing of clothes (19:10–11)—point to the need for inward cleansing.
 - (2) Separation of both man and beast from the mountain, lest they die (19:12–13)—points to the absolute holiness of God's temporary throne where he will confirm a special relationship with Israel.
 - (3) Abstinence from sexual relations (19:15)—points to the fact that the intimacy of husband and wife is no substitute for the more ultimate relationship of which marriage serves as a parable.
 - ii. Upon Yahweh's arrival:
 - (1) Further warnings for the community including the priests not to approach the mountain, “lest [Yahweh] break out against them” (19:24). Growing out of God's love for Israel balanced with his awareness of their innate rebellion, these warnings give heightened stress that the power of God must be treated with proper respect, or dire consequences will follow.
 - (2) Grasping the Significance of Yahweh's Presence:
 - (a) *Water and Fire*. Just as water is a necessary element for sustaining life but can be an instrument of death if not respected, how much more the power of God. Similarly, a proper respect of fire allows families to cook in a house, but a misuse can result in destruction.
 - (b) *Nuclear energy*. Nuclear energy is extremely powerful and useful, and its radiation is extremely dangerous.
 - (i) The benefits of nuclear energy are amazing, including the heating of our planet from the sun.
 - (ii) The dangers of nuclear energy were highlighted on April 26, 1986, when an accident at Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine resulted in a nuclear meltdown, releasing 400x more radioactive material than by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Its initial explosion killed 31 people (reactor staff and emergency workers), and as of 2008 there were 64 total confirmed deaths due to radiation. Long-term estimated death counts due to radiation-induced cancer range from 30,000 to almost 1,000,000.

- (iii) A friend of mine once served for 5.5 years as an electrician on a Navy nuclear submarine. The rules for interacting with the nuclear reactor and energy were simple: *limit exposure by time, distance, and shielding*. The less time one interacts directly with the reactor, the better. The further one stays away from the power source, the better. And the more barriers there are between you and the power, the better. Time, distance, and shielding allow humans to harness the life-giving aspects of nuclear energy without experiencing its negative effects.
- (c) *The purpose of God's will of command*. Out of love for his people, God commanded them not to break through the barrier around the mountain and had Moses warn them multiple times not to disregard the imperative. God directed this way in order to sustain Israel's life in relationship to him. But if they failed to heed Yahweh's command, taking God's revelation of himself too lightly, then God's power and presence would not give life but take it. They would be destroyed.
- c. *The Revealed Goal of the Worship Encounter (20:20)*: "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."
 - i. Overview:
 - (1) *The divine test*. Israel's encounter with Yahweh is designed to reveal what is truly in their hearts, whether they would take God seriously or not.
 - (2) *The need for fear*. From the perspective of the Yahweh's revealed will, his display at Sinai through power and word was intended to create an emotional response within Israel that would move them to follow rather than to flee. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of right living (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).
 - (3) *Obedience, the overflow of healthy fear*. This text suggests that a proper fear of God is necessary to motivate proper following of God.
 - ii. Links within the Pentateuch. The only other place in Scripture where "test" and "fear" are explicitly associated is Genesis 22:1, 12, where "God *tested* Abraham" and then, in response to Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, declares, "Now I know that you are a *fearer* of God." When linked with Genesis 26:4—"Abraham obeyed my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws," it appears that Moses is intentionally portraying Abraham as a model covenant keeper well before the law is given.
 - iii. Revealed Will vs. Sovereign Will. The greater story of the Bible tells us that God, in his providence, redeemed a sinful people, warned them not to touch the mountain, and gave them the law through Moses,

ultimately to condemn Israel, and with them, the world, all in order to make necessary the coming of Jesus and the fulfillment of the new covenant in him.

- (1) While to Israel belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, the promises, the patriarchs, and the Messiah (see Rom. 9:4–5), this was not enough to overcome their “rebellion” (Deut. 1:26, 43; 9:7, 23–24; 21:18, 20; 31:27), “unbelief” (1:32; 9:23; 28:66), and “stubbornness” (9:6, 13; 10:16; 31:27). And if they, having received so much, were unable to live for God, how much more would the rest of the world stand culpable and in need of a Savior, having never received the written law (Rom. 3:19–22).¹
 - Rom. 3:19–22. Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.
- (2) The fact that Israel’s “test” revealed their hardness is seen just days later at the golden calf episode. Rather than fearing God, they forgot him and worshipped an image (even while the mountain blazed!). Yahweh’s perspective on Israel’s state is clear:
 - Exod. 32:9–10. I have seen this people, and behold, it is a *stubborn people*. ¹⁰Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”
 - Exod. 33:3, 5. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a *stubborn people*.... ⁵You are a *stubborn people*; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you.
- (3) Moses later noted that Israel’s sustained rebellion was due to the fact that Yahweh did not give them “a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear” (29:4). But he promised a day after Israel’s exile when such a work would be done. The prophet depicted the disposition-transforming event as heart-circumcision, which would enable life-encompassing love for God (30:6). Jeremiah spoke in terms more akin to the initial revelation in Exodus 20:20:
 - Jer. 32:40. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And *I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.*

¹ While this seems to be the most likely way to read Rom 3:19–22, some have argued that Israel, like Adam, is being portrayed as a representative for humanity, so that in their failure, all humanity also failed. On this possibility, see A. B. Caneday, “‘They Exchanged the Glory of God for the Likeness of an Image:’ Idolatrous Adam and Israel as Representatives in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” *SBJT* 11.3 (2007) 34–45.

- Exod. 20:20. Do not fear, for God has come to test you, *that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.*”
- (4) Citing Psalm 36:1, Paul characterized humanity’s sin problem as, “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18; cf. Ps. 55:19). He also spoke of the old (Mosaic) covenant as bearing “the ministry of condemnation,” in contrast to the new covenant’s “ministry of righteousness” (2 Cor. 3:9). Through the Lord’s eschatological inner working, God-honoring “fear and trembling” are enabled by which we “work out our own salvation” (Phil. 2:12–13). Indeed, we offer God acceptable worship only “with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28–29).
- d. *The Experience of the Revelation: The Revelation of God’s Presence and Word*
- i. The intrusion of the divine presence was accompanied by and appears to have produced numerous natural phenomena normally associated with major thunderstorms, volcanoes, and earthquakes.
- Exod 19:16. On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.
 - Exod 19:18. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because Yahweh had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.
 - Exod 20:18. Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off.
- ii. The encounter was designed to clarify the initiator and parameters of the covenant relationship.
- (1) The Ten Words are *covenantal* in nature and therefore about relationship.
- Exod. 34:28. So he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets *the words of the covenant*, the Ten Words.
 - Deut. 4:13. And he declared to you *his covenant*, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Words, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. (See also Deut. 10:4.)
- (2) *Covenant* defined: “an elected, as opposed to natural, relationship of obligation established under oath/divine sanction” (G. P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 11, 171).
- (a) Etymologically, the Hebrew term *bʿrît* “covenant” is most likely related to ancient terms for “bond,” meaning a binding commitment (so Kenneth A. Kitchen, “The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 [1989]: 123; contra Perlit and Kutsch, who argue for a base meaning of “obligation”).

Fig. 4.6. Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Forms & Biblical Covenants

(II) Early & Mid-2 nd Millennium		(III) Mid to Late 2 nd Millennium			(IV) 1 st Millennium	
Mari & Leilan	Patriarchs	Mid-Hittite	Later Hittite	Exod, Deut, Josh	Sfire	Assyria
Witnesses Oath Stipulations	Witnesses Oath Stipulations	Title Witnesses Stipulations	Title Prologue Stipulations	Title Prologue Stipulations	Title Witnesses Curses Stipulations	Title Witnesses Stipulations
Curses	Curses	Oath Curses	Deposit Witnesses Curses Blessings	Deposit Witnesses Blessings Curses		Curses

Fig. 4.7. Law, Treaty, and Biblical Covenant Patterns Compared

Law Structure	Treaty Structure & Description		Biblical Parallel	
Title / Preamble	Title / Preamble	Identity of the suzerain & his right to proclaim the treaty	Title / Preamble	Exod. 20:1–2; Deut. 1:1–4; Josh. 24:1–2
Prologue (religious)	Historical Prologue	Survey of the past relationship between the parties (indicative)	Historical Prologue	Exod. 20:2; Deut. 1:5–3:29; Josh. 24:2–13
Laws	Stipulations	Obligations of the vassal (imperative)	Basic commands & detailed laws	<i>Basic laws</i> : Exod. 20:3–17 (Decalogue); <i>Detailed Laws</i> : 20:22–23:19 (Covenant Code); Exod. 34:10–26; Lev. 1–25 (Ritual); Deut. 4–26; Josh. 24:14–25
Epilogue	Document Clause	Storage & public reading	Document Clause	Exod. 25:16; Deut. 27:2–3; 31:10–13, 24–26; Josh. 24:26
	Witnesses	Usually gods, called to witness the oaths & sanctions	Witnesses	Exod. 24:4; Deut. 31:19–22, 26, 30, 32; Josh. 24:22, 27
Sanctions: blessings (few) & curses (many)	Sanctions: curses & blessings	Blessings & curses; the responses of the deities to covenant (dis)loyalty	Sanctions: blessings (brief) & curses (extensive)	Lev. 26:1–33; Deut. 28; Josh. 24:19–20
			Epilogue	Deut. 29:2–30:20

Adapted from Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty," *TynBul* 40 (1989): 124, 127.

- (b) The Mosaic covenant appears to be “a confluence of law and treaty” (so Kenneth A. Kitchen, “The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 [1989]: 118–135, quote from 124). Kitchen summarizes (128): “The Sinai covenant has the closest expectable links with both third/early second millennium Laws and the late second millennium Treaties, the links varying directly with function. Of distinctive features, Prologue, Laws, Epilogue, and few Blessings/many Curses all go with Law; the

historical component of Prologue, Deposit/Reading, Witnesses and a Curses/Blessings topos are all held in common with Treaty type III [late second millennium B.C.], and *not* with I [third millennium B.C.], II [early second millennium B.C.], IV [first millennium B.C.] other than basic Witnesses/Curses [and title and stipulations]. Thus, the form and content of the Sinai covenant is beyond serious doubt a clear confluence of the much older Law tradition with the late-second-millennium treaty format—and the covenant represents a fresh and distinctive formulation, intelligently using those two components.”

- (3) The Mosaic (old) covenant in its ancient context:
- (a) The structure of the Mosaic covenant relationship:
- (i) *Relationship founded on grace.* The covenant was a gift of God; Yahweh was not obligated on the basis of anything in Israel to initiate the relationship. The past grace is highlighted in the “historical prologue” and captured in the term “elected.”
 - (ii) *Relationship sustained through the vassal’s loyalty and the suzerain’s favor.* The call to obedience (at Sinai) only followed the initiation of the relationship (at the Exodus). Israel’s covenant loyalty only sustains and maintains the relationship; it does not cause or ground it. Covenant disloyalty places the vassal at the mercy of the suzerain—a problem addressed directly in the sacrifices of Leviticus.
 - (iii) *Relationship is ultimately initiated and sustained by the grace of the suzerain.* Yahweh initiated the relationship by grace, his gracious oath/promises of provision and protection (“divine sanction: blessings and curses”) motivate persevering loyalty (i.e., the ethics of faith in future grace), and his gracious forgiveness sustains the relationship even after failure.
 - (iv) *Faith, hope, and love are the (divinely generated) human responses to God’s covenant initiating and sustaining grace.*
 - Faith has its object in the promises of God and the God of promise.
 - Hope is created when faith is placed in the promises of God.
 - Love (God-oriented affection and covenant loyalty) is motivated by the promises of God.
 - (v) *The obedience of faith is both responsive and mandatory (never meritorious!).* Life is experienced, not won, through the obedience of faith.

- Rom. 1:5. We have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations. (See also Rom. 16:26.)
 - Rom. 8:13. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
 - Lev. 18:5. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am Yahweh.
- (b) While the *structure* of Mosaic (old) covenant grace parallels that of the new covenant (i.e., gracious redemption grounds the call to loyalty, which is motivated by gracious promises), the *nature* of covenant grace is different.
- (i) For the Mosaic covenant, the gracious redemption (from slavery in Egypt) and the gracious call to follow God (by keeping his commands) remained *external* for most of Israel, never addressing humanity's bondage to sin and its affront to God. This external call is portrayed in the fact that the tablets of stone on which the Ten Words of the covenant were written remained in the ark of the covenant at the very place where images of gods would reside (Exod 40:20– 21; cf. 25:21– 22, Deut 10:1– 5). God's image was displayed through the Ten Words out of the Holy of Holies, but this image never emanated from the hearts of the majority because sin rather than the law was written on their hearts (Jer 17:1).
 - (ii) The results of an external redemption and external law were tragic for Israel, and the righteousness for which they sought became works-driven from an unregenerate heart. While the old covenant called for a heart-felt response to God, it did not supply what it called for, and the result was that the old covenant condemned Israel. Life for them would have to come from *outside* the old covenant structure itself.
 - (iii) The new covenant is eschatological in nature with the grace being *internal*, redeeming us in Christ from sin's condemnation and bondage and enabling us in Christ to follow God rightly (not immediate sanctification overnight but progressive sanctification over a lifetime). Now what Moses called for (Deut 6:5; 10:16) is realized in the hearts of God's people—the law is written on the heart as the Spirit displays himself in human lives (Jer 31:33; 2 Cor 3:3, 6). It is from this perspective that Moses could anticipate that in the day of heart-circumcision the Israel of God would keep the very words of Deuteronomy (30:6, 8; cf. Rom 2:26, 29).

- e. *Exodus 19–20 on the Nature of Worship.* In Exodus 3:12, God told Moses that the redeemed community would “serve/worship God on this mountain.” One purpose of Exodus 19–20, then, is to clarify at least some of the characteristics of corporate worship. A number of features are suggested:
- i. Corporate worship happens in the context of covenant, which is grounded in gracious redemption and lived out through radical God-centered living, all for the goal of mediating and displaying God’s holiness to the world (19:4–6).
 - ii. Corporate worship is the culmination of anticipation, which is colored by preparation that includes addressing our innate uncleanness (19:10–11), recognizing the absolute and awesome holiness of God (19:12–13), and treating our relationship with him as preeminent above all others, including that with our spouse (19:15).
 - iii. Corporate worship is fundamentally an encounter with God’s holy presence and Word. God’s people are the audience of his display and proclamation. Corporate worship is principally a receiving, a revering, and a listening rather than a bringing or a giving.
4. The Ten Words as the Essence of God’s Covenant Direction (Exod. 20:1–17):
- a. The importance of the Ten Words:
 - i. The first written material specified in the Bible as authoritatively binding (cf. Gen 5:1; Exod 17:14), and the only portion of the Bible written “with the finger of God” (Exod 31:18; Deut 9:10; cf. Exod 24:12; 32:15–16; Deut. 5:22).
 - ii. Titled “the 10 words” (Exod 34:28; Deut 4:13; 10:4; cf. 5:22; 9:10) and “the words of the covenant” (Exod 34:27–28), the latter of which clarifies how to understand all the rest of the words in the Pentateuch that grow from them. They are on the only part of the Bible placed in the Ark of the Covenant (Exod 40:20–21; Deut 10:1–5).
 - iii. Key position at the head of laws in Exodus (20:1–17) and Deuteronomy (5:6–21), suggesting the foundational place of these laws within the community.
 - iv. Echoed throughout Scripture as the foundational summary of the call to love God and love neighbor (Hos 4:2; Jer 7:9; Pss 50:16–23; 81:9; Matt 5:21; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Rom 13:9).
 - b. Numbering the Ten Words
 - i. The Bible stresses there were 10 words proclaimed:
 - Exod. 34:28. So he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the *Ten Words*.
 - Deut. 4:13. And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the *Ten Words*, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. (See also Exod. 34:28; Deut. 10:4.)
 - Deut. 10:4. And he wrote on the tablets, in the same writing as before, the *Ten Words* that Yahweh had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. And Yahweh gave them to me.

- ii. Three numbering systems: (1) Majority Jewish (J); (2) Catholic, Lutheran (C, L); (3) Orthodox, Reformed (O, R)

Fig. 4.8. Numbering the Ten Words

<i>Deut. 5:6–21</i>	<i>J</i>	<i>C, L</i>	<i>O, R</i>
I am Yahweh your God	1	Preamble	Preamble
Never other gods	2a	1a	1
Never a carved image	2b	1b	2
Never name in vain	3	2	3
Sabbath	4	3	4
Honor parents	5	4	5
Never murder	6	5	6
<i>And</i> never adultery	7	6	7
<i>And</i> never steal	8	7	8
<i>And</i> never false witness	9	8	9
<i>And</i> never covet wife	10a	9	10a
<i>And</i> never desire house and household	10b	10	10b

THINK!

On the chart below, use a single underline to highlight elements that are unique to each account of the Ten Words, and use a double underline to note those areas that are parallel but different (e.g., double underline “Remember” in Exodus 20:8 and “Observe” in Deuteronomy 5:12, but single underline “as Yahweh your God commanded you” in 5:12). Once complete, follow the lead of form and content to determine which of the numbering systems you think is most faithful to the data. For an answer key to the comparison chart, see A.4.1 in the Appendix.

Fig. 4.9. A Comparison of the Ten Words in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5

<i>C/L/A</i>	<i>O/R</i>	<i>Exodus 20:2–17</i>	<i>Deuteronomy 5:6–21</i>
		² I, Yahweh, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.	⁶ I, Yahweh, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
1a	1	³ There shall not be to you other gods before my face.	⁷ There shall not be to you other gods before my face.
1b	2	⁴ You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I Yahweh your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children—on the third and on the fourth <i>generation</i> —to those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands to those who love me and keep my commandments. ☐	⁸ You shall not make for yourself a carved image, any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁹ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I Yahweh your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children—on the third and on the fourth <i>generation</i> —to those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing steadfast love to thousands to those who love me and keep my commandments. ☐
2	3	⁷ You shall not bear the name of Yahweh your God for falsehood, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless who bears his name for falsehood. ☐	¹¹ You shall not bear the name of Yahweh your God for falsehood, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless who bears his name for falsehood. ☐
3	4	⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you shall not do any work—you, or your	¹² Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Yahweh your God commanded you. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you shall not do any work—you or your

		son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days Yahweh made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. ☐	son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. 15 And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. ☐
4	5	12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you. ☐	16 Honor your father and your mother, as Yahweh your God commanded you, that your days may be long and that it may go well with you in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you. ☐
5	6	13 You shall not murder. ☐	17 You shall not murder. ☐
6	7	14 You shall not commit adultery. ☐	18 And you shall not commit adultery. ☐
7	8	15 You shall not steal. ☐	19 And you shall not steal. ☐
8	9	16 You shall not testify a deceptive witness against your neighbor. ☐	20 And you shall not testify a false witness against your neighbor. ☐
9	10a	17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house;	21 And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife. ☐
10	10b	you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's. ☐	And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's. ☐

c. Characteristics of the Ten Words

- i. *Words of freedom, not slavery.* The words are given to those freed from slavery (Exod 19:4; 20:1–2; Deut 5:6; cf. 5:15), suggesting the intimate link between God's redeeming work and the human response of covenant loyalty; fulfillment of all the laws are expressions of "freedom," not "bondage."
- ii. *Words that address humanity's proneness to sin.* All commands are negative except two: keep the Sabbath and honor one's parents; stresses both the vast freedom that is available for the child of God and proneness to sin.
- iii. *Words of promise, explanation, and motivation.* Behind every command is an implied promise that God's ways are the best for life—"Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh" (Deut 8:3). With this, the words are not only "laws" but also "explanation" (the Sabbath is grounded in creation [Exod 20:11] or the exodus [Deut 5:15]) and "motivation" ("that your days may be long and that it may go well with you" [Exod 20:12//Deut 5:16]).
- iv. *Words that are principlized, not situational.* Apodictic rather than casuistic in form, stressing their absolute, universal scope.

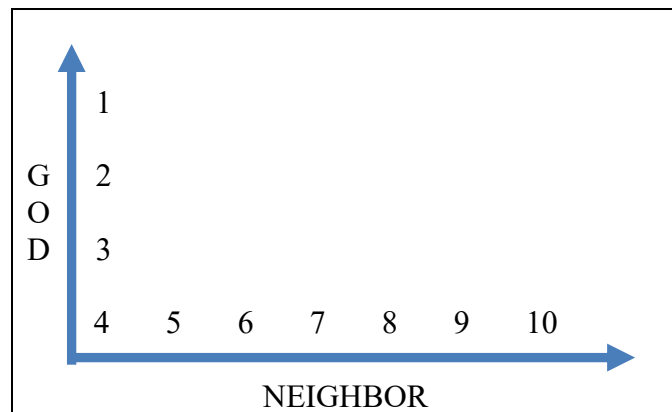
Fig. 4.10. Two Basic Law Forms

APODICTIC	CASUISTIC
Exod. 20:3. "You shall have no other gods before me."	Exod. 21:28. "If a bull gores a man or a woman to death, the bull must be stoned to death, and its meat must not be eaten. But the owner of the bull will not be held responsible."
Exod. 20:16. "You shall never bear false witness against your neighbor."	Exod. 22:26–27. "If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset, ²⁷ because his cloak is the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate."
Features	Features
Unconditional	Conditional ("If" or "when")
Imperative	Declarative
2nd person	Usually 3 rd person
General: without qualification or exception	Specific: based on actual situations, often with motive or exception clauses
Often in negative form	Usually in positive form
Begin with a volitional verb (usually imperative)	Begin with "if" or "when"
Adapted from Daniel I. Block, <i>Deuteronomy</i> (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011 draft), 267.	

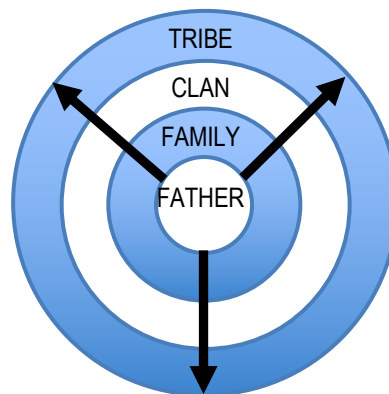
- v. *Words addressing heart and behavior, will and witness.* The last two prohibitions related to "coveting" (Exod 20:17 // Deut 5:21) deal with matters of the heart rather than behavior and thus cannot be regulated in a court; these two prohibitions seem to be the root of murder, adultery, theft, and false witness.
- vi. *Words for memorization.* There are 10 repetitive, concise statements (so Exod 34:28; Deut 4:13; 10:4), probably to encourage memorization (10 fingers/toes).
- vii. *Words that prioritize life.* There are two aspects possible here:
- (1) The ten may be structured according to relative priority (following the Catholic-Lutheran numbering): All people to God (1, 2, 3), head to household (3), children to parents (4), all to preserve individual life (5), husbands to preserve sanctity of sex (6), all to respect others' property (7), all to support truth and justice in society (8), all to nurture contentment in sexual desire (9) and in desire for things (10).
 - (2) From a macro-perspective (most clear in the version of the Ten Words in Deut 5:6–20), one can see how the Sabbath is placed at the center of parallel groupings according to size/word count:
 - (a) *Long*: Worship of Yahweh (Exod 20:2–6//Deut 5:6–10)
 - (b) *Short*: Bearing Yahweh's name (Exod 20:7//Deut 5:11)
 - (c) *Long*: Keeping the Sabbath (Exod 20:8–11//Deut 5:12–15)
 - (d) *Short*: Honoring Parents (Exod 20:12//Deut 5:16)
 - (e) *Long*: Loving Neighbors (Exod 20:13–17//Deut 5:17–21)
 The structure here places the sign of the Mosaic covenant (Exod 31:13, 16–17) at the center of Israel's relationship with God and highlights how celebrating God and his image in others would be

the means by which God's reign and blessing would be realized on a global scale (Gen 12:2–3; Exod 19:5–6). Ultimately, it is Jesus as the representative Israelite who fulfills this purpose, bring global rest (Matt 11:28–12:8) and new creational reconciliation with God (2 Cor 5:17–21).

- viii. *Words that call for loving God and neighbor.* They appear deliberately grouped with respect to loving God and loving neighbor. Following the Catholic-Lutheran numbering, the first four Words all include the phrase “Yahweh your God” and thus bear a distinct Godward focus (= love for God); the last six words are all brief in form and include no explicit mention of God (= love for neighbor). The Word regarding honoring one's parents may be transitional, both because it only includes “Yahweh your God” in a subordinate clause and because Jesus includes it with elements from the second grouping in his teaching (Matt 19:18–19).



- ix. *Words that centralize the role of the man/husband/father.* The words reflect the patricentric nature of Israelite society (not “father focused” but “father emanating”); they are not addressed to “priests” or “rulers” but “everyman,” specifically adult males who are heads of the households with wives, children, household servants, and movable and immovable property (cf. Gen 1–2; Proverbs).



- (1) *Words that define leadership as giving rather than receiving.* Biblical leadership does not replace God but resembles, reflects, and represents God and is targeted toward honoring others and looking out for them. Leadership God’s way confronts pride, prejudice, vain pursuit of comfort, and self-sovereignty by replacing them with God-dependence and a radical commitment to serve others. In Deuteronomy, a leader:
 - (a) Loves those in need, fighting for justice and giving them proper food and clothing (Deut. 10:18–19)
 - (b) Includes every household member and visitor in corporate worship, celebration, and feasting (14:26; 16:11, 14)
 - (c) Ensures the Levite, sojourner, fatherless, and widows are beneficiaries of the tithe (14:27–29; 26:12–13)
 - (d) Must be mindful to leave the leftovers of harvest for those in need (24:19–22)
 - (e) Is cursed if he “perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow” (27:19)
- (2) *Words that focus on others’ rights, not our own.* Focus on what others deserve from us, not on what we deserve from them (a Bill of *Other People’s Rights*)

Fig. 4.11. The Ten Words: A Bill of *Other’s Rights*

<i>Divine Rights (Love God):</i>	
(1)	Yahweh’s right to the Israelites’ exclusive allegiance
(2)	Yahweh’s right to proper representation
(3)	Yahweh’s right to be viewed as the sustainer and controller of all
(4)	Yahweh’s right to respect via one’s respect of parents
<i>Human Rights (Love Neighbor):</i>	
(5)	An Israelite neighbor’s right to life
(6)	An Israelite neighbor’s right to sexual purity
(7)	An Israelite neighbor’s right to enjoy his property
(8)	An Israelite neighbor’s right to honest and truthful testimony in court
(9)	An Israelite neighbor’s exclusive right to his own house (Exod. 20:17) / wife (Deut. 5:21)
(10)	An Israelite neighbor’s exclusive right to his own wife and household (Exod. 20:17) / house and household (Deut. 5:17)
Adapted with some differences from Daniel I. Block, following the Catholic-Lutheran numbering.	

- x. *Words that exalt Christ and, through him, call for a response from new covenant saints.* The Ten Words declare the great glory of Christ, to whom they point and by whom they were fulfilled, and clarify through principal some of the ways love of neighbor is to be manifest in the new covenant period.
 - (1) Christ the culmination and fulfiller of the Law:
 - Matt. 5:17. Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.
 - Luke 24:27. And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

- Rom. 10:4. For the *telos* [i.e., finish line = both end and goal] of the Law is Christ for righteousness to everyone who believes.
- (2) Christ lived out the obedience of faith perfectly, establishing in himself a basis for our righteousness (the doctrine of justification as traditionally described—negative and positive imputation):
- Mark 10:45. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
 - Phil 2:8; 3:8–9. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross....^{3,8}For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God that depends on faith.
 - 2 Cor. 5:21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - Heb. 4:15. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
 - Rom 5:18–19. As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so *one righteous act* (ἐνὸς δικαίωματος) leads to justification and life for all men.¹⁹For as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one's man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
 - Rom. 8:1–4. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,⁴ in order that *the righteous requirement* (τὸ δικαίωμα) of *the law might be fulfilled in us*, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.²
- (3) In light of Christ's victorious, saving work, we are now called to love our neighbor, seeing the righteous requirement of the law fulfilled in us who walk by the Spirit of Christ and not the flesh (the doctrine of sanctification as traditionally described—growth in holy conduct).
- Deut. 30:6, 8. And Yahweh will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life....⁸And you shall return and you shall heed unto the voice of Yahweh and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
 - Ezek. 36:27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk *in my righteous requirements* (Grk: ἐν τοῖς δικαίωμασίν μου) and be careful to obey my rules.
 - Rom. 2:26–29. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps *the righteous requirements* (τὰ δικαίωματα) of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷Then he who is physically uncircumcised but

² Many scholars (e.g., Piper, Schreiner) would place Rom 8:4 under category 3 below. I agree with the theological assertion that through Christ we now become law-fulfillers/keepers, and I used to hold this interpretation of 8:4. However, now I think the singular δικαίωμα in 8:4 parallels the singular use of the same form in 5:18 (which clearly points to Christ's obedience) and that it sets us up for the plural form δικαίωματα in 2:26 and the parallel comment in 13:8, 10 (without the noun), which do point to the Christians' law fulfillment through love.

keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. ²⁸For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

- Rom. 13:8–10. Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is *the fulfilling of the law*.
- 2 Tim. 3:16–17. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

C. The Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:22–23:33)

1. Structure:

- a. The Judgments (21:2–22:17/20) (case law)
- b. Other laws (22:18/21–23:33) (mixed forms)

2. Comparing some of Hammurapi’s Laws (ca. 1792–1750 B.C.) with those of Exodus and beyond. (All translations of the *Law Code of Hammurapi* are from *ANET* 175–176.)

a. Battery:

- LCH §195–208. If a son has struck his father, they shall cut off his hand. ¹⁹⁶if a seignior has destroyed the eye of a member of the aristocracy, they shall destroy his eye. ¹⁹⁷If he has broken a(nother) seignior’s bone, they shall break his bone. ¹⁹⁸If he has destroyed the eye of a commoner or broken the bone of a commoner, he shall pay one mina of silver. ¹⁹⁹If he has destroyed the eye of a seignior’s slave or broken the bone of a seignior’s slave, he shall pay one-half his value. ²⁰⁰If a seignior has knocked out a tooth of a seignior of his own rank, they shall knock out his tooth. ²⁰¹If he has knocked out a commoner’s tooth, he shall pay one-third mina of silver. ²⁰²If a seignior has struck the cheek of a seignior who is superior to him, he shall be beaten sixty (times) with oxtail whip in the assembly. ²⁰³If a member of the aristocracy has struck the cheek of a(nother) member of the aristocracy who is of the same rank as himself, he shall pay one mina of silver. ²⁰⁴If a commoner has struck the cheek of a(nother) commoner, he shall pay ten shekels of silver. ²⁰⁵If a seignior’s slave has struck the cheek of a member of the aristocracy, they shall cut off his ear. ²⁰⁶If a seignior has struck a(nother) seignior in a brawl and has inflicted an injury on him, that seignior shall swear, “I did not strike him deliberately”; and he shall also pay for the physician. ²⁰⁷If he has died because of his blow, he shall swear (as before), and if it was a member of the aristocracy, he shall pay one-half mina of silver. ²⁰⁸If it was a member of the commonalty, he shall pay one-third mina of silver.
- Exod. 21:15. Whoever strikes his father and mother shall be put to death.
- Lev. 24:19–20. If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, ²⁰fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him.
- Deut. 19:15, 21. A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. ²¹Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

b. Miscarriage:

- LCH §209–214. If a seignior struck a(nother) seignior’s daughter and has caused her to have a miscarriage, he shall pay ten shekels of silver for her fetus. ²¹⁰If that woman has died, they shall put his daughter to death. ²¹¹If by a blow he has caused a

commoner’s daughter to have a miscarriage, he shall pay five shekels of silver. ²¹²If that woman had died, he shall pay one-half mina of silver. ²¹³If he struck a seignior’s female slave and has caused her to have a miscarriage, he shall pay two shekels of silver. ²¹⁴If that female slave has died, he shall pay one-third mina of silver.

- Exod. 21:22–25. When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman’s husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, ²⁴eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

c. Goring ox:

- LCH §250–52. If an ox, when it walking along the street, gored a seignior to death, that case is not subject to claim. ²⁵¹If a seignior’s ox was a gorer and his city council made it known to him that it was a gorer, but he did not pad its horns (or) tie up his ox, and that ox gored to death a member of the aristocracy, he shall give one-half mina of silver. ²⁵²If it was a seignior’s slave, he shall give one-third mina of silver.
- Exod. 21:28–32. When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. ²⁹But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. ³¹If it gores a man’s son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. ³²If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Fig. 4.12. General Content Distinctions of Old Testament Laws

<p><i>Rom. 13:8–10. Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments ... are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.</i></p>	
Criminal	<p>Laws governing crimes or offenses that put the welfare of the whole community at risk; the offended party is the state or national community, and therefore the punishment is on behalf of the whole community in the name of the highest state authority, which in Israel meant Yahweh. SAMPLE ISSUES: Kidnapping and homicide; false prophecy and witchcraft; adultery and rape.</p> <p style="font-size: small;"><i>Exod. 21:23–25. You shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.</i></p>
Civil	<p style="font-size: small;"><i>Deut. 17:8–9. If any case arises ... within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place that Yahweh your God will choose. And you shall come to the Levitical priests and to the judge ..., and you shall consult them, they shall declare to you the decision.</i></p> <p>Laws governing private disputes between citizens or organizations in which the public authorities are appealed to for judgment or called upon to intervene; the offended party is not the state or national community. SAMPLE ISSUES: Accidental death and assault; theft and destruction of property; limited family issues like premarital unchastity, post-divorce situations, and the mistreatment of slaves.</p>
Family	<p style="font-size: small;"><i>Deut. 11:18–20. You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.</i></p> <p>Non-civil, domestic laws governing the Israelite household. SAMPLE ISSUES: Marriage and inheritance; the redemption of land and persons; family discipleship and care of slaves.</p>
Ceremonial / Cultic	<p style="font-size: small;"><i>Lev. 20:25–26. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. You shall be holy to me, for I Yahweh am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.</i></p> <p>Laws governing the visible forms and rituals of Israel's religious life. SAMPLE ISSUES: The sacred sacrifice, the sacred calendar, and various sacred symbols like the tabernacle, priesthood, and ritual purity that distinguished Israel from the nations and provided parables of more fundamental truths about God and relating to him.</p>

Compassion	<i>Deut. 24:17–18. You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow’s garment in pledge, but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and Yahweh your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.</i>
	“Laws” dealing with charity, justice, and mercy toward others. SAMPLE ISSUES: Protection and justice for the weak; impartiality and generosity; respect for persons and property.
Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie and Kenneth J. Turner. The categories are taken from Christopher J. H. Wright, <i>Old Testament Ethics for the People of God</i> (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 288–301, which he adapted from Anthony Phillips, <i>Ancient Israel’s Criminal Law: A New Approach to the Decalogue</i> (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 2, 13. For an expanded version of this material that includes biblical texts with the sample issues, see A.4.2 in the Appendix.	

Fig. 4.13. Traditional Theological Distinctions of Old Testament Laws

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples</i>
MORAL (Interpersonal)	<i>Rules and right behavior:</i> Foundational inter-relational principles expressive of God’s character that regulate kingdom community relationship in God’s world	Ten Words (Exod. 20:1–17; Deut. 5:6–21); love commands (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:4–5); call to holiness (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2, 24; 20:7, 26)
CIVIL (Theocratic)	<i>Legal system and governance:</i> Illustrative examples of God’s moral law as governmental guidelines for national Israel during their tenure in the Promised Land as a theocracy	Book of the Covenant + Deuteronomic Renewal, focusing on the central sanctuary, legal relationships, business practices, farming guidelines, etc. (Exod. 20:22–23:33; Deut. 12–26)
CEREMONIAL (Cultic / Religious)	<i>Rituals and ceremonies:</i> Illustrative examples of God’s moral law for national Israel through symbolic portrayal while God visibly resided in their midst	Circumcision, clean and unclean, tabernacle and priesthood, sacrifices and offerings, feasts and festivals (Exod. 25–30; Lev. 1–16)
Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie and Kenneth J. Turner. For an argument that such categories are ultimately not helpful, see the lecture on the Christian and Old Testament Law.		

VII. Sacred Spaced as the Context for Yahweh’s Relationship with Israel (Exod. 24:12–40:38)

A. A Historical Sketch of God’s Presence amidst Israel:

1. Burning bush (Exod. 3:2)
2. Description of God’s presence at Sinai (Exod. 24:17; Deut. 4:24; 5:25; 9:23; cf. Exod. 3:2; Lev 9:24; 10:2; Num. 11:1; 16:21; 35, 45; Deut. 28:21; 31:17; 32:22)
3. Pillar of cloud by day; pillar of fire by night; presence of God over the tabernacle (Exod. 13:21–22; 14:19, 24; 33:9–10; Num. 12:5; 14:14; Deut. 31:15)
4. NOTE: The divine presence of the exodus = Holy Spirit.
 - a. The language of “hovering” associated with the Spirit of God in Gen 1:2 occurs elsewhere in the Pentateuch on in Deut 32:11 with respect to the glory cloud leading Israel through the wilderness.
 - Gen 1:2. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering (*m^craḥepet*) over the face of the waters.
 - Deut 32:11–12. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters (*y^craḥēp*) over its young, spreading out its wings, cathing them, bearing then on its pinions, ¹² Yahweh alone guided him, no foreign god was with him.
 - b. The prophets portray this glory cloud as Yahweh’s Spirit:
 - Isa. 63:11–14. Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹²who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an

everlasting name, ¹³who led them through the depths?... ¹⁴the Spirit of Yahweh gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.

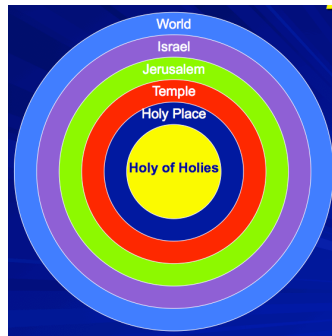
- Hag. 2:5. According to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not.

B. The Tabernacle: An Overview

1. Designations of the tabernacle:
 - a. “Dwelling place” (*miškān*) – Yahweh’s residence and divine immanence
 - b. “Holy place, Sanctuary” (*miqqēdāš*) – Yahweh’s transcendent holiness
 - c. “Tent of appointment/meeting” (*’ōhel mō’ēd*) – Place to encounter Yahweh
 - d. “The House of Yahweh” (*bēt yhw*) – divine residence (Exod. 34:26)
 - e. “The Palace of Yahweh” (*hēkal yhw*) – residence of the divine king (1 Sam. 1:9; 3:3)
2. The Tabernacle as an Earthly Model or Picture of the Heavenly Reality
 - a. On the mountain, God let Moses see a “pattern” after which he was to construct the earthly Tabernacle. The “real” was in the heavenlies, and the earthly Tabernacle would be but a temporary, though substantive, picture pointing to the “real.”
 - Exod. 25:8–9. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. ⁹Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.
 - Exod. 25:40. And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.
 - Exod. 26:30. Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain. Cf. 27:8.
 - Heb. 8:5. They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”
 - Heb. 9:23–24. Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.
 - Cf. Exod. 27:8; Num. 8:4; Acts 7:44.
 - b. The Tabernacle as a Microcosm of the Cosmos
 - i. 7 divine speeches, each introduced with “And Yahweh spoke to Moses” (Exod. 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12) and corresponding to “And God said” in Gen. 1.
 - ii. 6+1 pattern: 6 speeches deal with creative activity, the 6th sets forth two humans filled with God’s Spirit to oversee the project; the 7th deals with the gift of the Sabbath (31:12–17); the sanctuary is connected with Sabbath elsewhere (cf. Lev 19:30; 26:2).
 - iii. Menorah has central stem with 7 lights (25:31–40), corresponding to 7 days.
 - iv. Echoes of Genesis:
 - (1) Exod. 39:32 with Gen. 2:1
 - Exod. 39:32. Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished, and the people of Israel did according to all that Yahweh had commanded Moses; so they did.
 - Gen. 2:1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

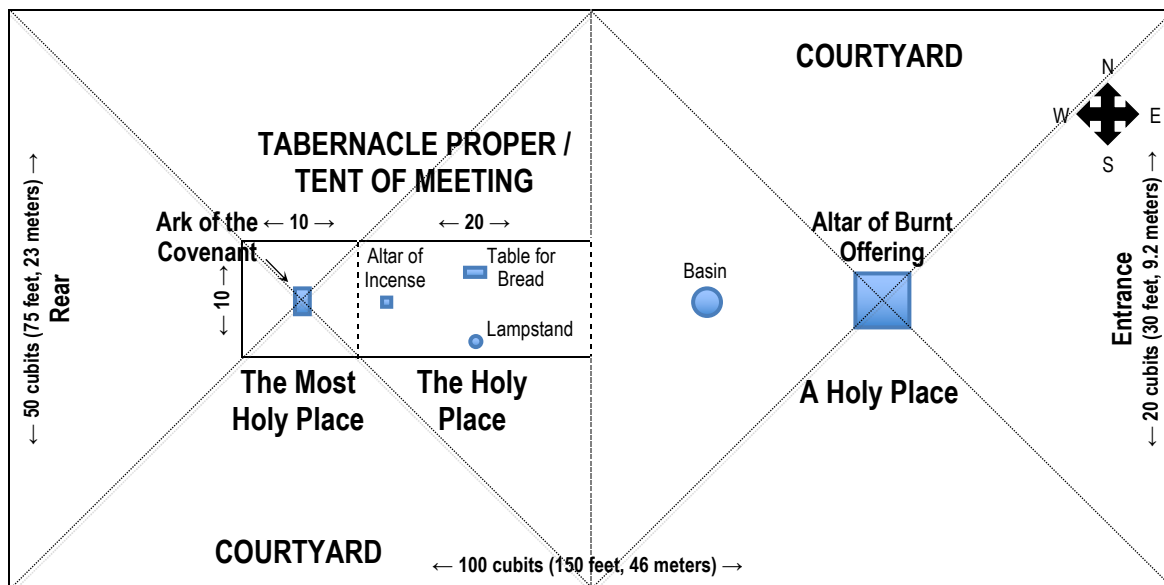
- (2) Exod. 39:43 with Gen. 1:31
- Exod. 39:43. And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as Yahweh had commanded, so had they done it. Then Moses blessed them.
 - Gen. 1:31. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
- (3) Exod. 40:33 with Gen. 2:2
- Exod. 40:33. And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.
 - Gen. 2:2. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.
- v. Symmetry and proportion of the Tabernacle parallel the symmetry and proportion of the 1st creation week.

Fig. 4.13. Gradations of Sacred Space



3. Tabernacle Design
- Orientation:
 - East-west axis, like pagan temples, but with intentional covering over the ark.
 - The light radiating from the Holy of Holies was not a secondary light but the divine glory itself.
 - Parts:
 - Outer court (50x100 cubits) with Bronze altar
 - Tabernacle itself (10x30 cubits), 2 parts (Exod. 26:34):
 - Holy Room (with Menorah, Table of the bread of Presence, Altar of Incense)
 - Holy of Holies (with the Ark, the throne of Yahweh; cf. 1 Sam 4:4)

Fig. 4.14. Sacred Space: The Tabernacle Compound



Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie; adapted from Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus*, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 19.

- c. Perfect Proportions
 - i. Tabernacle compound divided into two equal squares (50x50 cubits):
 - (1) Center of front square: the Altar (God judges/saves)
 - (2) Center of back square: the Ark (God rules)
 - ii. Tabernacle itself divided into two parts:
 - (1) Front room/Holy place (10x20 cu)
 - (2) Back room/Holy of Holies (10x10 cu)
 - iii. Furnishings:
 - (1) Bronze altar (burnt off.) (5x5x3 cu, 27:1–8)
 - (2) Altar of incense (1x1x2 cu, 30:1–10)
 - (3) Table of Presence (2x1x1.5 cu, 25:23–30)
 - (4) Menorah (central stem with 7 lights, 25:31–40)
 - (5) Ark of Covenant (2.5x1.5x1.5 cu, 25:10–22)
 - (6) Laver/wash basin (? , 30:17–21)
 - iv. Gates protected increasing sanctity of the areas as one moves from east to west:
 - (1) Outer gate (20 cu)
 - (2) Gate to tabernacle proper (10 cu)
 - (3) Gate to Holy of Holies (absent)
- d. Materials (increasingly more precious from outside to inside)
 - i. Outside covering of compound to protect from heat and dust: cloth from goats' hair (26:14; 36:14–18)
 - ii. Upper and lower curtains of the tabernacle proper: upper = luxury goatskin leather / lower = rams' skins dyed red (26:7–13; 36:19)
 - iii. Pillars of outer curtains: bronze pillars decorated with silver (27:9–19); curtains themselves = royal blue purple and royal red purple fine twisted linen, decorated with cherubim (26:1–6; 36:8–14)

- iv. Walls of tabernacle proper: acacia wood panels set in sockets of silver (26:15–29; 36:20–30)
 - v. Veil closing off the Holy of Holies: fine royal blue purple and royal red purple, decorated with cherubim (26:31–33)
 - vi. Supporting pillars of the veil: acacia wood overlaid with gold and set in sockets of silver (26:37; 36:35–38)
 - vii. Ark of the Covenant: acacia wood and overlaid completely with gold, finely decorated with gold molding, and covered by the solid gold “mercy seat” with cherubim (25:10–20; 37:1–9)
4. The revealed purpose of Sacred Space:
- a. To provide a context for Moses to meet with God and to receive word from God for the people.
 - Exod. 25:21–22. And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²⁵There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.
 - b. To provide a context for Israel as a nation to be brought to regular remembrance before the Lord.
 - Exod. 28:29–30. So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart, when he goes into the Holy Place, to bring them to regular remembrance before Yahweh. ³⁰And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron’s heart, when he goes in before Yahweh. Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before Yahweh regularly.
 - c. To provide a context for Israel through their sacrifices to be declared holy to Yahweh and thus escape his wrath.
 - Exod. 28:36–38. You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, “Holy to Yahweh.” ³⁷And you shall fasten it on the turban by a cord of blue. It shall be on the front of the turban. ³⁸It shall be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts. It shall regularly be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before Yahweh.
 - d. To provide a context for the priests to serve the people before Yahweh without dying.
 - Exod. 28:35. And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before Yahweh, and when he comes out, so that he does not die.
 - Exod. 28:42–43. You shall make for [the priests] linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; ⁴³and they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him.
 - Exod. 30:20–21. When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to Yahweh, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. ²¹They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations.

- e. To provide a means for Israel to know God rightly and to enjoy lasting relationship with him.
 - Exod. 29:44–46. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. ⁴⁵I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. ⁴⁶And they shall know that I am Yahweh their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am Yahweh their God.
- f. Building off the last, Ezekiel highlights how the sanctuary was designed to teach, by its very nature, the significance of Yahweh’s holiness.
 - Ezek 41:4; 42:14 with 44:19; 42:20; 43:7–8, 12; 44:2, 6–8, 23

C. Israel’s Idolatry and Yahweh’s Amazing Grace (Exod. 32–34)

1. And Overview of the Narrative Structure:
 - a. Israel’s idolatry and God’s initial response (32:1–10)
 - b. Moses’ two intercessions and God’s response
 - i. On the mountain (32:11–14)
 - ii. Down the mountain (32:30–35)
 - c. Israel’s state and the problem with God’s glory presence (32:9; 33:3, 5; 34:9)
 - d. Moses’ veiling as embodiment of judgment and mediation of mercy: the divine solution (33:7–11, 12–16; 34:29–35)
2. Paul on the Mosaic Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6–18)
 - a. New covenant ministry of the Spirit, not the letter (2 Cor. 3:6; cf. Jer. 31:31–34; Ezek. 36:25–27)
 - b. Old covenant glory, Moses’ veiling, and the ministry of death (2 Cor. 3:7–11)
 - c. Sustained hardness in Israel (2 Cor. 3:14–15; cf. vv. 2–3)
 - d. Christ, the recipient of judgment so that we might look on glory and enjoy the outcome of life (2 Cor. 3:12–18; cf. v. 6)
3. Moses’ Request for Yahweh to Reveal His Glory

Exod. 33:18–19; 34:5–7. Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” ¹⁹And [Yahweh] said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘Yahweh.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”... ^{34:6}Yahweh passed before him and proclaimed, “Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

 - a. *Context:*
 - i. By the hand of Moses, God performed signs and wonders in Egypt, in order to make his “name” known (Exod. 7:3–5; 9:15–16; Ps. 106:6–8; cf. Pss. 78:42–51; 105:26–36).
 - ii. By his chosen prophet, God had led his people through the wilderness (Exod. 19:4; Ps. 77:13–15, 20; cf. Ps. 78:52–54).
 - iii. However, the “signs and wonders” were not enough to keep Israel faithful; they rebelled with the golden calf (Exod. 32:7–8; **NOTE:** “your people” in contrast to “God’s people,” cf. Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Jer. 7:23; Ezek. 11:20).
 - iv. Moses interceded, and the community is spared, but at heavy cost (Exod. 32:11, 13–14, 25–28, 31–34).

- v. Upon the petition of Moses, God promises to renew the covenant with his people and also to manifest his presence in their midst (33:15–17).
- b. *The Description of Yahweh’s Character or “Goodness”*:
- i. God asserts that he will “make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘Yahweh’” (33:19).
 - ii. God then echoes the distinct clause structure of Exodus 3:14, thus calling reader to read this new revelation in light of the earlier:
 - Exod. 3:14. I am who I am.
 - Exod. 33:19. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.
 - iii. Exodus 34:6–7 provide, therefore, an exposition of Yahweh’s attributes as expressed in his relationship with his people. The various character qualities stand in apposition to the repeated name “Yahweh, Yahweh.”
 - (1) Ontological Foundation:
 - (a) *rahûm* (“merciful”): Used almost solely of God, stressing his deep compassion for his own, much like a mother cares for her child; it is often viewed as the withholding of a judgment that is deserved.
 - (b) *hannûn* (“gracious”): Used only in reference to God and usually in combination with *rahûm*; it is often seen as the granting of a redemption that is not deserved.
 - (2) Functional Overflow:
 - (a) *ʾerek ʾappayim* (“slow to anger,” lit., “long of nose”): Usually used of God and often translated “longsuffering”; it focuses on the seemingly inexhaustibility of God’s patience, for it takes a long time for the fury of his wrath to come out in judgment (thus “long of nose”).
 - (b) *hesed* (“steadfast love”): Also translated “lovingkindness,” “unfailing love,” “mercy,” “loyalty,” and more; one of the most broadly based expressions of God’s all-encompassing, unending, active devotion for his people.
 - (c) *ʾemet* (“faithfulness”): Also translated as “truth” or “steadfastness,” it carries the underlying certainty and assurance that the attributes of this divine self-revelation will never fail.
 - (d) *nōšēʾ ʾawōn wāpešaʿ wʾhattāʾâ* (“forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin”): Lit., “one who bears/carries” iniquity on behalf of his people.
 - (e) *pōqēd ʾwōn ʾābôt* (“visiting the iniquity of the fathers”): Just as he takes mercy and forgiveness seriously, so too God takes sin seriously and will punish all who hate him.
 - (3) The book leaves in tension how Yahweh’s willingness to forgive is reconciled with his unwillingness to clear the guilty. It finds resolve partially in the sacrificial instructions of Leviticus, which

point to the ultimate resolve in the penal substitutionary work of Christ.

- c. Moses' response: Worship and a request for the divine manifestation of this great God's presence in the midst of sinful Israel (34:9)
 - Exod. 34:8–9. And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. ⁹And he said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Yahweh, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

D. Excursus: Meditations on Yahweh's Manifestation and Israel's Calling to Image God.

1. Key texts stressing the need for God's visible presence among his people:
 - Exod. 33:2–4, 15. "I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ³Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people." ⁴When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments... ¹⁵And [Moses] said to [Yahweh], "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here."
 - Hag. 1:9. You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares Yahweh of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.
2. God's presence provides the key way by which God's people are distinguished from the world.
 - Exod. 33:15–16. And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"
3. What is the connection between the divine presence among the people and the witness such a manifestation makes to the nations? *Answer*: God's presence ignites fear leading to holiness, witness, and lasting covenant relationship
 - Exod. 20:20. Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.
 - Jer. 32:39–40. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. ⁴⁰I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.
 - Ezek. 36:22–23, 26–27. It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. ²³And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am Yahweh...when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes... ²⁶And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
 - Deut. 4:5–14. See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as Yahweh my God commanded me... ⁶Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." ⁷For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Yahweh our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? ⁹Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life... ¹⁰On the day that you stood before Yahweh your God at Horeb... ¹¹at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. ¹²Then Yahweh spoke to

you out of the midst of the fire... ¹³And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Words, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.

- Exod. 19:4–6. You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
- Exod. 33:15–16. And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me... ¹⁶how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"

4. Conclusion: The presence of God's Spirit is essential for God's people to bear witness to his holiness to the world (see Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:1–17; Gal. 5:16–25).

E. **Conclusion: The Significance of Yahweh's Presence with Israel**

1. In response to Moses' plea, God's covenant with Israel was renewed (34:10–35) and the Tabernacle materials were gathered and the whole was constructed (35:1–40:33).
2. Then Yahweh graciously filled the Tabernacle with his glory, stressing that his purposes for Israel would continue in spite of their stubbornness.
 - Exod. 40:34–38. Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle. ³⁵And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle. ³⁶Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. ³⁷But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸For the cloud of Yahweh was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.
3. The Lasting Purpose of Yahweh's Dwelling in Sacred Space:
 - a. Stressed Yahweh's covenant commitment to his people.
 - i. Yahweh, the Great King, was present with them as Provider and Protector (the centrality of the ark of the covenant, the throne of God).
 - ii. Yahweh wanted them to enjoy life in relationship with him (the centrality of the bronze altar, where atonement was secured).
 - b. Stressed Yahweh's passion for his own witness and reputation: Yahweh's presence alone set Israel apart, for an encounter with the presence alone created fear leading to holiness and witness.
 - c. Stressed the holiness of God's presence and all he touches.
 - i. The compound-structure and Tabernacle design are focused on:
 - (1) Protecting the people from lethal doses of God's glory;
 - (2) Preserving the distinction between Yahweh and humanity.
 - ii. The intensity of holiness increases as one moves up the central spine from the outer east gate to the Holy of Holies where Yahweh is enthroned.
 - iii. In every sphere of increasing holiness, access is strictly regulated and controlled by a complex system of walls, gates, Levitical guardians, and regulations.
 - d. Stressed hope for God's people, even as sinners, to encounter the holy God.
 - i. The presence of the Tabernacle declares God's special concern for Israel; they alone among the nations enjoy Yahweh's kingship.

- ii. The commissioning of priests and sacrifices declares God’s special willingness to relate to sinners.
- iii. The centrality of the altar and the ark in the compound plan provides a powerful symbol of how life can be enjoyed: access to the presence of the Great King is enjoyed only *through* the substitutionary atonement he provides.

VIII. Summary: As a foreshadowing of what God will do through his Messiah, God defeats the kingdom of Egypt by rescuing his people from Egyptian tyranny through Moses, and then he reestablishes his kingdom among his people by making a covenant with them at Mount Sinai so that he can dwell in their midst forever in Sabbath rest.

IX. Guided Reading for Exodus:

A. Points of Focus:

1. Key chapters: Exod. 1–6:13, 14–15, 19–24, 32–34
2. Key persons: Aaron, Amalekites, Jethro/Reuel, Levi, Miriam, Moses, Pharaoh
3. Key places: Canaan, Midian, Raamses, Re(e)d Sea, Sinai/Horeb; basic layout of the tabernacle

B. Questions:

1. Which OT passage states that Israel’s exodus from Egypt took place 480 years before “the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel”? On this basis, what date has traditionally been suggested for the exodus? The suggested “late date” of the Exodus (c. 1290 B.C.) is partially based on the presence of the name _____ in Exodus 1:11.
2. Where was Moses pasturing his flocks when God appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush? What does God say will be the “sign” to Moses that it is indeed Yahweh—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—who has sent him to Egypt?
3. What do you learn from the immediate context, footnotes, and study notes in Exodus 3:14 regarding God’s statement to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”? What more do you learn about the name “Yahweh/the LORD” and God’s character in 6:1–8 and 34:4–7?
4. List in order the 10 plagues God brought against Egypt because they failed to heed his voice found in Exodus 7:14–12:30.
5. Exodus 19:4–6 and 20:1–17 deal both with Israel’s redemption and her obedience. Which came first, and why is this significant? Stated differently, what clues are there in the text that suggest God’s call to Israel for obedience was not about earning a right to have relationship with him (i.e., salvation by works)?
6. List in order the 10 Commandments found in Exodus 20:1–17. Where else in the Bible do all ten show up in sequence? Are there any differences between the two lists?
7. According to Exodus 20:20, what is the reason Yahweh has revealed himself and his will to Israel at Mount Sinai? See Genesis 22:1, 12 for the only other place in the OT where the key words “test” and “fear” are used together. Since the Genesis text is likely intentionally designed within the overall narrative to link with Exodus 20:20, in what way is the author linking Abraham’s obedience (see also Gen. 26:5) to God’s charge to Israel in Exodus 20?

8. When Israel sinned by worshipping the Golden Calf in Exodus 32, what did Moses entreat God to “remember”?
9. In Moses’ mind, what will prove that he and Israel have “found favor” in the Yahweh’s sight and that Israel is indeed “distinct...from every other people on the face of the earth”? What connections do you see with this verse and Exodus 20:20; Jeremiah 32:39–40; and Ezekiel 36:27?
10. “Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.” To whom did Yahweh declare this statement?