

## Exodus (January 29)

### Reading Exodus

Thin, cool ribbons of green vegetation border heavenly blue waters. They flow together amid a vast plain of parched yellow sand and dust. From a distance, they appear like a great serpent slithering through the desert, with its tail in Lake Victoria and its head 4160 miles away on the shore of the Great Sea. The coiling track of the Nile is life and civilization.

After 430 years of sipping from the Nile, the children of Israel forgot their homeland in Canaan to the east. Exodus describes how the Lord awakened the memory of Israel, caused them to call out to him, and sent Moses to rescue Israel from the grip of the Nile and the dryness of the desert. As you read Exodus, keep one foot on the Nile's cool green bank and the other foot on the scalding yellow sand. Feel the Israelites' dilemma. Recognize the immense obstacles and temptation from which the Lord rescued them. And call him your deliverer amid the obstacles and temptations of your life.

### Author

Several statements in Exodus record that Moses wrote certain sections of the book. The New Testament also claims Mosaic authorship for various passages in Exodus. Taken together, these references assert that Moses was responsible for writing the book of Exodus.

### Themes and Theology

Exodus lays a foundational theology in which God reveals his name, his attributes, his redemption, his law, and how he is to be worshiped. It also reports the appointment and work for the first covenant mediator (Moses), describes the beginnings of the priesthood, defines the role of the prophet, and relates how the ancient covenant relationship between God and his people came under a new administration (the Sinai covenant).

The theology of salvation is likewise one of the strong emphases of the book. The verb "redeem" is used often, and the heart of redemption theology is best seen in the Passover narrative of chapter 12 and the sealing of the covenant in chapter 24. The apostle Paul taught that the Passover lamb was fulfilled in Christ. Indeed, John the Baptist called Jesus the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

The book concludes with an elaborate discussion of the theology of worship. Though costly in time, effort, and monetary value, the tabernacle – in meaning and function – points to God's gracious condescension to let sinful, forgiven, and restored mankind approach him and enter into communion with him. By means of the tabernacle, the God of the universe came to "dwell" (or "tabernacle") with his people. God is not only mighty on Israel's behalf; he is also present in their midst.

### Blessings for Readers

Exodus describes the central redemptive event of the Old Testament. Through the blood of the Passover lambs, the Lord delivered his people from slavery. This redemption becomes the most-mentioned event of Israelite history. Through the blood of the covenant, the Lord consecrated Israel as a kingdom of priests. He directed the building of the tabernacle as a place of worship and forgiveness.

Moses and the elders of Israel also enjoyed the splendor of seeing God and learning the meaning of his name, Yahweh. They saw that God is not only holy but also merciful and patient. He remembers his people and his promises to their forefathers for a thousand generations. As you read Exodus, look for these important themes. See that the Lord still leads his people through the prophet like Moses and redeems you by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.