

EX

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US

# Belonging to a Rescuing God

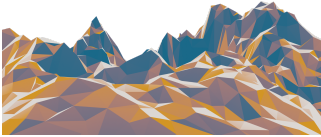
The second half of Exodus is often neglected. All the action is done. The dramatic and powerful rescue of God's people is complete. As the dust settles on Yahweh's victory over the might of Pharaoh, God's people are in awe at all they have learnt about him. He is gracious. He is merciful. He is personal, and present, and determined to rescue. He keeps his promises. God's people have been introduced to their extraordinary God.

This is where the end credits roll in the Hollywood films.

But Exodus is only half way through. Where the first half was all about **Israel getting to know God**, the second half is **all about Israel getting to know themselves as God's rescued nation**. As Israel get to know what it looks like for them to be a nation rescued by God, *Exodus will help us get to know what it looks like for us to be a church community rescued by Jesus*.

"I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Exodus 20.2 (ESV)



## Exodus 21-24

The story of Exodus is told in two main parts.

Part 1, which we looked at earlier this year, is all about **knowing God**. It tells of God rescuing his people from slavery in Egypt. It's a dramatic story! But through these events God introduces himself to Israel; showing them his power, his determination to save, his grace and mercy, his holiness, and his rescue. He even tells them his name!

1. Flip through the pages of Exodus 1-20. What stood out to you about God's character?

Part 2 is all about **knowing what it means to be God's rescued people**. It starts with God meeting with his people on Mount Sinai. God tells Israel he has rescued them for a purpose, and invites them into relationship with him. Through this long conversation between God and his people, Israel learn what it means for them to belong to God, and relate to God.

2. Read the following passages and draw a line that best matches the topic.

Exodus 21.1-11	Relationship with foreigners
Exodus 21.12-13	Human rights
Exodus 22.16-19	Justice
Exodus 22.20 & 23.13-15	Money
Exodus 22.21 & 23.9	Generosity
Exodus 22.25-27	Relationship with Yahweh
Exodus 23.6-8	Mercy
Exodus 23.10-12	Morality

3. Did you notice any other topics covered?

4. What do these laws teach Israel about God's character?

5. What do these laws teach Israel about how they are to treat one another?

6. Before God gives Israel these laws, he reminds them what he has *already* done for them. Read Exodus 20.1-2. Why is this context important?

### **Read Exodus 24**

7. How do the Israelites respond to God and his law (here called his 'covenant')?

8. How does this chapter portray the relationship between God and his people?

### **Think it over**

These chapters of Exodus show that for Israel, belonging to God means living a life of *thankful obedience*, because he has rescued them. The same is true for us, although our rescue is an even greater one.

Read Romans 8.3-4. Why was a new covenant needed? What has the new covenant achieved?

Read Hebrews 8.13. What does this tell us about God's law in Exodus?

Read John 14.15. What law do Christians obey?

What will a life of thankful obedience look like now?

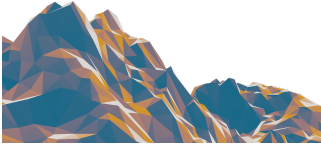
One example of a command from Jesus is in 1 John 4.7-21, where it says, "*Beloved, let us love one another, because love comes from God... and we have this commandment from him: whoever loves God must love his brother as well.*" What might it look like to live in thankful obedience to this command in our Small Group? What about in our church?

Are there areas of your life where you are not living in thankful obedience to Jesus? How might this change?

### **Prayer ideas**

Give thanks for Jesus who has rescued us from sin and death and brought forgiveness.

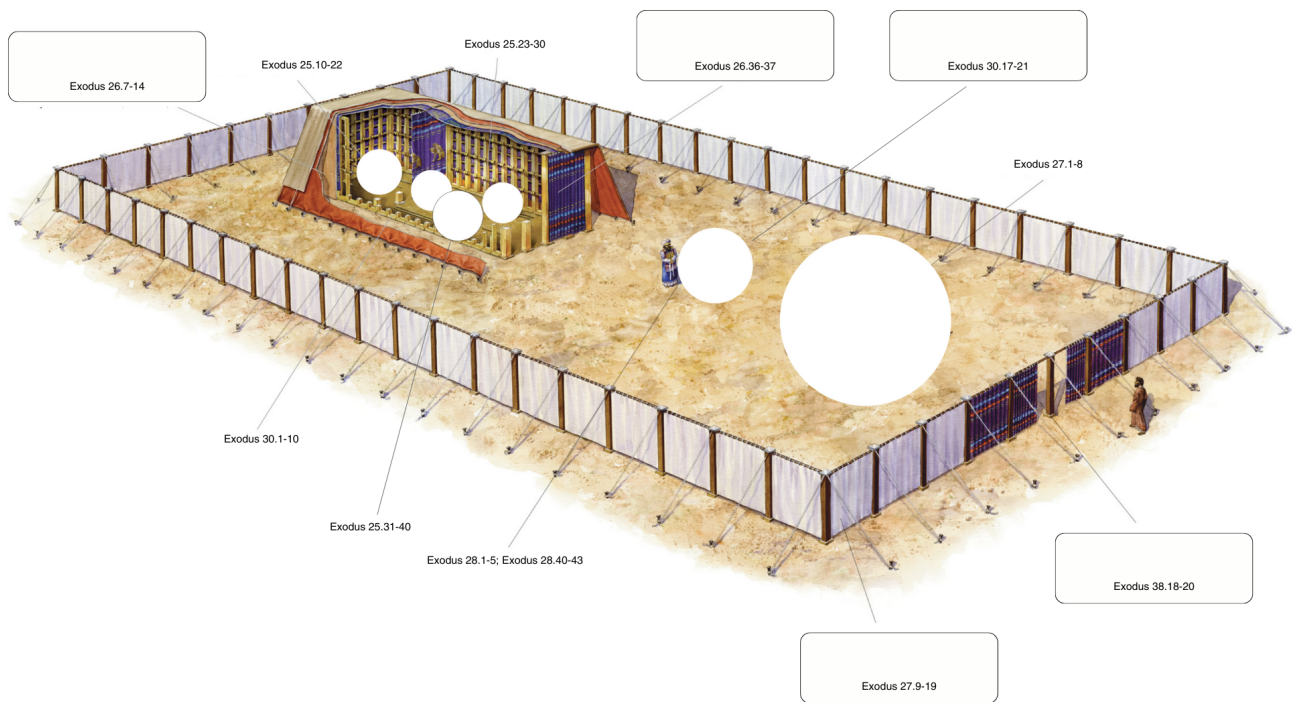
Ask God that we might live in thankful obedience to Jesus.



## Exodus 25-31

1. Summarise what we learnt in Exodus 21-24 in a couple of sentences.

2. Draw the missing pieces of the picture<sup>1</sup> and add descriptive labels.



3. How do the different features of the tabernacle help define Israel's relationship with God?

4. Re-read chapter 24 from last week. What features of the tabernacle remind Israel of their experience on Mount Sinai?

5. Yahweh speaks seven times as he describes the construction of the tabernacle in these chapters<sup>2</sup>. The final time God speaks the topic is rest ('Sabbath'). What might this allusion to creation and the Garden of Eden add to Israel's understanding of the tabernacle?

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/other-content-listings/>

<sup>2</sup> 25.1, 30.11, 30.17, 30.22, 30.34, 31.1, 31.12

6. Read Exodus 25.8. What is the purpose of the tabernacle?

7. How does the tabernacle deal with the problem of sin, so that it can fulfil its purpose?

8. Remember that the first half of Exodus was all about Israel getting to know a powerful, rescuing God. This second half is all about Israel discovering what it means to belong to this God. How does the tabernacle help Israel understand what it means to belong to Yahweh?

### **Read Hebrews 9.11-14**

9. In what way is the tabernacle just a picture of something much better?

10. In what way are the tabernacle's priests (Aaron and his sons) just a picture of someone much greater?

### **Think it over**

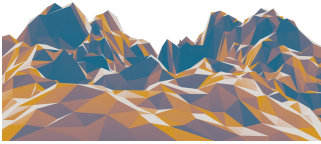
God has come to be with us through his Son Jesus. And through Jesus we have been brought near to Yahweh our Holy God.

- How does Jesus deal with the problem of sin?
- How does this transform our relationship with God?
- In what ways is this a comfort to you?
- In what ways is this a challenge to you?
- How does this shape our togetherness as God's people?

### **Prayer ideas**

Give thanks for Jesus who is God with us.

Ask God that his presence, through his Son and his Spirit, would be a real in our lives.



## Exodus 32-34

1. Using the following verses, put together a quick timeline of events since Yahweh rescued his people from Egypt.

- Exodus 19.1-3
- Exodus 20.1-3
- Exodus 19.16-20
- Exodus 24.17-18

### Read Exodus 32

2. What do the people ask Aaron to do? What reason do they give for their request?

3. What name does Aaron give the golden calf?

4. What is Yahweh's reaction? Is it appropriate?

5. What arguments does Moses use in 32.11-14 and 32.30-32?

6. How does Moses help us appreciate Jesus?

### Read Exodus 34<sup>3</sup>

7. How is God's grace displayed in 34.1?

8. How is Yahweh described in 34.6-7?

9. How does God's character bring comfort into his relationship with his people?

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<sup>3</sup> If your group has time, read 33 and 34.

10. How does God's character bring tension into his relationship with his people?

11. How is God's grace displayed in 34.10-35?

12. In 34.18 Yahweh reminds his people of the Passover. Why do you think he does this here? (Check Exodus 12.17 if you need a reminder of what the Passover is all about.)

**Read 1 Corinthians 10.1-14**

13. What value does the apostle Paul say these Exodus events have for us today (10.11-13)?

14. What is the apostle Paul's take home lesson from these Exodus events (10.14)?

**Think it over**

From Exodus 32.4-6, how would you define an idol?

How serious an offence is it to God when people worship something other than him?

In what ways might we be allowing things in our life to rival God in a way that offends him?

In what ways do we see God's character in Exodus 34.6-7 displayed in Jesus?

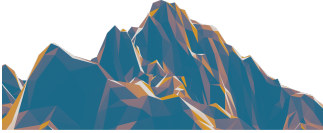
How is the tension present in Exodus 34.6-7 resolved in Jesus?

**Prayer ideas**

Give thanks for Jesus who took our punishment, that we might be forgiven.

Ask God that we would flee idolatry.





## Exodus 35-40

1. Some extraordinary events have taken place in the book of Exodus. Which event do you think is the most extraordinary so far?

2. Skim over Exodus 35-39 and then go back and skim over Exodus 25-31, which we looked at a couple of weeks ago. (You might find the paragraph headings helpful if you haven't read these chapters before your group meets.) What do you notice when you compare these two sections?<sup>4</sup>

### **Read Exodus 40.1-15 & Exodus 40.16-33**

3. What do you notice when you compare these two parts of the chapter?

4. Why do people use repetition? Why do you think Exodus is using all this repetition?

### **Read Exodus 40.34-38**

5. What do you notice when you compare verse 34 with verse 35?

6. The tabernacle courtyard was about 50 metres long and 25 metres wide (Exodus 27.18). The tabernacle tent was just 14 metres long and 5 metres wide. How does this make Exodus 40.33-34 all the more extraordinary?

7. Read Psalm 113.4-6. How does this make Exodus 40.33-34 all the more extraordinary?

8. Read Exodus 32.7-10. How does this make Exodus 40.33-34 all the more extraordinary?

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<sup>4</sup> If your group is pressed for time you may want to skip this question.

9. Read Exodus 33.1-3. How does this make Exodus 40.33-34 all the more extraordinary?

**Read John 1.14**

10. What is it about God that makes this verse so extraordinary?

11. What is it about us that makes this verse so extraordinary?

**Think it over**

Who does God use to build his church?

How does this part of Exodus help us see the privilege of being God's people?

Where do we see God's goodness and grace and mercy in Jesus?

If Jesus is the fullness of God's goodness and grace, what are some of the implications for

- the place of Jesus in our church?

- the way we treat one another?

- the way we talk to our friends, family, and neighbours?

**Prayer ideas**

Give thanks for Jesus, who brings all God's goodness and glory to us.

Ask God to help us see that Jesus is central to every part of who we are as his people.