DISCOVER

EXODUS 16-40

Free to Worship
We thank Carol Veldman Rudie for writing the original lesson material (1998) on which this revised study of Exodus is based. This edition incorporates suggestions by readers and small group leaders.

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How to Study

The questions in this study booklet will help you discover for yourself what the Bible says. This is inductive Bible study—in which you will discover the message for yourself.

Questions are the key to inductive Bible study. Through questions you search for the writers’ thoughts and ideas. The questions in this booklet are designed to help you in your quest for answers. You can and should ask your own questions too. The Bible comes alive with meaning for many people as they discover the exciting truths it contains. Our hope and prayer is that this booklet will help the Bible come alive for you.

The questions in this study are designed to be used with the New International Version of the Bible, but other translations can also be used.

Step 1. Read each Bible passage several times. Allow the ideas to sink in. Think about their meaning. Ask questions about the passage.

Step 2. Answer the questions, drawing your answers from the passage. Remember that the purpose of the study is to discover what the Bible says. Write your answers in your own words. If you use Bible study aids such as commentaries or Bible handbooks, do so only after completing your own personal study.

Step 3. Apply the Bible’s message to your own life. Ask,

- What is this passage saying to me?
- How does it challenge me? Comfort me? Encourage me?
- Is there a promise I should claim? A warning I should heed?
- For what can I give thanks?

If you sense God speaking to you in some way, respond to God in a personal prayer.

Step 4. Share your thoughts with someone else if possible. This will be easiest if you are part of a Bible study group that meets regularly to share discoveries and discuss questions.
Introduction

Part One of this study focused on Exodus 1-15, which reveals how God delivered his people from slavery—to show Egypt and all nations that the God of Israel is the one Lord over heaven and earth. The remaining chapters of Exodus (featured in Part Two) describe how God makes his people into a nation unlike any other—not for the purpose of being different, but ultimately to show God’s love to the world. In these chapters we see how Israel learns to trust in God, to believe that he will always take care of them and be with them. God has shown his faithfulness and great power in the ten plagues and in the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex. 7-14), and God will continue to provide for his people. But as the Israelites begin to learn important life lessons, God also begins to ask, “Will you now be faithful to me?”

The full narrative of Exodus mirrors the redemptive plan of God for his children, even today. It gives us a fascinating picture of God’s purpose throughout history—to provide a divine mediator, Jesus Christ, who came to free us from our slavery to sin and lead us into faith-filled, full life with God forever (John 8:34-36; 10:10).

Glossary of Terms

**Abraham**—father of the Israelite nation, called by God to leave his homeland and begin a family of people who would be faithful to the Lord and live in the land of Canaan. Abraham is renowned for his faith in God’s promises (Gen. 12:1-7; 15:6, 13-16; Heb. 11:8-16). He is also called “the father of all who believe” in Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:11).

**acacia**—a type of tree in the Sinai region that grew to a height of about twenty feet. Its wood was hard, durable, and close-grained.

**Amalekites**—a nomadic people who lived in the Sinai peninsula and were often a threat to the Israelites wandering through the desert. Descendants of Amalek, a grandson of Esau (see Gen. 36:12), they were distant cousins of the Israelites.

**angel (of the Lord)**—a special agent from God who represents, brings a message from, and is sometimes identified with God.

**anointing**—an application of oil or ointment (by pouring or sprinkling) for consecration to God. People were anointed to a special task or office, such as the priesthood (Ex. 29:7), and objects were anointed for special use in the worship of God (29:21, 36).

**ark of the covenant**—a wooden chest overlaid with gold and placed in the innermost room (Most Holy Place) of the tabernacle. It
Lesson 2
Exodus 17-18

God’s Care for His People

Introductory Notes

This lesson continues the theme of the Lord’s protective care over his people. We will see how Moses grows in his ability to lead the people in ways that are blessed by the Lord. His own confidence in the Lord increases with each experience of the Lord’s faithfulness.

1. Exodus 17:1-7
   a. What is the people’s complaint? How does Moses restate it?

   b. How does the Lord provide water?

   c. What do the two names for this place tell us about this incident?
2. *Exodus 17:8-16*
   a. How do Moses and the Israelites respond to the attack of the Amalekites? How is the battle won?
   
   b. How is Moses to commemorate this event, and how does he interpret the outcome?

3. *Exodus 18:1-8*
   Describe Jethro’s arrival and why he has come.

4. *Exodus 18:9-12*
   What is Jethro’s response to Moses’ report, and what do we learn from this?
5. *Exodus 18:13-23*
   a. What role does Moses play in this episode? How effective does he seem to be?
   
   b. What does Jethro suggest to Moses?
   
   c. What kind of assistants should Moses look for, and what should their role be?
   
6. *Exodus 18:24-27*
   What is the result of Jethro’s advice?
Questions for Reflection

What do these chapters teach us about Israel’s dependence on God? Recall their question in Exodus 17:7.

What do these episodes teach about Israel’s relationship to surrounding nations? What should our relationship be to people around us today?

What do these episodes reveal about God and the way he works through people who honor him? How can we honor God in our lives today?
An Invitation

Listen now to what God is saying to you.
You may be aware of things in your life that keep you from coming near to God. You may have thought of God as someone who is unsympathetic, angry, and punishing. You may feel as if you don’t know how to pray or how to come near to God.

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved” (Eph. 2:4-5). Jesus, God’s Son, died on the cross to save us from our sins. It doesn’t matter where you come from, what you’ve done in the past, or what your heritage is. God has been watching over you and caring for you, drawing you closer. “You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation” (Eph. 1:13).

Do you want to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord? It’s as simple as A-B-C:

• Admit that you have sinned and that you need God’s forgiveness.
• Believe that God loves you and that Jesus has already paid the price for your sins.
• Commit your life to God in prayer, asking the Lord to forgive your sins, nurture you as his child, and fill you with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of Commitment

Here is a prayer of commitment recognizing Jesus Christ as Savior. If you long to be in a loving relationship with Jesus, pray this prayer. If you have already committed your life to Jesus, use this prayer for renewal and praise.

Dear God, I come to you simply and honestly to confess that I have sinned, that sin is a part of who I am. And yet I know that you listen to sinners who are truthful before you. So I come with empty hands and heart, asking for forgiveness.

I confess that only through faith in Jesus Christ can I come to you. I confess my need for a Savior, and I thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross to pay the price for my sins. Father, I ask that you forgive my sins and count me as righteous for Jesus’ sake. Remove the guilt that accompanies my sin, and bring me into your presence.

Holy Spirit of God, help me to pray, and teach me to live by your Word. Faithful God, help me to serve you faithfully. Make me more like Jesus each day, and help me to share with others the good news of your great salvation. In Jesus’ name, Amen.
Bibliography


Bible Studies for Small Groups

EXODUS 16–40

In this continued study of Exodus, the people of Israel learn how to honor, worship, and live for the Lord and through Moses, receive God’s law for their nation—the Ten Commandments! Despite the Israelites’ rebellion at times, God constantly guides and provides for them along their journey to the promised land. Come explore God’s continued guidance and provision for God’s people today and be inspired to worship and live for the Lord. This is Part Two of the study on Exodus, covering chapters 16–40.

The Discover Your Bible series inspires readers to discover together what the Bible says and means. Participants dive into the text using questions that spark meaningful conversation and personalized application. Every lesson is designed to be a framework that guides groups on a unique and transformative journey. Discover more at DiscoverYourBible.org.