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Exodus Overview



Bible Book Overviews - Steve Gregg

In this overview of the book of Exodus, Steve Gregg discusses the historical background and events surrounding the Israelites' departure from slavery in Egypt. He also addresses scholarly debates about the authorship of the book, as well as the significance of the Exodus narrative in relation to the Messianic age and Jesus' role in providing salvation for all people. Gregg highlights how the Tabernacle and its rituals foreshadowed the coming of Jesus, who became the ultimate sacrifice and high priest, allowing anyone to approach and receive mercy from God.

Transcript

Glad to have you here. And we're going to be continuing a series that we began just last time. Only happens about once a month, so it's a kind of a discontinuous series in one respect, because so much time lapses between installments.

But we're going through all the books of the Bible. We started with Genesis last time. We're doing Exodus this time.

And what I'm doing is giving an introduction to the book, an overview of the book, and basically trying to familiarize you with things about it that would be helpful for you to know if you want to study it on your own. So we're not going to go verse by verse through Exodus or anything like that. We're just going to be giving a background introduction, things like that, so that when you read Exodus, it can be more meaningful to you.

And actually, I'm hoping that month by month, those who attend or maybe those who watch by Facebook will actually read through the books that we're talking about, so that in the coming month you'll read through Exodus, and next time we'll get together and talk about Leviticus, and so forth. Eventually, over the course of many, many years, if this continues, we will get through the whole Bible. But it is quite a long project when we only do it once a month, and there are 66 books, so you can do the math.

We're talking about more than five and a half years if we actually continue it all the way through. Anyway, why don't we pray, and we'll get started tonight. Father, I thank you

for those who have come out to join us tonight, and for those who may be viewing over the Internet.

And we especially thank you that we have the book of Exodus to look at and to learn from, because it is so central to the story that you have involved us in. We are involved in a story that really began in Genesis, but continues and makes considerable, significant changes in the book of Exodus. And I pray that the contents of this book will come alive to us as your Holy Spirit helps us examine your Word and learn from it.

I pray, Father, that with each one who's here, each one who's watching, that beyond what I will have to say here, your Spirit will communicate and speak to them from the message of the book of Exodus. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, those who are here have notes that I've handed out, and those who are not with us but watching us online, you'll just have to deduce what the notes say, but I will be talking about what are in the notes. We're looking at the book of Exodus, and the title of the book, Exodus, is a Greek word, or it's an English rendering of a Greek word. Exodus is a Greek word that means going out or departure.

In the Hebrew Bible, which is the language that the Old Testament was written in originally, the book is actually called *Welah Shemot*, which obviously I'm not that familiar with. I had to read it. It means these are the names, and that's the first phrase in the book in the Hebrew.

The books of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, are named in the Hebrew Bible by the first words in the books. So Genesis in Hebrew, the name of the book is *In the Beginning*. In Exodus, in the Hebrew Bible, the name of the book is *These are the Names*, because that's one of the opening phrases in the book, and that's *Welah Shemot* in Hebrew.

In the Vulgate, which was the Latin translation, the word Exodus was used, as we have it in our English, and that was taken from the Greek Septuagint, translated almost 300 years before Christ. The Hebrew Bible translated it to Greek. The name Exodus was given.

Now, the word Exodus actually occurs in the New Testament with reference to what Jesus accomplished. In the ninth chapter of Luke, it says that Moses and Elijah met with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and spoke with him about the Exodus. That's what it actually says in the Greek New Testament.

In Luke chapter 9, it says they spoke to him of the Exodus that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. And the use of the word Exodus there suggests that there's a connection in principle between the Exodus in the Old Testament and the accomplishment of Christ at the cross. And this is something that is taken for granted in

much of the rest of the Old Testament and the New, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and that's what's referred to as the Exodus, these Israelites were slaves for a very long time in Egypt, and they were delivered from their slavery, and they were made into an independent nation.

This going out of slavery is what the word Exodus refers to. And what Jesus accomplished in Jerusalem, the Exodus that he accomplished, as it says in Scripture, is a reference to his delivering us from the slavery of sin. And so the bondage in Egypt is treated in Scripture as a type and a shadow of the condition of man unsaved, a slave of sin.

Jesus said, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. But he said, if the Son sets you free, you'll be free indeed. So Christ sets us free from the slavery of sin, just as Moses was used by God to set Israel free from the slavery in Egypt.

And there are many things in the New Testament that look back at the Exodus and basically parallel it to our own experience. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10, the opening verses, Paul mentions that, he says, our ancestors, he means the Jews' ancestors under Moses, they all escaped from Egypt through the sea under the leadership of Moses. He says they were baptized into Moses in the water, in the sea, and also in the cloud.

And he talks about how they ate spiritual food and how they drank spiritual drink from the rock. And some of these stories are going to come up in actually in numbers. But some of this is in Exodus.

And he says in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 6, he says, these things happened as a type of us. The word *tupos* in the Greek means a pattern. That God caused Old Testament history and many of its features to take place in such a way as to forepattern, to pre-pattern, to, in a sense, foreshadow.

What Christ was going to do for us, our escape from sin, even our passing through the waters of baptism. Paul likens that to the passing through the Red Sea of the children of Israel. That's from the book of Exodus, of course.

He talks about them eating manna, which comes from Exodus 16. He talks about them drinking from a rock that produced water. That's also from Exodus.

And so he says that we're like that. We eat the spiritual bread, which is the bread of life, Christ. We drink the spiritual water, the spiritual drink, which Jesus identified as the living water that he would give to everyone who thirsts.

In John, chapter 7 and verse 39, the apostle John tells us that this living water is the Holy Spirit. So our escape from sin, our baptism in water, our receiving the Holy Spirit, our eating of Christ, all of these things are prefigured in the book of Exodus. And so the book of Exodus is seen in the New Testament and should be seen by us as a very significant pattern of spiritual things.

Though, of course, the things we're reading about were physical things, literal historic events. The going out of Egypt was a physical movement into physical freedom. And yet they represent spiritual movement from spiritual slavery into spiritual freedom and so forth.

And so this is how the New Testament takes up the ideas of the book of Exodus in some cases and uses them. There are other things in Exodus the New Testament makes use of. The tabernacle, for example, is described in detail in the latter chapters of Exodus.

The book of Hebrews, particularly in chapters 8 and 9 and somewhat in 10, discusses the rituals associated with and the design of the tabernacle. It does not go into detail as we might wish it would, but it does say that these things foreshadowed heavenly reality. So, again, there's spiritual truths that are depicted in physical ways in the way the tabernacle was constructed, in the way the rituals of the tabernacle were ordained.

The things that the priests did at the altar and so forth, they all parallel spiritual things, according to the New Testament. And there are other ways that we will see. The law, of course, is given in Exodus, the Ten Commandments.

And there's much information in the New Testament about that. Jesus, of course, in the Sermon on the Mount, reiterated some of those commandments and gave his own spin on them, his own enlightened additional insight into some of those commandments. So the New Testament makes great use of the material in Exodus.

It's obvious that the New Testament writers believed Exodus was very significant. Now, when we come to Exodus, or as with any book of the Bible, it becomes somewhat important who wrote it. Why would that be important? Well, for the very reason that we generally refer to the books of the Bible as the Word of God.

But how can books written by humans be the Word of God, unless those humans are inspired humans? A person who's inspired to write the Word of God, we call them a prophet. So it's essential with these books that we know whether or not they were written by somebody who's a prophet or not. Many good books have been written by people who are not prophets.

Many reliable books, history books and so forth, have been written by people who are not prophets. But what they write is not the Word of God. What they write is maybe an accurate history, maybe a valuable history.

But if something is written by a prophet under inspiration of God, we have not only the value of its historical credibility, we also have, of course, the fact that God is the one who's inspiring the author to include the things he includes. Every historian, of course, has to be selective. No historian can record everything that ever happened.

And therefore, historians always must decide, will I include this or will I use the space for

this other thing that's more important? Every historian makes those choices based on his own ideas, unless, of course, he's a prophet. In which case, if he's inspired, then God is the one who's selecting the details. God is the one who's, in a sense, giving us the details of history that he thinks are the important ones.

Then a prophet who writes history also has the added advantage of being able to tell us God's opinion about things that happened. If we wrote a history of anything, let's say you write your own autobiography, you might be very accurate. It might be a very true history.

But whether you included the most important things that God would see as most important or not would be open to question. And as you would even give your own interpretation of the things that you record, and you say, well, I think what God was doing when this happened to me was such and such. Well, that would be your opinion.

You might be right or might not be right, but people would have reason to question it. But if you're an inspired writer and you record history and you give your interpretations, then you're actually presenting God's version of the story and God's appraisal of things. And that's why it's important for us to know with the books that actually did make it into the Bible, were they written by inspired people? Were they written by prophets? Now, the first five books of the Bible traditionally have all been attributed to Moses, who certainly was a prophet.

In fact, if anything, God speaks of Moses as if he is greater than any other prophet in the book of Numbers. God actually says, if I speak to a prophet, I'll speak to him in dreams and visions and dark sayings. We said my servant Moses is not so with him.

I'll speak plainly, even face to face. And in other words, not in dark sayings that while God does reveal his will through prophets on many occasions, Moses was superior to them all. And if Moses is indeed the author of the first five books of the Bible, that gives them an incredibly high level of reliability in giving us what God has to tell us about the things that they record.

But if Moses didn't write it, then we have to ask, well, who did? Now, of course, it is Jewish tradition that Moses wrote it. It's also Christian tradition that Moses wrote it. But how do we know if that's really true? It is important because if Moses didn't write it, then presumably somebody unknown whom we have no reason to believe was necessarily inspired may have written these books.

And that is, of course, the position that is taken by many scholars today who are what I would refer to as liberal scholars who do not have the same confidence in the Bible that I do, for one thing, and that conservative Christians usually do. Liberal scholarship has been saying for over a century that Moses didn't write any of these first five books. The view they hold is called the documentary hypothesis.

On their view, all the material in the first five books of the Bible existed as verbal traditions passed along from generation to generation verbally without being written down for hundreds of years. And finally, in a time perhaps as late as 500 or so BC, which is really about a thousand years after the Exodus, they finally were written down by who knows who. Basically, the theory is that there were different traditions somewhat in conflict with each other.

Four different traditions, they say, were around. They call one of them the Yahwist tradition. One's called the Elohist tradition.

One's called the priestly tradition. One is called the Deuteronomist tradition. But in some of these books, they believe they see interweaving of these different traditions that arose separately and even in conflict with each other sometimes and that they've been kind of almost sloppily put together by somebody at a much, much later century into a written form as we have them now.

In other words, what they're saying is that Moses didn't write these books. Now, when this view originated, it partly was based on the assumption that Moses lived before the creation of written language, if he lived at all. The time in which Moses is said to have lived, they said, written language had not yet been invented yet.

So obviously, Moses could not have written these books, and therefore, they came up with an alternative theory. Though the Jews had always believed that Moses wrote them and Christians had always believed that Moses wrote them, the assured findings of science now are telling us Moses couldn't have written them because there was no writing in Moses' day. However, that argument didn't last for very long because they found the libraries of Hammurabi, who lived in the time of Abraham, who, if you want to do the math, is like 400 years before Moses.

And Abraham was contemporary with the Mesopotamian king Hammurabi, whose laws have been found in written form and can be seen in the British Museum today in this cone-shaped black stone that has all these little etchings in it, which are the laws of Hammurabi dating at least 400 years before Moses. Clearly, written language existed before Moses. More than that, the more recent discovery of the Ras Shamra texts in Egypt or nearby are from the time of Moses.

They're not written by Moses, but they're contemporary with the time of Moses, and they're written documents too. So obviously, the argument that Moses couldn't have written these books because writing wasn't invented yet is simply one of the many cases where the skeptics have been proven wrong by further discovery. And that has almost always been the trend with skepticism about the Bible.

The scientists, the archaeologists, the skeptics, they'll find some way of discrediting the Bible, they think, and then further discovery will prove that they were totally wrong and

that they have egg on their faces. They never admit they were wrong, they just stop making the same arguments, but sometimes they'll retain the conclusions that were based on those arguments. So that now that we know that there was writing in the time of Moses, and that's proven beyond a shadow of a doubt, the idea that Moses didn't write these books and that they are derived from separate traditions written down centuries later, that tradition, that documentary hypothesis was in place before they disproved that Moses couldn't write it.

And therefore, although the reason for that documentary hypothesis has fallen apart, that hypothesis had become established scholarly opinion in liberal schools and still is today. And so the argument is that when we read Exodus, we're not reading probably real history at all, certainly not anything written in the time of Moses and certainly not by Moses. If there was a Moses even, he didn't have, he didn't write these things down.

We may have legends of a man who really lived, who some of these things may be true or based on something true, but we can't really trust these things. Obviously, this view, which is almost the universal view of modernist or liberal biblical scholars, it removes any hope of seeing the book of Exodus as an inspired book by a prophet. Now, I still not only like the traditional view, but I believe the traditional view has much more evidence in his favor.

After all, there is no solid evidence for these four hypotheses. It's for traditions. The hypothesis can be presented and you can find ways of conforming the evidence to the hypothesis, but there's no actual proof that Moses didn't write these.

And yet there is tremendous reason to believe he did. For one thing, the material in Exodus contains a lot of things that would be of no interest to anybody after the time of Moses. If it wasn't written in the time of Moses and by Moses, it's hard to know exactly why anyone would have written it at a later time.

When you read all those details of the tabernacle, I don't know if you've read them recently, but chapter after chapter telling how many cubits long these things are and what they're made of, how many hooks and how many sockets there are and all this detail. It's tedious to read. Why would they go into that at a time when the tabernacle didn't even exist anymore? In the time that they're saying these books were written, the tabernacle had been long gone.

Even Solomon's temple had replaced it and been destroyed since then. The tabernacle would have been ancient history if it had existed at all. Why would somebody living at such a late date going to all this minutia about how the tabernacle was to be designed and then do it again because you actually have that minutia described in Exodus when God is telling Moses how to do it.

Then in the later chapters of Exodus, we read how Moses actually did build it and all the

same details are gone over again. This is one of the great challenges in reading through the book of Exodus. The early chapters are very exciting stories, but after around chapter 23 or so, you start getting into all these details of the tabernacle.

If it's boring to read, think how boring it would have been to write. Why would someone write it if it wasn't real? Why would Moses write it if he did? Because God gave him this to set up as the worship system of Israel. Moses would have every reason to give all these details.

It can't be imagined that anyone of any later generation would have any interest in doing so. It just doesn't make sense. There's lots of reasons actually to believe that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch, the whole first five books of the Bible.

But let me give you a few reasons in your notes. First, Moses was well qualified to write these books. He was well educated.

According to the story, he was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians because he was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter as an infant and brought up in Pharaoh's household where he was given the best education possible. And it's clear that whoever wrote the laws in Exodus had to either be inspired by God or had to be very intelligent in writing a legal code for a nation. Which, by the way, if you just throw together a few laws because you want to write a law book, it's not likely the laws you're going to come up with on the top of your head are going to become the basis of Western civilization and the most just system of government ever known in history.

And yet that's what the laws that Moses gave have turned out to be. They're the basis of British common law, which became basically the basis of Western civilization. What Moses wrote 1,400 years before Christ has passed the test of time so that if he was not inspired, he was a legal genius.

And he might have been that whether he was inspired or not because he was well educated. But we certainly would have to say whoever wrote the book of Exodus would be give evidence of being a very educated and intelligent literary man. Moses was well educated and could easily fit that bill.

He also was, of course, familiar with both Egyptian and Midianite geography because he was raised in Egypt and he fled to Midian where he spent 40 years tending sheep before he led the children of Israel in the Exodus. Therefore, all the place names that are mentioned in the travels of the Israelites, both in Egypt and elsewhere, are places that Moses in his lifetime would have become familiar with. By the way, many of the place names can be identified archaeologically today.

Some of them cannot. Many of them have long perished. But the writer obviously was writing at a time when these place names were known to him.

And they're scattered all over what we now call the Sinai Peninsula and, of course, Egypt and Midian. And those are the areas where Moses lived. That's geography that the author was clearly familiar with and which Moses would be.

There's many other reasons to suggest Moses wrote this, but certainly his qualifications to do so would be a first consideration. Also, he would have the motivation to write it. As I said, who else writing at some other time would have the motivation to write all these details about the tabernacle? It wouldn't be an institution that was being used at that time anymore.

Moses would have motivation because he was assigned to be the leader, religious and political leader, of the children of Israel. And therefore, he would have reason to write these things for them, their laws, the description of the tabernacle and their history. Basically, the first portion of the Book of Exodus, the first quarter, describes the founding of the nation, which would be as important to the Jews as the founding of our country and the stories surrounding that, the American Revolution and so forth would be important for us to know.

Moses would have reason to give these stories and to preserve these laws and so forth in a sense that no one previously or afterward would really have quite the same reason to do. There's quite a few references in the Book of Exodus to Moses writing. I've given you some references.

In chapter 17 and verse 14, we're told that Moses wrote down a prophecy. In chapter 24, verse 4, we're told that Moses wrote down all the laws that God gave him. In chapter 34 and verse 28, we have another reference to Moses writing.

And so Moses, we know, wrote some of the material in the book unless the book is lying. And of course, there's every reason to believe he wrote the whole book. Now, to say he's the author of the book does not necessitate that he wrote every single word because of course the Jews preserved these books throughout history.

And with all the books that Moses wrote, there's some evidence that an editor may have at one time or another updated a place name. You know, they'll say, well, this place was called Luz. It's Bethel now, but it was called Luz previously or something, you know.

Sometimes an editor later would update some of the information just for a later readership to be familiar with what's being discussed. But Moses is the substantial author. That is what Jews and Christians have always believed until modern times and still do if they're conservative.

More importantly than any of this, though, is the fact that the New Testament, including Jesus and Paul, attest to Moses being the author. In Mark chapter 7 and verse 10, Jesus said that Moses said, honor your father and your mother. And whoever curses father or

mother, let him die the death.

Now that's in Exodus. Exodus 20 and Exodus 21. It's quoting from that.

And Jesus is the one who said Moses said this. Well, if Jesus said Moses said it, I'll trust him more than the modern scholars who are only guessing and don't really have a clue. Jesus, after all, we believe was inspired and was God's own son.

So he would be a more reliable witness about the things of God than virtually anyone else. In Mark 12, 26, we have also a quotation from Moses and attributed to him by Jesus in Luke 24, 44. Jesus said to his disciples that all things that were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms about him had to be fulfilled.

So, again, the law of Moses, Jesus refers to it as in John 7, 19. Jesus said, did not Moses give you the law? And yet none of you keeps the law. His question did not Moses give you the law is a rhetorical question.

It's a way of affirming. Of course, he did. And yet you don't keep it.

That was his way of rebuking them about it. In Hebrews nine and verse 19, the author of Hebrews also makes reference to Moses writing these things or Moses giving every law and so forth. So the New Testament takes it for granted, just as the Jews did and as Christians have that Moses is, in fact, the author.

He's the most likely author based on his qualifications and motivation for doing so. The information would be stuff that he would be aware of. Certainly.

And the New Testament tells us that he wrote it. Now, Exodus begins pretty much with the birth of Moses. The books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy continue to tell of events in the life of Moses and Deuteronomy closes with the death of Moses.

So Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These four books cover the lifetime of Moses. And there's every reason to believe that he'd be the best man to write those books.

Genesis, of course, occurs before Exodus and before Moses birth. And yet traditionally, we believe that he wrote that book as well. The book of Genesis.

The New Testament never specifically says that Genesis was written by Moses. But Jesus did say that Moses wrote the law and the word Torah law that Jesus no doubt used. Means the Pentateuch or the first five books.

Genesis was considered part of the law, part of the Torah. And therefore, Jesus seemed to confirm that Moses wrote that, too. By the way, it's clear that Exodus is written with Genesis in mind.

That is to say, the book of Exodus wasn't just written independently without any mindfulness about what Genesis had said. The first word in Exodus is and. Which is a strange way to begin a book.

Unless you're considering it to be a continuation of something previous. And so Exodus begins with the word and. And obviously is presupposing a knowledge of Genesis.

In fact, some of the things in Exodus presuppose knowledge of things in Genesis. For example, Abram, Isaac and Jacob. When God meets Moses at the burning bushes, I am the God of Abram, Isaac and Jacob.

Well, these men, where do we learn about them? But in Genesis, it is assumed that the reader of Exodus is going to know who these men are. Because that person is also right. The prequel, which is Genesis.

Additionally, it is assumed that the reader of Exodus knows about the six day creation. Because when God gives the command to keep the Sabbath, he says, because it's six days. The Lord God made the heavens, the earth and the sea and all that is in them.

That's, of course, referring back to Genesis chapter one. And it is assumed to be it's a given in Exodus that this is the true story. So Genesis and its information is assumed to be known.

It is most likely the same authors writing Exodus as a sequel to Genesis. And of course, that would be Moses, we believe. Now, let me give you just a summary of the contents of the book of Exodus.

I want to talk about some other historical background issues, too. But here's basically an outline of the book. The first chapter of the book of Exodus describes how the people of Israel who had come into Egypt.

Under favorable circumstances, came to be unfavorably treated by the Egyptians. And actually put under forced labor and became slaves there. Now, you may recall the end of Genesis.

Joseph had gone into Egypt and had been elevated to a high position, second only to Pharaoh. His position of privilege allowed him to bring his family, Jacob and the brothers of Joseph and their children, into Egypt because there was a famine in the land of Canaan where they lived. And so they came to Egypt and there's lots of grass and lots of water and lots of food.

And so they brought their flocks there and they became prosperous and comfortable in Egypt. So, that's how Genesis basically ends. In Exodus, we read that a new Pharaoh has arisen who did not appreciate Joseph.

Joseph had died. He died at the end of Genesis. And the new Pharaoh comes up and does not feel any gratitude toward Joseph.

And he only feels intimidated by Joseph's family who has become a large group of people by this time. By the time of the Exodus, a census was taken and there were 600,000 male Israelites over 20 years old. Now, if you would add to the 600,000 males over 20 years old, add the males and females who are under 20 years old as well as all the women, this would make a group of people probably very close to 3 million people.

Now, when they went into Egypt in the days of Jacob and Joseph, there were only 70 heads of households. 70 men and their families went in. But they leave, in the time of the Exodus, with 600,000 men and their families.

So, Israelites grew in number very rapidly. And this became a threat to the Pharaoh. He was afraid that if there was ever an invasion of Egypt, and there were often invasions of Egypt from foreign countries, that the Israelites might wish to join the side of the enemies and give trouble to Egypt.

So, he instead deprived them of their rights just as every police state, every oppressor does. They deprive people of their ability to defend themselves and make slaves of them so that they will be under control. And so, in the first chapter of Exodus, Israelites, in some generation after Joseph, perhaps a generation or two afterwards, they are made slaves in Egypt.

And it's not an easy slavery. They are made to build cities for Pharaoh. Rameses and Pithom are named as cities that they built.

These are treasure cities of the Egyptians. And so, that's what chapter 1 tells us. There's more.

Of course, we can't go into all the details. The midwives, for example, are mentioned. The Pharaoh tells the Hebrew midwives to kill the baby boys when they're delivered, and they don't do it.

And so, what happens is Pharaoh tries to get rid of the baby boys of the Israelites another way. He makes an order that all the baby boys, two years old and younger, have to be thrown into the Nile River. Well, Moses was thrown into the Nile River, but his parents had taken some precautions against his drowning.

They made a floating basket for him and put him in the Nile River. They technically obeyed the law. We'll put him in the river, but he's not going to drown.

Interestingly, Moses had an older brother, Aaron, who was three years older than him, who wasn't thrown in the river. So, he must have just missed it. He just missed the cutoff date.

He must have been about three. He was three when Moses was born, and therefore, since it was the younger babies that were thrown in the river, Aaron was not in danger. But Moses was.

And his mother had him put in the river in a floating basket, watched by his 12-year-old sister, Miriam. And, of course, Pharaoh's daughter found him there. She knew immediately that he was a Hebrew child, but she had pity on him, took him, and adopted him.

And he was, therefore, raised with the privileges of the royal family in Egypt. And that's what chapters 2 and 3, 2 through 4, actually, are telling us. But, again, in that story, there's more.

Because when Moses came to his adulthood, he knew the Hebrews were his people. How he knew this, we don't know exactly. But we do know that the Pharaoh's daughter hired Moses' actual mother to wean the child.

And in ancient times, children weren't weaned very young, at least three years old, possibly five years old in those days a child was weaned. So, Moses' mother, while caring for him in his earliest years, would have been able to inculcate in him an appreciation for his Hebrew roots, his Hebrew heritage. And he grew up, although educated as an Egyptian, knowing he was a Hebrew.

And as an adult, when he was about 40 years old, he went out and saw some of his Hebrew countrymen being afflicted by an Egyptian taskmaster. Moses actually took the side of his brethren and killed the taskmaster. This was discovered, and Moses had to flee from Pharaoh.

So he fled to Midian. Midian is in the land that's now Saudi Arabia. Now, it may be of value to you in reading Exodus to have a map.

You may have maps in the back of your Bible. Or if you have a phone, you may want to simply Google the Sinaitic Peninsula. If you Google that and get a picture of it, you can get an idea of where things are laid out.

There is Egypt, and then there's the Sinai Peninsula desert, a big triangular piece of land which was controlled by the Egyptians at that time. And it's separated from the main body of Egypt by the Suez, the Sea of Suez, or the Gulf. It's called the Gulf of Suez.

Then there's this triangular bit of land, which we call the Sinai Peninsula. And it is separated from Midian or Saudi Arabia by the Gulf of Aqaba. And it was on the other side of the Gulf of Aqaba.

Moses fled from Pharaoh. He crossed the Gulf of Suez, crossed what we call the Sinai Peninsula, crossed the Gulf of Aqaba into what was then called Midian. There he married

the daughter of a priest and became a herdsman of sheep and did that for close to 40 years and accomplishing not much else.

But in chapters 3 and 4, we read about how he encountered God in a burning bush when he was 80 years old. He had been in Egypt the first 40 years. He had been tending sheep the second 40 years.

Now at 80 years old, he meets God, and God said, I'm sending you back to Egypt to deliver my people, to tell Pharaoh to let my people go. Moses initially doubted that he was qualified for this and objected to it. Maybe he was a little scared, but God didn't let him off the hook and told him, gave him some miracles he could do, showed him some miracles he could show as signs to Pharaoh and to the Hebrews.

Moses went on his way to Egypt and confronted Pharaoh. In chapters 5 through 13, we have this confrontation with Pharaoh. Some stories which as a child were some of my favorite stories in the book of Exodus about the 10 plagues.

I think maybe from watching the movie, The Ten Commandments, as a child or something, I had very graphic pictures of these. They were probably even more exciting than the movie depicted them. But chapters 10 through 13, we see that Pharaoh does not take kindly to Moses' demands that Pharaoh must release this slave force that were such an economic boon to Egypt and to just let him go.

And so Pharaoh said no. And Moses had to make several threats. He said, well, if you don't let my people go, then the Nile is going to turn into blood.

It did. Pharaoh realized he was in trouble, asked Moses to change it. It was changed.

But Pharaoh hardened his heart and wouldn't let him go. So he said, OK, there's going to be a plague of frogs. There are going to be frogs all over the place here.

And they came. And then there were other plagues, flies and boils and locusts. And there were 10 plagues.

And as the final plague, each time we know, Pharaoh seemed to crack under the plague and say, OK, OK, I'll let you go. But when the plague was removed, he changed his mind, hardened his heart. So after nine of these cycles, God told Moses to tell Pharaoh that God was going to take the firstborn of Pharaoh and all the firstborn sons of Egypt if he didn't let the people go.

However, the Israelites could be exempt from this by killing a lamb, placing the blood of the lamb on the lintels in the doorposts of their houses and staying indoors all night. And there's going to be the passing of God through the camp through actually Egypt. And he would take the lives of the firstborn of every house that didn't have the blood.

But he did say, when I see the blood on your doors, I will pass over you and I will spare your firstborn. This was what we call the first Passover, because God passed over the houses that had the blood on the doorposts. And it became an annual celebration, which, of course, Jews, observant Jews today still celebrate generally around Easter.

The reason they do it around Easter is because Jesus rose from the dead at Passover. And so Christians have traditionally celebrated Easter as the resurrection of Christ around the time that he rose. And Passover was the time when Jesus died and rose again.

So the Jews Passover occurs approximately at the same time that Christians are celebrating Easter, the resurrection Sunday. Now, Passover, therefore, is really when the Jews celebrate it to this day. It's their Independence Day.

It's the birth of their nation. It's like the Fourth of July. It's the day that they escaped from Egypt.

And, of course, all the sensational stuff wasn't over yet, because as they fled from Egypt, Pharaoh had given them a reprieve and told them they could go. They changed his mind. So he's pursuing them.

And they found themselves bottled in at the Red Sea. And the Egyptians were pursuing behind them to recapture them. And that's where the famous story of Moses parting the Red Sea took place.

Now, some manuscripts say the Red Sea. The Hebrew actually says the Sea of Reeds. And so some feel like maybe it's not the Red Sea, but some other body of water.

There's some question as to where it is that the Israelites crossed. And this question is also affected by where it is they crossed to. Traditionally, it is thought what they crossed was over the Gulf of Suez into the Sinai Peninsula.

Now, we know that they wandered for 40 years eventually. That's not recorded in Exodus. That's recorded in Numbers.

But they eventually wandered around for 40 years before they went into the Promised Land. And they wandered in a region which was where a mountain called Sinai was. Sinai was the mountain where God had met Moses in the burning bush.

When Moses brought them out of Egypt, he took them to Mount Sinai, which is also called Horeb. And that's where they received the Ten Commandments. In fact, they camped there for a year.

They were at Sinai for a year during the entire period of the latter half of Exodus and the whole book of Exodus and the first ten chapters of Numbers. After ten chapters of

Numbers, God tells them, okay, let's move on now. And then they wandered for 38 more years and some change.

But where Mount Sinai is is a very interesting controversy. There are three traditional locations of Sinai. They're all in what we call the Sinai Peninsula.

And therefore, if that's where Mount Sinai is, that's where Moses met God the first time and where they camped for a year in the Sinai Peninsula. Now, it might seem like a no brainer that they were in the Sinai Peninsula. After all, it's the Sinai Peninsula.

But we have to realize that it's called the Sinai Peninsula only later. It was not called the Sinai Peninsula when Moses was alive. Later history referred to it that way because it's the traditional location of what some people think is Mount Sinai.

Mount Sinai was located by divine revelation, allegedly, by Constantine's mother in this body of land that we call the Sinai Peninsula. Of course, hundreds, thousands of years after Moses. And once Mount Sinai was supposedly identified, the region became Sinai.

And so we call it the Sinai Peninsula based on the traditional location of the mountain. However, there are many scholars who believe that the mountain was not in that peninsula, but was actually in Saudi Arabia, in Midian. There's some good reasons to think so.

Moses encountered that mountain when he was tending sheep in Midian. In order to be in the Sinai Peninsula with his sheep, he'd have to have crossed the Gulf of Aqaba with his sheep. And that doesn't seem very likely.

That's pretty far from Midian to take your sheep. And there's other reasons also to suspect that Mount Sinai was in fact in Arabia, which was called Midian in those days. One reason is because Paul says in Galatians 4 that Mount Sinai is in Arabia, which is not where the Sinai Peninsula is.

So there's some reason to doubt the traditional location of Sinai, and I'll say more about that when we talk about the route they took. But the point that I would make is that they crossed the water somewhere. They may have crossed the Gulf of Aqaba.

Some think they crossed the Gulf of Suez or a smaller body of water, an inlet of the Red Sea. But the Red Sea is there. Both the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba are inlets from the Red Sea.

So it could be said to be crossing the Red Sea whichever way they crossed. In any case, of course, the sea had to part for them to pass through. And then as the Egyptians pursued them, the waters came down and destroyed the Egyptians.

And that was, of course, what determined once and for all that Israel would never be

slaves again in Egypt because the Egyptians were destroyed and Israel was on the other side safely. Seemingly safely. They still had a lot of trials and challenges to their survival in the region of Sinai, but they're nonetheless, they were not going back to Egypt.

And so that's their deliverance from Egypt, this confrontation with Pharaoh, these 10 plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, and so forth, all occur in chapters 5 through 13. Now, chapters 14 through 18 give us the journey from where they crossed the sea to Mount Sinai. When they crossed the sea, they journeyed still for about a month and got to Mount Sinai that way.

And in those chapters, we read, for example, that they were attacked by the Amalekites. And they had to defeat them. So Moses and Aaron and Hur went up on a mountain and Moses put his hands up in a posture of petition to God.

And as his hands were up, the Israelites defeated their enemies. When his hands went down, the enemies tended to prevail. So Aaron and Hur sat down, Moses down on each side of him and held his hands up.

They must have been really dead by the end of that day. All the blood drained out of them, but they won the battle. And so that's one of the great battles that they fought on the way to Mount Sinai.

They also started receiving manna on the way to Mount Sinai. They also had a visit from Moses' father-in-law who came to visit them after the exodus. And he gave Moses some advice about how to administrate such a large group of people, which Moses took.

These are some of the things we read about in chapters 14 through 18. But when you get to chapter 19, they are at Mount Sinai. And of course, what happens most significantly there is Moses goes up on the mountain and receives the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone.

These Ten Commandments are given for us initially in chapter 20. The next three chapters after chapter 20, chapters 21, 22, and 23 are what are sometimes called the Book of the Covenant. The Book of the Covenant is miscellaneous laws, three chapters of miscellaneous laws that seem to be applications of the Ten Commandments to various life situations.

To domestic life, to economic life, to civic life. And so you have the Ten Commandments in chapter 20. And then chapters 21 through 23 have all these various laws applying the Ten Commandments to these different stations and events in life.

And those three chapters are called the Book of the Covenant. Then in chapters 25 through 31, we have the details given of how the tabernacle is to be built, how its furniture is to be built, and how the priest's robes and attire are to be designed. As I said earlier, this is very detailed, very frankly, tedious.

And after that, after chapter 31, when all those details have been given, we have the story of how Moses had to go down and confront the Israelites because they had built a golden calf and had begun worshipping it. Moses, in his anger, threw the Ten Commandments down on the ground. They broke into pieces, so they had to be remade.

And so he had to take some stone tablets back up on the mountain, and God put the Ten Commandments on them again. All this took place in chapters 32 through 34. Then we have just six chapters left.

Chapters 34 through 40, or 35 through 40, have the details of the tabernacle and its furniture again. Because now we're told how they actually built it. The first time we had those details was how they were told to build it.

Do it like this, do it like this, do it like this. Chapters 35 through 40, they did it like this, they did it like this, they did it like this. So you get all the same details again, with all the same tedium as the first time.

But in the final chapter, they erect the tabernacle, they dedicate it through a ceremony that God prescribes, and the glory of God in the form of a visible cloud, what the Jews call the Shekinah glory, comes and fills the tabernacle in such a mighty way that no one could enter the tabernacle. The presence of God was too heavy, too thick. Even the priests couldn't go into ministry until that dissipated.

But that is how the Book of Exodus ends. And then, of course, they camp there through the Book of Leviticus and through much of Numbers as well, but those are books we'll take at another time. So this is an outline of the Book of Exodus.

Now, I want to talk to you about the historical veracity of the Book of Exodus and the event of the Exodus. Because there are people who say that it never happened. For one thing, they say the Egyptian records don't record any evidence of it.

Egyptian history is fairly detailed, but Egyptologists can't find any record in Egyptian annals of a huge slave population being released and escaping from Egypt at any particular time that would correspond with the Exodus. It is also sometimes said that there's no archaeological evidence to support the idea that millions of Israelites lived in the land of Goshen, which is up in the Nile River Delta in the northern part of Egypt where the Bible says the Israelites lived. Nor, they say, is there any archaeological evidence of this huge group of people traveling through the Sinai Desert.

We don't find artifacts. We don't find their skeletons. We don't find evidence that these people were there.

And therefore, it is sometimes argued that there's no real historical support for this. Now, let me just suggest one thing. The Book of Exodus is a historical document, and we don't necessarily need multiple historical documents to know that something happened,

especially if we have one written essentially by participants in the events, something written by an eyewitness.

You know, sometimes people say, well, how come we don't have any more history than we do about the life of Jesus? If Jesus was so important, how come the Roman historians didn't write about him? How come the Greek historians didn't write about him? Well, there's a good reason for that. They didn't know about him. Jesus never really ministered outside his own country in his lifetime, and during his lifetime, very few people except his disciples had any inkling that he'd be important at all.

He was just a Jewish peasant rabbi walking around. Of course, he did some miracles, no question, but there were a lot of people who reportedly did miracles. I mean, the Romans over in Italy, why would they even be paying attention? They wouldn't even know he was there.

The Roman historians did know he had been there later because Christianity spread to Rome, and then later Roman historians, Suetonius and Tacitus, didn't make reference to Christ because they became aware of him through the Testament of Christians after his resurrection. But during his lifetime, who's going to report his story except, of course, people who followed him? And that's exactly what we have in the four Gospels. We have four historical documents from people who followed him.

How many do you need? We don't have that many documents from the time of Alexander the Great telling us what he did or any other major historical character. It's a very rare thing to have an eyewitness account about someone famous in our history that we can appeal to. But the Gospels are four historical accounts by people who were there.

But see, people, they'll discount the Gospels. Well, those are in the Bible. We can't believe those because those are in the Bible.

We need something secular. Why? Why would you assume that because something's in the Bible, it isn't trustworthy? That sounds to me like a prejudice that's totally gratuitous. There's no reason for anyone to say, well, just because it's in the Bible, it can't be trusted.

The real question is, is it written by somebody who was there, somebody who knew? Is it written especially, was it written by Moses in this case? The evidence is that it was. Furthermore, the alleged evidences against the historicity of the Exodus are feeble. The fact that the Egyptian records do not record the Exodus is not surprising.

Ancient pagan kings did not usually encourage the record of embarrassing defeats. The Exodus was a humiliation to the pharaohs. He lost his firstborn son.

His whole country was destroyed by plagues. He was shown to be less powerful than a foreign deity, the deity of the Israelites. This would be a humiliation to the pharaoh.

And frankly, you don't read very many accounts in the official histories of ancient kings about their humiliating defeats. Historians of their time are encouraged to write the things that make the kings look glorious and powerful, not the things that make them look stupid and impotent. And therefore, that there'd be no Egyptian records of this is not surprising in the least.

Although there are historical archaeological things that have been found that seem to at least give some support to the Exodus, nothing that really proves it, certainly not in the Egyptian records. But what about the fact that they haven't found archaeological evidence of the Jews being in Goshen or traveling through the Sinai Peninsula? I'd like to suggest to you that they didn't spend 40 years in the Sinai Peninsula. They spent 40 years in Midian, near Mount Sinai.

And that is a different place to be looking for stuff. Now, in fact, there have been some archaeological finds in Saudi Arabia where Mount Sinai probably was. There's even a mount that many people identify with Mount Sinai, which has at its foot many archaeological evidences of an encampment of 12 tribes.

There are like, there are symbols of 12 tribes carved on stones. There's Hebrew, as it were, graffiti found on stones there. There's quite a lot of things.

There's altars there at the foot. And this could well be evidence that was left by the Hebrews that year they spent there. But if people are looking for the evidence in the Sinai Peninsula, they might be looking where they weren't.

They would have had to cross the Sinai Peninsula to get to Midian. But there's every reason to believe that that is what happened. We don't know for sure.

But also, how about the evidence that the Israelites were in Goshen in Egypt? There has been found interesting evidence there. There's the capital city of the region of Goshen was called Avaris. And you can look that up on Google if you want to.

And you'll find that Avaris has been excavated. And some interesting things have been found there. They find that Asiatic people, not Egyptian people, were living there.

And there are 12 altars that have been excavated there, strangely enough. The 12 tribes of Israel are said to have lived there. And there's even a tomb, which many people believe is the tomb of Joseph.

Because the tomb actually has a statue in it of a ruler sitting down. His face has been bashed out with a hammer by someone at a later time. But his hairstyle and his clothing are still observable.

And he is in the 12th. There's like 12 buildings. And one of them is the one that has this statue.

It would appear that the other 11 have bones in them. The one with Joseph doesn't have any bones in it. By the way, the Bible says that Joseph's bones were taken out of Egypt and buried in Canaan when the Israelites fled.

So his bones wouldn't be found in Goshen. But the person who's depicted in this statue is actually wearing a coat of many colors, rather interestingly. If you look up Avaris, A-V-A-R-I-S, you'll find that it's in the middle of the land of Goshen.

And it appears to be a place where Hebrews lived at one time. And these 12 altars and this statue, which may be of Joseph, certainly could not be discounted as archaeological evidence that these stories are true. It may be that someone could get away with denying that these things prove the exodus.

But there's very few historical events you can actually prove beyond the shadow of a doubt from archaeology. You have the stories written in historical records, and then you find archaeological artifacts that seem to confirm them. We have the historical record in Exodus.

The artifacts do appear in some cases to confirm the story. I'm not saying it's been proven by this, but I'm saying that to say there's nothing been found is simply not accurate. Interesting and relevant artifacts have, in fact, been found.

Some reasons for believing the exodus really happened is this. The ancient Hebrews believed that this was the way their nation was founded. Now, they became a great power.

In the time of David, they were probably the most important power in the Middle East. They were a significant and respected nation in some times of their history. It's not very likely that people who are going to invent a false history of their founding are going to describe their founding as a bunch of slaves escaping and behaving rebelliously against God and coming under God's judgment and all having to be dying in the wilderness because they were so stupid.

I mean, it's sort of like believing that the apostles who wrote the Gospels were lying when they told about how the apostles were so stupid. I mean, they record their own flaws so thoroughly. This is not the stuff of fiction.

People often omit their flaws even when they're telling history, but when they make stuff up, they don't include their own stupidity like the writers of the Gospels do and like the Israelites do. If the Israelites invented this as their history and it's not true, what nation would invent a history that says we were founded by a bunch of slaves? It's not a dignified beginning. And especially if they say, well, and God is the one who started our nation, but we totally rebelled against him.

He had to wipe our whole first generation out because we were so rebellious. This is not

a dignified story of the beginning of a nation. This is a shameful story.

People who make up fictional legends about their ancestors and about their founding of their nation, they're not going to write stuff that's so embarrassing unless it's true. Now, we do know also that a lot of the brick buildings that were built in Egypt were built by foreign labor. The Egyptian records do show that.

And of course, the Israelites would be foreign labor. So, I mean, that doesn't prove anything, but it is historically accurate. Actually, one of the cities that Israel built, according to Exodus chapter one, was the city of Pithom, one of the treasure cities of Egypt.

Exodus one tells us they built Pithom and Ramses. Pithom has been excavated. And one thing that's interesting about it is that when the bricks of Pithom have been broken up, they find that the lower courses of bricks have finally cut straw in the mud.

The higher courses on the walls don't have straw, but they have grass plucked up by the roots in the bricks. And the higher courses still have nothing in them, just mud. Now, it's interesting.

This is what archaeologists have found, because the book of Exodus says that Pharaoh used to provide straw for the Israelites to put in their bricks. But when they started talking about independence, he got angry and says, I'm not going to provide the straw, but you have to make the same number of bricks. And the Bible actually says they went out and grabbed grass and pulled it up by the roots and used it.

And that's what you find in the bricks in the higher courses. And then, of course, they apparently weren't able to keep up with the tally of bricks, so they eventually just made bricks without straw or grass. But it's interesting that what has been excavated at Pithom supports what the Bible says on the subject.

And they were the brickmakers for the Egyptians at this time. I'm going to make a couple more points, and I'm going to give you a stretch break here. There is an Egyptian stela.

A stela is a stone that archaeologists find with writing on it. And there's an Egyptian stela from Pharaoh Meruptah, which dates from 1209 B.C. Now, 1209 B.C., in my opinion, is about 200 years after the Exodus, or maybe I should say more like 150 years after the Exodus. And in this stela that has been found, the Canaanites are asking the Pharaoh to send troops to help them against a group of invading Hebrew Israelites, invading them.

Now, this would have been around the time of Joshua or the judges. And therefore, we actually have a reference to the Israelites invading Canaan around that time from an archaeological find in the time of Pharaoh Merenptah. It's M-E-R-E-N-P-T.

I don't know how you do an N-P-T pronunciation. There's also another thing, and that is

I've mentioned to you that at an alternative site of Sinai, a place called Jabal al-Lawz, which is in Saudi Arabia, there is some archaeological evidence of an Israelite encampment there at the foot of the mountain, and some strong reasons to suspect it is Mount Sinai rather than the traditional mountains of Sinai. I've got more to cover, but I need to give you a break to stretch.

And so we're going to take five minutes. You can go get some coffee, water, go to the bathroom, stretch, say hello, and then come back, and we'll finish this up. I'm going to try not to go very late tonight.

I do want to discuss a couple of controversies, though. This is not the most important thing, but it's a matter of curiosity, and that is how long were the Israelites actually slaves in Egypt? Now, you might say 400 years. You might say 430 years.

And yet there's different ways of reckoning this period of time. I'd like you to look at Exodus chapter 12. Exodus 12, verse 40.

It says, Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was 430 years. And it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, on that very same day, it came to pass that the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. Now, it says the very same day, which almost makes it sound like it was 430 years to the day, not a day more or less, and that probably is what it means.

But where did that 430 years begin? Did it begin when Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt? Did it begin when Jacob and his sons went in there? Well, they weren't slaves exactly for a long time until after Joseph died. When did this sojourning in Egypt actually begin? Joseph went there ahead of his brothers, but even Abraham had gone into Egypt, and Sarah had been taken into captivity, more or less, into his heraldry. You might remember back in Genesis chapter 12.

There are some who believe that we should measure the 430 years from the entrance of Jacob and his sons into Egypt at the end of Genesis, and that the sojourning began then. And that means that they were slaves for most of 400 years. There's another school of thought.

At first, it might seem less likely to be true, but it actually has some interesting things in its favor, and that is that the sojourning of Israel in Egypt for 430 years is not a steady sojourning, that it began with Abraham going down to Egypt in Genesis 12 on the occasion when Sarah was taken into captivity. And, of course, they were back in Canaan a lot of that time, but they were in Canaan until Joseph was taken into captivity, but he was there for years before the rest of Israel came in. In other words, parts of Israel went into Egypt in captivity at various times, and some believe the 430 years is to be marked beginning at the first time Abraham and Sarah went down there.

Now, it seems counterintuitive to say so, because it says the sojourning of Israel in Egypt was 430 years, but it may simply mean that the time from the beginning of it to the end of it was 430 years, but that doesn't mean that every year they were in there the whole time. What's interesting is if you take the date when Abraham went into Egypt in Genesis 12, and take that up to the date that Jacob took his family into Egypt at the end of Genesis, it's exactly 215 years, half of 430. Abraham went into Canaan in chapter 12 of Genesis when he was 75 years old.

Jacob was born, well, let's put this way, Isaac was born 25 years later. Jacob was born 40 years after that, and Jacob was 130 years old when he went into Egypt at the end of Genesis. If you add up the totals, the lifetime of Abraham in Canaan up through the time that Jacob, his grandson, and his great-grandsons left was 215 years.

And some believe that it was only 215 years that the whole nation of Israel was actually in Egypt, so their captivity was not so much 400 years, but more like 200 years in captivity. It would still be the case that 430 years is the number of the whole time, but the time would not be necessarily speaking of the whole time that the nation lived consistently in an unbroken, uninterrupted way in Egypt. One of the things that's favorable toward this is that God told Abraham that his children were going to Egypt into captivity, he said this in the 15th chapter of Genesis, and he said they'll come back after four generations.

Likewise, Moses and Aaron, who led the children into the Exodus, were four generations removed from Levi, one of the sons of Jacob, who went with his family into Egypt when Jacob did. Now, 430 years is an awful long time to span four generations. In fact, there aren't really any indications in the Bible that a generation in the Bible would be 100 and more years.

And so some feel it was more like 215 years that they were actually as a nation, or as a family in their entirety in Egypt. Now, why this would have any importance is it would help us to fix the date of the Exodus and of other events around it. There are two opinions about when the Exodus took place, and one of them has been used to discredit the Exodus.

The liberal scholars who have said that Moses probably didn't even exist and the Exodus never happened, ironically say, but when it did, it was the 13th century BC. Now, it's interesting that they would insist that this happened in the 13th century BC when they insist it never happened at all. But for some reason, they place the Exodus in the 13th century BC, specifically in the year 1270 BC.

And one reason they do so, perhaps the main reason they do so, is because the Israelites built a city that was called Rameses. It is assumed that this city was named after the pharaoh Rameses II, and he did not live until the 13th century BC, which means the city would not have been built and named after him before his lifetime, so the Exodus would

not have happened any earlier than that. That it had to be sometime in the 13th century rather than earlier, because Rameses lived in the 13th century, and the city that they built as slaves was named after him.

Of course, there are some who feel like the name Rameses is the name that was later given to the city, that it wasn't called that when they built it, but it was later named after him in the 13th century BC, that they may have built it centuries earlier. Many men have changed the names of cities after themselves. For example, the name Caesarea Philippi in Israel is a city that has had three or four different names in its history, depending on which ruler wanted to name it after himself.

And so the city of Rameses might not have been called that when Israel built it. It might be known as that later because Rameses named it after himself, and the Israelites may well have built it earlier. The evidence seems to be that the Exodus took place in the 15th century BC.

Now remember when we're talking about BC, the 15th century is 200 years earlier than the 13th century. So many people believe that it was in the middle of the 1400s BC that the Exodus took place, and I think this is probably the right date. And when you actually go looking for archaeological support for the Exodus, you don't find any in the 13th century BC, but there is some reason to find it, as I said, in the city of Avaris in the 15th century BC.

So by looking in the strata from the wrong century, scholars often don't find support for the Exodus. But looking in the wrong century is not where you're going to find the evidence. Now I believe there's evidence in the Bible that the Exodus took place in the year 1446 BC.

For one thing, in 1 Kings 6 and verse 1, Solomon said that the fourth year of his kingdom, when he built the temple, it had been 480 years since the Exodus. 1 Kings 6.1 said it had been 480 years from the Exodus to the building of the temple, which was the fourth year of Solomon. Now I'm not going to do all the math right now, but technically if you go back 480 years from the fourth year of Solomon, you get back to about 1445 or 46 BC.

In addition to that, in the book of Judges, Jephthah, who lived around 1100 BC, claimed that Israel had inhabited the land for 300 years in Judges 11 and verse 26. Judges 11.26, Jephthah said that the land of Canaan had been occupied by Israel for 300 years. He might have been rounding it off or it might have been exact, but he was speaking around 1100 BC, 300 years before that being the 1400s BC.

We also know that from the invasion of Canaan, which was 40 years after the Exodus, to David was only five generations according to the book of Ruth. Ruth 4 verses 21 through 22 says it was five generations from the invasion of Canaan to David. Now David reigned around 1000 BC.

Five generations would probably be more than 200 years judging from the age of life at that time, and many people feel that that also points to the invasion of Canaan, which was 40 years after the Exodus, taking place earlier than the traditional date. Also, there's archaeologists found what they call the Armana letters, which were written by Canaanite chieftains requesting from a Pharaoh aid against foreign invaders, foreign raiders who may have been the Israelites. Now, these letters were written to Pharaoh Akhenaten, who was from 1352 to 1336.

He was the Pharaoh in Egypt. Now, he was in the 14th century BC. He received letters from Canaanites asking his assistance against the invading armies of probably the Israelites, which means Israel invaded in the 14th century BC and probably came out of Egypt in the 15th century BC.

In any case, the evidence in general points to around 1446 as the date of the Exodus, although many scholars for some reason have assumed based on the name of the city of Rameses, being named after Rameses, that it was like 200 years after that. The reason I say that's important is because it's important for archaeology. It's important for looking for the details of where the Israelites in Egypt, when were they there, and you can find evidence of that in the 15th century BC, but not in the 13th century BC, and that's why many scholars have said there's no archaeological evidence because they're looking, frankly, in the wrong century.

Now, another controversy has to do with the geography of the Exodus. I already made a reference to this. If you look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula, in the back of your Bibles, almost always if you have maps in the back of your Bibles, they're going to show the route of the Exodus in one of those maps, and they're going to show the Israelites leaving from the land of Goshen across some body of water near the top of the Gulf of Suez into the Sinai Peninsula.

They're going to show Mount Sinai as being in that peninsula, and if they show wanderings, they're going to show them wandering around in that peninsula for 38 years. As I said, there is some dispute as to whether Mount Sinai is in that peninsula at all, and it seems very unlikely that Moses, living in Midian as he did, would be tending his sheep in the Sinai Peninsula, which would be hundreds of miles. You don't usually take a flock of sheep hundreds of miles to graze them, and he would have had to cross the Gulf of Aqaba to do so.

It's hard to take sheep across a body of water as well, unless he went the really long way around the north of the Gulf of Aqaba, which would make it even hundreds of miles further. The likelihood that Moses, working for his father-in-law in Midian, tending his sheep, would have gone out of the country into Egyptian territory to graze his sheep and there encounter Mount Sinai is not at all likely, it seems to me and to many others. Also, as I said, if you look at Galatians chapter 4, verse 25, Paul said, For this Hagar is Mount

Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is.

I won't go into Paul's particular argument here. The interesting thing is he said that Mount Sinai is in Arabia. Now Arabia in Paul's day was what we call Saudi Arabia today, and what was called Midian in Moses' day.

It was not in the Sinai Peninsula. So according to Paul, and frankly common sense, Mount Sinai was in Midian, which is where Moses lived and where he tended his sheep, and where he'd likely encounter the burning bush anyway, at Mount Sinai, Mount Horeb. Now no one knows exactly what mountain it is, but as I said, there is a location that has some interesting archaeological artifacts that have been found there, and that place is an Arabian mountain called Jabal al-Lawz, and there's probably a growing number of scholars who believe this might be the true Mount Sinai, and all the three different traditional sites, which are all in the Sinaitic Peninsula, are probably mistaken.

And what that would mean then, of course, is that when Israel came out of Egypt, they crossed probably the northern part or the middle part of the Sinai Peninsula, and the water they crossed was probably the Gulf of Aqaba, which is on the east of the Sinai Peninsula and separates it from Midian or Saudi Arabia. Now in crossing that body of water, we don't know very much about what place they crossed it, but there is some discoveries that are rather interesting, in that there is a point where there's a shallow land bridge under the water across the Gulf of Aqaba, separating the Sinai Peninsula from Saudi Arabia. There have been people who've gone down scuba diving and photographed, they photographed what they believe are chariot wheels at the bottom.

There's this wide, I don't know what it is, coral reef or something like that under the water, which if the waters would receive somewhat, would provide a land bridge for people to go across. On the Egyptian side of that bridge is a wide open space where lots of people could congregate on the shore, in an otherwise very mountainous region. It's across this land bridge and not far from it that Jabal al-Lawz, which is thought perhaps to be the true Mount Sinai, is found.

I only tell you this because it's what a growing number of scholars have discovered. There are some movies, documentaries that have been made about this. If you're interested in it, I would just go on Google, you know, the real Mount Sinai or something like that, and you'll find educational videos about it.

Also, with reference to some of the historical information I've given you, you can find a good documentary on video called Exodus, the Patterns of Evidence. This was a movie that was in theaters not too long ago. It's a very, it's a scholarly documentary and incredible, and it covers some of the material I've been giving you too.

The main thing is that as you look in the back of your Bible at the maps, it's going to show Mount Sinai in a certain place and the wanderings of the Israelites in a certain

place, and it may be that that's not where they were at all. If they crossed the Gulf of Aqaba in Ptumidion before they came to Mount Sinai, then their wilderness wandering would have been on the other side of Aqaba in Saudi Arabia rather than in the Sinai Peninsula. This has very little importance to us except for people who care about historical accuracy, you know, and I do, and that's why I go to the trouble of mentioning it.

I want to skip down to the bottom of the notes and talk about fulfillment in the New Testament because that's really where Exodus becomes relevant to us. At the beginning of our lecture, I mentioned that the New Testament makes quite a use of material in Exodus. I want to just point out to you some of the ways that it does so.

Three elements in the book of Exodus are particularly the focus of much New Testament discussion. One is the Exodus itself. A second is Passover, and a third is the tabernacle.

And these, frankly, these three elements combined make up the majority of what's in Exodus. And the New Testament makes a lot of use of them. Now, Isaiah chapter 11 is a prophecy about the Messianic age, the age the Messiah would bring.

And I don't know how many of my lectures you've heard that are related to that subject, but there's some controversy in the church today as to the Messianic age. Is it now or is it in a future millennium? Christians believe that the Messianic age the prophet spoke of either began at the first coming of Christ or will begin at the second coming of Christ. Historically, the church generally believed the first coming of Christ initiated the Messianic age, and we are living in the age of the Messiah, meaning the age that the Messiah is reigning.

The New Testament says that Jesus, when he ascended, sat down at the right hand of God. He's sitting on the throne. He's reigning, and he must reign until he's put all his enemies under his feet.

So, historically, the church taught that the kingdom of the Messiah began when Jesus ascended and sat on the right hand of God and is continuing to progress through the mission of the church to this day. A more modern view is that Jesus did not establish his reign at the time of his first coming, but it was postponed. And when he comes back, he's going to establish his reign, and that'll be the future millennial kingdom.

Now, the reason I point this out is because the passages like Isaiah 11, of which there are very many in the Old Testament prophets and the Psalms, describe the age of the Messiah in very poetic language. It's not literal. Lots of poetry, a lot of imagery.

But it describes a time of peace. It describes a time of righteousness. A time of liberty for God's people under the Messiah.

And depending on how one views the Messianic age, this either is describing the age

that Jesus inaugurated at his first coming, in which we're now living, or an age that will come when Jesus returns and be the millennial kingdom. And all of these passages of this sort, as I said, there are many of them in the Old Testament, are applied by one school of thought either to the present age, or by another school of thought to the millennial kingdom in the future. Now, I take the first view.

I take the view the church took through most of history. And that is that Jesus is reigning, that he is at the right hand of God. As he has said, he is seated with his father on his throne, and he is going to reign until he's put all his enemies under his feet, the Bible says.

And therefore, he is the king, and the Messianic age was inaugurated when he was here. There's no reference anywhere in the Bible to it being postponed. Jesus announced it was coming when he said, the kingdom of God is at hand, and he never made any reference to it being postponed, nor did any other biblical writer.

So, if we take Jesus pretty much at his word, he did come and inaugurated the Messianic age the prophets spoke about. And we read about this in Isaiah 11, 1. There shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. This is a reference to Christ.

Is that his first coming or his second coming? Well, he grows out of Jesse's roots. When Jesus comes back, is he going to grow out of Jesse's roots? I don't think so. I think he's going to come from heaven.

He came out of Jesse's roots when he came the first time. He was born from the lineage of Jesse. Jesse was David's father, and Jesus descended from David.

So, this is talking about the birth of Jesus, not talking about the second coming of Jesus. It says, the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Well, that's what Jesus said in the synagogue of Nazareth, isn't it? He said, the spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, and so forth.

I personally believe that this is a reference to Christ's coming and establishing his kingdom at this present time. But the imagery gets very poetic, and I don't have time to go through the whole chapter because it's not our subject tonight. But I want to point out that it does talk about God saving his people, and he describes it in terms of the Exodus.

In this chapter, verses 15 and 16, it says, the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt. With his mighty wind, he will shake his fist over the river and strike it in the seven streams and make men cross over dry shod. Clearly a reference to something like the Exodus where God parted the Red Sea, and the Bible specifically says they crossed

the sea on dry land.

There will be a highway for the remnant of his people who will be left from Assyria as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. The day that Israel came up from the land of Egypt, what day was that? That was the Exodus. It's likening the Messianic Age and the salvation of the Messianic Age with the Exodus.

It'll be like the Exodus, only different, because it's spiritual. Now frankly, whether you see the Messianic Kingdom as present now or in the future millennium, no one's going to take seriously that the kingdom of the Messiah is going to begin with people walking across dry shod, some body of water. In fact, even the passage changes imagery from being the sea to being a river.

The point is that there's language reminiscent of the Exodus given to describe the Messiah's salvation, the salvation brought by the Messiah, which I believe is the salvation we experience, and that's how the New Testament treats the subject. But also, Jeremiah does so. Jeremiah chapter 23, verses 5 through 7, says, Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise up to David a branch of righteousness.

All Christians recognize this as a reference to Christ. Again, it's his first coming. He's a branch being raised up, like the root of Jesse.

A king shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In his days, Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell safely. The true Israel, the true remnant.

Now this is his name by which he's called the Lord, our righteousness. Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that they will no longer say, as the Lord lives, who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt. But, as the Lord lives, who brought us up, up the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from the countries where they had been driven.

Now he's saying there's going to be a salvation through the Messiah that eclipses that of the Exodus. So much so that instead of, as the Jews had done, celebrating on Passover, blessed be the Lord who brought us out of Egypt. So now that's going to be eclipsed by a new salvation.

God gathering people, his people, from all lands, which I believe is what is happening through the evangelization of the world. The Great Commission is gathering God's people from all lands. It's interesting that Jesus sat with his disciples in the upper room where they're celebrating the Exodus on Passover evening.

He said, from now on, when you eat this bread, you're not remembering the Exodus, you're remembering me. You're remembering this is the blood that I'm shedding for the remission of your sins. This is my body that's broken for you.

In other words, the Passover's significance has changed from commemorating the salvation of the Jews from Egypt to commemorating the salvation Jesus brought by his shed blood and his broken body. That's the salvation. We no longer say, blessed be the Lord God who brought us up out of Egypt.

We're praising God for a much more global messianic salvation, which has to do with the salvation from our sins. That's how the New Testament understands these Old Testament passages. Many times, I think people make mistakes by not applying the New Testament's explanation to these Old Testament passages.

They read the passages in the Old Testament, they don't understand the symbolic language. They think, well, I guess this is going to happen literally, and they say, well, that didn't happen, so it must be in the future. But in fact, the New Testament applies these images to what Christ has done.

The fulfillment that is the antitype of the Exodus is the salvation that Christ has brought through his shed blood and his broken body. I mentioned earlier that Luke 9.31 says that Moses and Elijah spoke to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration about the Exodus that Jesus was going to accomplish. There's two exoduses, one that Moses accomplished, and one that Moses talked to Jesus about that Jesus was going to accomplish.

And that was at the cross. He said he was going to accomplish it in Jerusalem. That's where Jesus was crucified.

And so the crucifixion of Jesus was the accomplishing of the second Exodus that the prophets had predicted, that eclipses in importance the first one. In 1 Corinthians 10, I told you earlier, Paul goes through in verses 1 through 6. He recounts the Exodus, the eating of the manna, the drinking of the water from the rock. These things are all summarized by Paul.

He says these things were all a type of us. That is the Exodus Israel had, and being fed by bread from heaven and drinking spiritual drink from God, that's us. We've been saved.

We've passed through the waters of baptism. We're led by the Spirit like the cloud led them. We eat of Christ.

We drink of the Holy Spirit. This is, Paul says, all these happened to them as a type of us, not a type of something that's going to happen when Jesus comes back, but of what's happened with us already, and as people who are saved through the Messiah. The Messianic age, which is like the second Exodus, is now according to the New Testament.

In Revelation 15, 3, it's interesting. John sees a group of people, and they're singing what he calls the Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb. They're singing a song of redemption, and it's called the Song of Moses.

Now, when the Israelites came out of Egypt in Exodus 15, they sang what was called the Song of Moses, celebrating their deliverance from Egypt. But in heaven, those who are saved by Christ are singing a song that corresponds to the Song of Moses, only it's the Song of the Lamb. It's the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.

It incorporates the earlier salvation that was celebrated by the Israelites into the fuller salvation that the Lamb has brought, and the celebration of that salvation is suggested in this Song of Moses and of the Lamb. What I'm saying is, in the New Testament, again and again, the Exodus and its subsequent benefits to the Israelites are seen as a type and a shadow of our lives as Christians and our salvation from sin through Christ, through what he accomplished. So that's how the New Testament deals with the Exodus.

As far as the Passover is concerned, I already mentioned that Jesus had the Passover that he had with the disciples. In Luke chapter 22, verses 13 through 20, he came to them and he said, With great desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. And then he went through the regular ritual of the Passover, and it's very elaborate.

But at a certain point, when they would normally take the cup and the bread to remember what God had done for them and bring them out of Egypt, that's when he said, Whenever you eat this bread or drink this cup, do it in remembrance of me. Not remembrance of Moses, not remembrance of the deliverance out of Egypt. Now you're going to remember me and what I've done for you.

This cup is my blood that was shed for you. This cup is my body that was broken for you. From now on, you do this to remember me.

The Passover celebration, which frankly, Jewish people who reject Christ still are celebrating in the old fashioned way. Christ transformed it and said, From now on, you take this bread and you drink this cup to remember the salvation that I have provided, which now, of course, eclipses the salvation that was the foundation of the nation of Israel in the Exodus. There's now the foundation of the new Israel church through Christ's blood, through Christ's body, and through a second Exodus, as it were.

Now, I've mentioned the tabernacle had symbolic value as well. Most of what we know about that comes from Hebrews. I'd like you to look at Hebrews briefly and then we're going to be done.

Hebrews chapter 8, verses 1 and 2 says, Now this is the main point of the things we are saying. We have such a high priest who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord erected and not man. Now, Moses erected a tabernacle in the wilderness, but he was a man.

The writer of Hebrews says, well, there's another tabernacle, which God erected, not man. It actually corresponded very closely with the one that Moses erected because Moses was told to build the tabernacle in all points as he was shown a pattern of it on Mount Sinai. When he was up there with God on Mount Sinai, God showed him a pattern of the tabernacle.

And God said, make sure you build the one you build just like the one I'm just showing you. You can see that, of course, in chapter 8, as you look at verse 5. It says that the tabernacle. Says serve as a copy and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle.

For he said, see that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain. Actually, God said that to Moses several times in Exodus. And the writer of Hebrews says, you know, God was insistent that Moses must build the tabernacle in his furniture just so.

Just exactly according to a pattern, the blueprint that God is showing on the mountain. Actually, not the blueprint so much. I think that Moses actually saw a heavenly tabernacle.

After which was patterned the earthly tabernacle. And the writer of Hebrews says, why do you suppose God said build it according to the pattern? Why did God keep saying that? He says because the tabernacle Moses built was an earthly pattern of heavenly truths, heavenly things. There are heavenly truths about salvation that are symbolically depicted in the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture and of the rituals associated with it.

We'll say more about that in a moment. The writer of Hebrews almost goes into it in chapter 9. And I find the opening verses of Rome of Hebrews 9 very frustrating. And you'll see why in a moment.

Let me read you the first few verses. He was 9 1. Then, indeed, even the first covenant had ordinance of divine service and an earthly sanctuary. The word sanctuary means a holy place.

He means the tabernacle. For a tabernacle was prepared. The first part in which was the lampstand, the table of showbread, which is called the sanctuary or the holy place.

And behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all, or which we might call the holy of holies. Which had the golden sensor, the ark of the covenant, overlaid on all sides with gold in which were the golden pot that had manna, Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant. And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.

Now, he's just summarized the layout and the architecture of the tabernacle and his

furniture. And then he says one of the most frustrating lines in scripture. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

Well, God certainly spoke in detail in Exodus. It'd be nice if some New Testament writer would take the time to speak in detail about what these things mean. Because he says they mean something.

They correspond to heavenly truths, heavenly realities. It's so important that we know these heavenly realities that Moses was not permitted to alter anything so that these heavenly realities would not be altered. And yet the writer says, you know, I could go into this.

I just wish I had more time. Yeah, I wish he did, too. We can't go into these right now.

Well, where are you going to? He never does. He does go into one thing in detail in chapter nine and ten. And that is the ritual of the day of atonement.

And perhaps that's the main thing about the tabernacle. Now, the tabernacle is in use every day. The priests and the Levites were ministering at the tabernacle every day.

Sacrifices were offered every morning and every night routinely. And then there were additional occasional sacrifices for special occasions or which Israelites would bring to bring for their own sins or whatever reasons they brought their sacrifices. More about that in Leviticus chapters one through seven.

But the point is, the tabernacle is basically a slaughterhouse where animals were slaughtered and parts of their carcass were burned on an altar as an offering to God. Parts of their bodies were eaten by the priest. Parts were eaten by the worshippers.

Some unclean parts like their intestines with the. The newer in them is stuff where they're taken outside the camp and burned in an unclean place. There was all this ritual associated.

But what went on day in and day out of the tabernacle was the offering of sacrifices by priests. But the day of atonement was one day a year. And that was the day when the tabernacle was the most significant.

It was the high day of the year for Israel's religion. That was the only day when the high priest and only he could go into the holy of holies. And there was an elaborate set of rituals that took up most of the day.

Several sacrifices were made. Different things were done with the blood. There was a scapegoat that was let off in the wilderness.

A whole bunch of different things happened on the day of atonement. Yom Kippur, as it was called and still is called by the Jews. Yom Kippur was the time when once a year the

high priest made intercession in the very presence of God in the holy of holies for the nation to kind of cover their national sins for another year.

Now, this was not dealing with the individual sins of all the Jewish people. They had to take care of that between themselves and God during the year. When they sinned, they had to bring their own sacrifices.

But the nation as a whole stood vulnerable to being judged, even destroyed by God, if the national sins were not atoned for. And so once a year, God had this ritual where the high priest representing the people would go into the holy of holies, the very presence of God. No one ever went in there any other day, even him.

And there he did some rituals and so forth that led to the declaration that the sins of Israel had been covered. Again, the national sins so the nation didn't have to be worried about being destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah or something like that for their sins. And this was an extremely important day in their calendar.

And the writer of Hebrews goes into that in some detail in chapters 9 and 10. Now, let me just tell you very briefly what the rituals at the tabernacle were so we can give some idea of what they represent in terms of spiritual truth. The tabernacle was constructed in this manner.

There was an open air courtyard surrounded by curtains, high curtains, over seven feet tall, held up by posts at various intervals. These curtains simply were like an enclosure without a roof that enclosed a large area. I believe it was 150 feet by 75 feet rectangular.

And there was an opening at the east end only, a gateway into the courtyard, as it was called. And as one would enter the courtyard, you would encounter, first of all, a big altar. It was made of wood overlaid with bronze, designed a certain way that's described in Exodus in great detail.

This was the altar on which animals were sacrificed. A priest would do this for you. You would bring your animal if you had sinned, and you'd give it to the priest, and he'd slit the throat, drain the blood, and lay his hands on it and do the things that had to be done, then burn it on the altar, the parts that had to be burned.

This was the altar of sacrifice where the blood atonement was to be made. As you went from the altar further into the courtyard, you'd encounter a large bowl of water. They called it the laver of cleansing.

It's basically a basin for washing. It had an upper basin and a lower basin, and the priest, not the individual worshiper, but the priest on behalf of the worshiper, after he offered the animal sacrifice, he'd go wash his hands and his feet at the laver. Now, as he went beyond the laver, there was a building.

Remember, the courtyard was open air, no covering, but there was a covered building in it. This building was 15 feet wide and 45 feet deep. It was called the tabernacle.

It was called the sanctuary. The word sanctuary means holy place. This building was divided into two compartments.

Its entrance was on the east side, which is the side you came into the enclosure in the first place. You enter the courtyard from the east. You encounter the altar where the animals are sacrificed.

You encounter the laver of cleansing where the washing is done, and then there is the entrance to this building. It's 15 feet wide and goes 45 feet deep. If you would enter that building, but only priests were allowed to, but if you went into the building, you'd be in a room initially that was 15 by 30 feet.

The first 30 feet of depth of the building were the first compartment, which is called the holy place. Beyond that, separated from the other part, which is 15 more feet deep, you'd have a cube shape, 15 feet tall, 15 feet wide, 50 feet deep, separated from the rest of the building by a curtain, a veil, as it was called. Behind this curtain was where the Ark of the Covenant was.

That was the Holy of Holies. That's the place where only the high priest could go once a year. In front of the veil, to the east of the veil, inside the building, was the larger part of the building, 15 feet wide by 30 feet deep.

The last 15 feet of depth was the Holy of Holies, but it was separated by a curtain. As you'd walk into this building, or the priest would walk into the building, on his right would be a table that had 12 loaves of bread on it. On his left would be a menorah, a lamp stand, oil lamps that had seven branches.

Right in front of him would be a little wooden altar covered with gold, where incense was offered. Not animals, but incense. Just beyond that incense altar was the veil, beyond which was the Holy of Holies with the Ark of the Covenant in it.

This is how it was laid out. Now, this was how you would approach God. You would come into his gates, and you would come to the altar to offer a blood sacrifice for your sins.

The priest then, on your behalf, would go into the tabernacle and burn incense in there. Every day, incense was burned in the tabernacle. It was only once a year that they went beyond the holy place into the Holiest of Holies.

That's where he did special rituals on the mercy seat, which was the gold slab on the top of the Ark of the Covenant. That was a once a year thing. Going into the holy place where the incense was burned was something that was done every day.

This represented how man approaches God. From a New Testament perspective, we can see what this would correspond to. When we approach God, we have to come on the basis of a blood atonement.

The first thing they encounter is the altar where the animals are slain. We come to the cross. Jesus was slain as our sacrifice.

He is the lamb that was slain in our place. Coming to the altar is like coming to the cross, coming and receiving forgiveness of sins. The labor of cleansing is then like baptism.

Just before the priest enters into the building, he has to be washed. In the early church, baptism was seen as the ritual of entrance into the body of Christ, into the household of God, into the church. You'd come to Christ to receive blood atonement.

You'd go to the waters of baptism to be cleansed, and the labor of cleansing was like that. Then you enter into God's house. The Bible says many times that the body of Christ is God's house.

In fact, the book of Hebrews says that. Hebrews 3 says that Christ is the builder of his own house, whose house we are. But Paul also said to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3.15, If I'm delayed, I want you to know how to behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

The house of God is the church. Peter said in 1 Peter 2.5 that we are like living stones being built up into a spiritual house, a holy temple. Paul said in Ephesians 2.22 that we are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, in whom the whole building grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

We're the components built into a spiritual temple. We are the living stones. It's a spiritual temple.

It's not a physical building made with hands. But the point here is the church, the body of Christ, not the building we're standing in, but the people who belong to Christ are his house. The habitation of God through the spirit, the temple of the Holy Spirit is the body of Christ, the people of God.

Now we enter the people of God through going through the cross and through baptism into there. And there we worship God and the incense offered in that place is likened to prayer and worship. In both the Old and the New Testament, David said in one of the Psalms, let my prayer arise to you like incense.

And in Revelation 5.8 and again in Revelation 8.3, we see incense being offered up in heaven and it says it's with the prayers of the saints or in one case says it is the prayers of the saints. Incense represents our worship to God. So we get saved, we get baptized, we come into the body of Christ and in the context of the fellowship of the saints, we

offer up our corporate praise to God.

Now we never go into the Holy of Holies, at least the average Jew did not, but we do. But the Jew could not, only the high priest could go in there. Now it says in Hebrews 9 that Jesus upon his ascension into heaven entered into the holiest of all, not made with hands, not on earth, but in heaven.

The Holy of Holies represents the presence of God itself in heaven. And the high priest alone could go in there and Jesus alone is the high priest. And what the writer of Hebrews tells us is that when Jesus ascended into heaven, it was like the high priest disappearing behind the veil into the Holy of Holies.

He hasn't been seen since. But on the day of atonement, Yom Kippur, the people waited with bated breath for the priest to come out alive because they believed that if he had sinned, he wouldn't get out alive. You can't go into the immediate presence of God with undealt with sin.

And they actually, according to Talmud, they actually tied a rope around the priest's leg and left the end of the rope outside the veil while he went inside. Because if he would drop dead, they couldn't go in after him. No one could go in there but him.

They just dragged his body out. Now we don't ever read that this ever happened, but they apparently were prepared for that contingency. Now, Jesus disappeared behind the clouds, behind the veil into the Holy of Holies, the writer of Hebrews says.

And says we're still waiting for him to come out. We have no doubt that he will. We're not afraid.

We don't need a rope around his leg to pull him out in case he sinned. We know he didn't sin. The Bible, it says in the same book, Hebrews, he was tempted in all ways like we are, yet without sin.

We know that he's made an acceptable sacrifice. And it says that in Hebrews, he didn't offer the blood of bulls and goats like the high priest did on the day of atonement. He offered his own blood on the altar.

But the absence of Christ since his ascension until his return is compared with the period of time the priest was in the Holy of Holies. And people awaited his return. And at the end of chapter 9 of Hebrews, it tells us we're waiting for him to appear again at his second coming.

But because we are in Christ, Christ going in beyond the veil has made a way for us to go in. In fact, when Jesus died on the cross and said it is finished, we're told that the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. That's the veil that separated the holy place from the Holy of Holies.

It was symbolic of the fact that God had now made access to himself for all his people. And not only the high priest could enter into God's presence. And in Hebrews chapter 10, we have this final exhortation based on all of this.

Verse 19, it says, Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest of all, being the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he consecrated for us through the veil. That is his flesh and having a high priest over the house of God. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

The heart sprinkled is the blood at the altar. Our bodies washed with pure waters like the laver of cleansing. He says we can now enter in beyond the veil into the holiest of all.

That is, we have the privilege through the blood of Christ to come into the immediate presence of God. As it were, heaven, as it were, the Holy of Holies, we can come before God ourselves. We don't need to stay outside and let someone go in for us.

Now, Christ has gone in for us, but the Bible says he's the forerunner. He just went in ahead of us. And it says in this verse I just read that he consecrated a new and living way for us to go beyond the veil.

By going through the veil, the veil was torn and the way is made open to all who are in Christ to go on his merits there. Therefore, in Hebrews chapter two or maybe I'm maybe I'm thinking of chapter four. Yeah.

Hebrews 4:14 is a scene, then that we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens. Jesus, the son of God, let us hold fast our confession, for we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was at all points tempted as we are yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace.

That we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. As we come boldly to the throne of grace. In my opinion, throne of grace corresponds with the mercy seat.

The mercy seat was on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. It's the seat where mercy is found. The writer of Hebrews calls it the throne of grace.

He says we come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need. But he says, because Christ, our high priest has gone in, we go boldly in there, too. Now, no Jew would ever go boldly into the Holy of Holies.

Even the high priest couldn't go boldly. He wasn't sure he's going to get out alive. But because of Christ opening the way into the presence of God himself so that we can go directly into the presence of God.

This is done, of course, through prayer and through fellowship and through our. He's not

talking about going to heaven when we die. That's not what he's talking about here.

He's talking about we can now come boldly to God to receive grace, to receive help. You know, these are things we need day by day. We can access God directly.

Whereas under the old tabernacle, which is only a pattern and a figure of the true. Under that system, they could only have a representative going for them. And they weren't so sure he was going to make it.

Now, let me just show you another passage and then we'll be done. And that's in John. Chapter 16.

He says in verse 23. Jesus is in the upper room. He's talking to his disciples just before his betrayal.

In John 16, 23 says, and in that day you will ask me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now, you have asked nothing in my name.

Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. Now, notice this. You're not going to be asking me.

You're going to be asking my father. Until now, you've asked me for things, but you've never gone to the father to ask in my name. What's it mean in my name? It means on Christ's merits, on the merits and virtues of Christ.

We can come before God as if we were Jesus himself. That God will accept us as much as if we were Jesus because his merits are given to us in him. And in a few verses later, verse 26, John 16, 26.

Jesus said, and in that day, you will ask in my name. He means, of course, you'll ask the father in my name, as he said earlier. And I do not say to you that I shall pray the father for you.

For the father himself loves you because you have loved me and I believe that I came forth from God. Notice, Jesus said, you're going to go talk to him yourself. I'm not going to go talk to him for you.

He loves you. The Jews needed a high priest to go in instead of them. The high priest went into the Holy of Holies in the presence of God to intercede for them instead of them.

Jesus goes, not instead of us, but ahead of us. He goes and makes the way open for us to come to. He said, I'm not going to ask.

I'm not going to pray on your behalf. You pray yourself. I'm not going to ask the father.

You ask him. He'll listen to you now because of my merits. Remember, Jesus said in John 14, 6, I am the way, the truth, and life.

No man comes to the father, but by me. We usually quote that as if it's about going to heaven. Well, I suppose it's applicable to going to heaven, but Jesus didn't say anything about going to heaven.

He talked about coming to the father. What Jesus came to do was to restore us to the father. Sinful man has not been able to approach God.

The tabernacle ritual was designed in order to get that across. God is inside this little cube here, the Holy of Holies. No one goes in there except one guy.

Thoroughly bathed, thoroughly sprinkled with blood, thoroughly qualified, and only once a year. And even then he's taken a chance. Because sinful man cannot just go strutting into the presence of God.

It's amazing how many people think they can just come to God on whatever terms they want to. They don't serve Christ. They don't worship God, but they just think on the day of judgment, they're going to just be able to walk in there and say, hey, God, remember me? You're the man upstairs, right? I remember I used to talk about you once in a while.

You don't just kind of strut into God's presence. If the tabernacle taught anything, it was that sinful man doesn't get into the presence of God easy. There's this elaborate ritual.

Every dot, every I had to be dotted, every T had to be crossed properly. And even then, you couldn't go directly into the Holy of Holies. Only someone had to go for you.

But that was all foreshadowing a better tabernacle, a better covenant, a better arrangement. Where Christ, a better high priest with better sacrifices, his own blood, goes in and he strips down that veil and says, OK, the way is open, guys. Come on in.

He says, I'm not going to pray for you. Come in and pray. You're welcome in here, too.

The Father loves you, too, because you've believed that he sent me, he said. And so this is what the tabernacle kind of portrayed. It portrayed something, almost a contrast.

It was a contrast. It was a contrast between. The time before Christ and the time after Christ, the time before Christ.

It was hard to get into the presence of God. After Christ, because of Christ, it's no longer hard. And I might just say I always say I'm only a real reverse and then I read more.

What am I supposed to do? There's so many verses in the Bible. What are you going to do? Ignore them? What's interesting is that it says that Jesus. Well, this this detail about how hard it was to get into the Holy of Holies, it says.

In verse nine, Hebrews nine, nine, talk about the tabernacle ritual on the Yom Kippur. He says it was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot make him who perform the service perfect in regard to the conscience concerned only with foods and drinks and the sacrifice of the body. Various washings and so forth.

Also, verse I should read verse eight. Actually, I should read from verse six on. Pardon me.

There's so much here. Verse six is now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle performing the services, but into the second part, meaning the Holy of Holies. The high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and the people.

It says, verse eight, the Holy Spirit was thus indicating that the way into the holiest of all or the Holy of Holies was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing. Now, the point he's making here is while the tabernacle was standing, it was access to the Holy place was exclusive in order to show that God had not yet made a general access to himself available to man. While the first tabernacle was standing, the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest.

And this exclusiveness that allowed only one day a year for this one man to go in, he says that was symbolic. That was God's. That was the Holy Spirit telling us that until Jesus came the way into the.

Immediate presence of God was simply not available to man, not like it is now. But now that it is, we have no excuse for not coming boldly before the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need. We have no excuse not to talk to God, not to make our requests known to him because he receives us into his presence.

And that's what Jesus came to do, too, that men might come to the father through him. A lot of times people have replaced God with Jesus because they feel like God's angry and Jesus is on our side. They pray to Jesus, although Jesus said in that day, you won't ask me anything.

You ask my father in my name. But people pray to Jesus of me because they feel more comfortable with Jesus. Many times people think God was the angry one and Jesus was the one on our side.

So Jesus kind of got in between God and us and say, hey, God, please cool your jets here. I'll go down and do something so you don't have to get angry at these people as if Jesus was the nice one and God was the mean one. She said, no, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

It's not Jesus who loved us and came to save us from God. It's God who loved us and

sent Jesus to save us from the natural consequences of our sinfulness. And Jesus came and did that so that we could now be restored to the father because the father wanted us restored to him.

That's what the prodigal son story was intended to tell us as well. All right. Well, we've taken a long enough, I think, on this introduction to Exodus.

We now know the significance in the New Testament of some of these things. Most of the things that Exodus has to say. So, Father, we thank you for the book of Exodus and for even more than that, the New Testament, as it expounds the themes of this book in a way that bring them into relevance to us in this time that we live.

It's really quite a sad thing that those who follow the Jewish religion still only have the Exodus to celebrate. When your prophets have said the time would come when they'll no longer say, blessed is the Lord God who gathered us out of Egypt, but rather blessed is the Lord who gathered us from all nations into his kingdom. And that's us who have been gathered from many nations, many nationalities into your kingdom and experience this salvation and this access to you that your son, Jesus Christ, has made available to us.

We thank you for that. I pray that this will be given to us by revelation, not just words we hear and understand with our minds, but it'll become an insight that defines and governs our relationship with you every single day. And we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. All right. Goodbye, everyone on Facebook.