

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns, rendered in a light gray color, frames the central text. The border is composed of repeating motifs of leaves and scrolls, creating a classic, elegant frame.

**A Layman's
Commentary on
The Book of
Exodus**

T.O.D. Johnston

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A Layman's Commentary on The Book of Exodus

Religious Non-fiction

1st Edition 2018 – Scriptures Included

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A Layman's Commentary on Exodus – T.O.D. Johnston - www.biblestudylessonspdf.info

A Layman's Commentary on The Book of Exodus

1st Edition - 2018

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Published by Owen Johnston
www.biblestudylessonspdf.info

Dedicated for knowledge, understanding, and inspiration as we seek to follow Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ.

Preface

After reading many scholarly commentaries on different books of Scripture, it became my mental habit to sift through the minute discussions of individual words and/or phrases, and the quoting of various scholars of the past of many differing opinions, and center on the most logical and inspirational truths that remained. Thus I relied on the studied scholarship of those who had learned the original languages and had read all the previous scholars that had written to get the best possible understanding of Scripture that I, as a non-scholar, could. It seemed that most church members would not attempt to read scholarly works - but would benefit from their knowledge if presented in a plain and straightforward manner, the truths they had perceived. The following commentary is my attempt to do this. May God bless my efforts to the extent that they increase the understanding and faith of the reader.

T.O.D. Johnston
2005

Lesson I

Introduction.

Exodus means "the going forth". There are 2 distinct parts: 1st (chapters 1-19) details the circumstances of up to and includes the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. 2nd (chapters 20-40) includes the giving of the Law, and the other institutions that completely organized the people as a holy nation under God Almighty.

The narrative connects with that of Genesis. A considerable amount of time has gone by. The situation of the people of Israel is dramatically different.

There are many smaller sections or sub-divisions. Moses is accepted as author. He also is the central figure and eyewitness to everything recorded in the narrative. This includes descriptions of himself in unique detail. This also included the miracles sent by God, supernaturally.

The narrative also includes details of Egypt: their religion, and practices which Moses was raised with. This was also seen in the making of the Tabernacle: supplies used and skills needed in its construction would have been learned also in Egypt.

The Chronology of Exodus. Exodus 12:40 gives 430 years for the time of the Israelites in Egypt. The approximate date of the beginning of the Exodus was 1490 B.C.

Exodus chapter 1.

Verses 1-11.

- 1 Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob.
- 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,
- 3 Is'sachar, Zeb'ulun, and Benjamin,
- 4 Dan, and Naph'tali, Gad, and Asher.
- 5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.
- 6 And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.
- 7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.
- 8 ¶ Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.
- 9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:
- 10 come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.
- 11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raam'ses.

Commentary.

Verses 1-7. "Now" literally "And", indicates a continued connect with the narrative of Genesis. The fulfillment of God's promises of Genesis 46:3.

The descriptions of the number of people of Israel includes all the families of the sons and grandsons of Jacob. This number was considerable and continued to increase abundantly. This was an important fact leading to the Exodus.

70 souls when Jacob settled in Egypt. But over the time til the new Pharaoh, the Israelites' population increased more than anywhere else. There had not been any noted problems or stress between them and the Egyptians.

Verse 8. The new king had no knowledge of Joseph. This makes the time since Joseph's death several generations. It also implies that the new king did not follow the traditions of his predecessors.

The majority of Egyptian scholars consider this king was head of the 184th Dynasty: named Amosis I.

Verse 9. The king called together the important people of Egypt (princes, nobles, ministers of the state) to stir them up with inflammatory exaggeration of the number and power of these foreigners – more to the point of their rebelling and wishing to take over all Egypt. Something must be done to prevent such a danger.

Verse 10. He says, "Come on," get with it, no delay. They must deal wisely with them, to weaken and diminish their numbers and their power.

The other great fear; if another nation rises up against Egypt, the Israelites might join them against us, and then get up and leave Egypt. The Egyptians didn't want that to happen – they wanted to keep the benefits that these industrious and fruitful people provided.

Verse 11. The solution: taskmasters to burden them as an affliction. This would be similar to tax collectors: they would place a burden on them to diminish their wealth and oblige them to hard working to satisfy them.

The increase provided the Pharaoh enough to build two "treasure cities". This could have included ornaments, fortifications, as well as to store the Pharaoh's treasures, granaries, and storehouses for corn.

Verses 12-22.

12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor:

14 and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor.

15 ¶ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Pu'ah;

16 and he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools, if it be a son, then ye shall kill him; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

17 But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

Commentary.

Verse 12. The harder labor caused the Israelites to become more numerous, not less. They spread still more in the land. The point was to work the men to weaken their ability and make them unfit to procreate. They had become stronger and procreated more children.

Verse 13. The Egyptians' new plan was to make them serve under heavier burdens and add cruelty and fierceness to the way were treated. This was to break their strength and their spirit.

Verse 14. The Egyptians made sure that they had no ease of body or peace of mind. Their lives were made bitter to them.

They were made to build treasure cities or Pharaoh. This included making the brick and mortar as well. They carried all the supplies to the cities, then built also walls about the cities. They were sent to a variety of locations, always from home and family for long periods. They were kept working as much as humanly possible. Their taskmasters were cruel, punished any slackers that didn't or couldn't keep up the proper pace. Any weak or unable (worn out or injured) were tossed aside as now worthless.

Verse 15. The king of Egypt had another bright idea. This involved midwives. He called for the two most prominent midwives of the Hebrew women. They would then be responsible to instruct the rest concerning the king's orders.

Verse 16. The order was, that when they perform the office of midwife for the Hebrew women who about to give birth. They would set up the special "birthing stool" the women about to give birth sat upon to aid in the birth. The midwives sat on the floor in front to he stool and aided in the birth. She would also be the first one to see the baby and whether it was male or female. If it was male, she was to give the male child a private, deadly pinch while in their hands, making it appear that its death was because of a difficult birth. It would appear as a "natural" not a planned occurrence. Only male children were threats, who could eventually procreate themselves and continue the growing population of Israelites. The female children were to be allowed to live. They would be absorbed into the general population of Egyptians in time.

Verse 17. The Hebrew midwives feared God rather than a king. They would not take the life of any human child. They saved them all alive.

Verse 18. It didn't take long for it to become obvious that the king's order was not followed by the midwives. He called for them and demanded to know why they had done the opposite of his orders. They had done everything for the health and welfare for all the children of the people of Israel.

Verse 19. The midwives had a ready answer. They said that Hebrew women were stronger, "more lively" than the Egyptian women. They were as skilled as the midwives concerning babies and giving birth. They had their babies before the time it took to send for a midwife, and for her to arrive.

It is possible that the midwives had revealed the king's order to the Hebrews so that they made arrangements so they did not call the midwives. They got any help they needed from their families or lose neighbors.

Verse 20. God approved of their behavior and "dealt well with the midwives". They might have given God the credit for the Hebrew women being so strong and "lively", therefore they had strong and healthy babies.

Verse 21. God rewarded the midwives for their faith and their actions: their households were secure and prosperous, their families "built up".

Verse 22. The Pharaoh had been completely defeated in his plan with the midwives. Now he turns to his own people, the Egyptians. A general command to all people of Egypt: they are to throw into the Nile all male children of the Hebrews, all daughters "ye shall save alive".

Next, the birth of Moses and his preservation as God's plan.

Lesson II

Exodus chapter 2.

Verses 1-11.

- 1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.
- 2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.
- 3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.
- 4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.
- 5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.
- 6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.
- 7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?
- 8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.
- 9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.
- 10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.
- 11 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren.

Commentary.

Verse 1. This was Amram, son of Kohath, grandson of Levi. He married one Jochebed also of the tribe of Levi as proper, to keep the tribes distinct from one another.

Verse 2. The woman conceived and had a son. Not her first: she had Aaron and Miriam before Moses. She looked on him with great pleasure for he was "exceeding fair and beautiful" as Stephen says it (in Acts 7:20).

For three months she kept him hidden in her husband's house to preserve his life.

Verse 3. When he was 3 months old, she having been observed as pregnant, there would be inquiries very soon to find out about her outcome. She could no longer hide him. Also at that age he would be very active and loud at times. Now, to save the child had had an idea. She made a little boat of reeds, most likely of papyrus, that grew on the banks of the Nile. She daubed it with waterproofing compounds (slime and pitch). She placed the child within and certainly left him in God's providential hands. She placed it in the water near the shore of the Nile, among the reeds, so it wouldn't be drawn into the river's stream, and where someone coming to the river bank could notice it.

Verse 4. His sister, Miriam, was told to keep an eye on what would happen, from a discreet distance so she wouldn't be noticed. She is thought to be at least 10 years old at the time.

Verse 5. The Pharaoh's daughter came down to wash herself in the coal water of the river. She she went down she noticed the little ark floating among the plants (reeds) growing there. She sent her servants to fetch it and bring it to her.

Verse 6. The ark was closed and covered. She opened it and found the child, now crying. She felt compassion on him. She knew of the edict of her father concerning the Hebrew children. She also observed the form and beauty of the baby.

Verse 7. Several writers suggest that several maids gathered about Pharaoh's daughter to observe the child. This would allow Miriam a more discreet opportunity to make the following offer. They also suggest that the baby was known as a Hebrew because of the differences it had from the typical Egyptian baby. Miriam also observed the apparent affection that Pharaoh's daughter had for him. Therefore she felt it appropriate to make the following offer of aid: she asked if she wanted her to go find a nurse of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for her. This would make it possible for her to bring up the child, herself.

Verse 8. Pharaoh's daughter accepted this proposal and told the girl to go and do what she had offered. The maid went and called the child's mother and her mother also (Jochebed).

Verse 9. When she came, Pharaoh's daughter told her that she would pay her for taking the baby and nursing it for the appropriate time. She agreed and took the baby.

Verse 10. The child grew in size and strength under his own mother's care, until he was weaned – most likely at 2 to 3 years of age. When brought to Pharaoh's daughter, he became officially her son. Some say she had been married a long time, but had no children though she desired to. She called his name Moses which in Hebrew means "drawn from water" or "saved from water". She was apparently conversant in Hebrew (as with Moses' mother).

Verse 11. After many days Moses was grown up. Stephen in Acts 7:23 accounts Moses at the age of 40 at this point. During the time of his growing up he was told about his heritage (certainly by his mother) and his not being an Egyptian. He began going out, and away from Pharaoh's palace, to get to know his brethren, to understand their lives and circumstances. He observed their heavy burdens, and how they were about and pressed. He was sad and concerned and wished to help them - get them some relief, if possible.

On this occasion, he came upon an Egyptian beating a Hebrew "one of his brethren". This punishment was meted out for not doing his proper work adequately, to his standard.

Verses 12-25.

12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses.

¶ But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Mid'i-an: and he sat down by a well.

16 Now the priest of Mid'i-an had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to Reu'el their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon today?

19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew water enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zippo'rah his daughter.

22 And she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

23 ¶ And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

24 And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25 And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

Commentary.

Verse 12. At this point, Moses had decided to act. He first looked all around to see if there were any other people to observe or even notice what he was about to do, especially another Egyptian. When he was satisfied there were no witnesses, he struck the Egyptian to death. The body was buried in the sand.

Verse 13. A day later Moses again went out among the Hebrews and noticed two men in a fight, one aggressive toward the other. Moses reacted, questioned why he was hitting his brother, friend and companion. Moses saw it as unkind and unnatural in their present circumstances in Egypt. They should be compassionate and especially because of the oppression of the Egyptians.

Verse 14. The aggressor questioned Moses: had Moses received authority from Pharaoh to rule and judge over the Hebrews? He then asks Moses if he was planning to kill him as he had killed that Egyptian. Was this man the Hebrew that Moses had protected from the Egyptian, or was he only informed of the event? We are not told, but this let Moses see that his deed was known, and would lead to it being known also to the Egyptians. This left him no choice: he must get away very quickly to be safe.

Verse 15. The Pharaoh got the news and immediately put out the order to find and put Moses to death. He had not only killed an Egyptian but also taken the side of the Hebrew. This was treason and murder.

To preserve life Moses had to leave the area. Also he must have been guided by divine providence for the time when he was the deliverer of Israel. He went to the land of Midian. This was traditionally identified as being in Arabia, east of the Nile. It was a normal precedent for a stranger to go to a well where they could expect to meet the locals without too much

delay and seek help from them. Certainly he was tired, pensive, and waiting. Midian was one of Abraham's sons by Keturah (Genesis 25:2). This priest was named Jethro.

Verse 16. This priest might have retained the knowledge of the true God. Therefore this would make the marrying of one of his daughters most acceptable to Moses. He had seven. At this well they came to draw water to give to their father's flock. They filled the troughs with water.

Verse 17. A group of shepherds came to the well and who out of laziness and lack of patience, pushed the daughters and their flocks away from the well and let their sheep take the water drawn by the ladies. This was not proper but selfish and cruel. Moses could not let it pass. He stood up and took their part, forcing the intruders to back off. They saw no advantage in arguing with Moses who was forceful and authoritative. He helped the daughters and their attendants to water their flock.

Verse 18. They then went home to their father Reuel. He remarks that they have come home earlier than he thought they would. He asked how this had come about.

Verse 19. In their reply they gave Moses (the Egyptian) credit for intervening on their behalf against these shepherds. This suggests that this kind of action by these shepherds was not uncommon. Moses also had in addition continued drawing water for them, that he had watered their whole flock. Therefore, they had no need to tarry and so they came home earlier than usual.

Verse 20. He asked his daughters where this man was now. The description of the stranger and his noble actions led him to give Moses his gratitude and reward him in some manner. He asks why they left the man behind at the well. That was rude and ungrateful to the stranger. They were told to call him to go home with them to refresh himself and share a meal with them.

Verse 21. After an unspecified time Moses was content to dwell with the man. They had obviously both relaxed and conversed a while, the father was pleased with his disposition and general manner, in addition to his generous actions for his daughters. He asked Moses to stay a while. Moses readily consented. After another unspecified period of time he gave Moses his daughter. Zipporah to be his wife.

Verse 22. The next important event was the birth of a son to Moses and his wife. He named the child Gershom (Meaning desolate stranger) describing his own history in this place. It also pointed to the future – the promised land of Canaan as home to Israel. An unaccounted amount of time passed.

Verse 23. The next major event was the death of the king of Egypt, who reigned when Moses was born. Moses was now 60, having lived in the land of Midian 20 years. Twenty years after this, he was called from here to deliver his people.

The bondage of the children of Israel was to be more severe, not less. The people so no remedy, and no way of escape. They cried out in desperation. Their cries were aloud in passion and anger – so great that it reached up to heaven and was heard by the Almighty God. Their cry was "by reason of the bondage". God was pleased to regard their cry.

Verse 24. They in despair also groaned with their crying. God heard them and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would bring them out of the

strange land where they were sorely afflicted, into the promised land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.

Verse 25. God looked upon them with pity and compassion and observed all their labor and hardships, and injuries, He loved them as His own and took close notice of every detail of their lives.

Finis.

Lesson III

Exodus chapter 3.

Verses 1-11.

- 1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Mid'i-an: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.
- 2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.
- 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.
- 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.
- 5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.
- 6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.
- 7 ¶ And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;
- 8 and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Per'izzites, and the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites.
- 9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.
- 10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.
- 11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

Commentary.

Verse 1. This takes up the narrative about 40 years since Moses came to Midian. His father in law is called Jethro, his less official name, used by his family. He has been chiefly employed as shepherd. It may be assumed that during his non working hours he would have improved his knowledge of nature, of civilizations, and religion. As shepherd he ruled, and led, and fed, even as David did, in preparation to lead the people of Israel. At this time he had led the sheep to a remote "back side" of the desert and ended up at Horeb, the mountain of God.

Verse 2. the angel of the lord (not a created angel – but the Son of God) appeared to him, in a flame of fire, within a bush. The shocking sight was that the bush was not burning, it wasn't consumed!

Verse 3. Moses was surprised by this unique occurrence, and "turned aside" to go closer to see this thing. The unique thing was the bush was not burnt.

Verse 4. Here the Lord watched Moses turning and coming toward the burning bush. The Lord called him by name from the midst of the bush. Moses, Moses. He answered, "Here am I". Calling his name twice certainly was effective in letting him know that the source of this

voice spoke with authority and also must know him well. It also stopped him in his tracks – to know that he must give close attention to what was about to be said. His response was simply - "here am I", that he was prepared to listen carefully to what was to be said, and to obey.

Verse 5. The first thing said was that Moses must keep a proper distance, and take off his shoes – for they were soiled with dirt and dust, for the place was holy ground, because of the presence of the Lord.

Verse 6. Next he said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He was conscious of his own sin and unworthiness, afraid to look at God's flame of fire.

Verse 7. It is certain, God explains, that He has been closely watching what distress His people are suffering in Egypt. He has affectionate sympathy for them. He has heard their bitter crying out because of their taskmasters who used them cruelly and beat and abused them continually. Their sorrows were both physical and also inward grief and hopelessness. They cried out for help and deliverance.

Verse 8. This has led up to this point. Now God has come down to deliver them from their oppressor – the Egyptians. He delivers the message in this unique way for communicating most dramatically and directly with Moses; delivering the promise that in His kindness and grace would deliver His people. He had also a special destination for them: a land flowing with milk and honey. Canaan was the general name, from the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah. The names of the various tribes were from sons of Canaan.

Verse 9. This is repeated to dramatically emphasize the importance this had to the Lord. And that importance is why the Lord has come to Moses at this time. There must now be no delay. This means immediate action is necessary.

Verse 10. The commission of Moses is direct, clear, and to the point. "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Moses is to be the deliverer, guide, governor under God for the role.

Verse 11. Moses was in shock. Who was he to do such mighty things? He was just a humble shepherd, a foreigner, a fugitive Hebrew, with no ties with Egyptians, much less with Pharaoh. How in the world would the Israelites accept him, much less listen to or follow him?

Verses 11-22.

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 ¶ And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

17 and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Per'izzites, and the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

18 And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

21 And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

22 but every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

Commentary.

Verse 12. The Lord promises the certainty that He will be with Moses: to encourage, give strength, defend, and protect; and also to prosper and succeed. He will be respected by the people, and have influence over Pharaoh, who will finally let Israel go.

The proof (token) that God has sent him for this task will be when Moses brings the people out of Egypt to this mountain where they will serve God. Mount Sinai will be the proof that he has brought the people out of Egypt, all by the promise and strong hand of the Lord to that place and time for thanksgiving and worship.

Verse 13. Moses brings up another problem. When he tells the people of his mission from God, what if they ask him what is the name of this God? What will he answer? Their question would be their need to know Moses' relationship with God and what God had revealed to him of this new role and plan.

Verse 14. God answered: I Am that I Am. This denotes His eternity and immutability. He is constant, consistent, and faithful in fulfilling His promises at all times in the past, the present, and in the future. I Am is above and over all time.

Verse 15. To further instruct them and confirm the mission Moses is to tell them of His being the Lord God of their fathers: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I Am is the name Jehovah. This is His Name to all generations, to bring remembrance what He had done for them and what He had promised for them.

Verse 16. Moses is to call the elders of the people together – heads of tribes and families. He is to tell them that the Lord God of their fathers had appeared to him and revealed His observing what has been done to them in Egypt. He is completely aware of their situation and condition.

Verse 17. The result and conclusion is that He is now ready to bring them up out of the affliction. This is the message given to Moses for them. Their destination is Canaan where the listed groups are at present, a goodly land, flowing with milk and honey.

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