

1. Exodus Review:

- The primary theme of Exodus –
 - Redemption of the community into the presence of God starting in this lifetime (see Exodus 40:34-38).
 - How can the Israelites build a space, whether physical (the Tabernacle), spiritual (worship of one God), or temporal (a Sabbath in time), for the presence of God to dwell amid the community?
- The primary theme of the Bible?
 - Redemption into the presence of God starting in this lifetime (Gen. 1 – Rev. 21-22).
 - Cultural redemption is restoring a member of the father's household back into their rightful place (John 14:2).
- Exodus can be read/understood at multiple levels:
 - **Simple/Historical:** The historical story of the Israelites being rescued from Egypt, delivered to Mount Sinai, and receiving the commandments from God.
 - **Personal/Spiritual:** Exodus provides a metaphor for individual spiritual growth journey –
 - deliverance from the bondage of slavery of sin (totalitarian nature of sin).
 - Wilderness (Hebrew – *midbar*) – learn to hear God speak.¹
 - The proper spiritual posture while journeying with God²
 - Ascending the mountain out of foolishness toward wisdom.³
 - Creating a space for the presence of God to dwell.

2. Through what *lens* do we read Exodus (and the other commandments in the Torah)?

- A typical lens for modern western Christians to read the commandments in Exodus is that of “ultimate individual salvation.”
 - We often react to any suggestion we should follow the commandments of the Old Testament with a statement such as “under grace, not law.”

¹ Fig Tree Exodus Study week 15. The Hebrew word for ‘word’ is *dabar* (DBR) which is the root word for wilderness *midbar* (*mDBR*). It is in the *midbar* (wilderness) of life that we hear the *dbr* (word) of God.

² See Fig Tree Exodus Study lessons week 16 and 17 - *The Lord My Banner*. Moses raises a *nes* – a banner – which points to God who is the provider of their strength. Jesus is the *nes* for the whole world that Isaiah 11 prophesied about.

³ See Fig Tree Exodus Study lessons 18 and 19 – *The Mountain of God*.

3. A different lens to read Exodus:

Creating an ordered society in which the presence of God can dwell and humanity can flourish.

- Covenant Relationship – Exodus shows us the establishment of a covenantal relationship between God (as the bridegroom) and the nation of Israel (as the bride), an extension of the Abrahamic covenant.
 - Both parties have covenant relationship responsibilities.
 - The commandments are *after* deliverance – post salvation.
- The majority of the commandments in Exodus are regulated at the societal level.
- God desires a “kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:6/1 Peter 2:9)
 - Priests were the educated class of ancient societies.
 - God wanted the entire nation to know and understand his covenant relationship.
- Violating a commandment by an individual or community introduces a destabilizing force into society.
- Leviticus is a book about the holiness of individuals.
 - How does an individual approach a holy God?
 - The Hebrew word for offering (*korban*) derives from the root word (*karab*), which means to come near, approach, or enter into.⁴

4. Book of the Covenant (?)

- Scholars refer to **Exodus 21-23** as the “book of the covenant” – because, in chapter 24, the text says that Moses read aloud and ratified the covenant.

Verse	Topic
- Ex. 21:2-11	- treatment of servants (Hebrew <i>'ebed</i> = either slave or indentured servant)
- Ex. 21:12-36	- personal injury (tort law)
- Ex. 22:1-15	- property laws
- Ex. 22:15 – 23:5	- Social responsibility, justice, and mercy.
- Ex. 25 – 40	- building the Tabernacle

⁴ Leonard J. Coppes, “2065 קָרַב,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 811.