



Do any of God's commandments surprise you?

How easy or difficult do you think it would be to keep them?

What do the commandments tell you about what God is like?

Take some time to look back over the book of Exodus and reflect on what you have learnt. How have you been challenged? What will you do in response? What questions do you still have?



BIBLE STUDY



Exodus • Week 6

MEETING THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

The true story of the Exodus is a shadow of the greater salvation that God brought, 1400 years later, in Jesus. See Hebrews 12:18-24.
1 Peter 2:9-10 describes the role of Christians in the world using language similar to Exodus 19:3-6. What does it mean for you to belong to this God?

THE STORY SO FAR

The book of Exodus is part of the Bible's one big story. God chose a man called Abraham to be the ancestor of a great nation who God would use to eventually bless all peoples on earth. 400 years later, Abraham's descendants (the people of Israel) had greatly increased in number, but they were slaves under the fierce oppression of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. They cried out to God. God heard them and rescued them through a series of plagues. Despite this amazing deliverance, the people quickly forgot God's generosity and spent their time grumbling and complaining on their way to Mt Sinai.

Now they will learn what it means to be the people of God.

MEETING GOD

Read **Exodus 19:1-6**.

What has God done for Israel? (v.4)

What does God expect of Israel? (v.5)

What is God's plan for Israel? (v.5-6)

Think back to our first Exodus study. In what way does the agreement at Mt Sinai connect with God's promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)?

priest – In the Old Testament, priests were dedicated to God's service. Their role was to act as a mediator between God and people (telling people God's word, praying to God for people, offering sacrifices to God for people).

holy = set apart for a special purpose

Read **Exodus 19:7-25**.

What is Israel's initial response to the agreement? (v.8)

What do we learn about God's nature from this chapter?

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

The preparations in chapter 19 are a build-up to chapter 20. God speaks to all the people and gives 10 commandments as a basis for their whole law system. Because Israel are to be a "kingdom of priests" to the rest of the world, by following these laws they will reflect something about God himself to the other nations.

Read **Exodus 20:1-20**.

Tick whether you think each commandment is primarily about relating to God or relating to other people.

Imagine you're one of the Israelites who has been rescued from Egypt and is now hearing God speak all these words. Why is verse 2 important?

Commandment	Relating to God	Relating to other people
1 (20:3)		
2 (20:4-6)		
3 (20:7)		
4 (20:8-11)		
5 (20:12)		
6 (20:13)		
7 (20:14)		
8 (20:15)		
9 (20:16)		
10 (20:17)		

Notes on specific commandments:

1. Monotheism (cf Egypt & surrounding nations - temptation for Israel to fall in with neighbours & worship different gods? *“You think back to Egypt, with its great cities and powerful imperial civilization. The king, Pharaoh, was known as the Sun-God. The neighbours prayed to goat idols. Your sister put her faith in the bull god to protect her son from the soldiers. You had wondered about praying to the god of the Nile to get you out. Somehow the religion of Jacob and Joseph got a bit confused in Egypt. After all, their god didn’t seem to be up to much, so why not try some others? Now it is clear who you should worship: the one true God.”*)

2. Prohibits both worship of idols (other gods) and worshipping YHWH through images. (translation of ‘idol’ (lit. ‘image’) is misleading). No manmade image of God can adequately represent him. The making of visual representations of God is prohibited because God is to be known primarily through his word, and humans are his uniquely licensed images in the world (Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6).

ANE - tribal deities - the god understood to be present in the statue

Josh 24:14 - Israelites worshipped idols in Egypt.

v5b - is this unfair?? Sin has consequences. but: a) it implies sin continues (“3rd & 4th generation of those who hate me”) (NCV translation not that helpful here), and b) the point is the contrast between God’s punishment and his love (3-4gens cf thousands).

3. Importance of God’s name (~Ex 3-4)

4. Sabbath - mentioned first in ch16

*Must we follow 10Cs today? Xns? nonXns?

- remember who they are for - God’s ppl Israel, saved out of Egypt

“God’s laws are for his ppl. Those who do not know him are walking tombs. They do not need whitewashing but complete renovation, from the inside out. They do not need their moral gyroscopes pushed in the right direction, but the Spirit of the risen Christ breathed into them.” (Enns)

I imagine you won’t have time to discuss the orange box at the end in groups, but it’s there as a pointer to some NT application, for those who are keen (i’ll probably mention some of this in my wrapup talk at the end)..