“Thoughts on Genesis and Exodus Bible Passages”

By Greg Clements Started September 20, 2018 Last Revised March 14, 2022

This document still needs proofreading but it is close to being a finished document.

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I am also working on a document “Characteristics of God” as I read through the Bible.

This writing represents my own thoughts about some Bible passages. I will give sources from time to time but I expect most of the words not in quotes will be my own. I plan to take most of the Bible quotes from the NET Bible. THE NET BIBLE, NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION, COPYRIGHT © 1996 BY BIBLICAL STUDIES PRESS, L.L.C. This Bible is a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org/). The First edition without notes is free from<https://netbible.com/download>. The second edition with notes is $4.95 download as of 2018. The NET 2nd edition can be read online for no cost at<https://lumina.bible.org/bible/Genesis+1> (starts at Genesis).

GENESIS

Gen 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Since I am an astronomer by training I will give some brief background on theories of the universe. Before the 1920s astronomers lacked data on the nature of the universe. In the 1920s it was determined that most nebulae (not stars) seen on the sky are actually not in our galaxy but are tremendous distances away from our galaxy. Doppler shift measurements of the nebulae showed that almost all of these distant nebulae (now called galaxies) are moving away from us at very high speeds. Speed (Velocity) and distance measurements led Hubble to conclude that there is a relationship between the speed a galaxy is moving away from us and the distance to the galaxy (Hubble's Law). It is important to note that we are not at the center of the universe. Measurements taken from a location in any galaxy of the other galaxies would give the same conclusion (everything moving away). So, some astronomers concluded that the galaxies must have been closer together in the past (since they are getting farther apart now), and there must have been a beginning of the expansion of the universe. Other astronomers hypothesized that the universe had no beginning (Steady State Theory) and they used the term “Big Bang” as a derisive term to describe the theory that there was a beginning to the universe. “Big Bang” is an inaccurate label. The universe did not start with an explosion. The start was the formation of energy (light) and matter with an expansion of space and the material in space. In the 1960's the Cosmic Microwave Background radiation (not nuclear radiation, but microwaves in space) was discovered. I don't want to make this an astronomy text so I will just say that this radiation gave conclusive proof that the “Big Bang” did occur, the universe had a beginning.

For full disclosure, most scientists do not associate the event of the Big Bang with an act of creation by God. I do believe God spoke the Big Bang and the universe into existence. Most scientists take the point of view that there was nothing before the Big Bang and then the Big Bang occurred. These scientists hold that there was some fluctuation in the void of nothing that led to energy and matter coming into existence. Quantum Mechanics does allow for energy and matter to come into existence from nothing for brief times and then disappear (see Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle). But Quantum Mechanics states that the larger the energy the shorter the time that the energy can exist. This is contrary to the enormous energy and matter in the universe and its apparent age of almost 14 billion years. (By the way I am comfortable with 14 billion years for the age of the universe … more on this later in the document.) These scientists propose that there was a one-time event where the energy and mass did not disappear. I am far from an expert in Quantum Mechanics but their explanation seems to lack credibility. There is a well proven law of physics called Conservation of Mass-Energy. This law states that the sum total of energy and mass in the universe is a constant. Energy can become mass and mass can become energy (E = mc^2 describes the math of this). In my thinking, if there was nothing before the Big Bang (no energy and no matter), then the laws of physics would say there should be nothing at some later time. Most scientists would claim that the energy question is answered by the positive energy of mass and motion is balanced by the negative energy in the form of Potential Energy. In my thinking, the universe has energy and matter because God spoke energy and matter into existence. I take Proverbs 3:19,20 to describe that God created the laws of physics and decided how the universe would operate. Job chapters 38, 39, and 40 have more to say about God's understanding of the universe.

The question of time also comes into play when I consider the word “day” in the first few verses of Genesis. If you use some bible helps (I am using the notes built into the second edition of the NET bible that is available online … see the web site listed above) the Hebrew word translated “day” is “yom.” For almost all cases yom refers to the time span we would call a 24-hour day (morning, evening, back to morning). In a few cases yom is used to describe a span of time. My own view (perhaps biased by my astronomy and physics education) is that the “day” in the early verses of Genesis are long spans of time.

2 Peter 3:**8** “Now, dear friends, do not let this one thing escape your notice, that a single day is like a thousand years with the Lord and a thousand years are like a single day.”

I am not dogmatic about my interpretation of the meaning of yom. God is certainly able of creating the universe and life as described in Genesis in an instant, or in an hour, or in a 24 hour time span for each activity that is described. If the days in Genesis 1 are literal 24-hour or so long days then God created the universe with the appearance of age. If we assume the laws of physics have been in operation since the Big Bang then there are problems in the yom = 24 hour day model. There are stars and other objects (Red Giants, White Dwarfs, Neutron Stars, … Black holes, nebulae, etc.) that take millions and billions of years to develop, when we use the current understanding of physics and astronomy. We see light coming from objects that are billions of light years away from us … implying, scientifically, that they existed billions of years ago when the light started moving towards us. (This discussion is just in general terms. There are some adjustments for distance and time values when Relativity is taken into account but the basic thrust of the argument is unchanged.) There are radioactive isotopes in the crust of the earth, found in meteorites, etc. that exist in abundances that imply those rocks have existed for billions of years. As I accept a 14 billion year age for the universe that only makes God bigger in his characteristics … he is longer lasting than just a few thousand years, his patience is longer than we can fathom, etc.

Pastor Bart Wilkins (Flatland Church, Omaha, NE) gave a message on Genesis 1 on August 18, 2019 as the first message in the “Time Travel” series. Some key points from the message were: God was behind it all; Scripture and science are compatible; Humanity has a special place in God’s creation. The congregation was given some online resources to explore on their own.

Nine Views of Creation: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/creation.cfm>

Science and Faith Podcast: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/science-faith/id1271147429?i=1000391102084&mt=2>

An Overview of the Whole Bible, Dr. Don Carson, podcast <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/an-overview-of-the-whole-bible>

Read Scripture App: <https://www.readscripture.org/>

Bible Project

Covenants: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/covenants/>

Old Testament, Torah, Prophets, Writings: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/tanak-old-testament/>

New Testament: <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/new-testament-overview/>

Sunday messages from Flatland Church can be viewed at this web page:

<https://flatlandchurch.com/watch>

Another Bible App is available from the Gideons International. There are over 1,200 languages available using this app. Some are text and some are audio. The app also has various “helps.”

<http://gideons.bible.is/>

Genesis Chapter 1 continues

My view is that God spoke each “day” into existence and created what is described for each “day.” I do not subscribe to natural evolution that claims life originated over a long period of time from random events in the raw materials available on the Earth. My expertise is far from biology so I will not explore this topic further. There are many resources available that explore this topic. I basically fall in the “Intelligent Design” camp with the intelligent God of the Bible doing the design.

<https://intelligentdesign.org/whatisid/>

<https://www.discovery.org/v/what-is-intelligent-design/>

<https://www.allaboutscience.org/intelligent-design.htm>

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/defense-intelligent-design/>

Creationists have concerns about Intelligent Design <https://answersingenesis.org/intelligent-design/>

Secular resource: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligent_design>

Genesis 2:5,6

no rain yet, springs from the ground watered the earth …. I take this to show that the earth was still developing. At the time of Noah the rain does come. And after the flood the water cycle … rain, rivers, evaporation, repeat … is established.

Genesis 3:8 - 19 Adam and Eve Sin

Both Adam and Eve make an excuse for why they sinned. God does not let these excuses stand. Each person is responsible for their own decisions and actions.

Genesis 4:6,7

Cain’s offering not accepted …. God does not accept Cain’s pouting. God expects Cain to watch for sin and not be dominated by it.

4:26

Adam, then Seth, then Enosh … at this time people begin worshipping (calling on the name of) God. The notes of the NET Bible say that this means prayer and sacrifice was started.

Genesis 5

Genealogy Note that people lived much longer than now, and that the lifespans decrease through the generations. Perhaps there was a gradual change in Earth’s environment, or perhaps genetics weakened over time. Also note, Enoch (descendent of Seth) in verse 18 is a different person from Enoch (son of Cain) in Genesis . This Enoch (descendent of Seth) “walked with God.” I understand this to mean that Enoch was close to God and had a good relationship with God. To me, the passage means that Enoch was taken from Earth by God instead of dying a normal death.

5:28 - 32

The story of how God cursed the land after Adam and Eve’s sin must have been passed down through the generations.

6:1 - 4

“Sons of God” could be angels or descendants of Seth.

6:9

Noah “walked” with God. This reminds me of descriptions of Adam and Eve before they sinned, and of Enoch. The picture in my mind is a person who is seeking to do what God wants done...a person who wants to be near God, who wants fellowship with God, who is innocent in his thoughts and actions.

6:13 - 22

God reveals his plan of destruction to Noah and gives him the command to build the ark and supply it. Noah could communicate with God because Noah “walked” with God.

God Opposes the Proud

11:1 - 9 Tower of Babel

The people wanted to build a tower to reach high in the sky (perhaps to lift themselves up to the place of God in their eyes). God confuses their speech so the task is not possible.

God Calls People

A “call” is a giving of direction by God to a person. I don’t think it always is an audible voice. I experienced the inner voice of God when Calvary Temple Church in Fremont was selecting a pastor to replace Bill Howell around 1990. I was on the pastor selection committee. During a phone call interview with Nathan Ennis the message “this is the man” came clearly to my mind, not via my ear.

Abraham Puts His Trust in God, Not in Others

**14: 21-24 “21** Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people and take the possessions for yourself.” **22** But Abram replied to the king of Sodom, “I raise my hand to the Lord, the Most High God, Creator of heaven and earth, and vow **23** that I will take nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal. That way you can never say, ‘It is I who made Abram rich.’ **24** I will take nothing except compensation for what the young men have eaten.As for the share of the men who went with me – Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre – let them take their share.”

And God Responds to Abraham’s Trust with a Promise of Rewards on Earth

15:1 “After these things the Lord’s message came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram! I am your shield and the one who will reward you in great abundance.”

A possible future Bible study would be to look at verses that describe God communicating to people. See Genesis 15:4 (and before this, but it occurred to me now that I should put this note in this document)

God values those who believe in him

15:6 “ Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord credited it as righteousness to him.”

Discuss things with God

18:20-33

Abraham requests that Sodom be spared if there are enough righteous people there. The Lord agrees up to a certain number.

You can have a discussion with God. You can ask for a change in plans (to save Lot and his family).

19:29

There weren’t enough righteous people in Sodom for it to be spared. But “God honored Abraham’s request. He removed Lot…”

God helps obedient people to accomplish godly purposes.

24:1-27

Abraham trusted (v7) that God would send an angel to help his servant find a wife for Isaac

V50

Laban and Bethuel have respect for God and put their wishes underneath God’s wishes. God was working among people other than just Abraham.

Genesis 27 The Blessing of Isaac

The blessing passed on by Isaac was like a prophecy with power and seems to be like a legal will. V37 Isaac tells Esau that Jacob is now lord over him.

I think of “blessing” in a somewhat different way. My blessing (our blessing … Pam and I) is given to all our children, their spouses and our grandchildren and generations after them. See my 1998 Sunday School Word documents on the subject of Blessing. Pam and I regularly ask for God’s blessing and guidance for our children, their spouses, and our grandchildren.

Family Strife

Esau is upset with Jacob. Family strife is painful for parents. Pam and I are thankful for the good relations between our children. As you read this sometime after I am writing this in January 2019, if there is strife between members of our descendants I implore all concerned to meet and talk in an attitude of love and forgiveness.

Philippians Chapter 2  **1** Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort provided by love, any fellowship in the Spirit, any affection or mercy, **2** complete my joy and be of the same mind, by having the same love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose. **3** Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. **4** Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. **5** You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had,

Genesis 28:10 - 22 Jacob dreams of God and makes a commitment to God.

Family Strife

Genesis 29 and 30

There is competition between Leah and Rachel for sons for Jacob. The actions of Leah and Rachel may have been common at this time in history but their actions did not end the strife. It is clear in the New Testament that one wife for one husband is God’s norm.

Genesis 31

Jacob becomes more wealthy. Leah’s and Rachel’s father, Laban, becomes less favorable to Jacob. God tells Jacob to return to his homeland. Laban is an example of what not to be as a father-in-law.

Genesis 32

Jacob travels home, and encounters angels of God, but he is afraid of how Esau will treat him. Jacob prays to God and asks to be rescued. Jacob prepares gifts for Esau. Jacob wrestles with “a man,” perhaps an angel. Jacob is persistent, not defeated, and is blessed by the “man.”

Purify and Rededicate

Genesis 35:1-5

Jacob hears from God. He makes the people in his group get rid of idols. He tells the people to purify themselves, wash their clothes, he is going to Bethel to make an altar to God. My advice to someone who is reading this and realizes they have strayed from God’s ways: remove ungodly things and influences from your life and return to seeking God in a way that God wants.

35:9-15

God speaks to Jacob and reaffirms the Abrahamic covenant.

35:23-26

Jacob’s 12 sons are listed here.

Esau and Jacob

Genesis 36

Esau marries Canaanite women and moves to Edom because he and Jacob’s livestock are too large to both use the same land. Esau gives way to Jacob and moves away. Perhaps Esau did not want to be in the vicinity of Jacob because he saw that Jacob was doing things God’s way and Esau knew he was not doing things God’s way.

Family Strife

Genesis 37

Joseph complains to Jacob about his brothers. Jacob shows favoritism to Joseph. Joseph may be bragging about his dreams where all bow down to him. Most of Joseph’s brothers decide to harm Joseph. Reuben slows down their plan. The brothers sell Joseph to Ishmaelite traders who were going to Egypt. The brothers did not think this out about how Jacob would be distressed. This is not the way to resolve family disputes.

Use the principles of

Matthew 18. **15** “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have regained your brother. **16** But if he does not listen, take one or two others with you, so that at the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. **17** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector.

Joseph in Egypt

Genesis Chapters 39 - 41

Joseph maintains his integrity and rises to second in command of Egypt. Joseph could have easily given in to Potiphar’s wife and indulged in pleasure. I believe Joseph kept away from this sin because of his upbringing in Jacob’s care. My prayer is that each parent who reads this will take seriously Proverbs 22 **6** Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

If you are a child and realize you have not been trained (dedicated, guided) in God’s ways you can still make your own decision to follow God’s ways. You are not excused because your parents did not give you the proper guidance. Each person is responsible for their own actions.

Joseph Reunited With His Family

Genesis Chapters 42 - 45 Joseph could have had his brothers, who mistreated him, killed. Instead Joseph chooses to be reunited. Joseph gives credit for God for how things worked out.

Genesis 45:3-8 “**3** Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” His brothers ...were dumbfounded before him. **4** Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me,” so they came near. Then he said, “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. **5** Now, do not be upset and do not be angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to preserve life! **7** God sent me ahead of you to preserve you on the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. **8** So now, it is not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me an adviser to Pharaoh, lord over all his household, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. “

Jacob Blesses His Children Before He Dies

Genesis 49: **28** “These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each of them an appropriate blessing. “

(glc) If you read these blessings you will see they are more like prophecies than “feel good” blessings.

Joseph Reaffirms His Good Intentions Toward His Brothers

Genesis 50: 15-21 “...Joseph’s brothers ... said, “What if Joseph bears a grudge and wants to repay us in full for all the harm we did to him?” 16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave these instructions before he died: 17 ‘Tell Joseph this: Please forgive the sin of your brothers and the wrong they did when they treated you so badly.’ ....” When this message was reported to him, Joseph wept. 18 Then his brothers also came and threw themselves down before him; they said, “Here we are; we are your slaves.” 19 But Joseph answered them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 As for you, you meant to harm me, but God intended it for a good purpose, so he could preserve the lives of many people, as you can see this day. 21 So now, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your little children.” Then he consoled them and spoke kindly to them.”

(glc)Joseph maintains his integrity with respect to his brothers. Joseph does not put himself ahead of God’s plan.

Romans 8:**28** “And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose,”

(glc) Not all our experiences are good from our point of view. But God has plans and designs for our lives that we can’t see because we are embedded in our lives, we don’t have an overall view (especially, we can’t see all of time like God can).

EXODUS

The Israelite People Become Oppressed

Exodus 1:**8-14 “** Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. **9** He said to his people, “Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are! **10** ... let’s deal wisely with them. ...they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us ....” **11** So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor. ... the Egyptians loathed the Israelites, **13** and they made the Israelites serve rigorously.**14** They made their lives bitter by hard service with mortar and bricks and by all kinds of service in the fields. “

(glc) I would note that the Israelites did not get absorbed into the Egyption nation. The people kept their identity. It appears that the Egyptians had the ability to dominate the Israelites with some deceptive plan or military force so the Israelites became slaves.

Israelite Midwives Obey God Rather Than Pharaoh

Exodus 1:**17-21 “** ...midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live. **20** So God treated the midwives well, and the people multiplied .... **21** And because the midwives feared God, he made households for them.”

(glc) The best plan is to obey God rather than political leaders.

Proverbs 29:**25** “The fear of people becomes a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord will be set on high.”

Respect God

Exodus 3:**4-6** “... God called to him from within the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” **5** God said, “Do not approach any closer! Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” **6** He added, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.”

(glc) God tells Moses to take off his sandals. I view this as a call to respect God and be humble. It seems to me that the Israelite people would have passed on the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through the generations (this is 400+ years after Jacob brought his family to Egypt). I trust that generations that follow me will pass on spiritual values and spiritual beliefs. This is my main goal in creating these documents on “Thoughts on Bible Passages” and “Characteristics of God” and other documents. Each person is responsible for seeking God. I hope these documents help in your search for an understanding of God and a relationship with God.

God Equips Moses To Speak To Israelites

Exodus 4:1-9

(glc)staff and snake, leprous and healed arm, water from Nile will become blood on dry ground

God does not give us assignments without his support.

Moses is Reluctant

Exodus 4:10-13

(glc)Moses asks for someone else to do the assignment. God is displeased but tells Moses that Aaron will help.

Exodus 4:30

(glc) It seems that Aaron did the signs before the Israelites, not Moses.

Pharaoh Rejects God’s Plan

Exodus 5: 2-9

(glc)Pharaoh rejects the plan of the people going to worship God. Instead he makes their work harder.

Exodus 5:20,21

(glc)The people don’t like the outcome of Moses and Aaron’s conversation with Pharaoh. They fear being killed.

God Reassures Moses

Exodus 6:1-8

(glc)God promises the people will leave Egypt. They will be rescued by God.

Exodus 6:9

(glc)The people were too deep in discouragement with the extra work to accept what Moses told them about being released from Egypt.

Glc thought--We can get to a place of discouragement and not trust God like we should.

Exodus 6: 12,13,28, 7:1-5

(glc)Moses lacks confidence that Pharaoh will listen to him. This does not stop God from using Moses, along with Aaron, to confront Pharaoh.

Exodus 7:6,7

(glc)Moses and Aaron obey God.

Miracles and Signs

(glc)God gives Moses directions for what signs to perform for Pharaoh.

Pharaoh is told in advance what the sign will be.

After the frogs Pharaoh asks Moses for relief from the sign but after each problem is removed Pharaoh hardens his heart again.

Exodus 7:8 -

(glc)Aaron’s (Moses’) staff becomes a snake and eats the snakes of Pharoah’s magicians.

Moses strikes the Nile with his staff and it turns to blood. Pharaoh’s magicians also turn water to blood.

The staff is extended and frogs cover Egypt. Pharaoh’s magicians also bring up frogs.

Swarms of flies cover Egypt, but not in Goshen.

All kinds (see NET notes) of livestock of Egyptians dies, but not the livestock of Israelites.

Boils on people and animals in Egypt. The court magicians are also affected.

Hail, thunder, fire (lightning) Some of Pharaoh’s servants fear God and bring in their servants and livestock indoors for protection. There was no hail in Goshen.

9:15,16

(glc)God does not just kill Pharaoh. He is making an example of Pharaoh for the world to see God’s strength through the signs.

Locusts eat vegetation that escaped the hail.

Exodus 10:1,2

(glc)Pharaoh had hardened his heart. Now it is stated that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. GLC--God let Pharaoh’s heart stay in its hardened state.

Darkness over Egypt for three days, not just dim light, but not enough light to see people close to you. This is the last audience with Pharaoh. Moses tells Pharaoh of the plague of death that is coming.

Death for the firstborn of people and animals.

11:3

(glc) The Israelites had favor with the people of Egypt. Moses was respected by Pharaoh’s servants and the people of Egypt.

Passover

Exodus 12

(glc) God establishes a new calendar with this as the first month of the year. It is a new beginning for the Israelites. The blood of a perfect lamb is to be put on the doorposts and top of the doorframe. Prepare to travel. This day is to be a perpetual memorial, a festival to the Lord. Purify your household and hold a holy convocation.

12:31

(glc)Pharaoh gives Moses and Aaron the message to leave Egypt. The Egyptian people want the Israelites to leave quickly. The people give the Israelites silver, gold, clothing and in this way Israel plunders Egypt.

12:37 600,000 men in the group.

12:40 The Israelites had been in Egypt 430 years.

Remember God and What He Has Done

Exodus 13:1-16

(glc) God established Passover in Exodus 12. God wants the generations that follow the exodus to remember the event of Israel leaving Egypt by God’s power. Moses helps that take place with his commands in Exodus 13. Part of that rememberance is the sacrifice of first born animals and redemption of first born sons.

God Knows the People Need Preparing Before Entering the Promised Land

Exodus 13: **17-18 “** When Pharaoh released the people, God did not lead them by the way to the land of the Philistines,although that was nearby, for God said, “Lest the people change their minds and return to Egypt when they experience war.” **18** So God brought the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea, and the Israelites went up from the land of Egypt prepared for battle.”

(glc) God prepares people to face difficult situations.

God Leads The People and Removes Military Power From Egypt

Exodus 13:20-14:31

(glc) God was not finished with the Egyptians. And, he was not done teaching Israel about himself. God led Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This was supernatural leading. Pharaoh brings the might of his army to attack Israel. The Israelites are afraid but Moses trusts in God and cries out to God. God keeps the Egyptian army separated from Israel. God causes the Red Sea to part with a strong wind and Israel walks across on dry ground. The Egyptian chariots follow but their wheels get jammed (sink in soft ground?). The water returns and drowns Pharaoh’s army.

Exodus 14: **30-31 “**So the Lord saved Israel on that day from the power of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the shore of the sea. **31** When Israel saw the great power that the Lord had exercised over the Egyptians, they feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.”

(glc)This event caused Israel to fear the Lord, believe in the Lord, and in Moses. WIthout this event Egypt could have caught up with Israel beyond the Red Sea and attacked Israel at some future time.

Exodus 15:1 - 21

(glc) Israel takes time to celebrate what God has done for them. Do we take enough time to celebrate what God has done for us? It is sometimes very difficult to have a godly outlook on the events that occur in our lives. The process of the Exodus took many years. Israel was in Egypt 430 years with most of those years being in slavery. There was a period of time when Pharaoh had male Israelite babies killed. I am not saying that we “celebrate” the difficult events that occur. I am saying that we should continue trusting in God, that he has long term goals in mind. The troubles we have in this world are troubles and are significant, but the good coming for christians in the life everlasting will overwhelm these troubles and that good will be even more significant.

Romans 8: **18-30 “** ...our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the coming glory that will be revealed to us. **19** For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility – not willingly but because of God who subjected it – in hope **21** that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children. **22** .... **23** Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance. 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God’s will. 28 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.”

(glc) Glory be to God!

The Teaching of Israel Starts

Exodus 15: **22-26**  “Then Moses led Israel to journey away from the Red Sea. They... walked for three days into the wilderness, and found no water. **2**3 Then they came to Marah, but they were not able to drink the waters of Marah, because they were bitter….

24 So the people murmured against Moses, saying, “What can we drink?” 25 He cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When Moses threw it into the water, the water became safe to drink. There the Lord made for them a binding ordinance, and there he tested them. 26 He said, “If you will diligently obey the Lord your God, and do what is right in his sight, and pay attention to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, then all the diseases that I brought on the Egyptians I will not bring on you, for I, the Lord, am your healer.”

(glc) The people grumble when they face lack of water. Moses brings the problem to God and the problem is solved.

The People Grumble Again for Food

Exodus 16:4-5 “ **4** Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people will go out and gather the amount for each day, so that I may test them. Will they walk in my law or not? **5** On the sixth day they will prepare what they bring in, and it will be twice as much as they gather every other day.”

(glc)The people will be tested to see if they will obey the method of gathering bread. Will they have faith in God that there will be provision on the following day, will they not gather too much, will they not trust in their own work and plans, but trust in God’s provision each day?

Be Careful Not To Murmur Against Your Leaders

Exodus 16:8 “... Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord.”

God provided quail in the evening and the bread in the morning.

(glc) God provided manna until Israel entered the promised land.

Now the People Grumble for Water

Exodus 17:1-3 “ ...Israelites traveled on their journey ...there was no water for the people to drink. **2**So the people contended with Moses, and they said, “Give us water to drink!” Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you test the Lord?” **3** But the people were very thirsty there for water, and they murmured against Moses and said, “Why in the world did you bring us up from Egypt – to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?”

(glc) The people don’t bring their concerns in a good way. It is extremely likely that Moses was aware of the water shortage before they came to Moses.

Moses brings the problem to God (who also knew the problem before it was brought to him). God is waiting for Moses to come to him. God waits for us to bring our problems to him also.

Moses strikes the rock as God commanded. This is done in the sight of the elders of Israel so there is no doubt that God has done a miracle of delivering water from the rock. Moses has not just located some hidden stream, it is a miracle.

**Gen 36:12** “Timna, a concubine of Esau’s son Eliphaz, bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Esau’s wife Adah.”

(glc) The Amalekites were descendants of Esau, not Jacob. They attacked Israel. Israel was not seeking their land, Israel was on its journey to the promised land. Even today, we may face attacks that we did not start. God provided victory for Israel and God will provide victory for you as you keep close to him.

Moses was Writing During the Exodus

**Exodus 17:14** “The Lord said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in Joshua’s hearing;”

(glc) I believe this tells us that Moses wrote the first books of the Bible. They were not written at a much later date. Moses had a good education in Egypt and would be capable of recording history, and recording interactions of God with mankind.

Exodus 18

(glc) Horeb, where God provided water, is the mountain where Moses encountered God at the burning bush as he was tending sheep after marrying Jethro’s daughter.

Exodus 18:9-12 “ **9** Jethro rejoiced because of all the good that the Lord had done for Israel... **10** Jethro said, “Blessed be the Lord who has delivered you from the hand of Egypt... **11** Now I know that the Lord is greater than all the gods, for in the thing in which they dealt proudly against them he has destroyed them.”**12** Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat food with the father-in-law of Moses before God.”

(glc) Jethro acknowledges the power of God. Jethro participates in a sacrifice to God.

Exodus 18:17-23 “ 17 Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is not good! 18 You will surely wear out, both you and these people who are with you, for this is too heavy a burden for you... 19 ... I will give you advice, and may God be with you: You be a representative for the people to God, and you bring their disputes to God; 20 warn them of the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. 21 But you choose from the people capable men, God-fearing, men of truth, those who hate bribes, and put them over the people as rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22 They will judge the people under normal circumstances, and every difficult case they will bring to you, ... so that you may make it easier for yourself, and they will bear the burden with you. 23 If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people will be able to go home satisfied.”

(glc) Jethro gives godly advice to help Moses. Note that in verses 19 and 23 Jethro defers to God’s direction. This plan of delegation is Jethro’s idea but Jethro is willing for God to give the final OK for implementing the plan. We get our ideas on how to proceed in situations. Do we bring those ideas to God to get his OK?

TEN COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-17 “God spoke all these words:

2 “I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you from the land of Egypt... 3 “You shall have no other gods before me. 4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, responding to the transgression of fathers by dealing with children to the third and fourth generations of those who reject me, 6 and showing covenant faithfulness to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. 7 “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold guiltless anyone who takes his name in vain. 8 “Remember the Sabbath day to set it apart as holy. 9 For six days you may labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; on it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your cattle, or the resident foreigner who is in your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy. 12 “Honor your father and your mother, that you may live a long time in the land the Lord your God is giving to you. 13 “You shall not murder. 14 “You shall not commit adultery. 15 “You shall not steal. 16 “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. 17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

(glc) This is a starting list of guidance for living as God wants you to live.

Matthew 22: **36** “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” **37** Jesus said to him, “‘***Love*** ***the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind***.’ **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** The second is like it: ‘***Love your neighbor as yourself***.’ **40** All the law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

THE FEAR OF GOD HELPS YOU TO NOT SIN

Matthew 22:20-21 “ 20 Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you so that you do not sin.” 21 The people kept their distance, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.

(glc) The “fear of God” is a separate bible study on its own. See my Sunday School materials on the fear of God. This fear is a reverential, respectful, awe-filled, fear. It is not just a trembling, want to hide and get away, fear.

Exodus 20:5

(glc) Transgressions tend to get passed on to the following generations. But through Jesus there is hope, there is provision for getting back to a right relationship with God.

Romans 8:1-2 “ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **2** For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.”

2 Corinthians 5:14-19 “ **14** For the love of Christ controls us,... Christ died for all; therefore all have died. **15** And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised. **16** So then from now on we acknowledge no one from an outward human point of view. Even though we have known Christ from such a human point of view, now we do not know him in that way any longer. **17** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;what is old has passed away – look, what is new has come! **18** And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. **19** ... in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people’s trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 “ **3** ... we do not wage war according to human standards, **4** for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments **5** and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.”

Exodus 20:6

(glc) Those who love God and behave in line with his principles can expect a continuing good relationship with God.

Exodus Chapters 21, 22, start of 23 ...

(glc)Some of these principles guided the formation of our legal and punishment system.

MOSES RECORDED GOD’S WORDS AND THE PEOPLE PROMISE TO OBEY

Exodus 24:4a …”and Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord.”

Exodus 24:7 **”** He took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud to the people, and they said, “We are willing to do and obey all that the Lord has spoken.”

(glc) The people say they will obey God, but we know this was temporary. Why did they turn away from obeying? How did they come to be separated from God?

Isaiah 53: **6** “All of us had wandered off like sheep; each of us had strayed off on his own path,...”

(glc) Isaiah 53 has a description of the Messiah. When we stop listening to the voice of the shepherd (Jesus) we wander off to our own paths, our own desires. We need Messiah (Jesus) in our lives to restore us to relationship to God.

Exodus 24: 9-11

(glc)Moses, Aaron, two of Aaron’s sons, 70 elders went part way up the mountain and saw God. Verse 10 describes what was under God’s feet. Perhaps they were all prostrate in reverent awe for a time. Then they ate and drank.

Exodus 24:12-14

(glc)God tells Moses to come up to him on the mountain to get the stone tablets with the law and commandments to use to teach Israel. Moses tells the elders to wait and to turn to Aaron and Hur for decisions.

Exodus 24:15 - 18

(glc)Moses goes up into the cloud on the mountain. The people below could see the cloud and the glory of God (like fire) on the mountain. Moses was there 40 days and nights. In a few chapters it is told that the people gave up on Moses and wanted something tangible, something they could see, something they could put their trust in, a golden calf. The cloud was unusual but it didn’t satisfy or build up the faith of the people. How soon do we give up on God when we don’t see tangible things in our lives? I encourage you to read the Bible to build up your faith, pray to God and take time to listen to him … through what the Holy Spirit reveals to you as you read, through the words of other committed Christians, even perhaps through God speaking to you directly with an inaudible voice in your mind or audible voice. But “test the spirits” as explained in 1 John 4

1 John 4: 1-6 “ Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2** By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses Jesus as the Christ who has come in the flesh is from God, **3** but every spirit that refuses to confess Jesus, that spirit is not from God.... 4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world’s perspective and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God; the person who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.”

(glc) If you receive any directions that are contrary to what is written in the Bible, that direction is not from God.

Galatians 1:6-9 “ **6** I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are following a different gospel – **7** not that there really is another gospel, but there are some who are disturbing you and wanting to distort the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we (or an angel from heaven) should preach a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be condemned to hell! **9** As we have said before, and now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let him be condemned to hell!”

(glc) (I have shared this verse with missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints … Mormons) who came to our front door .

God Gives Directions To Moses While He Is On The Mountain

Exodus 25

(glc) God gives directions for the tabernacle and ark. God will meet Moses there and speak to him about Israel in the future.

Exodus 25:40

(glc) Moses is reminded that Israel should follow the directions given for the items of worship exactly. If the nation did not closely follow God’s pattern they would soon not follow God’s pattern for living either. These worship items reinforced God’s special connection to Israel, that he communicated with them, that they were to have a special relationship to him that no other people had. They should have felt special and should have been motivated to keep God’s commandments to keep their special relationship with God.

(glc) God gives specific plans for the tabernacle. It will be sturdy but portable.

Exodus 26, 27

(glc) God gave special skill to craftsmen

Exodus 28

(glc) A person will bring a memorial of the people before the Lord.

Exodus 28:29-30 “ **29** Aaron will bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of decision over his heart when he goes into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. **30** “You are to put the Urim and the Thummim into the breastpiece of decision; and they are to be over Aaron’s heart when he goes in before the Lord. Aaron is to bear the decisions of the Israelites over his heart before the Lord continually.”

(glc) The person will be aware of the need to make atonement for iniquity.

Exodus 28:36-39 “**36** “You are to make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it the way a seal is engraved: “Holiness to the Lord.”**37** You are to attach to it a blue cord so that it will be on the turban; .... **38** It will be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron will bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the Israelites are to sanctify by all their holy gifts; it will always be on his forehead, for their acceptance before the Lord. **39** You are to weave the tunic of fine linen and make the turban of fine linen, and make the sash the work of an embroiderer.”

Exodus 28

(glc) The priestly garments for Aaron and his sons were “for glory and for beauty.” They would serve to remind the people of the importance of the worship.

(glc) The priests needed to be consecrated.

Exodus 29: 1- 37

(glc) There will be regular offerings to God.

Exodus 29:38-43

(glc) God sets apart as holy the tent of meeting, the altar, and Aaron and his sons.

Exodus 29:1-34

Exodus 29:**35-37** “Thus you are to do for Aaron and for his sons, according to all that I have commanded you; you are to consecrate them for seven days. **36** Every day you are to prepare a bull for a purification offering for atonement. You are to purify the altar by making atonement for it, and you are to anoint it to set it apart as holy. **37** For seven days you are to make atonement for the altar and set it apart as holy. Then the altar will be most holy. Anything that touches the altar will be holy.”

Genesis 29:**44-46** “So I will set apart as holy the tent of meeting and the altar, and I will set apart as holy Aaron and his sons, that they may minister as priests to me. **45** I will reside among the Israelites, and I will be their God, **46** and they will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out from the land of Egypt, so that I may reside among them. I am the Lord their God.”

Exodus 30:29-33 “ **29** So you are to sanctify them, and they will be most holy; anything that touches them will be holy. **30** “You are to anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them, so that they may minister as my priests. **31** And you are to tell the Israelites: ‘This is to be my sacred anointing oil throughout your generations. **32** It must not be applied to people’s bodies, and you must not make any like it with the same recipe. It is holy, and it must be holy to you. **33** Whoever makes perfume like it and whoever puts any of it on someone not a priest will be cut off from his people.’”

(glc) God establishes a right way of approaching him …. altar of incense, atonement offering once a year,, collection of “ransom” for each man to fund the services at the tent of meeting as an offering for the Lord, bronze laver for priests to wash when they enter the tent of meeting so they do not die, sacred anointing oil mixture used to anoint the tent, ark, table, utensils, incense altar, altar for burnt offering, laver.

The people are not to imitate the anointing oil and use it for their own purposes. The people need to recognize the special ceremonies and keep God special in their hearts. There should be a sense of mystery about God and a reverent awe for how he has established the order of worship.

God Wants People To Remember Him, Sabbath

Exodus 31:12-17 “ **12** The Lord said to Moses, **13** “Tell the Israelites, ‘Surely you must keep my Sabbaths, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.” **14** So you must keep the Sabbath, for it is holy for you. Everyone who defiles it must surely be put to death; indeed, if anyone does any work on it, then that person will be cut off from among his people. **15** Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; anyone who does work on the Sabbath day must surely be put to death. **16** The Israelites must keep the Sabbath by observing the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. **17** It is a sign between me and the Israelites forever;for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’”

(glc) The Saturday Sabbath was for Israel. Jesus was not controlled by the Sabbath. He harvested food on the sabbath and healed on the Sabbath, much to the irritation of Pharisees. (John 9; John 7; John 5; Luke 6;

Luke 6:1-5 “ Jesus was going through the grain fields on a Sabbath, and his disciples picked some heads of wheat... and ate them. **2** But some of the Pharisees said, “Why are you doing what is against the law on the Sabbath?” **3** Jesus answered them, “Haven’t you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry – **4** how he entered the house of God, took and ate the sacred bread, which is not lawful for any to eat but the priests alone, and gave it to his companions?” **5** Then he said to them, “The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”

(glc) But Christians are still to honor God regularly.

Acts 20: **7** “On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul began to speak to the people, and because he intended to leave the next day, he extended his message until midnight”

Romans 14:1-6 “ ...do not have disputes over differing opinions. **2** One person believes in eating everything, but the weak person eats only vegetables. **3** The one who eats everything must not despise the one who does not, and the one who abstains must not judge the one who eats everything, for God has accepted him. **4** Who are you to pass judgment on another’s servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 One person regards one day holier than other days, and another regards them all alike. Each must be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day does it for the Lord. The one who eats, eats for the Lord because he gives thanks to God, and the one who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. “

Hebrews 10:24-25 “**24** And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, **25** not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.”

Rev 1:10-11 “**10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day when I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, **11** saying: “Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches – to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”

Colossians 2:16-19 “ **16** ...do not let anyone judge you with respect to food or drink, or in the matter of a feast, new moon, or Sabbath days – **17** these are only the shadow of the things to come, but the reality is Christ! **18** Let no one who delights in false humility and the worship of angels pass judgment on you. That person goes on at great lengths about what he has supposedly seen, but he is puffed up with empty notions by his fleshly mind. **19** He has not held fast to the head from whom the whole body, supported and knit together through its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.”

(glc) For more info on the selection of the day of worship in the early church see:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabbath_in_Christianity#Early_Christianity>

Of course, I put the Bible passages on a much higher level than Wikipedia!

(glc) When I was young (1950s 1960s) it was rare that a retail business was open on Sunday. There would be restaurants open. Some states had “Blue Laws” to keep most businesses closed on Sunday. The sale of alcohol was restricted on Sundays. I spoke at a city council meeting in Fremont to support the ban on alcohol sales on Sunday. This was sometime near the year 2000. At the first reading of the ordinance I was the only person to speak at the council meeting to oppose the lifting of the ban on Sunday sales. Others spoke against the ordinance at later council meetings. Sunday sales of alcohol were approved by the council. My hometown of Elmwood, NE did not have sales of any kind of alcohol until the early 2000s.

But I digress.

Back to Sunday and culture. Even in my own life I have seen a trend with less of the day of Sunday focused on God. Pam and I attend church regularly … missing for bad weather, illness, or occasionally for family plans. We attend a small church group in homes on many Sunday nights. But, there is less “down time” with bible reading and prayer than there used to be. There is now more thought given to how I will use the afternoon hours for something I want to do. So I am in danger, and our culture is in danger of minimizing God, of putting God in the box of Sunday morning. Pam and I do pray daily and read the bible almost daily. I have had a habit of reading a chapter in the bible at the start of every day for many years, probably more than 20 years. I sometimes eat breakfast before reading the bible but that is rare. My council to those reading this is to make God part of your everyday life, remember what God has done for this world in providing Jesus sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins with the result of restoration of relationship between God and those who accept Jesus sacrifice for their sins.

(glc) People Are Impatient And Want To Go Their Own Way

Exodus 32:1 “When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, “Get up, make us gods that will go before us. As for this fellow Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him!”

(glc) Leaders Need To Be Led By God, Not By Pressure From The People

Exodus 32:2-6

(glc) Aaron gives in to the will of the people and forms a golden idol (and perhaps other idols). He even proclaims that these “gods” brought the people out of Egypt instead of the one true God.

Exodus 32:7-8

(glc) God knows what the people have done. God calls Israel, Moses people. They are not behaving as God’s people when they turn to idols.

Intercession

Exodus 32:9-14

(glc) God tells Moses he intends to destroy the people. Moses calls the people God’s people and asks God to remember the patriarchs and promises to the patriarchs. God relents. It would, perhaps, have been easier for Moses if God had destroyed the people so Moses could work with his children to build up another nation that would follow God’s ways. But Moses interceded, he asked God to turn from his anger and relent. We should not give up on people either. We should be interceding for people. This must be done with caution, that we don’t get a “holier than thou” attitude that is entirely misplaced. Only God is the true judge of people’s hearts and faith. But we can see the fruits of people’s lives, and we can hear their words. If these are in disagreement with the Bible it is time for us to intercede. Intercession is not only through prayer but in personal, loving, conversation with people.

Ephesians 4:14-16 “**14** So we are no longer to be children... carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. **15** But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. **16** From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body builds itself up in love.”

(glc) Also, if Israel had been destroyed and a new Israel created directly from Moses descendants, I have no doubt the long term outcome would again be turning away from God. Your good relationship with God is only established by personally accepting Jesus’ sacrifice for your sins. We continue to sin after personally accepting Jesus but if we ask for forgiveness we will receive forgiveness. See the book of Romans for discussion about our sin problems.

Exodus 32:19-20

(glc) Moses is angry with the people, breaks the stone tablets, and forces the Israelites to drink water with the golden calf powder in it. There are consequences for sin.

Exodus 32:21-24

(glc) Moses is angry with Aaron. Aaron has not been a good leader. Moses left him in charge and he did not lead the people in godly ways. His excuse is weak to the point of lying.

Exodus 32:25-29

(glc) Moses has the Levites kill people in the camp. 3,000 die. The Levites are commended for being “for the Lord.” They were faithful to God above any family tie.

Exodus 32: 30-32

(glc) Moses confronts the people about their sin but he does not separate himself from the people. Instead he tells them he will try to help them restore their relationship to God. Moses admits sin to God and again intercedes to the point of offering that he be destroyed along with Israel.

Exodus 32:33-35

(glc) God still plans to punish those who sinned “I will wipe them out of m book.” God sends sickness on the people.

(glc) God Separates Himself From Israel

Exodus 33:1-6 “ The Lord said to Moses, “Go up from here, you and the people whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ **2** I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. 3 Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go up among you, for you are a stiff-necked people, and I might destroy you on the way.”

4 When the people heard this troubling word they mourned.... 5 For the Lord had said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites, ‘You are a stiff-necked people. If I went up among you for a moment, I might destroy you. Now take off your ornaments, that I may know what I should do to you.’” 6 So the Israelites stripped off their ornaments by Mount Horeb.”

(glc) God will still help Israel in moving into the land that was promised to the patriarchs, but he will keep some distance from them. Israel’s behavior and attitude was not fully devoted to God. God is separated from sin. We fully experience God in our lives when we accept forgiveness through Jesus’ sacrifice. Then God sees Christ’s righteousness around us instead of our sin.

Israel took off their ornaments. Perhaps they stopped thinking so much of themselves.

Jesus Righteousness Covers Us

Romans 3: 20-24 “ For no one is declared righteous before him by the works of the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. 21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God (although it is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed – 22 namely, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. 24 But they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 3: **28 “**For we consider that a person is declared righteous by faith apart from the works of the law.”

Romans 5: **8** “But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, because we have now been declared righteous by his blood, we will be saved through him from God’s wrath.”

Romans 5:**17** “For if, by the transgression of the one man, death reigned through the one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ!”

Romans 10:1-4 “Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God on behalf of my fellow Israelites is for their salvation. **2** For I can testify that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not in line with the truth. **3** For ignoring the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking instead to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. **4** For Christ is the end of the law, with the result that there is righteousness for everyone who believes.”

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 “ **17** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;what is old has passed away – look, what is new has come! **18** And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. **19** In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people’s trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation. **20** Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making his plea through us. We plead with you on Christ’s behalf, “Be reconciled to God!” **21** God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God.”

Philippians 1:9-11 “**9** And I pray this, that your love may abound even more and more in knowledge and every kind of insight **10** so that you can decide what is best, and thus be sincere and blameless for the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.”

Philippians 3:6-9 “ **6** In my zeal for God I persecuted the church. According to the righteousness stipulated in the law I was blameless. **7** But these assets I have come to regard as liabilities because of Christ. **8** More than that, I now regard all things as liabilities compared to the far greater value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things – indeed, I regard them as dung! – that I may gain Christ, **9** and be found in him, not because I have my own righteousness derived from the law, but because I have the righteousness that comes by way of Christ’s faithfulness – a righteousness from God that is in fact based on Christ’s faithfulness.”

Exodus 33: 7-11

(glc) The tent of meeting where Moses talked to God was moved to outside the camp. The people worshiped as they saw the cloud descend at the entrance to the tent.

(glc) Moses Sought to Be Closer To God

Exodus 33:12-23

(glc) Moses wanted guidance from God and wanted to know God. Knowing God would help Moses continue to find favor in God’s sight. Moses did not want to move on without having God with them. God knew Moses by name. Moses asks to see God’s glory and God lets Moses see a little of his glory, but the full glory of God would be too much for Moses to comprehend and experience.

(glc) God Expects His People to Keep His Ways

Exodus 34:10-17 “ **10** He said, “See, I am going to make a covenant before all your people. I will do wonders such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. All the people among whom you live will see the work of the Lord, for it is a fearful thing that I am doing with you. 11 “Obey what I am commanding you this day. I am going to drive out before you the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite. 12 Be careful not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it become a snare among you. 13 Rather you must destroy their altars, smash their images, and cut down their Asherah poles. 14 For you must not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. 15 Be careful not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone invites you, you will eat from his sacrifice; 16 and you then take his daughters for your sons, and when his daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will make your sons prostitute themselves to their gods as well. 17 You must not make yourselves molten gods.”

(glc) Don’t be misled by people around you. Guard yourself from non-christian influences.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 “ **14** Do not become partners with those who do not believe, for what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship does light have with darkness? **15** And what agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share in common with an unbeliever? **16** And what mutual agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said, “***I will live in them*** ***and will walk among them****,* ***and I will be their God****,* ***and they will be my people***.”**17** Therefore “***come out from their midst****,* ***and be separate***,” says the Lord, “***and touch no unclean thing****,* *and I will welcome* *you*, **18** *and I will be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters*,” says the All-Powerful Lord.”

Exodus 34:18-28

(glc) God gives Moses his expectations for the behavior of the people and times of special feasts. Moses records the ten commandments on the stone tablets. They become part of the covenant between the people and God.

Exodus 34:29-35

(glc) When Moses came down his face was radiant. Perhaps this is the original “aglow with the Spirit.” His 40 days with God had changed his outward appearance. This faded over time. It is good to have “mountaintop,” refreshing, awe-inspiring, experiences with God. I don’t think everyone has them. But we all should have the foundation for solid growth with God provided by reading the bible and spending time in prayer.

Exodus 35:1- 29; 36:1-7

(glc) Israel brings freewill offerings to the Lord, so the sanctuary could be well made.

The people bring so much that they have to be told to stop bringing offerings.

Exodus 36, 37, 38

(glc) The work was done as God have given directions to Moses.

The gold and silver and bronze used were of great value.

Exodus 39

(glc) The garments were made as God directed.

Exodus 39:30-31 “ **30** They made a plate, the holy diadem, of pure gold and wrote on it an inscription, as on the engravings of a seal, “Holiness to the Lord.” **31** They attached to it a blue cord, to attach it to the turban above, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

Exodus 39:42-43 “**42** The Israelites did all the work according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses. **43** Moses inspected all the work – and they had done it just as the Lord had commanded – they had done it exactly – and Moses blessed them.”

Exodus 40

(glc) The tabernacle, the tent of meeting is set up, and articles of worship are anointed, sanctified. Aaron is anointed and sanctified. His sons are anointed. Moses puts the tabernacle together.

Exodus 40:33-38 “**33** And he set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and the altar, and put the curtain at the gate of the courtyard. So Moses finished the work. **34** Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. 35 Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. 36 But when the cloud was lifted up from the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on all their journeys; 37 but if the cloud was not lifted up, then they would not journey further until the day it was lifted up. 38 For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, but fire would be on it at night, in plain view of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.”

(glc) … God led Israel out of Egypt and into a relationship with him. God showed his patience and also his holiness during this time. Exodus ends on a high note, with the people willingly participating in giving valuable items to furnish the tabernacle. And with the tabernacle finished God displays his presence with the cloud by day and fire by night.