



# EXODUS

A 12-WEEK STUDY

Matthew R. Newkirk



**J. I. Packer**

THEOLOGICAL EDITOR

**Dane C. Ortlund**

SERIES EDITOR

“This series is a tremendous resource for those wanting to study and teach the Bible with an understanding of how the gospel is woven throughout Scripture. Here are gospel-minded pastors and scholars doing gospel business from all the Scriptures. This is a biblical and theological feast preparing God’s people to apply the entire Bible to all of life with heart and mind wholly committed to Christ’s priorities.”

**BRYAN CHAPPELL**, President Emeritus, Covenant Theological Seminary; Senior Pastor,  
Grace Presbyterian Church, Peoria, Illinois

“Mark Twain may have smiled when he wrote to a friend, ‘I didn’t have time to write you a short letter, so I wrote you a long letter.’ But the truth of Twain’s remark remains serious and universal, because well-reasoned, compact writing requires extra time and extra hard work. And this is what we have in the Crossway Bible study series *Knowing the Bible*. The skilled authors and notable editors provide the contours of each book of the Bible as well as the grand theological themes that bind them together as one Book. Here, in a 12-week format, are carefully wrought studies that will ignite the mind and the heart.”

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“These *Knowing the Bible* volumes provide a significant and very welcome variation on the general run of inductive Bible studies. This series provides substantial instruction, as well as teaching through the very questions that are asked. *Knowing the Bible* then goes even further by showing how any given text links with the gospel, the whole Bible, and the formation of theology. I heartily endorse this orientation of individual books to the whole Bible and the gospel, and I applaud the demonstration that sound theology was not something invented later by Christians, but is right there in the pages of Scripture.”

**GRAEME L. GOLDSWORTHY**, former lecturer, Moore Theological College; author,  
*According to Plan, Gospel and Kingdom, The Gospel in Revelation, and Gospel and Wisdom*

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**BRUCE A. WARE**, Professor of Christian Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

# KNOWING THE BIBLE

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Dane C. Ortlund, Series Editor  
Lane T. Dennis, Executive Editor

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Genesis	Matthew	Galatians
Exodus	Mark	Philippians
Ruth/Esther	Luke	Colossians/Philemon
Psalms	John	Hebrews
Proverbs	Acts	James
Isaiah	Romans	Revelation
Daniel	1 Corinthians	

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Matthew R. Newkirk

*Knowing the Bible: Exodus, A 12-Week Study*

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## S E R I E S   P R E F A C E

**KNOWING THE BIBLE**, as the series title indicates, was created to help readers know and understand the meaning, the message, and the God of the Bible. Each volume in the series consists of 12 units that progressively take the reader through a clear, concise study of that book of the Bible. In this way, any given volume can fruitfully be used in a 12-week format either in group study, such as in a church-based context, or in individual study. Of course, these 12 studies could be completed in fewer or more than 12 weeks, as convenient, depending on the context in which they are used.

Each study unit gives an overview of the text at hand before digging into it with a series of questions for reflection or discussion. The unit then concludes by highlighting the gospel of grace in each passage (“Gospel Glimpses”), identifying whole-Bible themes that occur in the passage (“Whole-Bible Connections”), and pinpointing Christian doctrines that are affirmed in the passage (“Theological Soundings”).

The final component to each unit is a section for reflecting on personal and practical implications from the passage at hand. The layout provides space for recording responses to the questions proposed, and we think readers need to do this to get the full benefit of the exercise. The series also includes definitions of key words. These definitions are indicated by a note number in the text and are found at the end of each chapter.

Lastly, for help in understanding the Bible in this deeper way, we urge readers to use the ESV Bible and the *ESV Study Bible*, which are available in various print and digital formats, including online editions at [www.esvbible.org](http://www.esvbible.org). The *Knowing the Bible* series is also available online. Additional 12-week studies covering each book of the Bible will be added as they become available.

May the Lord greatly bless your study as you seek to know him through knowing his Word.

J. I. Packer  
Lane T. Dennis

# WEEK 1: OVERVIEW



## Getting Acquainted

The book of Exodus received its name because it records Israel's departure (Greek *exodos*) from Egypt. The book recounts how God graciously delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt, traces their journey through the wilderness, and describes in detail the covenant<sup>1</sup> God made with them at Mount Sinai. In telling this story, Exodus highlights the supreme faithfulness and mercy of God, and contrasts this with Israel's repetitive grumbling, rebellion, and sin. In so doing, this book presents a condensed picture of the gospel. Simply put, Exodus shows us that God saves sinners.

After showcasing his power and glory in freeing Israel from slavery, God gathers Israel to the foot of Mount Sinai where he communicates his will to them through the law. The instructions of the law include both requirements for how Israel is to live (chs. 20–24) and directives for how God is to be worshiped (chs. 25–31). Although Israel continues to demonstrate idolatrous tendencies, God shows himself to be supremely merciful and faithful (chs. 32–34). The book ends with Israel constructing the tabernacle<sup>2</sup> according to God's specifications, and God descending to dwell with them (chs. 35–40). (For further background, see the *ESV Study Bible*, pages 139–144; also online at [www.esvbible.org](http://www.esvbible.org).)

## Placing It in the Larger Story

Whereas Genesis records God's promise that Abraham would become a great nation (Gen. 12:2), Exodus describes the fulfillment of that promise (Ex. 1:6–7). Moreover, God's covenant with the patriarchs,<sup>3</sup> in which he promised to give their descendants the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:18; 26:3; 35:12), is the reason God delivers Israel from Egypt (Ex. 2:24).

Although God gives Israel the law and comes to dwell in their midst, ultimately Israel will not be faithful to their covenant with him. Only in Jesus do we find a faithful Israelite who keeps God's law while simultaneously embodying God's presence with his people (John 1:14).

## Key Verse

“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples” (Ex. 19:4–5a).

## Date and Historical Background

In the Gospels, Jesus quotes Exodus 3:6 and ascribes authorship to Moses (Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37). In Exodus, one verse in particular narrows down when Moses finalized the book. Exodus 16:35 says, “The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan.” This verse suggests that Moses did not finalize the book of Exodus until *after* the forty years in the desert, when Israel had reached the border of Canaan. This reveals that the original audience of Exodus was the second generation of Israel, camped on the plains of Moab, waiting to enter the Promised Land.

## Outline

### I. Exodus from Egypt (1:1–18:27)

#### A. Israel in Egypt (1:1–11:10)

1. Israel's oppression and Moses' early life (1:1–2:25)
2. Moses' call and preparation (3:1–7:7)
3. The plagues against Egypt (7:8–11:10)

**B. From Egypt to Sinai (12:1–18:27)**

1. Passover and exodus (12:1–13:16)
2. Deliverance at the Red Sea (13:17–15:21)
3. Journey to Sinai (15:22–18:27)

**II. Covenant at Sinai (19:1–40:38)**

**A. Covenant law at Sinai (19:1–24:18)**

1. Covenant preparation (19:1–25)
2. Covenant law (20:1–23:33)
3. Covenant confirmation (24:1–18)

**B. Divine Presence with Israel (25:1–40:38)**

1. Instructions for building the tabernacle (25:1–31:18)
2. Covenant violation, intercession, and renewal (32:1–34:35)
3. Construction of the tabernacle (35:1–40:38)

**▶ As You Get Started**

What is your present understanding of the events in Exodus as they relate to God’s plan of salvation? How would you summarize the teaching of the book as a whole?

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How do you understand Exodus’s contribution to Christian theology? From your current knowledge of Exodus, what does it teach us about God, humanity, sin, salvation, and other doctrines?

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## WEEK 1: OVERVIEW

What has perplexed you about Exodus? What questions do you hope to see answered through this study of Exodus?

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### As You Finish This Unit . . .

Ask God to open your heart and mind as you begin this study of Exodus. Also, take a few minutes and look back through this first unit of study to see what the Lord may be teaching you—and perhaps to highlight or underline anything that jumps out so you can review it later.

### Definitions

<sup>1</sup> **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two parties, typically involving a formal statement of their relationship, a list of stipulations and obligations for both parties, a list of witnesses to the agreement, and a list of curses for unfaithfulness and blessings for faithfulness to the agreement.

<sup>2</sup> **Tabernacle** – The tent where God dwelled on earth and communed with his people as Israel’s divine king.

<sup>3</sup> **Patriarchs** – The earliest ancestors of Israel, primarily Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.



**THE BOOK OF EXODUS** recounts the single most important event in Israel's history: their escape from slavery in the land of Egypt.

In this easy-to-use guide, readers will follow Israel's journey through the Red Sea, across the wilderness, and eventually to Mount Sinai—rediscovering the glory of the God who rescues and redeems sinners, even in the midst of their unfaithfulness.

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## ABOUT THE *KNOWING THE BIBLE* SERIES

Over the course of 12 weeks, these studies explore books of the Bible and:

- Ask thoughtful questions to spur discussion
- Show how each passage unveils the gospel
- Tie the text in with the whole story of Scripture
- Illuminate the doctrines taught in each passage
- Invite you to discover practical implications
- Help you better understand and apply God's Word

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author, *According to Plan*

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BIBLE STUDY

