

THE HEART OF GOD  
EXODUS THROUGH JOSHUA



T. M. Moore

*A Scriptorium Study*

*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,*

*He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27*

The Fellowship of Ailbe

*The Heart of God: Exodus through Joshua*

The Heart of God: Exodus through Joshua  
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## Introduction to *Exodus through Joshua*

Four hundred years after the end of Genesis, Israel is no longer a tribal unit. They have become a great people – great, but enslaved. And God determined not to leave them in Egypt, but to bring them out with a mighty hand, renew His covenant with them, and lead them into the land of promises.

*Exodus through Joshua* tells the story of that deliverance, and of the preparations God made with His people to enable them to enter more fully and more consistently into the grace and blessing of His covenant. God's covenant undergoes some expanding in this section, but only to adapt the *same* covenant made with Adam, Noah, and Abraham to the changing circumstances of the people of God.

The period of time covered by this section begins with a *deliverance from* and ends with a *deliverance into*. It's fitting that the name of the primary leader of the first part of this period is Moses, whose name means "drawn out"; and that the primary leader of the last part is Joshua, whose name means "he delivers."

*The Heart of God* studies provide a road map through the Scriptures, unfolding key unifying threads and following the development of those matters closest to the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, from Genesis to Revelation. Through all our study we'll see how the Scriptures lead us to Jesus, and how He, in turn, brings into the presence of our heavenly Father and His Kingdom. There, as we encounter God and His glory, the Spirit can transform us increasingly in to the very image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We begin our study of *The Heart of God* by looking at the uniqueness and unity of Scripture, and at three primary themes which lie close to the heart of God.

We're pleased to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

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We hope you find this study of Acts instructive and helpful to equip you for your walk with and work for the Lord. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1 God's Covenant Renewed

*Read and meditate on Exodus 1-3 and 6.1-2*

By the time this next period of revelation begins, 400 years have passed (Gen. 15.13). The focus changes as God begins to concentrate on a *people* rather than on just one *family*. His work of creating a people for Himself accelerates and expands in this new epoch, and we should expect to see His covenant take on some new dimensions in order to accommodate to the changing circumstances of God's people. We will also see that each of the unifying threads of Scripture comes into focus in bolder and more dramatic ways, as God continues to act toward His people according the Word of promise He spoke to Abraham, and the purpose for which He created people in the beginning.

*For reflection*

1. At the very beginning of this new epoch God made the point of showing the *continuity* of all He was *about to do* with all He had *already done*. How can you see that, for example, in Exodus 2.23-25? How did God regard the covenant He had made with Abraham? How should this instruct us in *our* period of living in God's covenant?

2. In Exodus 3, how did God make it clear to Moses and us that what He was preparing to do for His people was based on His covenant with Abraham? What are the implications of this for the *promises* God made to Abraham? How can you see that being renewed in God's covenant is a work of *God* first of all?

3. What Name did God give Moses for identifying Him to the people? This Name seems to derive from the Hebrew verb *to be* and carries the meaning of self-determined, perpetual being and existence. Why is this a fitting way to think about the God of the covenant? How would this Name have encouraged His people? What does God's Name suggest about His glory?

4. In Exodus 6.1-12, God is *adamant* about His covenant. Not only did He *establish* the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but He is determined to *continue* that same covenant with this generation of Israelites. The word *remember* here, and in Exodus 2.24, means something like *actively attended to*. What does God's attitude toward His covenant suggest about what ours should be?

5. Neither Israel nor Pharaoh listened to Moses on his first attempt to bring the people out of Egypt. The people had been groaning in their captivity and crying out to God for relief. Yet, when Moses came to them, they rejected him. Why (cf. Ex. 5.15-21)? Should God's people expect opposition as they begin to pursue God's promises? Is stretching out into a fuller realization of God's covenant a *scary* proposition? Explain.

*Summary*

God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt unto Himself, so that He could renew His covenant with them, now as a great *people* and not simply a *family*. But captivity, be it ever so onerous, can become a kind of comfort zone against the unknown. Is it possible that God's people today are too comfortable in a captivity of their own to begin moving in new ways toward the

promises of God? Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

Israel also came into Egypt,  
And Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham.  
He increased His people greatly,  
And made them stronger than their enemies.  
He turned their heart to hate His people,  
To deal craftily with His servants.  
He sent Moses His servant,  
*And* Aaron whom He had chosen.

Psalm 105.22-26

## 2 Deliverance!

*Read and meditate on Exodus 12-15.*

Like the flood, the deliverance from Egypt represented an act both of God's judgment and His deliverance. We see Him moving *against* the sins of hardened people and *for* the welfare of His people. At the same time, we see Him *covering* the sins of His people through an act of sacrifice. Here is another type of Jesus to come.

*For reflection*

1. Summarize the specific details of the sacrifice which was to be prepared for the Passover. What do we learn from this about the nature and role of sacrifice when it comes to protecting God's people from His wrath?
2. In view of this, why is John the Baptist's comment in John 1.29 important for our understanding of Christ and His role in God's economy and covenant?
3. The Passover was designed to link Israel's past with her present and future. How can you see this, especially in Exodus 15.1-17? Why is it important that God's people have such a perspective? How did this seem to affect their confidence as they began moving toward the land of promise (vv. 14-17)?
4. Meditate on Romans 9.16-18. What does Israel's deliverance from Egypt reveal about the glory of God?
5. Meditate on Exodus 15.22-27. At this point, Israel didn't really have any *commandments* or *statutes* from God, except to follow Moses out of Egypt. How can you see that God was preparing His people for the next stage of development of His covenant? What does this suggest about how we must pursue the promises of God's covenant?

*Summary*

God delivered His people from Egypt by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. He showed His glory both in His strong love for them and His powerful wrath against their enemies. And He began preparing them for the next stage in the development of His covenant relationship with them. What are we learning about the role of faith in the life of God's covenant people from Exodus?

*Closing Prayer*

He also brought them out with silver and gold,  
And *there was* none feeble among His tribes.  
Egypt was glad when they departed,  
For the fear of them had fallen upon them.  
He spread a cloud for a covering,  
And fire to give light in the night.  
*The people* asked, and He brought quail,  
And satisfied them with the bread of heaven.

He opened the rock, and water gushed out;  
It ran in the dry places *like* a river.  
For He remembered His holy promise,  
*And* Abraham His servant.

Psalm 105.37-42

### 3 Commandments and Statutes

*Read and meditate on Exodus 19, 20, 24, and 40.*

As God renewed His covenant with Israel, He constituted them as a people and gave them His Law to establish their unique identity: Holy to the Lord. He *saved* Israel, then *declared them to be His people*, before He *gave them His Law* so that they could love Him and their neighbors. We must not lose sight of this order of events.

*For reflection*

1. According to Exodus 19.1-6 and 20.1, 2, what is the *basis* upon which God declared this further stage of His covenant's development? Is this a *new* covenant or a *new development* of the *existing* covenant? Explain.
2. This is neither a new nor a different covenant; rather, is it an elaboration in more specific detail – due to a change in the circumstances of His people – of His existing covenant (cf. Gal. 3.16-22). What was it about Israel's change of circumstances that made it necessary to bring these new changes into God's covenant? Should we expect to see similar changes as God's covenant continues to unfold in Scripture? Explain.
3. The Law was not given in order to *save* Israel, and Israel did not *become* God's people by *keeping His Law*. He saved them and took them to Himself, then gave them His Law. What is the role of Law in God's covenant, as we see it unfolding here?
4. How did the people respond to God in these chapters, and what can we learn from them about how we should respond to the Lord? Are the people *earning* the favor of God or *responding* to it? And *how* did they respond to the favor, graciously received?
5. Why was the Tabernacle important? How would the Tabernacle have reinforced the significance of God's Name? What was in the Tabernacle, and what was done there? In John 1.14 Jesus is described as having "tabernacled" among us (the Greek verb is the same as the Septuagint uses for the Tabernacle). What significance should we attach to this? Is the Tabernacle yet another *sign*? Explain.

*Summary*

In order to constitute Israel as a people holy to the Lord, God needed to do two things: First, He had to set forth His expectations for His people, in order to guide them in to His blessings. And, second, He needed to assure them of His presence with them, which He did through the Tabernacle. Can you see any *foreshadowing* in this of what it means to follow Jesus Christ?

*Closing Prayer*

Save us, O LORD our God,  
And gather us from among the Gentiles,  
To give thanks to Your holy name,



To triumph in Your praise.  
Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel  
From everlasting to everlasting!  
And let all the people say, "Amen!"  
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 106.47, 48

## 4 A Standard of Holiness

*Read and meditate on Leviticus 9, 16, 17, and 20.*

Leviticus helps us to understand God's standard of holiness by explaining the system of sacrifices, offerings, and holy days God established to help His people stay right with Him. It's always easy to drift or fall away from God; but returning to Him, and remaining in Him, can be costly.

*For reflection*

1. What are your general impressions from reading these four chapters? What role did priests, sacrifices, and holy days fulfill in God's covenant at this time?
2. In Leviticus 9.22-24, how did God show that He was pleased with the response of His people to this further development of His covenant? What is God saying to His people about their response and His glory? How did the people respond as God manifested His glory among them?
3. The shedding of blood played an important part in Israel's ability to maintain a right relationship with God. According to Leviticus 16 and 17, why was this so (cf. esp. 17.11)? According to Hebrews 10.1-8, what did these sacrifices actually accomplish? To what did they point?
4. Review Leviticus 16.29-34. How can you see in the work of the high priest a foreshadowing of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ?
5. Review Leviticus 20. What does it mean to be a holy people unto the Lord? What lengths is God willing to go to in order to help His people be holy (cf. Heb. 12.3-11)? What is involved in pursuing holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7.1)?

*Summary*

God commanded His people to be holy, but for them to fulfill this, He would have to provide *means of grace* to lift them out of their sin. Priests, sacrifices, offerings, a place of meeting, the Sabbath, feast days – all these were given to encourage the people to seek the Lord and not to become complacent about their sins, nor to lapse into the ways of the surrounding nations. What *means of grace* has God provided for us to be holy, as He is holy?

*Closing Prayer*

O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger,  
Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure.  
Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I *am* weak;  
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled.  
My soul also is greatly troubled;  
But You, O LORD —how long?  
Return, O LORD, deliver me!  
Oh, save me for Your mercies' sake!

Psalm 6.1-4

## 5 Poised to Enter the Promises

*Read and meditate on Numbers 10, 13, 14, 21.1-9, and chapter 33.*

Numbers tells us about what happened with God's people between the time He renewed His covenant with them at Mt. Sinai, and they actually reached the land of Canaan to enter it. Poised to enter the promises of God's covenant, Israel demurred – only to be led back to the brink years later.

*For reflection*

1. Getting to the *promises* of God's covenant involved Israel in a journey. They had to move in a particular direction, by a particular means, in order to gain what God had promised. What is the significance of Numbers 10.33-36, and how should we apply Israel's *Numbers* experience to our own life in God's covenant?
2. What kept the people of Israel from laying hold on the promises of God as they first approached the land? What warning is there for us in their failure?
3. We note that of the two spies who kept alive the hope of gaining God's promises, one was named *Joshua*. See if you can find what the name *Joshua* means. Is it significant that the *Greek* form of that name is *Jesus*?
4. God may be seen to have been *testing* Moses in the first part of chapter 14. What did Moses invoke so that God would not destroy His people (Num. 14.15-17)? What does this suggest about Moses' understanding of God's covenant? How did God show that Moses had passed the test?
5. Reflect on the episode of the brazen serpent (chapter 21). What situation created the need for this? What was it about merely *looking* at that serpent that saved sinful men and women? In view of Jesus' comment in John 3.14, 15, what do we learn from this episode about God's people and God's redemptive plan?

*Summary*

We've raced through Numbers, bypassing along the way many important aspects of God's Law which His people would need in order to be a people holy to the Lord. But Numbers shows us two things: First, that we can expect many obstacles in our pursuit of God's promises. And, second, that God will never fail us as we turn and seek Him faithfully, according to His Word. Suggest one application of the book of Numbers for your own walk with and work for the Lord.

*Closing Prayer*

Then they despised the pleasant land;  
They did not believe His word,  
But complained in their tents,  
*And* did not heed the voice of the LORD.  
Therefore He raised His hand *in an oath* against them,  
To overthrow them in the wilderness,  
To overthrow their descendants among the nations,

And to scatter them in the lands.  
They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor,  
And ate sacrifices made to the dead.  
Thus they provoked *Him* to anger with their deeds,  
And the plague broke out among them...  
Save us, O LORD our God,  
And gather us from among the Gentiles,  
To give thanks to Your holy name,  
To triumph in Your praise.  
Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel  
From everlasting to everlasting!  
And let all the people say, "Amen!"  
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 106.24-29, 47, 48

## 6 Second Chance

*Read and meditate on Deuteronomy 4-7, 18, and 28.*

Here, after forty years, Israel is poised a second time to enter the land of promise. A new generation is being renewed in God's covenant, and the process involves history, teaching, vision-casting, admonition, and worship.

*For reflection*

1. What does it tell us about the grace of God, and the certainty of His covenant, that we even *have* the book of Deuteronomy?
2. How can you see that the revelation given to this new generation of Israelites is squarely based in and grounded on previous revelation to the people of God? Can you see how careful God was to confirm and reassert the *continuity* of the covenant between this generation and all those generations which had gone before? Is there instruction here for us?
3. How would you describe God's purpose for His people, as you see it being declared in Deuteronomy? How does God plan to keep up His revelation to Israel after Moses is no longer with them? Can you see how chapter 18 points forward to a further stage of God's covenant, and beyond that, to Jesus? Explain.
4. Meditate on Deuteronomy 28.1-14. How *extensive* are the promises of God? How much of life does the covenant embrace? How do these promises compare, for example, with Paul's instruction to live *in all things* to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10.31)?
5. The rest of chapter 28 is a litany of threats or *sanctions*, warning us to walk carefully according to the promises and mandates of God's covenant. Why was this necessary? Is it because God doesn't love His people that He threatens them so severely? How do promises and sanctions work to help keep us living within the framework of God's covenant?

*Summary*

Deuteronomy is a testimony to the unfailing grace of God. He saved a new generation for Himself in order to give them the promises He had been holding out to Israel from the days of Abraham. And yet, Deuteronomy is a book of *Law*. Do grace and Law go together? Are they part of the same saving work of God?

*Closing Prayer*

My days *are* like a shadow that lengthens,  
And I wither away like grass.  
But You, O LORD, shall endure forever,  
And the remembrance of Your name to all generations.  
You will arise *and* have mercy on Zion;  
For the time to favor her,  
Yes, the set time, has come.

For Your servants take pleasure in her stones,  
And show favor to her dust.  
So the nations shall fear the name of the LORD,  
And all the kings of the earth Your glory.  
For the LORD shall build up Zion;  
He shall appear in His glory.  
He shall regard the prayer of the destitute,  
And shall not despise their prayer.  
This will be written for the generation to come,  
That a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.  
For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary;  
From heaven the LORD viewed the earth,  
To hear the groaning of the prisoner,  
To release those appointed to death,  
To declare the name of the LORD in Zion,  
And His praise in Jerusalem,  
When the peoples are gathered together,  
And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

Psalm 102.11-22

## 7 Conquest

*Read and meditate on Joshua 1, 5, 8, 21.43-45, and chapters 22, 23, and 24.*

The book of Joshua covers a period of many years (cf. Acts 13.16-20). Here we see *Joshua* leading the people of Israel *into the promises* of God. Here is another *down payment* or *guarantee* of God's covenant, yet one that still leaves work undone, and promises of more blessing to come.

*For reflection*

1. As you read through these chapters, make note of the various ways the book of Joshua connects with Moses and previous epochs of God's covenant.
2. What aspects of continuity with the previous stage of God's covenant can you identify in these readings? That is, how is it clear that God is still relating to Israel on the basis of existing promises and protocols? Why does it matter that we insist on holding this covenant narrative together?
3. Besides the conquest of the land, what steps did the people of Israel take in order to ensure covenant continuity with the generations that would follow them? Is renewing covenant like this a good idea? What might that look like in our day?
4. On what basis did Joshua exhort the people in chapters 23 and 24? We might say that Joshua is leading the people of God to look back, look up, and look ahead in order to ensure the continuity of God's blessings with them. Explain.
5. Let's see if we can summarize these first two periods of the unfolding of God's Word and the story of the divine economy? How would you describe the *continuity* of God's covenant from Adam to Joshua? What things remain constant? What *discontinuities* can you identify? That is, in what ways has the covenant changed or developed, and why?

*Summary*

At the end of Joshua we feel like we've reached a kind of milestone. The people are back in the land God promised to Abraham. They have vanquished the nations, as opposed to having been enslaved by them. They are the people of God, rather than merely a man and his wife, or a man and his family. What would you describe as the most important lesson you've gained from this first part of God's covenant, Genesis through Joshua? How can you see the unifying threads of Scripture – God's glory, His people, and His redemptive work – weaving together through this period?

*Closing Prayer*

For He remembered His holy promise,  
And Abraham His servant.  
He brought out His people with joy,  
His chosen ones with gladness.  
He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,  
And they inherited the labor of the nations,  
That they might observe His statutes



And keep His laws.  
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 105.42-45

*For reflection or discussion*

1. How did God intend His *grace* and *Law* to work together to bring us into His *promises*?
2. How is it clear, through this period, that realizing the fullness of God's promises depends on *God* and not on *us*? But what is our role in laying hold on those promises?
3. God used a good deal of *symbolism* to dramatize and remind His people of the nature of their relationship with Him. Why did He do this? Isn't it enough just to write it all out?
4. In what ways can you see that this section of Scripture wants to point us forward to Jesus?
5. What have we learned about God's glory in Exodus through Joshua? About His people? In what ways have we seen Him at work for their redemption? What's the most important insight or lesson you've learned from the study for this week?

*Glory to Glory*

We are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ *from* the glory we encounter in God's Word *to* the way we live for His glory in the world (2 Cor. 3.12-18; 1 Cor. 10.31).

What have you encountered *of* God's glory in our reading and meditations in this week's studies? That is, how has He shown Himself *to* you more clearly?

How do you expect this *experience* of God's glory to help you *live more consistently for* His glory in the daily details of your life?

What have you learned about yourself from this week's study to help you in knowing more of the presence, promise, and power of the Kingdom? To equip you for serving Christ in your [Personal Mission Field](#)?

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Thank you.