



The Seventh Plague of Egypt, John Martin, 1823

About the artist and painting: The English Romantic painter John Martin was no stranger to death and despair. Out of the 13 children born to his mother and father, John was one of only 6 that survived childhood. He grew up in poverty, the son of a farm laborer. In 1813, John lost his grandmother, mother, father, and youngest son all in the same year. Despite his popular appeal to English society, he was never really celebrated much less even accepted by the art community. Yet he was somewhat of a revolutionary by choosing to paint very fantastic, biblical scenes and landscapes. One can't help but think John looked to the extraordinary aspects of the bible to deal with the harsh realities of life in a broken world.

His 1823 work, *The Seventh Plague of Egypt*, helps to capture the deliverance theme so prevalent in the Book of Exodus. In the painting you have these mighty structures of Pharaoh's palace, city, and pyramids all displayed in their grandeur. In Moses' day this represented to God's people Pharaoh's power and oppression towards them as he ruthlessly made their lives harsh. Yet God is breaking into these circumstances, "showing up" to bring about His deliverance. In this painting, over and above the Egyptian structures is something more magnificent, the storm of God: thunder, hail, and fire being poured down upon the oppressor and persecutor of His people. And your eye is drawn to the man standing on the left side of the painting, Moses, with outstretched arms looking to the LORD and His deliverance.

The purpose of Exodus:

“The original purpose of Exodus was theological, to teach God’s people about himself and their relationship to him.” - Peter Enns, NIVAC, 25.

“Exodus is about a man, Moses. He is central to the narrative in a way in which no single character, not even Abraham, dominates Genesis...Exodus is about a nation, Israel, moving from slavery in Egypt into freedom...but ultimately Exodus is about God, about the God of the covenant who has instituted a new relationship between himself and those whom he has called to be his people.”
- John Mackay, Exodus, 9.

“The whole story of Exodus is a covenant narrative. The God who pledged himself to Abraham and his descendants remained the faithful God. He had made promises and intended to honor them, and when his moment came, honor them he did...in a word, Exodus cannot be described simply as the book of the holiness of the Lord, nor simply as the book of the presence of the Lord, but as the book of the holy God present in all his holiness at the heart of his people’s life, their provident savior and friend, who makes provision whereby they, in all their unworthiness, may live safely with him.” - Alec Motyer, The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Exodus, 20, 23.

The setting for Exodus 1:1-2:25 is Israel in Egypt. The opening section sets the stage for the rest of the book by describing: the connection to the narrative of Genesis (Ex. 1:1–7), the oppression that has arisen under a new pharaoh (1:8–22), the preservation of Moses at birth (2:1–10) and later in Midian (2:11–22), and the declaration of God’s intimate knowledge of Israel’s suffering and God’s faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (2:23–25).

Exodus is a journey in two parts.

Part One: Egypt Exodus 1-15 Aug. 7th – Oct. 30th

Part Two: Sinai Exodus 16-18 Nov. 6th – Nov. 20th

Pause for Advent: Nov. 27th – Dec. 18th

Part Two Cont. Sinai Exodus 19 - 39 Jan. 8th – June 25th

Pause for Capital Campaign Series: Jan. 22nd-Feb. 12th

Pause for DNOW: February 19th

Pause for Missions Sunday: March 26th

Resources for further study:

Exodus: A Mentors Commentary by John Mackay

Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture
(Volume 2) (The New American Commentary) by Douglas Stuart

APRIL 2,2023

Delivered to a Full Access

Exodus 26:1,6-7,11,14,15,26-27, 31-37 ESV

“Moreover, you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue and purple and scarlet yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them.

6 And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to the other with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be a single whole. 7 “You shall also make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make.

11 “You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together that it may be a single whole.

14 And you shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and a covering of goatskins on top.

15 “You shall make upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood.

26 “You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, 27 and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward.

31 “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen. It shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. 32 And you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, with hooks of gold, on four bases of silver. 33 And you shall hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil. And the veil shall separate for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy. 34 You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place. 35 And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table, and you shall put the table on the north side.

36 “You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, embroidered with needlework. 37 And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

Scriptures for further study:

Genesis 3:8

Genesis 26:3

Exodus 3:11-12

Exodus 25:8-9

Psalm 27:4

Psalm 61:1

1 Peter 1:18

Mark 15:37-38

Romans 5:2

Ephesians 2:18

John 14:6

“Though the tabernacle visibly pointed to God’s presence with his people, there were various barriers preventing immediate access to chambers of their King and God. The separation of the divine presence from the people was not to deprive them of fellowship, but to ensure that approaches to God did not end in disaster. Time and again it was made clear to them that only through the blood of sacrifice was it possible to draw close.”

- John Mackay

**DELIVERED TO A FULL ACCESS
EXODUS 26:1-37 ESV**

BIG IDEA

If God is pervasively present with His people yet accessing Him is no easy feat, best look to the One who by His grace and strength alone can break through today’s barriers, both human and divine.

OUTLINE

1. Presence

2. Barriers

3. Access

NOTES

“The curtain at the heart of the Jerusalem temple was part of a chain of barriers to entry, each of which Jesus removed. The outer court of Gentiles was nullified by Jesus’s drawing all nations by faith. The court of women was nullified by Jesus’s making male, female, Jew, and Greek equal heirs of God (Gal. 3:28). And the priestly courts were nullified by his consecrating all Christians as a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9). Throughout his ministry, Jesus demolished barriers symbolized in the temple apparatus. The inner curtain was simply the last.”

- Greg Lanier

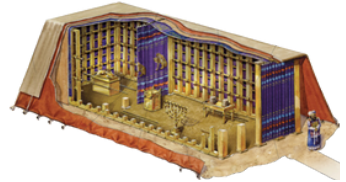
“Missions is the church’s sending out of missionaries (the sent ones) to pioneer the church among peoples who otherwise have no access of the gospel.”

- David Mathis

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

“Emmanuel! God with us! Now, God makes provision to dwell in the midst of his redeemed people. This tabernacle served as a copy and shadow of the heavenly tabernacle in which God dwelt (Heb. 8:5). Eventually, the tabernacle would be replaced with the temple (2 Sam. 7:4–17; 1 Kings 5:3; 6:1–38; 7:13–9:9). As God declares, “I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel” (1 Kings 6:13).

- *ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible*



The tabernacle was a portable temple—a “tent of meeting”—within a movable courtyard (Exodus 25–31; 35–40). It was constructed after the pattern that Yahweh revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai and was assembled in the desert as Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land. The tabernacle courtyard was 150 feet (46 m) long and 75 feet (23 m) wide, totaling 11,250 square feet (1,045 square meters).

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

-*ESV Archeological Study Bible*

Praise to Jesus. Today, reflect on what your life would be like without God’s presence. Praise Jesus for entering Jerusalem so that you can enter God’s presence now and forever through the cross.

Repentance through Jesus. What does it mean to you to have access to God through Jesus Christ? Confess through Jesus for the way that you have taken your privilege for granted by trusting in your abilities, connections, or resources to save you. Confess and repent for the missed opportunities you have had to lead someone to access to God through Jesus.

Consecration for Jesus. Today, once again, behold as if for the first time, your King. He is the One who rode into Jerusalem to finish the work and calling the Father placed over his life. Because of that work and calling, as you praise God for Jesus, abide in his presence and joy. As you go on a mission trip at home, or in your neighborhood, or work, tell folks about the unfathomable wonder and great joy that can theirs through Jesus Christ!

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. Members Only, Club Level, Invitational Only; what are the other contexts to which you must have special permission to enter?
2. How can the presence of a trusted friend change your perspective on a difficult circumstance? Who are those people with whom time together fills you up with joy? How was the physical structure of the Tabernacle significant to the Israelites? What is the connection between the Tabernacle and Palm Sunday?
3. Do you have a friend who has read the Bible but doesn’t understand what it means? What are the barriers to understanding? (Read Acts 8:26-40) Most of us will not be called to a mission field in another country; who are the folks in your life, neighborhood, or work that the Lord is sending you to help remove the barriers which prevent them from seeing, understanding, and embracing the Words of Life?
4. Through the Tabernacle the Israelites have access to God’s presence. How has Jesus changed access to God? How does this make Christianity both the most exclusive and inclusive religion in the world?

“On the one hand, Christianity is the most exclusive religion imaginable. It insists that belief in Jesus Christ is absolutely necessary for salvation. Jesus is the only way. You must go to Him to get eternal life. On the other hand, Christianity is the most inclusive religion possible because it makes salvation accessible to everyone. Salvation is offered for all people through one Person. Whoever believes in Him will not perish. Anyone who receives or believes in Jesus will live forever with God. There are no racial, social, intellectual, or economic criteria that prevent anyone from joining God’s family. One of the problems with the other religions of the world is that they all smack of elitism... Only Christianity offers salvation to everyone as a free gift.”

- Phillip Graham Ryken

“We minimize our joy when we neglect the daily worship of God in private. It is one of the great blessings of life that God does not limit our access to Him and enjoyment of His presence to one day per week! Daily strength, guidance, and encouragement are available to us. An invitation to grow in intimacy with Jesus Christ Himself is open every day. Think of it: The Lord Jesus Christ is willing to meet with you privately for as long as you want, and He is willing- even eager- to meet with you every day!”

- Donald Whitney

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

1. Exodus 26 is full of detailed instructions for the Tabernacle. What do you learn about God's view of worship by these detailed instructions? (Talk with your children about the high priority of worship in the lives of those who follow God.)
 - a. Take time to talk with your children about the importance of worship in our lives.

2. What kinds of materials did God want Moses to make His Tabernacle out of and what items did God want them to make for the Tabernacle? (See how many your children can remember. This is a good chance to review the passage.)

3. From Exodus 26:33-34 what two rooms did God command to be built? (Holy Place and Most Holy Place)
 - a. What is the significance of the veil dividing the two rooms? (Talk with your children about the separation created by our sin and God's holiness.)
 - b. Read Matthew 27:51. What is the significance of the veil in front of the Most Holy Place being torn at Jesus' death? (You will want to talk with your children about God granting full access to Him through the Jesus' sacrificial death in which He took on the penalty for our sin.)

4. Take time to pray with your family to express our thankfulness for Jesus' life, death, and resurrection that made it possible for sinners like us to have access to and a relationship with God.

Note: Selected questions borrowed and adapted from *Long Story Short* by Marty Machowski. This is a great resource for family devotions and Bible study.

Scriptures for further study:

1 Timothy 2:5

John 1:14-18

Scriptures for further study:

Genesis 3:8

Exodus 40:34

2 Chronicles 7:1-3

Matthew 3:16-17

Colossians 1:19

Romans 8:9

1 Corinthians 3:16

Ephesians 2:22

2 Peter 3:13

Revelation 21: 3

FOR STUDENTS

1. What difference would it make to you if you were more assured of, and more excited about, your eternal home?

2. Which aspect of the Tabernacle's design, and what it points to, particularly resonates with you today?

3. Imagine someone said to you, "What is the point of thinking about the tabernacle? It was where God lived among His ancient people, and that's all we need to know." What would you say?

4. Read Hebrews 8:1-7. The writer says that our high priest, the risen and ascended Jesus, now ministers in "the true tent" of which the Tabernacle erected by Moses was merely a "copy and shadow." What does this tell us about what was being pictured in the design and furniture and activity of the Tabernacle? Consider the colors and designs of the curtain.

5. God has always intended to dwell with his people, and we know that one day we will see Him face-to-face. According to the following verses, where has God chosen to dwell? (See Genesis 3:8, Exodus 40:34, 2 Chronicles 7:1-3, Matthew 3:16-17, Colossians 1:19)

6. According to the following verses, where does God choose to dwell now? (See Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 2:22)

7. According to the following verses, where does God intend to dwell? (See 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21: 3)

*Selected questions borrowed and adapted from *Exodus for You* by Tim Chester and *The Lamb of God* by Nancy Guthrie.

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. When we look ahead at Exodus 27, we see that there was to be an altar of burnt offerings just outside, near the entrance of the Tabernacle. There was also to be a bronze laver for ritual washing before entering in.

Question: Since these two features were placed outside the tent before one could enter into the Tabernacle, what does this signify for us about God's requirements for dealing with sin before we can enter into a relationship with Him?

2. Everything about the Tabernacle was designed to convey both the holiness of God as well as the nearness and presence of God.

Question: In your own worship of God, how would you maintain a healthy balance between remembering to show God reverence, and at the same time to appreciate His closeness and mercy?

3. When we look back at Exodus 25:23-30, we see that there was to be a table in the Tabernacle that contained bread. This bread was literally to be called "the bread of the face," since it was to be presented before the face of God. On the one hand, this bread represents Jesus, who would later come to his people, declaring himself to be the bread of life. He would provide himself (His body) as a sacrifice for us that would lead to our eternal life. But the bread on the table could also be seen as our offering before God. That bread was to be made fresh every day.

Question: After reflecting on all the ways Jesus has offered himself to you, in what ways would you consider offering yourself back to him? And in terms of worship, are you offering something that is fresh, or stale? Is it your very best?

4. In some ways, worship can be thought of in terms of communication. And communication is a two-way thing: God communicates with us, and we communicate with Him. Everything about the tabernacle was designed to be God's means of communicating to His people about His holiness, His truth, His goodness, and His presence. But Exodus 40:5 tells us that there was to be an altar of incense in the Tabernacle, the incense representing the prayers of the people, which God promised to hear.

Question: If worship is communication, and communication is key to the health of any relationship, how important should worship be to your relationship with God? If God is communicating with us, how well are you listening to Him? If we are communicating with God, how engaged is your spirit when speaking back to Him?

Scriptures for further study:

Exodus 25-27