

Easy-to-Read Version

Language: English

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PDF generated on 2017-07-07 from source files dated 2017-07-07.

9417f999-1fb5-525b-a123-d5d84a7f35e1

ISBN: 978-1-5313-1294-7

Exodus

The book of Exodus continues the story of God's people that began in Genesis. The book of Genesis ends with the death of Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel). During the next 400 years, the descendants of Joseph and his brothers lived in Egypt. They were called Hebrews or Israelites (people of Israel). As the years passed, new Egyptian families came to power who knew nothing about Joseph. They did not know he had been an important royal official in Egypt many years earlier. So the Hebrews lost the power and influence they had gained during the time of Joseph. They were eventually forced to work as slaves in the service of Pharaoh (the king of Egypt).

This is where Exodus begins—in tragedy. The Hebrews (Israelites) are still in Egypt, far away from their promised homeland. Their families had grown and had spread throughout the region. And this caused a new king to do everything he could to stop them from growing in number. His men used whips to force them to work hard on his huge building projects. But the Hebrews kept growing in number, and this worried Pharaoh even more. So he tried to kill a whole generation of baby Hebrew boys. A baby named Moses was born into this dangerous time in Israel's history.

Exodus tells how the baby boy Moses came to be an Egyptian prince. One day, trying to help some of his people, Moses killed an Egyptian. To escape Pharaoh's punishment, Moses left Egypt. But God had

other plans for him. God needed a leader for his people, and Moses was his choice. But God's people, the Israelites, were still slaves in Egypt. Moses had many objections to God's plan for him. But he finally obeyed God and returned to Egypt to lead the Israelites to freedom.

God was with Moses and used powerful miracles to cause Pharaoh to free the Israelites from Egypt. God led his people to Mount Sinai, where Moses received God's law for the Israelites. The book of Exodus is about God's people, their slavery and their rescue from slavery. It includes God's laws for his people. These laws told them how to live and serve God in their new freedom.

The laws that God gave the Israelites included instructions for building and setting up the Holy Tent where God would meet with his people. That's why it is also called the Meeting Tent. God gave Moses detailed instructions for the priests who would serve in the Holy Tent. Exodus ends with God filling the Holy Tent with his presence in the form of a cloud.

And this is where the next book begins. Then it continues with more laws for the people of Israel. But God's people did not always follow the instructions he gave them. Even as God was giving his law to Moses, the people were already breaking it. The story of Exodus began in Egypt. And it ends in the middle of the Sinai desert with God's people still far away from their promised homeland.

In the book of Exodus, the people of God...

Become slaves in Egypt (1:1 – 12:30)

Escape Pharaoh and go east (12:31 – 18:27)

Receive God's law in the Sinai desert (19:1 – 35:3)

Build and set up God's Holy Tent (35:4 – 40:38)

Jacob's Family in Egypt

1 When Jacob went to Egypt, his sons and their families went with him. They were called the sons of Israel.* Here are their names: ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, ³Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, ⁴Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher. ⁵Another son, Joseph, was already living in Egypt. So Jacob had 70[†] descendants with him in Egypt.

⁶After some time, Joseph, his brothers and all the people of that generation died. ⁷But the Israelites had many children, so many that they could not be counted. They were all over the land of Egypt.

Trouble for the Israelites

⁸Years later, a new king who knew nothing about Joseph began to rule over Egypt. ⁹He said to his people, "Look at the Israelites. There are too many of them, and they already outnumber us! ¹⁰If we don't find a way to outsmart them, there will be too many of them for us to control. Then, if there is a war, they will join our enemies and fight against us. They will escape from the land!"

¹¹So the Egyptians put slave masters in charge of the Israelites to keep them under control with hard work. They made them build the cities of Pithom and Rameses, where the king could store

supplies. ¹²But no matter how hard the Egyptians forced the Israelites to work, they continued to grow in number and spread through all the land. And the Egyptians began to fear and hate them. ¹³The Egyptians forced the Israelites to work like slaves, showing them no mercy. ¹⁴The Egyptians were cruel to the Israelites and made life miserable for them. They forced them to work hard making bricks, mixing mortar or working in the fields.

The Nurses Who Respected God

¹⁵Then Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, spoke with two Hebrew[‡] women. Their names were Shiphrah and Puah. They were nurses who helped the Israelite women give birth. He said to them, ¹⁶"When you help the Hebrew women give birth, watch carefully as the baby is born. If it's a girl, let her live. But if the baby is a boy, kill him!"

¹⁷But the nurses did not obey the king's command because they feared God more than Pharaoh. They let all the baby boys live.

¹⁸So the king called for the nurses and asked them, "Why are you doing this? Why have you let the boys live?"

¹⁹The nurses said to Pharaoh, "The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. They give birth much faster, and their babies are already born by the time we get there." ²⁰God protected the nurses, so the Hebrews had more and more children. The Israelites continued to grow in number so much that they could not be counted. ²¹And God gave Shiphrah and Puah their own fam-

***1:1 Israel** The writer expects the readers to know from Genesis (32:28) that Jacob's name was changed to Israel.

[†]**1:5 70** This is the number in the traditional Hebrew text. The Dead Sea Scrolls and the ancient Greek version have "75". See Gen. 46:27 and Acts 7:14.

[‡]**1:15 Hebrew** Or "Israelite". This name might also mean "descendants of Eber" (read Gen. 10:25-31) or "people from beyond the Euphrates River". Also in verse 19.

ilies because they feared him more than Pharaoh.

²²So Pharaoh gave this command to all his people: “When the Hebrew women give birth, if the baby is a girl, let her live. But throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River.”

An Important Baby Boy Is Saved

2 During this time, a man from the family of Levi married a woman who was also from the family of Levi. ²She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw how beautiful the baby was, she hid him for three months because of Pharaoh’s order. ³When she could not hide him at home any more, she had another idea. She got a basket and made it waterproof with tar and tree sap. She put the baby in the basket. Then she hid it in the tall grass at the edge of the Nile River. ⁴The baby’s sister watched from a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵Before long, Pharaoh’s daughter came to the river to take a bath. She saw the basket in the tall grass. Her servants were walking beside the river, so she told one of them to bring her the basket. ⁶She opened it and saw a baby boy. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. She said, “This must be one of the Hebrew babies.”

⁷That’s when his sister came over and spoke to the king’s daughter. She asked, “Do you want me to go and find a Hebrew woman who can nurse the baby for you?”

⁸Pharaoh’s daughter said, “Yes, please.” So the girl went and got the baby’s mother.

⁹Pharaoh’s daughter said to the mother, “Take this baby and feed him for me. I’ll pay you to take care of him.”

So the woman took her baby and cared for him. ¹⁰When the boy was a few years older, she brought him back to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her adopted son. She named him Moses[†] because she had pulled him from the water.

Moses Helps His People

¹¹Years later, when Moses was a full-grown man, he went out to where his people were working. He saw how hard they were forced to work. Then he saw an Egyptian man beating a Hebrew man, one of his own people. ¹²Moses looked around to see if anyone was watching. When he saw no one, he gave the Egyptian a beating that killed him. So he buried his body in the sand.

¹³The next day Moses saw two Hebrew men fighting each other. He said to the one who started the fight, “Why are you hitting one of your own people?”

¹⁴The man answered, “You have no authority over us! Do you think you can be our judge? And are you planning to kill me the way you killed that Egyptian yesterday?”[§]

Then Moses was afraid. He thought to himself, “Everyone must know what I did.”

¹⁵When Pharaoh heard about what Moses did, he decided to kill him. But Moses ran away from Pharaoh and went to the land of Midian.

Moses in Midian

Moses stopped near a well in Midian. ¹⁶A priest who had seven daughters lived there. His daughters came to the well to get water for their father’s sheep.

[†]2:10 *Moses* This name is like a Hebrew word meaning “to pull or draw out”.

[§]2:14 *yesterday* This is from the ancient Greek version.

They were trying to fill the trough with water. ¹⁷ But some shepherds came and chased the girls away from the well. So Moses came and helped these girls and gave water to their animals.

¹⁸ Then they went back to their father. ^{**} He asked them, “Why have you come home early today?”

¹⁹ The girls answered, “Some shepherds chased us away from the well, but an Egyptian helped us. He got water for us and gave it to our animals.”

²⁰ So then he asked, “Where is he? Why did you leave him? Go and invite him to eat with us.”

²¹ Moses agreed to stay with this family. And later, the father gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses to be his wife. ²² She became pregnant and had a son. Moses named him Gershom^{††} because Moses was a stranger in a land that was not his own.

God Wants to Help Israel

²³ A long time passed and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to suffer under the hard work they were forced to do. So they cried out for relief from their slavery, and their cries went up to God. ²⁴ God heard their painful cries and remembered the agreement he made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ²⁵ God saw how much the Israelites were suffering and cared about their pain.

The Burning Bush

3 Moses was taking care of the sheep that belonged to his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. One day, Moses led the sheep to the far side of

the desert. He came to Horeb,^{‡‡} known as the mountain of God. ² There Moses saw the angel of the LORD in a flame coming from the middle of a bush.

Moses saw that the bush was on fire, but to his surprise, it did not burn up. ³ Moses thought, “What an amazing sight! I need to get a closer look at this. Why is the bush not burning up?”

⁴ The LORD saw Moses turn towards the bush. So he called to him from the bush: “Moses, Moses!”

Moses said, “Here I am.”

⁵ Then God said, “Don’t come any closer. Take off your sandals. You are standing on holy ground. ⁶ I am the God your father worshipped, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

Moses covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ Then the LORD said, “I have clearly seen how much my people have suffered in Egypt. I have heard them cry out when their slave bosses beat them. I certainly care about their pain. ⁸ Now I will go down to save my people from Egypt’s control. I want to take them from that land and lead them to a good land that has plenty of space. It is a land good for raising cattle and growing crops.^{¶¶} Many different people live there: the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ You can be sure I have heard the cries of the Israelites. I have seen the way the Egyptians have made life hard for them. ¹⁰ So now I am sending you to Pharaoh. Go! Lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

^{**}**2:18 their father** Literally, “their father Reuel”. Beginning in chapter 3 he is called Jethro.

^{††}**2:22 Gershom** This name is like the Hebrew words meaning “a stranger there”.

^{‡‡}**3:1 Horeb** Also known as “Sinai”.

^{¶¶}**3:8 land ... crops** Literally, “land flowing with milk and honey”. The “honey” here may be “fruit syrup”. Also in verse 17.

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “How can I be the one to go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?”

¹² God said, “You can do it because I AM^{§§} with you. Later, it will be made clear that I myself have sent you. This will happen after you lead the people out of Egypt, when you all come and worship me on this mountain.”

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “But if I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors sent me,’ the people will ask, ‘What is his name?’ What should I tell them?”

¹⁴ Then God said to Moses, “Tell them, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’^{*} When you go to the Israelites, tell them, ‘I AM sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ Again God said, “Tell the Israelites that you were sent by YAHWEH,[†] the God worshipped by your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This is my name forever. It is how I want people to remember me from now on.

¹⁶ “Now go and call together the leaders of the people. Tell them that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, the same God worshipped by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, appeared to you. Give them this message from me: ‘I have watched you closely and have seen what people in Egypt have done to you.’ ¹⁷ And I have decided I will lead you out of these troubles you are suffering in Egypt. I will lead you to the land that now belongs to others—the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. I will lead you to a land good for raising cattle and growing crops.’

¹⁸ “The leaders will listen to you. And then you and the leaders will go to the king of Egypt. You will tell him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews,[‡] appeared to us. So we are asking you to let us travel three days into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.’

¹⁹ “But I already know that Pharaoh will not let you go. Only a great power will force him to let you go. ²⁰ So I will use my great power to defeat Egypt with all the amazing things I will do there. After this, he will let you go. ²¹ I will cause the Egyptians to be kind to the Israelites. They will give many gifts to your people when all of you leave Egypt.

²² “All the Hebrew women will ask their Egyptian neighbours and the Egyptian women living in their houses for gifts. And the Egyptians will give them silver, gold and fine clothing. You will use these gifts to dress your sons and daughters. This is how you will take away the wealth of the Egyptians.”

Proof for Moses

4 Then Moses answered, “But the Israelites will not believe me when I tell them that you sent me. They will say, ‘The LORD[¶] did not appear to you.’”

² The LORD said to Moses, “What is that you have in your hand?”

Moses answered, “It is my walking stick.”

³ “Throw your walking stick on the ground,” the LORD told him.

So Moses threw his walking stick on the ground, and it became a snake.

§§3:12 **I AM** The Hebrew for these words is like the name YAHWEH (“LORD”). See verse 14. This form is used all through Exodus.

*3:14 **I AM WHO I AM** The Hebrew words are like the name YAHWEH (“LORD”).

†3:15 **YAHWEH** Or “the LORD”. Literally, “HE IS”. The form in Hebrew is similar to the one translated “I AM” in verse 14. Also in verses 16 and 18. See YAHWEH in the Word List.

‡3:18 **Hebrews** Or “Israelites”. Also in verse 22.

¶4:1 **The LORD** Or “YAHWEH”. See YAHWEH in the Word List.

Moses ran from it, ⁴but the LORD said to him, “Reach out and grab the snake by its tail.”

When Moses reached out and grabbed the snake’s tail, it changed back into a walking stick. ⁵Then God said, “Do this miracle so that the people will believe you. They will know that you saw the LORD, the God your ancestors worshipped, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

⁶Again the LORD spoke to Moses and said, “Put your hand inside your robe.”

So Moses put his hand inside his robe. When he brought his hand out, it was diseased. The skin on his hand was dry and white as snow!

⁷Then God said, “Now put your hand inside your robe again.” So Moses put his hand inside his robe. When he brought it out, it was healthy again. It looked the same as the rest of his skin.

⁸Then God said, “If the people don’t believe you when you do the first miracle with your walking stick, they will believe you when you show them this miracle. ⁹If they still refuse to believe after you show them both of these signs, take some water from the Nile River. Pour the water on the ground, and as soon as it touches the ground, it will turn to blood.”

¹⁰Then Moses said to the LORD, “Please, Lord, I am not the one to go. I am not good with words. I have never been able to speak well. Even talking to you now is a problem for me. I have to go slow when I speak and often don’t know what to say.”

¹¹Then the LORD said to him, “Who makes a person able to speak or not? Who can make someone able to hear or not? Who can make a person blind or able to see? I am the one who does such

things. I am the LORD. ¹²So go now. I will be with you when you speak. I will help you know what to say.”

¹³But Moses said, “Please, Lord, I beg you to send someone else, not me.”

¹⁴Then the LORD became angry with Moses and said, “Aaron the Levite is your brother, isn’t he? I know he is a good speaker. And he is already on his way here to meet you. He will be happy to see you. ¹⁵⁻¹⁶He will be your voice and speak to the people for you. And you will act as God for him, giving him the words I give to you. I will help you both know what to say and do. ¹⁷Take the walking stick with you, and use it to do miracles that show my power.”

Moses Leaves Midian

¹⁸Then Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law. Moses said to him, “Please let me go back to Egypt. I want to see if my people are still alive.”

Jethro said to Moses, “Go in peace.”

¹⁹Moses was still in Midian when the LORD said to him, “It is safe for you to go back to Egypt now. The men who wanted to kill you are now dead.”

²⁰So Moses put his wife and children on a donkey and began the trip to Egypt. He carried the walking stick that held God’s power. ²¹The LORD said to him, “When you get to Egypt, be sure to show Pharaoh all the miracles that I have given you the power to do. But I will make Pharaoh very stubborn. He will not let the people go. ²²And then you will say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son. ²³I have told you to let him go so he can serve me. But you have refused to let this son of mine go, so I will kill your firstborn son.’”

Moses' Son Circumcised

²⁴ On the way to Egypt, Moses stopped at a place to spend the night. The LORD[§] came to Moses there and wanted to kill him. ²⁵ So Zipporah took a flint knife and circumcised her son. She took the skin and touched Moses between his legs with it. She said to Moses, “This blood will keep you safe.”^{**} ²⁶ So God let Moses live. When Zipporah said “This blood will keep you safe,” she was talking about the blood from the circumcision.

Moses Arrives in Egypt

²⁷ The LORD had spoken to Aaron and told him, “Go out into the desert and meet Moses.” So Aaron went and met Moses at the Mountain of God.^{††} He saw Moses and greeted him with a kiss. ²⁸ Moses told Aaron what the LORD had told him to say in Egypt. And he told Aaron about the miracles the LORD had commanded him to do.

²⁹ So Moses and Aaron went to Egypt and gathered all the leaders of the Israelites. ³⁰ Then Aaron spoke to the people and told them everything the LORD had told Moses. Then Moses did the miracles for all the people to see, ³¹ and they believed. They understood that the LORD was now there to help them and had seen their troubles. So they bowed down and worshipped him.

Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh

5 After Moses and Aaron talked to the people, they went to see Pharaoh. They told him, “The LORD,^{‡‡} the God of

Israel, says, ‘Let my people go into the desert so that they can have a festival to honour me.’”

² But Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD? Why should I obey him? Why should I let his people Israel go? I don’t even know who this LORD is, so I refuse to let Israel go.”

³ Then Aaron and Moses said, “The God of the Hebrew people^{¶¶} has asked us to do this. Please let us travel for three days into the desert to offer a sacrifice to the LORD our God. If we don’t go, he will kill us with disease or by war.”

⁴ But Pharaoh said to them, “Moses and Aaron, you should not keep the people from doing their work! All of you, get back to work!” ⁵ Then Pharaoh said, “I can’t believe how many of these people there are now! And you two want them to stop working!”

Pharaoh Punishes the People

⁶ That same day Pharaoh gave a command to the slave masters and Israelite foremen. ⁷ He said, “Now you must stop providing the straw these people need to make their bricks. Let them go and find it themselves. ⁸ But they must still make the same number of bricks as they did before. Don’t let them do any less. They have become lazy. That’s why they are begging me to let them go and make sacrifices to their God. ⁹ So make these people work harder. Keep them busy. Then they will not have enough time to listen to any lies from their leaders.”

¹⁰ So the Egyptian slave masters and the Israelite foremen went to the Is-

§4:24 **LORD** The ancient Greek and Aramaic versions have “angel of the LORD”.

4:25 **This ... safe The Hebrew here is unclear. Another possible translation is “Now you are a bridegroom of blood to me.”

††4:27 **Mountain of God** That is, Mount Horeb (Sinai).

‡‡5:1 **The LORD** Or “YAHWEH”. See YAHWEH in the Word List.

¶¶5:3 **Hebrew people** Or “Israelites”. Also in verses 10,14,15,19.

raelites and said, “Pharaoh has decided that he will not give you straw for your bricks. ¹¹ Go and find straw for yourselves wherever you can. But you must still make as many bricks as you made before.”

¹² So the people went everywhere in Egypt gathering whatever small pieces of straw they could find in the fields.

¹³ The slave masters forced the people to work even harder. They forced the people to make as many bricks as they did when the Egyptians provided the straw.

¹⁴ The Egyptian slave masters beat the Israelite foremen they had put in charge of the work. As they beat them, the Egyptians asked, “Why haven’t you done what we told you to do? Why aren’t you making as many bricks now as you made before?”

¹⁵ Then the Israelite foremen went to Pharaoh and said, “Why do you treat your slaves this way? ¹⁶ First, no one gives us any straw. Then our masters order us to make bricks! When we can’t do it, they beat us! But it’s not our fault! Your own people are to blame.”

¹⁷ Pharaoh answered, “You are lazy and don’t want to work! That’s why you keep asking me, ‘Let us go and make sacrifices to the LORD.’ ¹⁸ Now, go back to work! We will not give you any straw. And you must still make as many bricks as you did before.”

¹⁹ The Israelite foremen knew they were in trouble, because now they had to tell the workers, “You must still make as many bricks every day as you made before.”

²⁰ When they left the meeting with Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron outside waiting for them. ²¹ They said to

Moses and Aaron, “May the LORD judge and punish you for what you did! Because of you, Pharaoh and his officials are disgusted with us. ²² You have given them an excuse to kill us.”

Moses Complains to God

²² Then Moses went back to the LORD and said, “Lord, why have you done this terrible thing to your people? Why did you send me here? ²³ I went to Pharaoh and said what you told me to say. But since that time he has made the people suffer even more, and you have done nothing to help your people!”

6 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. I will use my great power against him, and he will let my people go. In fact, when he sees my power, he will force them to go.”

² Then God said to Moses, “I am the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They called me God All-Powerful.* They did not know my name, YAHWEH. ⁴ I made an agreement with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they were living as immigrants. ⁵ Now, I have heard the Israelite slaves in Egypt groaning in pain. And I remember my agreement. ⁶ So tell the Israelites that I say to them, ‘I am the LORD. I will save you from your hard labour. You will no longer be slaves of the Egyptians. I will use my great power to make you free, and I will bring terrible punishment to the Egyptians. ⁷ You will be my people, and I will be your God. I am the LORD your God, and you will know that I freed you from your work as slaves in Egypt. ⁸ I will lead you to the land that I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

§§5:21 *Because of ... us* Literally, “You have made us stink before Pharaoh and his officials.”

*6:3 *God All-Powerful* Literally, “El Shaddai”, which was also a name some Canaanites or Amorites used for their most important god.

And I will give you that land to keep. Believe this, because I am the LORD.”

⁹ So Moses told this to the Israelites, but the people did not listen to him. They were too worn out from all their hard work to hear what he was saying.

¹⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, ¹¹ “Go and tell Pharaoh that he must let the Israelites leave his land.”

¹² Moses answered, “But LORD! If the Israelites refuse to listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me? After all, I am a terrible speaker.”†

¹³ But the LORD talked with Moses and Aaron and commanded them to go and talk to the Israelites and to Pharaoh. He commanded them to lead the Israelites out of the land of Egypt.

Some of the Families of Israel

¹⁴ These are the names of the leaders of the families of Israel:

Israel’s first son, Reuben, had four sons. They were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi.

¹⁵ Simeon’s sons were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar and Shaul. (Shaul was the son from a Canaanite woman.)

¹⁶ Levi lived 137 years. His sons were Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

¹⁷ Gershon had two sons, Libni and Shimei.

¹⁸ Kohath lived 133 years. His sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.

¹⁹ Merari’s sons were Mahli and Mushi. All these families were from Israel’s son Levi.

²⁰ Amram lived 137 years. He married his father’s sister, Jochebed. Amram and Jochebed gave birth to Aaron and Moses.

²¹ Izhar’s sons were Korah, Nepheg and Zicri.

²² Uzziel’s sons were Mishael, Elzaphan and Sithri.

²³ Aaron married Elisheba. (Elisheba was the daughter of Amminadab, and the sister of Nahshon.) Aaron and Elisheba gave birth to Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

²⁴ The sons of Korah (that is, the ancestors of the Korahites) were Assir, Elkannah and Abiasaph.

²⁵ Aaron’s son, Eleazar, married a daughter of Putiel. She gave birth to Phinehas. All these people were from Israel’s son, Levi.

²⁶ Aaron and Moses were from this tribe. And they are the men the LORD spoke to and said, “Lead my people out of Egypt in divisions.” ²⁷ Aaron and Moses are the men who talked to Pharaoh and told him to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

God Repeats His Call to Moses

²⁸ The LORD spoke to Moses again in the land of Egypt. ²⁹ He said, “I am the LORD. Tell the king of Egypt everything I tell you.”

³⁰ Moses answered, “But Lord! You know I’m not a good speaker. Why would Pharaoh listen to me?”

7 The LORD said to Moses, “You can be sure of this: I am sending you to be like God to Pharaoh. You will give him orders through your brother Aaron, who will be your prophet. ² You will tell Aaron everything I have commanded you. Then he will tell the king to let the Israelites go free. ³ But I will make Pharaoh stubborn so that he will not do what you tell him. Then I will do many signs and wonders in Egypt to prove who I am. ⁴ But he will still refuse to listen. So I will strike Egypt with my fist. I will punish them with a power-

†6:12 *I am a terrible speaker* Literally, “I have uncircumcised lips.”

ful show of force and lead my army, my people, out of that land. ⁵And when I strike down the people of Egypt and take the Israelites away from them, they will know that I am the LORD.”

⁶Moses and Aaron did what the LORD told them. ⁷Moses was 80 years old at the time, and Aaron was 83.

Aaron’s Walking Stick Becomes a Snake

⁸The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹“Pharaoh will tell you to do a miracle to prove your power. When he does this, tell Aaron to throw his walking stick down in front of Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.”

¹⁰So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did what the LORD told them to do. Aaron threw his walking stick down. While Pharaoh and his officials watched, the stick became a snake.

¹¹So Pharaoh called for his advisers and fortune-tellers. These magicians were able to use their secret powers to do the same thing Aaron did.

¹²They threw their walking sticks on the ground, and their sticks became snakes. But then Aaron’s walking stick ate theirs.

¹³Pharaoh still refused to let the people go, just as the LORD had said. Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses and Aaron.

The Water Becomes Blood

¹⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh is being stubborn. He refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵In the morning, Pharaoh will go out to the river. Go to him by the edge of the Nile River. Take the walking stick that became a snake. ¹⁶Tell him this: ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you. He told me to tell you to let his people go and worship him in the desert. Until now you have not listened to the Lord. ¹⁷So the LORD says that he will do something to

show you that he is the LORD. I will strike the water of the Nile River with this walking stick in my hand, and the river will turn into blood. ¹⁸The fish in the river will die, and the river will begin to stink. Then the Egyptians will not be able to drink the water from the river.”

¹⁹The LORD said to Moses: “Tell Aaron to hold the walking stick in his hand over the rivers, canals, lakes and every place where they store water. When he does this, all the water will turn into blood. All the water, even the water stored in wood and stone jars, will turn into blood.”

²⁰So Moses and Aaron did what the LORD commanded. As Pharaoh and his officials watched, Aaron raised the walking stick and struck the water in the Nile River. All the water changed to blood.

²¹The fish in the Nile died. And the river began to smell so bad that the Egyptians could not drink the water. The blood was everywhere in Egypt.

²²But the Egyptian magicians used their secret powers to do the same thing. So Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

²³Pharaoh turned away and went into his palace. He paid no attention to what had happened.

²⁴The Egyptians could not drink the water from the river, so they dug wells by the river for water to drink.

The Frogs

²⁵Seven days passed after the LORD changed the Nile River.

8 Then the LORD told Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and tell him that the LORD says, ‘Let my people go to worship me! ²If you refuse to let my people go, I will punish you by filling Egypt with frogs. ³The Nile River will overflow with frogs. They will come from the river and enter your palace. They will be in your bed-

room and on your bed. They will be in the houses of your officials and your people. They will be all over where you cook and prepare your food. ⁴You will have frogs jumping on you, your people and your officials.”

⁵Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to hold the walking stick in his hand over the canals, rivers and lakes. This will bring the frogs out to cover the land of Egypt.”

⁶So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs began coming out of the water and covered the land of Egypt.

⁷The magicians used their secret powers to do the same thing—so even more frogs came out onto the land!

⁸Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, “Pray to the LORD and ask him to remove the frogs from me and my people. Then I will let the people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD.”

⁹Moses said to Pharaoh, “I will let you decide when you want me to pray for you, your people and your officials. Then you and your houses will be free from the frogs, and they will be only in the Nile River. When do you want this to happen?”

¹⁰Pharaoh said, “Tomorrow.”

Moses said, “It will be done as you have said. Then you will know that there is none like the LORD our God. ¹¹You, your houses, your officials and your people will be free from the frogs. There will not be any frogs left except in the Nile.”

¹²Then Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh. Moses cried out to the LORD about the frogs he had sent against Pharaoh. ¹³And the LORD did what Moses asked. The frogs in the houses, in the yards and in the fields all died. ¹⁴The Egyptians gathered the dead frogs into pile after pile. They began to rot, and the whole country began to stink. ¹⁵But

when Pharaoh saw that they were free of the frogs, he again became stubborn. So he did not do what Moses and Aaron asked. This was exactly what the LORD had said would happen.

The Gnats

¹⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell Aaron to raise his walking stick and strike the dust on the ground, and everywhere in Egypt dust will become gnats.”

¹⁷They did this. Aaron raised the stick in his hand and struck the dust on the ground. And every speck of dust in Egypt became a gnat. The gnats covered the people and the animals.

¹⁸The magicians tried to do the same thing with their secret powers, but they could not do it. The gnats covered the people and the animals. ¹⁹So the magicians told Pharaoh that it was God who did this. But Pharaoh refused to listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

The Flies

²⁰The LORD said to Moses, “Get up in the morning and go to Pharaoh. He will go out to the river. Tell him that the LORD says, ‘Let my people go and worship me! ²¹If you don’t let my people go, flies will come into your houses. The flies will be on you and your officials. The houses of Egypt will be full of flies. They will be all over the ground too! ²²But I will not treat the Israelites the same as the Egyptians. There will not be any flies in Goshen, where my people live. In this way you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land. ²³So tomorrow I will treat my people differently from your people. This will be my proof.’”

²⁴So the LORD did just what he said. Millions of flies came into Egypt. The flies were in Pharaoh’s house, and they were in all his officials’ houses. They were all over Egypt. The flies were ru-

ining the country. ²⁵ So Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and told them, “Offer sacrifices to your God here in this country.”

²⁶ But Moses said, “It would not be right to do that. The Egyptians think it is terrible to kill animals as sacrifices for the LORD our God. If we do this here, the Egyptians will see us and throw stones at us and kill us. ²⁷ Let us go three days into the desert and offer sacrifices to the LORD our God. This is what he told us to do.”

²⁸ So Pharaoh said, “I will let you go and offer sacrifices to the LORD your God in the desert, but you must not go very far. Now, go and pray for me.”

²⁹ Moses said, “Look, I will leave and ask the LORD to remove the flies from you, your people and your officials tomorrow. But you must not stop the people from offering sacrifices to the LORD.”

³⁰ So Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. ³¹ And the LORD did what Moses asked. He removed the flies from Pharaoh, his officials and his people. None of the flies remained. ³² But Pharaoh again became stubborn and did not let the people go.

The Disease of the Farm Animals

9 Then the LORD told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him: “The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says, ‘Let my people go to worship me!’ ² If you continue to hold them and refuse to let them go, ³ the LORD will use his power against your animals in the fields. He will cause all your horses, donkeys, camels, cattle and sheep to get sick with a terrible disease. ⁴ But the LORD will treat Israel’s animals differently from the animals of Egypt. None of the animals that belong to the Israelites will die. ⁵ The LORD has set the time for this to happen. He said,

‘Tomorrow the LORD will make this happen in this country.’”

⁶ The next morning the LORD did what he said. All the farm animals of the Egyptians died, but none of the animals that belonged to the Israelites died. ⁷ Pharaoh sent people to see if any of the animals of Israel had died. Not one of them had died. But Pharaoh remained stubborn and did not let the people go.

The Boils

⁸ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Fill your hands with the ashes from a furnace. Moses, you throw the ashes into the air in front of Pharaoh. ⁹ This will become dust that will go throughout the land of Egypt. Whenever the dust touches a person or an animal in Egypt, boils will break out on the skin.”

¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron took ashes from a furnace and went and stood before Pharaoh. Moses threw the ashes into the air, and boils began breaking out on people and animals. ¹¹ The magicians could not stop Moses from doing this, because even the magicians had the boils. This happened everywhere in Egypt. ¹² But the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn, so he refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.

The Hail

¹³ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Get up in the morning and go to Pharaoh. Tell him that the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says, ‘Let my people go to worship me!’ ¹⁴ This time, I will use my full power against you, your officials and your people. Then you will know that there is no one in the world like me. ¹⁵ I could use my power and cause a disease that would wipe you and your people off the earth. ¹⁶ But I have put you here for a reason. I have put you here so that I could show you my power. Then people

all over the world will learn about me!¹⁷ You are still against my people. You are not letting them go free.¹⁸ So at this time tomorrow, I will cause a very bad hailstorm. There has never been a hailstorm like this in Egypt, not since Egypt became a nation.¹⁹ Now, you must put your animals in a safe place. Everything you own that is now in the fields must be put in a safe place. Any person or animal that remains in the fields will be killed. The hail will fall on everything that is not gathered into your houses.”

²⁰ Some of Pharaoh’s officials paid attention to the LORD’s message. They quickly put all their animals and slaves into houses.²¹ But other people ignored the LORD’s message and lost all their slaves and animals that were in the fields.

²² The LORD told Moses, “Raise your hand into the air and the hail will start falling all over Egypt. The hail will fall on all the people, animals and plants in all the fields of Egypt.”

²³ So Moses raised his walking stick into the air, and the LORD sent hail with thunder and lightning down on the earth. The LORD caused hail to fall all over Egypt.²⁴ The hail was falling, and lightning was flashing all through it. It was the worst hailstorm that had ever struck Egypt since it had become a nation.²⁵ The storm destroyed everything in the fields in Egypt. The hail destroyed people, animals and plants. The hail also broke all the trees in the fields.²⁶ The only place that did not get hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived.

²⁷ Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and told them, “This time I have sinned. The LORD is right, and I and my people are wrong.²⁸ We have had enough of this hail and thunder! Ask the LORD

to stop the storm, and I will let you go. You don’t have to stay here.”

²⁹ Moses told Pharaoh, “When I leave the city, I will lift my hands in prayer to the LORD, and the thunder and hail will stop. Then you will know that the earth belongs to the LORD.³⁰ But I know that you and your officials don’t really fear and respect the LORD yet.”

³¹ The flax had already developed its seeds, and the barley was already blooming. So these plants were destroyed.³² But wheat and spelt ripen later than the other grains, so these plants were not destroyed.

³³ Moses left Pharaoh and went outside the city. He lifted his hands in prayer to the LORD. And the thunder and hail stopped, and even the rain stopped.

³⁴ When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail and thunder had stopped, he again disobeyed. He and his officials remained stubborn.³⁵ Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go free. Moses had told the people that the LORD said this would happen.

The Locusts

10 The LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh. I have made him and his officials stubborn. I did this so that I could show them my powerful miracles.² I also did this so that you can tell your children and your grandchildren about it. You can tell them about the miracles that I did among the Egyptians and how I made them look like fools. I did these things so that you will all know that I am the LORD.”

³ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh. They told him, “The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says, ‘How long will you refuse to obey me? Let my people go to worship me!’⁴ If you refuse to let my people go, tomorrow

I will bring locusts into your country. ⁵The locusts will cover the land. There will be so many locusts that you will not be able to see the ground. Anything that was left from the hailstorm will be eaten by the locusts. The locusts will eat all the leaves from every tree in the field. ⁶They will fill all your houses and all your officials' houses and all the houses in Egypt. There will be more locusts than your fathers or your grandfathers have ever seen. There will be more locusts than there have ever been since people began living in Egypt.” Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh.

⁷Then the officials asked Pharaoh, “How long will we be trapped by this man? Let the men go to worship the LORD their God. If you don't let them go, before you know it, Egypt will be destroyed!”

⁸So Pharaoh told his officials to bring Moses and Aaron back to him. Pharaoh said to them, “Go and worship the LORD your God. But tell me, just who is going?”

⁹Moses answered, “All our people, young and old, will go. And we will take our sons and daughters and our sheep and cattle with us. We will all go because the LORD's festival is for all of us.”

¹⁰Pharaoh said to them, “The LORD really will have to be with you before I let you and all your children leave Egypt. Look, you are planning something evil. ¹¹The men can go and worship the LORD. That is what you asked for in the beginning. But all your people cannot go.” Then Pharaoh sent Moses and Aaron away.

¹²The LORD told Moses, “Raise your hand over the land of Egypt and the locusts will come! They will spread all

over the land of Egypt and will eat all the plants that the hail did not destroy.”

¹³So Moses raised his walking stick over the land of Egypt, and the LORD caused a strong wind to blow from the east. The wind blew all that day and night. When morning came, the wind had brought the locusts to the land of Egypt. ¹⁴The locusts came into Egypt like a huge cloud and covered the land in every part of the country. It was the worst invasion of locusts in the history of Egypt. And there will never be that many again. ¹⁵They covered the ground, and the whole country became dark. The locusts ate every plant on the ground and all the fruit in the trees that the hail had not destroyed. There were no leaves left on any of the trees or plants anywhere in Egypt.

¹⁶Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. ¹⁷Now, forgive me for my sins this time. Ask the LORD to remove this ‘death’ from me.”

¹⁸Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. ¹⁹So the LORD changed the wind. He made a very strong wind blow from the west, and it blew the locusts out of Egypt and into the Red Sea.[‡] Not one locust was left in Egypt! ²⁰But the LORD caused Pharaoh to be stubborn again, and Pharaoh did not let the Israelites go.

The Darkness

²¹Then the LORD told Moses, “Raise your hand into the air and darkness will cover Egypt. It will be so dark you can feel it!”

²²So Moses raised his hand into the air and a thick, black darkness covered Egypt for three days. ²³None of the people could see each other, and no one got

[‡]10:19 *Red Sea* Or “Reed Sea”. See 1 Kgs 9:26.

up to go anywhere for three days. But there was light in all the places where the Israelites lived.

²⁴ Again Pharaoh called for Moses. He said, “Go and worship the LORD! You can take your children with you. But you must leave your sheep and cattle here.”

²⁵ Moses said, “No, we will take them all. In fact, you will give us offerings and sacrifices for us to use in worshipping the LORD our God. ²⁶ Yes, we will take our animals with us to worship the LORD our God. Not one hoof will be left behind. We don’t know yet exactly what we will need to worship the LORD. We will learn that only when we get there.”

²⁷ The LORD made Pharaoh stubborn again, so he refused to let them go. ²⁸ Then Pharaoh told Moses, “Get out of here. I don’t want you to come here again. The next time you come to see me, you will die!”

²⁹ Then Moses told Pharaoh, “You are right about one thing. I will not come to see you again.”

The Death of the Firstborn

11 Then the LORD told Moses, “I have one more disaster to bring against Pharaoh and Egypt. After this he will ask you to leave Egypt. In fact, he will force you to leave this country. ² You must give this message to the Israelites: ‘Men and women, you must ask your neighbours to give you things made of silver and gold.’” ³ The LORD caused the Egyptians to be kind to the Israelites. The Egyptians, even Pharaoh’s own officials, already considered Moses to be a great man.

⁴ Moses said to the king, “This is what the LORD says: At midnight tonight, I will go through Egypt, ⁵ and every first-born son in Egypt will die, from the first-

born son of Pharaoh the king to the first-born son of the slave girl grinding grain. Even the firstborn of all the cattle will die. ⁶ The crying in Egypt will be worse than at any time in the past or any time in the future. ⁷ But none of the Israelites or their animals will be hurt—not even a dog will bark at them. Then you will know that the LORD has treated Israel differently from Egypt.” ⁸ Then Moses said to Pharaoh, “All these officials of yours will come and bow down to me. They will beg me to leave and take all my people with me. Only then will I leave!” Then, full of anger, Moses left the meeting with Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the LORD told Moses, “The reason Pharaoh will not listen to you is so that I can show my power in even more ways in the land of Egypt.” ¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron did all these great miracles in front of Pharaoh. But the LORD made Pharaoh so stubborn that he would not let the Israelites leave his country.

Passover

12 While Moses and Aaron were still in Egypt, the LORD said to them: ² “This month^f will be the first month of the year for you. ³ This command is for the whole community of Israel: On the tenth day of this month each man must get one lamb for the people in his house. ⁴ If there are not enough people in the house to eat a whole lamb, they should share the lamb with neighbours. The lamb should be divided so that everyone has plenty to eat. ⁵ The lamb must be a one-year-old male, and it must be completely healthy. This animal can be either a young sheep or a young goat. ⁶ You should take care of the animal until the fourteenth day of the month. On that day, all the people of the

^f12:2 *month* Abib (or Nisan). See Abib in the Word List.

community of Israel must kill these animals just before dark. ⁷You must collect the blood from these animals and put it on the top and sides of the doorframe of every house where the people eat this meal.

⁸“That night you must roast the lamb over a fire. You must eat it with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast. ⁹You must not eat any of the lamb raw or boiled in water. You must roast all the parts over a fire. This includes the head, the legs and everything from the inside. ¹⁰You must eat all the meat that night. If any of the meat is left until morning, you must burn it in the fire.

¹¹“When you eat the meal, you must be fully dressed and ready to travel. You must have your sandals on your feet and your walking stick in your hand. You must eat in a hurry, because this is the LORD’s Passover.

¹²“That night I will go through Egypt and kill every firstborn man and animal in Egypt. In this way I will judge all the gods of Egypt and show that I am the LORD. ¹³But the blood on your houses will be a special sign. When I see the blood, I will pass over[§] your house. I will cause bad things to happen to the people of Egypt. But none of these bad diseases will hurt you.

¹⁴“You will always remember tonight—it will be a special festival for you. Your descendants will honour the LORD with this festival forever. ¹⁵For seven days you will eat only bread made without yeast. On the first day, you will remove all the yeast from your houses. No one should eat any yeast for the full seven days of this festival. Anyone who eats yeast must be separated from the rest of Israel.

¹⁶There will be holy assemblies on the first day and the last day of the festival. You must not do any work on these days. The only work you can do is preparing the food for your meals. ¹⁷You must remember the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because on this day I took all your people out of Egypt in divisions. All your descendants must remember this day. This is a law that will last forever. ¹⁸So on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, you will begin eating bread without yeast. You will eat this bread until the evening of the twenty-first day of the same month. ¹⁹For seven days there must not be any yeast in your houses. Anyone, either a citizen of Israel or an immigrant living among you, who eats yeast at this time must be separated from the rest of Israel. ²⁰During this festival you must not eat any yeast. You must eat bread made without yeast wherever you live.”

²¹So Moses called all the leaders together and told them, “Get the lambs for your families. Kill the lambs for Passover. ²²Take bunches of hyssop and dip them in the bowls filled with blood. Paint the blood on the sides and top of each doorframe. No one must leave their house until morning. ²³At the time the LORD goes through Egypt to kill the firstborn, he will see the blood on the sides and top of each doorframe. Then he will protect** that house and not let the destroyer come into any of your houses and hurt you. ²⁴You must remember this command. This law is for you and your descendants forever. ²⁵You must remember to do this even when you go to the land the LORD is giving you. ²⁶When your children ask

§12:13 *pass over* Or “protect”. Also in verse 27.

**12:23 *protect* Or “pass over”.

you, ‘Why are we doing this ceremony?’²⁷ you will say, ‘This Passover is to honour the LORD, because when we were in Egypt, he passed over the houses of Israel. He killed the Egyptians, but he saved the people in our houses.’”

Then the people bowed down and worshipped the Lord.²⁸ The LORD had given this command to Moses and Aaron, so the Israelites did what the Lord commanded.

²⁹ At midnight the LORD killed all the firstborn sons in Egypt, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh the king to the firstborn son of the prisoner sitting in jail. Also, the firstborn of all the animals died.³⁰ That night someone died in every house in Egypt. Pharaoh, his officials and all the people of Egypt began to cry loudly.

Israel Leaves Egypt

³¹ So that night, Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said to them, “Get up and leave my people. You and your people can do as you say. Go and worship the LORD.³² Take all your sheep and cattle with you, just as you said you would. Go! And say a blessing for me too.”³³ The people of Egypt also asked them to hurry and leave. They said, “If you don’t leave, we will all die!”

³⁴ The Israelites did not have time to put the yeast in their bread. They just wrapped the bowls of dough with cloth and carried them on their shoulders.³⁵ Then the Israelites did what Moses asked them to do. They went to their Egyptian neighbours and asked for clothing and things made from silver and

gold.³⁶ The LORD caused the Egyptians to be kind to the Israelites and give them whatever they wanted. So, in this way, the Israelites carried off the wealth of the Egyptians.

³⁷ The Israelites travelled from Rameses to Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, not counting the women and children.³⁸ A great number of people who were not Israelites went with them, along with many sheep, cattle and other livestock.³⁹ The people did not have time to put yeast in their bread or make any special food for their journey. So they had to bake their bread without yeast.

⁴⁰ The Israelites had lived in Egypt^{††} for 430 years.⁴¹ On the very day the 430 years ended, all the armies of the LORD^{‡‡} left Egypt.⁴² The night they left, the LORD watched over them to bring them safely out of Egypt. So on this same night each year, the Israelites will always celebrate to remember what the LORD did.

⁴³ The LORD told Moses and Aaron, “These are the rules for Passover: No foreigner^{¶¶} is allowed to eat the Passover meal.^{44–45} A foreigner who is staying with you as a hired worker is not allowed to eat the meal. But if someone buys a slave and circumcises him, the slave can eat the Passover meal.

⁴⁶ “Each family must eat the meal in one house. None of the food is to be taken outside the house. Don’t break any of the lamb’s bones.⁴⁷ The whole community of Israel must celebrate this special night.⁴⁸ If an immigrant living among you wants to share in the LORD’s

^{††}12:40 *Egypt* An ancient Greek translation and the Samaritan Hebrew text have “Egypt and Canaan”. This would mean they counted the years from about Abraham’s time, not from Joseph’s. See Gen. 15:12-16 and Gal. 3:17.

^{‡‡}12:41 *armies of the LORD* The Israelites.

^{¶¶}12:43 *foreigner* Here, this means someone who has not agreed to follow the laws and customs of Israel.

Passover, he must be circumcised. Then he can share in the meal like any other citizen of Israel. But a man who is not circumcised cannot eat the Passover meal.⁴⁹ The same rules are for everyone. It doesn't matter if they are citizens or immigrants living among you."

⁵⁰ So all the Israelites obeyed the commands that the LORD gave to Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ On that same day the LORD led all the Israelites out of the country of Egypt. The people left in groups.

13 Then the LORD said to Moses, ² "You must give me every male in Israel who is his mother's first child. That means that every firstborn baby boy and every firstborn male animal will be mine."

³ Moses said to the people, "Remember this day. You were slaves in Egypt, but on this day the LORD used his great power and set you free. You must not eat bread with yeast. ⁴ Today, in the month of Abib, you are leaving Egypt. ⁵ The LORD made a special promise to your ancestors. He promised to give you the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites. After the Lord leads you to the land filled with many good things,^{§§} you must remember this day. You must have a special day of worship on this day during the first month of every year.

⁶ "For seven days you must eat only bread without yeast. On the seventh day, there will be a great festival to show honour to the LORD. ⁷ So for seven days you must not eat any bread made with yeast. There must be no bread with yeast anywhere in your land. ⁸ On this day you should tell your children, 'We are hav-

ing this festival because the LORD took me out of Egypt.'

⁹ "This festival will help you remember; it will be like a string tied on your hand. It will be like a sign before your eyes.* This festival will help you remember the LORD's teachings. It will help you remember that the LORD used his great power to take you out of Egypt. ¹⁰ So remember this festival every year at the right time.

¹¹ "The LORD will lead you into the land he promised to give you. The Canaanites live there now. But God promised your ancestors that he would give you this land. When that happens, ¹² you must give to the LORD every firstborn son. And every firstborn male animal belongs to the LORD. ¹³ You may keep a firstborn donkey if you buy it back from the LORD by offering a lamb. If you don't buy the donkey with a lamb, you must break the donkey's neck. But you must buy back every firstborn son.

¹⁴ "In the future your children will ask why you do this. They will say, 'What does all this mean?' And you will answer, 'The LORD used his great power to save us from Egypt. We were slaves in that place, but he led us out and brought us here. ¹⁵ In Egypt, Pharaoh was stubborn and refused to let us leave. So the LORD killed every firstborn in all the land. (The Lord killed the firstborn males—animal and human.) That is why I give every firstborn male animal to the LORD, and that is why I buy back each of my firstborn sons from him.' ¹⁶ This is like a string tied on your hand, like a sign in front of your eyes. It helps you remember that the LORD brought us out of Egypt with his great power."

§§13:5 *land ... things* Literally, "land flowing with milk and honey".

*13:9 *string ... eyes* Literally, "a mark on your hands and a reminder between your eyes". This might refer to the special things an Israelite ties to his arm and forehead to help him remember God's laws for him. Also in verse 16.

The Journey Out of Egypt

¹⁷When Pharaoh made the people leave Egypt, God did not lead them on the road that goes through the land of the Philistines. That road along the coast is the shortest way, but God said, “If the people go that way they will have to fight. Then they might change their minds and go back to Egypt.” ¹⁸So God led them another way through the desert by the Red Sea.[†] The Israelites were prepared for battle when they left Egypt.

Joseph Goes Home

¹⁹Moses carried the bones of Joseph with him. Before Joseph died, he made the Israelites promise to do this for him. He said, “When God saves you, remember to carry my bones with you out of Egypt.”

The Lord Leads His People

²⁰The Israelites left Succoth and camped at Etham. Etham was near the desert. ²¹The LORD led the way. During the day, he used a tall cloud to lead the people. And during the night, he used a tall cloud of fire to lead the way. This fire gave them light so that they could also travel at night. ²²The cloud was always with them during the day, and the cloud of fire was always with them at night.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, ²“Tell the people to go back to Pi Hahiroth. Tell them to camp between Migdol and the Red Sea, near Baal Zephon. ³Pharaoh will think that the Israelites are lost in the desert and that the people will have no place to go. ⁴I will make Pharaoh brave, and he will chase you. But I will defeat Pharaoh and his army. This will bring honour to me.

Then the people of Egypt will know that I am the LORD.” So the Israelites did what he told them.

Pharaoh Chases the Israelites

⁵Pharaoh received a report that the Israelites had left. When he heard this, he and his officials changed their minds about what they had done. Pharaoh said, “Why did we let the Israelites leave? Why did we let them run away? Now we have lost our slaves!”

⁶So Pharaoh prepared his chariot and took his men with him. ⁷He took 600 of his best chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt. There was an officer in each chariot.[‡] ⁸The Israelites were leaving with their arms raised in victory. But the LORD caused Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to become brave. And Pharaoh chased the Israelites.

⁹Pharaoh’s army, with all his horses, chariots and drivers, went to stop the Israelites. They caught up with them while they were camped near the Red Sea at Pi Hahiroth, east of Baal Zephon.

¹⁰When the Israelites saw Pharaoh and his army coming towards them, they were frightened and cried out to the LORD for help. ¹¹They said to Moses, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out here in the desert to die? We could have died peacefully in Egypt; there were plenty of graves in Egypt. ¹²We told you this would happen! In Egypt we said, ‘Please don’t bother us. Let us stay and serve the Egyptians.’ It would have been better for us to stay and be slaves than to come out here and die in the desert.”

¹³But Moses answered, “Don’t be afraid! Don’t run away! Stand where you are and watch the LORD save you to-

[†]13:18 *Red Sea* Or “Reed Sea”. Also in 14:2,9,16,21,30; 15:4. See 1 Kgs 9:26.

[‡]14:7 *There was ... chariot* Or “There were three soldiers in each chariot.”

day. You will never see these Egyptians again. ¹⁴You will not have to do anything but stay calm. The LORD will do the fighting for you.”

¹⁵Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you still crying to me? Tell the Israelites to start moving. ¹⁶Raise the walking stick in your hand over the Red Sea, and the sea will split. Then the people can go across on dry land. ¹⁷I have made the Egyptians brave, so they will chase you. But I will show you that I am more powerful than Pharaoh and all his army with their chariots and teams of horses. ¹⁸Then Egypt will know that I am the LORD. They will honour me when I defeat Pharaoh with all his chariots and horses.”

The Lord Defeats the Egyptian Army

¹⁹Then the angel of God moved to the back of the people. (The angel was usually in front of the people, leading them.) So the tall cloud moved from in front of the people and went to the back of the people. ²⁰In this way the cloud stood between the Egyptians and the Israelites. There was light for the Israelites. But there was darkness for the Egyptians. So the Egyptians did not come any closer to the Israelites that night.

²¹Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the LORD caused a strong wind to blow from the east. The wind blew all night long. The sea split, and the wind made the ground dry. ²²The Israelites went through the sea on dry land. The water was like a wall on their right and on their left. ²³Then all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots and drivers followed them into the sea. ²⁴Early that morning the LORD looked down from the tall flaming cloud at the Egyptian army. Then he made them panic. ²⁵The wheels of the chariots became stuck. It was very hard to control the chariots.

The Egyptians shouted, “Let’s get out of here! The LORD is fighting against us. He is fighting for the Israelites.”

²⁶Then the LORD told Moses, “Raise your hand over the sea to make the water fall and cover the Egyptian chariots and drivers.”

²⁷So just before daylight, Moses raised his hand over the sea. And the water rushed back to its normal level. The Egyptians were trying to escape the water, but the LORD swept them into the sea. ²⁸The water returned to its normal level and covered the chariots and drivers—the whole army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. None of them survived!

²⁹But the Israelites crossed the sea on dry land. The water was like a wall on their right and on their left. ³⁰So that day the LORD saved the Israelites from the Egyptians. Later, the Israelites saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians on the seashore. ³¹The Israelites saw the great power of the LORD when he defeated the Egyptians. So the people feared and respected the LORD, and they began to trust the LORD and his servant Moses.

The Song of Moses

15 Then Moses and the Israelites began singing this song to the LORD:

I will sing to the LORD!

He has done great things.

He took the enemy’s horses and riders and threw them all into the sea.

²The LORD is my strength, the one who protects me!

He is the one who saved me.

He is my God,

and I praise him.

He is the God of my father, and I will honour him.

³The LORD is a great warrior.

YAHWEH is his name.

⁴ He threw Pharaoh's chariots
 and soldiers into the sea.
 Pharaoh's best officers
 drowned in the Red Sea.
⁵ The deep water covered them,
 and they sank to the bottom like rocks.
⁶ LORD, your right hand is amazingly
 strong.
 With your right hand, LORD, you break
 the enemy to pieces.
⁷ In your great majesty you destroy
 those who stand against you.
 Your anger destroys them,
 like fire burning straw.
⁸ Angrily you blew against the sea,
 and the water piled up high.
 The flowing water became a wall,
 solid to its deepest parts.
⁹ The enemy said,
 "I will chase them and catch them.
 I will take all their riches.
 I will take it all with my sword.
 I will use my power to destroy them."
¹⁰ But again you blew against the sea,
 and it covered them all.
 They sank like lead
 under the powerful waves.
¹¹ Are there any gods like the LORD?
 No, there are no gods like you—
 you are wonderfully holy!
 You are amazingly powerful!
 You do great miracles!
¹² You raised your right hand to punish
 the enemy,
 and the ground opened up to swallow
 them.
¹³ But by your faithful love
 you will lead the people you have saved.
 And with your strength
 you will lead them like sheep to your
 holy pasture.[¶]
¹⁴ The other nations will hear about this,

and they will be frightened.
 The Philistines will shake with fear.
¹⁵ The commanders of Edom will
 tremble.
 The leaders of Moab will be afraid.
 The people of Canaan will lose courage.
¹⁶ They will be filled with fear
 when they hear about your strength.
 They will be as still as a rock, LORD,
 while your people, whose freedom you
 paid for, pass by.
¹⁷ You will lead your people into the
 land
 and let them settle on your own
 mountain.
 That's the place, LORD, that you chose
 for your home,
 the Temple that you yourself built.
¹⁸ The LORD will rule for ever and ever!
¹⁹ Yes, it really happened! Pharaoh's
 horses, chariots and drivers went into
 the sea. And the LORD brought all the
 water of the sea down on top of them.
 But the Israelites walked through that
 sea on dry land.
²⁰ Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's
 sister, picked up a tambourine, and all
 the women followed her, playing tam-
 bourines and dancing. ²¹ Miriam sang
 this song with them:
 Sing to the LORD!
 He has done great things.
 He took the enemy's horses and riders
 and threw them all into the sea.

Israel Goes Into the Desert

²² Moses led the Israelites away from
 the Red Sea and into the desert of Shur.
 They travelled for three days in the
 desert and could not find any water.
²³ Then they came to Marah.[§] There was
 water at Marah, but it was too bitter to

[¶]15:13 *holy pasture* Or "holy camp" or "holy tent". This could be Canaan (the land promised to Israel), Mount Sinai (where the Israelites camped) or Jerusalem (future site of God's Temple).

[§]15:23 *Marah* This name means "Bitter" or "Sad".

drink. (That is why the place was named Marah.)

²⁴The people began complaining to Moses. They said, “Now what will we drink?”

²⁵So Moses called to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a large piece of wood. When Moses put the wood in the water, the water became good to drink.

There the LORD put in place a law and a command for his people and tested them to see if they would obey. ²⁶He said, “I am the LORD your God. If you listen to me and do what I say is right, and if you obey all my commands and laws, I will not give you any of the sicknesses that I gave the Egyptians. I am the LORD who heals you.”

²⁷Then the people travelled to Elim. At Elim there were twelve springs of water and 70 palm trees. So the people set up camp there near the water.

Israel Complains, So God Sends Food

16 Then all the Israelites left Elim. They reached the western Sinai Desert,^{**} between Elim and Mount Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month^{††} after leaving Egypt. ²There in the desert the Israelites all began complaining to Moses and Aaron. ³They said, “It would have been better if the LORD had just killed us in the land of Egypt. At least there we could sit down and eat meat and all the food we wanted. But now you have brought us out here into this desert to make us all die from hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will cause food to fall from the sky. This food will be for you to eat. Every day the peo-

ple should go out and gather the food they need for that day. I will do this to see if they will do what I tell them. ⁵Every day the people will gather only enough food for one day. But on Fridays, when the people prepare what they have gathered, it will be enough food for two days.”^{‡‡}

⁶So Moses and Aaron said to the Israelites: “This evening you will see the power of the LORD, and you will know that he is the one who brought you out of Egypt. ⁷And in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord because he has heard your complaining against him. Yes, your complaining is against the LORD, not us. We do only what he tells us to do, so you had no reason to complain against us.”

⁸Then Moses said, “In the evening the LORD will give you meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. The LORD will do this because he has heard your complaining, which was against him, not us. What can we do? We do only what he tells us to do, so your complaints are really against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Tell the whole community of Israelites to come together before the LORD, because he has heard their complaints.”

¹⁰So Aaron spoke to all the Israelites. While he was talking, the people turned and looked into the desert. And they saw the glory of the LORD appear in a cloud.

¹¹The LORD said to Moses, ¹²“I have heard the complaints of the Israelites. So tell them, ‘This evening you will eat meat. And in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will

^{**}16:1 *western Sinai Desert* Literally, “desert of Sin”.

^{††}16:1 *fifteenth day of the second month* That is, the fifteenth of Iyyar. The Israelites had been travelling for a month.

^{‡‡}16:5 *Fridays, ... two days* This happened so that the people would not have to work on the Sabbath (Saturday), the day of rest.

know you can trust the LORD, your God.”

¹³That evening, flocks of quail came and filled the camp. And in the morning, dew lay on the ground all around the camp. ¹⁴After the dew was gone, something like thin flakes of frost was on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they asked each other, “What is that?” because they did not know what it was. So Moses told them, “This is the food the LORD is giving you to eat. ¹⁶The LORD says, ‘Each of you should gather what you need, two litres[¶] of this food for each person in your family.’”

¹⁷So that is what the Israelites did. Some people gathered a large amount, some people gathered a little. ¹⁸But when they measured what they had gathered, there was no shortage and there was none left over. Everyone gathered just what they needed.

¹⁹Moses told them, “Don’t save that food to eat the next day.” ²⁰But some of the people did not obey Moses. They saved their food for the next day. But worms got into the food and it began to stink. Moses was angry with the people who did this.

²¹Every morning the people gathered as much food as they could eat, but by noon^{§§} the food that was left on the ground had melted and was gone.

²²On Friday the people gathered twice as much food—four litres* for every person. The leaders of the people came and told Moses what they had done.

²³Moses said, “That is what the LORD commanded you to do. Tomorrow is the Sabbath, the special day of rest to hon-

our the LORD. Cook all the food today that you will need, whether you bake or boil it. And save what is left for tomorrow.”

²⁴So the people saved the rest of the food for the next day, as Moses had commanded, and none of the food spoiled or had worms in it.

²⁵On Saturday, Moses told the people, “Eat the food you gathered yesterday. Today is the Sabbath, the special day of rest to honour the LORD. You will not find any food out in the fields. ²⁶You should gather the food for six days. But the seventh day of the week is a day of rest—so there will not be any of the special food on the ground.”

²⁷On Saturday, some of the people went out to gather some of the food, but they could not find any. ²⁸Then the LORD said to Moses, “How long will you people refuse to obey my commands and teachings? ²⁹Look, the LORD has made the Sabbath a day of rest for you. So on Friday he will give you enough food for two days. Then, on the Sabbath, each of you should sit down and relax. Stay where you are.” ³⁰So the people rested on the Sabbath.

³¹The people called the special food “manna”.[†] It was like small white coriander seeds and tasted like thin cakes made with honey. ³²Moses told the people what the LORD had said: “Keep a basket of this food for your descendants. Then they can see the food that I gave to you in the desert when I took you out of Egypt.”

³³So Moses told Aaron, “Take a jar and fill it with two litres of manna. Then

[¶]**16:16 two litres** Literally, “1 omer”. Also in verses 22,32,33.

^{§§}**16:21 noon** Literally, “the heat of the day”.

***16:22 four litres** Literally, “2 omers”.

[†]**16:31 manna** This name is like the Hebrew phrase in verse 15 meaning “What is that?”

put this manna before the LORD. Keep it for our descendants.”³⁴ (Aaron did what the LORD had commanded Moses. Aaron put the jar of manna in front of the Box of the Agreement.)³⁵ The people ate the manna for 40 years, until they came to the land of rest, that is, until they came to the edge of the land of Canaan.³⁶ (The measure they used for the manna was an *omer*. An *omer* was about two litres.[‡])

Water From the Rock

17 The Israelites left the western Sinai Desert.[¶] They all travelled together from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink.² So they turned against Moses and started arguing with him. They said, “Give us water to drink!”

Moses said to them, “Why have you turned against me? Why are you testing the LORD?”

³ But the people were very thirsty, so they continued complaining to Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out here so that we, our children and our cattle will all die without water?”

⁴ So Moses cried to the LORD, “What can I do with these people? They are ready to kill me.”

⁵ The LORD said to Moses, “Go before the Israelites, and take some of the leaders of the people with you. Carry your walking stick with you. This is the stick that you used when you struck the Nile River.^{¶¶} I will stand before you on a rock at Horeb.[§] Strike that rock with the walk-

ing stick, and water will come out of it. Then the people can drink.”

Moses did these things and the leaders of Israel saw it.⁷ Moses named that place Meribah^{**} and Massah,^{††} because this was the place that the Israelites turned against him and tested the LORD. The people wanted to know if the LORD was with them or not.

War With the Amalekites

⁸ At Rephidim the Amalekites came and fought against the Israelites.⁹ So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some men and go and fight the Amalekites tomorrow. I will stand on the top of the hill and watch you. I will be holding the walking stick God gave me.”

¹⁰ Joshua obeyed Moses and went to fight the Amalekites the next day. At the same time Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.¹¹ Any time Moses held his hands in the air, the Israelites started winning the fight. But when Moses put his hands down, the Israelites began to lose the fight.

¹² After some time, Moses’ arms became tired. So they put a large rock under Moses for him to sit on. Then Aaron and Hur held Moses’ hands in the air. Aaron was on one side of Moses, and Hur was on the other side. They held his hands up like this until the sun went down.¹³ So Joshua and his men defeated the Amalekites in this battle.

¹⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this message in a book and read it aloud so that Joshua will hear it: ‘I will not leave any Amalekites on earth! No one will remember that they ever lived.’”

[‡]16:36 *two litres* Literally, “1/10 of an *ephah*”.

[¶]17:1 *western Sinai Desert* Literally, “desert of Sin”.

[§]17:6 *Horeb* Another name for Mount Sinai.

^{**}17:7 *Meribah* This name means “argument” or “rebellion”.

^{††}17:7 *Massah* This name means “trial”, “temptation” or “test”.

And this will remind people in the future of what I said.”

¹⁵Then Moses built an altar and named it, “The LORD is My Flag.”

¹⁶Moses said, “I lifted my hands towards the LORD’s throne. And the LORD will continue to fight against the Amalekites for years to come.”

Advice From Moses’ Father-in-Law

18 Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, was a priest in Midian. He heard about all that God had done to help Moses and the Israelites—how the LORD had brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

²So Jethro went to Moses while Moses was camped near the mountain of God.‡‡ Jethro brought Moses’ wife, Zipporah, with him. (Zipporah was not with Moses, because Moses had sent her home.)

³Jethro also brought Moses’ two sons with him. The first son was named Gershom,^{¶¶} because when he was born, Moses said, “I am a stranger in a foreign country.” ⁴The other son was named Eliezer,^{§§} because when he was born, Moses said, “The God who was worshipped by my father helped me and saved me from the king of Egypt.”

⁵So Jethro went to Moses while Moses was camped in the desert near the mountain of God. Moses’ wife and his two sons were with Jethro.

⁶Jethro sent a message to Moses that said, “This is your father-in-law Jethro. I am bringing your wife and her two sons to you.”

⁷So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. Moses bowed down before him and greeted him with a kiss. The two men asked about each other’s health. Then they went into Moses’ tent to talk

more. ⁸Moses told Jethro everything the LORD had done for the Israelites. He told what the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. He told about all the troubles they had suffered along the way. And he told his father-in-law how the LORD had saved the Israelites from all those troubles.

⁹Jethro was happy when he heard all the good things the LORD had done for Israel. He was glad that the Lord had freed the Israelites from the Egyptians. ¹⁰He said, “Praise the LORD! He freed you from the power of Egypt. He saved you from Pharaoh. ¹¹Now I know the LORD is greater than all the gods. Those proud Egyptians thought they were in control, but look what God has done!”

¹²Then Jethro brought a burnt offering and other sacrifices to honour God. Then Aaron and all the leaders of Israel came to eat with Moses’ father-in-law Jethro. They all ate together there with God.

¹³The next day, Moses had the job of judging the people. There were so many people that they had to stand before him all day.

¹⁴Jethro saw Moses judging the people. He asked, “Why are you doing this? Why are you the only judge? And why do people come to you all day?”

¹⁵Then Moses said to his father-in-law, “The people come to me seeking advice from God. ¹⁶If they have an argument with someone, they come to me, and I decide which person is right. In this way I teach the people God’s laws and teachings.”

¹⁷But Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “You are not doing this the right way. ¹⁸You cannot do this job all by

‡‡18:2 *mountain of God* That is, Mount Horeb (Sinai).

¶¶18:3 *Gershom* This name is like the Hebrew words meaning “a stranger there”.

§§18:4 *Eliezer* This name means “my God helps”.

yourself. It is too much work for you. It will wear you out and the people too. ¹⁹Now listen to me. If you follow my advice, God will be with you. You should continue listening to the problems of the people. And you should continue to speak to God about these things. ²⁰You should explain God's laws and teachings to the people. Warn them not to break the laws. Tell them the right way to live and what they should do. ²¹But you should also choose some of the people to be judges and leaders.

"Choose good men you can trust—men who respect God. Choose men who will not change their decisions for money. Make these men leaders over the people. Some should be in charge of 1000 people. Others should be over groups of 100, 50 or 10 people. ²²Let these leaders judge the people. If there is a very difficult case, they can come to you and let you decide what to do. But they can decide the other cases themselves. In this way these men will share your work with you, and it will be easier for you to lead the people. ²³If you do this as God directs you, then you will be able to do your job without tiring yourself out. And the people can still have all their problems solved before they return home."

²⁴So Moses did what Jethro told him. ²⁵Moses chose good men from among the Israelites. He made them leaders over the people. Some were in charge of 1000 people. Others were over groups of 100, 50 or 10 people. ²⁶These leaders were judges for the people. The people could always bring their arguments to these leaders, and Moses had to decide only the most important cases.

²⁷After a short time, Moses said goodbye to his father-in-law Jethro, and Jethro went back to his own home.

God's Agreement With Israel

19 On the first day of the third month of their journey from Egypt, the Israelites reached the desert of Sinai. ²They had travelled there from Rephidim. They camped in the desert near Mount Sinai. ³Then Moses climbed up the mountain to meet with God. The LORD spoke to him on the mountain and said, "Tell this to the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob: ⁴'You people saw what I did to the people of Egypt. You saw that I carried you out of Egypt like an eagle and brought you here to me. ⁵So now listen to what I tell you and obey me faithfully. If you do this and keep the agreement I am making with you, you will be my chosen people—people who belong only to me. The whole world belongs to me, ⁶but you will be my special nation—a kingdom of priests.' Moses, you must tell the Israelites what I have said."

⁷So Moses climbed down the mountain and called the leaders of the people together. Moses told the leaders everything the LORD had commanded him to tell them. ⁸All the people spoke at the same time and said, "We will obey everything the LORD says."

Then Moses went back up the mountain and told the Lord that the people would obey him. ⁹Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will come to you in the thick cloud. I will speak to you. All the people will hear me talking to you. I will do this so that they will always believe what you tell them."

Then Moses told God everything the people had said.

¹⁰And the LORD said to Moses, "Today and tomorrow you must prepare the people for a special meeting. They must wash their clothes ¹¹and be ready for me on the third day. On the third day, the

LORD will come down to Mount Sinai. And all the people will see me.¹²⁻¹³ But you must tell the people to stay away from the mountain until they hear the ram's horn sound a long blast. Only then can they go up the mountain. Until then, mark a line around the mountain and don't let anyone cross it. Any person or animal that crosses the line and touches the mountain must be killed with stones or shot with arrows. And no one may touch the person or animal that crosses the line."

¹⁴ So Moses climbed down the mountain and went to the people. He got them ready for the special meeting, and they washed their clothes.

¹⁵ Then Moses said to the people, "Be ready for the meeting with God in three days. Do not have sexual relations during that time."

¹⁶ On the morning of the third day, a thick cloud came down onto the mountain. There was thunder and lightning and a very loud blast from a horn. All the people in the camp were frightened. ¹⁷ Then Moses led the people out of the camp to a place near the mountain to meet God. ¹⁸ Mount Sinai was covered with smoke. Smoke rose off the mountain like smoke from a furnace. This happened because the LORD came down to the mountain in fire. Also the whole mountain began to shake. ¹⁹ The noise from the horn became louder and louder. Every time Moses spoke to God, God answered him with a voice like thunder.

²⁰ So the LORD came down to Mount Sinai. He came from heaven to the top of the mountain. Then he called Moses to come up to the top of the mountain with him. So Moses went up the mountain.

²¹ The LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people not to come near me and look at me. If they do, many will die. ²² Also tell the priests who come near the LORD that they must prepare themselves for this special meeting. If they don't, I, the LORD, will punish them."

²³ Moses said to the LORD, "But the people cannot come up the mountain. You yourself told us to make a line and not allow the people to cross the line to holy ground."

²⁴ The LORD said to him, "Go down to the people. Get Aaron and bring him back with you. But don't let the priests or the people come near me. I will punish them if they come too close."

²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them these things.

The Ten Commandments

20 This is what God told his people: ² "I am the LORD your God. I am the one who freed you from the land of Egypt, where you were slaves.

³ "You must not worship any other gods except me.

⁴ "You must not make any idols. Don't make any idols or statues that look like anything up in the sky, on the earth or in the water below the earth. ⁵ Don't worship or serve idols of any kind, because I am the LORD your God, and I do not allow my people to worship other gods.* I will punish the sin of those who reject me in this way. And I will punish their children, their grandchildren and even their great-grandchildren.

⁶ But I will be very kind to people who love me and obey my com-

*20:5 *I do not allow ... other gods* Or "I am El Kanah—the Jealous God."

mands. I will be kind to their families for thousands of generations.[†]

⁷“You must not use the name of the LORD your God to make empty promises. If you do, the LORD will not let you go unpunished.

⁸“You must remember to keep the Sabbath a special day. ⁹You may work six days a week to do your job. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a day of rest in honour of the LORD your God. So on that day no one should work—not you, your sons and daughters or your men and women slaves. Even your animals and the immigrants living in your cities must not work! ¹¹That is because the LORD worked six days and made the sky, the earth, the sea and everything in them. And on the seventh day, he rested. In this way the LORD blessed the Sabbath—the day of rest. He made that a very special day.

¹²“You must respect your father and your mother. Do this so that you will live a long time in the land that the LORD your God gives you.

¹³“You must not murder anyone.

¹⁴“You must not commit adultery.

¹⁵“You must not steal.

¹⁶“You must not lie as a witness against someone.

¹⁷“You must not want to take your neighbour’s house. You must not want his wife. And you must not want his men and women servants or his cattle or his donkeys. You must not want to take anything that belongs to another person.”

The People Are Afraid of God

¹⁸During all this time, the people in the valley heard the thundering and saw the lightning on the mountain. They saw smoke rising from the mountain and heard the sound of the horn. They were afraid and shook with fear. They stood away from the mountain and watched. ¹⁹Then the people said to Moses, “If you want to speak to us, we will listen. But please don’t let God speak to us. If this happens, we will die.”

²⁰Then Moses said to them, “There is no need for that kind of fear! God has only come to test you. He wants you to have the kind of fear for him that keeps you from sinning.” ²¹The people stood far away from the mountain while Moses went to the dark cloud where God was.

Altars for the Lord

²²Then the LORD told Moses to say this to the Israelites: “You people have seen that I talked with you from heaven.

²³So you must not make idols using gold or silver to compete with me. You must not make these false gods.

²⁴“Make a special altar for me. You should use dirt to make this altar. Offer sheep and cattle as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on this altar. Do this in every place I choose to be honoured. Then I will come and bless you. ²⁵But if you use stones to make an altar, don’t use stones that were cut with an iron tool. If you do that, it will make the altar unacceptable. ²⁶And you must not make steps leading up to the altar. If there are steps, when people look up to the altar, they will be able to see under your clothes.”

[†]20:6 Or “But I will show mercy to thousands of people who love me and obey my commands.”

Other Laws and Commands

21 Then God said to Moses, “These are the other laws that you will give to the people:

²“If you become the owner of a Hebrew[‡] slave, that slave will serve for six years. After six years, he will be free, and he will owe nothing. ³If he was not married when he became your slave, he will leave without a wife. But if the man was married when he became your slave, his wife will be freed with him. ⁴If the slave is not married, the master can give him a wife. If that wife gives birth to sons or daughters, she and her children will belong to the master. After the slave is finished with his years of service, he will be made free.

⁵“But if the slave decides that he wants to stay with the master, he must say, ‘I love my master. I love my wife and my children. I will not become free—I will stay.’ ⁶If this happens, the master will bring the slave before God.[†] The master will take the slave to the door or the doorpost and use a sharp tool to make a hole in the slave’s ear to show that he will serve that master for all his life.

⁷“If a man sells his daughter as a slave, the rules for making her free are not the same as the rules for making the men slaves free. ⁸If the master who bought her for himself is not pleased with her, he may sell her back to her family. He cannot sell her to anyone else because he broke his agreement with her. ⁹If the man who bought her as a slave decides to give her to his son, he must accept her as a daughter.

¹⁰“If the man takes another woman as a slave or a wife, he must con-

tinue to give the other woman the same food, clothing and rights she had before.

¹¹The man must provide these three things for her. If he does not, the woman is made free, and it will cost her nothing. She owes no money to the man.

¹²“Whoever hits and kills someone must be killed too. ¹³But if an accident happens, and a person kills someone without planning it, then God allowed that thing to happen. I will choose some special places where people can run to for safety. So that person can run to one of those places. ¹⁴But whoever plans to kill someone out of anger or hatred must be punished. Take them away from my altar and kill them.

¹⁵“Whoever hits their father or their mother must be killed.

¹⁶“Whoever steals someone to sell them as a slave or to keep them for their own slave must be killed.

¹⁷“Whoever curses their father or mother must be killed.

^{18–19}“Two men might argue and one might hit the other with a rock or with his fist. If the man who was hurt is not killed, the one who hurt him should not be killed. If the man was hurt and must stay in bed for some time, the one who hurt him must support him. He must pay for the man’s lost time until he is able to get around with the help of a cane.

²⁰“Sometimes people beat their slaves. If the slave dies after being beaten, the killer must be punished. ²¹But if the slave is still alive after a day or two, the master will not be punished. The slave is the property of his master.

²²“Two men might be fighting and hurt a pregnant woman. This might make the woman give birth to her baby before its time. If the woman was not

[‡]21:2 *Hebrew* Or “Israelite”.

[†]21:6 *before God* Or “before the judges”.

hurt badly,[§] the man who hurt her must pay a fine. The woman's husband will decide how much the man must pay. The judges will help the man decide how much the fine will be. ²³ But if the woman was hurt badly, the man who hurt her must be punished. The punishment must fit the crime. You must trade one life for another life. ²⁴ You must trade an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵ a burn for a burn, a bruise for a bruise, a cut for a cut.

²⁶ "If a man hits a slave in the eye, and the slave is blinded in that eye, then the slave will be allowed to go free. His eye is the payment for his freedom. This is the same for a man or a woman slave. ²⁷ If a master hits his slave in the mouth, and the slave loses a tooth, then the slave will be allowed to go free. The slave's tooth is payment for the slave's freedom. This is the same for a man or a woman slave.

²⁸ "If a man's bull kills a man or woman, you should kill that bull with stones. You should not eat the bull. The owner of the bull is not guilty. ²⁹ But if the bull had hurt people in the past, and if the owner was warned, then the owner is guilty. That is because he did not keep the bull tied or locked in its place. So if the bull is allowed to be free and kills someone, the owner is guilty. You should kill the bull with stones and also kill the owner. ³⁰ But the family of the dead man may accept money. If they accept money, the man who owned the bull should not be killed. But he must pay as much money as the judge decides.

³¹ "This same law must be followed if the bull kills someone's son or daughter. ³² But if the bull kills a slave, the owner

of the animal must pay the master 30 pieces of silver.** And the bull must also be killed with stones. This law will be the same for men and women slaves.

³³ "Someone might open a pit or dig one and not cover it. Then another man's ox or donkey might fall into the pit and be killed. ³⁴ If that happens, the owner of the pit must pay the owner of the animal. But after he pays for the animal, it will belong to him.

³⁵ "If one man's bull kills another man's bull, they should sell the bull that is alive. Both men will get half of the money that comes from selling the bull, and both men will also get half of the bull that was killed. ³⁶ But if a man's bull has hurt other animals in the past, that owner is responsible for his bull. If his bull kills another bull, he is guilty because he allowed the bull to be free. That man must pay bull for bull. He must trade his bull for the bull that was killed.

22 "How should you punish someone who steals a bull or a sheep? If he kills the animal or sells it, he cannot give it back. So he must pay five bulls for the one he stole. Or he must pay four sheep for the one he stole. He must pay for stealing. ²⁻⁴ If he owns nothing, he will be sold as a slave. But if he still has the animal and you find it, he must give the owner two animals for every animal he stole. It doesn't matter if the animal was a bull, a donkey or a sheep. If the thief is killed while he is breaking in to steal, no one will be guilty for killing him. But if this happens during the day, the one who killed him will be guilty of murder.

⁵ "A person's cattle might wander from his own field or vineyard and graze in a field that belongs to someone else. If that

§21:22 *hurt badly* Or "killed".

**21:32 *30 pieces of silver* The price for a new slave.

happens, the owner must pay the other person for what the cattle ate. And the payment must come from the best of his crop.

⁶“What if someone starts a fire in his field, and it burns through the thorn bushes around his field into his neighbour’s field? And what if the fire burns his neighbour’s grain that has been cut and stacked or is still growing? If that happens, the person who started the fire must pay for all the grain that was burned.

⁷A person might give some money or tools to a neighbour for safekeeping. What should you do if someone steals those things from the neighbour’s house? If you find the one who stole them, that thief must pay twice as much as the things are worth. ⁸If you don’t find the thief, the neighbour must take an oath before God that he did not steal the things that did not belong to him.

⁹“What should you do if two men disagree about a bull or a donkey or sheep or clothing or something that is lost? One man says, ‘This is mine,’ and the other says, ‘No, it is mine.’ Both men must take an oath before God, and God will decide which one is guilty. The one who was wrong must pay the other man twice the value of whatever was lost.

¹⁰“A man might ask his neighbour to take care of an animal for a short time. It might be a donkey, a bull or a sheep. What should you do if that animal is hurt or dies or is stolen, and no one saw what happened? ¹¹That neighbour must explain that he did not steal the animal. If this is true, the neighbour will promise to the LORD that he did not steal it. The owner of the animal must accept this promise. The neighbour does not have to pay the owner for the ani-

mal. ¹²But if the neighbour stole the animal, he must pay the owner for the animal. ¹³If wild animals killed the animal, the neighbour should bring the body as proof. The neighbour will not have to pay the owner for the animal that was killed.

¹⁴“If a man borrows an animal from his neighbour, and the animal is hurt or dies, the neighbour must pay the owner for the animal. The neighbour is responsible, because the owner was not there himself. ¹⁵But if the owner was there, the neighbour does not have to pay. Or if the neighbour was paying money to use the animal for work, he will not have to pay if the animal dies or is hurt. The money he paid to use the animal will be enough payment.

¹⁶“If a man has sex with a virgin who he is not engaged to,^{††} he must pay her father the full amount necessary to marry her. ¹⁷If the father refuses to allow his daughter to marry him, the man must still pay the full amount for her.

¹⁸“You must not allow any woman to do evil magic. If she does magic, you must not let her live.

¹⁹“You must not allow anyone to have sex with an animal. If this happens, that person must be killed.

²⁰“Whoever makes a sacrifice to a false god should be destroyed. The LORD is the only one you should make sacrifices to.

²¹“Remember, in the past you were immigrants in the land of Egypt. So you should not mistreat or harm anyone who is an immigrant in your land.

²²“You must never do anything bad to women whose husbands are dead or to orphans. ²³If you do anything wrong to these widows or orphans, I will know it. I will hear about their suffering. ²⁴And

^{††}22:16 *a virgin ... engaged to* Literally, “a virgin who is not engaged”.

I will be very angry and kill you with a sword. Then your wives will become widows, and your children will become orphans.

²⁵“If you loan money to any of my people who are in need, don’t be like a moneylender. Don’t charge them interest. ²⁶If you take their cloak to make sure they pay the money back, you must give it back to them before sunset. ²⁷The cloak might be their only protection against the cold when they lie down to sleep. If they call to me for help, I will listen because I am kind.

²⁸“You must not curse God or the leaders of your people.

²⁹“At harvest time you should give me the first grain and the first juice from your fruit. Don’t wait until late in the year. And don’t wait to give me your firstborn sons. ³⁰Also, give me your firstborn cattle and sheep. Let the firstborn stay with its mother for seven days. Then on the eighth day, give him to me.

³¹“You are my special people. So don’t eat the meat from something that was killed by wild animals. Let the dogs eat that dead animal.

23 “Don’t tell lies about other people. If you are a witness in court, don’t agree to lie for a bad person. ²Even if everyone else wants something that is wrong, you must not join them. Don’t lie as a witness to please the crowd. Don’t help them rob someone of justice. ³And don’t try to help a poor person win a lawsuit just because that person is poor.

⁴“If you see a lost bull or donkey, you must return it to its owner—even if the owner is your enemy.

⁵“If you see an animal that cannot walk because it has too much to carry, you must stop and help that animal. You must help that animal even if it belongs to one of your enemies.

⁶“Don’t be unfair to those who are poor when they appear in court.

⁷“Be very careful if you say that someone is guilty of something. Don’t make false charges against a person. Never allow innocent people to be killed as punishment for something they did not do. Whoever kills an innocent person is evil, and I will not treat a guilty person as innocent.

⁸“If someone tries to pay you to agree with them when they are wrong, don’t accept that payment. A payment like that can blind judges so that they cannot see the truth. It can make good people tell lies.

⁹“You must never mistreat an immigrant. Remember, you know what it is like to be an immigrant because at one time you were immigrants in the land of Egypt.

The Seventh Year and the Seventh Day

¹⁰“Plant seeds, harvest your crops and work the ground for six years. ¹¹But the seventh year must be a special time of rest for the land. Don’t plant anything in your fields. If any crops grow there, allow the poor to have it. And allow the wild animals to eat the food that is left. You should do the same with your vineyards and with your fields of olive trees.

¹²“Work for six days, but on the seventh day, rest! This will allow the slaves and foreigners who work for you a time to rest and relax. And your bulls and donkeys will also have a time of rest.

¹³“Be sure that you obey all these laws. Don’t worship other gods. You should not even speak their names!

The Annual Festivals

¹⁴“You will gather to celebrate three festivals each year to honour me. You must come to my special place to wor-

ship me during these festivals. ¹⁵The first festival is the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This is as I commanded you. During this time you will eat bread that is made without yeast. This will continue for seven days. You will do this during the month of Abib, because this is the time when you came out of Egypt. Everyone must bring an offering to me at that time.

¹⁶“The second festival will be the Festival of Harvest. This festival will be during the early summer when you begin harvesting the first crops that you planted in your fields.

“The third festival will be the Festival of Shelters. This will be in the autumn, when you finish gathering the rest of the crops from your fields.

¹⁷“So three times each year all the men will come to the special place to be with the Lord GOD.

¹⁸“When you kill an animal and offer its blood as a sacrifice, you must not include anything that has yeast in it. And when you burn the fat from my sacrifice, don’t let any of it remain until morning.

¹⁹“When you gather your crops at harvest time, you should bring the first of everything you harvest to the house^{‡‡} of the LORD your God.

“You must not eat the meat from a young goat that is boiled in its mother’s milk.”

God Will Help Israel Take Their Land

²⁰“I am sending an angel before you to protect you along the way and to lead

you to the place that I have prepared for you. ²¹Obey the angel and follow him. Be careful in his presence, and don’t rebel against him. The angel will not forgive the wrong things you do to him. He has my power^{¶¶} in him. ²²If you listen to what he says and do everything I tell you, I will be an enemy to all your enemies. I will fight against everyone who is against you.

²³“My angel will lead you through the land. He will lead you against many different people—the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites. But I will defeat all of them.

²⁴“Don’t worship their gods. Don’t ever bow down to those gods. You must never live the way those people live. You must destroy their idols. And you must break the stones that help them remember their gods.^{§§} ²⁵You must serve the LORD your God. If you do this, I will bless you with plenty of bread and water. I will take away all sickness from you. ²⁶Your women will all be able to have babies. None of their babies will die at birth. And I will allow you to live long lives.

²⁷“When you fight against your enemies, I will send my great power before you.* I will help you defeat all your enemies. The people who are against you will become confused in battle and run

^{‡‡}23:19 *house* The “Holy Tent” or later, the Temple, where the people went to meet with God. See Exod. 25:8-9.

^{¶¶}23:21 *my power* Literally, “my name”.

^{§§}23:24 *stones ... gods* Or “memorials”. Here, these were stone markers that people used in worshipping their gods.

*23:27 *When you fight ... you* Or “News of my power will go before you, and your enemies will be frightened.”

away. ²⁸I will send the hornet[†] in front of you. He will force your enemies to leave. The Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites will leave your country. ²⁹But I will not force all of them out in just one year. If the people leave too quickly, the land will be left empty. Then the wild animals will multiply, and you will be unable to control them all. ³⁰So I will force the people out slowly, until there are enough of you to take over the land.

³¹“I will give you all the land from the Red Sea[‡] to the Sea of the Philistines[¶] and from the desert of Sinai to the Euphrates River. I will let you defeat the people living there and force them all to leave.

³²“You must not make any agreements with any of those people or their gods. ³³Don’t let them stay in your country. If you let them stay, they will be like a trap to you—they will cause you to sin against me. And you will begin worshipping their gods.”

God and Israel Make Their Agreement

24 The LORD told Moses, “You, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the 70 leaders of Israel must come up the mountain and worship me from a distance. ²Then only Moses will come close to the LORD. The other men must not come close, and the rest of the people must not even come up the mountain.”

³Moses told the people all the rules and commands from the LORD. Then all

the people said, “We will obey all the commands that the LORD has spoken.”

⁴So Moses wrote down all the commands of the LORD. The next morning he got up early and built an altar near the bottom of the mountain. And he set up twelve stones—one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵Then Moses sent young Israelite men to offer sacrifices. These men offered bulls to the LORD as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

⁶Moses saved the blood from these animals. He put half of the blood in bowls, and he splashed the other half of the blood on the altar.[§]

⁷Moses read the scroll with the special agreement written on it. He read the agreement so that all the people could hear him. And the people said, “We have heard all the laws that the LORD has given us. And we agree to obey them faithfully.”

⁸Then Moses held the bowls full of the blood from the sacrifices. He splashed that blood on the people. He said, “This blood shows that the LORD has made a special agreement with you. The laws God gave you explain the agreement.”

⁹Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the 70 leaders of Israel went up the mountain. ¹⁰On the mountain, these men saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was a pavement that looked like sapphire, as clear as the sky! ¹¹These leaders of Israel saw God, but God did not

[†]23:28 *hornet* A stinging insect like a large wasp or bee. Here, it might mean “God’s angel” or “his great power”.

[‡]23:31 *Red Sea* Or “Reed Sea”, probably the part known as the Gulf of Aqaba. See 1 Kgs 9:26.

[¶]23:31 *Sea of the Philistines* That is, the Mediterranean Sea.

[§]24:6 The blood was used to seal the agreement between God and the people. It was splashed on the altar to show that God shared in the agreement.

destroy them. ** They all ate and drank together.

Moses Goes to Get God's Law

¹²The LORD said to Moses, "Come to me on the mountain. I have written my teachings and laws on two stone tablets. These teachings and laws are for the people. I will give these stone tablets to you."

¹³So Moses and his assistant, Joshua, went up the mountain of God. ¹⁴Moses said to the leaders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. While I am gone, Aaron and Hur will rule over you. Go to them if anyone has a problem."

Moses Meets With God

¹⁵Then Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD came down on Mount Sinai. The cloud covered the mountain for six days. On the seventh day, the LORD spoke to Moses from the cloud. ¹⁷The Israelites could see the glory of the LORD. It was like a fire burning on top of the mountain.

¹⁸Then Moses went higher up the mountain into the cloud. He was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights.

Gifts for the Holy Tent

25 The LORD said to Moses, ²"Tell the Israelites to bring me gifts. You will accept gifts for me from everyone who is willing to give. ³Here is the list of the things that you should accept from the people: gold, silver and bronze; ⁴blue, purple and red yarn and fine linen; goat hair, ⁵ram skins dyed red and fine leather; acacia wood; ⁶oil

for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil and spices for the sweet-smelling incense. ⁷Also accept onyx stones and other jewels to be put on the ephod and the judgement pouch.

⁸"Tell the people to build a special place for me, and I will live among them. ⁹I will show you a pattern for this Holy Tent. Make the tent and everything in it look exactly like this pattern.

The Box of the Agreement

¹⁰"Use acacia wood and build a special box. This Holy Box must be 110 centimetres^{††} long, 66 centimetres^{‡‡} wide and 66 centimetres high. ¹¹Use pure gold to cover it inside and out, and put gold trim around the edges. ¹²Make four gold rings and attach them to the four corners, two rings on each side. ¹³Then make poles to put through the rings. They should be made from acacia wood and covered with gold. ¹⁴Put the poles through the rings on the sides of the Holy Box, and use these poles to carry it. ¹⁵The poles should always stay in the rings of the Box. Never take them out.

¹⁶"I will give you the tablets with the commands of the Agreement. Put the tablets into this Box. ¹⁷Then make a cover for the box. Make it from pure gold. Make it 110 centimetres long and 66 centimetres wide. ¹⁸Then make two winged creatures and put them on each end of the cover. Hammer gold to make these angels. ¹⁹Put one creature on each end of the cover. Join the creatures together with the cover to make one piece. ²⁰The wings of these creatures should spread up towards the sky. They should cover the Box with their wings

** **24:11 saw God ... destroy them** In other places, the Bible says that people cannot see God. But God wanted these leaders to know what he was like, so he allowed them to see him in some special way.

†† **25:10 110 centimetres** Literally, "2.5 cubits". Also in verse 17.

‡‡ **25:10 66 centimetres** Literally, "1.5 cubits". Also in verses 17,23.

and should face each other, looking towards the cover.

²¹ “I will give you the Agreement. Put it inside the Box, and put the cover on the Box. ²² When I meet with you, I will speak from between the winged creatures on the cover that is on the Box of the Agreement. From that place, I will give all my commands to the Israelites.

The Table

²³ “Make a table from acacia wood. The table must be 88 centimetres^{¶¶} long, 44 centimetres^{§§} wide and 66 centimetres high. ²⁴ Cover the table with pure gold and put gold trim around it. ²⁵ Then make a frame 75 millimetres^{*} wide around the table. And put gold trim on the frame. ²⁶ Then make four gold rings and attach them to the four corners of the table, where the four legs are. ²⁷ Put the rings close to the frame around the top of the table. These rings will hold the poles used to carry the table. ²⁸ Use acacia wood to make the poles, and cover them with gold. The poles are for carrying the table. ²⁹ Make the plates, the spoons, the pitchers and the bowls from pure gold. The pitchers and bowls will be used for pouring the drink offerings. ³⁰ Put the holy bread before me on the table. It must always be there in front of me.

The Lampstand

³¹ “Then you must make a lampstand. Use pure gold and hammer it to make the base and the shaft.[†] Make flowers, buds

and petals from pure gold. Join all these things together into one piece.

³² “The lampstand must have six branches—three branches on one side and three branches on the other. ³³ Each branch must have three flowers. Make these flowers like almond flowers with buds and petals. ³⁴ Make four more flowers for the lampstand. These flowers must be made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ³⁵ There will be six branches on the lampstand—three branches coming out from each side of the shaft. Make a flower with buds and petals below each of the three places where the branches join the shaft. ³⁶ The whole lampstand with the flowers and branches must be made from pure gold. All this gold must be hammered and joined together into one piece. ³⁷ Then make seven lamps[‡] to go on the lampstand. These lamps will give light to the area in front of the lampstand. ³⁸ Use pure gold to make the lamp snuffers and trays. ³⁹ Use 35 kilogrammes[¶] of pure gold to make the lampstand and the things to be used with it. ⁴⁰ Be very careful to make everything exactly the way I showed you on the mountain.

The Holy Tent

26 “The Holy Tent should be made from ten curtains. These curtains must be made from fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. A skilled worker should sew pictures of winged creatures into the curtains. ² Make each curtain the same size. Each curtain should be 12

¶¶25:23 88 centimetres Literally, “2 cubits”.

§§25:23 44 centimetres Literally, “1 cubit”.

*25:25 75 millimetres Literally, “1 handbreadth”. The width of 4 fingers.

†25:31 base and the shaft Or “flared base”.

‡25:37 lamps Small bowls filled with oil. A wick was put in the bowl and lit to produce light.

¶25:39 35 kilogrammes Literally, “1 talent”.

metres[§] long and 2 metres^{**} wide. ³Join the curtains together into two groups. Join five curtains together to make one group and join five curtains together to make the other group. ⁴Use blue cloth to make loops along the edge of the end curtain in one group. Do the same on the end curtain in the other group. ⁵There must be 50 loops on the end curtain of the first group. And there must be 50 loops on the end curtain of the other group. These loops must be opposite each other. ⁶Then make 50 gold rings to join the curtains together. This will join the Holy Tent together into one piece.

⁷“Make another tent that will cover the Holy Tent. Use eleven curtains to make this tent. Make these curtains from goat hair. ⁸All these curtains must be the same size. They must be 13 metres^{††} long and 2 metres wide. ⁹Join five of the curtains together into one group. Then join the other six curtains together into another group. Fold back half of the sixth curtain at the front of the Tent. ¹⁰Make 50 loops down the edge of the end curtain of one group. Do the same for the end curtain of the other group. ¹¹Then make 50 bronze rings to join the curtains together. This will join the tent together into one piece. ¹²Half of the end curtain of this tent will hang down below the back edge of the Holy Tent. ¹³On the sides, the curtains of this tent will hang down 44 centimetres^{‡‡} below the bottom edges of the Holy Tent. So this tent will completely cover the Holy Tent. ¹⁴Make two coverings to go over the

outer tent. One covering should be made from ram skins dyed red. The other covering should be made from fine leather.

¹⁵“Use acacia wood to make frames to support the Holy Tent. ¹⁶The frames should be 4 metres^{¶¶} high and 66 centimetres^{§§} wide. ¹⁷Two side poles should be joined together with cross pieces to make each frame. All the frames for the Holy Tent must be the same. ¹⁸Make 20 frames for the south side of the Holy Tent. ¹⁹And make 40 silver bases for the frames. Each frame should have two silver bases to go under it—one base for each side pole. ²⁰Make 20 more frames for the other side, the north side, of the Holy Tent. ²¹And make 40 silver bases for these frames—two bases under each frame. ²²Make six more frames for the back, the west side, of the Holy Tent. ²³Make two frames for the corners at the back of the Holy Tent. ²⁴The frames at the corners should be joined together at the bottom. At the top a ring will hold the frames together. Do the same for both corners. ²⁵There will be a total of eight frames for the west end of the Tent. There will be 16 silver bases—two bases under each frame.

²⁶“Use acacia wood and make braces for the frames of the Holy Tent. There should be five braces for the first side of the Holy Tent. ²⁷And there should be five braces for the frames on the other side of the Holy Tent. And there should be five braces for the frames at the back, the west side, of the Holy Tent. ²⁸The middle brace should pass through the frames from one end to the other.

[§]26:2 12 metres Literally “28 cubits”.

^{**}26:2 2 metres Literally “4 cubits”. Also in verse 8.

^{††}26:8 13 metres Literally “30 cubits”.

^{‡‡}26:13 44 centimetres Literally “1 cubit”.

^{¶¶}26:16 4 metres Literally “10 cubits”.

^{§§}26:16 66 centimetres Literally “1.5 cubits”.

²⁹“Cover the frames with gold. And make rings for the frames to hold the braces. Make these rings from gold. Also cover the braces with gold. ³⁰Build the Holy Tent the way I showed you on the mountain.

Inside the Holy Tent

³¹“Use fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn to make a curtain for the Most Holy Place. And sew pictures of winged creatures into the curtain. ³²Make four posts from acacia wood, and cover the posts with gold. Put hooks made from gold on the four posts. Put four silver bases under the posts. Then hang the curtain on the gold hooks. ³³Put the curtain under the gold rings.* Then put the Box of the Agreement behind the curtain. This curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. ³⁴Put the cover on the Box of the Agreement in the Most Holy Place.

³⁵“Put the table you made outside the curtain. The table should be on the north side of the Holy Tent. Then put the lampstand on the south side across from the table.

The Entrance to the Holy Tent

³⁶“Then make a curtain to cover the entrance to the Holy Tent. Use blue, purple and red yarn and fine linen to make this curtain. Weave pictures into it. ³⁷Make gold hooks for this curtain. Make five posts using acacia wood covered with gold and make five bronze bases for the five posts.

The Altar for Burnt Offerings

27 “Use acacia wood and build an altar. The altar should be square. It must be 2.2 metres[†] long, 2.2 metres wide and 1.3 metres[‡] high. ²Make a horn for each of the four corners of the altar. Join each horn to its corner so that everything is one piece. Then cover the altar with bronze.

³“Use bronze to make all the tools and dishes that will be used on the altar. Make pots, shovels, bowls, forks and pans. These will be used for cleaning ashes from the altar. ⁴Make a grating for the altar, a network made of bronze. And put a bronze ring at each of the four corners of the grating. ⁵Put the grating below the ledge of the altar so that it reaches halfway down the sides.

⁶“Use acacia wood to make poles for the altar, and cover them with bronze. ⁷Put the poles through the rings on both sides of the altar. Use these poles for carrying the altar. ⁸Make the altar like an empty box with the sides made from boards. Make the altar just as I showed you on the mountain.

The Courtyard Around the Holy Tent

⁹“Make a courtyard for the Holy Tent. The south side should have a wall of curtains 44 metres[¶] long. These curtains must be made from fine linen. ¹⁰Use 20 posts and 20 bronze bases under the posts. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods[§] should be made from silver. ¹¹The north side must also have a wall of curtains 44 metres long. It must

***26:33 under the gold rings** The 50 gold rings that joined together the two parts of the Holy Tent. See Exod. 26:6.

†**27:1 2.2 metres** Literally, “5 cubits”. Also in verse 18.

‡**27:1 1.3 metres** Literally, “3 cubits”.

¶**27:9 44 metres** Literally, “100 cubits”. Also in verses 11,18.

§**27:10 curtain rods** These were either rods that joined the posts together or grommets (rings) sewn into the curtains.

have 20 posts and 20 bronze bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods must be made from silver.

¹²“On the west side of the courtyard there must be a wall of curtains 22 metres** long. There must be ten posts and ten bases. ¹³The east side of the courtyard must also be 22 metres long. ¹⁴Here at the entrance to the courtyard, one side must have curtains 6.6 metres†† long. There must be three posts and three bases on this side. ¹⁵The other side of the entrance must also have curtains 6.6 metres long. There must be three posts and three bases on that side.

¹⁶“Make a curtain 9 metres‡‡ long to cover the entrance to the courtyard. Make this curtain from fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. Weave designs into that curtain. There must be four posts and four bases for that curtain. ¹⁷All the posts around the courtyard must be joined with silver curtain rods. The hooks on the posts must be made from silver and the bases for the posts must be bronze. ¹⁸The courtyard should be 44 metres long and 22 metres wide. The wall of curtains around the courtyard should be 2.2 metres high. The curtains must be made from fine linen. The bases under the posts must be bronze. ¹⁹All the tools, tent pegs and other things used in the Holy Tent must be made from bronze. And all the pegs for the curtains around the courtyard must be made from bronze.

Oil for the Lamp

²⁰“Command the Israelites to bring their best olive oil for the lamp that must be lit each evening. ²¹This lamp is in the first room of the Meeting Tent, outside

the curtain for the room where the Box of the Agreement is. Aaron and his sons will make sure this lamp is burning before the LORD every day from evening until morning. The Israelites and their descendants must obey this law forever.

Clothes for the Priests

28 “Tell your brother Aaron and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, to come to you. These men are the ones I have chosen from the Israelites to serve me as priests.

²“Make special clothes for your brother Aaron. These clothes will give him honour and respect. ³I have given special wisdom to some of the skilled men. Tell them to make the clothes for Aaron. These clothes will show that he serves me in a special way. Then he can serve me as a priest. ⁴These are the clothes the men should make: the judgement pouch, the ephod, a blue robe, a woven long shirt, a turban and a cloth belt. They must make these special clothes for your brother Aaron and his sons. Then Aaron and his sons can serve me as priests. ⁵Tell the men to use gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn.

The Ephod and the Cloth Belt

⁶“Use gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn to make the ephod. This must be the work of a very skilled person. ⁷At each shoulder of the ephod, there should be a shoulder piece. These shoulder pieces should be tied to the two corners of the ephod.

⁸“The men will carefully weave a cloth belt for the ephod. This belt must be made the same way as the ephod—

**27:12 22 metres Literally, “50 cubits”. Also in verse 18.

††27:14 6.6 metres Literally, “15 cubits”.

‡‡27:16 9 metres Literally, “20 cubits”.

use gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn.

⁹“Take two onyx stones. Write the names of the twelve sons of Israel on these jewels. ¹⁰Write six names on one jewel and six names on the other jewel. Write the names in order, from the oldest son to the youngest. ¹¹Cut the names of the sons of Israel into these stones. Do this the way a worker makes a seal. Put the jewels in gold settings. ¹²Then put these two jewels on the shoulder pieces of the ephod. Aaron will wear this special coat when he stands before the LORD. And the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel will be on the ephod. These jewels will cause the Lord to remember the Israelites. ¹³Use fine gold to hold the stones on the ephod. ¹⁴Twist chains of pure gold together like a rope. Make two of these gold chains and fasten them to the gold settings.

The Judgement Pouch

¹⁵“Make the judgement pouch for the high priest. Skilled workers should make this pouch just as they made the ephod. They must use gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. ¹⁶The judgement pouch should be folded double to make a square pocket. It should be 22 centimetres^f long and 22 centimetres wide. ¹⁷Put four rows of beautiful jewels on the judgement pouch. The first row of jewels should have a ruby, a topaz and a beryl. ¹⁸The second row should have a turquoise, a lapis lazuli and an emerald. ¹⁹The third row should have a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst. ²⁰The fourth row should have a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. Set all these jewels in gold. ²¹There will be twelve jewels on the judgement pouch—one stone for

each of the sons of Israel. Each stone will be like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes cut into it.

²²“Use the chains of pure gold made for the judgement pouch. These chains must be braided like a rope. ²³Make two gold rings and put them on two corners of the judgement pouch. ²⁴Put the two gold chains through the two rings at the corners of the judgement pouch. ²⁵Fasten the ends of the gold chains to the two gold settings on the shoulder pieces of the ephod. ²⁶Make two more gold rings and put them on the other two corners of the judgement pouch. This will be on the inside edge of the judgement pouch next to the ephod. ²⁷Make two more gold rings and put them on the lower part of the shoulder pieces on the front of the ephod. Put the gold rings near the fastener, just above the cloth belt of the ephod. ²⁸Use blue ribbon to tie the rings of the judgement pouch to the rings of the ephod. In this way the judgement pouch will rest close to the cloth belt and will be held against the ephod.

²⁹“When Aaron enters the Holy Place, he must wear the judgement pouch. In this way he will wear the names of the twelve sons of Israel over his heart. And the LORD will always be reminded of them. ³⁰Put the Urim and Thummim inside the judgement pouch. They will be over Aaron’s heart when he goes before the LORD. So when Aaron goes before the LORD, he will always have with him a way of finding out my decisions for the people of Israel.

Other Clothes for the Priests

³¹“Make a blue robe for the ephod. ³²Make a hole in the centre for the head. And sew a piece of cloth around the

^f28:16 22 centimetres Literally, “1 span”. The distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger.

edge of this hole. This cloth will be like a collar that keeps the hole from tearing. ³³Use blue, purple and red yarn to make cloth pomegranates. Hang these pomegranates around the bottom edge of the robe, and hang gold bells between the pomegranates. ³⁴So around the bottom edge of the robe there should be bells and pomegranates. There should be a bell following each pomegranate. ³⁵Aaron will wear this robe when he serves as a priest. The bells will ring as Aaron goes into the Holy Place to stand before the LORD, and the bells will ring as he leaves the Holy Place. This way Aaron will not die.

³⁶“Make a strip of pure gold and carve these words into the gold like the writing on a seal: only for the lord. ³⁷Fasten the gold strip to a blue ribbon. Tie the blue ribbon around the turban. The gold strip should be on the front of the turban. ³⁸Aaron will wear this on his head. In this way he will take on himself the guilt if anything is wrong with the gifts that the Israelites give to God. Aaron will always wear this on his head so that the LORD will accept the gifts of the people.

³⁹“Use fine linen to weave the long shirt and the turban. The cloth belt should have designs sewn into it. ⁴⁰Also make long shirts, belts and special caps for Aaron’s sons. This will give them honour and respect. ⁴¹Put the clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons. Then pour the special oil on them to make them priests. This will make them holy, and they will serve me as priests.

⁴²“Use linen to make underclothes for the priests. These underclothes will cover them from the waist to the thighs. ⁴³Aaron and his sons must wear these clothes whenever they enter the Meeting Tent. They must wear these clothes when they come near to the altar to serve as priests in the Holy Place. If they

don’t wear these clothes, they will be guilty of wrong and will have to die. All this should be a law that continues forever for Aaron and all his family after him.

The Ceremony for Appointing the Priests

29 “Now I will tell you what you must do to dedicate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. Choose one young bull and two rams that have nothing wrong with them. ²Then use fine wheat flour without yeast to make bread. And use the same things to make cakes mixed with olive oil. Also make small thin cakes spread with oil. ³Put this bread and the cakes in a basket. Then give the basket to Aaron and his sons. At the same time, give them the bull and the two rams.

⁴“Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Meeting Tent and wash them with water. ⁵Put the special clothes on Aaron—the woven long shirt and the robe that is worn with the ephod. Put the ephod and the judgement pouch on him. Then tie the beautiful cloth belt on him. ⁶Put the turban on his head and the holy crown around the turban. ⁷Take the anointing oil and pour it on Aaron’s head. This will show that he is chosen for this work.

⁸“Then bring Aaron’s sons to that place. Put the long shirts on them. ⁹Then tie cloth belts around their waists, and give them special caps to wear. At that time they will begin to be priests. They will be priests because of the special law that will continue forever. This is the way you will make Aaron and his sons priests.

¹⁰“Then bring the bull to that place at the front of the Meeting Tent. Aaron and his sons must put their hands on the bull’s head. ¹¹Then kill the bull there

in the LORD's presence at the entrance to the Meeting Tent. ¹²Then take some of the bull's blood and go to the altar. Use your finger to put some blood on the horns of the altar. Pour out all the blood that is left at the bottom of the altar. ¹³Then take all the fat that is on the inner parts of the bull, the fatty part of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat around them. Burn this fat on the altar. ¹⁴Then take the bull's meat, his skin and his other parts and go outside your camp and burn them. This bull is an offering to take away the sins of the priests.

¹⁵"Then tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the head of one of the rams. ¹⁶Kill that ram and splash the blood against the four sides of the altar. ¹⁷Then cut the ram into several pieces. Wash all the parts from inside the ram and the legs. Put these things with the head and the other pieces of the ram. ¹⁸Then burn everything on the altar. This is a burnt offering to the LORD. It is a sweet-smelling gift to the LORD.

¹⁹"Tell Aaron and his sons to put their hands on the other ram. ²⁰Kill that ram and save some of its blood. Put that blood on the right ear lobes of Aaron and his sons. Also put some of the blood on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet. Then splash the blood against all four sides of the altar. ²¹Then take some of the blood from the altar. Mix it with the special oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his clothes. And sprinkle it on his sons and their clothes. This will show that Aaron and his sons serve me in a special way. And it will show that their clothes are used only at special times.

²²"Then take the fat from the ram. (This is the ram that will be used in the ceremony to make Aaron the high priest.) Take the fat from around the tail and the fat that covers the organs inside

the body. Then take the fat that covers the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them and the right leg. ²³Then take the basket of bread that you made without yeast. This is the basket you put before the LORD. Take these things out of the basket: one loaf of bread, one cake made with oil and one small thin cake. ²⁴Give them to Aaron and his sons. Tell them to lift these things up with their hands before the Lord to dedicate the things as a special offering. ²⁵Then take all these things from Aaron and his sons and burn them on the altar on top of the first ram. This offering made by fire is a sweet-smelling gift to the LORD.

²⁶"Then take the breast from the second ram. (This is the ram that will be used in the ceremony to make Aaron the high priest.) Hold the breast of the ram before the LORD as a special offering. Then take it back and keep it. This part of the animal will be for you. ²⁷Take the breast and the leg of the ram that was used to make Aaron the high priest and make these parts holy. Then give these special parts to Aaron and his sons. ²⁸The Israelites will always give Aaron and his sons these parts. These parts will always belong to the priests when the Israelites make a fellowship offering to the LORD. When they give these parts to the priest, it will be the same as giving them to the Lord.

²⁹"Save these special clothes that were made for Aaron and his descendants. They will wear these clothes when they are chosen to be priests. ³⁰Aaron's son will become the next high priest after him. That son will wear these clothes for seven days when he comes to the Meeting Tent to serve in the Holy Place.

³¹"Cook the meat from the ram that was used to make Aaron the high priest. Cook that meat in a holy place. ³²Then Aaron and his sons must eat the meat at

the entrance of the Meeting Tent. And they must also eat the bread that is in the basket. ³³They must eat these offerings that were used to cleanse them for their appointment and dedication as priests. And because these offerings are holy, no one else may eat them. ³⁴If any of the meat from that ram or any of the bread is left the next morning, it must be burned. You must not eat that bread or the meat because it should be eaten only in a special way at a special time.

³⁵“You must do all these things for Aaron and his sons. You must do them exactly as I told you. The ceremony for appointing them to be priests must continue for seven days. ³⁶You must kill one bull every day for seven days. This will be a sin offering for purification. You will use these sacrifices to make the altar pure. Then pour olive oil on the altar to make it holy. ³⁷You will make the altar pure and holy for seven days. At that time the altar will be most holy. Anything that touches the altar will also be holy.

Daily Offerings

³⁸“Every day you must make an offering on the altar. You must kill two lambs that are one year old. ³⁹Offer one lamb in the morning and the other in the evening. ⁴⁰When you offer the first lamb, also offer one kilogramme^{§§} of fine wheat flour. Mix that flour with one litre* of the best oil. Also offer one litre of wine as an offering. ⁴¹In the evening, offer the second lamb with the same flour and wine offerings as in the morning. This will be a sweet-smelling gift to the

LORD. When you burn this offering, he will smell it, and it will please him.

⁴²“You must burn these things as an offering to the Lord every day. Do this at the entrance of the Meeting Tent before the LORD. Continue to do this for all time. When you make the offering, I will meet you there and speak to you. ⁴³I will meet with the Israelites at that place, and my glory will make that place holy.

⁴⁴“So I will make the Meeting Tent and the altar holy. I will also make Aaron and his sons holy so that they can serve me as priests. ⁴⁵I will live with the Israelites. I will be their God. ⁴⁶The people will know that I am the LORD their God. They will know that I am the one who led them out of Egypt so that I could live with them. I am the LORD their God.

The Altar for Burning Incense

30 “Make an altar from acacia wood. You will use this altar for burning incense. ²You must make the altar square—44 centimetres[†] long and 44 centimetres[‡] wide. It must be 88 centimetres[‡] high. There will be horns at the four corners. These horns must be made as one piece with the altar. ³Cover the top, the horns and all four sides of the altar with pure gold. Then put gold trim all around the altar. ⁴Below this trim there should be two gold rings. There should be two gold rings on opposite sides of the altar. These gold rings will be used with poles to carry the altar. ⁵Make the poles from acacia wood and cover them with gold. ⁶Put the altar just outside the curtain that hangs in front of the Box of the Agreement. So this altar will be in front

§§29:40 *one kilogramme* Literally, “1/10 of a *ephah*”.

*29:40 *one litre* Literally, “1/4 *hin*”.

†30:2 *44 centimetres* Literally, “1 cubit”.

‡30:2 *88 centimetres* Literally, “2 cubits”.

of the place where I will meet with you—the cover over the Box of the Agreement.

⁷“Aaron must burn sweet-smelling incense on the altar every morning. He will do this when he comes to care for the lamps. ⁸He must burn incense again when he checks the lamps in the evening so that incense will be burned before the LORD every day forever. ⁹Don’t use this altar for offering any other kind of incense or burnt offering or for any kind of grain offering or drink offering.

¹⁰“Once a year Aaron must purify the altar. He will take blood from the offering for purification and put it on the horns of the altar. This must be done once every year from now on. This altar is most holy, dedicated to the LORD.”

The Temple Tax

¹¹The LORD said to Moses, ¹²“Count the Israelites so that you will know how many people there are. Every time this is done, each man must make a payment for himself to the LORD so that nothing terrible will happen to the people. ¹³Each man who is counted must pay 5 grammes[†] of silver. (That is by the official measure, which is 11 grammes.[§]) These 5 grammes of silver are an offering to the LORD. ¹⁴Every man who is at least 20 years old must be counted. And every man who is counted must give the LORD this offering. ¹⁵The rich must not give more than this, and the poor must not give less. Everyone will make this same offering to the LORD as payment for their lives. ¹⁶Gather this money from the Israelites. Use the money for the service in the Meeting Tent. This payment

will be a way for the LORD to remember his people. They will be paying for their own lives.”

The Washing Bowl

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸“Make a bronze bowl and put it on a bronze base. You will use this for washing. Put the bowl between the Meeting Tent and the altar. Fill the bowl with water. ¹⁹Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet with the water from this bowl. ²⁰Every time they enter the Meeting Tent, they must wash with that water so that they will not die. They must also wash every time they come near the altar to offer their gifts up in smoke to the LORD. ²¹They must wash their hands and their feet so that they will not die. This will be a law that continues forever for Aaron and his people who will live in the future.”

The Anointing Oil

²²Then the LORD said to Moses, ²³“Find the finest spices. Get 6 kilogrammes^{**} of liquid myrrh, half that amount (that is, 3 kilogrammes^{††}) of sweet-smelling cinnamon and 6 kilogrammes of sweet-smelling cane ²⁴and 6 kilogrammes of cassia. Use the official measure to measure all these things. Also get 4 litres^{‡‡} of olive oil.

²⁵“Mix all these things to make a holy, sweet-smelling anointing oil, just as a perfume maker would do it. ²⁶Pour this oil on the Meeting Tent and on the Box of the Agreement. ²⁷Pour the oil on the table and on all the dishes there. And pour this oil on the lamp and on all its tools.

[†]30:13 5 grammes Literally, “1/2 shekel”.

[§]30:13 11 grammes Literally, “20 gerahs”.

^{**}30:23 6 kilogrammes Literally, “500 measures”.

^{††}30:23 3 kilogrammes Literally, “250 measures”.

^{‡‡}30:24 4 litres Literally, “a hin”.

Pour the oil on the incense altar. ²⁸ Also, pour the oil on the altar for burnt offerings. Pour it on everything on the altar. Pour this oil on the bowl and on the base under the bowl. ²⁹ By doing this, you will make all these things holy. They will be completely holy to the Lord. And whatever touches these things will also become holy.

³⁰ “Pour the oil on Aaron and his sons to dedicate them to serve me as priests. ³¹ Tell the Israelites that the anointing oil is holy—it must always be used only for me. ³² This oil is holy, and you must treat it as something holy. Don’t make oil with this same formula to be used for any other purpose. ³³ Don’t let people use this oil for their bodies. Whoever makes an oil like this and puts it on anyone except a priest must be separated from the people.”

The Incense

³⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Get these sweet-smelling spices: resin, onycha, galbanum and pure frankincense. Be sure that you have equal amounts of these spices. ³⁵ Mix the spices together to make a sweet-smelling incense. Do this the same as a perfume maker would do it. Also mix salt with this incense. This will make it pure and special. ³⁶ Grind some of the incense until it becomes a fine powder. Put the powder in front of the Holy Box that holds the Agreement in the Meeting Tent. This is the place where I meet with you. You must use this incense as something very holy. ³⁷ Never make incense like this to use for yourselves. It is holy, and you must use it only for the LORD. ³⁸ There may be people who will want to make some of this incense for themselves so that they can enjoy the smell. But whoever does this must be separated from the people.”

Bezalel and Oholiab

31 Then the LORD said to Moses, ² “I have chosen a man to do some special work for me. His name is Bezalel, the son of Uri and the grandson of Hur from the tribe of Judah. ³ I have filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God—I have given him the skill and knowledge to do all kinds of things. ⁴ He is a very good designer who can make things from gold, silver and bronze. ⁵ He can cut and set beautiful jewels. And he can work with wood. He can do all kinds of work. ⁶ I have also chosen Oholiab to work with him. Oholiab is the son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan. And I have given skills to all the other workers so that they can make everything that I have commanded you:

⁷ the Meeting Tent;

the Box of the Agreement;

the cover that is on it;

⁸ the table and everything on it;

the pure gold lampstand and everything used with it;

the altar for burning incense;

⁹ the altar for burnt offerings and the things used at the altar;

the bowl and the base under it;

¹⁰ the special clothes for Aaron the priest;

the special clothes for Aaron’s sons when they serve as priests;

¹¹ the anointing oil;

the sweet-smelling incense for the Holy Place.

These workers must make everything the way that I have commanded you.”

The Sabbath

¹² Then the LORD said to Moses, ¹³ “Tell the Israelites this: ‘You must follow the rules about my special days of rest. You must do this because they will be a sign between you and me for all

generations. This will show you that I, the LORD, have made you my special people.

¹⁴“Make the Sabbath a holy day. If someone treats the Sabbath like any other day, that person must be killed. Whoever works on the Sabbath day must be separated from their people. ¹⁵There are six other days in the week for working. But the seventh day is a holy day of rest. It is a special day to honour the LORD. Anyone who works during the Sabbath must be killed. ¹⁶The Israelites must remember the Sabbath and make it a holy day. They must continue to do this forever. It is an agreement between them and me that will continue forever. ¹⁷The Sabbath will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever. The LORD worked six days and made the sky and the earth, and on the seventh day, he rested and relaxed.”

¹⁸When God finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two stone tablets of the Agreement. God had written on the stones with his finger.

The Gold Calf

32 The people saw that a long time had passed and Moses had not come down from the mountain. So they gathered around Aaron. They said to him, “Look, that man, Moses, led us out of the land of Egypt, but we don’t know what has happened to him. So make us some gods^f to go before us and lead us.”

²Aaron said to the people, “Pull off the gold earrings that your wives, sons and daughters are wearing and bring them to me!”

³So everyone took off their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron. ⁴He

took the gold from the people and used it to make an idol. Using a special tool, he shaped the gold into a statue of a calf.

Then the people said, “Israel, here are your gods that brought you out of the land of Egypt!”^{§§}

⁵When Aaron saw all these things, he built an altar in front of the calf. Then Aaron made this announcement: “Tomorrow will be a special festival to honour the LORD.”

⁶The people woke up early the next morning. They killed animals and offered them as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. They sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up and had a wild party.

⁷At the same time, the LORD said to Moses, “Go down from this mountain. Your people, the people you brought out of the land of Egypt, have committed a terrible sin. ⁸They have quickly turned away from what I commanded them to do. They made a calf from melted gold for themselves. They are worshipping that calf and making sacrifices to it. The people have said, ‘Israel, these are the gods that led you out of Egypt.’”

⁹The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen these people, and I know that they are very stubborn. ¹⁰So now let me destroy them in anger. Then I will make a great nation from you.”

¹¹But Moses begged the LORD his God, “LORD, don’t let your anger destroy your people. You brought them out of Egypt with your great power and strength. ¹²But if you destroy your people, the Egyptians will say, ‘God planned to do bad things to his people. That is why he led them out of Egypt. He wanted to kill them in the mountains

^f32:1 *some gods* Or “a god”.

^{§§}32:4 *Israel ... Egypt* Or “Israel, here is the God that brought you out of the land of Egypt!” This shows that the people worshipped the calf as a special symbol for the Lord, and even this was forbidden. See 1 Kgs 12:26-30.

and wipe them off the earth.’ So don’t be angry with your people. Please change your mind! Don’t destroy them. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, your servants. You used your own name in an oath to make a promise to them. You said, ‘I will make your people as many as the stars in the sky. I will give your people all this land as I promised. This land will be theirs forever.’”

¹⁴So the LORD changed his mind and did not destroy them as he said he would do.

¹⁵Then Moses went down the mountain. He had the two stone tablets with the Agreement on them. The commandments were written on both sides of the stone, front and back. ¹⁶The tablets had been made by God himself, and the writing on them was God’s own writing, which he had carved into the stone.

¹⁷Joshua heard the noise from the party in the camp. He said to Moses, “It sounds like war down in the camp!”

¹⁸Moses answered, “No, it’s not the shout of victory, and it’s not the cry of defeat. The noise I hear is the sound of singing.”

¹⁹When Moses came near to the camp, he saw the gold calf and the people dancing. He became very angry, and he threw the stone tablets on the ground. The stones broke into several pieces at the bottom of the mountain. ²⁰Then Moses destroyed the calf that the people had made. He melted it in the fire. Then he ground the gold until it became dust and threw it into the water. Then he forced the Israelites to drink that water.

²¹Moses said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you that would make you do this? Why did you lead them to do such a terrible sin?”

²²Aaron answered, “Don’t be angry, sir. You know that these people are always ready to do wrong. ²³The people said to me, ‘That man, Moses, led us out of Egypt, but we don’t know what has happened to him. So make us some gods to lead us.’ ²⁴So I told the people, ‘If you have any gold rings, pull them off and give them to me.’ The people gave me their gold. I threw the gold into the fire, and out of the fire came this calf!”

²⁵Moses saw that Aaron had let the people get out of control. They were being wild, and all their enemies could see them acting like fools. ²⁶So Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and said, “Anyone who wants to follow the LORD should come to me.” Everyone from the tribe of Levi ran to Moses.

²⁷Then Moses said to them, “I will tell you what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Every man must get his sword and go from one end of the camp to the other. You men must kill your brothers, friends and neighbours.’”

²⁸The people from the tribe of Levi obeyed Moses. That day about 3000 of the people died. ²⁹Then Moses said, “Take your role today as special servants of the LORD because you were willing to fight against even your own sons and brothers. You will receive a blessing for this.”

³⁰The next morning Moses told the people, “You have committed a terrible sin! But now I will go up to the LORD, and maybe I can do something so that he will forgive you for your sin.” ³¹So Moses went back to the LORD and said, “Please listen! These people committed a terrible sin and made a god from gold. ³²Now, forgive them of this sin. If you

will not forgive them, then erase my name from your book.”*

³³ But the LORD said to Moses, “The only people I erase from my book are those who sin against me. ³⁴ So now, go down and lead the people where I told you to go. My angel will lead you. When the time comes to punish those who sinned, I will punish them.” ³⁵ So the LORD caused a terrible sickness to come to the people. He did this because they, along with Aaron, had made the gold calf.

I Will Not Go With You

33 Then the LORD said to Moses, “You and the people you brought out of Egypt must leave this place. Go to the land that I promised to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I promised them that I would give that land to their descendants. ² So I will send an angel to go before you, and I will defeat the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. I will force them to leave your land. ³ So go to the land filled with many good things,[†] but I will not go with you. You people are very stubborn. If I go with you, I might destroy you along the way.”

⁴ The people heard this bad news and became very sad, so they stopped wearing jewellery. ⁵ This was because the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites, ‘You are a stubborn people. Even if I travel with you for only a short time, I might destroy you. So take off all your jewellery while I decide what to do with you.’” ⁶ So the Israelites stopped wearing their jewellery at Mount Horeb.

The Tent Where God Spoke to Moses

⁷ Moses used to take a tent a short way outside the camp. He called it “the meeting tent”.[‡] Anyone who wanted to ask something from the LORD would go to the meeting tent outside the camp. ⁸ Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people watched him. They stood at the entrance of their tents and watched Moses until he entered the meeting tent. ⁹ Whenever Moses went into the tent, the tall cloud would come down and stay at the entrance to the tent. And the Lord would speak with Moses. ¹⁰ So when the people saw the cloud at the entrance of the tent, they would go to the entrance of their own tents and bow down to worship God.

¹¹ In this way the LORD spoke to Moses face to face like a man speaks with his friend. Then Moses would go back to the camp, but his assistant, Joshua son of Nun, always stayed in the tent.

Moses Sees the Glory of the Lord

¹² Moses said to the LORD, “You told me to lead these people, but you did not say who you would send with me. You said to me, ‘I know you very well, and I am pleased with you.’ ¹³ If I have really pleased you, teach me your ways. I want to know you. Then I can continue to please you. Remember that you chose this nation to be your own people.”

¹⁴ The Lord answered, “I myself will go with you, Moses. I will give you rest.”

¹⁵ Then Moses said, “If you don’t go with us, don’t make us leave this place. ¹⁶ How will anyone know if you are pleased with me and your people? Only

***32:32 your book** A book in which God has written the names of his people. See Ps. 68:28; Rev. 3:5; 21:27, where such a book is called “the book of life”.

[†]**33:3 land ... things** Literally, “land flowing with milk and honey”.

[‡]**33:7 meeting tent** This is perhaps a temporary tent that Moses used until the real Meeting Tent was built.

if you are with us will anyone be able to see that your people and I are different from every other nation on earth.”

¹⁷ Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will do what you ask. I will do this because I am pleased with you and because I know you very well.”^f

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Now, please show me your glory.”

¹⁹ Then the Lord answered, “I will show my mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show my kindness to anyone I choose. So I will cause my perfect goodness to pass by in front of you, and I will speak my name, YAHWEH, so that you can hear it. ²⁰ But you cannot see my face. No one can see me and continue to live.”

²¹ Then the LORD said, “Here is a place for you to stand by me on this large rock. ²² I will put you in a large crack in that rock. Then I will cover you with my hand, and my glory will pass by. ²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back. But you will not see my face.”

The New Stone Tablets

34 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make two more stone tablets like the first two that you broke. I will write the same words on these stones that were written on the first two stones. ² Be ready tomorrow morning and come up on Mount Sinai. Stand before me there on the top of the mountain. ³ No one will be allowed to come with you. No one should even be seen anywhere on the mountain. Even your herds of animals or flocks of sheep will not be allowed to eat grass at the bottom of the mountain.”

⁴ So Moses made two more stone tablets like the first ones. Early the next

morning Moses went up Mount Sinai, just as the LORD had commanded. Moses carried the two stone tablets with him.

⁵ Then the LORD came down to him in a cloud, stood there with Moses, and spoke his own name. ⁶ That is, the LORD passed in front of Moses and said,

“I am YAHWEH, the LORD, the God who is kind and merciful.

I am slow to become angry, full of unfailing love and forever loyal.

⁷ My faithful love for my people never ends.

I forgive even sinners, who turn against me and do wrong.

But I do not fail to punish people who are guilty.

Even their children will suffer because of their parents’ sins

and so will their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.”

⁸ Then Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshipped the Lord.

⁹ Moses said, “Lord, if you are pleased with me, please go with us. I know that these are stubborn people, but forgive us for the bad things we did. Accept us as your people.”

The Lord’s Agreement

¹⁰ Then the Lord said, “I am making this agreement with all your people. I will do amazing things that have never before been done for any other nation on earth. The people with you will see that I, the LORD, am very great. They will see the wonderful things that I will do for you. ¹¹ Obey what I command you today, and I will force your enemies to leave your land. I will force out the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ¹² Be careful! Don’t make any agreement with the people who live in the land where you are going. If you

^f33:17 *I know you very well* Literally, “I know you by name”.

make an agreement with them, it will bring you trouble. ¹³So destroy their altars, break the stones they worship and cut down the poles that honour their goddess Asherah. ¹⁴Don't worship any other god. I am YAHWEH KANAH—the jealous God. That is my name. I hate for my people to worship other gods.[§]

¹⁵“Be careful not to make any agreements with the people who live in that land. If you do this, you might join them when they worship their gods. They will invite you to join them, and you will eat their sacrifices. ¹⁶If you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons, those daughters will serve false gods. They will lead your sons to do the same thing.

¹⁷“Don't make idols.

¹⁸“Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat the bread made without yeast as I commanded you before. Do this during the month I have chosen, the month of Abib, because that is the month you came out of Egypt.

¹⁹“A woman's firstborn son belongs to me. And every firstborn male from your herds of cattle or your flocks of sheep and goats belongs to me. ²⁰You may keep a firstborn donkey if you buy it back from the LORD by offering a lamb. If you don't buy the donkey with a lamb, you must break the donkey's neck. But you must buy back every firstborn son.

“No one should come before me without a gift.

²¹“You will work for six days, but on the seventh day, you must rest. You must rest even during the times of planting and harvesting.

²²“Celebrate the Festival of Harvest. Use the first grain from the wheat harvest for this festival. And in the autumn** celebrate the Festival of Shelters.

²³“Three times each year all your men must go to be with the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.

²⁴“When you go into your land, I will force your enemies out of that land. I will expand your borders—you will get more and more land. You will go before the LORD your God three times each year. At that time no one will try to take your land from you.

²⁵“When you kill an animal and offer its blood as a sacrifice, you must not include anything that has yeast in it.

“Don't let any of the meat from the Passover meal remain until morning.

²⁶“Give the Lord the best of the first crops you harvest. Bring them to the house†† of the LORD your God.

“Never cook a young goat in its mother's milk.”

²⁷Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write everything that I have told you. This is the agreement that I made with you and the Israelites.”

²⁸Moses stayed there with the LORD for 40 days and 40 nights. Moses did not eat any food or drink any water. And the LORD wrote the words of the agreement (the Ten Commandments) on the two stone tablets.

Moses' Shining Face

²⁹When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he carried the two stone tablets of the Agreement. Because he had talked with the Lord, his face was shining, but he did not know it. ³⁰Aaron

§34:14 *I hate ... gods* Or “I am El Kanah—the Jealous God.”

**34:22 *autumn* Literally, “at the changing of the year”.

††34:26 *house* The “Holy Tent” or later, the Temple, where the people went to meet with God. See Exod. 25:8-9.

and all the people of Israel saw that Moses' face was shining bright. So they were afraid to go near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them. So Aaron and all the leaders of the people went to him. Moses talked with them. ³² After that, all the Israelites came near Moses, and he gave them all the commands that the LORD had given him on Mount Sinai.

³³ When Moses finished speaking to the people, he put a covering over his face. ³⁴ Any time Moses went before the LORD to speak with him, Moses took off the covering. Then Moses would come out and tell the Israelites what the Lord commanded. ³⁵ The people would see that Moses' face was shining bright, so he would cover his face again. He kept his face covered until the next time he went in to speak with the Lord.

Rules About the Sabbath

35 Moses gathered all the Israelites together and said to them, "I will tell you what the LORD has commanded you to do:

² "There are six days for working, but the seventh day will be a very special day of rest for you. You will honour the LORD by resting on that special day. Anyone who works on the seventh day must be killed. ³ On the Sabbath you should not even light a fire in any of the places where you live."

Gifts for the Holy Tent

⁴ Moses said to all the Israelites, "This is what the LORD commanded: ⁵ Gather special gifts for the LORD. All who are willing should bring these gifts to the LORD: gold, silver or bronze; ⁶ blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ⁷ ram skins dyed red and fine leather; acacia wood; ⁸ oil for the lamps;

spices for the anointing oil and spices for the sweet-smelling incense. ⁹ Also, bring onyx stones and other jewels to be put on the ephod and the judgement pouch.

¹⁰ "All of you who are skilled workers should make everything the LORD has commanded: ¹¹ the Holy Tent, its outer tent and its covering; the rings, boards, braces, posts and bases; ¹² the Holy Box, its poles, the cover and the curtain that covers the area where the Box stays; ¹³ the table and its poles, all the things on the table and the holy bread on the table; ¹⁴ the lampstand that is used for light and the things used with the lampstand, the lamps and oil for the light; ¹⁵ the altar for burning incense and its poles; the anointing oil and the sweet-smelling incense; the curtain that covers the door at the entrance to the Holy Tent; ¹⁶ the altar for burnt offerings and its bronze grating, the poles and all the things used at the altar; the bronze bowl and its base; ¹⁷ the curtains around the courtyard, their posts and bases and the curtain that covers the entrance to the courtyard; ¹⁸ the pegs used to support the Tent and the wall of curtains around the courtyard, and the ropes that tie to the pegs; ¹⁹ and the special woven clothes for the priest to wear in the Holy Place. These are the special clothes for Aaron the priest and his sons to wear when they serve as priests."

The Great Offering From the People

²⁰ Then all the Israelites went away from Moses. ²¹ All the people who wanted to give came and brought a gift to the LORD. These gifts were used for making the Meeting Tent, everything in the Tent and the special clothes. ²² All the men and women who wanted to give brought gold jewellery of all kinds. They

brought pins,^{‡‡} earrings, rings and other jewellery. They all gave their jewellery as a special offering to the LORD.

²³ Everyone who had fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn brought it to the Lord. Anyone who had goat hair or ram skins dyed red or fine leather brought it to the Lord. ²⁴ Everyone who wanted to give silver or bronze brought that as a gift to the LORD. Everyone who had acacia wood came and gave it to the Lord. ²⁵ Every skilled woman made fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. ²⁶ And all the women who were skilled and wanted to help made cloth from the goat hair.

²⁷ The leaders brought onyx stones and other jewels. These stones and jewels were put on the ephod and judgement pouch of the priest. ²⁸ The people also brought spices and olive oil. These things were used for the sweet-smelling incense, the anointing oil and the oil for the lamps.

²⁹ All the Israelites who wanted to help brought gifts to the LORD. They gave these gifts freely, because they wanted to. These gifts were used to make everything the LORD had commanded Moses and the people to make.

Bezalel and Oholiab

³⁰ Then Moses said to the Israelites, “Look, the LORD has chosen Bezalel, the son of Uri and the grandson of Hur from the tribe of Judah. ³¹ And he has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God—he gave Bezalel special skill and knowledge to do all kinds of things. ³² He can design and make things with gold, silver and bronze. ³³ He can cut and set stones and jewels. He can work with wood and make all kinds of things. ³⁴ The Lord has

given Bezalel and Oholiab special skills to teach other people. (Oholiab was the son of Ahisamach from the tribe of Dan.)

³⁵ He has given both of these men special skills to do all kinds of work. They are able to do the work of carpenters and metalworkers. They can weave cloth with designs in it from blue, purple and red yarn and fine linen. And they are able to weave things with wool.

36 “So Bezalel, Oholiab and all the other skilled men must do the work the LORD has commanded. The LORD has given these men the knowledge and ability to do all the skilled work needed to build this holy place.”

² Then Moses called Bezalel, Oholiab and all the other skilled men who had been blessed with ability from the LORD. They came because they wanted to help with the work. ³ Moses gave them everything the Israelites had brought as gifts, and they used these things to build this holy place. The people continued to bring gifts each morning. ⁴ Finally, all the skilled workers left the work they were doing, and they went to speak to Moses. ⁵ They said, “The people have brought too much. We have more than we need to finish the work the LORD told us to do.”

⁶ Then Moses sent this message throughout the camp: “No man or woman should make anything else as a gift for this holy place.” So the people were forced to stop giving more. ⁷ The people had brought more than enough things to finish the work.

The Holy Tent

⁸ Then the skilled workers began making the Holy Tent. They made the ten curtains from fine linen and blue, pur-

^{‡‡}**35:22 pins** Or “hooks”. These were like safety pins and were used like buttons to fasten their robes.

ple and red yarn. And they sewed pictures of winged creatures into the curtains. ⁹ Each curtain was the same size—12 metres[¶] long and 2 metres^{§§} wide. ¹⁰ The workers joined the curtains together into two groups of curtains. They joined five curtains together to make one group and five curtains together to make the other group. ¹¹ Then they used blue cloth to make loops along the edge of the end curtain of one group. And they did the same on the end curtain in the other group. ¹² There were 50 loops on the end curtain in one group and 50 loops on the end curtain in the other group. The loops were opposite each other. ¹³ Then they made 50 gold rings to join the two curtains together. So the Holy Tent was joined together into one piece.

¹⁴ Then the workers made another tent to cover the Holy Tent. They used goat hair to make eleven curtains. ¹⁵ All the curtains were the same size—13 metres* long and 2 metres wide. ¹⁶ The workers joined five curtains together into one group and six curtains together into another group. ¹⁷ They put 50 loops along the edge of the end curtain of one group. And they did the same on the end curtain in the other group. ¹⁸ The workers made 50 bronze rings to join the two groups of curtains together to form one tent. ¹⁹ Then they made two more coverings for the Holy Tent. One covering was made from ram skins dyed red. The other covering was made from fine leather.

²⁰ Then the workers made frames from acacia wood to support the Holy Tent. ²¹ Each frame was 4 metres[†] high and 66 centimetres[‡] wide. ²² There were two

side poles joined together with cross pieces to make each frame. Every frame for the Holy Tent was made the same. ²³ They made 20 frames for the south side of the Holy Tent. ²⁴ Then they made 40 silver bases for the frames. There were two bases for each frame—one base for each side pole. ²⁵ They also made 20 frames for the other side, the north side, of the Holy Tent. ²⁶ They made 40 silver bases for the frames—two bases for each frame. ²⁷ They made six more frames for the back, the west side, of the Holy Tent. ²⁸ They also made two frames for the corners at the back of the Holy Tent. ²⁹ These frames were joined together at the bottom. And at the top a ring held the corner frames together. They did the same for both corners. ³⁰ There were eight frames for the west side of the Holy Tent. And there were 16 silver bases—two bases for each frame.

³¹ Then the workers used acacia wood to make the braces for the frames—five braces for the first side of the Holy Tent, ³² five braces for the other side, and five braces for the back, the west side, of the Holy Tent. ³³ They made the middle brace so that it passed through the frames from one end to the other. ³⁴ They covered these frames with gold. Then they used gold to make the rings to hold the braces, and they covered the braces with gold.

Inside the Holy Tent

³⁵ They used fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn to make the curtain for the Most Holy Place. And they sewed

¶**36:9 12 metres** Literally, “28 cubits”.

§§**36:9 2 metres** Literally, “4 cubits”. Also in verse 15.

***36:15 13 metres** Literally, “30 cubits”.

†**36:21 4 metres** Literally, “10 cubits”.

‡**36:21 66 centimetres** Literally, “1.5 cubits”.

pictures of winged creatures into the curtain. ³⁶They made four posts using acacia wood, and they covered the posts with gold. Then they made gold hooks for the posts and four silver bases for the posts.

The Entrance to the Holy Tent

³⁷Then they made the curtain to cover the entrance to the Tent. They used blue, purple and red yarn and fine linen to make this curtain. And they wove pictures into it. ³⁸Then they made the five posts and the hooks for this curtain over the entrance. They covered the tops of the posts and the curtain rods^f with gold. And they made the five bronze bases for the posts.

The Box of the Agreement

37 Bezalel made the Holy Box from acacia wood. The Box was 110 centimetres^g long, 66 centimetres^{**} wide and 66 centimetres high. ²He covered the inside and outside of the Box with pure gold. Then he put gold trim around the Box. ³He made four rings of gold and attached them to the four corners. These rings were used for carrying the Box. There were two rings on each side. ⁴Then he made the poles for carrying the Box. He used acacia wood and covered the poles with gold. ⁵He put the poles through the rings on each side of the Box to carry it. ⁶Then he made the cover from pure gold. It was 110 centimetres long and 66 centimetres wide. ⁷Then Bezalel hammered gold to make two

winged creatures. He put the winged creatures on each end of the cover. ⁸He put one winged creature on one end and the other winged creature on the other end. The winged creatures were joined together with the cover to make one piece. ⁹The wings of the winged creatures were spread up towards the sky. The winged creatures covered the Box with their wings and faced each other, looking towards the cover.

The Table

¹⁰Then he made the table from acacia wood. The table was 88 centimetres^{††} long, 44 centimetres^{‡‡} wide and 66 centimetres high. ¹¹He covered it with pure gold and put gold trim around it. ¹²Then he made a frame 75 millimetres^{¶¶} wide around the table. He put gold trim on the frame. ¹³Then he made four gold rings and attached them to the four corners of the table, where the four legs were. ¹⁴He put the rings close to the frame. The rings were to hold the poles used to carry the table. ¹⁵Then he used acacia wood to make the poles for carrying the table. He covered the poles with gold. ¹⁶Then he made everything that was used on the table. He made the plates, the spoons, the bowls and the pitchers from pure gold. The bowls and pitchers are used for pouring the drink offerings.

The Lampstand

¹⁷Then he made the lampstand. He used pure gold and hammered it to make the base and the shaft.^{§§} Then he made

^f36:38 *curtain rods* Or “fasteners”.

^g37:1 *110 centimetres* Literally, “2.5 cubits”.

^{**}37:1 *66 centimetres* Literally, “1.5 cubits”. Also in verse 10.

^{††}37:10 *88 centimetres* Literally, “2 cubits”. Also in verse 25.

^{‡‡}37:10 *44 centimetres* Literally, “1 cubit”. Also in verse 25.

^{¶¶}37:12 *75 millimetres* Literally, “1 handbreadth”. The width of 4 fingers.

^{§§}37:17 *base and the shaft* Or “flared base”.

flowers, buds and petals and joined everything together into one piece. ¹⁸The lampstand had six branches—three branches on one side and three branches on the other side. ¹⁹Each branch had three flowers on it. These flowers were made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ²⁰The shaft of the lampstand had four more flowers. They were also made like almond flowers with buds and petals. ²¹There were six branches—three branches coming out from each side of the shaft. And there was a flower with buds and petals below each of the three places where the branches joined the shaft. ²²The whole lampstand, with the flowers and branches, was made from pure gold. All this gold was hammered and joined together into one piece. ²³He made seven lamps for this lampstand. Then he made lamp snuffers and trays from pure gold. ²⁴He used 35 kilogrammes* of pure gold to make the lampstand and the things used with it.

The Altar for Burning Incense

²⁵He made the altar for burning incense from acacia wood. The altar was square. It was 44 centimetres long, 44 centimetres wide and 88 centimetres high. There were four horns on the altar. There was one horn on each corner. These horns were joined together with the altar to make one piece. ²⁶He covered the top, all the sides and the horns with pure gold. Then he put gold trim around the altar. ²⁷He made two gold rings for the altar. He put the gold rings below the trim on each side of the altar. These gold rings held the poles for carrying the altar. ²⁸He made the poles

from acacia wood and covered them with gold.

²⁹Then he made the holy anointing oil. He also made the pure, sweet-smelling incense. He made them just as a perfume maker would do it.

The Altar for Burnt Offerings

38 Then Bezalel used acacia wood to build the square altar for burning offerings. It was 2.2 metres[†] long, 2.2 metres wide and 1.3 metres[‡] high. ²He made a horn for each of the four corners of the altar. He joined each horn to its corner so that everything was one piece. He covered the altar with bronze. ³Then he used bronze to make all the tools to be used on the altar. He made the pots, shovels, bowls, forks and pans. ⁴Then he made a grating for the altar, a network made of bronze. He put the grating below the ledge of the altar so that it reached halfway down the sides. ⁵Then he made bronze rings to hold the poles for carrying the altar. He put the rings at the four corners of the grating. ⁶Then he used acacia wood to make the poles and covered them with bronze. ⁷He put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it. He used boards to make the sides of the altar. It was hollow, like an empty box.

⁸He made the bowl and its base with bronze. He used the bronze mirrors that the women gave. These were the women who served at the entrance to the Meeting Tent.

The Courtyard Around the Holy Tent

⁹Then he made a wall of curtains around the courtyard. On the south side,

*37:24 35 kilogrammes Literally, "1 talent".

†38:1 2.2 metres Literally, "5 cubits". Also in verse 18.

‡38:1 1.3 metres Literally, "3 cubits".

he made a wall of curtains 44 metres[¶] long. The curtains were made from fine linen. ¹⁰The curtains on the south side were supported by 20 posts. The posts were on 20 bronze bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods[§] were made from silver. ¹¹The north side of the courtyard also had a wall of curtains 44 metres long. There were 20 posts with 20 bronze bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods were made from silver.

¹²On the west side of the courtyard, the wall of curtains was 22 metres^{**} long. There were 10 posts and 10 bases. The hooks for the posts and the curtain rods were made from silver.

¹³The east side of the courtyard was 22 metres wide. The entrance to the courtyard was on this side. ¹⁴On one side of the entrance, the wall of curtains was 6.6 metres^{††} long. There were three posts and three bases on this side. ¹⁵The wall of curtains on the other side of the entrance was also 6.6 metres long. There were three posts and three bases on that side. ¹⁶All the curtains around the courtyard were made from fine linen. ¹⁷The bases for the posts were made from bronze. The hooks and the curtain rods were made from silver. The tops of the posts were covered with silver also. All the posts in the courtyard had silver curtain rods.

¹⁸The curtain for the entrance of the courtyard was made from fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. Designs were

woven into that curtain. The curtain was 9 metres^{‡‡} long and 2 metres high. It was the same height as the curtains around the courtyard. ¹⁹The curtain was supported by four posts and four bronze bases. The hooks on the posts were made from silver. The tops on the posts were covered with silver, and the curtain rods were also made from silver. ²⁰All the tent pegs for the Holy Tent and for the curtains around the courtyard were made from bronze.

²¹Moses commanded the Levites to write down everything that was used to make the Holy Tent, that is, the Tent of the Agreement. Ithamar son of Aaron was in charge of keeping the list.

²²Bezalel, the son of Uri and the grandson of Hur from the tribe of Judah, made everything the LORD commanded Moses. ²³Also Oholiab son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan, helped him. Oholiab was a skilled worker and designer. He was skilled at weaving fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn.

²⁴The people gave 1000 kilogrammes^{¶¶} of gold as an offering to the Lord for his holy place. (This was weighed using the official measure.)

²⁵⁻²⁶All the men 20 years old or older were counted. Each man had to pay a tax of 1 *beka*^{§§} of silver. (Using the official measure, 1 *beka* is 1/2 *shekel*.*) There were 603,550 men, so they collected about 3420 kilogrammes of silver. ²⁷They used 3400 kilogrammes of that

[¶]38:9 44 metres Literally, "100 cubits".

§38:10 curtain rods Or "fasteners". Also in verses 12,17,19,28.

**38:12 22 metres Literally, "50 cubits".

††38:14 6.6 metres Literally, "15 cubits".

‡‡38:18 9 metres Literally, "20 cubits".

¶¶38:24 1000 kilogrammes Literally, "29 talents and 730 shekels".

§§38:25-26 beka 5 grammes.

*38:25-26 shekel 11.5 grammes.

silver to make 100 bases for the Holy Tent and its curtains. They used 34 kilogrammes[†] of silver for each base. ²⁸They used the remaining 20 kilogrammes[‡] of silver to make the hooks, the curtain rods and the silver covers for the posts.

²⁹They gave more than 2425 kilogrammes[¶] of bronze. ³⁰That bronze was used to make the bases at the entrance of the Meeting Tent. They also used the bronze to make the altar and the bronze grating. And the bronze was used to make all the tools and dishes for the altar. ³¹It was also used to make the bases for the curtains around the courtyard and the bases for the curtains at the entrance. And the bronze was used to make the tent pegs for the Holy Tent and for the curtains around the courtyard.

Clothes for the Priests

39 The workers used the blue, purple and red yarn to make special clothes for the priests to wear when they served in the Holy Place. They also made the special clothes for Aaron as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Ephod

²They made the ephod from gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. ³(They hammered the gold into thin strips and cut the gold into long threads. They wove the gold into the blue, purple and red yarn and fine linen. This was the work of a skilled person.) ⁴They made the shoulder pieces for the ephod. They tied these shoulder pieces to the two corners of the ephod. ⁵They wove the cloth belt and fastened it to the

ephod. It was made the same way as the ephod—they used gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

⁶The workers put the onyx stones for the ephod in gold settings. They wrote the names of the sons of Israel on these stones. ⁷Then they put these jewels on the shoulder pieces of the ephod. These jewels were to help God to remember the Israelites. This was done as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Judgement Pouch

⁸Then they made the judgement pouch. It was the work of a skilled person, just like the ephod. It was made from gold thread, fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn. ⁹The judgement pouch was folded double to make a square pocket. It was 22 centimetres[§] long and 22 centimetres wide. ¹⁰Then the workers put four rows of beautiful jewels on the judgement pouch. The first row had a ruby, a topaz and a beryl. ¹¹The second row had a turquoise, a lapis lazuli and an emerald. ¹²The third row had a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst. ¹³The fourth row had a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. All these jewels were set in gold. ¹⁴There were twelve jewels on the judgement pouch—one jewel for each of the sons of Israel. Each stone had the name of one of the sons of Israel carved onto it, like a seal.

¹⁵The workers made two chains from pure gold for the judgement pouch. The chains were braided like a rope. ¹⁶The workers made two gold rings and fas-

[†]38:27 34 kilogrammes Literally, “1 talent”.

[‡]38:28 20 kilogrammes Literally, “1775 shekels”.

[¶]38:29 2425 kilogrammes Literally, “70 talents and 2400 shekels”.

[§]39:9 22 centimetres Literally, “1 span”. The distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger.

tened them to two corners of the judgement pouch. Then they made two gold settings for the shoulder pieces. ¹⁷ They fastened the gold chains to the rings at the corners of the judgement pouch. ¹⁸ They fastened the other ends of the gold chains to the settings on the shoulder pieces. They fastened these to the front of the ephod. ¹⁹ Then they made two more gold rings and attached them to the other two corners of the judgement pouch. This was on the inside edge of the judgement pouch next to the ephod. ²⁰ They also put two gold rings on the bottom of the shoulder pieces on the front of the ephod. These rings were near the fastener, just above the cloth belt. ²¹ Then they used a blue ribbon and tied the rings of the judgement pouch to the rings of the ephod. In this way the judgement pouch would rest close to the cloth belt and would be held tight against the ephod. They did everything just as the LORD commanded.

Other Clothes for the Priests

²² Then they made the robe for the ephod from blue cloth. It was woven by a skilled worker. ²³ They made a hole in the centre of the robe and sewed a piece of cloth around the edge of this hole. This cloth was like a collar and kept the hole from tearing.

²⁴ Then they used fine linen and blue, purple and red yarn to make the cloth pomegranates. They hung these pomegranates around the bottom edge of the robe. ²⁵ Then they made bells from pure gold. They hung these bells around the bottom edge of the robe between the pomegranates. ²⁶ Around the bottom edge of the robe, there were bells and pomegranates. There was a bell following each pomegranate. This robe was for the priest to wear when he served the

Lord. It was made just as the LORD commanded Moses.

²⁷ Skilled workers made long shirts for Aaron and his sons. These shirts were woven from fine linen. ²⁸ And the workers made a turban from fine linen. They also used fine linen to make special caps and underclothes. ²⁹ Then they made the cloth belt from fine linen and sewed designs into it using blue, purple and red yarn. These things were made as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰ Then they made a strip of pure gold for the holy crown. They carved these words into the gold like the writing on a seal: only for the lord. ³¹ They fastened the gold strip to a blue ribbon, which they used to fasten the strip to the turban. This was just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Moses Inspects the Holy Tent

³² So all the work on the Holy Tent, that is, the Meeting Tent, was finished. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³³ Then they showed the Holy Tent and everything in it to Moses. They showed him the rings, the frames, the braces, the posts and the bases. ³⁴ They showed him the covering of the Tent that was made from ram skins dyed red and the covering that was made from fine leather. And they showed him the curtain that covered the entrance to the Most Holy Place.

³⁵ They showed Moses the Box of the Agreement, the poles used for carrying it and the cover. ³⁶ They showed him the table with everything on it and the holy bread. ³⁷ They showed him the pure gold lampstand and the lamps on it, the oil and all the other things that were used with the lamps. ³⁸ They showed Moses the gold altar, the anointing oil, the sweet-smelling incense and the curtain

that covered the entrance to the Tent. ³⁹They showed him the bronze altar, the bronze grating, the poles used for carrying the altar and all the utensils used at the altar. They showed him the bowl and the base under the bowl.

⁴⁰They showed Moses the wall of curtains around the courtyard with the posts and bases. They showed him the curtain that covered the entrance to the courtyard. They showed him the ropes and the tent pegs. They showed him everything in the Holy Tent, that is, the Meeting Tent.

⁴¹Then they showed Moses the clothes that were made for the priests serving in the Holy Place. They showed him the special clothes for Aaron the priest and his sons to wear when they served as priests.

⁴²The Israelites did all this work exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁴³Moses looked closely at all the work and saw that it was done exactly as the LORD had commanded. So Moses blessed them.

Moses Sets Up the Holy Tent

40 Then the LORD said to Moses, ²“On the first day of the first month, set up the Holy Tent, that is, the Meeting Tent. ³Put the Box of the Agreement in the Holy Tent, and hang the curtain so that the Box is behind it. ⁴Then bring in the table. Put the things on the table that should be there. Then put the lampstand in the Tent. Put the lamps on the lampstand in the right places. ⁵Put the gold altar for offering incense in the Tent in front of the Box of the Agreement. Then put the curtain at the entrance to the Holy Tent.

⁶“Put the altar for burnt offerings in front of the entrance of the Holy Tent, that is, the Meeting Tent. ⁷Put the bowl between the Meeting Tent and the altar.

Put water in the bowl. ⁸Set up the wall of curtains around the courtyard. Then put the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard.

⁹“Use the anointing oil and anoint the Holy Tent and everything in it. When you put the oil on these things, you will make them holy. ¹⁰Anoint the altar for burnt offerings. Anoint all the altar’s utensils. You will make the altar holy. It will be very holy. ¹¹Then anoint the bowl and the base under it to make these things holy.

¹²“Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Meeting Tent. Wash them with water. ¹³Then put the special clothes on Aaron. Anoint him with the oil and make him holy. Then he can serve me as a priest. ¹⁴Then put the long shirts on his sons. ¹⁵Anoint the sons in the same way you anointed their father. Then they can also serve me as priests. When you anoint them, they will become priests. That family will continue to be priests for all time to come.” ¹⁶Moses obeyed the Lord. He did everything that the LORD commanded him.

¹⁷So the Holy Tent was set up at the right time. It was the first day of the first month during the second year from the time they left Egypt. ¹⁸Moses set up the Holy Tent just as the Lord had said. He put the bases down first. Then he put the frames on the bases. Then he put the braces on and set up the posts. ¹⁹After that, Moses put the outer tent over the Holy Tent. Then he put the covering over the outer tent. He did these things just as the LORD had commanded.

²⁰Moses took the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments of the Agreement written on them and put them in the Holy Box. He put the poles on the Box and put the cover on it. ²¹Then Moses put the Holy Box into the Holy Tent. He hung the curtain in

the right place to protect it. In this way he protected the Box of the Agreement behind the curtain just as the LORD had commanded him. ²² Then Moses put the table in the Meeting Tent on the north side of the Holy Tent. He put it in the Holy Place, in front of the curtain. ²³ Then he put the bread on the table before the LORD. He did this just as the LORD had commanded him. ²⁴ Then Moses put the lampstand in the Meeting Tent on the south side of the Tent across from the table. ²⁵ Then Moses put the lamps on the lampstand before the LORD. He did this just as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁶ Then Moses put the gold altar in the Meeting Tent, in front of the curtain. ²⁷ Then he burned sweet-smelling incense on the altar. He did this as the LORD had commanded him. ²⁸ Then Moses put the curtain at the entrance to the Holy Tent.

²⁹ Moses put the altar for burnt offerings at the entrance to the Holy Tent, that is, the Meeting Tent. Then Moses offered a burnt offering on that altar. He also offered grain offerings to the Lord. He did these things just as the LORD had commanded him.

³⁰ Then Moses put the bowl between the Meeting Tent and the altar. He

put water in the bowl for washing. ³¹ Moses, Aaron and Aaron's sons used this bowl to wash their hands and feet. ³² They washed themselves every time they entered the Meeting Tent. They also washed themselves every time they went near the altar. They did these things just as the LORD commanded Moses.

³³ Then Moses set up the curtains for the courtyard around the Holy Tent and the altar. Then he put the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. So he finished all the work.

The Glory of the Lord

³⁴ Then the cloud covered the Meeting Tent and the glory of the LORD filled the Holy Tent. ³⁵ Moses could not go into the Meeting Tent because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD had filled the Holy Tent.

³⁶ When the cloud rose from the Holy Tent, the Israelites would begin to travel. ³⁷ But when the cloud stayed on the Holy Tent, the people did not try to move. They stayed in that place until the cloud rose. ³⁸ So the cloud of the LORD was over the Holy Tent during the day, and at night there was a fire in the cloud. This continued to happen wherever they travelled.