

## Notes on the Pentateuch—No. 2

### The Book of Exodus

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The theme of the second book of the Bible and the source from which it draws its name is in Exodus 19:1: "In the third month after the children of Israel were **gone forth out of** the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai." *Exodus* means "going out." This book explains that the Hebrews were then slaves to the Egyptians because a Pharaoh had come into power who "knew not Joseph" (1:8). That generation had forgotten the blessing Joseph the first Hebrew to arrive in Egypt, had been to the Egyptians. Exodus tells the story of Moses' birth and adoption by the daughter of Pharaoh and how he was eventually used by God to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage.

The Mosaic authorship of Exodus is clearly stated three times in the book itself (17:14; 14:4-8; 34:27). Despite these plain statements, some self-proclaimed "higher critics" insist that it is only a patchwork of stories gathered from various sources and thrown together by some unknown editor. Such is nothing short of the rankest infidelity. Exodus was probably written near the end of the Wilderness Wanderings of the Israelites, about 1,500 BC. It covers a period predating Moses' birth by several years and into at least the eightieth year of Moses' life. The purposes of Exodus seem to be the following:

1. To document the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, pertaining to a great chosen nation
2. To record God's first written covenant with men.

The book of Exodus is a book of preparations:

1. The preparation of Moses includes his rearing in Pharaoh's court, yet under the influence of his own Hebrew mother, and his forty years as a fugitive and shepherd.
2. The preparation of Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go, which included all the plagues upon Egypt.
3. The preparation of Israel for the long journey to Canaan, which included the observance of the Passover, asking for various provisions from the Egyptians and the plagues which showed that God was with Moses and with them.
4. The preparation of the Hebrews to become the nation of Israel through which God would bring His Son, the Redeemer, into the world. This included the giving of the Law of Moses and the building of the tabernacle.

In Exodus, we have one of the most exciting and dramatic narratives ever written. It contains the record of the first great series of miracles God performed through a human agent.

It contains the first written statement of God's great moral laws which have remained constant from the beginning. The remainder of the Bible and of God's dealings with men in subsequent history cannot be understood without the material in this great book.

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