

**Chronological Bible Blog – Monthly Notes - [www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com](http://www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com)  
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**Notes & Group Questions for February 1 - 28 readings (Questions (Q:) for groups are bolded below)**

**EXODUS 1:1 - NUMBERS 5:31 (Daily reading schedule at: [www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com](http://www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com))**

2/1 - Today we begin the book of Exodus!

**~Exodus~**

Author: Moses

Date: 1420 or 1220 B.C.

Content: The book of Exodus deals with the significant facts surrounding Israel's emergence as a nation. Moses' great leadership is described as he accepted God's call to return to Egypt in order to lead God's people to freedom. God sent the ten devastating plagues upon Egypt because the Pharaoh refused to obey his command. The ceremony of Passover was established during the last plague and became a memorial of God's deliverance for all time to Israel. The Israelites crossed the sea and arrived at Mt. Sinai where God gave the Ten Commandments and the plan for the tabernacle, and the covenant was renewed the nation.

Theme: The power of God over evil is clearly shown when God defeats the enemy of his people by delivering them from bondage, but God expects that we trust and obey him in return. Worship in the Tabernacle and adherence to the law were two aspects of Israel's obedience. (Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" pages 1-2)

2/1 - In Exodus chapter 1 verse 12 is awesome: *"But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more quickly the Israelites multiplied!"* It's amazing how when God wants people to flourish, they flourish! Even in the midst of oppression. This verse kind of reminds me of the flourishing of churches over the centuries and even today where the body of Christ is still often oppressed. It flourishes! Praise God for flourishing his people then - and now! **Q: How do you see God flourishing people in the midst of oppression in our world today?**

2/1 - Moses kills the Egyptian in Exodus chapter 2 today. We cannot hide from some of the things in the Bible that are not squeaky clean & perfect. The Bible is not always squeaky clean & perfect in terms of the behaviors of people in the Bible. Life is not always squeaky clean & perfect. However God will ultimately make us squeaky clean & perfect - forever. And in this life God can even redeem Moses after this act. Please do read up more on this act of Moses' in chapter 2 at bible.org [at this link](#). At this link you'll see this line: "We dare not seek to defend Moses in the murder of the Egyptian, no matter how cruel he may have been. Moses' act was in defiance of the authority of Egypt, and it was premeditated murder ("he looked this way and that," v. 12). While Moses' method of dealing with this problem was wrong, we can see that his motivation was commendable. Moses sought to defend the oppressed. When he sought to rebuke his Hebrew brother for wrongly mistreating another Hebrew (v. 13), Moses revealed, once again, the disposition of a deliverer." Moses was 40 years old when he killed the Egyptian. Moses then escapes to Midian - an area on the eastern side of the Red Sea that was very dry and desolate. Moses ends up living in Midian for 40 years. **Q: Do you believe God can redeem murderers? Do you think God redeems murders in our world today?**

2/1 - In Chapter 3 today God speaks to Moses through the burning bush! What I love about this is in verse 4: *"When the LORD saw that he had caught Moses' attention..."* It seems like Moses probably could have seen this burning bush - and kept going. He could have somehow walked on by - maybe because he had to get the flocks back home or he was late for dinner or who knows what. He could have missed the adventure and the calling of his life. But he doesn't. He stops. He investigates. He has a conversation with God. God caught his attention. **Q: Do you think God is trying to catch your attention today in any ways? How has God caught your attention in the past and revealed to you something important? Have you ever passed God by when he was trying to catch your attention?**

2/1 - Exodus 3:14 is a biggie in today's readings as Moses asks God who he should tell the Hebrews who sent him: *"God replied, 'I AM WHO I AM. Just tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"* I AM WHO I AM translates into Yahweh in Hebrew. I read a great little commentary that said when God speaks of himself, he says "I AM". When we speak of God we should say "He is." I like that. He is. I actually heard a sermon recently about the unchanging nature of God. He is omniscient. Omni-present. Eternal. He is wisdom. He cannot learn anything, because He knows everything. He is. The Hebrew letters yud, hey, vav, hey (below) -- often depicted in English as YHWH or Yahweh -- spell the ineffable name of God. Another powerful thing to note is that Jesus uses this same phrase of I AM and nearly gets stoned to death for sharing

this truth in the Gospel of John chapter 8 verses 58 & 59: *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.*  
**Q: Do you believe that Jesus IS? What IS Jesus to you in your life today? How IS Jesus your very life?**

2/1 - Today in Exodus chapter 4 we read about God discussing with Moses from the burning bush how Moses will lead the Israelites out of Egypt! Moses has a classic line to God in Chapter 4 verse 10: *"Moses said to the LORD, 'O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.'*" I think what is classic about this line is that probably many of us have some sort of line similar to this one that we say to God when God is calling us to do something big for His Kingdom. Or maybe even if it is something medium-sized or small God is calling us to, we probably have some pretty good excuses. "Why me God?" "I'm too young." "I'm too old." "I'm too busy." "I'm not that smart." "I'm not that talented". And I'm sure our list of excuses could go on. BUT – check out what God says to Moses in verse 12: *"Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."* Wow. **Q: What is an area of your life that God is calling you to move forward? Maybe calling you to some Kingdom work? And what are your excuses? Will you leave those excuses behind? Do you realize that God will help you do whatever you need to do? Do you realize that God will teach you what to do as you go? You may not know exactly what to do right now – but if you move forward, do you believe God will show up and help you accomplish the task? Will you go?**

2/2 - Verses 24 through 26 probably raised some questions for you today... :) *"On the journey, when Moses and his family had stopped for the night, the LORD confronted Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah, his wife, took a flint knife and circumcised her son....After that, the LORD left him alone."* The obvious question being, why was God about to kill Moses? Didn't God just call Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt? Well, yes he did. Commentaries I read suggest that the primary issue here was an issue of obedience. Moses had not circumcised his son, which was a requirement of God's covenant with Israel from Genesis chapter 17 - you'll recall Abraham and his household all getting circumcised in that 1 day. So, Moses - and actually Zipporah his wife performed the task of the covenant - had to circumcise his son before God would let Moses go forward to deliver God's people out of Egypt. Don't you like it when the Bible throws in some quick curveballs like this? :)

2/2 - I like Exodus chapter 5 verse 1, which builds upon some of our readings in chapter 4: *"After this presentation to Israel's leaders, Moses and Aaron went to see Pharaoh."* What I like about this is that there was Moses & Aaron going to see Pharaoh - the 2 of them. This reminds me of Jesus sending out the disciples in pairs. Sometimes in life it seems like we can accomplish more, or stay on task better, if we are partnered with someone else. It's sometimes tough to do things on our own. I think sometimes we want to make ourselves out to be Lone Rangers - thinking that we can shoulder the weight of the world on our own. But... we can't. First and foremost we need to be in relationship with God through Jesus. Secondly, in relationship with our family. Thirdly, relationship with our community - as we saw Moses and Aaron spoke with the Hebrew leaders at the end of chapter 4. And then... we are ready to take on Pharaoh! Then, we are ready to take on the world! Yeah, sure, on rare occasions God will call us to pull off Kingdom tasks on our own - but... 9 times out of 10, I think you are going to need brothers and sisters in Christ to help you make it. **Q: What type of Kingdom work do you do with other people? Who would you say is your "Aaron" in your life?**

2/2 - Exodus Chapter 5 verse 22 starts off our readings today with what seems to be an awfully bold question & complaint from Moses to God: *"So Moses went back to the LORD and protested, 'Why have you mistreated your own people like this, Lord? Why did you send me? Since I gave Pharaoh your message, he has been even more brutal to your people. You have not even begun to rescue them!'"* That first question initially made me wince - obviously God was not mistreating his own people - Pharaoh and the foremen were. I don't fault Moses for this question, since he saw the Israelites suffering so much - and God didn't seem to fault Moses either as we see in the beginning of chapter 6 he tells Moses what he is going to do to Pharaoh - and he doesn't address Moses question & complaint. I think Moses was probably really instead trying to ask God what he gets at in the last sentence - why haven't you started your rescue of your people? Then, the second question in verse 22 above takes us back to Moses' words to God at the burning bush near Midian when God first called Moses to this task - "why me??" This second question kind of made me smile... I guess because I've probably asked this question of God a lot of times in my life in various forms - why are you asking me to do this? Why not pick someone else? Don't I have enough going on? How am I going to pull this off? Etc. Etc.... Etc.... any of these questions sound familiar to you? :) And yet, even in the midst of this protesting, God is still going to use Moses in a big way for his Kingdom purposes. I pray he will still use me in the midst of my protesting. **Q: How have you ever protested against God? Why do you think we protest against God? Do you think God can still use us despite our protesting?**

2/3 - In Exodus chapter 7 we read about Aaron's staff becoming a snake and the plague of blood. It is interesting that Pharaoh's wise men & magicians did the same thing as these miracles with their "secret arts." However, it's obvious that what the magicians did was not as powerful as what God did - because God's snake wins! :) And, it is indeed ironic that the magicians turning water to blood would really only make matters worse for the Egyptians. I read commentaries that suggested the magicians were either coming up with illusions or potentially tapping into dark / demonic forces to make their tricks come to fruition. Check out tons more great info on the nature of the plagues, the magicians tricks, the pattern of the plagues and the point of the plagues in Bob Deffinbaugh's essay titled "**The Finger of God**" at bible.org [at this link](#). This is worth the read before we dive into all the plagues over the next few days!

2/3 - Today in Exodus chapters 8 & 9 we read about many of the plagues! I've got to say, for some reason the plague of frogs really resonated with me in today's reading. I'm not sure why - but for some reason I could really envision frogs being everywhere... and how disgusting this would truly be... An interesting thing I read in a commentary today is that the plagues in some ways were direct attacks on the Egyptian "gods". For example, the Egyptians had a god named Hopi, who was god of the Nile river. Hopi couldn't stop the river from turning to blood. They had a cow-goddess named Hathor, who couldn't stop the livestock from dying. They had a sun-god named Amon-Re who couldn't stop darkness from coming over the land. (in tomorrow's readings). God's plagues were going after these false gods - and showing to Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and the Hebrews too I think, who the one true living God is, was, and forever shall be. Chapter 8 verses 18 & 19 stand out: *"Pharaoh's magicians tried to do the same thing with their secret arts, but this time they failed. And the gnats covered all the people and animals. "This is the finger of God!" the magicians exclaimed to Pharaoh.* The magicians tricks were beginning to fail! They realized that God was creating the plagues with their exclamation, "This is the finger of God!" God's name & fame was becoming known. **Q: When is a time in your life when you saw or experienced the finger of God?**

2/3 - Chapter 9 verse 16 is powerful: *"But I have let you live for this reason--that you might see my power and that my fame might spread throughout the earth."* In the New Testament, Paul quotes this verse in Romans 9:17, which we'll view in context here from Romans 9:14-18 - *"What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden."* Wow... great stuff in this Roman's verse... it does not depend on our desire or effort, but on God's mercy. **Q: How have you seen God's mercy in your life? Have you ever seen God's mercy show up in spite of your own efforts?**

2/3 - Exodus chapter 9 verse 20 is also powerful, as we read about some Egyptians beginning to believe in God: *"Some of Pharaoh's officials believed what the LORD said. They immediately brought their livestock and servants in from the fields."* How about us today? Do we believe what the Lord says? Like these Egyptians in this instance, do we then also immediately do what the Lord says? In verse 27 Pharaoh finally confesses his sin: *"Then Pharaoh urgently sent for Moses and Aaron. "I finally admit my fault," he confessed. "The LORD is right, and my people and I are wrong."* Though he doesn't stay repentant for long. **Q: Have you ever confessed your sin to God and then not stayed repentant? Why do you think this happened? How do you confess your sins and then make a complete U-turn - go completely in the other direction and not look back?**

2/4 - In Exodus chapter 10 today we read about the Plague of Locusts! In ancient times locust plagues were greatly feared and were often considered to be a sign of divine judgment. Next up is the plague of darkness. Some Biblical commentaries have found Pharaoh's statement to Moses to be quite appropriate and ironic that he said this during the plague of darkness in 10:28: *"The day you see my face you will die."* Apparently Moses couldn't quite fully see Pharaoh's face during the plague of darkness? Makes sense to me. Commentaries have also suggested that this verse was a death threat to Moses, and that this death threat was responded to with the coming plague on the firstborns of Egypt, including Pharaoh's son.

2/4 - Today we read in Exodus chapter 12 about God giving Moses and Aaron instructions on the First Passover. Verse 2 stands out: *"From now on, this month will be the first month of the year for you."* Here we see that God is actually instituting a new religious calendar for the Hebrews with the month that Passover is in being the first month of the calendar year. This month is in the March-April spring timeframe and is called Abib or Nisan in Hebrew. The feasts that were and are celebrated in this 1st month were - Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits. Here is a very interesting

note on the Jewish calendar from the NIV Study Bible - "In the ancient Near East, new year festivals normally coincided with the new season of life in nature. The designation of this month as Israel's religious New Year reminded Israel that its life as the people of God was grounded in God's redemptive act in the Exodus... Israel's agricultural calendar began in the fall, and during the monarchy it dominated the nation's civil calendar. Both calendars (civil and religious) existed side by side until after the exile. Judaism today uses only the calendar that begins in the fall."

2/4 - The significance of Passover was that God was introducing the concept of a sacrifice or a substitute for a life. The lamb was sacrificed as a substitute for the Hebrews first-born sons. The blood of the lamb was placed on the doorposts as a sign that the household had sacrificed an innocent life - the lamb. By the blood of the unblemished/perfect lamb, the household was protected from death. This is a foreshadowing of Jesus' ministry. Jesus is the sacrificial lamb for us. He was a substitute for us and our sins. He was an innocent unblemished/perfect lamb - sinless. By Jesus' blood, we are protected from eternal death. **Q: What are some parallels you see between Passover and Jesus' death on the cross?**

2/4 - Exodus chapter 12 verse 11 is of note: "*Wear your traveling clothes as you eat this meal, as though prepared for a long journey. Wear your sandals, and carry your walking sticks in your hands. Eat the food quickly, for this is the LORD's Passover.*" By wearing their traveling clothes, the Hebrews were faithfully acknowledging God's Word that they would very soon be freed from slavery and bondage in Egypt. The Exodus would soon begin! And the traveling clothes signified that the Hebrews were ready for the journey! **Q: How about you? Do you think that God may still call you on journeys today? What journey might God be calling you on in 2010? Are you be ready for the call? What are your "traveling clothes" that you're wearing, so that when the "Exodus" comes, you are ready for it?**

2/4 - This is a big day in our readings today - The Israelites officially begin their exodus from Egypt! Today in Exodus chapter 12 we read about God instituting the Festival of Unleavened Bread along with Passover. These both are still observed today by practicing Jews. Verse 14 states the importance of these festivals to the Israelites: "*You must remember this day forever. Each year you will celebrate it as a special festival to the LORD.*" Verses 37 & 38 are amazing: "*That night the people of Israel left Rameses and started for Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, plus all the women and children. And they were all traveling on foot. Many people who were not Israelites went with them, along with the many flocks and herds.*" 600,000 men equals probably at least 1.2 million people all together - and probably close to 2 million. This is a massive Exodus! Verse 38 is very interesting in that some Egyptians were joining the Israelites in this Exodus! **Q: Why do you think some Egyptians joined the Israelites in the Exodus? Do you think these Egyptians believed in God? When have you ever experienced a Passover meal in your life? What was it like? How does the Passover foreshadow Jesus' life?**

2/5 - In Exodus chapter 13 we read about God's instructions for the dedication of the firstborn. Note that based on this law that Jesus, the firstborn of Mary & Joseph, was dedicated to God in the Temple in Jerusalem as we read in Luke chapter 2 verses 21 through 24: "*On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived. When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."*" I think it's also interesting to note that Mary & Joseph did not present a lamb, but a pair of doves or two young pigeons. This portion of the law came from Leviticus chapter 12 verse 8: "*If she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering.*" **Q: How have you dedicated your children to God? Or how have you seen family members or your church dedicate children to God? Why do you think we still dedicate children to God today?**

2/5 - Today in Exodus chapter 13 verse 17 we read what I found to be an intriguing verse: "*When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them on the road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest way from Egypt to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt."*" That last sentence really stood out to me. It makes sense. It was wise for God to do this. But... then I think about our lives today. What if we are faced with a challenging spiritual battle our lives? Will we change our minds about God and return to our "Egypt"? Our Egypt might be the places where we are / were comfortable - enslaved to a sin though we may have been. As I think more about this, I do believe that God is sensitive in our lives, just as he was in the Israelites lives in this verse, as to what we can handle. I do not think he will send us a temptation or a trial greater than we can bear. But I also know that trials do come. And I pray that as the trials come, that we don't go back to our "Egypt"! but that we press on toward the "Promised Land". **Q: Have you ever wanted to retreat from moving forward**

**spiritually and wanted to retreat to your old "Egypt" or back to old habits? How did you overcome this temptation? How do you keep your eyes forward on Jesus, and not back on your old Egypt/habits? Have you ever had to sever friendships for this reason?**

2/5 - In Exodus chapter 15 we read an amazing song that Moses and the Israelites sing to God after passing safely through the Red Sea! Some commentaries say that this is the oldest recorded song in the world! Music played an important part in Israel's celebration and worship. **Q: Does music play an important part in your celebration and worship of God? (I know not everyone is musically inclined, so don't feel bad if this is not a yes.) In what ways does worship music manifest itself in your life? In church, do you really sing the songs to God and God only? And not worry about what your voice sounds like to your neighbors? In your car, do you ever bust out with some loud and true worship singing to God? How do you typically "sing" your praise to the Lord?**

2/5 - The other comment to make on the song in chapter 15 is that this song seems to be a very significant development in the relationship of the people of Israel and God. The people of Israel now seem to really embrace and worship God as their God as we see in verse 2: *"The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my victory. He is my God, and I will praise him; he is my father's God, and I will exalt him!"* Wow... I love that language. **Q: How is God your strength? In what ways is God your song?**

2/5 - Related to music, per above, One thing I personally struggle with is listening to worship / Christian music versus secular music. I grew up listening to all the 80's / early 90's bands you could think of. And I have come to realize that many of the lyrics from these bands are really full of hopelessness, existentialism, sexuality, addiction, narcissism, etc. And yet, for some reason I typically still like the tunes... I had one friend tell me that after he became a Christian he literally threw away most of his CD collection - which was all secular CD's. I guess I still sometimes struggle with being in the world and not of the world. **Q: What do you think is the line of listening to / enjoying secular music, versus it literally being bad for you? Please let me know your thoughts on secular music - do you listen to it? Do you avoid it? Are you cautious about it in any way?**

2/5 - Today in Exodus chapter 15 we read about the prophet Miriam! You'll recall from Exodus chapter 2 that Miriam watched Pharaoh's daughter draw Moses from the Nile when he was a baby and Miriam wisely suggested that she find a Hebrew nurse for the baby (Moses' mom). We'll read about Miriam again in Numbers chapter 12 with a very interesting interaction with Aaron, Moses & God - you can read about it now [at this link](#). Other female prophets we will read about in Bible include Deborah ([Judges 4:4](#)), Isaiah's wife ([Isaiah 8:3](#)), Huldah ([2 Kings 22:14](#)), Noadiah ([Nehemiah 6:14](#)), Anna ([Luke 2:36](#)) and Philips daughters ([Acts 21:9](#)). **Q: How have women impacted your spiritual journey? Who are some women in your life that have really blessed your relationship with the Lord?**

2/5 - Verse 26 stood out to me in this chapter: *"If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and laws, then I will not make you suffer the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you."* It seems to me that here the Israelites are getting a foreshadowing of the Laws to come. "Listen to God - do what is right in his sight. And you will not suffer. I will heal you." We'll dive more into this when we get to the Laws - but, I'll say this now and repeat it often - I do believe that the Laws for the Israelites, as we even see in this verse, were born out of compassion from God. God wanted to preserve and care and heal his people - and imagine living in a desert for 40 years, coming out of slavery... the laws were beneficial for your very well being and life! **Q: How have God's laws been beneficial or compassionate for your life?**

2/6 - Today in Exodus chapter 16 we read about Manna and Quail from heaven. Verses 29 & 30 were powerful for me today, as God speaks about the Sabbath: *"Do they not realize that I have given them the seventh day, the Sabbath, as a day of rest? That is why I give you twice as much food on the sixth day, so there will be enough for two days. On the Sabbath day you must stay in your places. Do not pick up food from the ground on that day." So the people rested on the seventh day.*" You will probably read on this blog over and over and over again about the Sabbath... I am a huge fan of the concept! And such a poor practitioner of it... I honestly think the Sabbath is one of the most compassionate things God ever created for us. And, don't get me wrong - my personal view is not legalistic in the sense of the Sabbath... But.... personally, I think the Sabbath is just such a blessing of a gift to us. And I think we - I - us - humans - often do such a bad job of really taking a Sabbath. Really taking 1 day a week to really rest and relax and be with God. Recently I read in our local newspaper about a Hasidic Jewish rapper who came through our town on tour - yes, seriously, there is a Hasidic Jewish rapper who is getting hugely popular nationally. Anyhow, the article - in our secular newspaper - wrote about how this rapper will not perform on Fridays or Saturdays in observance of the Jewish Sabbath Law - and Hasidic

Jews strongly observe most all of the Laws still today (I believe... except for animal sacrifices - simply because there is not the Temple in Jerusalem today for the sacrifices). Anyhow - I'm going off on some tangents here - but, the point is, that when I read about how this guy will not perform shows on the 2 best money-making nights of the week for concerts, because of his observance of the Sabbath - I dare say his love of God and his appreciation of the Sabbath - it really struck me. And it really reminded me of how really really bad I am at truly resting and being with God 1 day a week. And I'm not feeling guilty about this per se... but maybe I am feeling convicted... :) Basically - I am feeling that God is really calling me to slow down and simply rest and be with him 1 day a week. A Sabbath. **Q: do you take a Sabbath? What do you do - or not do - on the Sabbath? Does it bless the other 6 days of your week? How long have you been in the habit of taking a Sabbath? Is it hard to get in the habit? Any other "tricks of the trade" you can share with all of us about taking a Sabbath?**

2/6 - Verse 31 quick comment - *"In time, the food became known as manna. It was white like coriander seed, and it tasted like honey cakes."* I love that manna means "What is it?!" That is awesome... I think you'll notice throughout our Bible readings this year that names can often be very descriptive of locations, happenings, personalities - and can even be simple questions like "What is it??"

2/6 - Today in Exodus chapter 17 we read about the Israelites defeating Amalekites. We are introduced to Joshua in verse 9. Joshua is from the tribe of Ephraim and he has a strong faith in God and loyalty to Moses, along with leadership skills. He will be Moses' successor who leads the Israelites into Canaan 40 years later. Verse 12 reminded me of how oftentimes we cannot always do things on our own - we oftentimes need our friends help: *"Moses' arms finally became too tired to hold up the staff any longer. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side, holding up his hands until sunset."* **Q: Who are your Aaron and Hur? Who is holding you up your arms when they get tired? And whose arms are you holding up when their arms get tired?**

2/6 - In Exodus chapter 18 we read about Jethro's visit of Moses and Jethro's wise advice to Moses. This chapter has been pointed out to me as something I should take heed of a couple of times over this past year or so... Like Moses in this chapter, I think I have a hard time delegating! :) But, indeed, Jethro's advice in verses 17 & 18 about how Moses was settling every single case is something I need to reflect upon often: *"This is not good!" his father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out--and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself."* **Q: How about you? Are there areas of your life where you are doing too much? Where you need to delegate to others? Where you need to "let go and let God"? Are you wearing yourself out? Will you follow Jethro's advice to Moses?** Great advice on how to avoid "burnout" in our lives as based on Exodus chapter 18 titled **"The Tyranny of the Urgent"** is online at bible.org [at this link](#).

2/6 - Exodus chapter 19 is a significant chapter because the Israelites arrive at Mt. Sinai! Exodus chapter 19 verse 3 all the way through Exodus chapter 24 verse 18 is what is called by many commentators "The Sinaitic Covenant." You'll recall that we have already read about the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9:8-17, the Abrahamic A Covenant in Genesis 15:9-21, and the Abrahamic B Covenant in Genesis 17. Per the NIV Study Bible, this Sinaitic Covenant was "made with Israel as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and as the people God has redeemed from bondage from Egypt. This Sinaitic Covenant is a conditional divine pledge to be Israel's God on the condition of Israel's total consecration to God as his people who live by his rule and serve his purposes in history." Tomorrow we read about the Ten Commandments!

2/7 - Big day today! Ten Commandments day! This kind of snuck up on me, but it was a great surprise. **Q: Since we've arrived at the Ten Commandments in our readings today, now is an appropriate time to ask - are the Ten Commandments important to you? Why? Have they always been important to you?** I will confess that there was a time early in my Christian walk where the Ten Commandments didn't really matter to me. All that mattered at that time was my faith in Jesus. But, then, I personally felt that I was not moving forward as a disciple of Jesus' without meditating upon and considering and, yes, applying the Ten Commandments to my life. Am I perfect when it comes to the Ten Commandments? Of course not, this side of heaven. But meditating upon the Ten Commandments and meditating upon my actions - in relationship with Jesus and inviting Jesus into this process - has changed my heart and my actions. **Do you think that we should meditate upon the Ten Commandments and our actions?**

2/7 Verse 19 in chapter 20 is intriguing as the Israelites speak to Moses: *"You tell us what God says, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us. If he does, we will die!"* The NIV Study Bible commentary suggests that this is the first time that people asked for a "mediator" between them and God. And that mediator is initially fulfilled in Moses, then

in the Aaronic / Levitical priests, then in the prophets, and then finally in Jesus Christ - our final mediator. Powerful for each of us to consider... **Q: Who is the mediator between you and God? Has this always been the case?**

2/7 – I liked reading and considering the simplicity of God's instructions on the proper use of altars in chapter 20 verses 24 & 25: *"The altars you make for me must be simple altars of earth.... Build altars in the places where I remind you who I am, and I will come and bless you there. If you build altars from stone, use only uncut stones. Do not chip or shape the stones with a tool, for that would make them unfit for holy use."* For some reason the simplicity of these altars stood in stark contrast to the religiosity Jesus goes after in our Matthew readings today. Maybe God likes us to keep things simple? This is an interesting thing to consider. The gospel message is not complicated. It's simple. Sometimes I think we do a pretty good job of complicating it for ourselves or others though. When maybe instead we should just be sharing with others our simple altars to God.... **Q: Have you ever over-complicated the Gospel in your own life? How do you think the Gospel is simple? But perhaps not simplistic?**

2/7 - Exodus chapter 21 dives into some regulations surrounding slavery. I know this brings up some questions. The One Year Bible Companion today covers this topic at a high level: "The Hebrews, though freed from slavery, had slaves themselves. A person could become a slave because of poverty, debt, or even crime. But Hebrew slaves were treated as humans, not property, and were allowed to work their way to freedom. The Bible acknowledges the existence of slavery but never encourages it." For further study on this topic - Bible.org has commentary on slavery in the Bible [at this link](#), and [at this link](#), and [at this link](#).

2/7 - Today in Exodus chapter 21 we read the very well-known verses 24 & 25: *"If an eye is injured, injure the eye of the person who did it. If a tooth gets knocked out, knock out the tooth of the person who did it. Similarly, the payment must be hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."* What you may not realize about this "law of retaliation" is that it actually was meant to limit the punishment to fit the crime, which prevented cruel and barbaric punishments that were seen in many ancient cultures. Meaning - before this law it might have been seen as "acceptable" for someone to kill someone in return for knocking out an eye - whereas this law limited the retaliation to fit the crime. Jesus of course invokes the higher law of love in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 verses 38 through 42: *"You have heard that the law of Moses says, 'If an eye is injured, injure the eye of the person who did it. If a tooth gets knocked out, knock out the tooth of the person who did it.' But I say, don't resist an evil person! If you are slapped on the right cheek, turn the other, too. If you are ordered to court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow."* **Q: How do you see that Jesus exemplified this higher law of love for us through his ministry, life, death and resurrection?**

2/7 - I find it very fascinating to read all of the laws in these chapters today. I think what is incredible is to remember is that these laws are coming directly from God to the Hebrews. I find it very encouraging that God is so interested in the minutiae details that are discussed in these laws! God is not an impersonal God who just sets up the universe like a clock and lets it tick. God is engaged and concerned with our behavior - back then and today! **Q: Do you believe that God is engaged and concerned with your behavior today? In what ways?**

2/8 - Today in Exodus chapter 23 we read about the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Harvest, and the Festival of Final Harvest (also known as Festival of Booths or Ingathering or Tabernacles). Commentary on Exodus chapter 24, entitled **"The Magnificent Meal on Mt. Sinai"** is at bible.org [at this link](#). This old covenant meal was a foreshadowing of Jesus' new covenant Last Supper with his disciples just before his death and resurrection. In chapter 24 Moses is called up on the mountain for forty days and forty nights - similarly Jesus spent forty days and forty nights in the desert after his baptism and before beginning his public ministry.

2/9 - Today in Exodus chapters 26 & 27 we read about God's plans for the Tabernacle, the Altar and the Courtyard. This is my 8th time reading through the One Year Bible, and I have to admit, I have zoned out a bit when reading these chapters in years past. But for some reason this year these details were fascinating to me today! Why the change? I'm not 100% sure, other than I do think repeated study of the Bible year after year does bear fruit and does grow our interest in every iota of God's Word. So, if by chance you felt like you were zoning out a bit when reading these chapters today, don't be discouraged. The interest will definitely come with time and further study of all of God's Word. Let me recommend to you that you don't skim over chapters like these though. Please do read each word. If you skim this year, you'll skim next year and you'll miss out on the fruit that will come from this study. **Q: Why do you think God put so much detail and planning into describing the Tabernacle, etc. in the Bible? Do you think God puts this much**

## detail and thought into all of His creation? Into you?

2/9 - Exodus chapter 28 verse 1 stood out to me in today's readings: *"Your brother, Aaron, and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, will be set apart from the common people. They will be my priests and will minister to me."* Here we see that the priests are being set apart as mediators between the people of Israel and God. And this role is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ as our high priest. Jesus is now the mediator between God and us. Personally, I still do see so much value in pastors and clergy in our lives and churches today. We'll study more about these important roles in Paul's writings in the New Testament. However, I also personally believe that we can approach the throne of God through Jesus Christ as our mediator - and that we don't need another human mediator here on earth to approach God. Jesus is more than enough. **Q: How is Jesus your high priest today? How does Jesus mediate between you and God?**

2/10 - Today in Exodus chapter 29 we read about the dedication of Aaron and his sons as priests! Verse 37 stood out to me in this chapter: *"After that, the altar will be exceedingly holy, and whatever touches it will become holy."* It's interesting to consider the verses prior to this - with the 7 days of sacrifices of young bulls. For some reason this verse reminded me of Jesus and how people could simply touch the tassels of his robes and they would be healed. I think it's fair to say that Jesus was much more holy than this altar was - and Jesus did not require purification rituals or sacrificing of bulls to make Jesus holy, as this altar did. Jesus "embodied" holiness! **Q: Do you believe Jesus is Holy, Holy, Holy? What does Jesus' holiness mean to you today? Does it mean anything? Does it change anything in your life?**

2/10 - In Chapter 30 we read about the incense altar. I read a commentary that said the incense from this altar represented prayers to God from his people. We can see this similarity in Revelation chapter 8 verses 3 & 4: *"Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great quantity of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people, to be offered on the gold altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, mixed with the prayers of the saints, ascended up to God from the altar where the angel had poured them out."* **Q: Do you believe that your prayers to God are like fragrant incense? Does this imagery help think about your prayer life? How is your prayer life these days?**

2/10 - Chapter 31 verses 1 through 3 stood out to me today: *"The LORD also said to Moses, "Look, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts."* These verses make me wonder about our lives. **Q: How has God chosen you? What has God given you as gifts and skills? Do you believe that your gifts, skills, and wisdom come from God? How are you using these gifts, skills, and wisdom in the service of God?**

2/10 - In verse 13 we read: *"Tell the people of Israel to keep my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between me and you forever. It helps you to remember that I am the LORD, who makes you holy."* **Q: How about for you? Do you think taking one day of rest – true rest – as a Sabbath is a good idea? Is there an activity that you are doing 7 days a week, that you can do just 6 days a week? Are you over-scheduling yourself maybe 7 days a week? Can you take 1 day a week to not be scheduled?**

2/11- Today Exodus chapter 32 verse 1 made me think about spiritual "boredom" - *"When Moses failed to come back down the mountain right away, the people went to Aaron. "Look," they said, "make us some gods who can lead us. This man Moses, who brought us here from Egypt, has disappeared. We don't know what has happened to him."* I guess what made me think in this verse was this - Moses was gone only 40 days and 40 nights, up Mt. Sinai. Granted, the Israelites were in the middle of nowhere, so this actually might be quite a long time for him to be gone in these circumstances. But, my thought is this – **Q: Do you think maybe the Israelites had somehow gotten "bored" with God? And I ask this because I wonder if maybe we today get "bored" with God or "bored" with our faith? And if so... why? Why did the Israelites get bored? Why do we get bored?** What makes me nervous about getting bored with our faith is that what we see take place later in this chapter to the Israelites I think can happen to us - we can pursue false Gods and indulge in dangerous sins. Typically, I find faith in God and a relationship with God to be the most adventurous thing on earth! However, I will admit that there have been seasons in my walk where I somehow got bored with my faith. And I think if I honestly look back at those seasons, I think the boredom came because I stopped moving forward in my relationship with God. I let my faith kind of stagnate as a status quo. I started to get distracted by worldly things. And I got spiritually bored. And this was not good. **So - I wonder - what's our cure for boredom in our faith? What keeps our faith fresh? Part of me thinks that daily spiritual disciplines are part of the answer. Reading the Bible every day. Really praying every day. Giving thanks to God every day. How about for you? What do you do to keep your faith fresh?**

2/11 - Today in verses 7 & 8 about the golden calf – *“Then the LORD told Moses, “Quick! Go down the mountain! The people you brought from Egypt have defiled themselves. They have already turned from the way I commanded them to live. They have made an idol shaped like a calf, and they have worshiped and sacrificed to it. They are saying, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of Egypt.’”* **Q: What about us in our lives today? Are we so different from the Israelites? Do we make our own versions of “golden calves” today? Do we have idols that we worship? Money? Career? Popularity? Relationships? Addictions? Our Intelligence? Technology? Do these idols stand in the way of our worship of God? Do they stand in the way of our relationship with God? Do these idols defile us? Do we think sometimes that these idols have actually “brought us out of Egypt” – instead of God? Will we give up these false idols and return to worshipping only God the Father, Son & Holy Spirit with all of our hearts, minds, soul and strength? Will you give up your “golden calf” at the feet of Jesus today?**

2/11 - Exodus chapter 34 verses 6 & 7 are beautiful and we will hear these words repeated again later in the Old Testament a few times: *“I am the LORD, I am the LORD, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unfailing love and faithfulness. I show this unfailing love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion.”* **Q: How do these words resonate with you? How do you see that God is merciful and gracious? Slow to anger? And rich in unfailing love and faithfulness? Have you asked God for forgiveness for your sins and rebellion?**

2/11 - Verses 33 through 35 in chapter 34 in today's readings tell us: *“When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. But whenever he went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with the LORD, he removed the veil until he came out again. Then he would give the people whatever instructions the LORD had given him, and the people would see his face aglow. Afterward he would put the veil on again until he returned to speak with the LORD.”* And today's guest commentary on these preceding verses is from none other than Paul! This is the Bible giving commentary on the Bible. Here is Paul in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians chapter 3 verses 7 - 18 (read this carefully... read this twice... this is good....) - *“That old system of law etched in stone led to death, yet it began with such glory that the people of Israel could not bear to look at Moses' face. For his face shone with the glory of God, even though the brightness was already fading away. Shouldn't we expect far greater glory when the Holy Spirit is giving life? If the old covenant, which brings condemnation, was glorious, how much more glorious is the new covenant, which makes us right with God! In fact, that first glory was not glorious at all compared with the overwhelming glory of the new covenant. So if the old covenant, which has been set aside, was full of glory, then the new covenant, which remains forever, has far greater glory. Since this new covenant gives us such confidence, we can be very bold. We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so the people of Israel would not see the glory fading away. But the people's minds were hardened, and even to this day whenever the old covenant is being read, a veil covers their minds so they cannot understand the truth. And this veil can be removed only by believing in Christ. Yes, even today when they read Moses' writings, their hearts are covered with that veil, and they do not understand. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, then the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives freedom. And all of us have had that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more.”* Not a bad commentary, eh?

2/12 - The NIV Study Bible commentary today notes that Exodus 35:4 through 39:43 are for the most part repeated from chapters 25 through 28; 30:1-5; and 31:1-11, sometimes verbatim, but with the verbs primarily in the past rather than the future tense and with the topics arranged in different order. This type of repetition was a common feature of ancient Near Eastern literature and was intended to fix the details of a narrative in the readers mind. I really like in today's readings in chapter 35 that people freely brought their offerings for the tabernacle (much of which was likely given to them by the Egyptians as the Exodus from Egypt began, as you'll recall from [Exodus 12:33-36](#)), as we see in verses 20 through 22 - *“So all the people left Moses and went to their tents to prepare their gifts. If their hearts were stirred and they desired to do so, they brought to the LORD their offerings of materials for the Tabernacle and its furnishings and for the holy garments. Both men and women came, all whose hearts were willing. Some brought to the LORD their offerings of gold--medallions, earrings, rings from their fingers, and necklaces. They presented gold objects of every kind to the LORD.”*

2/13 - I found Exodus chapter 38 verse 8 intriguing today: *“The bronze washbasin and its bronze pedestal were cast from bronze mirrors donated by the women who served at the entrance of the Tabernacle.”* Apparently mirrored glass had not yet been invented in these days, but highly polished bronze gave off a good reflection. This reminds me of Paul's writings in First Corinthians 13:12 - *“Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”* **Q: Are you fully known by God? Fully?**

2/14 - Today is the final day of readings from Exodus. Personally, a couple of learnings for me this year from Exodus that I will share are these - 1. Moses' leadership really stood out to me this year as I read through Exodus. And it was interesting to me that his leadership grew over time. Early on in Exodus Moses was saying to God to "please don't choose me to free the Israelites from Egypt - pick someone else" and then by the end of the book Moses has gained enough faith to fast for 40 days on Mt. Sinai and enough confidence to ask God to "show me your glory." I think we can see in Moses how God can transform a person's life completely - and how God can transform our lives completely - if that person enters into a responsive, faithful, loving and obedient relationship with God. Point #2 of my learnings this year - my interest and knowledge in some of the intricacies of the tabernacle has grown, which has been wonderful. **Q: I hope that your reading this past month about the Israelites Exodus from Egypt and their emergence as a nation under Moses' leadership has been a good learning experience for you? More than anything - I hope that reading about God's interactions with His covenant people in Egypt, the plagues, the Red Sea, the manna from heaven, the Ten Commandments, and the plans for the Tabernacle has expanded your understanding of who God is and God's story? What has been an interesting learning for you in Exodus this year that you can share with the group?**

2/14 - In Numbers chapter 9 today we read about the fiery cloud over the tabernacle! Verses 22 & 23 stood out to me in today's readings: "*Whether the cloud stayed above the Tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, the people of Israel stayed in camp and did not move on. But as soon as it lifted, they broke camp and moved on. So they camped or traveled at the LORD's command, and they did whatever the LORD told them through Moses.*" **Q: Do you do whatever the Lord tells you to do in your life today? Do you wait patiently on the Lord? Do you move when the Lord tells you to move?**

2/15 - Numbers Chapter 7 is the longest chapter in the book of Numbers, and certainly an amazing one. It is awesome to read about the presentation of offerings for the dedication of the altar over 12 days. At the end of this chapter we read in verse 89: "*Whenever Moses went into the Tabernacle to speak with the LORD, he heard the voice speaking to him from between the two cherubim above the Ark's cover--the place of atonement--that rests on the Ark of the Covenant. The LORD spoke to him from there.*" **Q: How do you hear the Lord's voice in your life today?**

2/16 - Today in Numbers chapter 8 we read about the dedication of the Levites. **Q: Who or what have you dedicated in your life? Are dedication's important?**

**2/16 - Learning to Love Leviticus!** - This upcoming week of readings is what I call *mission-critical*. We're beginning our journey through the book of Leviticus! As this is my 6th time leading a crew of people through the One Year Bible, I know that Leviticus is the book where we lose many people who started out so strong over the past 6 weeks. I want to let you know this in advance, so that if you feel like maybe not reading your Bible for even just one day this upcoming month, don't do it! You may find Leviticus "boring" on occasion, but there truly is a lot of depth to it. And if you stop reading the One Year Bible during Leviticus, you'll miss out on so much more of the Bible coming up later this year - including Saul, David, Solomon, the prophets - and the list goes on. If you read nothing else in this posting today, please take ten minutes or so to review the amazing reflection at the link below on the book of Leviticus by Bob Deffinbaugh over at Bible.org. The article at this link below titled "**Learning to Love Leviticus**" will bless you immensely before we embark on our study of Leviticus this week: [http://bible.org/page.php?page\\_id=258](http://bible.org/page.php?page_id=258) An excerpt from Bob at this link above - "Up to this point in time the Book of Leviticus has been the "liver and onions" book of the Bible to me. That is, I know that it must be good for me, but I just don't seem to have a taste for the stuff. To others, the Book of Leviticus is something like camping - they tried it once and that was enough to last them a lifetime. Having briefly looked at the Book of Leviticus, let us get down to the issue of "taste" which must be settled before we will ever benefit from this portion of God's word. The first thing we must seek to do is to identify the reasons why we tend to dislike and thus to avoid this book." [Again, please please read "Learning to Love Leviticus" at this link](#) before you read anything else in this blog posting today. **Q: Have you read the book of Leviticus before? What has motivated you to read the book all the way through? What have you learned from the book of Leviticus in the past?**

2/16 - **Leviticus begins!**

Author: Moses

Date: 1420 or 1220 B.C.

Content: The book of Leviticus was designed to be a handbook for the priests or Levites, hence the name Leviticus. It sets down the regulations that were to govern the life of Israel in general and specifically to give regulations concerning sacrifice and worship. All of the major sacrifices are described, as well as the way they were to be offered. All of the major festivals and holidays are discussed. There are also special sections devoted to the priesthood and regulations

concerning ceremonial matters.

**Theme:** The central theme of this book is that God has provided a way for atonement to be made by the offering of sacrificial blood. This whole system found its fulfillment in the shedding of Christ's blood as the one great sacrifice for the sins of the world. Leviticus also shows that worship is to be orderly and is to follow a regular pattern. (*Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" page 2*) More commentary on Leviticus is at this link – [http://bible.org/page.php?page\\_id=882](http://bible.org/page.php?page_id=882)

2/17 - Today in Leviticus we read about the Sin Offering and the Guilt Offering. Combine this with our readings from yesterday and we've covered the 5 major Old Testament sacrifices - which I'll recap below from the NIV Study Bible. I'd recommend taking a good mental note of these 5 Sacrifices, as we'll keep reading about them this year in various capacities in the OT:

1. **Burnt Offering** - Voluntary act of worship; atonement for unintentional sin in general; expression of devotion, commitment and surrender to God. Bull, ram or male bird is offered - wholly consumed no defect.
  2. **Grain Offering** - Voluntary act of worship; recognition of God's goodness and provisions; devotion to God. Grain, fine flower, olive oil, incense, baked bread, salt offered - accompanied burnt and fellowship offering.
  3. **Fellowship Offering** - Voluntary act of worship; thanksgiving and fellowship as it included a communal meal. Any animal without defect from herd or flock offered.
  4. **Sin Offering** - Mandatory atonement for specific unintentional sin; confession of sin; forgiveness of sin; cleansing from defilement. Young bull for high priest & congregation offered. Male goat for leader. Female goat or lamb for common person. Dove or pigeon for the poor. Tenth of an ephah of fine flower for the very poor.
  5. **Guilt Offering** - Mandatory atonement for unintentional sin requiring restitution; cleansing from defilement; make restitution; pay 20% fine. Ram or lamb offered.
- (above 5 points from the NIV Study Bible p. 151)

2/17 - Chapter 4 verse 21 foreshadows Jesus' death on the cross outside the gates of Jerusalem at Golgotha: *"The priest must then take what is left of the bull outside the camp and burn it there, just as is done with the sin offering for the high priest."* Here's how Hebrews chapter 13 verses 11 through 14 looks back at this verse in Leviticus: *"The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come."* **Q: What stands out to you about reading about offerings in our Old Testament readings? Do you see how Jesus was an offering for our sins and is also our high priest?**

2/17 - Today in Leviticus we read about further instructions for offerings. Chapter 6 verse 13 I found interesting: *"Remember, the fire must be kept burning on the altar at all times. It must never go out."* Commentaries state that the fire was never to go out because the fire was started by God. Humans were not to bring man-made fire to the altar, or they would die, as we will see Leviticus chapter 10 when we read about Nadab and Abihu. The only real "eternal flame" that I can think of in today, that was started by God, is the Holy Spirit. And this eternal flame of the Holy Spirit is made available to you and I through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. **Q: How do you experience the Holy Spirit in your life today? Do you experience the Holy Spirit often, or just sometimes? Do you want to experience more of the Holy Spirit in your life? I don't know if you've ever done much study on the Holy Spirit? If not, please do spend a good chunk of time at these 3 links above. Also, I remember a good friend of mine was reading a book a few years ago called "Holy Spirit" - I believe... He said it was an incredible book. I haven't read it. Has anyone else read it? Know the author's name? Or - do you have any other Holy Spirit books or other resources recommendations?**

2/18 - Leviticus chapter 7 verse 27 stands out: *"Anyone who eats blood must be cut off from the community."* This was commanded for 3 reasons - 1. to separate the Israelites from the pagans who drank blood - the pagans drank blood in the hopes of gaining the attributes of the animals from the blood they drank (speed, strength, etc.). 2. the sin of the people was symbolically transferred to the animal before the offering, and the blood represents the life of that animal. 3. for sanitary reasons - blood can carry some nasty diseases.

2/18 - I found Leviticus chapter 7 verse 36 to be powerful as we read about a portion of the offerings going to the priests: *"The LORD commanded that the Israelites were to give these portions to the priests as their regular share from the time of the priests' anointing. This regulation applies throughout the generations to come."* I think this is something for us to consider today - most of us realize that a portion of our tithes and offerings to our churches goes to support our pastors, priests, ministers, clergy. And I believe this is rightly so. These clergy are doing holy work in our churches today. And I

know from first hand experience from my past that church ministry work is not easy work. Yes, oftentimes it is joyful work and the most amazing & fulfilling work you can imagine. But, other times it can be really tough work as you can find yourselves on the front lines of spiritual warfare and working with people at very low points in their lives. So - I guess I say all of this to encourage you to not begrudge your clergy in your church for getting paid for their work. Aaron and his sons were "paid" here in Leviticus - and I think it is still proper for clergy to be paid today. (and trust me - most clergy that I know do not get paid an exorbitant amount by a long shot... :) I guess, while I am on this subject, I am also a bit familiar with the house church model today - and I do believe there are some leaders in this movement that are probably not getting "paid" financially. And I think this is great if you can sustain the model. But, personally, I wouldn't fault house church leaders for receiving compensation either. It is holy work that our clergy do. I think fair compensation for this work is fair. **Q: What are your thoughts on your clergy receiving compensation? What are your thoughts on others in other types of ministry receiving compensation? Where do we draw the line of when ministry should be done with compensation or without compensation?**

2/19 - Today in Leviticus chapter 9 we read about Aaron & his sons beginning their priestly ministry. I liked verse 24 as a closing verse to this chapter: *"Fire blazed forth from the LORD's presence and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When the people saw all this, they shouted with joy and fell face down on the ground."* I think what this verse does for me is to really confirm that all of the Offerings we are reading about in Leviticus were ordained by God at that time and that what we are reading about in Leviticus is truly part of God's story. Not that I ever doubted this fact - but, when you read about God consuming the offering in fire in such a dramatic fashion, you realize that God was fully pleased with the priest's and the people's obedience. The Offerings are part of God's story - and are foreshadowing the final Offering of Jesus on the cross. **Q: How do you believe the Offerings are a part of our spiritual history? How do the Old Testament offerings foreshadow the New Testament?**

2/19 - In Leviticus chapter 10 we read about the disobedience of Nadab and Abihu. You'll recall 2 days ago that we read in Leviticus Chapter 6 verse 13: *"Remember, the fire must be kept burning on the altar at all times. It must never go out."* Commentaries state that the fire was never to go out because the fire was started by God. Humans were not to bring man-made fire to the altar, or they would die. I realize that this can seem like a very harsh punishment for disobedience. Commentaries suggest that because Nadab and Abihu were in such high spiritual leadership positions, their disobedience carried the risk of leading many people astray. It may help to remember that we saw disobedience from others earlier in the Bible - and we'll see disobedience again later in the Bible - without the consequence of immediate death. But, in this case, disobedience brought death. Think about the risk of disobedience in our lives today. Yeah, sure, maybe we can get away with something dangerous/disobedient 9 times out of 10 - but, there is always the risk that perhaps the 10th time could prove lethal. **Q: So - why take the risk of disobedience at all? Is it worth it? Ever?**

2/19 - Today in Leviticus chapter 11 we read about ceremonially clean and unclean animals for the Israelites. The One Year Bible Companion commentary on this chapter today states that "there were several reasons for this restricted diet - 1. to ensure the health of the nation. The forbidden foods were usually scavenging animals that fed on dead animals; thus disease could be transmitted through them. 2. to visibly distinguish Israel from other nations. The pig, for example, was a common sacrifice of pagan religions. 3. To avoid objectionable associations. The creatures that move about on the ground, for example, were reminiscent of serpents, which often symbolized sin." **Q: Do you think there is any truth to the quote "cleanliness is next to godliness?" Why do you think God focuses so much on cleanliness in the Old Testament? Do you think there is a focus on cleanliness in the New Testament?**

2/19- Today in chapter 11 verse 44 we read: *"After all, I, the LORD, am your God. You must be holy because I am holy."* How does this verse speak to you? Do you think about being holy? Do you want to be holy? Zondervan shares the following commentary on this verse - "Holiness is the key theme of Leviticus, ringing like a refrain in various forms throughout the book. The word "holy" appears more often in Leviticus than in any other book of the Bible. Israel was to be totally consecrated to God. Her holiness was to be expressed in every aspect of her life, to the extent that all of life had a certain ceremonial quality. Because of who God is and what he has done, his people must dedicate themselves fully to him." Check out Peter quoting from this Leviticus verse in 1 Peter 1 verses 13-16 - *"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy.""* **Q: How do these verses speak to you? How do you ever you think about being holy? Do you want to be holy, as God is holy?**

2/20 - Today in Leviticus chapter 13 we read about contagious skin diseases and mildew. Quite a chapter! It does make

sense to me that this level of detail is given by God on these topics. These instructions were health instructions for the community of Israel as a whole. The NIV Study Bible notes that "the ceremonially unclean were excluded from the camp (the area around the tabernacle and courtyard), where the Israelites lived in tents. Later, no unclean persons were allowed in the temple area, where they could mingle with others." I look at this from the standpoint that they did not have medicines back then to heal people of these contagious diseases - and as such, the only way to keep the diseases from spreading to the entire population was to isolate the sick. I know this doesn't sound compassionate on the surface... but was there a better option at that time? In the New Testament we read about Jesus curing people of leprosy, which was a couple of thousand of years later. It's obvious that skin diseases were a major issue in Moses' day and through Jesus' day - as was mildew during Israel's rainy season of October through March - particularly along the coast and by the Sea of Galilee where it is very humid. **Q: What was your reaction to reading about the contagious skin diseases and mildew? Do you think these laws were compassionate or harsh for their time and place?**

2/21 - In Leviticus chapter 16 we read about the Day of Atonement. Ever wonder where the term "scapegoat" came from? Now you know! This chapter. Check out verses 20-23 about the scapegoat - *"When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tabernacle, and the altar, he must bring the living goat forward. He is to lay both of his hands on the goat's head and confess over it all the sins and rebellion of the Israelites. In this way, he will lay the people's sins on the head of the goat; then he will send it out into the wilderness, led by a man chosen for this task. After the man sets it free in the wilderness, the goat will carry all the people's sins upon itself into a desolate land."* There was also the other goat which was sacrificed. I read a commentary that said that both of these 2 goats foreshadowed Jesus' death - that Jesus was both sacrificed for atonement for our sins and Jesus is our permanent scapegoat. In verse 34 we read - *"This is a permanent law for you, to make atonement for the Israelites once each year."* You'll notice the "once a year" wording in this verse. Contrast this with Jesus' "once for all" sacrifice discussed in Hebrews chapter 10 verses 12 - 14 - *"But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."* For further study on Jesus' "once for all" sacrifice, please read Hebrews chapters 10 and 9. **Q: Do you believe that Jesus' sacrifice was "once for all"? Do you believe that Jesus is your High Priest who has made Atonement for your sins? Do you believe that Jesus as your High Priest sits at the right hand of God? If so, how might fully realizing this change how you live? How you pray?**

2/21 - Today we finish up Leviticus chapter 16 with a very simple but powerful statement in verse 34 - *"Moses followed all these instructions that the LORD had given to him."* Moses followed all of the instructions... That sounds so simple, but think about really how amazing it is. Moses did not veer to the left or the right. He stayed on the narrow path. He followed the instructions. The Sermon on the Mount in Matthews 5-7 is a nice summary of some instructions to us from Jesus. **Q: Can what was said of Moses be said of you today? Are you following all of the instructions Jesus has given us?** Don't beat yourself up over this if the answer is no. Not one of us is perfect this side of heaven - except for Jesus. Moses was not perfect either. But, I think we can hopefully learn something from Moses' obedience to God's instructions. I do believe that each of us today can walk along the narrow path to follow Jesus in faith, follow his teachings in faith, and become more and more like Him as we go. Even if we trip or stumble along the Way, if we continue in our faith in Jesus and who he truly is, we will indeed become more like Him as we follow Him. **Q: How well are you doing at following Jesus' instructions in your life today? What are some areas in you can grow in?**

2/22 - Bob Deffinbaugh at bible.org's commentary on Leviticus chapter 17, "The Preciousness of Blood," is [at this link](#). A quote from Bob from this link - "The Israelite of old learned from Leviticus, as nowhere else up to that point in time, the preciousness of blood to God. How much greater value does blood take on for the New Testament saint, whose blessings are all a result of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. As Harrison summarizes the matter, "The blood is the life of the flesh (Lev. 17:11), and it is through the atoning blood of Christ that the believer receives redemption (1 Pet. 1:18-19), forgiveness (Eph. 1:7), justification (Rom. 5:9), spiritual peace (Col. 1:20), and sanctification (Heb. 13:12)." **Q: How is Jesus' blood precious to you?**

2/22 - Today in Leviticus chapter 19 we read about holiness! What a tiny but powerful little word - holy. This chapter is of interest to me in that I continue to struggle with the call to holiness in my life. I understand grace. I get grace. I'm good at receiving grace... :) But holiness? Well, that's a bit trickier for me personally. I guess where I am at these days in my walk with the Lord is really trying to balance grace and holiness. I know we are saved through grace, not works - but, I also believe there is a call to holiness in our lives once we have received that gift of grace. You know I love Bob Deffinbaugh's writings over at bible.org. I think Bob's writings on [Leviticus chapter 19 titled "How to Spell Holy" at this link is up there with some of his best stuff](#). Please check out this link, and make sure you scroll down to read about Bob's take

on "perversions of holiness" - 1. stained glass holiness 2. positional holiness 3. equating holiness with the miraculous 4. isolational holiness 5. holiness by redefinition. Great stuff! **Q: What does holiness mean to you in your life? Do you seek to be holy? How?**

2/23 - Today in Leviticus chapter 20 verses 23 & 24 we read - *"Do not live by the customs of the people whom I will expel before you. It is because they do these terrible things that I detest them so much. But I have promised that you will inherit their land, a land flowing with milk and honey. I, the LORD, am your God, who has set you apart from all other people."* These verses are another reminder that God's laws to the Israelites were given to set them apart from the pagans surrounding them and in Canaan. God's laws were given to differentiate what is right and wrong, in comparison to the pagan immoral customs. I wonder about this in our modern world today. **Q: As followers of Jesus, do you think we should be "set apart" from what the modern world tells us to do & how to live? Should we or should we not be living by the customs of our modern world? How are you living your life today? If someone examined your life, how would they see that you are set apart from the customs of our modern world? How do you set yourself apart from the world for God? Are there particular movies or TV or radio programs that you will not watch or listen to? Should we set boundaries for ourselves on what we will and will not watch? Personally, I will admit that I don't watch rated R movie these days. I just know what those movies will typically be trying to "sell" me - and I ain't buying. I do think that we should think about the Holy Spirit indwelling in us and how we might want to set ourselves apart on occasion of what we won't participate in, that the rest of the world wouldn't blink at participating in. What are some examples of how you try to set yourself apart from the world for God?**

2/24 - Today in Leviticus chapter 23 we read about the Appointed Festivals! The NIV Study Bible has a great chart summarizing the Old Testament Feasts and Other Sacred Days, which is significantly paraphrased below with just Name & Purpose:

1. **Sabbath** - Rest for people and animals
2. **Sabbath Year** - Rest for land.
3. **Year of Jubilee** - Help for poor; stabilize society.
4. **Passover** - Remember Israel's deliverance from Egypt.
5. **Unleavened Bread** - Remember how the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt in haste.
6. **Firstfruits** - Recognize the Lord's bounty in the land.
7. **Weeks (Pentecost or Harvest)** - Show joy and thankfulness for the Lord's blessing of harvest.
8. **Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah-New Year's Day)** - Present Israel before the Lord for his favor.
9. **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)** - Atone for the sins of priests and people and purify the Holy Place.
10. **Tabernacles (Booths or Ingathering)** - Memorialize the journey from Egypt to Canaan; give thanks for the productivity of Canaan.
11. **Sacred Assembly** - Commemorate the closing of the cycle of feasts.
12. **Purim** - Remind the Israelites of their national deliverance in the time of Esther.
13. **Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication or Festival of Lights)** - Commemorated the purification of the temple and altar in the Maccabean period.
14. New moons were also often special feast days.

(Above is from Zondervan's "NIV Study Bible" pp. 176-177)

**Q: Which of these festivals above do you "celebrate" in any way? Which of these festivals do you wish you did celebrate? Which of these festivals above do you see foreshadowing Jesus' life, death and/or resurrection?**

2/24 - Today in Leviticus chapter 24 we read the well known law of retaliation from verses 19 & 20: *"Anyone who injures another person must be dealt with according to the injury inflicted-- fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Whatever anyone does to hurt another person must be paid back in kind."* I've read commentaries that say that this law of retaliation was actually compassionate for its time - in that it limited what one person could do to another person in a very lawless age. If you lost an eye, you could take an eye - but you could not kill in return, for example. So, I see the logic behind saying that the law of retaliation limited punishments.... but, I also think we would do well to remember Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount where he quotes from Leviticus 24 verse 20 in Matthew chapter 5 verse 38 & 39: *"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."* Jesus teaches that there is a higher law of love that is better than the law of retaliation. **Q: Do you ever struggle with the desire to retaliate against someone? How have you ever been able to resist this struggle and turn instead to Jesus' law of love?**

2/24 - Today in Leviticus chapter 25 we finish up reading about the Year of Jubilee. I don't know what it is about the Year

of Jubilee, but for some reason I really like the concept of it! I actually read a commentary that said there is no evidence that the Year of Jubilee was actually ever carried out, which made me a bit sad. However, that same commentary suggested that the Year of Jubilee was ultimately fulfilled through the life of Jesus, as Jesus himself quotes this very Year-of-Jubilee-ic :) sounding verse from Isaiah in Luke chapter 4 verses 18-21: *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."* Then Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, *"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."* **Q: Whaddya think? Think the concept of the Year of Jubilee was indeed fulfilled in the life of Jesus?** I do. And we don't need to count down 50 years from now until the next Year of Jubilee. The Year of Jubilee is available to each of one of us today! **Q: How do you think the Year of Jubilee was fulfilled in Jesus? How are you living your life today in light of Jesus fulfilling the Year of Jubilee?**

2/25 - Leviticus chapter 26 is a great look at the blessings of obedience and punishments for disobedience. As I read through the punishments for disobedience my mind instantly went to where, later in the Bible, Israel would indeed walk down the path of disobedience - and ultimately be punished with the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile into Babylon. For those going through the One Year Bible for more than the first time, I am sure you probably recognized this as well. What is interesting to keep in mind that these words of God were written by Moses nearly 1,000 years before the Babylonian exile. This reminded me again of how powerful God's Word truly is - and how true it really is. And it reminded me that even in our modern times, the Bible is still truth, and the teachings of Jesus are still relevant now 2,000 years later... Truth is truth. We may be inconsistent, but God is not. **Q: How are you walking in the path of obedience in your relationship with God? How are you walking in Truth? How in your life have you seen that obedience brings blessings and disobedience brings punishment?**

2/25 - Verses 44 & 45 in this chapter stood out to me as a reminder that even though God punishes disobedience, he leaves room for repentance and he allows for a remnant to carry on the covenant: *"But despite all this, I will not utterly reject or despise them while they are in exile in the land of their enemies. I will not cancel my covenant with them by wiping them out. I, the LORD, am their God. I will remember my ancient covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of Egypt while all the nations watched. I, the LORD, am their God."* And verses 12 & 13 in this chapter are awesome: *"I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people. I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you from the land of Egypt so you would no longer be slaves. I have lifted the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk free with your heads held high."* **Q: How do you believe that God walks among us today? How is God your God? And how are you His? How has the yoke of slavery from sin been lifted from your neck? How are you walking free today with your head held high?**

2/26 - Today we wrap up Leviticus and transition into Numbers! Congratulations on staying the course through the book of Leviticus! Have you [Learned to Love Leviticus](#) this past month?? :) Commentary on Leviticus chapter 27 by Bob Deffinbaugh titled **"The Value of a Vow"** is at bible.org [at this link](#). Numbers is an amazing book! I encourage you to reflect on words "Obedience" and "Disobedience" as we read through the book of Numbers. We'll read much about both of these words in this book. And – I think as we read about both Moses' and the Israelites Obedience and Disobedience, we will see many parallels in our own lives today. We have an opportunity with the book of Numbers to reflect upon where we have been both Obedient and Disobedient to God in our lives. We also have the opportunity to reflect upon the fruits and blessings of Obedience and the consequences of Disobedience – in Moses', the Israelites, and our lives today. I hope you are ready to experience the book of Numbers! **Q: How was reading the book of Leviticus for you this year? What did you learn? What did you learn about God? About Jesus?**

2/26 - ~The Book of Numbers~

Author: Moses

Date: 1420 or 1220 B.C.

Content: This book deals with the journey of Israel from Mt. Sinai to the edge of Canaan and the Israelites' preparation to enter the Promised Land. Because of sin and unbelief, however, they were not allowed by God to claim their inheritance but were condemned to wander in the wilderness for forty years. After the forty years they slowly made their way back to Canaan – this time ready to obey God's commands. After winning some important battles to the east of the Jordan River, the Israelites prepared for the entrance into the land itself.

Theme: The book shows the continual faithfulness of God and the unbelievable sin of man. Israel rejected God but God remained true to his word, in leading the people through the wilderness and providing for their needs. In the New Testament the Christian life is likened to a wandering in the wilderness with the promise of a heavenly Canaan before us.

(Above commentary is from "The One Year Bible Companion" pp. 2-3) Excellent commentary on the Book of Numbers is [at this link](#).

2/26 - Today in Numbers chapter 1 verse 1 we read: "*The LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt.*" You'll definitely notice as we read through the book of Numbers that God speaks to Moses, and through Moses to Israel. This fact is stated over 150 times and in more than 20 different ways in the book of Numbers – all the way from this first verse above until the very last verse of Numbers in chapter 36 verse 13 – "*These are the commands and regulations the LORD gave through Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.*" The Israelites were dependent on Moses at that time to hear from God. **Q: How do you hear from God in your life today? Do you believe that you are hearing from God as you read the Bible? Do you believe that you can hear from God during times of prayer? Do you believe that today you can hear from God through your faith in Jesus and in your participation in the body of Christ, the church? Are you hearing from God today? Do you want to hear from God today?**

2/27 - Today in Numbers chapter 2 we read about the organization of Israel's camp! For some reason I really like these types of chapters - chapters where we get what may seem at first glance to be "just a bunch of details" and maybe we even ask occasionally, "what's the point?" For me, the details are the point! I don't know about you, but I'll confess this here and now on the blog - I'm a bit of a packrat. :) Seriously. And not only that - but I have seasons of crazy disorganization in my house and in my life. And I of course remember the old adage, "cleanliness is next to godliness...." :) And yes, I guess I can at times feel guilty about my disorganization. But, for some odd reason just this past few weeks I've been on an organization kick. The homestead has been getting a serious cleaning. I'm getting rid of stuff that I really really don't need to keep. And then I read chapters like this in Numbers, and I realize that God is a God of order. He likes things organized. And I think we as followers of God do well when we get things organized in our lives too - our housekeeping, our finances, how we spend our time, etc. Now, don't hear me say that you should be obsessive compulsive about order... :) But... I am seeing amazing benefits in my life of being organized. **Q: Are there any other closet packrats out there that will fess up?? :) Or any former packrats / disorganized folks that can give us some advice in the Comments below on how you got orderly? Do you think that God is a God of order? Should we be a people of order?**

2/28 - Today in Numbers chapter 4 we read about the duties of the Kohathites, Gershonites and the Merarites! Reading this chapter reminded me of the church where I used to work - where we had to set up and tear down the sanctuary each Sunday, because we were holding services in a rented community center building. And truly, most Sundays my days felt like verse 31 and the Merarites: "*Their duties at the Tabernacle will consist of carrying loads.*" But, even though this task of carrying loads back then and today may seem "menial" at first glance, the task was of utmost importance for the community's worship! So, I hope this chapter can be an encouragement to you if at times you feel like you are simply "carrying loads" at your church - keep in mind it is a holy task that the Merarites faithfully conducted before you in the time of Moses! **Q: Have you ever had volunteer duties at your church that were less than glamorous duties? :) Do you think that maybe these duties were actually very glamorous to God, even if they weren't glamorous to the world? Do you make it a habit of volunteering at your church regularly? What are some volunteer things you do for your church to help "carry the load" of your church's ministry?**

#### Group discussions:

- Introductions.
- What were some of your favorite verses or passages from the readings?
- What are some questions that were generated for you based on the readings?
- What is something new you learned about God or the Bible from the readings?
- How did God speak to you through the readings?
- What is something you want to change or grow in your life based on the readings?
- **Discuss the bold Questions in the Study Notes**
- Any prayer requests for the group?

**Each group is encouraged to close in prayer.**

**Daily questions for this next month's readings you may want to journal or pray through and discuss with your group:**

- My favorite verses or passages:

- What I learned from the readings:
- My questions for further study:
- How God spoke to me through the Word:
- Something I want to change or grow in my life based on the Word:
- My prayer points based on the Word:

Visit [www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com](http://www.ChronologicalBibleBlog.com) for daily commentary and questions for reflection.

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