

Dr. John Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1, Exodus 1-2 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1, Exodus 1-2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This is a transcript of the first session of Dr. John Oswalt's teaching on the Book of Exodus, covering chapters 1-2. **Oswalt frames Exodus as a paradigm of salvation**, arguing that it reveals humanity's alienation from God as its central problem. He examines the Israelites' enslavement in Egypt and their need for deliverance, highlighting the roles of the midwives and Moses. **Oswalt emphasizes God's faithfulness to His covenant with Abraham and His active role in the Israelites' liberation**, exploring themes of God's providence, character, and the importance of knowing Him personally. The session concludes with a discussion of the significance of God remembering His covenant and the Israelites' cry for help.

**2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Pentateuch → Exodus).**



**Oswalt_Exodus_Ses
sion01.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1, Exodus 1-2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on Exodus 1-2:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on Exodus 1-2

I. Overview of Exodus

- **Meaning of Exodus:** The Greek word "Exodus" means "the way out." While commonly understood as the way out of Egypt, Oswalt argues this is a limited view.
- **Deeper Meaning:** The book is not just about physical liberation from Egypt but also about deliverance from spiritual darkness and alienation from God.
- **Quote:** *"The way out of spiritual darkness? Yes. How desperately we need to know God and who he is and what he's like."*
- **Paradigm of Salvation:** Exodus is presented as the standard model or paradigm for understanding salvation.
- **Quote:** *"Exodus is the standard model for salvation. If you want to understand the biblical teaching on salvation, Exodus is the place to begin."*
- **Key Themes:** Revelation of God's power and character
 - Divine Providence
 - Covenant relationship
 - God's desire for personal relationship with His people
 - The problem of alienation from the source of life
 - The importance of knowing God, not just intellectually, but through personal experience.
- **Outline Structure:** The book unfolds as follows:
 - Need for deliverance (Chapter 1)
 - Preparation of the deliverer (Chapter 2)
 - Call of the deliverer (Chapters 3-4)
 - Events of deliverance (Chapters 5-14)

- Evidence of divine providence (Chapters 15-18)
- Revelation of God's principles (Chapters 19-24)
- The Tabernacle (Chapters 25-31, 35-40) - representing God's desire to dwell among His people,
- The Golden Calf incident (Chapters 32-34) - illustrating the human tendency to replace God with idols and to supply our own needs

II. Key Points in Exodus 1

- **Background in Genesis:** Exodus is built upon the foundation of Genesis. Understanding Genesis is essential for understanding Exodus.
- **Quote:** *"This book is built upon the assumption of Genesis."*
- The book is sequential and historical.
- **God's Faithfulness:** The rapid population growth of the Israelites in Egypt is presented as a fulfillment of God's covenant promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1) to make his descendants as numerous as the stars and sand.
- **Quote:** *"God is keeping his promise to them even though they're far away from the promised land."*
- **Egyptian Fear:** Egyptians feared the Israelites because of:
 - Their potential alliance with enemies.
 - The loss of their free labor.
- **Bondage:** The Hebrews were enslaved, which relates to God's promise of land, which they did not possess while enslaved in Egypt.
- **Quote:** *"Well, if they are in bondage in Egypt, they're not in the promised land. So, that's a problem."*
- **Pharaoh's Decree:** Pharaoh's decree to kill all male Hebrew babies was an attempt to wipe out the ethnic group, which poses a problem for God's promise to make them a "kingdom of priests."
- **Midwives' Resistance:** The midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, who are named in the text, defied Pharaoh's command due to their fear of the Lord.
- **Quote:** *"They feared God."*

- The Fear of the Lord is defined as awe, respect, and obedience, a recognition of accountability to God.
- God blesses them for their actions, giving them children.
- **Human-Divine Problem:** The problem of the Hebrews is not just a human one, but also a divine one. If God's people are destroyed, it is a problem for God as well.
- **Quote:** *"So, the need for deliverance is a human-divine problem."*

III. Key Points in Exodus 2

- **Moses' Birth and Rescue:** Moses' parents put him in a basket on the Nile, entrusting him to God's providence.
- The Nile was the "mother" of the Egyptians, suggesting a symbolic act of returning the child to the Egyptian mother, in a way.
- **Pharaoh's Daughter:** Pharaoh's daughter found and adopted Moses. Her compassion was greater than her father's command.
- **Providence and Timing:** God's timing is perfect, and his providence orchestrated the entire sequence of events, having Moses' mother nurse him.
- **Moses' Training:** God allowed Moses to be raised in the palace, receiving training in civil administration, military operations, and the arts. God used the oppressor to train the deliverer.
- **Moses' Early Attempt at Deliverance:** Moses, upon seeing injustice, attempted to deliver his people using his own strength through violence. He acted in secret, one by one. He fled after killing an Egyptian, revealing his impetuosity.
- **Moses' Failure:** The Israelites rejected Moses' attempt to act as their deliverer which leads him to flee to Midian.
- **Moses in Midian:** Moses settled down and is "content to stay" there.
- **God's Remembrance:** God heard the cries of the Israelites and "remembered" his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- This indicates God's awareness, sensitivity, faithfulness, and His care.
- **Cause of Deliverance:** The cause of deliverance is God's character and nature and not based on anything Moses did.

- **Quote:** *"What is the cause of deliverance? God's character and nature."*

IV. Key Takeaways

- Exodus is more than a historical account; it's a model for salvation, a demonstration of God's character, and a narrative about humanity's relationship with God.
- Salvation involves personal acquaintance with God.
- God is not limited by human actions or failures; He can work through all circumstances to accomplish His purposes.
- The events in Exodus highlight God's faithfulness to His covenant promises.
- The importance of the "fear of the Lord" as a foundation for life.

This briefing document should provide a solid overview of the key ideas presented in the excerpt of Dr. Oswalt's lecture. It includes direct quotes to reinforce his points and highlights the central themes of the passage.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1, Exodus 1-2

Exodus: A Study Guide (Sessions 1-2)

Short Answer Quiz

1. According to Oswalt, what is the Greek meaning of "Exodus," and what problem does he identify with a simplistic understanding of this term?
2. What are the three major sections, as described by Oswalt, of God's revelation in Exodus following the departure from Egypt, and how does each reveal different aspects of God?
3. Oswalt suggests that the problem of bondage is not the deepest issue in Exodus. What does he argue is the ultimate problem and how does the book of Exodus address it?
4. What does Oswalt mean by the phrase "the way out," and why is Exodus considered the "standard model for salvation"?
5. How does the Bible's understanding of human-divine experience differ from that of other religious traditions, and what does this imply about God's interaction with humanity?
6. What two things were the Egyptians afraid of regarding the Israelites, and how did these fears impact their actions?
7. Why does Oswalt consider the naming of the midwives in Exodus 1 significant, and what is the biblical understanding of "the fear of the Lord"?
8. How did the Egyptians' plan to kill the male Hebrew babies relate to the Abrahamic covenant, and what does it suggest about God's promises?
9. According to Oswalt, what can be said about the role of God's providence when considering the circumstances of Moses' life and how they align with God's plan?
10. What key elements of God's character are revealed in Exodus 2:23-25, and how do they relate to the theme of deliverance?

Answer Key

1. The Greek word "Exodus" means "the way out." The problem with simply understanding it as the way out of Egypt is that the Israelites are out of Egypt by chapter 15, suggesting that there is a deeper meaning to the story.

2. First, there is the revelation of God's providence in chapters 16-18, where God reveals his care for the Israelites. Then, the giving of the covenant in chapters 19-24 reveals God's character and creation order. Finally, the construction of the tabernacle shows God's desire to dwell among His people.
3. Oswalt argues that the ultimate human problem is alienation from the source of life, which he connects to being like a plant pulled out of the ground. Exodus addresses this problem by showing how God seeks to restore fellowship and bring his people home.
4. "The way out" refers to God's plan to address the deepest human needs, not just physical freedom. Exodus is the standard model for salvation because it reveals both the problem of sin and separation and how God intends to solve it through revelation, relationship and reconciliation.
5. The Bible's understanding of human-divine experience is sequential and historical, meaning that God reveals himself within the context of real human experience in time. Other religious traditions often treat each mystical experience as disconnected and not rooted in linear time. This highlights the importance of history in the Judeo-Christian tradition.
6. The Egyptians feared that the Israelites would join their enemies (other Semites) and fight against them, and they also feared losing their free labor source should the Israelites leave the country.
7. The naming of the midwives signifies that God knows them and that they will be remembered for their actions. "The fear of the Lord" is awe, respect, and obedience to God, recognizing His authority and one's accountability to Him, not terror.
8. The plan to kill the male Hebrew babies directly threatened the promise that Israel would become a great nation and a kingdom of priests. This raises questions about God's ability to keep his promises, presenting a human-divine problem.
9. God works through the actions of individuals, using even those who do not know him, to align with his plan. Even the training Moses received as a son of Pharaoh served God's purposes by preparing him to lead the Israelites.
10. God hears, sees, remembers, and acknowledges His people. He is aware of their suffering, faithful to His covenant, and compassionate. This reflects his character as a God who delivers and cares.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the concept of "holiness" as presented by Oswalt and how it relates to God's character and the treatment of others. How might this definition challenge traditional understandings of holiness?
2. Analyze the parallels between the Exodus story and the concept of salvation. In what ways does Exodus serve as a "paradigm" or model for understanding salvation, and what does this reveal about the nature of God and his redemptive plan?
3. Compare and contrast Moses' initial attempt at deliverance with God's plan for deliverance. How do their approaches differ, and what does this suggest about human initiative versus divine action in the process of salvation?
4. Explore the significance of the naming of the midwives in Exodus 1 and how this highlights God's knowledge of individuals. How does this event illustrate God's care for the marginalized, and how does it contrast with the actions of Pharaoh?
5. Examine the tension between human bondage and God's promises to Abraham throughout Exodus chapters 1 and 2. How does Oswalt suggest that this conflict creates both a human problem and a divine problem?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Exodus:** A Greek word meaning "the way out." In the context of the Bible, it is the second book of the Old Testament that tells the story of the Israelites' departure from Egypt.
- **Paradigm:** A model or standard example; in the context of Oswalt's teaching, Exodus is considered the standard model for salvation.
- **Providence:** God's care and provision for his creation, particularly in the context of his interaction with people.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement between two parties, specifically between God and his people. In Exodus, the covenant is a way for God to show His character and principles.
- **Holiness:** Not merely piety or religious observance but living in accordance with God's character, encompassing how one treats others (slaves, neighbors) and creation (animals).
- **Tabernacle:** A portable dwelling place for God's presence among the Israelites, built according to God's specific instructions.
- **Alienation:** A state of separation or estrangement from the source of life, often used in a spiritual context to describe separation from God.
- **Yahweh:** The divine name of God, often rendered in English as LORD, which is indicative of God's personal nature and intention to be in relationship.
- **The Fear of the Lord:** Awe, respect, and obedience to God; recognizing God's authority and one's accountability to Him.
- **Omniscience:** The state of knowing everything; an attribute of God often discussed in relation to how God sees, hears and knows his people.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, Exodus, Session 1, Exodus 1-2, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Exodus 1-2

- **What is the primary meaning of "Exodus" beyond a physical departure from Egypt?** While Exodus literally means "the way out," referring to the Israelites' escape from Egypt, the book explores a deeper spiritual journey. It highlights the need for deliverance not only from physical bondage but also from spiritual darkness and alienation from God. The ultimate problem presented is not just slavery, but the separation of humanity from the source of life, and the book presents a model for understanding how God intends to solve that need, as a paradigm of salvation.
- **How does the book of Exodus reveal God's character beyond His power of deliverance?** Exodus portrays God's character through multiple revelations. Beyond demonstrating His power in freeing the Israelites, the narrative shows His providence in caring for their needs (food, water, protection) in the wilderness. Furthermore, God reveals his character through the giving of the covenant, emphasizing the principles of holiness, justice, and compassion. God is not just a powerful deliverer but a caring provider and a moral authority. He desires a personal relationship with His people, not just their obedience.
- **Why are there seemingly repetitive and detailed descriptions of the tabernacle?** The detailed and repetitive descriptions of the tabernacle are intentional, emphasizing its crucial role in God's plan. The tabernacle signifies God's desire to dwell among His people, to come down from the mountain and live in the center of their camp. It is about God's desire to be in relationship with his people, and the repetition underscores the immense importance God places on this dwelling place. The inclusion of the golden calf incident within this section also highlights the danger of replacing God's design with human constructs to meet perceived needs.

- **What is the significance of the phrase "Then you/they will know that I am Yahweh," and what does it mean to "know" God in this context?** The repeated phrase "Then you/they will know that I am Yahweh" emphasizes that salvation involves personally encountering and understanding God as He truly is, not just intellectual knowledge or understanding the facts about Him. "Knowing" God, in the biblical sense, is a deep, experiential relationship that shapes and transforms individuals and communities, rooted in personal experience. It is a profound understanding of God's character and reality that has implications for how people treat each other and engage in the world. It is knowing God through experiencing Him.
- **How do the midwives in Exodus 1 demonstrate the importance of the "fear of the Lord"?** The midwives' defiance of Pharaoh's command to kill Hebrew baby boys highlights the "fear of the Lord" as awe, respect, and obedience to a God to whom one is accountable. Their refusal, risking their own lives, was based on the recognition of God's authority over Pharaoh's. This "fear" is not terror but a deep reverence and respect that influences actions, and it provides a foundation for courageous living and trust in God, and a commitment to doing what's right, regardless of the cost. This is not a fear based on what God might do to you, but a recognition that your life should be based on an awareness that you're accountable to God.
- **How do the events of Exodus 1-2 present both a human and a divine problem?** The enslavement of the Israelites presents both a human and divine problem. It's a human problem because the Israelites suffer oppression and bondage, and it presents a divine problem because the promise of descendants, land, and blessing to Abraham seems threatened. If God's promises appear to be thwarted, it raises questions about His power and faithfulness. The problems that humanity faces are also problems for God because he has a desire to see human flourishing and be in relationship with humanity, and sin threatens that intention.

- **Why is Moses' upbringing with the Egyptians and his time in Midian significant?** Moses being raised as an Egyptian prince and then living in Midian reveals God's sovereign use of circumstances. His training in Egyptian culture and leadership was used later when he led the Israelites out of Egypt. His time in Midian is an apparent detour, yet God used it to further refine Moses' character and prepare him for his eventual role as deliverer, illustrating that God can work through circumstances to achieve His purposes, even seemingly negative or misdirected periods of time in human history, including times when we are out of God's will. Moses' decision to settle down in Midian reveals a human tendency to settle for less, but God's plans transcend human failures.
- **How do the last verses of Exodus 2 reveal the cause of deliverance?** The final verses of Exodus 2 emphasize that the Israelites' deliverance is primarily due to God's character. God hears the cries of His people, remembers His covenant, and acknowledges them as His own. The deliverance is not because of the Israelites' merits, nor of Moses' capacity as deliverer, but entirely rooted in God's nature—his sensitivity, faithfulness, and love for His covenant people. The core reason for their salvation is rooted in God's character and not their human efforts or worthiness.