

A series of short readings and short questions to answer in writing.

Exodus 3.1 to 4.23: The LORD “appears” to Moses in the burning bush; this is called a **theophany**. Moses is called by the LORD for his mission to Pharaoh. This will be followed by chapter after chapter in which Moses goes to present the LORD’s demand that Pharaoh let the Israelites go, Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, and the LORD sends a succession of cruel plagues on Egypt to try to soften Pharaoh’s heart. *Questions:* (a) What verse in this short reading explains Pharaoh’s hardened heart? Please copy out the relevant words. (b) How is Moses instructed to describe Israel to the Pharaoh?

Exodus 9.1 to 10.2: Find at least two places where YHWH explains his ultimate aim in his dealings with Pharaoh. What is this aim?

Exodus 13.17 to 15.22: What do we learn here about the Israelites’ behavior?

Exodus 14.15-18: Again- what is the LORD after?

Exodus 19.1-9: A second theophany. Here the LORD offers the Israelites a covenant. What is promised them? On what condition?

Exodus 20.1-26. The Ten Commandments (followed by many more chapters of commandments (and, in Leviticus, practically a whole book of them!). The commandments are sometimes put into two classifications: the ritual ones, which concern humans’ relations to the LORD, and the ethical ones, which concern humans’ relations to other humans. In this chapter, at least, what does the LORD seem most interested in – the ritual or the ethical?

Exodus 32.1 to 33.23: This chapter contains one of the great episodes in Exodus- the Golden Calf. The LORD is angry to the point of wanting to destroy (“consume”) his people and start anew with Moses. *Four questions:* (a) What main argument does Moses (the LORD’s anger management counselor!) use to dissuade the LORD from following through? (b) Having calmed the LORD down, how does Moses then behave? (This is so wonderfully human) (c) At 32.25 ff., how does Moses require that the Levites show their special loyalty to the LORD? (d) At 33.14-16, what does Moses say will be the effect of the Israelites’ having the LORD’s presence with them?

A final question: The answers to most of the questions above are pretty straightforward. What themes, ideas, or questions emerge from them that you would like to discuss in a seminar?

