

**REVOLUTION**

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by The War College

## Exodus 1

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These are the conditions for revolution. In Egypt, in that day, the people of God were enslaved. God was marginalized (the king didn't even know Joseph!). And there was a culture of death. Pharaoh commanded the people to kill every Hebrew baby born. Every unwanted baby was ordered killed.

It sounds a lot like the situation in the West today. While Christians are not enslaved today, at least in the Western countries, God is marginalized. He's not allowed in classrooms. He's being booted out of courtrooms. He is legislated out of the public square. He is muscled out of politics. He is forced to play on the margins.

But that isn't so bad. Because the children of the revolution are born out of despair. And despair is the language of the margins. The poor live there. Those discriminated against. The different. In Biblical terms, the widow, the orphan, the alien. In our chapter, the Hebrews. God has a bias toward the marginalized.

And God raises revolutionary armies from the margins. Just look at David. He was in exile, on the run from the powerful king. And here and there, defectors from various tribes gathered to David until he found himself in charge of a mighty army (1 Ch.12). As people grow more and more dissatisfied with the status quo, they will look for something better.

Let me put that another way: as you grow more and more dissatisfied with the status quo, you will look for something better. As you grow more and more dissatisfied with a lack of compelling purpose in life, with a daily and possibly meaningless grind, with video games and slushies, with half-decent grades (or even excellent grades) and a part-time job at the gas station, with re-runs and fumbling dates, you will look for something better.

Not only that, but we're also a lot like this chapter in that we live in a society that has cultivated a culture of death. Kill the babies you don't want, the babies who might be deformed or diseased, the babies of the wrong gender, the babies that are just plain inconvenient. Kill them.

And you know God hears what is going on, and hates it. You know that He is not sitting by twiddling His thumbs. He is looking to ignite a revolution from the margins. So what should you do? Get on the margins, if you aren't already there. Identify with the marginalized- incarnate. Then catch God's heart against the sin that is rampant and for the people He created for something much better. Then fight.

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**Q:** *How can you identify with the marginalized in your current living situation? How can you stand up for the unborn? (try [abortionno.org](http://abortionno.org) – the GAP page)*

## Exodus 2

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I'm sure that most of us would agree that Moses was a revolutionist. And I believe it all started with murdering an Egyptian. Although at first glance, killing the Egyptian may not have been the best plan, it shows Moses' feeling God's heart for the people of Israel, perhaps for the first time.

Without God's heart, there can be no lasting spiritual revolution. If you're fighting for your own cause and it's not with God and for His justice, what you're looking at is a revolt. Revolts are a temporary disturbance, not a massive world-changing revolution.

Seriously though- what better way to start a revolution than to stand up to the man who is oppressing the oppressed? Only, somehow Moses must have just looked like a man who loved to fight because the Israelites didn't recognize him trying to help the man being beaten but they probably saw him as a tyrant- out to pick a fight.

And then Moses is called away to the desert of Midian to be brought into God's presence. Good idea.

But that's enough about Moses, because- like I said- we probably all agree that he was a revolutionist. So let's look at some of the other characters in this story.

What about Moses' mother? She takes one look at her baby boy and knows that he is special and is to be saved she risks her life and the lives of her family to keep this baby for three months.

And then there is Moses' sister. She watched her baby brother float down the river, and when the basket was found this little girl had the guts to not only approach the Pharaoh's daughter, but had the brains to basically con her into giving the baby back to his mother.

And what about Pharaoh's daughter? She had to have known that he was a Hebrew baby, and yet she kept him alive. Why? Her own father wanted them dead. She probably could have lost her life as well as Moses' mother.

When first reading this story, it's easy to overlook these people. In a war we don't think about the people who build the airplanes or the ones who are in factories making ammunition, but without them the war isn't possible. To be a part of the revolution, you don't have to be on the front lines killing Egyptians or ordering the Pharaoh around- although that could be fun- you just have to be obedient to your calling.

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**Q:** *Moses had a murder on his record. What sins do you need to repent of today to position yourself to accomplish God's purposes in your life? What is God calling you to do?*

## Exodus 3

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The Israelites were in Egypt suffering 400 years of slavery prophesied before they hit the jackpot in wealth and land (see Genesis 15:13-14). When their days of drudgery were almost to come to an end God went to a simple shepherd named Moses to be the leader of all of the Israelites, and to free them from their bondage. Since God is no little God, He didn't show up in a small way, and He sure wasn't going to let His special children slip out the back door.

Picture this, an ordinary man, we'll call him Moses, out doing the things that he normally does on a routine basis. When all of a sudden, he sees a fire in some bushes just a stones throw away. He stops and thinks to himself in wonderment, "What in tarnation is going on here? This bush is not burning up. AMAZING!?" He hesitantly approaches to check it out when he hears a voice calling his name from within the midst of the fiery splendor. Moses' response was probably that of any Average-Joe-Shepherd- a sheepish, "Here, here I a-a-am". Then the voice knocks the sandals off Moses by telling him that the ground he was standing on was holy. The rest of the story is, as they say, "His-story".

God is an AMAZING GOD, and he wanted to use Moses to do something amazing in the lives of his chosen people. I believe that he still wants to do something amazing in the lives of his selected ones today. 1 Peter 2:9 says, "But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, His very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." This means that you are CHOSEN and CALLED to do something AMAZING in the lives of others. Amazement is the perfect combination of fear and excitement, curiosity and satisfaction, bewilderment and awe.

Allow God to catch your attention in such a way that you are drawn closer to where He is, humbled before Him, and ready and willing to do what He asks of you. In the end, the land of milk and honey will be just on the other side of the Jordan. Can you see it? Can you taste it? Are you AMAZED?

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**Q:** *What amazes you?*

*What amazes you about God?*

*How will you respond to a God who chooses and calls you?*

## Exodus 4

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In Ch. 3: 6, Moses found this experience so intense that he "hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God". At chapter 4:1 we see something different, though, in Moses. He's afraid, but he's afraid of the people doubting the message from God. God soon makes it clear that He'll provide stuff to help the people believe, and that He's plenty able to do this (stuff into a snake -pretty impressive). It turns out that the real issue is that Moses isn't cool with being the messenger. He starts to point out his weaknesses to God; Yahweh reminds the shepherd man that He's fully aware of any weakness, and tells him that He will help Moses despite any such things. Pretty amazing what a bit of fear can do, though, because it takes a lot of convincing before Moses agrees to obey.

The important thing, however, is that Moses does obey. He listens to the plan that God has for him, and even though it freaks him out, he chose to say "yes". He puts himself in the mercy of God, making himself vulnerable. He goes to Egypt and speaks; he dies to fear. Really, the guy has to trust that this is important and that he is the man for the job -and that God will accomplish it through him, working out the details.

The result of this act of faith, this obedience to the One Who knows everything more than we can know, is prime. It leads directly to the people of Israel believing what Moses has been told by God. This was integral then, and it is today. The people of God need to believe in Him and in His words when He speaks.

The obedience of Moses (and of his brother Aaron) also lets the people of God hear of His compassion -that their God knows about the brutal stuff happening to them and cares enough to rescue them. Here too, more of the character of God is revealed to these folks: that He is the God Who is love, and He is the God of deliverances. It is Yahweh Who wants to take His children out of their hard times, and He is first letting them know how He's going to do it, through His prophets.

Something else terrific happens because of Moses living out God's call to action. The people he is sent to respond in the best possible way: "they bowed low and worshiped" (v.31). This is cool, and it's something we all need to do. Here the people of Israel are fulfilling two major things that God calls us to, humility, and worship of Him only. There is no other worthy of worship (Deut. 5: 6 - 10; Rev. 19:10); when we humble ourselves before Him (bowing low is a physical way of showing this) we do a major part of what He asks of us (Micah 6:8).

It's good to choose to obey God! When He speaks to us and gives us some directions, the best thing we can do is put our own agenda & doubts aside, and do what He's told us. We might as well do it with joy too, because it always ends up that His plans are miles better than ours can ever be! He's got the big picture. He loves, cares for us, and He can be trusted.

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**Q:** *Who do you fear?*

*Why do you find it hard to obey God?*

## Exodus 5

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Bricks without straw: Vision, Persecution, Promise

Expect opposition, but go forward in the promise.

5:2 Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go."

The flesh and the world are constantly resisting change. God operates in opposition to the ways of the world... you can't expect people who do not know the Lord to be supportive when you step out in faith. So why are we always so surprised when there's opposition? When God tells you to do something that's a little bit out of the box, you SHOULD expect opposition, but can rest in the promise that God will be with you through it all.

\* Have you ever stepped out in an unusual way for God?

\* What were the positive/negative results of that?

Let's backtrack a bit. Re-read Chapter 4:21-23, 29-31.

There are two huge events in this passage:

(v21) God tells Moses ahead of time Pharaoh will not listen to him, "But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go."

(v29-31) Moses and Aaron brought together "the elders of the Israelites" and shared with them "everything that the Lord had said to Moses... and they believed... bowed down and worshiped."

(To be continued- tomorrow)

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**Q:** *What opposition is contending against a Jesus revolution in your school?*

*How will you confront it?*

*How far out of the box is God calling you?*

## **Exodus 5, continued**

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Community Backup is Key#1: inviting others to the vision

"Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am also."

So Moses set out to deliver the word of the Lord, knowing in advance that Pharaoh would not let his people go, knowing in advance Pharaoh's rebellion would mean the loss of his eldest son. He also knew that God was with him and had equipped him to carry out a vision to free his people, the Israelites. **GOD DOES NOT SEND US OUT INTO THE BATTLE UNARMED. GOD EQUIPS US FOR HIS WORK.**

\*Ask God how He's seeking to equip you now for His work.

Moses didn't go out alone. He and Aaron met ahead of time with the elders\* before taking on Pharaoh. (Generally a good idea if you're intending to free someone, that you know that they want to be free in the first place!! Also a good idea to have some spiritual backing from someone with authority, especially when challenging whole governments and kingdoms!)

(\* other examples of gathering prayer support before engaging in serious spiritual warfare, see Esther 4:16, Mark14:34)

Chain of command:  
GOD >Moses >Elders (Intercession/blessing/confirmation) >Pharaoh >the People

Key #2: The right response is everything: "You have made us a stench to Pharaoh."

In the case of the Israelites, response, they were caught up with the present situation, rather than resting in the truth already revealed to them. Too often we get stuck complaining about where we are, rather than waiting and listening to God for where we are heading.

And if the complaining isn't coming from ourselves, persecution is inevitable. Being persecuted doesn't necessarily mean that you are out of God's will, in fact, Jesus told us to expect persecution. "If the world hates you remember that it hated Me first" (John 15:18).

To protect and encourage us, God has also given us the opportunity to talk to Him openly. "Call to me and I will answer you and teach you unsearchable things you do not know" (Jeremiah 33:3). When everything seemed going the wrong way, what did Moses do? Moses sought the Lord.

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***Q:** Is there a situation you can,t seem to get over? Take some time with Jesus, and ask for His perspective on things, and you may start to see things a little differently.*

## Exodus 6

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Now watch this. Things haven't started off that well for Moses in his big deliverance campaign against Pharaoh. Things are actually worse off now than when Moses got there! There has got to be some encouragement for budding revolutionists reading this. I mean, if the book ended after chapter 5, we'd conclude that Moses is a pansy, that God is impotent, and that it sucks to be Hebrew.

Thank God for chapter 6. When you actually take the plunge into this revolution thing and write off your life as you once knew it, things will quite possibly go down hill for awhile. You might lose support networks (eventually you'll get new ones). You might not be able to kick out every demon you confront, at the beginning. You might be misunderstood. You might lose stability and job and prospects.

But if you hang in there, if you position yourself downstream in the river of God's grace, if you posture yourself in radical humility in your relations with God and humans, things will change. They did for Moses, beginning in chapter 6.

God intervenes when the revolution looks like it was a non-starter. Watch how He does it.

He identifies Himself. First, He is Yahweh- the self-existent one. This makes Him absolutely unique in the history of the universe. He doesn't need anyone to keep Him alive. Yet, He is also the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. So, even though He doesn't need anyone, he greatly desires relationship. This is the basis of the covenant God. He is the God of... And then, finally He is God Almighty- El Shaddai. He's the kind of friend you don't let down, don't cheat on, and don't scam behind His back. But on the flipside, He is the friend who always backs you up, who effectively protects you in every situation, and who let's you sleep easily every night.

A lot of the chapter is filled with a bunch of names. Why is this significant? Two reasons: 1. God is a covenant God, a God of relationship. He doesn't just save plots of land or companies or armies. He saves people.

And 2? Many people think that this will be a nameless, faceless revolution. Now, don't get me wrong, it is the same relationship-loving, covenant-keeping God who saves people. But the chronicle of the revolution in millennium three will likely lack a list of names like chapter 6. Why? We think two reasons: 1. there will be heaps of people, from little children to very old, from northern hemisphere down through the tip of Chile, from possibly every country of the world participating in this revolution; and, much more importantly, 2. so that God gets all the glory, all the credit, and all the honour.

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**Q:** *What specifically should you do to posture and position yourself in hard times? What aspect of God that He reveals in this chapter is going to help you fight this week?*

## Exodus 7

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Alright, we're getting into the hardcore stuff here. We probably won't deal with every question raised in this chapter, but this isn't a Bible study. It is your revolutionary bread and butter.

But let's riff on a couple of the controversial bits just to get you thinking (you can study and research more if you want). People get all excited about God hardening Pharaoh's heart. Okay, God did it. He hardened Pharaoh's heart. It's as if God is unfair.

But wait a second. God is not unfair. Pharaoh has had a lifetime of revelation to submit to God. His own step-brother, as the Prince of Egypt movie sets it up- Moses- seemed to have converted from sinfulness to a life of following God. And Pharaoh also could have repented and believed. Paul argued, in Romans 1: "The basic reality of God is plain enough. Open your eyes and there it is! By taking a long and thoughtful look at what God has created, people have always been able to see what their eyes as such can't see: eternal power, for instance, and the mystery of His divine being. So nobody has a good excuse" (Message).

So, stop blaming God for Pharaoh's hardened heart and arteries. It's his fault. A few times it even says that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. He had access to what scholars call prevenient grace, just like you do. That is grace from the convicting Holy Spirit that allows him to respond to God.

But there is no guarantee that prevenient grace runs through to the grave. For Pharaoh there was a time limit, a due date, a best before marking on the label. And he missed it.

How does that apply for us here? Well, you probably know some people who are rejecting God's prevenient grace in their lives. For me it makes things more urgent. And there are billions of people that you don't know personally who are rejecting God's prevenient grace in their lives. And for us it makes things more urgent.

We have to mobilize as many warriors as possible and deploy where these billions are, to release the grease of prevenient grace in their lives, to sow the seed of the Gospel with boldness, to water what has already been planted.

And for you, don't presume on God's grace in your own life. God is holy. He doesn't mess around. He doesn't promise to put up with your petty sins, your dodgy habits, your hidden scandals, your moral compromise, your pathetic conformity to the world, forever. There is a best before date. Stop having sex until you get married. Stop it with the porn. Stop the stupid flirtations. Stop dressing like a slut. Stop degrading people by the jokes you tell about them. Stop everything that is keeping you from being dangerous to demons.

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**Q:** *is that last paragraph unfair? Why?*

*What are you going to do in light of this term-limit prevenient grace for billions?*

## Exodus 8

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The plague of frogs; the plague of gnats; the plague of flies... and the list goes on. Each one is a result of one man's stubborn pride and pathetic fear. That pride and that fear brought disease, destruction, and death upon his whole nation.

It is easy to identify with the Israelites who were bound and enslaved by a tyrannical ruler, but it is not often we choose to identify ourselves with Pharaoh, a man who was blinded by fear and pride. He was driven by his will being done and his kingdom coming.

Pharaoh had everything one could ever ask for and then some. He didn't have to worry about his next meal or how he was going to stay warm at night. But he was afraid of losing his kingdom to the Israelites. He enslaved the Israelites for fear of being taken over but it was his enslaving of them that brought about what he feared the most, the destruction of his kingdom.

Pharaoh chose to harden his heart to the will of God. He made a decision in his heart to go against Him and to hold on to the very thing he was asked to give up. And because he didn't give up the Israelites, he ended up bringing about greater devastation to his kingdom than if would have he let them go, when it was first asked of him. Pharaoh was given ample opportunity to repent, but he did not.

But we, the church, aren't so unlike pharaoh. I can identify with Pharaoh's fear and pride. There have been times when Jesus asked me to surrender something to Him that He knew would bring me harm but often I chose to hold on to it and disobey Him. Eventually, that very thing that I wouldn't give up brought me harm. It is sin that leads to death. If I had listened to Abba's voice and not hardened my heart, I could have avoided the pain and devastation of my sin.

It is like a kid who has too much candy and his parent warns him not to eat too much or he'll get sick. The child doesn't heed the parent's warnings and ends up with a stomachache and is usually very sorry for not listening to mom. But in his immaturity, he still may not see that she had his best interest at heart.

I wonder what would happen to the Church if we chose to trust and obey the word of the Lord instead of turn from Him and harden our hearts. We don't trust because we don't know Him or His character. If the church truly knew who God was and knew His heart for us, we wouldn't struggle to obey Abba.

Just a simple reminder of who He is and a word of instruction: He is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah (Psalm 95:7-8).

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**Q:** *Ouch! Identify your fear and pride and get rid of them. Then obey, okay?*

## Exodus 9

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We're into the thick of it. Pharaoh's magicians could mimic the first couple of miracles a few chapters ago. They pulled off the snake trick, even though their fabrications were engorged by God's miracle. The schemed up something similar to the bloody water. Of course, at that point, the more impressive and convincing miracle might have been changing the bloody water back to its original state. If you look back at chapter 7, the whole Nile River stunk, possibly because all of its fish died, and the Egyptians entire water supply was gone in a wave of Moses' rod.

But now we're getting beyond a little witchcraft. Actually, we're way past what the best national witches and warlocks of Egypt would conjure up. Why?

Because it is not an even fight. Satan and his demons aren't a rough equivalent of God and His angels. It isn't even close. God is self-existent (depends on no one to live, and is absolutely unique in universal history because of it). Satan is a created being. God is all-powerful. Satan is limited in power, possibly to a similar extent as an archangel (though I don't mean to offend an archangel with that speculation). God is everywhere. Satan can only be in one place at a time, like you. God knows everything. Satan sure doesn't. It isn't even close.

Chapter 9 is about an unfair fight. It's like USC Trojans taking on the Scarlett Heights High School Red Raiders. The Trojans would mop them up. In fact, the coach could tell the Raiders the plays they were about to run, and then proceed to run it down their throats and there'd be nothing the Raiders could do. It's like that, a bit.

Witchcraft has been sanitized by our society with the ubiquity of video games, movies, and a certain series of books that have insinuated themselves into the cultural consciousness. Witchcraft is the purview of demons. Did you get that? Witchcraft is about demons. The source of any effectiveness it has is demonic.

To ignorantly open yourself to the enemy is ridiculous. It warps your worldview. It twists your understanding of the enemy. It stunts your aggression. And it might even turn you over into an unwitting double agent.

It is all very dangerous stuff. How did Moses deal with it? He just obeyed God. He wasn't thrown off, impressed, or discouraged by it. He remained in the truth. And God was free to demonstrate His power through Moses because of it, even in the face of powerful demonic opponents.

You might be mixed up in some of the enemy's stuff through witchcraft. Get out.

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**Q:** *What needs to change in your life to get out of witchcraft's influence? What commands must you obey and what truth must you clutch to defeat your demons?*

## **Exodus 10:1-2**

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One thing I just can't get my mind around is how God can make a person reject him and then punish him for his rebellion. Seems to be pretty unfair on God's side in my eyes. Or at least big times selfish: God displaying his power on cost of Pharaoh and his officials. Where is the God of love in this?

Of course, if you read back through the whole book, you'll note that Pharaoh and the Egyptians had it coming. God is just. But this whole weird episode points some an important intention of God's: That we may know that He is the Lord.

Isaiah 6:9-13

At first glance it seems like God is willingly hiding Himself; making it unable for people to see, hear and understand him. And by means of that He is denying His people repentance and healing.

But out of destruction and judgement grows a new beginning, a small hope of future salvation.

And again this seems to be the only way to teach Israel this one lesson: That He is the Lord.

Matthew 13:11-15

It's not about us. Even if I tried I could not understand God's secrets, unless He let's me. Even if He does so, I've got to respond with hunger. I might search God out, but He initiates everything in this relationship.

Isaiah 45:9-11

Stop the rebellion! Get over our tendency that we always want to be in control of everything! That we are the ones that make the decisions or at least understand the background the choice is based on. Stop pressing God in our small box of human understanding and Christian morals!

He is the Lord. Unquestionable. Incomprehensible. Sovereign. But merciful.

Isaiah 55:9

"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

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**Q:** *In what areas of my life do you feel like going farther and farther down the road of destruction?*

*What lesson does God might want to teach me through that?*

*How does knowing that He is the Lord help you in the fight for revolution?*

## Exodus 10

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Here's another aspect of God we don't usually notice these days. How many preaches have you heard about the God who mocks?

The tables have obviously turned on the Egyptians as they get pummeled by one miracle after another, as they get hammered by one plague after another.

And we're not finished. God reveals Himself as the mocking God. Yahweh said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh... that you may tell in the hearing of your son and of your son's son how I have made sport of the Egyptians... that you may know that I am the LORD" (10:1,2).

This isn't the only time. In the face of a summit conference of nations organizing to rebel against Him, "God in heaven merely laughs! He is amused by all their puny plans. And then in fierce fury He rebukes them and fills them with fear" (Psalm 2:4,5 LB). The mocking God.

Or, about this: God "stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets" (Col. 1:15 Message).

Haha. He marches every demon in the universe, naked, with their tails between their legs, up and down the main streets. The mocking God.

There is much more (take five minutes and read Isaiah 40, for example). God is so much more powerful than any enemy.

The very cool thing is that as great as He is, as dominant over every force in the universe, He 'stoops down to make me great' (Psalm 18:35), to make you great.

We're not camping out on this to persuade you that He is mean-spirited. He is far from mean-spirited. He loves you with an everlasting love.

But He laughs at the enemy. He is not surprised by them. He isn't off in some office trying to figure out what to do next. The Father isn't plotting with the Spirit to come up with some effective response to Islamofascism. Jesus isn't out surveying Christian leaders for an appropriate strategy against abortion. God hasn't convened a big assembly of the angels in heaven to develop a plan to defeat materialism. He isn't asking the martyrs under the throne for a good idea to deal with pride in the West or corruption in the Rest.

He makes sport of the enemy. He uses them to demonstrate His power.

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**Q:** *How does mocking God revelation help you in the Jesus revolution?  
What specific enemy should you confront out loud, in Jesus' name, with these texts?*

## Exodus 11

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What would you give for total freedom? Maybe a few million dollars? Or how about the perfect career? What about your firstborn child? “What, are you crazy? Too much to ask!” But Yahweh’s already demanded it once. Then He offered up His own later.

“Then Yahweh said to Moses, ‘I will send just one more disaster on Pharaoh and his land, and after that he will let you go... about midnight I will pass through Egypt. And all the oldest sons shall die in every family in Egypt, from the oldest child of Pharaoh, heir to his throne, to the oldest child of his lowliest slave; and even the firstborn of the animals.’” – Exodus 11:1,5

There is a price to freedom. And it isn’t cheap, either. Think of what freedom means to you. Some may say that it’s the ability to do whatever you want whenever you want to do it. Others say that freedom is not worrying about the stresses of life, just living as you see fit. Others still, may say it is real life. Freedom is the ability to live as God commanded us to without hesitation or restriction. It’s the ability to fulfill His commands for us with grace and in faith knowing that you’re doing the right thing.

When Yahweh declared freedom for the Israelites from Pharaoh, the price involved many things, not the least of which was the firstborn of every Egyptian household. It was this bloodshed that brought them freedom.

Jesus Christ is the same freedom for all of us... not just those in the pews on Sunday mornings. His freedom is for all who are captive, which is anyone who has ever sinned and fallen short of the glory of Yahweh. News flash— that’s all of us!

“Yahweh sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children.” –Galatians 4:5

We’re orphans, but our Heavenly Father stops at nothing to give good gifts to His children. One of those gifts is freedom—from pain, sorrow, addiction, loneliness, depression, persecution, and more. The price of freedom is blood. Just like in Egypt where first-born Egyptian blood bought freedom for Israel, so Yahweh’s Firstborn’s blood offers freedom to the world.

Without bloodshed, there can be no freedom. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of that. He is the Firstborn of Yahweh, He is the perfect sacrifice, He is our salvation.

“For you have been called to live in freedom – not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love.” –Galatians 5:13

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**Q:** *Do you have freedom?*

*How has your freedom affected your family, friends, school, and city?*

## Exodus 12

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I have neighbors?

"What? I have neighbors?" is how a lot of people live. They don't usually say it but a lot of people live that way but that is not the way God wants it to be. Jesus said that the greatest commandments are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and soul, and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27).

Now that isn't just a New Testament way of thinking. Way back in the Old Testament God was making His people love their neighbors. In Exodus 12 each household of Israel was told to take a lamb for their family but if one family was too small it joined the nearest neighbors. It didn't just say closest neighbor relationship-wise but the nearest neighbor. If the neighbor didn't help they'd be dead.

So as we think of our neighbors, our nearest neighbors, how can we love them? How can we show that we love them? If our neighbors are having problems with their health and we know that they don't have anyone to take care of them would we still go on with our everyday life and not help them? Would we pass by them because it would mess up the flow of our life? If loving our neighbors means that we will be uncomfortable do we just so happen to forget where to find Luke 10:27 in our Bibles? We aren't called to care about ourselves and just our families. We are called to care for our neighbors and their families as well. Love isn't just a word it is an action. And we've got Biblical examples to follow.

We are not called to be soldiers by word of mouth but by action. We can say we are soldiers. We can say we love our neighbors. We can even say that red is green and green is blue but it doesn't make it true. We have to actively love our neighbors. It is time we stop living like no one else matters. In the end it is not about us now is it? I dare you to show your neighbors you care. This may be difficult with some neighbors who just don't seem to like you and go out of their way to show it. Well, go out of your way to show them you still care. When they are sick be the first one to pay them a visit. When the cat runs away be the first one to offer to help look for it. Yes we all have neighbors.

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. -1 Peter 1:22

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**Q:** *Is there anything more potentially revolutionary than authentic Christian community? How many neighbours do you know? Have you shared with them your lives and the Gospel yet? (if not, how about before the end of this month?)*

## Exodus 13

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As the chapter suggests, this is a major event, a day to remember forever. God is delivering His people out of bondage. It is the first stage success of revolution. Hallelujah!

And God emphasizes that they are to celebrate this day annually forever. It is an enormous source of national rejoicing. But it also prefigures the celebrations in which we participate as God has delivered us out of bondage and into freedom.

And, of course, it prophesies of the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. We praise Yahweh for Yeshua, our Jesus, who poured out His blood so that punishment would avoid us.

Twice God describes the effects of the Passover celebration: 'This ceremony will be like a mark branded on your hands or your forehead.' As God calls you, participate faithfully in this ceremony. God has called you to celebrate other events and engage in other habitual practices that also serve as a mark like one branded on your hands or your forehead.

A mark on your forehead is very visible. In our neighbourhood several people have tear drop tattoos below one of their eyes. On the street that apparently indicates that they did some certain bad stuff in their past. The details aren't important here. But everywhere they go people see the tattoo and draw certain conclusions about them, take certain precautions around them, and interact with them in certain ways.

Are you catching any of this? The Salvation Army has a few things like this, the most obvious being uniform. We wear uniforms. They are a sign of covenant community. But they are also a sign to the people around us. And everywhere we go, whether we happen to be all sallied up that day or not, people see us, recognize us as salvos, and draw certain conclusions about us, take certain precautions around us, and interact with us in certain ways.

What conclusions do we want them to draw? There's a zealous, passionate, covenanted warrior, exercising holy passion to win the world for Jesus (definition of a soldier) What precautions should they take? Well, often they clean up their jokes and language. Sometimes the demonized avoid us and run. But we want them to repent of their sins because of the fear of the Lord overflowing from our lives. How should they interact? They should expect to encounter God through us.

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**Q:** *How can those three responses play out in your life this week?*

## Exodus 14

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This is a chapter just waiting for a movie. Well, there is a really old one starring Charlton Heston, and there is Prince of Egypt in animation, but a modern big budget flick could do this up sweet.

We could go a whole month in this one chapter. So we're going to riff on one verse in the chapter: verse 15: "Then Yahweh said to Moses, 'Quit praying and get the people moving! Forward, march!'"

Now, this might be the only devotional you ever read that tells you to stop praying.

But it's not like that, really. Is it? These guys have been watching God perform miracle after miracle in their midst. They've been on the receiving end of blessing after blessing, avoiding plague after plague aimed at their enemies. They've had their faith stretched like an elastic band as their animals, their food supply, their health, and even their first-born children were all up for grabs.

I think it is fair to guess that they've been praying their sandals off for the last handful of chapters. And then in the last chapter they engage in Passover, and extended conversation with Yahweh.

But the bad guys are coming. It is time to stop praying and get moving.

Two disclaimers: 1. yes, you should keep in open communion with God at all times and all situations; 2. we have a War Room in our corps, a place dedicated to prayer, in which we've been praying non-stop, 24-7, since February of 2004.

That said, there is an inclination among Christians sometimes to use prayer as an excuse to avoid moving. Yahweh isn't new. He saw the Jews doing it here.

So He was straightforward with them: Quit praying and get moving!

Here's one for you: Quit praying and get moving. Quit avoiding the fight with excuses that you are waiting for God to reveal His will for you. Start fighting now.

Look, if you don't know what to do, I can hook you up with thousands of corps officers who can deploy you profitably in the great salvation war. No more excuses.

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**Q:** *What are you trying to avoid with excuses?*

*What kind of 'moving' can you do, starting this week, to help the revolution?*

## Exodus 15

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Praise the Lord! The Lord has done great things for us. Take a moment to think about it.

Now imagine with me if you will, an army. Rows upon rows clad in armor, swords waving, spears hoisted, horses charging, and they're coming towards you. Now listen. There you hear it-the clatter of metal, the horse hoofs and chariot wheels, the battle cries. They are coming... faster and faster. You have women and children to protect- no one is getting away fast enough and the army just keeps coming. Doom is pretty much sealed.

Woosh! You are caught off guard by a noise similar to a waterfall. You risk a backward glance. Back there, where the army used to be, you catch the last signs of a two tidal waves colliding. For a moment, as the water settles, there is no human noise, only water. Every eye is wide and mouth agape. Slowly, what is left of the army starts to appear on the surface. A few bodies are floating and some bits of wood. Finally, everyone breathes. After three cheers for Yahweh, people start to relax. You are still in a bit of shock. What you've just seen was the wipe out of the army that was minutes away from murdering you, your family, and your nation. That will take a couple years to get over! For now you just hold your trembling husband and shake your head. Everyone is in shock.

Some have tears rolling down their cheeks, still getting over the fact that they are still alive. Some are laughing and starting to crack a few jokes-like "That was a close one" and "The grandkids ain't gonna believe this one!" No one really knows what to do until slowly you hear music. It moves through the crowd and grows louder.

You can't hear the words quite yet, but soon you begin to catch the tune. Someone next to you pulls out a makeshift drum and your daughter skips away to join a few dancers. Soon you begin to catch a few phrases.

Praise to the Lord. It feels right in this both amazing and sacred moment. You close your eyes and listen. "I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed..."

Be encouraged-the battle is the Lord's, and the victory. Still, the battle He wins is for you. Your part is to praise- your role in the story, your move in the dance. Read it again, or any one of the psalms, and see who He is. Sing your song of His goodness, and never let it die. Then see Him smile and watch Him continue to fight for you-He will never let you wipe out.

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**Q:** *Wars are won in praise. How are you fighting in this way?*

*How about aiming to praise God straight – non-stop - for a whole day (under your breath, in words, in song, in shouting, etc.)*

## Exodus 16

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God's chosen people have been rescued from an abusive and cruel ruling authority... and they're hungry.

"Grumble, grumble, grumble"... "Ta-Da!!! Food!"... "Grumble, grumble"... "Ta-da! Meat" ...  
"Grumble, grumble" "ENOUGH!!!! THAT'S IT!!!! You're on bread and water for forty years!"

Seriously, though, the Israelites grumbled! At first they even complained they would've preferred death! (16:3). Sound stupid? Well, they thought they were dying of starvation. Seeing the truth of their slavery in Egypt was difficult. Perspective is always twisted by hunger.

Have you ever looked back on a situation as 'not as bad as I thought it was at the time'? We look back at the Israelites, craving 'choice meats' they enjoyed in slavery and think that's pretty stupid... right?

Ever looked back at 'pre-salvation you' (your 'independent self' or your 'non-saved alter-ego' and thought about 'choice meats'? Ever watched other Christian friends enjoy delights that God has 'taken' from you and gotten a little bitter?

Maybe it's relationships, possessions, a certain 'freedom' with words, a bit of sloth... and what about things like an 'assurance' of the future? As we obey God day by day, long-term plans may be something we'll never fully grasp.

Do we crave the choice meats we enjoyed in slavery? Check out verse 9. Catch the second half? "For He has heard your grumbling". God listens... to grumbling!

God wants to train us to "take every thought captive", subjecting them to Him. However, sometimes 'capturing' can take a while when the enemy puts on the guise of logic and reason.

What do we do? Grumble to God! Even before we're able to construct an eloquent, purified and 'holy' prayer; grumble to God!

What will He do? Rebuke you? – He disciplines those He loves. If you're wrong, He won't gloat, He will provide! Maybe not what you wanted, but exactly what He wants for you. Sound good?

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**Q:** *What are some provisions you feel you need? (that might feel like 'grumbles')*  
*Ask Him to provide.*

## Exodus 17

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Why do you think Yahweh pulled the cloud to a stop at dry old Rephidim? He had a teaching moment, but what... water fast, water digging, a faith stretch?

The key thing to remember is that the wilderness, the desert place, is the place of formation. Yahweh was taking a nation of slaves and making them into revolutionaries. Israel was chosen out of all nations to be a light, showing the way to relationship with Yahweh (Ex 19:5, Deut 14:2, Is 49:6). Their revolutionary lifestyle, as outlined in the covenant, was designed to turn the world upside down; having a day of rest, looking after widows, orphans, the poor, and strangers, the year of Jubilee (they never got to this one), let alone the awesome privilege of worshipping Yahweh. Unheard of!

But Yahweh had to teach them to embrace this revolutionary lifestyle, by slowly challenging generations of slave mentality, removing it from the collective memory, and replacing it with a deep trust in His promises. So this lesson in Israel's education is less about thirst and more about whether they really understood who their God was and trusted in Him to care for them.

Yahweh was directing them through the wilderness with the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night – supernatural Map Quest (Ex 13:21-22). He stopped them at Rephidim so they started setting up there tents and unrolling their sleeping bags. They soon got very angry with their accommodations and got in Moses' face about it! "Give us water to drink". This is where it hits the fan. Moses reminds them of Map Quest. 'For one, why are you grizzling to me? I didn't tell the cloud to stop in no-watersville. Two, why are you whinging at God? Didn't you see what happened to those Egyptians at the Red Sea?'

They continued, 'Why did *you* take us from Egypt and drag us out here to die of thirst? Why blame Moses! Yahweh brought them out; Moses was just the man on the ground. Second, from the question, you'd think they actually liked Egypt. Hello, they were slaves, breaking their backs making bricks with no straw! Israel was far from being the revolutionary nation Yahweh envisioned; instead they were a bunch of whingers. Moses named the site Massah, the place of testing, and Meribah, the place of complaining.

We're on the same journey – from slaves to revolutionaries. Do we continually look back and yearn for the comfort found in the familiarity of slavery, (slavery to materialism, lust, comfort, security, self satisfaction) no matter how damaging and soul destroying it was? Or will we step out in faith, trusting Yahweh?

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**Q:** *Can you relate with any of this?*

*How will you correct instances when you've forgotten where you came from?*

## Exodus 18

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Have you ever used the excuse, "I would like to spend more time with God but I just don't have the time"? It amazes me how sometimes we can't even give up 30 minutes of our day to spend time with the creator of the universe. We shouldn't view this time as a chore but rather a privilege. God wants to reveal Himself to us in new and exciting ways but the only catch is that we have to give Him the time.

This might mean that you will have to wake up a few minutes earlier than usual or possibly skip one of your favourite TV shows but trust me, it will totally impact your life. We have to make God our number one priority. If we're trying to build a strong relationship with God we have to give Him more than our Sunday mornings.

In Exodus chapter 18, it talks about Moses and the people of Israel who were in the desert. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, decided to pay him a visit. Moses served as judge to the people and would sit all day and all night and help others seek God's will. Jethro flat out told Moses that what he was doing wasn't good. He believed that Moses and all of the people were wearing themselves out. They were all wasting time because they would be standing around for hours. Moses would have to sit and judge people all day, which, in my opinion, would definitely get tedious after a while. I'm sure that he would have loved to have had some extra time to deep fry in the Spirit or simply be pickled in Yeshua's presence.

Jethro suggested that Moses appoint some capable men who were trustworthy, to be officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. These men would learn the decrees and laws and then judge the people. Moses would only have to deal with the most difficult cases. Moses loved this idea because it made his load much lighter. This way he would have more time to Worship the Lord or simply marinate in His love. Moses appreciated Jethro's wisdom.

When Moses was judging all of the people by Himself, he wasn't making proper use of his time because he could have got others to help him out. I think in many ways, we don't use our time efficiently. I realize that many of us have busy schedules but if our schedules become so busy that we don't have time for God, I think we need to re-evaluate our priorities. God loves us with an unconditional love and wants us to pursue Him. In Joshua 1:8 it says "Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

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**Q:** *Are you spending as much time with God daily as you would like to be?  
What areas in your daily life can you change so that you will be able to spend more time with God?*

## Exodus 19

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This chapter is enough to put the fear of God into any careful reader. We've been celebrating that Yahweh is a covenant God, and here He offers a covenant to his people. This is important for us, as we in The Salvation Army are the most covenanted people in history. Covenant is the biggest distinctive in The Army. And yet, most of don't really understand it.

Rob Dolby is a Salvo Warrior. He says this: "You can't make God love you more, but you can let Him trust you more." How? Covenant. Those people who take seriously God's rules and commands, even when they don't fully understand the reasons behind them all, live lives that God can trust.

How does God show his trust? With His character, with responsibilities, and with power. He doesn't drop His name and character on anyone who chooses to use it. He doesn't deploy just anyone on difficult missions. And He doesn't delegate His authority and power to every Christian, or else we'd be seeing lots of dead people coming back to life, lots of deaf people hearing, and lots of blind people seeing.

He can't trust most Christians with his power. Got it? Good. Let's move on.

What are the terms of the covenant? The people had to commit to obeying and God promised to make them his possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

God shows up in a thick cloud. I expect that this is how God shows up everywhere. There is probably a permanent cloud around Him. The cloud, or the smoke, is His glory. It is so thick you'd think you were walking down a LA street on a hot summer's day.

God knows how to make a grand entrance. Did you feel the mountains tremble? That would be God showing up. Oh, the forest fire? God. Smoke and cloud? God. Lightning and thunder? God. Everyone shaking in their boots? God.

This is serious stuff. Even though they agreed to covenant, it didn't mean that the people and God were buddy buddy. There were strict restrictions to handle with care. Otherwise, they'd break covenant.

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**Q:** *You might be a Salvation Army soldier. How can you take the terms of your covenant (article of war and orders and regulations) as seriously as these people? How do you think God might advance the revolution when all of he teenaged soldiers in your territory actually embrace the covenant they've signed?*

## Exodus 20

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This chapter follows immediately chapter 19 (it doesn't take a rocket scientist to write these revodevos!). The people had just entered covenant with God, a brave act through which their promised obedience opened them up to massive privileges and benefits.

The promise was made. God descended on the mountain. And He outlines the terms of the covenant. He drops on them some serious rules to follow. This is what they have just promised to obey.

Incidentally, this was a revolutionary act historically. What are commonly known as the ten commandments set the moral standard for western civilization. But that is not what we're on about here. God outlines covenant commands for the people. And everything seems hopeful.

How did the people respond in this first covenant conversation? Pathetically. They were scared out of their wits, they stood at a distance, and they shook in their bobby socks. Not only that, but they gave up. Before they'd even tried to fulfill their end of the covenant, before they'd even engaged in one battle along with God, they threw in the towel.

To Moses, they whined, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die."

Now, if you're a slacker Christian, like most Christians, you don't get it. But if you're hungry for God, you know what just happened. Here the people of God had a great set up in which they could listen directly to Him. And they said, in effect, 'no thanks. Not interested. Can't do it'.

This is what most keen Christians struggle for all the time- hearing God consistently and clearly. And the people of God threw in the towel. Pathetic.

But, if you think about it, you might just want to include yourself in their number. God has given you the same opportunities (1 Peter 2:9) of covenant. And yet, most people, maybe you, abdicate responsibility and say to the Moses of today (maybe your youth leader or Corps Officer or DYS), 'You speak to us- that's fine. And you listen to God for us. We can't do it ourselves'.

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**Q:** *(Why) have you given up the benefits of covenant by giving up the responsibilities of covenant?*

*Why not crack open the articles of war to renew your revolutionary covenant?*

## Exodus 21

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Whew! That's a huge list of laws (and all of them are for the Israelites' sake). It is starting to look a bit like the Orders and Regulations for Soldiers!

But look at in verses 5 and 6. There is a law for the Hebrews that slaves do not serve for life. After six years they are set free. But God slips in a provision for those who don't want to go free. Why on earth would someone not want to go free? If the slave loves his master.

That's the exception. Nuts? Well, if that happens, "then his master shall bring him before God. He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life."

A slave with a nail through his ear doesn't have to be there. He chose to be there. He wants to be a slave. Whacked, eh?

And yet this is the popular description that Jude, Peter, Epaphras, Timothy, and most of all, Paul use to describe their relationship with Jesus. Yes, they are apostles. Yes, overseers. Yes, big mozzarellas. Yes to all of those titles. But they seem to really enjoy calling themselves bond-servants, or (as in some translations) bond-'slaves'. They were 'slaves 'cause they wanna be'.

And, of course, what is good for Epaphras and Paul is good for us. Most of us are chomping at the bit to get out of our obligations. We can't wait to slip out of our Christian responsibilities.

God is looking for a different kind of warrior, a more dangerous breed of revolutionist. He is looking for people who choose to give up their wills, their futures, their prospects, their hopes, their rights to even choose what they're going to do tonight after work and school and next decade when all their friend are chasing the American dream. He is looking for people who say, "I love my Master." He is looking for the ones who will stick their ear lobe on the doorframe and say 'swing away'. He is looking for bond-slaves. He is looking for 'slaves 'cause we wanna be'.

He is looking for you.

Remember, 'you can't make God love you more, but you can let Him trust you more'. Bond-slaves are revolutionary agents, because they're dead and Jesus Christ lives through them.

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**Q:** *What's keeping you from taking a nail through the earlobe right now?  
How will your life change if you have the guts to do it?*

## Exodus 22

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'Alright, alright, another list of laws. We get it'. Sure, there were a bunch of rules God laid on the people (again, all for their own good). But let's camp out on a few verses near the end:

**21** You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. **22** You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. **23** If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; **24** my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans.

**25** If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them. **26** If you take your neighbor's cloak in pawn, you shall restore it before the sun goes down; **27** for it may be your neighbor's only clothing to use as cover; in what else shall that person sleep? And if your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate. **28** You shall not revile God, or curse a leader of your people (NRSV).

This is a whole different mindset than our society today. What do you get out of these verses? God loves the poor. God loves the widow and orphan. God loves the aliens.

Now, you might fit into one of those categories. You might have slipped into the country illegally. You might lack parents. You might be poor by North American standards. Sorry. God loves you.

But if you're dead and have a nail through your ear lobe (see yesterday) you need to move on and look beyond yourself. There are others to whom God is looking to demonstrate His compassion through you.

Note that God makes two promises: 1. He hears them; 2. there are consequences if you screw up.

These are not sins of commission, that is, things you do that are mean to poor people. These are things that you don't do. By not helping them, you open yourself up to the consequences (God's wrath, death by sword, etc.).

The bottom line is that we need to exert ourselves for the aliens (refugees), for orphans and widows, and for the poor (most of whom don't live in North America- they live over there -->).

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**Q:** *How many poor, orphans, widows, and refugees do you know?  
What can you do to show compassion to them this week?*

## Exodus 23

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Here are more revolutionary regulations from Yahweh to the people. They don't look that exciting to you now, because you are enjoying the benefits of their practice.

But there are still some people in some countries who would love to read and experience the regulations of this verse. If you were systematically mistreated because you were a foreigner, you'd welcome this chapter. If you were scammed from justice just because you were poor, you'd be thrilled about chapter 23. If you were used to being slandered because of your religious affiliation, you'd fight to see 23 realized in your society. If you had to work seven days a week, verse 12 would be like a tall drink of red bull. If you suffered injustice because of bribes, you'd breathe a sigh of relief at this chapter.

God instituted here (and in surrounding chapters) a moral code that has provided a foundation for western civilization. And those of us living in the West are blessed by these verses.

And we're challenged to see them implemented in the rest of the world. God's justice is not just for the West, but for every language, every people, every tribe, and every nation.

Twice in this chapter He explains that we are to take Him the first fruits. The first fruits belong to Him. (it all belongs to Him but He is actually demanding this part back!)

Far too many people are far too casual about our response to this command of Yahweh. The first fruits are to be given back to Him.

What does that mean? A tithe. What is a tithe? 10%. So if your part-time job pays you \$100/week, \$10 off the top goes straight to God in your cartridge. If you have a full-time job and make \$400/week, that's \$40 to the cartridge.

This isn't anything worthy of commendation. It is a command. It is God's. If you don't give it to God, you are stealing from Him (check Malachi 1 and 3 if you don't believe me).

And soldiers are so much above that it isn't funny. We start at 10% and go up from there. There are some soldiers up above 80%.

Get it? Give it!

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**Q:** *What can you do to implement 23 in the rest of the world?  
Have you been stealing from God? Will you stop, today?*

## Exodus 24

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The people of God finally decide to accept Yahweh's covenant offer. Covenant means 'to cut'. And it always involves sacrifice. Covenant is a bloody deal. Whether it is Abraham and God, or a Junior Soldier swearing in ceremony, or this chapter, covenant involves blood, cutting, and sacrifice.

And it appears that the people of God are up for it. They respond to the conditions with a corporate affirmation: "We will do everything Yahweh has commanded. We will obey."

One of the most whacked verses in the whole Bible comes up next (v11). "And though Israel's leaders saw God, He did not destroy them. In fact, they shared a meal together in God's presence!"

What? They saw God. Alright- that is enough to blow those people away who say that no one ever saw God. But beyond that, the leaders of Israel had supper with Yahweh!

Can you imagine that meal? I can't. I can't imagine the menu. I can't imagine the dinner conversation. I can't imagine 'grace'. I just can't get my head around it (yet).

And He didn't destroy them. I don't know, but it is probably a story that will shake your view of God.

It should.

Intimacy is one of the benefits of covenant. God can trust you with some details He normally doesn't share with everyone else. And the covenant conditions, those things in our lives that we change to align with God's purposes and characters, allow us to enter into His presence.

If soldiers around the world got their heads around this, I suspect there'd be a revolution. Think about it. There are more than a million senior soldiers and nearly half a million junior soldiers. If 1.5 million soldiers all fulfilled the conditions of covenant and began enjoying intimacy with Yahweh the effects would be catastrophic (to the enemy). Contagious love and compassion would overflow to hurting people. We're already in 109 countries. I suspect this infectious love would spill over into a bunch more.

Are you in?

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**Q:** *What have you sacrificed for covenant relationship with God?  
What conditions must you fulfill to enjoy intimacy with God?*

## Exodus 25

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Once you enter covenant with God there is no guarantee that every day is going to be a 'gotta blog this!' experience. The people of God exit the euphoria of dining with Yahweh and get down to the nuts and bolts of revolution.

It doesn't sound romantic but there has to be some preparation. Sometimes we get confused and think that, well, we 'accepted Jesus as our personal Saviour', so let's preach to thousands and heal the sick and raise the dead.

But I've read it happening like that. It seems that a few other things have to be in place first. I mean, you need to actually get saved, and not merely ask Jesus into your life. How? Mark 1:15 (repent and believe; follow Me). The thing is, it is not about you inviting Jesus into your life. It is about Jesus inviting you into His life. Do you get the distinction? The former is all about you, where you're going, your habits, your lifestyle and all. The latter is joining Jesus, where He is headed, in a great adventure that promises to impact globally and eternally.

Then there are things in your life to get right so that you can do the things Yahweh has dreamed up for you. Paul took years that you don't read about in the New Testament preparing himself to do all the exiting stuff you do read about (healing sick, confronting demons, raising dead, changing history).

There are character issues, discipline issues, training and skill issues. You need to cultivate the effective use of your gifts. You need to learn submission and service. You need to catch humility and experience holiness. And all of this is often worked out in the mundane, the monotonous and the trivial.

Tucked away in the detailed instructions for tabernacle and ark and table and lamp stand is Jabez-style promise that is easy to miss. The Army caught it. In fact, we camp out on it.

The lid of the ark of the covenant was called the mercy seat (in some translations). Now, you might recall the term 'mercy seat'. It is the main feature of every Salvation Army meeting in every Salvation Army hall around the world. Our whole meetings and our whole meeting theology is centred on the mercy seat.

The mercy seat covers the covenant and the miraculous power of God. And in verse 22 Yahweh promises to meet with us there, at the mercy seat. Did you catch it? Remember that on Sunday, and test it out.

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**Q:** *What preparation is God wanting to make in your life this year for revolution? Have you really met God at the mercy seat (in miraculous, covenant intimacy)?*

## Exodus (26-29) 30

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The instructions have continued for a few chapters and are coming down fast and furious to Moses and his people. Yahweh includes instructions for special anointing oil worth riffing.

The oil represents Holy Spirit through much of Scripture. Today you might hear all kinds of derivations of this: 'Man, there's oil on that song'; 'I could feel the oil'; 'get deep-fried'; 'soak'; 'saturate'; 'marinate'; 'release the grease'; and so on.

There are three aspects worth discussing:

This oil is holy. "Whatever touches them will become holy." Now, watch this. This is revolutionary. There are two kinds of holiness: contaminating and contagious. The first is the kind where you have to be careful not to get contaminated by the world or the devil and sin. But this kind is contagious. This oil was put on certain things and whatever touched those certain things (not even the oil directly) becomes holy. This is outrageous. This switches us from being pansy who are scared to death of losing our holiness and being contaminate to being robust, confidently holy people who go into darkness to brighten it up and who come alongside sin to make sinners holy. Wow!

This oil anoints. Now, the Holy Spirit (oil) is very active in our lives. He provides prevenient grace, He convicts, He regenerates, He guides, He leads you into truth, He points to Jesus, and so on. But He also sanctifies and anoints. In sanctification, He crucifies your natural inclination to selfishness and fills you up with a supernatural inclination - a default reaction - to please God. Revolutionary.

But anointing is a little different. Early Salvos called it the third blessing (salvation was first and sanctification was second). We don't walk about it too much these days but there you go. Holy Spirit comes on you. As with King Saul ('changed into a different person') and Peter and Paul and others in Scripture, Holy Spirit comes on you and things change. Often the context is engaging the enemy and the results are miraculous demonstrations that God exists, cares, and has the power to intervene. As you can imagine, anointing in daily warfare is a revolutionary resource.

This oil is exclusive. Verses 32, and 33 indicate that it would be disastrous for you to use it for your own purposes. And God wasn't joking. Nadab and Abihu (Aaron's sons, whom you've come across three times in Exodus) were killed by God for breaking this rule (Nu 3:2,4). What does that mean for us? Don't use the blessing and power of God for our own purposes, to accomplish our own ends, to make us look good, or for our own comfort.

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**Q:** *What aspects of the oil do you need? (contagiousness, power, etc.)*

## Exodus 32,33

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We only have space to fly through 32 and 33 with some midrash highlights:

32.1 Impatience often gives birth to disaster

32.1b there they go again, blaming Moses instead of God (not that I'd want to be caught dead near them blaming God...)

32.2 What got into Aaron's head? What is he thinking?

32.4 Aaron toolled it into a calf. Remember this for later on.

32.4b How idiotic! Check Isaiah 40 for God's view of this stupidity.

32.5 Aaron is such a loser in this chapter. He could be trying to redirect this pagan excitement (he did say the festival would be for Yahweh), or it could just be fear of some older, wiser veterans in the congregation. Whichever... weak.

32.6 Pagan sex show. Now don't forget context. Moses is up on the mountain delivering back the finger-engraved commandments from the hand of Yahweh.

32.10 Is God testing Moses here?

32.11 If so (the test), Moses passes with flying colours. Talk about guts!

32.13 Moses, always harping on covenant. It seems to be persuasive.

32.17 What was Joshua up to in the interim? Waiting midway, probably.

32.19 What do you make of that? Moses threw down the tablets. I think he is to blame (not that our purpose is to assign blame here or anything).

32.20 Now that is more like it. He could have skipped the tablet smashing and just melted, cooled, ground the gold and made the people drink their god. Classic.

32.21 Then he faces his brother. Hardline.

32.22 Aaron calls his kid brother 'sir'. You know he's in big trouble. But he immediately blames the people, because, after all, they are wicked!

32.24 'and out came this calf! Hahaha (see 32.4). What? Does he think Moses is new or something?

32.25 the effects of terrible leadership include 'the amusement of their enemies'.

32.26 More hardline judgement.

32.27,28 I imagine the Levites never figured they'd signed up for this.

32.29 Big blessing, though.

32.32 One of the most amazing verses in Scripture. Moses repents for the people and trades his eternity for theirs.

32.33 Yahweh doesn't make the trade.

32.35 A plague, just to make up for anyone that the gold water and Levitical attack missed.

Ah, there isn't much room for 33, so, only the really big highlights...

33.8-10 After 32 you can understand the people's humility.

33.11 Yahweh and Moses, face to face.

33.11b Joshua hangs out with God, after hours.

33.15 Moses won't go a step without God.

33.17 You are My friend.

**Q:** *Why not try to place yourself in each player's sandals in these chapters?*

## Exodus (34-39) 40

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We just slammed back a long book in a short month (assuming you filled in a few chapters we had to fast-forward by to get to the end). The elaborate instructions and operations of the last 15 chapters or so have finally been completed.

Moses and his people set up the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant. Everything is ready. It is a significant day in the history of Israel and the world.

The people have done everything they could. They carefully obeyed the detailed commands of God. They did well. All of that, in and of itself, is noteworthy.

But then God intervenes and makes it all supernatural. Have you ever experienced that? You'd been involved in a project at the Corps, working hard, preparing, and then pulling it off? All of that is nice and good.

But sometimes God slips in unannounced and makes it all supernatural.

That is an amazing experience. He breathes life into form. And He does it here. In verse 34 the cloud covered the tabernacle and the glorious presence of Yahweh filled it.

Often in Scripture the glory of God is depicted as smoke or cloud. It is visible and tangible. Sometimes today God's glory fills rooms as smoke or cloud or mist. It is all supernatural.

It's not about the smoke. I mean, we have dry ice and smoke machines that are a usual appearance at youth councils. We can conjure up the effects. But when God Himself shows up in all His glory (or even a tiny smidgeon of His glory), well, Moses couldn't even enter the tabernacle! And this was a guy whose face shone so brightly from his conversations with God that he had to wear a veil to dim the afterglow!

It seems a little ironic. They spent all this time and money and energy to build this great place for God and then He inhabits it. But then no one else can fit in!

Sometimes God's commands don't make sense.

At the end of the chapter and book, it indicates that the people of God followed the cloud (the glory of God, the presence of God) wherever it went. And revolutionaries today are just the same. We've got to follow the cloud.

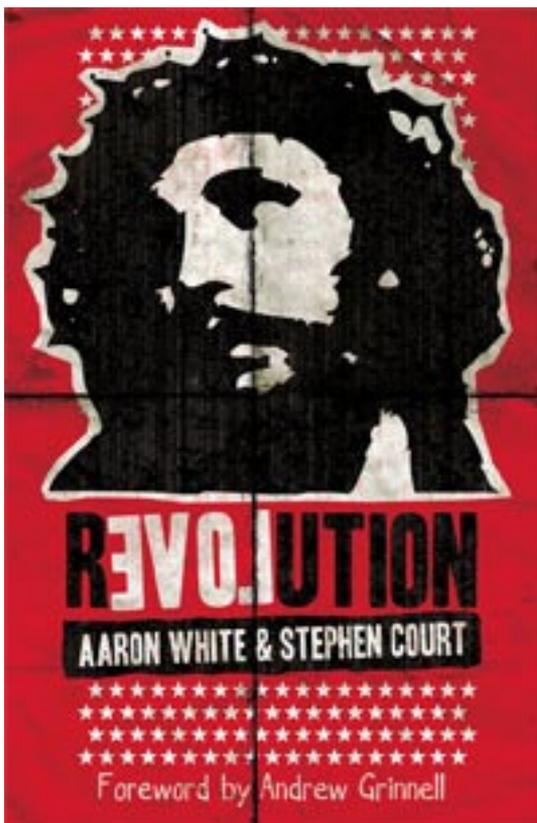
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**Q:** *Has God ever shown up supernaturally in your life? How? To what effect? Where is the cloud leading you?*

## REVOLUTIONARY RESOURCES

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revoDevos are part of the Revolutionary Package that includes:



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**REVOLUTION** by Aaron White and Stephen Court- challenging you to join the revolution to win the world for Jesus. Buy at [armybarmy.com](http://armybarmy.com).

**Sounds Of The Revolution**

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**SOUNDS OF THE REVOLUTION:** Worship with the west coast retro-prophets, led by Joshua Ivany, Danielle Strickland, and Mark Hood. Buy this stuff at [armybarry.com](http://armybarry.com).

## The War College

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For more revolutionary aids, check out [armybarmy.com](http://armybarmy.com) (including the blog, eStore, demo of the week, etc.) and [thewarcollege.com](http://thewarcollege.com).



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The War College is an incarnational training school in Canada's poorest postal code aimed at training this generation's warriors to win the world for Jesus. Oozing Primitive Salvationism (which is chari-flavoured, mission-focused heroism) this project attracted scores of applicants from several countries. Most of you couldn't hack it. But maybe you're the exception. If so, you can apply at [thewarcollege.com](http://thewarcollege.com) ([info@thewarcollege.com](mailto:info@thewarcollege.com)).

## MMCCXX

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One way to join the revolution is to partner with MMCCXX, which is aiming at new outposts in 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years. Most will be bi-vocational and cell-based. Contact [revolution@mmccxx.net](mailto:revolution@mmccxx.net) for more information.

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# MMCCXX

winning the world for Jesus

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**The Salvation Army** 

The idea is for you to go where there needs to be an expression of Jesus. Take some friends. A couple of you get part-time jobs. You all pour 60+ hours/week into the Salvation War. How? Make friends. Start cells. That's it. It is bi-vocational (you get a job to pay for your living). It is cell-based (the whole expression of the Body is in cells- no Sunday meetings or anything).

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## The End?

revoDevos are crafted by students and staff of The War College, The Salvation Army ([info@thewarcollege.com](mailto:info@thewarcollege.com)).

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