



## A Closer Look at Exodus

You can watch Pastor Andy's introduction to this study [here](#).

### **Exodus 23:20-33: Becoming a People On the Move**

We didn't skip over as many chapters this week. Following the 10 commandments God continues to give Moses more detailed instructions on how they shall live. More instruction is yet to come.

Following instruction, God recognizes that the people have a great distance to go to get to the promised land. God starts to prepare Moses to prepare the people for how this journey will work. God's Angel will lead the people. God is leading them to the promised land, the land flowing with milk and honey. But there is still a lot of formation to be done before they are ready to actually set out.

One catch is that there are already people living in that land. God starts to tell Moses how God will help Israel to inhabit the land, down to the details of weed management on the farmland!

### **Read Exodus 23:20-33**

<sup>20-24</sup> "Now get yourselves ready. I'm sending my Angel ahead of you to guard you in your travels, to lead you to the place that I've prepared. Pay close attention to him. Obey him. Don't go against him. He won't put up with your rebellions because he's acting on my authority. But if you obey him and do everything I tell you, I'll be an enemy to your enemies, I'll fight those who fight you. When my Angel goes ahead of you and leads you to the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, I'll clear the country of them. So don't worship or serve their gods; don't do anything they do because I'm going to wipe them right off the face of the Earth and smash their sacred phallic pillars to bits.

<sup>25-26</sup> "But you—you serve your God and he'll bless your food and your water. I'll get rid of the sickness among you; there won't be any miscarriages nor barren women in your land. I'll make sure you live full and complete lives.

<sup>27</sup> "I'll send my Terror on ahead of you and throw those peoples you're approaching into a panic. All you'll see of your enemies is the backs of their necks.

<sup>28-31</sup> "And I'll send Despair on ahead of you. It will push the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites out of your way. I won't get rid of them all at once lest the land grow up in weeds and the wild animals take over. Little by little I'll get them out of there while you have a chance to

get your crops going and make the land your own. I will make your borders stretch from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea and from the Wilderness to the Euphrates River. I'm turning everyone living in that land over to you; go ahead and drive them out.

<sup>32-33</sup> "Don't make any deals with them or their gods. They are not to stay in the same country with you lest they get you to sin by worshiping their gods. Beware. That's a huge danger." (*The Message Translation*)

### ***Questions for reflection and discussion***

- What about this story is most striking to you? Why do you think that is?
- What are the differences between being a people "putting down roots" and a people "on the move?" Which one can you relate to more?
- How do we reconcile God as a God of love and acceptance with the way the Jebusites, Hittites, and others were driven out of their lands?
- How might this Bible story have been used, or continue to be used, in order to harm people?
- God is saying he wants the Israelite people to stay together and not assimilate with other cultures, customs, or religions. Why might this be? How is this similar, different from what God might want today?
- What did you learn anew from this study?

***Prayer:*** *God of creation, we give you thanks for a beautiful world of wonders and adventure, from the St. Croix Valley to mountains and seas across the world. Help us to see our communities as promised land and to push for justice and peace for all people. Renew our Spirits when we are able to travel to new places and meet new people. Open our hearts and eyes every day with your wonders. Amen.*

***Next week:*** Exodus 40:16-38 (Israel on the move). If you have the time, read everything between tonight's scripture and next week's, maybe a few chapters each day.

To be part of our Zoom Bible Study Wednesday's at 7:00 PM, click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5596136118?pwd=SSStXODZYdk4yOXdYTVdEYWJpUFBFQT09>