Ex

1:5 *Souls*- The Hebrew word *nephesh* translated “soul” means a person, a body. It carries no idea of immortality.

1:7 The promises to Abraham of having numerous descendants have their main fulfilment in Christ and those baptized into Him (Gal. 3:16,27-29), but as in our lives too, God’s Kingdom promises have an initial fulfilment even in this life.

1:19 This would be an example of lies being told as an act of faith, similar to Rahab’s lie. We must be careful on one hand not to justify our behaviour all the time by thinking that we had no option but to do things which in most contexts would be sinful; yet on the other hand, we need to understand that God calls us to live by principles rather than a literalistic obedience to a legal code.

1:16 The plan to kill all the baby boys around the time of Moses’ birth is exactly what happened at the time of Christ (Mt. 2:16). This invites us to see Moses as a type of Christ.

1:21 It is God who gives and creates families; it is He who joins together husband and wife throughout the years of their relationship. These infertile women working as midwives must have longed for their own children more than many.

2:10 'Moses' meaning 'drawn out' suggests he is the prototype for every 'saint'- a called out one. As Moses was drawn out of the Nile and saved, so he later drew Israel out of Egypt. He could exactly enter into their feelings when they emerged from the Red Sea because he too had been drawn out of water to safety. Moses was a type of Christ, our representative who knows our feelings.

2:15 Visualize the scene when Moses was “full forty years old” (Acts 7:23). The Greek phrase could refer to Moses’ birthday- perhaps it had been arranged that when Moses was 40, he would become Pharaoh. Heb. 11:24 says that he refused and chose to suffer affliction with God’s people. Imagine Moses at the ceremony when he should have been declared as Pharaoh, the most powerful man in his world… standing up and saying, to a suddenly hushed audience, voice cracking with shame and stress and yet some sort of proud relief that he was doing the right thing: “I, whom you know in Egyptian as Meses, am Moshe, yes, Moshe the Israelite; and I decline to be Pharaoh”. Imagine his foster mother’s pain and anger. And then in the end, the wonderful honour would have been given to another man, who became Pharaoh. Perhaps he or his son was the one to whom Moses was to come, 40 years later. After a nervous breakdown, stuttering, speaking with a thick accent, clearly having forgotten Egyptian… walking through the mansions of glory, along the corridors of power, to meet that man, to whom he had given the throne 40 years earlier. He had a choice between the riches of Egypt, the pleasures of sin for a season, and choosing rather to suffer affliction with God's people and thereby fellowship the reproach of Christ (Heb. 11:24-26). He probably had the chance to become the next Pharaoh, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; but he consciously refused this, as a pure act of the will, as an expression of faith in the future recompense of the Kingdom.

3:7 God looked on the sorrows of His people through the sensitivity of Moses, He saw and knew their struggles, their sense of being trapped, their desire to revive spiritually but their being tied down by the painful business of life and living; and He sent Moses to deliver them from this. But these very words are quoted about our deliverance through the 'coming down' of the Lord Jesus (Ex. 3:7; 4:31 = Lk. 1:68).

3:11 Through Moses allowing himself to become part of God manifestation, he found a confidence to achieve that which felt impossible to him. He asks God: “Who am I...?” to do the great things God required... and the answer was “*I* am” (Ex. 3:11-13). Moses' sense of inadequacy was met by the principle of God's manifestation in him; and so will ours be, if we participate in it. We ‘are not’ as we would like to be, but God is.

3:18 The concepts of being God manifest and also being representative of a sinful Israel come together in Moses in a wonderful way. The elders of Israel were to tell Pharaoh that “Yahweh has met with us”. Yet Yahweh had only met with Moses. But because he was representative of Israel and also because he himself manifested Yahweh, the elders had met Yahweh when they met Moses. In this we see a superb prefigurement of the Lord Jesus. He was the supreme, faultless manifestation of God, and yet also the total, empathetic representative of sinful man.

3:20 Moses “supposed his brothers would have understood how that God *by his hand* would deliver them” (Acts 7:25); but God told Moses: “I will reach out *my hand*”. Moses had yet to learn the meaning of God manifestation through men. We too must learn that our hand is to be replaced by God’s hand.

4:7 Both the snake and leprosy are symbols of sin. Moses felt he was unable to do God’s work because of his own moral failures- but God was showing him that He has the power to deal with that, and that Moses could in fact grapple with sin if he let God use him. Moses had given the excuse that the people wouldn’t believe God’s word if he preached it to them (:1), but it seems this was really an excuse for his inner sense of unworthiness.

4:11 This verse is classic proof that disease is ultimately from God and not from any superhuman Devil or demons.

4:12 This is alluded to in Mt. 10:19,20 and Mk. 13:11 concerning how we too will be taught what to say when we come before the rulers of our world. In such moments of crisis, Moses, even in weakness as he was at this time, really is our living example.

4:16 Moses was “as God” to Aaron and Pharaoh (7:1), but he wasn’t God Himself. Such language can be used about men, Angels and Christ- but it doesn’t make them personally equal to God.

4:24 God’s intentions can be changed by the actions of a third party, in this case Moses’ wife. Later, God intended to destroy all Israel, but Moses interceded for them, and God relented. Moses was inspired to do this by his experience at this time; and his Saviour was a Gentile woman [an unbeliever, or weak in the true faith] whom perhaps he should never have married. Moses was being taught that he too for all *his* weakness could be used by God to save others.

4:26 Zipporah was not one of the covenant people; she was the daughter of a pagan priest (Ex. 18:11 implies Jethro thought Yahweh was only one of many gods); she did not circumcise their children. Should Moses have married her? The fact Moses did not bother circumcising his son shows he was not really serious about his relationship with God; God tried to kill him because of this. God tried to kill Moses because of this; this shows how serious this was in God's eyes. Zipporah was a Midianite, a descendant of Abraham through Keturah (Gen. 25:1-6). Circumcision was a sign of the covenant through Isaac, hence the resentment and bitterness of Zipporah over the circumcision issue; and it seems Moses capitulated to her on this. Their marriage is sure proof that fundamental spiritual differences at the start can only lead to anger and break up later on.

5:3 *Lest He fall on us*- This isn’t what God had threatened (3:18); Moses almost makes God out to be an unreasonable and draconian deity. It seems Moses added to God’s word to make it sound more credible, rather like Adam added “… neither shall you touch it” when relating God’s word to Eve. If we accept the Bible as God’s inspired word, we must be careful never to add to it, even implicitly, in order to make the message sound better in human terms.

5:16 Three times in 5:15,16 the Israelites assure Pharaoh that they are *his* servants, whereas Yahweh had requested that His people be allowed to leave so that they might serve *Him* (4:23). We cannot serve two masters- and they chose to serve Pharaoh and not Yahweh, in the hope that their hard lives might be made a fraction lighter by doing so. There was no fire of devotion in them for Yahweh, no desire to make a radical revolt against their surrounding world; they were interested in the offer of a better life which Moses offered them (4:31), they believed it for a brief moment, but any short term suffering was enough to bring them back to serving Egypt.

5:22 *Brought evil*- God is the ultimate source of “evil” in the sense of disaster (Is. 45:5-7), not any superhuman Satan being.

Moses is presented as initially a very unwilling co-operator with God, all too willing to give up and go home when there wasn’t the expected response. Yet he developed very quickly.

6:3 God had revealed Himself as Yahweh to the patriarchs, e. g. at Yahweh-Yireh (Gen. 22:14). But Israel had forgotten the implications of believing that the one true God is He who will be whom He will be, is who He is, and has been who He has been. God states seven times [the number of completion] in verses 6-8 that He “will” be and do things for His people. He really will be who He has said He will be.

6:5 God heard Israel’s groaning, even though at that time they didn’t believe in Him and were lost in depression. God ‘hears’ situations as if they are prayers, even the people concerned are to weak physically, mentally or spiritually to formally verbalize their situation in the form of a prayer to God. He does the same today.

6:12 Yet God had promised Moses earlier that Israel *would* hear him (3:18). God solemnly told him to go and speak to Pharaoh, because God had told him to do so. But Moses has the cheek to say exactly the same words to God a second time. In a chapter which speaks much of Moses' reluctance, the record encourages us: “These are that Aaron and Moses... these are those who spake to Pharaoh... these are that Moses and Aaron” (6:26,27)- as if the weakness of one as great as Moses should be encouragement for we who are so doubting and faltering in our service of God.

6:30 *Uncircumcised lips-* This may refer to some speech impediment Moses came to suffer. Or it may be that Moses felt he had been so long away from the Israelites that he didn’t feel himself as ‘circumcised’, or perhaps he had never been circumcised. But God used a man who keenly felt his physical and spiritual inadequacies for the great work he was asked to do. A feeling of insufficiency is vital if we are to be used by God, for He delights in using the weak and broken things of this world.

7:2 Although Aaron was intended to be Moses’ spokesman, it seems Moses soon took over speaking directly to Pharaoh. This may mean that Aaron lost his nerve; or that Moses gained confidence and no longer considered his spiritual and physical impediments of “uncircumcised lips” (6:30 note) to be a barrier to God using him.

7:4 It seems that all the people of Israel had a guardian Angel- this seems to be implied by “bring out My armies and My people”, implying that there were two armies leaving Egypt- one of Angels, another of their charges. Hence 12:41"it happened, that *all* the armies of Yahweh (a phrase often used about the Angels- but here concerning the Israelites too) went out from the land of Egypt". We too each have a guardian Angel.

7:5 The rejected will not only see how they could have been in the Kingdom; judgment results in men knowing God's Name / character. When God's judgments had been poured out on Egypt, then they knew God's Name; but for those racing against the inevitable tide of death in the returning Red Sea, it was all too late. This will be the tragedy of those rejected at the day of final judgment; nobody will be indifferent in that day, all will earnestly perceive who God really is. The day to know Him is now.

7:7 The life of Moses was in three clear sections. Forty years in Egypt in the opulence of Pharaoh’s court, forty years leading sheep in the wilderness, forty years leading Israel in the wilderness. Our lives too are arranged by God, although we only perceive it after many years.

7:17 The pronouns personally confuse God with Moses- our hand becomes God’s hand when we put it to His work.

8:9 Was such sarcasm appropriate? We have ‘the Truth’ in comparison to the unbelieving world, but this is by grace alone, and no sense of superiority, arrogance or sarcasm should ever feature in our witness to them.

8:13 *According to the word of Moses*- The requests of prayer become almost a command to God if we really believe they are according to His will; by His grace, we will ask what we will and He will do it for us (Jn. 16:23). The Greek there implies a superior asking an inferior to do something. This is an essay in the humility of God. We shall decree a thing (in prayer) and it shall be established unto us (Job 22:28).

8:16 The plagues were judgments against the gods of Egypt, whom Israel had likely come to believe in (12:12; 15:11). This plague targeted Seb, god of the dust of the earth; as the flies had mocked Hekot, the goddess of magic who had a frog’s head, and the Nile turning to blood showed the effective death of Hapi, the god of the spirit of the Nile.

8:21 Ra and the forerunner of Beelzebub were likened to beetles; much pagan Egyptian jewellery featured beetles.

8:22 Initially, God’s people suffered the effects of the earlier plagues. But they didn’t experience the later plagues. The plagues on Egypt are alluded to in the descriptions of the latter day judgments to come upon the earth just before Christ returns. It could be that the same will happen- those who are alive at that time may suffer the effects of the initial judgments, and then be somehow preserved as Israel were (Is. 26:20).

*To the end*- God’s desire was to save even Pharaoh. We should never give up on seeking to convert anyone.

8:25 *Within the land*- Comparing :27, it required three days journey for God’s people to leave Egypt. It’s likely that we are to see here a reference to the three days Christ remained dead, before resurrecting to enable God’s people to leave Egypt [the world] and embark for His Kingdom.

8:28 *Pray for me* sounds as if there might have been some recognition of Yahweh forming within Pharaoh. Hence God and Moses were seeking his repentance and even salvation, and the drawn out process of the plagues was part of that seeking, even though the more he hardened his heart against his spiritual possibilities, the more God had to confirm him in this.

9:3 *Is on*- Present tense. Yet the idea is clearly ‘it *will be* on’. God’s word is so certain that He can speak of things He has not yet done as if He has done them, or is now doing them (Rom. 4:17). We need to try to look at things like this; and see that the essence of future judgment and salvation are in fact working themselves out right now.

9:5 The plague upon cattle was clearly prophesied as going to happen at a specified time; but it was conditional upon Pharaoh refusing to let Israel go (9:1,2). He could have complied, and therefore the plague wouldn’t have happened. And yet the prophecy is so specific that it would seem that this conditionality just didn’t exist. But it did. Bible prophecies often have a conditional element to them, because God’s purpose is often open-ended, reflecting the colossal value He places upon our freewill decisions.

9:14 The plagues were on Pharaoh’s heart in that God was progressively confirming Pharaoh in the position he had himself adopted.

9:22 The great hail plague lead up to Israel’s Passover deliverance, and yet this is the language of the last days (Rev. 16:21)- as if there will again be a Passover deliverance for God’s people, heralded by the pouring out of plagues upon those who persecute them.

9:29 Spreading out hands is a form of prayer, perhaps symbolizing our openness before God, or perhaps an expression meaning that we have nothing, but beg God for His grace.

9:31,32 Are we to conclude that the Egyptians grew barley but the Hebrews preferred wheat?

9:35 The record speaks often of how Pharaoh hardened his heart [“his heart was stubborn” carries this idea], and yet also of how God hardened Pharaoh’s heart (10:1). God confirms people in the mental attitude they adopt. He’s not indifferent. Hence the colossal importance of human thought and action- God is waiting to confirm us in the way we choose to go.

10:6 Turning around and storming out shows his anger and emotion; being easily provoked was one of Moses' characteristics (Num. 20:12; Ps. 106:32,33). And yet he was very humble (Num. 12:3). There’s nothing wrong with emotion and passion in itself, and it’s not irreconcilable with humility.

10:19 The wind casting the locusts into the Red Sea was similar to how God sent a wind to open and close the Red Sea, and the Egyptians were as it were cast into the Red Sea to their destruction. God was seeking to show Pharaoh what He was capable of, and how Pharaoh was just another locust. The Pharaohs had a locust crest on their crowns. God tries to give people warning of the judgment that will come upon them, in the hope they will repent.

10:22 The plague of darkness was clearly intended to imply the death of Ra, the Egyptian sun god. One by one, the major gods of Egypt were declared dead or powerless by the plagues. The Israelites should’ve learnt from this not to worship the Egyptian gods ever again; but they forgot the lesson.

10:23 Similar to how the Angel stood behind the Israelites as they crossed the Red Sea, giving them light and yet giving darkness to the pursuing Egyptians (14:20). Perhaps the Israelites had light but the Egyptians darkness because the Angel stood with them literally? God often gives notice of what He is planning to do, bringing about similar situations, in the hope that His people will repent.

10:25 God’s demands upon Pharaoh grew- now he had to give them animals too. The further a person goes away from God, the harder God makes it for them- because He confirms people in the hardness or softness to Him which they choose.

11:3 *The man Moses was very great*- Yet it is also written that “the man Moses was very meek” (Num. 12:3). Putting the two passages together we have the clear lesson that he who humbles himself is made great; and in this, Moses was not only a type of Christ but also a pattern for all who would go through the pattern which the Lord Jesus set before us: of humbling ourselves now that we might be made great in due time.

11:8 *I will go out*- Moses saw himself as representative of all God’s people, just as Christ is our representative.

12:5 *Without blemish*- quoted about Christ, whom the Passover lamb represented (1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:19). The animal was to be ‘taken out’ from the flock- it wasn’t specially bred for the occasion. This prefigures how the Lord Jesus was to be of true human nature, one of us, identical to the rest of the flock whom He died to save.

12:11 *Belt on your waist-* With their robes girded up. In a chapter full of Passover allusions, Peter quotes this phrase as painting a word picture of the intensity in which believers today should be living as they await the call to leave this present society [cp. Egypt] and go to be with the Lord (1 Pet. 1:13).

12:19 Searching their homes for yeast represents our searching of our lives for sin (1 Cor. 5:6-8). Sin is like yeast in that just a little bit of it leads to a huge influence in our lives and those of others- it spreads, unless it is thrown away.

12:22 *Hyssop*- We think of the use of hyssop in Christ’s crucifixion (Jn. 19:29).

12:23 ‘Pass over’ translates a Hebrew word meaning to hover over. One Angel would hover over the homes of the faithful Israelites to stop the ‘Destroyer’ Angel (1 Cor. 10:10) killing their firstborn.

12:29 *Midnight*- The second coming of Christ is figuratively said to be with a great cry at “midnight” (Mt. 25:6). Note how a great cry went up at midnight on Passover night (:30). We who are awaiting the return of Christ are therefore in a similar position to Israel on Passover night, watching and waiting, under persecution of various types.

12:34 The Israelites also took with them the idols of Egypt (Ez. 20:7,8), even though the plagues had demonstrated those idols to be dead and powerless, and God had declared those idols condemned by the plagues (:12). The crossing of the Red Sea represents our baptism (1 Cor. 10:1,2), and we too mustn’t take any of this world’s idols with us when we spiritually leave this world.

12:37 If there were 600,000 men, excluding children, we can guess that there were around three million Israelites who left Egypt, in addition to the mixed multitude of :38. Jacob’s family numbered 70 people when they entered Egypt 430 years previously (12:41; Gen. 46:27). This is a huge growth rate; the promises to Abraham that his descendants would become many clearly received a clear initial fulfilment. Through baptism, those same promises are made to us (Gal. 3:27-29), and in some way we may also experience an initial fulfilment of the promised blessing even in this life.

12:38 *Mixed multitude*- Egyptians who had come to side with Yahweh? Or does this refer to the offspring of relations between the Israelites and Egyptians (e.g. Lev. 24:10)?

12:42 The Passover was a memorial feast, to commemorate how God had saved His people. The equivalent for believers today is the breaking of bread meeting, rightly called by some ‘the memorial meeting’. It’s a celebration of what has been done for us through the slain lamb, the Lord Jesus.

13:8 *For me*- Subsequent generations were to see themselves as having been personally saved from Egypt, and many of the Psalms take comfort in what God did there as being a guarantee that He likewise will save *us* from our Egypt-like situations.

13:9 *A memorial*- All that Israel did with their hands or thought in their minds was to be influenced by the memory of the fact that they had been redeemed from Egypt. Our experience of redemption through the blood of our Passover lamb should have the same effect upon us. Some Jewish traditions literally fulfil this command by carrying jewellery on their wrist and forehead. For us it should be a mental awareness, which is physically articulated through the memorial meeting, breaking bread and drinking wine in memory of Christ’s death which redeemed us from this world and its gods.

13:17 God is sensitive to our weaknesses in the path He chooses to lead us towards His promised land. The fact the people did later wish to return to Egypt (Num. 14:4) was therefore inexcusable; God did not test His people more than they could reasonably endure, just as He will not with us (1 Cor. 10:13).

13:21 The pillar of cloud is paralleled with an Angel in 14:19. Israel were led out of Egypt, through the desert to the promised land by an Angel who guided them- just as we are led by a guardian Angel. The cloud shielded them from the strong sun in the day, and the fire gave them warmth and light by night. In this we see God’s sensitivity to us and provision of all our basic needs on our journey towards His Kingdom. An Angel in a cloud appears in Rev. 10:1 to announce that the journey of God’s people is over, and they have entered His Kingdom.

13:22 The Angel was continually with the people, every day of their journey- including the days when they murmured against God, wanted to return to Egypt, made a golden calf. We too can become over familiar with God and with the fact that we are being led by an Angel towards God’s Kingdom.

14:2 Geographically and tactically, this was a mistake in human terms- God led them into a dead end, surrounded by mountains and with their backs to the sea, with the Egyptians charging after them. We too are led by God at times into situations which seem dead ends, with no human way out. But this is in order to show us the power of His salvation.

14:12 God wanted His people to leave Egypt in order to be *His* servants (7:16); but their response had been that they preferred to be Pharaoh’s servants. Moses brought them out of Egypt by his faith, not theirs (Acts 7:36,38; Heb. 11:28,29). In some ways, God drags us kicking and screaming out of the world and to be His people; this is what grace is all about.

14:13 *Whom you have seen*- The pursuing Egyptians were very close to the Israelites. God sometimes tests our faith to the very limit.

14:15 This was a rebuke of Moses by God. He had his crisis of faith, understandably- even though Moses calmly exhorted the people to have faith (14:13). Yet by faith he brought them through the Red Sea (Heb. 11:28,29). Therefore as with his first exit from Egypt (he feared the wrath of the King, and then he didn't, Heb. 11:27 cp. Ex. 2:14), his faith wavered, but came down on the right side.

14:21 *Made... dry land... the waters were divided*- Language definitely reminiscent of the Genesis creation (Gen. 1:7). It’s as if God was making a new creation for Israel. After our baptisms into Christ, we too become a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

14:22 1 Cor. 10:1,2 interprets crossing the Red Sea as prefiguring Christian baptism. Israel were baptized into Moses as we are into Christ, “in the cloud and in the sea”. A cloud is water droplets. They had water on both sides of them and water above them- in this sense they were surrounded by water, just as baptism is a complete immersion in water.

15:1 The faithful believers will sing the Song of Moses when they enter God’s Kingdom and all our troubled waters are permanently calm (Rev. 15:3). The Israelites are set up as our examples, and we should learn the lessons from their subsequent failures.

15:2 *My father's God*- Moses was only with his parents in babyhood and maybe very early childhood. They inculcated in him the faith of Yahweh at that early age. They likely died whilst he was still in the court of Pharaoh and looked like an ungrateful child who had gone the way of the world and forgotten his God and his people and their efforts to raise him in the faith. Moses here pays tribute to them. What a surprise awaits them in the Kingdom!

15:4 Pharaoh’s men ran into the Sea themselves in hot pursuit of Israel; but God confirmed them in that desire, so in a sense He cast them into the Sea. There is strong emphasis on the image of God throwing or casting the Egyptians into the Red Sea (15:1,21); God confirms people in the way they wish to go, in the heart they wish to have.

15:11 *Among the gods*- The Egyptian gods had been declared dead or powerless by the plagues. Israel enthusiastically sung of Yahweh’s excellence above these gods; and yet they still carried the idols who represented those gods with them, and worshipped them (Ez. 20:7,8; Acts 7:42,43). It’s one thing to enthusiastically sing of God’s truths in the words of hymns and songs, but to live out those words in daily life is quite another.

15:15 *Are melted away*- So the people enthusiastically sung, and so it was in reality, as reported by Rahab (Josh. 2:9-11). But when Israel came to enter Canaan, they preferred to believe that the people there hadn’t melted away at all, but were far too strong for them (Num. 13:30-33). Israel's hearts "melted" for fear of those melting Canaanites (Josh. 14:8). Again, we can loudly sing of God’s power over all that might be obstacles in our path to entering the Kingdom, but to live and feel this in continual daily life is something else.

15:22 Soon after their baptism at the Red Sea, God gave His people tests. This is often seen in the lives of those baptized into Christ.

15:24 *Murmured*- We are specifically told not to murmur as they did (1 Cor. 10:10). They soon lost the intensity of joyful faith they had when they sung the Song of Moses earlier in this chapter. We too struggle to keep the intensity of faith which we have at some specific moments.

15:27 The Israelites in their twelve tribes must have marvelled at God’s gracious providence when they came across twelve wells in the desert, one for each tribe. In our wilderness journeys we too at times are amazed by God’s kind providence. The twelve wells enabled 70 palm trees to grow. Gen. 10 listed 70 Gentile nations as the descendants of Noah’s sons after the flood, and the number is associated with the Gentile world. The implication is that Israel’s blessings were to be shared with the Gentile world. Abraham’s seed was to be a blessing to the world, and we who are in Christ are likewise that seed, and aren’t to be selfish with our spiritual blessings but share them with the surrounding world. Israel’s spiritual elitism and isolationism was exactly the opposite of what God intended.

16:3 As Israel exaggerated in their minds how good it had been in Egypt, forgetting it was the land of their suffering and desperation, so we can look back to the world we left at baptism [cp. The Red Sea crossing] and imagine it was so far better than it was.

16:6 God had brought Israel out of Egypt, but the reality and wonder of it was subsequently lost on them, just as it can be on us.

16:8 It's twice emphasized in :8,12 that the manna would completely fill them. God’s word as it is in Christ can alone fully satisfy us here in life’s wilderness.

*Not against us*- What they said against Moses they said against God, in the sense that all God’s people represent Him, and our attitude to His people is our attitude to God- and will be the basis of our final judgment (Mt. 25:40).

16:18 Jewish tradition interpreted this as meaning that the stronger, fitter people gathered more and shared it with those who were weaker and couldn’t gather so much, resulting in them all having the same amount of manna. Paul quotes this tradition with approval in 2 Cor. 8:15, using it to argue that rich Christians should give to those who are poorer. Those who refused to obey this command of 16:18 found their manna was corrupted by morning- teaching that unless we share our manna or wealth (as 2 Cor.8:15 interprets it) before the morning of the Lord's coming, we will incur His wrath.

16:19 They were given enough food only for each day. Jesus alluded to this when He asked us to pray that God will give us enough bread for today only (Mt. 6:11).

16:27 The manna represented the word of God and the salvation which comes through its revelation in Christ (Jn. 6:48,63). Israel could gather it on six days of the week, but not on the seventh. The seventh day represents the Millennium / Kingdom (cp. how the manna ceased as soon as they entered Canaan, representing the Kingdom). Yet on the seventh day Israel sought to collect manna but found none- as the foolish virgins of the new Israel will seek the oil of the word when it is no longer available. Nobody will be indifferent in the day of judgment. All will want to gather the manna, be filled with the oil. Now is the day to do so.

17:6 The rock that was struck represented Christ (1 Cor. 10:4)- water came out of His side when He was ‘struck’ in crucifixion. Paul says that the rock followed them- in the sense that the water from the smitten rock followed them as a gushing river. This speaks of the constant refreshment and life available from Christ in our wilderness journeys. Yet despite the wonder of that provision, the people still murmured, made a golden calf, wanted to return to Egypt- they failed to perceive the wonder of God’s constant presence, just as we can.

17:11 Uplifted hands represent intense prayer (Lam. 2:19; 2 Chron. 6:12,13; Ezra 9:5; Ps. 28:2; 141:2; 1 Tim. 2:8). The Bible is always teaching us the power of just one person- when Moses didn’t pray so fervently, Israelite lives were lost. Others’ wellbeing and final victory partially depends upon our prayer for them, hence Paul’s example of and exhortation to pray for others continually.

17:12 Moses with his arms held above his head with men both side of him until the sun went down invites comparison with Christ on the cross, where He intensely prayed for the final victory of us God’s people.

18:2 Moses "sent away" this woman- the Septuagint uses the same Greek word translated to “divorce” in 1 Cor. 7:11-13. Moses allowed divorce for the hardness of Israel's hearts (Mt. 19:8) and yet he himself appears to have divorced her- for the hardness of his heart?

18:3 Moses' children had names which showed his recognition he was a stranger in the land where he was living; he lived as a foreigner in Midian. Few people live in a country for 40 years without feeling they belong to it. We who are the Israel of God are to live as foreigners and pilgrims in this land which in fact is our eternal inheritance (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11).

18:15 Again we see the degree to which Moses was functionally God to the people, although he wasn’t God Himself in person. The same can be said of Jesus.

18:18 Moses accepts Jethro's advice on the basis that he would otherwise “wear away”; even though his natural strength never abated (Dt. 34:7). Was that because he followed Jethro’s advice- or because God blessed him anyway, making Jethro’s advice irrelevant?

18:21 As with the New Testament qualifications for leadership amongst God’s people, birth, education, charisma and social standing were irrelevant. Spiritual qualifications were to decide who was chosen for leadership- a concept unheard of in any other religion.

19:4 The eagle tries to teach its young to fly independently by casting them out of the nest and flying beneath them to catch them if they fall, as well as the draft from it’s own wings keeping them in motion. God wants His people to fly independently, not just be carried by Him.

19:6 We in Christ are His Kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2:9). The priests were from the tribe of Levi, and the kings from Judah. But God’s intention was that all His people should be priests, rather than giving the responsibility for spiritual care and welfare to a select group of specialists. Nearly all religions delegate spiritual care to some group of specialists, but amongst God’s true people we are all intended to be priests. Although Christ was from the kingly tribe of Judah, He is a priest too (Heb. 7:11-13)- and we who are in Him can therefore be a Kingdom of priests even now, and in the future be king-priests who shall reign eternally on earth (Rev. 5:10). Whilst the full physical manifestation of God’s Kingdom is yet to come at Christ’s return, we who are under the Kingship and dominion of God are in that sense His kingdom in embryo, in the sense that the people ruled over by a king are his ‘kingdom’.

19:19 According to Heb. 12:18-29, Moses was very frightened by the earthquake and sound of the voice. That passage draws a comparison with the voice of the blood of Christ, which is yet more powerful- having the power to shake all things to their very core.

19:24 God judges people in a manner appropriate to their sin- if the people broke through to gaze at Yahweh, He would break through in judgment against them.

20:4 Israel weren’t to worship any appearance of God or anything which claimed to be a representation of Him- He wanted them to worship Him directly, facing the utter reality of the fact that we can have direct contact with Him.

20:5 *Jealous*- The more love someone shows to someone, the more they are going to be jealous about them, especially when the beloved one has agreed to accept that love. God’s love for us is colossal, epitomized in the gift of His Son to die for us in demonstration of His love. He is therefore jealous over us, our thoughts, actions, feelings- for He sees all. It is painful for Him beyond words when we turn away to other gods- and it must be thrilling for Him to see us eagerly wanting to respond to Him, in a world which for the most part has refused His love or treats it as something ordinary.

20:7 *His Name in vain*- We take the Name to ourselves by baptism into that Name; baptism is a calling upon ourselves the Lord’s Name (Acts 15:17; 22:16). We aren’t to do this “in vain”, for nothing, but to appreciate the wonder of it.

20:17 *Not covet*- God’s law differs from human laws in that it criminalizes internal attitudes. It was impossible to prove the sin of covetousness, nor enforce the law against it- because it’s invisible to others. Yet the God who sees all stands in judgment upon our innermost thoughts and desires.

20:19 People prefer not to have a direct relationship with God, hence the hierarchies and pyramid structure of many churches. But God wants to have a direct personal relationship with us as individuals. They failed to see that Divine words given through another person really are the voice of God to us personally (Ex. 20:19). Perhaps our difficulty with appreciating an inspired Bible is similar; we know the theory, but do we really see the wonder of the fact that what we read is the awesome voice of God Himself to us?

20:24 We are made from the dust of the earth. God doesn’t want beautiful externalities, He wants us to worship Him from the heart, accepting us as we are. The Law of Moses recognizes so often that Israel wouldn’t be fully obedient, hence the next verse goes on to speak of how *if* they still insisted on building not an earth altar but a stone one, then even if they make use of God’s concession to human weakness, they must still abide by His principles.

*I will come down to you and I will bless you*- “You” is you singular in the Hebrew here. Wherever an ordinary Israelite offered sacrifice, God would come to them personally. Yet this is the very language of God coming unto Moses on the top of Sinai (19:20 “came down”)- as if to imply that the very pinnacle of Moses’ relationship with God, meeting Him on the top of the mount, is just as attainable for each of God’s people who truly sacrifices to Him.

21:6 *Elohim*- The word literally means ‘mighty ones’, and is usually translated “God”; but it can refer to Angels and also to men, in this case, to the elders or judges of Israel.

This custom is alluded to in Ps. 40:6, and applied to Christ in Heb. 10:5-10. For love of us, the wife whom He was given by God His “master” (:4), Christ chose to stay in the Father’s house for ever. The nailing of the ear to a piece of wood is understood in Hebrews 10 as prophetic of Christ’s nailing to the cross. The ear represented obedient listening to the Master’s word. Christ on the cross was ultimately obedient to God’s word- for our sakes. That we are seen as His wife should inspire us to the utmost faithfulness and support of His cause in this world.

21:14 The altar represented Christ (Heb. 13:10). He is the place of refuge whither we may flee, who like the man of v. 13 have committed sins worthy of death and yet against our deepest will. Whilst we cannot justify all our sins by blaming them on circumstances, within some kind of ‘situational ethic’, it is also true that God recognizes that at times and in some ways we sin without deeply intending to.

21:17 To deal with a person as if they are an object is judged by God as bad as murder. The value and meaning of the human person is paramount with God, and is reflected in His law.

21:20 A slave was to be respected as a person no less than anyone else. A person’s social or economic standing can never excuse abusing them.

21:33 *Doesn’t cover it*- As the punishment for not keeping in an animal known to be dangerous (:29). These laws were seeking to inculcate sensitivity to others. We too should live our lives thinking about the possible consequence to others of our actions, both in what we commit and what we omit to do.

22:7 *Pay double*- But Zacchaeus paid back four times what he had stolen (Lk. 19:8). The existence of God’s law shouldn’t inculcate a spirit of minimalism in us, doing the letter of the law and no more. Rather if we perceive the principles behind it, we will do far over and above what the letter of the law requires.

22:10 ‘God’ here refers to the judges or elders; to come before God’s representative is to come before God.

22:21 Israel were to be motivated in kindness to others by the recollection that they had been redeemed from Egypt; the memory of our redemption through the waters of baptism [cp. the Red Sea] should have the same effect upon us.

22:25 Israelites weren’t to lend to each other for interest. Yet Jesus tells the rejected man that he should’ve done at least this (Mt. 25:7)- as if to say that the man should’ve done at least something with what God had given him, even if it wasn’t the ideal, and even if it technically infringed God’s law. Indifference and selfish laziness with God’s gifts is therefore highlighted as being so reprehensible to Jesus.

22:31 This command wasn’t only for hygienic reasons. God wished to encourage His people to have a healthy work ethic, not taking short cuts, but eating animals they had raised themselves for that purpose. We live in a society where laziness and trying to live for free has become almost an art form. We cannot ultimately get around the curse, that we shall eat only as a result of the sweat of our own labour. We have to accept our humanity and our fallen condition, looking for the lifting of the curse in God’s future Kingdom.

23:2 We go astray “like sheep” (Is. 53:6)- we tend to sin because of others’ influence, because we’re not as strongly individualistic and independent as we like to think we are.

23:4,5 These are further examples of how God’s law differs from human laws in that it criminalizes internal attitudes. It was impossible to prove the sin of omitting to help your enemy’s animal, nor enforce the law against it- because it would’ve been invisible to others. Yet the God who sees all stands in judgment upon our innermost thoughts and desires. Note too that sins of omission are just as bad as sins of commission; the man who refused to help the animal could’ve returned to his home that day feeling he hadn’t actually committed anything wrong. But his sin of omission would’ve been noticed by God.

23:12 God’s sensitivity to animals shines through the Law- the fact even animals are living beings and not mere machines should be felt by us too. God’s intention was to inculcate an all round spirit of sensitivity to others in human life, and that included animals.

23:13 They were not to even mention the names of idols- a principle alluded to in Eph. 5:3, where we are told that we shouldn’t even name or talk about immorality and evil. For these are the idols of our age. We aren’t to sin vicariously, by watching, reading and speaking about sinful things whilst not physically doing them ourselves.

23:21 God’s Name being carried by the Angel explains how Moses later is recorded as talking with Yahweh face to face, even though we are also told that He cannot ever be seen by humans. Moses spoke with the Angel who carried the Yahweh Name, and who was therefore functionally as God to men. The same principle explains how men, and especially Christ, can be spoken of as God because they carried His Name, without this making them God Himself in person.

23:23 This happened invisibly, with the Angel working through circumstances to weaken those tribes. But the Israelites failed to believe this verse, feeling that those tribes were far too strong for them (Num. 13:30-33).

23:28 The sending of hornets ahead of Israel parallels the sending of the Angel ahead of them (:23). The reference may be to literal hornets devastating and weakening the Canaanites; or it could refer instead to Egyptian tribes or the Philistines, some of whom had hornets on their armour, attacking and weakening the Canaanite tribes just before the Israelites arrived. This situation was providentially arranged by the Angel who went before Israel. The obstacles to our possessing the Kingdom seem huge and strong, but in fact they have been significantly weakened by God’s providence. Invisible to us, the Angels likewise are potentially preparing our way to enter the Kingdom.

23:29 The God who is so far away from this earth foresees the situations we will face in life, and like a true Father, arranges things so that they will not be too great for us to overcome. His sensitivity to us is amazing.

24:7 Moses could read- for he had been raised with the best of the Egyptian education system (Acts 7:22).

24:8 *Blood of the covenant*- It wasn’t that the blood *was* the covenant, but the death of the slain animal represented the confirmation and certainty of the covenant. Christ’s death confirmed the new covenant which was made in the promises to Abraham (Rom. 15:8; Gal. 3:15-19). Believers take the cup of the new covenant in the breaking of bread service (1 Cor. 11:25), as a token of the absolute certainty of God’s basic promises to we who have had those same covenant promises made to us through baptism (Gal. 3:27-29). We will eternally inherit the earth- and the blood of Christ confirmed that to us.

24:11 To eat and drink with the Lord is a sign He accepts us and does not wish to destroy us. This is the comfort of doing so at the breaking of bread meeting.

24:12 Yahweh wrote the Law. Yet the Lord Jesus speaks of *Moses* writing the precepts of the Law (Mk. 10:5). “The book of the law of Moses” is parallel with “the book of the law of Yahweh” (Neh. 8:1; 2 Chron. 17:9); it was “the book of the law of Yahweh given by Moses” (2 Chron. 34:14). God was so strongly manifest in Moses, without making Moses to be God Himself in person.

25:2 Willing hearted giving to God is important- the giving must never be from a sense of unavoidable obligation. In appealing for generosity to our poorer brethren, Paul uses this idea- speaking of how a willing heart in a cheerful giver is so loved by God (2 Cor. 8:19; 9:7).

25:21 The blood of atonement was sprinkled each year upon the top of the ark, the place known as “the mercy seat” or ‘atonement cover’. This blood represented the blood of Christ. The Angel cherubim shadowed the blood on the cover, representing how the Angels watched over Christ in His sacrifice and especially upon the cross. Hence His temptation to call Angels to deliver Him from it (Mt. 26:53). Peter alludes to this in saying that the Angels intently look down upon the things of the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:12). Pagan religions typically had a throne in their temples, on which their God sat. The throne of the true God was empty- there was a “mercy seat”, but no god or idol sat upon it. Faith is about believing in the God who cannot be seen (Heb. 11:1,2), and whose saving mercy to us is confirmed in the blood of His Son.

25:22 God meets with us over the blood of Christ, and from there His voice is heard. Hence Heb. 12:18-29 likens the blood of Christ to a huge voice; we cannot imagine Him there on the cross and be passive, we hear, as it were, God’s voice for us. This is why we must regularly remember Christ on the cross, replaying the scene continually before our eyes. For there we hear God’s voice and we have our meeting with Him. The breaking of bread service is a practical help to this end.

25:36 The candlestick represents the assembly of believers (Rev. 1:20). It was made of beaten work, representing how all those in the true church will be beaten into a shape through which they can be lights for God.

25:38 Gold wasn’t the strongest or most practical material for these instruments. But it represents faith (1 Pet. 1:7). We aren’t the best instruments for God to use in His house, but He prefers to use the soft and those who aren’t humanly qualified for His work- because He works by faith in us, and by our faith in Him rather than our human strength.

26:6 The tabernacle was "one", joined together in such a way by the interlocking parts that it taught the lesson of unity. The spiritual tabernacle, the believers, was "pitched" by the Lord Jesus- translating a Greek word which suggests 'crucifixion' (Heb. 8:2). Through the cross, the one, united tabernacle was pitched. To tear down that structure by disuniting the body is to undo the work of the cross.

26:10 The tabernacle represents God’s dwelling place. He now no longer lives in any physical structure, but in the hearts of His people, who between them comprise His new dwelling place. We can however learn lessons from the principles behind the tabernacle construction. Great emphasis was placed on how the components were all interlocking- the curtains coupled together, the boards were joined by bars etc. It is by our unity and connection with each other that God will dwell amongst us. Christianity can’t be lived in isolation- we need each other.

26:14 They were dyed red to represent how the blood of Christ is the covering for God’s people.

26:31 The veil represents Christ in His humanity (Heb. 10:20). His character was complexly woven and beautiful, with the white linen or righteousness (Rev. 19:8) running as a thread through His entire character. Weaving complex strands and patterns therefore speaks of how God worked to develop the character of Christ, and He likewise weaves in our lives too, if we are open to His working.

26:33 The veil screened off the Most Holy Place, where the very presence of God was. When Christ died, this veil was torn down (Mt. 26:51), from top to bottom- indicating it was done by God and not men. Through His death, anyone who believes in Him can do continually what the High Priest could do only once per year- come right into the very presence of God Himself.

27:1 *Acacia wood*- This was plentiful in the wilderness, but it is little more than brushwood; a surprising choice of material to be used in God’s dwelling place. But His choice of *us* with all our weakness and dysfunction, the common, weak stuff of the wilderness, is no less surprising. The choice of acacia wood for constructing the tabernacle is one of several points in the whole enterprise where it seems a less than ideal material was chosen, from a construction point of view. This aspect emphasizes that God prefers to work with the soft, weak and broken in order to do His work (as also in Ez. 15:2-5).

27:20 The lampstand is used as a symbol of the ecclesia in the visions of Revelation 2 and 3. The purpose of the ecclesia is to enable the oil of the Spirit to be burnt, to turn it into light. We are to keep our own personal light burning continually, day and night. Jesus had this in mind when He likened us to women waiting for the bridegroom to come at night, whose oil lamps should not be allowed to go out (Mt. 25).

28:3 The wise were given wisdom, in keeping with God’s principle of confirming people in the way in which they themselves choose to go.

28:6 The ephod was a kind of waistcoat, onto which the breastplate was attached.

28:12 This is symbolic of how Christ, our High Priest, carries the names of all God’s people on His shoulders and over His heart (:29) as He stands for us in God’s presence. The preciousness of the stones reflects our high value in God’s sight.

28:17 The faithful believers are likened to a stone with a unique name written on it (Rev. 2:17). We are each called to uniquely reflect and refract the light of God’s glory in a way slightly different to anyone else, just as the stones on the breastplate all glimmered with their own unique beauty. Unity isn’t the same as uniformity.

28:35 "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16) may be Paul alluding to how the High Priest had to have bells so that "his sound shall be heard... so that he will not die". This idea of the sound being heard is picked up in Ps. 19:3 concerning the spread of the Gospel.

28:39 That the Priest’s crown was to be made of linen rather than solid gold or some other precious metal could appear some kind of anticlimax- most leaders of other religions had something solid on their heads. White linen represents righteousness (Rev. 19:8); it’s as if the intention was to highlight the fact that simple righteousness is of such great value and power in God’s sight rather than any visible ostentation.

28:41 The Lord died that He might "sanctify" us to God (Jn. 17:17,19). This is the word used here by the Septuagint to describe the consecration of the priests to service of the body of Israel. If we reject the call to priesthood today, wanting to leave it all to others, we reject the point of the Lord's saving suffering for us.

28:43 *Bear iniquity*  is therefore an idiom for being personally guilty. Yet the idiom is used about Christ in His bearing of our iniquity on the cross (Is. 53:11). The Lord Jesus was our sin bearer and yet personally guiltless. This is the paradox which even He struggled with, leading to His feeling of having been forsaken by God (Mt. 27:46). This means that although Christ never sinned, He knows the feelings of sinners, because His identity with us was so deep and complete.

29:1 ‘To make holy’ or to ‘sanctify’ is something Jesus often spoke in discussing the meaning of His death. He makes many allusions to the language of the High Priest in His prayer of John 17, e.g. “for their sakes I sanctify Myself so that they also may be sanctified” (Jn. 17:19). We are all called to be part of a new priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5,9); Christ’s death sanctified us, prepared us for service in God’s house. Spiritually serving others is therefore not something just for a specialist minority, but for *all* who are in Christ, ‘the anointed one’, anointed just as the priests were anointed to serve (:21). The unblemished animals which were sacrificed in order to sanctify the priests therefore represent the sacrifice of Jesus.

29:7 The Septuagint word used for ‘anointing’ here occurs in the New Testament only in 1 Jn. 2:20,27, where we read that we have each been anointed. The idea of anointing was to signal the initiation of someone as they began a specific calling or work. When we are baptized into Christ, *the* anointed One, then as 2 Cor. 1:21 says, we too are anointed in a sense. We're given a specific mission and purpose. "The anointing that you received" in 1 Jn. 2 would therefore refer to our commissioning at baptism. It seems to imply a one time act of being anointed / commissioned / inaugurated for service. Baptism isn't therefore merely an initiation into a community; it's a specific commissioning for active service, in ways which are unique to us. We do well to bring this point out to those we prepare for baptism.

29:33 Eating the things with which the atonement was made points forward to the breaking of bread service. We can see in this echoes of the consecration of the priests; and we should realize each time we do it that we have been sanctified in order to proactively serve in God’s house.

29:42 Although we are a great multitude of redeemed, yet the communication of the Father and Son to us are still amazingly unique, even though we all hear and read the same actual words, and reflect upon the same facts. Right back at the beginning of God’s relationship with Israel He made the point that “I will meet you [plural] to speak there to you [singular]” [the KJV reflects the Hebrew grammar by making a distinction between you plural and ‘thee’, you singular].

29:45 *I will dwell… will be their* God- Rev. 21:3 understands this as coming true when Christ returns to earth, seeing that God’s intention for this to happen with Israel didn’t materialize. And yet, having prophesied that He *will be* their God, He says that He is right now their God (:46). This could mean that even if God’s people choose not to have Him as their God, yet He keeps His side of the covenant; He is their God. In this we see God’s hopefulness for us, His earnest desire to have a relationship with His people.

29:46 Often we read this two fold intention of God- to bring His people out from the world [Egypt], and then to do something positive with them. Our separation from the world isn’t therefore negative; for ‘holiness’ means both separation *from* and separation *unto*.

30:8 *Perpetual incense*- The continual burning of incense, night and day, was a reminder that prayer (cp. Incense, Rev. 8:3,4) was a way of life, not only specific statements. David's references to making constant prayer (e.g. Ps. 88:1) may allude to the constant rising up of the incense. We cannot be literally praying all the time, but our basic spirit of life can rise up as a prayer to God constantly. Our lives are, in a sense, our prayer.

30:9 The Law seems to have foreseen the difference between real and apparent prayer by warning that the true incense was to be burnt [representing prayer], but not any other kind of incense, or incense comprised of other kinds of ingredients. We must ask ourselves whether our prayers are the real thing, or just one part of our brain talking to another part of our brain which we call ‘God’.

30:18 This may represent the need for the washing of baptism in order to come to Christ, the altar (Heb. 13:10). This was required if they didn’t want to die (:20).

30:20 Tit. 3:5-7 implies that the priests washing in the brass basin typified baptism. Baptism is related to salvation. All God's people are priests (1 Pet. 2:5,9); the washing of baptism is an absolute necessity before we can be God's priestly people.

30:21 There are many allusions to the language of priesthood in the New Testament, both as major statements and also in passing. The idea of baptism as a washing suggests that we afterwards enter into priestly service; we’re not declared by baptism to be merely members of a denomination, hobby level theologians who now agree to a set of doctrines. We instead, in a very real sense, are cleansed and consecrated into the service of God, ministering to His people, doing His work.

30:35 Incense is a symbol of prayer (Rev. 8:3,4). Whilst there is a place for instantaneous and emotional prayers, this doesn’t mean that we should overlook the fact that another kind of prayer should be prayer that is carefully prepared, just as the incense was.

*Seasoned with salt*- Our speech, Paul says, should be “seasoned with salt” (Col. 4:6). He’s alluding here, perhaps with the idea that the way we speak generally should be in the same manner as we pray to God, like the incense.

30:36 *Very small*- If incense is like prayer, this may refer to how we shouldn’t be afraid nor ashamed to pray to God about the smallest things. Nothing is outside of His control, indeed, God is so often in the details.

31:6 The wise were made more wise- an idea we often encounter in the opening chapters of Proverbs. God confirms men and women in the way they wish to go; if they wish to do His work and build up His dwelling place, He will confirm them in their natural talents and give them new ones.

31:17 How are we to understand the 'Language of limitation' which Scripture abounds with- e.g. Gen. 2:2; Ex. 31:17; Dt. 32:20,27? God is almighty and doesn’t need refreshment. One explanation is that such language refers to God’s manifestation through His Angels, who aren’t almighty although they are sinless (Mt. 24:36).

Heb. 4:10 understands the Sabbath to teach that as God ceased from His works, so those in Christ should cease from trusting in their own works and live their whole lives in the spirit of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is defined here as a sign between God and the people of Israel, those in Christ don’t need to observe it today (Col. 2:14-17).

32:32 Moses loved the people so intensely, despite their rebellion. He was prepared to give his place in the Kingdom so that they might enter; he *prayed* God for 40 days to accept his offer. He knew that atonement could only be by sacrifice of blood (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22; cp. Num. 25:8,13); and yet he climbed the Mount with the intent of making atonement himself for Israel's sin (:30); he intended to give his life for them. And he didn't make such a promise in hot blood, as some men might. He made the statement, and then made the long climb to the top of the mount. And during that climb, it seems he came to an even higher spiritual level; he was prepared not only to offer his physical life, but also his place in the Kingdom; God’s “book” is His book of life, of those who will ultimately be saved (Ex. 32:32 cp. Ez. 13:9; Dan. 12:2; Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 20:12). The love of Moses for Israel typifies the love of Christ towards us. At the end of his life he recounts how God had threatened to destroy the people (Dt. 9:15), but he doesn’t record his 40 days of pleading with the Father, and how he turned down the offer of having himself made into a great nation. In this we see his humility.  Note how Moses argues with God against God’s stated intention, and persuades God otherwise. He is open to dialogue with us His people; hence the intensity we can experience in prayer, and the element of wrestling there is in it. To be blotted out of the book may have been understood by Moses as asking for him to be excluded from an inheritance in the promised land; for later, a ‘book’ was written describing the various portions (Josh. 18:9). The connection is made explicit in Ez. 13:9- to be blotted out of the book meant to not enter the land. God had just spoken of ‘blotting out’ Israel from before Him (Dt. 9:14), and making a nation of Moses; but now Moses is asking to share in their condemnation rather than experience salvation without them. This was the extent of his devotion. In Dt. 9:18 he says that his prayer of Ex. 32:32 *was heard*- in that he was not going to enter the land, but they would. Hence his urging of them to go ahead and enter the land- to experience what his self-sacrifice had enabled. In this we see the economy of God, and how He works even through sin. On account of Moses’ temporary rashness of speech, he was excluded; Moses didn't enter the land. And yet by this, his prayer was heard. But ultimately he did what he intended- he gave his place in the Kingdom / land so that they might enter [although of course he will be in the future Kingdom]. This is why Moses stresses at the end of his life that he wouldn’t enter the land *for Israel’s sake* (Dt. 1:37; 3:26; 4:21; Ps. 106:32). He saw that his sin had been worked through, and the essential reason for him not entering was because of the offer he had made. In all this, Moses was typifying the death of Jesus. Is. 53:8 describes His cross as being “cut off [Heb. ‘excluded’] from the land of the living” (s.w. ‘the congregation’- of Israel), for the transgression of His people. The Lord died the death of a sinner, He chose like Moses to suffer affliction with us, that we might be saved.

32:33 God didn’t accept Moses’ offer to die as a *substitute* for Israel, for each must be judged for their own sins. But He did accept Moses as a *representative* of Israel and accepted his mediation for their salvation on this basis; just as He accepted the work of Christ on the same basis. Paul learnt the lesson when he says that he *could wish* himself condemned and Israel saved (Rom. 9:1-3); but he recognized God didn’t accept Moses’ offer of dying for them as a substitute.

33:1 The manifestation of God in a person leads to a mutuality between them. Here God says that *Moses* brought up Israel out of Egypt; but in 32:11, Moses says [as frequently] that *God* brought Israel out of Egypt. And we too can experience this mutuality in relationship with the Father.

33:5 God told Moses that because Israel were stiff-necked, therefore He could not go up with them. Moses agrees the people are stiff-necked, but he knows God well enough to ask Him to still go up in the midst of them (34:9). And God did! He acted according to how broad was Moses’ conception of God’s grace. If Abraham’s conception of grace had been even broader, perhaps Sodom would’ve been saved…

33:13 God assures Moses that he has found grace in His eyes, and yet Moses doubts this… as if the voice of God telling him wasn’t enough! And maybe there is even the implication that he mistakenly thought that he needed more *knowledge* of God before he could find that grace… as if it depended upon his own mental faculties. And yet God patiently assures Moses yet again: “I *will be gracious* to whom I will be gracious” (:19) was said specifically to Moses, given the context of Moses’ doubts about his receipt of God’s grace. The coming down of Yahweh to pronounce His Name was, in the context, to show how far God would go to assure Moses that yes, His grace towards Moses was real. We too struggle with really believing God’s grace, it seems too good news; and we too are given, also by grace, this undeserved assurance upon assurance.

*I will give you rest*- But they did not enter that rest- Heb. 4:8,10. “Rest" was defined as the land being subdued before God with all the tribes driven out (Josh. 1:13,15; Num. 32:21,22; 1 Chron. 22:18). This being conditional on Israel's faithfulness, we conclude that when the Angel said "I will give you rest" He was speaking of what was possible in prospect; so much peace, victory and salvation have been prepared for us in prospect.

34:6 God’s Name is essentially His characteristics and personality; this declaration of the Name is in response to the request to reveal His glory (33:18). How we pronounce or transliterate God’s Name isn’t so important; the essence of God’s Name is who He is and what He does by grace in the lives of people. Jesus alludes here when He predicted that His death would be a declaration of God’s Name; in the cross we see the quintessence of God’s mercy, grace, judgment etc. (Jn. 17:26). We are baptized into the Name, whereby all God’s perfect character is counted to us.

34:9 Moses makes this request after the clear statement in 33:3 "I will not go up in the midst of you". So let us not be afraid to ask God to change what seems like His purpose in our lives, no matter how hard it seems, if we truly feel that another way would give Him more glory. Moses would not have tried if he did not think success in that prayer was possible. But he not only tried, he succeeded.

34:28 The Old Covenant is defined here and elsewhere as the ten commandments, which include the Sabbath. The New Testament teaches that the Old Covenant has been replaced by the New Covenant in Christ- and He never commanded us to keep the Sabbath.

34:29 We are described in 2 Cor. 3:18 as also like Moses beholding the glory of God, in terms of His moral perfection as it is in the face of Jesus (see on :6), and as the physical glory reflected off Moses’ face, so the more we are in the presence of Jesus, meditating upon His character, the more that glory in a moral sense will increasingly shine off our faces. Paul uses the metaphor of looking in a mirror, until we find that the image in the mirror is no longer our face but the face of Jesus.

35:5 Paul wanted the Corinthians to think themselves into Israel’s shoes. For then they would realize that as Israel had to have a willing heart to give back to God the wealth of Egypt which He had given them, so they were to have a willing heart in being generous to their poorer brethren (Ex. 35:5 = 2 Cor. 8:12). And they would have realized that as “last year” they had made this offer (2 Cor. 8:10 Gk.), so the year before, Israel had received Egypt’s wealth with a similar undertaking to use it for the Lord’s cause. As Moses had to remind them a second time of their obligations in Ex. 35, so Paul had to bring it again before Corinth. And if they had seen these similarities, they would have got the sense of Paul’s lament that there was not one wise hearted man amongst them- for the “wise hearted” were to convert Israel’s gold and silver into tools for Yahweh’s service (Ex. 35:10 = 1 Cor. 6:5; 2 Cor. 10:12).

35:6-9 These were the things which Israel had taken with them from Egypt (12:36); we likewise should use whatever resources we have taken from this world [cp. Egypt] in order to do God’s work and build and enhance His dwelling place amongst His people.

35:31 These men could have refused to do what God asked them. This passage appears to be the basis upon which Paul tells us that each of us have “good works” which God has in mind for us to do, and we must exercise our freewill to perceive them and go do them (Eph. 2:10).

36:6 Israel were extremely generous to God’s work, whilst at the same time carrying with them the idols of Egypt and in their hearts wanting to return there (Ez. 20:7,8; Acts 7:42,43). We too can be externally supportive of God’s work whilst in our hearts being far from Him; this is the nature of our human condition which we must battle against. God above all seeks our hearts and not our external works.

36:31 *He made...*- There is an exact symmetry between the commands to make the tabernacle items- e.g. “You shall make bars...” (26:26) and the record of the fulfilment of the work- “He made... bars”. This is to demonstrate how strictly obedient Moses was to all the commands, hence the comment that he was faithfully obedient in all the work of God’s house (Heb. 3:2,5). In all this, Moses was a type of the perfect obedience of Christ to God. However, we also note that earlier in his life, Moses tended to argue back with God and find every reason *not* to be obedient. As he grew spiritually, he became more naturally and enthusiastically obedient to God’s demands rather than trying to find ways around them, and as such he becomes a pattern for our spiritual growth too.

36:35 The veil symbolized the flesh of the Lord Jesus (Heb. 10:20); and yet into it was woven scarlet, a symbol of His blood and sacrifice which permeated His mortal life. The lesson is that the cross is a daily way of life. The Lord taught this when He asked us to take up the cross daily: to live each day in the exercise of the same principles which He lived and died by. Let's not see spiritual life as a survival of a few crises, as and when they present themselves. It's a way of life, and the principles which lead us to the little victories (when we scald ourselves with hot water, when we dirty a newly washed shirt...) will give us the greater ones also, when (e.g.) we stand before a tribunal, or face death in whatever form.

37:19 Israel was one nation under God; they were represented by one seven-branched candlestick. But in the New Testament vision of Rev. 1:20, each church is represented by an individual candlestick, and the body of Christ as a whole is represented by seven candlesticks, seven being the number of completion. This suggests that each local congregation is seen as autonomous by Christ; no other candlestick can dictate to another what they should do. If they fail to give light as they should, then this is dealt with by Christ Himself, the One who walks amongst the seven candlesticks and is in their midst (Rev. 1:13); He alone can remove a candlestick (Rev. 2:5).

37:21 The language of buds, flowers and branches invites us to see the candlestick as a tree of life giving light in the darkness of the tabernacle, which had no natural light. The candlestick represents the local church in our times (Rev. 1:20); we as communities of believers are to be as the tree of life, offering eternity to a dark world; hence Prov. 11:30 likens the fruit of the righteous to the tree of life, which results in winning people for eternity.

37:22 *One beaten work*- The fact the candlestick was made from one piece of gold is emphasized; it speaks of the unity of the local church, achieved through much patient beating out of the material which comprises it.

38:8 Perhaps this suggests that their devotion to God led them to no longer be so concerned with their own image and appearance.

38:18 This describes the curtain over the door of the tabernacle in similar language to how the veil hiding the Most Holy is described. Christ is the door of the tabernacle through which we enter at our conversion and baptism (Jn. 10:9). By doing so we also enter, in prospect, through the veil into the Most Holy of eternity and Divine nature.

The height of the curtains was such that a man would have to bow his head in order to pass underneath it, teaching the humility required to approach God’s presence.

38:23 This seems to imply that Aholiab was already a master craftsman; but he could only do the work because God blessed and developed the ‘natural’ talent which Aholiab was willing to present to God’s service. God sometimes gives us the opportunity to develop our ‘natural’ talents for use in His service- other times, He asks us to do that which is for us a taking up on the cross.

38:29 God remembers to this day how much everyone gave of what material, and has preserved the record in His written word. This is encouragement to us that no sacrifice for God’s house is every forgotten, but He eternally remembers it.

39:7 *Stones of memorial*- The idea wasn’t that God might forget His people and so He needed to be reminded by the Priest wearing these stones with their names on; rather they were a reminder to Israel that they were each personally remembered by God all the time.

39:9 A span was about 22 cm. or 9 inches. The breastplate was quite small, compared to the grandiose religious clothing of other religions.

39:23 Christ died as the supreme High Priest, and the soldiers decided not to rend His garment but instead to throw dice to see which of them should get it (Jn. 19:24). As He hung on the cross, looking down and noticing what they were doing, He would have remembered this teaching about the High Priest’s garment, and taken encouragement that He was indeed doing the High Priestly work to its ultimate term. His blood stained, dirty outer garment- perhaps woven by his social outcast of a mother- was equivalent of the High Priest’s robe of “glory and beauty” (28:2).

39:43 When Moses looked with pleasure upon the completed tabernacle and blessed Israel, he was imitating God’s inspection and blessing of the completed natural creation (Gen. 1:31); as if now a new creation had been begun in the lives of Israel, just as it is in us through baptism into Christ (cp. The Red Sea crossing)- 2 Cor. 5:17.

40:3 *Ark of the testimony*- The “testimony” refers to the tables of the covenant, the ten commandments, which were within the ark; the connection between the ark and the “testimony” is very strong in the record. The ark was symbolic of Christ, in whom dwelt the word and covenant of God.

40:6 Sacrifice is necessary before we can enter God’s presence. Sacrifice doesn’t simply mean giving material things to God; it refers to giving up to God that which is personal and valuable to us. We’re not involved with God simply in order to get from Him; in this case, spirituality would be purely selfish, as it is in many religions. Authentic relationship with God depends upon our having the spirit of sacrifice; not in the sense that we can only get to God if we give something, for that too would be too primitive and a denial of grace as the basis of our relationship with God. But His grace and the wonder of fellowship with Him cannot be accepted by us passively nor with indifference; our natural response, if we believe it, is to want to give to Him.

40:19 *As Yahweh commanded Moses*- This phrase runs as a refrain throughout the chapter, as an appropriate ending to the book. See on 36:31.

40:30 Before we can come to offer acceptable sacrifice and do God’s work, we must firstly wash in baptism.

40:33 *Finished the work*- Jesus had this in mind when just before His death He said that He had finished the work God had given Him to do (Jn. 17:4); and He died saying “It is finished” (Jn. 19:30). He felt His work had been to build a dwelling place for God- not in a literal tabernacle, but in the hearts of willing men and women whose weakness and sin He had enabled to be overcome through His sacrifice.

40:37 They didn’t know their itinerary ahead of time, each day and night they would’ve wondered whether they’d be called to move on or not. Their lives in this sense had no stability. If the Red Sea crossing represents our baptisms (1 Cor. 10:1,2) then this speaks of our lives afterwards being under God’s leadership and guidance, we in that sense cannot map out how we would wish our journey to be.