

## WEEK 2: GOD'S PEOPLE BECOME A NATION

Route for this week:

1. Joseph's Dreams (Genesis 37:1-36)
2. Getting Your Bearings: Waiting for a Deliverer
3. Israel in Egypt (Exodus 1:8-2:10)
4. Escape through the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-14:31)
5. God Reveals Himself at Sinai (Exodus 19:16-20:21)
6. God's Presence with his People (Numbers 9:1-23)

### SUMMARY

Abraham's descendants—God's chosen family—move to Egypt to survive a famine, and while there they grow into a mighty nation but become enslaved and oppressed by the powerful Egyptians. They cry out to God for deliverance, and through Moses God miraculously and dramatically rescues them. God frees them from slavery and promises to give them the land he had promised their ancestor Abraham. Before the people head for the Promised Land, God reveals himself to Moses and the nation at Mount Sinai, providing the Law as a foundation for being God's nation and for living as his representatives to the entire world. Unfortunately, the nation rebels against God and fails to trust him to fulfill his promise. Because of their faithlessness, God disciplines the entire generation, making them wander in the desert as he provides for their needs and teaches them to trust him. Finally, approaching the land, a new generation is ready to follow God's lead as a nation.

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. In Egypt, God's people were protected from famine and grew into a large nation, but they also suffered in slavery. What do you learn from this about God's plans for his people? How do suffering and blessing relate to one another, if at all?
2. God showed his mighty power when he rained down plagues on the Egyptians and parted the Red Sea to free his people from oppression and slavery in Egypt. But when they were free, they worried about how they were going to

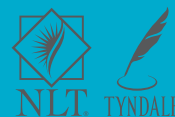
feed themselves in the wilderness, wishing they were back in Egypt. God responded by providing food for them every day in the form of manna. What does this tell you about God's response to the needs of his people, regardless of their attitude?

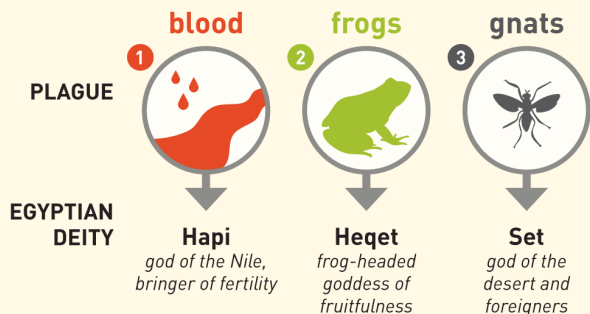
3. God gave his people detailed instructions for everything from worship to criminal justice, from dietary rules to social programs, from the Ten Commandments to instructions for building the Tabernacle. Jesus tells us that the whole law is summarized in the two commands to love God and love our neighbor (Matthew 23:37-40). Why did God give Moses so many detailed instructions instead of just two? How should we read the Law in light of Jesus' summary today?

4. God didn't take the Israelites on the most direct route to the Promised Land (Exodus 13:17-18), and when God was ready to lead them into battle, the people still weren't ready and were punished by another forty years of wandering in the wilderness (Numbers 13:25-14:4, 26-35). Have you ever experienced detours in your life that seemed out of the way? Did they make more sense looking back on them afterward? Did it encourage you to trust God more?

### APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Moses' mother showed a tremendous amount of trust in God when she put Moses in a basket in the water (Exodus 2:2-3). Have you ever given something you loved to God, not knowing what would happen but trusting him? Is there anything you need to trust him with today?
2. Moses explained that God came with thunder, lightning, and smoke in order that the people would fear God and not sin (Exod 20:20). How can a fear of God keep us from sinning? Is there a sinful habit that you know is creeping further and further into your life? How can you spend time developing a greater fear of the Lord?





### THE PLAGUES AND EGYPT'S DEITIES

The gods of Egypt supposedly had power over fertility, animals, death, and other aspects of life, but God showed that they had no power to thwart him. Many see the plagues as a direct display of God's power over the Egyptian deities.



Exod 7-12

