

## The Journey Begins – Exodus 12:1-13:22

### Introduction

- I grew up in a nominal Christian family. My mom was Lutheran, though I don't remember her going to church except on Easter. My dad was not a Christian. I remember going to the corner church walking from our house a couple of times. In fifth grade my parents took me to Sunday school at Nutwood Baptist church in Garden Grove. I went three times and didn't want to go back. Do you want to know why? They talked about the minute construction of the tabernacle for three weeks, three whole long weeks, and for a 10-year-old it didn't seem very exciting to me. That is my intro to the book of Exodus. I believe that I didn't understand the purpose of Exodus. So, what is the purpose is the purpose of the book of Exodus?
- Peter Enns in his commentary on **Exodus** from **The NIV Application Commentary** states:
- *We must remember that the original purpose of Exodus was theological, to teach **God's people about himself and their relationship to him**. It was not to have its readers enter into discussions of who the pharaoh was or some other piece of historical trivia. Exodus was written as a theological treatise, and hence any original meaning we might discern from the text will have to proceed firmly from that basis. - Enns*
- What have we seen so far in our study of the book of Exodus?
- **Ex. 1:7** *But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.* God had exceeding blessed the children of Israel. They went down as a small group of people but they had become a mighty nation enslaved by the Egyptians.
- **Ex. 2:24-25** *So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.* God had not forgotten His people. God was aware of their suffering and His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **Ex. 6:6-7** *Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and **you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*** God was going to deliver them. They are called "My people" by God. God was going to redeem them and bring them back to the promised land. They were going to be taught who the true God is.
- **Ex. 7:5** *The Egyptians **shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.***
- One of God's purposes in Exodus was for the Egyptians to know who the real God is. As you remember the Egyptians worshipped many gods, but they were all false gods. Most of the plagues that we talked about last week were directed against one or more of the false gods of Egypt.
- Look at what God stated in six of the plagues:

- **Blood:** Ex. 7:17 *Thus says the Lord, “By this you **shall know that I am the Lord**: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will be turned to blood.*
- **Frogs:** Ex. 8:10 *Then he said, “Tomorrow.” So he said, “May it be according to your word, that **you may know** that there is no one like the Lord our God.*
- **Gnats:** 8:22 *But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that **you may know that I, the Lord, am in the midst of the land.***
- **Boils:** Ex. 9:4 *For this time I will send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so **that you may know** that there is no one like Me in all the earth.*
- **Hail:** Ex. 9:29 *Moses said to him, “As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease and there will be hail no longer, **that you may know** that the earth is the Lord’s.*
- **Locusts:** Ex. 10:2 *and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that **you may know** that I am the Lord.”*
- Did you notice the theme in these verses? God wanted the Egyptians to know the true God and the gods that they worshipped were not gods at all.

### **Lesson**

- So, what does the passage cover this week? Let’s look at the outline...
  - **12:1-28** Regulations for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread
  - **12:29-32** The tenth plague: the death of the firstborn
  - **12:33-42** The departure from Egypt
  - **12:43-13:16** Additional Passover regulations
  - **13:17-22** God leads the people out of Egypt
- The study guide for this week has done a very good job going over the passage and dealing with details about the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the tenth plague, and the departure.
- As an engineer I deal with facts and reasons why things happen. My job is figure out what needs to be done and get it done. I like clear outlines and organization. I like meetings with purpose and a reasonable time schedule. What I have learned as I have matured in my Christian faith is that I don’t always know why something happens, or when it is going to happen, or what really happened in my life. What I have learned is that I have to trust in God and live my life by faith and He will provide what I need to know when I need to know it.
- What I want to focus on specifically today is what can **we learn about God** and **how we can apply** it to our lives. We should be changed as we interact with God’s Word. The Bible will change our lives if you let it work through His Word.
- **Point #1:** God speaks to us

- **Ex. 12:1** *Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt.*
- One of the things that we need to be reminded of over and over again is that God is personal and relational and He wants us to know Him and to be in a relationship with Him. He has spoken in the past and in this passage, He spoke to Moses. This word for “**speak**” is used nearly 5,000 times in the Old Testament and generally means verbal communication.
- While God does not often speak to us verbally, though He can, He does communicate to us through His Word and His Son:
- **2 Tim. 3:16-17** *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*
- **Heb. 1:1-2** *God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.*
- **Bible** – *Within the covers of one single book, the Bible, are all the answers to all the problems that face us today--if only we would read and believe.* - **Ronald Reagan** (The Bible is the first book we reach for in our lives.)
- **Point #2:** God provides the way of salvation
- **Ex. 12:7, 12-13** *Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it...For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*
- God provided salvation for the Israelites through the shedding of blood, the blood from the sacrificed lamb placed on their doorposts. The angel of death would pass over those families that had placed their faith in God and obeyed His direction and they would not be judged during the tenth plague, a judgment that led to death.
- **Heb. 12:22** *And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.* It is only through the shedding of blood that forgiveness from God is possible. It is not gained by what you do or how good you are, but who you are trusting in.
- **Col. 1:19, 20** *For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.* It is by Jesus’ shedding of blood on the cross we have eternal salvation and have peace with God.
- **Point #3:** God wants us to remember what He has done
- **Ex. 12:14, 17** *Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance...You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout*

*your generations as a permanent ordinance.* (They are called to remember what did in their lives.

- *The focus on this section of Exodus, however is not simply on the regulations. This celebration is to be a lasting, eternal ordinance. Passover is not just an event, and it is not just for one night. The Israelites from now on are to remember this night, impress it on their collective consciousness and pass it on to their children. - Enns*
- These are not stories for us just to hear. These stories are for us to realize that God **has acted** in the past and He **continues to work** in our lives every day. What God had done for the Israelites more than 3500 years ago is relevant to our lives today. Why? God is the same today as He was then. God wants us to reflect upon how He has acted in the past.
- Paul reflects on the Israelite's journey to the promised land: **1 Cor. 10:6, 11** *Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved...Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*
- What God has done in the past is important to us today. We can learn and apply what we read in the Bible to our lives. The Bible is relevant to us today and we need to read and study it to learn about God and what we are to do and not do. We should read both the Old Testament and the New Testament for they are both God's Word for us and examples that we can learn from.
- Look at what it says a few verses later in Exodus: **Ex. 12:26,27** *And when your children say to you, 'What does this rite mean to you?' you shall say, 'It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.'"* And the people bowed low and worshiped. God's instructions to the Israelites was to remember what the Passover means, when it started, and how God worked in their lives.
- **Point #4:** God can be trusted
- **Ex 12:29-32** *Now it came about at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle...Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel; and go, worship the Lord, as you have said. Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and bless me also."*
- And the conclusion: **Ex. 12:50-51** *Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that same day the Lord brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.*
- Why is this important? God does what He says and we can trust Him to do what He says. God is faithful to what He says. I am sure that if we had the time today, we would all have a story of how God has been faithful and how He has taught us to live by faith – through our job, our family, our health, our problems, and in our ministries. The infinite, powerful, and all-knowing God is at work in our lives every day of our lives.

- God said to Moses in **Ex. 3:10** *Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so **that you may bring** My people, the sons of Israel, **out of Egypt.***
- **Ex. 4:22-23** *Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, "Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I said to you, 'Let My son go that he may serve Me'; but you have refused to let him go. **Behold, I will kill your son, your firstborn.**"'*
- God promised freedom from Egypt for His people. God promised that He would kill the firstborn of the Egyptians. He did both of these things. He can be trusted. What God has promised in our lives He will also fulfill. Look at these two promises:
- **John 14:1-2** *Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for **I go to prepare a place for you.***
- **Matt 28:19-20** *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.*
- Jesus has gone to heaven to prepare a place for us, for His children, that we are going to live with Him forever. Jesus has promised to be with always, in the good and in the bad. We can trust God that He will fulfill His promises and we can turn to Him for any of our needs.
- **Trust** - *One day, while my son Zac and I were out in the country, climbing around in some cliffs, I heard a voice from above me yell, "Hey Dad! Catch me!" I turned around to see Zac joyfully jumping off a rock straight at me. He had jumped and then yelled "Hey Dad!" I became an instant circus act, catching him. We both fell to the ground. For a moment after I caught him I could hardly talk. When I found my voice again I gasped in exasperation: "Zac! Can you give me one good reason why you did that???" He responded with remarkable calmness: "Sure...because you're my Dad." His whole assurance was based in the fact that his father was trustworthy. He could live life to the hilt because I could be trusted. Isn't this even more true for a Christian? - **Tim Hansel, Holy Sweat** (We should trust our God in all things. We trust in God for He loves and cares for us.)*
- **Point #5:** God wants us to remember we belong to Him
- **Ex. 13:1** *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me."*
- For the Israelites, God wanted them to remember that the firstborn of every womb belongs to God. Though their firstborn didn't die in the tenth plague, the firstborn still belonged to Him. We all belong to God since Jesus has redeemed us. We are not our own.
- **Eph. 2:10** *For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*
- **1 Cor 6:20** *For you have been **bought** with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*
- One of the tough times in my life was the time that I lost my job. I found during that time I grew in my relationship with God and learned how to live my life by faith without income and without job to occupy my time. The time off was actually a blessing and the job I got

later was better than the job I lost. In fact, I would say that it was one of the richest times of growth in my life as I got to spend more time with God. I belong to God and He cares for me.

- **Point #6:** God will guide us
- **Ex. 13:21-22** *The Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.*
- God not only fulfilled His promises to Israel, He revealed Himself to them in miraculous ways, and He also guided them on their journey to the promised land. They had very clear signs, both during the day and during the night, of God's presence with them.
- **Psa. 23:3** *He restores my soul; **He guides me** in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*
- **John 16:13** *But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you** into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.*
- **Guidance** – *Elizabeth Elliot tells of two adventurers who stopped by to see her, all loaded with equipment for the rain forest east of the Andes. They sought no advice, just a few phrases to converse with the Indians. She writes: "Sometimes we come to God as the two adventurers came to me -- confident and, we think, well-informed and well equipped. But has it occurred to us that with all our accumulation of stuff, something is missing? She suggests that we often ask God for too little. We know what we need--a yes or no answer, please, to a simple question. Or perhaps a road sign. Something quick and easy to point the way. What we really ought to have is the Guide himself. Maps, road signs, a few useful phrases are things, but infinitely better is someone who has been there before and knows the way. - Elizabeth Elliot, A Slow and Certain Light.*
- When we come to God for guidance how do we act? Do we want a quick yes or no answer? A few hints? A Bible verse to proof text our opinion? A sign from God? Let us dig into God's Word deeply, to mediate upon Him, to learn more about Him, and have our lives changed as we interact with the Creator of the Universe.

### Application:

- I encourage you all to read God's Word every day of your life. When you read God's Word look for God in the passages of Scripture: Who He is, what He has done, and what he requires from us.
- I have two applications from our passage today.
- (1) Jesus is our Passover Lamb
- **John 1:29** *The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!"*
- **1 Cor. 5:7** *Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For **Christ our Passover** also has been sacrificed.*



- **1 Pet. 1:18-19** *knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a **lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.***
- Jesus is our Passover Lamb. He sacrificed Himself for us, so that our sins would be forgiven. We are to turn to Him. We must trust in Him. There is no way for us to have our sins forgiven except through believing in faith that Jesus died for our sins.
- (2) Jesus is our sinless sacrifice
- Leaven in the Bible is often associated with sin and that is the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews were to remove what was sinful in their lives to celebrate the feast and this is symbolized by the cooking without leaven.
- *The Feast of Unleavened Bread brings up the issue of what is unleavened and leavened. Leaven is used in the Old Testament as a type of sin. Do you know why God picked it to be a type of sin? Because it corrupts by puffing up...It is consistently used as an idiom for sin throughout the Bible—for sin, hypocrisy and deception. - Chuck Missler, The Feasts of Israel*
- **John 6:35, 51** *Jesus said to them, “I am the **bread of life**; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst...I am **the living bread** that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”*
- **1 John 1:5** *You know that Jesus appeared in order to take away sins, and **in him there is no sin.***
- **Heb. 9:14** *...how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself **without blemish** to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
- Jesus is our sinless sacrifice. He could die for our sins since He was sinless. It is only by a sinless sacrifice without blemish that can pay the penalty for our sins.
- Salvation is only found in Him. **Acts 4:12** *And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.*