

## Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?

Exodus 5:2

The stage is now set for God's great act of redemption. God's people are suffering in Egypt. A savior has been born, preserved, and called by God. A request has been made: *Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.'*<sup>1</sup> And Pharaoh has stubbornly refused: *'Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?'*<sup>2</sup>

The next section in Exodus answers Pharaoh's question. In breathtaking ways God reveals his power, provision, prominence, and patience. Nothing is hidden in this section of Exodus. There is absolute clarity about who God is and how we should respond to him. Both the Israelites and the Egyptians see that the LORD alone is God, and they see the brokenness and bankruptcy that comes when God's will is stubbornly refused.

The ultimate purpose of this section in Exodus is to bring us to our knees in worship of God as we come face to face with one reality: ***The God of Exodus is more glorious than all the false gods that were worshipped during the time of the Exodus and all the false gods that are worshipped in the world today.***

This reality is one that Satan will constantly attack because he doesn't want God to be seen as glorious in the world today. He wants God to be seen as impotent and uninvolved. He wants us to give in to doubt and despair. He wants us to worship things that will leave us bankrupt and broken.

So as we make our way through this section of Exodus, be keenly aware of what you worship. There is a cosmic battle being waged today for worship. On one side of this battle there is Satan and the spiritual forces of evil.<sup>3</sup> On the other side of this battle there is the LORD who is strong and mighty to save.<sup>4</sup> And just as God declared an all-out war on the false gods in Egypt, he will declare an all-out war on the false gods in our lives.

So if you experience the LORD battling for your soul during this section in Exodus, do not harden your heart. Listen and respond. Follow where he leads and you will find yourself leaving your slavery to sin and entering freedom with your God.

As God works in your life during this series, please share what he is doing at [preaching@faithchurchfc.org](mailto:preaching@faithchurchfc.org). We love hearing stories of people being rescued by God for his glory.

Every blessing,  
Pastor Charlie for the Teaching Team

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1 Exodus 5:1  
2 Exodus 5:2  
3 Ephesians 6:12  
4 Isaiah 43:2-3



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# INTRODUCTION TO SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

No one is born into this world with a theology. So each generation must rediscover the truths of Scripture for itself.

Preaching the Bible is one of the primary tools God has given the church for this to take place.

Small groups are the place where the preaching at Faith is applied and where our church is encouraged to live out God's word. Members of Faith's small groups take time each week to discuss the previous Sunday's sermon, share specific insights from the Bible, and care for one another so that as a church we grow up to maturity in Jesus.

This study guide has been put together to give you an overview of our current sermon series so that you know where we are going and so that you are prepared for great discussions in your small group.

Here is an overview of what you will find for each week in this study guide:

**Main Passage** – This is the passage the teaching pastor will preach from.

**Secondary Passages** – These passages help to unpack and explain the main passage.

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation** – This is one passage to memorize and meditate on throughout the week so that at all times you are giving Jesus an opportunity to work in your life.

**Overview** – This is an overview of what will be discussed in small group this week.

**Opening Question** – This is a general question meant to spark conversation.

**Discussion Questions** – These are questions related to the Bible passages.

**Application Questions** – These are questions and ideas for applying the Bible to your life.

**Table Time With Kids** – These are questions and ideas for families with young kids.

These materials are not meant to be a rigid formula for your small group, but rather a means for intentional study, discussion, and life application so that ultimately, as a church, we grow together to maturity in Jesus.

We hope you find this helpful.



## **What is a small group?**

Small groups at Faith are small gatherings of people from Faith that meet regularly for friendship, prayer, and Bible Study.

Each small group is unique because it is shaped by the people who attend. However, at the heart of each small group is a desire to see a tight-knit community form that is marked by a growing love for Jesus and for the other people in the small group.

## **Why should I join a small group?**

We are made for friendship with God and others. When we are not known and loved by others, we suffer because we are not experiencing all that God created us to experience. Additionally, life is too difficult to journey alone. Therefore, small groups are a place where we can connect in friendship with other people through the ups and downs of life.

## **How do I get connected to a small group?**

The easiest way to get connected to a small group is to go to [www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/small\\_group](http://www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/small_group). You can also sign up on Sunday by filling out the Bluebook. Finally, if you would like to join a small group, you can call the church at 970-226-2095.



**Title:** Ordinary Hopeful People

**Main Passage:** Exodus 6:10-27

**Secondary Passages:** Psalm 139:1-28; Luke 10:20; John 1:12

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.*

Psalm 139:13-14

**Overview:** At first glance a genealogy doesn't seem all that important. To us it is simply a list of unfamiliar and hard to pronounce names of people we know little about. And so it is tempting to skip over this section of Exodus. Yet everything in the Bible is inspired by God and profitable for us.<sup>1</sup> As such, this genealogy has much to teach us about God's goodness and grace.

One way to see the significance of this genealogy is to contrast it with the genealogies in Egypt. The genealogies preserved in Egypt contain the names of great Pharaohs and dignitaries – men who made a massive impact in their world. Not so with the names in this genealogy. Most are unknown and unimpressive, but they are remembered because they are part of God's story of rescue and redemption.

Another way to see the significance of this genealogy is to consider this question: *What if your name were written in this genealogy?* This would make the genealogy deeply significant because it would mean that you were included in God's story of rescue and redemption. God had a plan and a purpose for you. The good news of the gospel is that if we believe in Jesus, God has included us in his genealogy. He has written our names in his book, and this is reason for great joy.<sup>2</sup>

The genealogy also becomes significant when we remember that the Israelites were ordinary, yet hopeful people. This reality is seen from the names recorded in the genealogy. Philip Ryken's commentary is helpful in understanding the meaning of a few names in the genealogy:

*Pallu's parents must have been demanding, for his name means "extraordinary." Korah means "baldy," and we can surmise that he was hairless when he came out of his mother's womb. Nepheg means "clumsy," which is not very flattering, but then it is simply a fact that some people are less coordinated than others. The Israelites were ordinary people. Even if we didn't know anything about them, we would know that they were very much like us. They were men and women created in the image of God. They were fallen sinners in desperate need of God's grace. If anything distinguished these men and women, it was the way they looked to God for grace. This, too, is evident from the meanings of their names. Shaul must have been the answer to his parents' prayers because they named him "Prayer's Answer." Similarly, Eleazar means "God Has Aided," Elzaphan means "God has Treasured," and Elkanah means "God Has Created."<sup>3</sup>*

These names reveal that the Israelites saw themselves as ordinary people who were loved by an extraordinary God,

1 2 Timothy 3:16-17

2 Luke 10:20

3 Exodus, Philip Ryken

a God who answered prayers and treasured his people. The good news of the gospel is that in Jesus we too have a God who answers our prayers and treasures us. As such, this genealogy isn't just a declaration of what God did in the past, it is a declaration of what God will do today. In and through Jesus he will write down our names in his book and treasure us forever.

### **Opening Question**

- What excites you most about studying the book of Exodus?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 6:10-27. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- Why do you think that God inspires Moses to write down a genealogy at this point in Exodus?
- What does the genealogy reveal about God's involvement with his people?
- Look at Psalm 139:1-28. What does this passage reveal about God's involvement in your life?
- Look at Luke 10:20. What does Jesus reveal about your name being written down by God?
- Look at John 1:12. How are we included in God's family?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?

### **Application Questions**

- How would you feel if your name was written down in a genealogy of God's work in this world?
- How have you seen God at work through your family tree?
- What would you like the legacy that comes from your family to be?
- How has this lesson challenged the way you think, speak, or act?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family read aloud Exodus 6:10-27. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- What is the silliest name in Exodus 6:10-27?
- What do the names in Exodus 6:10-27 reveal about God? *God has intimate, personal relationships with his people.*
- How has God been at work in your family?
- Look at John 1:12. How are we included in God's family?
- ***Parents, if you had a specific reason for giving your son or daughter their name, share it with them this week. Also share with them some of the stories of God's work in your life and in other people in your family.***

**Title:** The Staff And The Snakes

**Main Passage:** Exodus 6:28-7:13

**Secondary Passage:** John 2:1-11

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*

John 2:11

**Overview:** This section of Exodus sets the stage for the confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh. This confrontation is ultimately a battle between the true God, who Moses represents, and the false gods of Egypt, who Pharaoh represents. In other words, the confrontation that begins in this section of Exodus is another part in the invisible battle that continues to be fought between God and Satan in our world.

There is a clear supernatural and prophetic dimension in the conflict between Moses and Pharaoh. This is seen in the staff that swallows up the snakes.

When Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh, Aaron throws down his staff and his staff miraculously becomes a snake. Pharaoh then calls his magicians to perform the same miracle, which they successfully do. This reveals that Satan does have power in our world, but his power is limited and under God's authority. The snake from Aaron's staff swallows up the snakes from Pharaoh's magicians.

At that time, the snake was the symbol of Pharaoh's authority, and so in this section of Exodus God is revealing that he is in authority over Pharaoh and just as the snakes were swallowed up by Aaron's staff, so Pharaoh's army will be swallowed up by God at the end of the Exodus.

It is interesting to notice Moses' and Aaron's ages at this point in the story. Moses is eighty years old and Aaron is eighty-three. This reveals that we are never too old to have a soft heart before God. We are never too old to do what the LORD commands. And we are never too old to be used by God in significant ways.

### **Opening Question**

- Why do you think supernatural occurrences are so interesting to people?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 6:28–7:13. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What does God reveal to Moses about the process by which he will set his people free?
- Look at Exodus 7:4–5. According to this passage, why does God confront Pharaoh in such a strong way? What explicit outcome is God pursuing?
- In ancient Egypt, the snake was a symbol of Pharaoh's power. What is God revealing to Pharaoh in this section of the story?

- Pharaoh's magicians were able to imitate the miracle of turning a staff into a snake. What does this reveal about Satan's power in the world today?
- Aaron's staff swallowed up the other snakes. What does this reveal about God's power in the world today?
- When they were in their eighties, Moses and Aaron did just what the LORD commanded them. How does this statement instruct you in your relationship with God?
- Look at John 2:1-11. How do miracles confirm the truth of God's Word?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?

### ***Application Questions***

- Why do you think God performs miracles?
- Do you think God continues to perform miracles today? Why or why not?
- What are some miracles that God has performed in your own life to help you see that he is a living God?
- How have you seen God's power in your life this past week?
- How has this lesson challenged the way you think, speak, or act?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family read aloud Exodus 6:28-7:13. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Does God work in powerful ways in our world? *Yes. God is a living and active God.*
- How have you seen God's power at work in your life this past week?
- ***Parents, this week look for opportunities to point out God's everyday miracles. Help them to see how he is active and involved, how he sustains his creation, how he gives good things. Share with your children some of the supernatural ways God has worked in your life. The miracle of conversion is, of course, the greatest miracle of God.***

**Title:** The Plagues And The Glory Of God

**Main Passage:** Exodus 7:14-8:19

**Secondary Passages:** Romans 5:6-8; Matthew 11:4-6; Psalm 106:7-8

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.*

Exodus 8:19

**Overview:** God works in our world purposefully. Nothing he does is haphazard or arbitrary. Nothing is thrown together willy nilly. Everything, from beginning to end, happens for a purpose.

What is the purpose of God? God works to display his glory in the world.<sup>1</sup>

We see God working to display his glory very clearly in this section of Exodus. The main purpose of the plagues was so that the Israelites and the Egyptians might know that the LORD alone is God. And so the plagues were not haphazard warnings from God. They were intentionally directed against the gods and goddesses of Egypt and they were intended to show the superiority of the God of Israel to the Egyptian gods.<sup>2</sup>

This is how James Boice explains the significance of the plagues:

*There were about eighty major deities in Egypt, all clustered about the three great natural forces of Egyptian life: the Nile river, the land, and the sky. It does not surprise us, therefore, that the plagues God sent against Egypt in this historic battle follow this three-force pattern. The first two plagues were against the gods of the Nile. The next four were against the land gods. The final four plagues were against the gods of the sky, culminating in the death of the firstborn.<sup>3</sup>*

God often uses signs and wonders to reveal his glory. This was true of Jesus' ministry. One of the reasons Jesus performed so many miracles was to show that he was Lord above all things including sickness, sin, and death.<sup>4</sup> His resurrection from the grave is the greatest miracle, revealing God's glory until we see him face to face.

God's work to reveal his glory is not complete. And so just as God confronted the false gods in Egypt, he will confront the false gods in our lives. He will work, sometimes in demonstrative and painful ways, to prove that he alone is the Creator, the Savior, the Sustainer, the Provider, and the Giver of life. When this happens, we will be faced with a choice. Will we worship God, like Moses, by trusting him alone or will we, like Pharaoh, place our confidence in the false gods that continue to fail us?

### Opening Question

- What plague would you most want to avoid?

1 See Habakkuk 2:14, Isaiah 43:6-7, Ephesians 1:4-6

2 See Exodus 8:10

3 *Psalms: An Expository Commentary*, James Boice

4 Matthew 11:4-6

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 7:14–8:19. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- How would the plagues have impacted the Egyptians?
- Why did God send the plagues?
- What is the conclusion that Pharaoh’s magicians come to after the third plague? What would be the appropriate response to their conclusion?
- The first three plagues affect both the Egyptians and the Israelites. Why do you think God allows his people to suffer while he reveals his glory to other people? What should be our attitude during those times?
- What does God’s willingness to confront false gods reveal about God’s character?

### **Application Questions**

- Has God ever confronted a false god in your life? What did he do? How did you respond?
- Is God currently confronting a false god in your life? If so, how are you responding?
- How has this lesson challenged the way you think, speak, or act?
- What things do you go to for comfort, security, pleasure, or peace? Have any of these good things become a false god to you?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 7:14–8:19. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Is God able to help you in difficult situations? *Yes. God is a living God who is at work in the world today.*
- What struggles are going on in your family?
- ***Parents, this week spend some time praying with your children for God to rescue your family from the various trials and troubles that you face. Leverage opportunities to tell your children that God is the savior. He saves us from sin. He saves us from evil. The gospel is the good news that God is at work in this world saving his people.***

**Title:** The Plagues And The Mercy Of God

**Main Passage:** Exodus 8:20-9:35

**Secondary Passages:** 2 Peter 3:1-10; Psalm 145:1-9

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.*

Psalm 145:8-9

**Overview:** Even in the plagues the LORD was gracious and merciful. He did not deal with the Pharaoh or the Egyptians as their sins deserved. With one blow, God could have justly destroyed Pharaoh and wiped Egypt off the map, but instead God chose to give them various opportunities to see his power and plenty of time to repent of worshipping the false gods in Egypt.

We see God's mercy in at least three ways during the plagues.

First, God gave clear communication. There was absolutely no uncertainty about what God was doing and what would result from Pharaoh's ongoing rebellion. At every turn, Pharaoh knew what was coming. Even the death of all the firstborn in Egypt was clearly communicated by God to Pharaoh. God's clear revelation during this time was an act of mercy, because it made it painfully obvious that what was taking place in Egypt was no mere coincidence but the mighty hand of God.

Second, we see the mercy of God in the way he protected his people during the seven last plagues. Only the great God of Israel could block out the light of the sun from the land of Egypt, but allow the sun to shine on his people. Only the sovereign God of the universe could control the pattern of flies to keep them from entering the area in Egypt where his people lived. God's supernatural protection of his people was an act of mercy because it revealed that the plagues were not coming from the false gods in Egypt; they were coming from the LORD. This clear demonstration of God's power and grace to his people served as a gracious invitation to the Egyptians to humble themselves before the LORD so that they might receive protection and provision from him.

Finally, we see the mercy of God in the way he increases the suffering in Egypt. Each plague was a parable that revealed the destruction that comes when God is not followed. Had the LORD not powerfully demonstrated this reality, many in Egypt would have continued in their stubborn unbelief. But because God acted in such a severe manner, many in Egypt stepped into a life-giving relationship with him.<sup>1</sup> So the plagues were a severe mercy from God. They were a merciful parable of what life is like when God is ignored.

### Opening Question

- Describe a time when someone showed you mercy.

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1 See Exodus 12:38

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 8:20–9:35. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Why do you think God didn't send his judgment in one terrible blow when freeing his people from Egypt?
- According to Exodus 9:14–16, why did God bring the plagues against the Egyptians? What is the ultimate goal of God's judgment of his enemies?
- How is God's mercy seen throughout the plagues?
- How is God's providential care for his people seen throughout the plagues?
- Look at 2 Peter 3:1–10 and Psalm 145:1–9. How are the plagues a vivid parable of what God reveals about himself in these passages?

### **Application Questions**

- Does God seem mean in sending the plagues? If so, why?
- Have you ever received a warning from God and continued in sin? What was the outcome? How would the outcome have been different if you had heeded the earlier correction?
- How have you experienced God's mercy in your life?
- How has God's mercy drawn you into a deeper relationship with him?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 8:20–9:35. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Was God mean in sending the plagues? *No. God was being merciful. He was showing the people in Egypt very clearly that he was God and what would happen if they continued to resist him.*
- How do the plagues show God's power and mercy?
- If someone said to you, "God seems mean in the Old Testament," what would you say? *It isn't mean for God to clearly reveal who he is and that life is found in knowing and following him.*
- ***Parents, as you interact with your kids this week, leverage opportunities to talk about God's mercy in clearly revealing himself to us. Have some fun this week coming up with different things about himself that God is clearly revealing to your family during this season.***

**Title:** The Hardening Of Pharaoh's Heart

**Main Passage:** Exodus 10-11

**Secondary Passages:** Exodus 4:21; 7:3-4, 13-14, 22-23; 8:15, 19, 31-32; 9:7, 12, 17, 34-35; 10:1-2, 20, 27; 11:10;  
Romans 9:14-23

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."*

Hebrews 3:15

**Overview:** The hardening of Pharaoh's heart would be nice to avoid, but it is too obvious to pass over. And so this week we are going to jump into some deep theological waters. As you work through the passages for this week, please ask God to give you humility before him and with the people in your small group. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart has caused much division and distress throughout history. This is sad because it is not recorded to divide or discourage God's people; it is meant to bring us to worship as we marvel at the mystery of God's sovereignty and embrace the reality of personal responsibility.

In summary, this is what the Bible clearly reveals about what happened to Pharaoh's heart: In spite of warnings, powerful displays of God's power, the witness of his own magicians, and the clear distinction of God's people from Pharaoh's people, Pharaoh repeatedly hardened his heart and refused to let God's people go. These facts cannot be debated.<sup>1</sup>

But what also cannot be debated is the fact that God predicted this would happen, promised that he would cause it,<sup>2</sup> and clearly hardened Pharaoh's heart.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, in the Bible we are told that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart illustrates God's sovereign rule over everything he has made.<sup>4</sup> So the events in Exodus show that God controls not just the physical world but the hearts of people. Proverbs 21:1 expresses this truth with great clarity: *The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.*

This reality has caused no shortage of debate. Some people have said that God is unjust to judge Pharaoh for something he predicted and actively caused. Others have said that God is free to do what he pleases because he is the creator of all things. Wisdom would say that we should be careful about speaking too dogmatically or simplistically when it comes to the relationship between God's sovereignty and human freedom because that relationship cannot be precisely pinned down nor can it be denied. Both exist, and at the end of the day, we do not know how the two interact.

This is a mystery that is meant to produce worship, hope, prayer, and repentance. Worship, because we see God as he is: sovereign and in control. Hope, because God's love is expansive: he longs for all people to follow him. Prayer, because God must move for our hearts to become soft. And finally, repentance, because we recognize that there have been moments when we have resisted God and hardened our own hearts.

1 See Exodus 7:13-14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34-35

2 See Exodus 4:21; 7:3-4

3 See Exodus 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8

4 See Romans 9:14-23

## Opening Question

- How has God been at work in your life during this study in Exodus?

## Discussion Questions

- Read Exodus 10-11. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- Read Romans 9:14-23. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Several times throughout the plagues, Pharaoh attempted to bargain with Moses and dictate the terms of his obedience. He offered to allow Israel to sacrifice within the land of Egypt, to sacrifice but “not go very far away,” for only the men to go, and for the people to go without their flocks and herds. What do these bargains reveal about Pharaoh’s heart?
- In Hebrew thought, the heart is the core of a person - the seat of intellect, emotion, and will. What do you think it means to have a hard heart? What does it mean to have a soft heart?
- What do you learn from the fact that after each of the first five plagues it is said that Pharaoh hardened his heart, but after the sixth, eighth, and ninth it is said that the LORD hardened it?

## Application Questions

- How do you feel about the idea of God having a decisive influence over the way people think and act? Does this offend you, scare you, or make you feel secure?
- In what way is the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart a warning to you?
- What are some ways you are tempted to “bargain” with God when it comes to your obedience?
- What helps you to develop a soft heart?
- Are you hard-hearted in any area of life?
- According to Romans 9:15-17, why is it important to you personally that God is able to have his way in our hearts?

## Table Time With Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 10-11 and Romans 9:14-23. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Did God predict and harden Pharaoh’s heart? *Yes. God was actively involved in the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart.*
- Did Pharaoh disobey God and harden his own heart? *Yes. God clearly revealed himself to Pharaoh and instead of humbling himself before God, Pharaoh exalted himself and hardened his heart.*
- What should we do when we sense that our heart is hard towards God? *We should confess this to God and ask him to soften our hearts. His love for us and his ability to work in our hearts reveals that he will answer this prayer.*
- Are you hard-hearted in any area of life?
- **Parents, as you interact with your kids this week, leverage opportunities to talk about their need for God to**

*give them soft hearts. Help them see that sin happens in their lives because of hard hearts, and that Jesus wants to forgive us and give us new hearts that want to know, trust, and follow him.*



**Title:** The Passover

**Main Passage:** Exodus 12:1-28

**Secondary Passages:** Matthew 26:17-29; John 1:29; Hebrews 9:12

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

1 John 2:2

**Overview:** We now come to the climatic conclusion to the plagues in Egypt. Repeatedly throughout the plagues, God warned Pharaoh what would happen if he continued to resist him. Instead of humbling himself before God and asking God to give him a willing heart, Pharaoh resisted God and hardened his heart by rejecting God's word. To be sure, God had been patient and merciful to Pharaoh; he gave him ample time to repent and clear warnings of what would come if he continued in his pride and unbelief. Sadly, Pharaoh's resistance to God remained unchanged, and so the final plague was prophesied: *Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle.'*<sup>1</sup>

To prepare the Israelites for this great act of judgment, God gave Moses instructions for the Passover sacrifice. All those who followed God's instructions would be passed over when the plague of death came to Egypt.

The Passover sacrifice was a lamb that was killed at twilight. The blood of the lamb was then placed on the doorposts of the house, so that when the LORD came to destroy the Egyptians, he would see the blood of the lamb and pass over those houses. The Israelites were then to cook the lamb over a fire and consume it in anticipation of their final deliverance by God from Egypt.

To commemorate this saving event, God instructed the Israelites to rearrange their calendar around this moment in their history: *This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.*<sup>2</sup> Also, they were to celebrate the Passover annually.<sup>3</sup> By doing this, God's people were to keep the memory of God's salvation alive throughout their generations. This would not only remind God's people of how God worked in the past, but it would prepare God's people for God's greatest work of redemption through the death of Jesus.

The sacrifice of the Passover lamb is one of the clearest pictures of the gospel in the Old Testament. As such, the New Testament presents Jesus as *"the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."*<sup>4</sup> Jesus deserves this title because, just as the shed blood of the Passover lamb covered the Israelites so that judgment passed over them, the shed blood of Jesus covers all who put their faith in him so that God's final judgment passes over them.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it isn't a coincidence that Jesus' sacrificial death occurs during the Passover festival. He is the fulfillment of this Old Testament symbol. Paul makes this abundantly clear in 1 Corinthians 5:7 where he writes that *"Christ, our Passover*

1 Exodus 11:4-5

2 Exodus 12:2

3 Exodus 12:14

4 John 1:29

5 John 3:16 and 1 John 3:16

*lamb, has been sacrificed.”*

### **Opening Question**

- What are some rituals that you observe to remember significant past events?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 12:1–28. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- This section starts off by rearranging Israel’s calendar around God’s deliverance from Egypt. What benefit would this have for future generations?
- God could have simply passed over the Israelites’ homes without all this added ritual. Why do you think God included all the rituals around the Passover? What does God’s instruction to his people reveal about the way salvation comes to us?
- Read Matthew 26:17–29, John 1:29, Hebrews 9:12, and 1 Corinthians 5:7. What are some similarities between the Passover sacrifice and Jesus’ death on the cross?

### **Application Questions**

- Which of the symbols in the Passover are most meaningful to you? Why?
- What helps you remember that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world?
- Look at Exodus 12:25–27. What rituals or memorials do you practice that cause those around you to ask, “Why are you doing this?”
- How has Jesus death on the cross changed your life?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 12:1–28. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Why do you think God had the Israelites sacrifice spotless lambs? *The spotless lambs pointed to Jesus who was without sin.*
- How is the lamb a picture of Jesus’ sacrifice for us? *Just as the lamb’s blood was shed to protect the Israelites from God’s judgment, Jesus’ blood was shed at the cross so that God’s judgment can pass over us.*
- ***Parents, this week look for opportunities to remind your children that God’s plan to rescue the world from the problem of sin is through Jesus. If your child hasn’t trusted in Jesus, ask them this week if they would like to trust in Jesus. If they do put their trust in Jesus to forgive them for their sins, put together a special celebration to commemorate this huge milestone in your family.***

**Title:** Rescued By God

**Main Passage:** Exodus 12:29-51

**Secondary Passages:** John 8:31-36; Romans 8:1-2; Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 1:7-10; Hebrews 9:12

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

John 8:36

**Overview:** God's people had been in Egypt for over 400 years, and they had been suffering in slavery for over 80 years. During this time they had cried out for rescue, and finally the rescue came. It happened in the dead of night. Most people were asleep. But then death came and there was a great cry all throughout Egypt. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Get out. Be gone."

Quickly the people of Israel left, along with many of the Egyptians who most likely had had enough of Pharaoh and the false gods that were worshipped in Egypt. So this mixed multitude left their slavery in Egypt, provided for, guided, and protected by the LORD.

The exodus from Egypt is the story of everyone who believes in Jesus. The Bible reveals that everyone is in slavery to sin. And Jesus' death on the cross is what God did in space and in time to bring us out of slavery to sin.

Practically, what does it look like to be enslaved to sin? We hate what we are doing but we cannot stop it.

Practically, what does it look like to be set free by Jesus? We finally have the power to say "no." Like God's people in Egypt, we can walk away. Sin's power is broken and we really can live free. Certainly we don't always take advantage of this freedom, but it belongs to us because of Jesus.

### **Opening Question**

- Why do you think people long for freedom?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 12:29-51. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Imagine that you are an Israelite in this story. What sort of reaction would you have to what happens in these verses?
- Why do you think God records that his people plundered the Egyptians?
- Look at John 8:31-36, Romans 8:1-2, Galatians 5:1, Ephesians 1:7-10, and Hebrews 9:12. How is the exodus from Egypt similar to our exodus from slavery to sin?
- What does it look like for a follower of Jesus to plunder Satan and sin?

### **Application Questions**

- How has God brought you out of slavery and into freedom in Jesus?
- What do you think characterizes a life that is set free by Jesus?
- Is there any sin in your life that is enslaving? If so, be brave and share it with your small group so they can pray for rescue in Jesus' name.
- Close your small group this week with a time of prayer, thanking God for all the various ways he has set your group free.

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 12:29 - 51. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from the passages you read this week?
- Was God at work when his people were rescued from slavery? *Yes. God worked in a very powerful way to set his people free from slavery.*
- Does God work today to set us free? *Yes. The Bible reveals that we are in slavery to sin and God works to set us free so that we can say "no" to sin and we can say "yes" to him.*
- ***Parents, this week remind your kids that we all struggle with sin, but that God can rescue us if we will cry out to him. Help them see that Jesus' resurrection means real freedom from sin and power to follow him.***

**Title:** Consecrated To God

**Main Passage:** Exodus 13:1-16

**Secondary Passages:** Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:13-25; Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*

1 Corinthians 5:7

**Overview:** The exodus from Egypt is a massive revelation of all that happens to God's people when they are rescued by God. The plagues reveal that sin is serious, so serious that God judges those who persist in their rebellion. The Passover lamb reveals that blood must be shed for God's wrath to pass over his people. The deliverance from Pharaoh reveals God's power to set us free from Satan. And the journey out of Egypt into the Promised Land points to the journey we anticipate when we will finally be at rest with the Lord.

Another aspect of salvation revealed in the exodus from Egypt is the reality that those saved belong to the LORD completely and are called to reflect him in this world through their obedience. These truths are seen in the consecration of the firstborn and the feast of unleavened bread.

The consecration of the firstborn was a commemorative ceremony instituted by God in which God's people would give him the firstborn of every man and beast. The beast would be sacrificed as an offering to the LORD and the firstborn child would be dedicated to serve the LORD. This act was an ongoing reminder to God's people that God had a claim on their lives. They belonged to him completely because he was their Creator and because he was their Savior.

The feast of unleavened bread was a commemorative ceremony instituted by God in which God's people removed all leaven or yeast from their homes. The yeast represented sin, in that it spreads and impacts what it is mixed with. In calling his people to annually remove the yeast from their homes, God was creating a yearly rhythm to remind his people that sin spreads and they are called to be holy as he is holy.

One reason God gave his people the commemorative ceremonies was because his people would be apt to forget all that God accomplished for them in delivering them from Egypt. Their salvation was multifaceted and it impacted all of life, so God gave these ceremonies to provide plenty of opportunities to remember and to pass on the good news of their salvation to the coming generations.

### **Opening Question**

- The word "obey" tends to have negative connotations. What are some reasons we resist that word?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 13:1–16. What sticks out to you from these verses?

- What did consecrating the firstborn represent for the Israelites? What does it symbolize for Christians today (See Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Peter 1:13-25)?
- What are some of the challenges that come in consecrating the first of everything to God?
- What are some of the benefits and blessings that come in consecrating the first of everything to God?
- In the Bible, yeast is used as a metaphor for sin. In what ways is yeast similar to sin?
- What did getting rid of the yeast represent for the Israelites? What does getting rid of the yeast symbolize for Christians (see Matthew 5:13-16 and 1 Corinthians 5:7-8)?
- What do you learn about God from Exodus 13:1-16?

### **Application Questions**

- The consecration of the firstborn reveals that God has a claim on our lives. What characterizes a life that is fully consecrated to God?
- Do you feel like God has a claim on your life? If so, how do you practically consecrate yourself to him?
- In what ways is it freeing to live a consecrated life to God?
- The feast of unleavened bread reveals that we are to remove sin from our lives. What helps you to remove sin from your life?
- How has this lesson challenged the way you think, speak, or act?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 13:1-16. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Exodus 13:1-16?
- Do we belong to God? *Yes. The Bible reveals that we belong completely to God because he made us and he saved us.*
- Does God want us to tolerate sin in our lives? *No. God wants us to remove sin by confessing it to him, asking him to forgive us and empower us to put sin to death.*
- **Parents, this week buy up opportunities to help your children understand that they belong to God; he gets to call the shots in their lives. This is freeing because God is good and wise and loving.**

**Title:** Guided By God

**Main Passage:** Exodus 13:17-22

**Secondary Passages:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 14:17, 25-26; John 16:-15; 1 Peter 4:14

**Passage for Memorization and Meditation:**

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

John 16:13

**Overview:** As the story of Exodus unfolds, we see with increasing clarity that God is not a passive character in the story. He is the author, producer, and director of it all. And so, on the day that Pharaoh finally decided to release God's people, God led his people in a very tangible way: *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.*<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to notice that God did not take his people on the shortest path to the Promised Land. Instead, he took them around the land of the Philistines. The reason for this is that God knew his people were not ready to face the Philistines. Although they were armed for battle, they were in no shape to fight emotionally or spiritually. So God in his wisdom and grace led them a different way. This shows us that God always knows which way is best for his people and God always leads us in this direction.

The pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire reveal a second truth to us: God is always present to guide his people. This is a great comfort. We are never alone in this world. We never have to figure things out for ourselves. We have a great God who guides us with wisdom and love.

How does God guide us today? The Bible reveals that God leads us by his Word and with his Spirit.<sup>2</sup> The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, and the Bible reveals that the Holy Spirit indwells everyone who believes in Jesus.<sup>3</sup> Part of the Spirit's work is to give us direction for life. In fact, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. So now, by the Holy Spirit, God is always with us to guide us.

**Opening Question**

- Talk about a time in your life when you needed clear direction. What were some things you did to try to find your way?

**Discussion Questions**

- Read Exodus 13:17-22. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- God led his people on a longer route to the Promised Land because he knew they were not ready to face the

1 Exodus 13:21-22

2 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 16:13

3 John 14:17; 1 Peter 4:14

Philistines. What does this reveal about the way God guides his people?

- God was tangibly present during the day and at night to guide his people. What does this reveal about the way God guides his people?
- Do you think it was hard for the Israelites to know where God was leading them? What does this reveal about the way God guides his people?
- What do you learn about God from Exodus 13:17-22?
- Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 14:17, 25-26; John 16:1-15; 1 Peter 4:14. How does God guide us today?
- Satan wants us to think that understanding God's guidance is complicated. How does Exodus 13:17-22, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, and John 14:25-26 defeat this lie for followers of Jesus?

### **Application Questions**

- What are some of the benefits of being guided by God?
- Talk about a time when God guided you. What did you learn about him?
- Have you ever experienced God guiding you on a route that is longer than you expected? If so, what do you think he was sparing you from? What did he teach you by taking you on this route?
- How is God a tangible guide for you every single day?

## **Table Time With Kids**

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Exodus 13:17-22. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Exodus 13:17-22?
- Did God clearly guide his people? *Yes. God was tangibly present with his people to guide them.*
- Does God guide us today? *Yes. God gave us his Word and his Spirit to guide us.*
- What happens when we follow God's guidance? *He leads us to life.*
- Is following God worth it? *Yes. God is good, and following him leads us to life.*
- ***Parents, this week look for opportunities to teach your children that God wants to guide them. Take time to pray with them each day to seek his guidance for something very specific. Then help them to follow where God leads.***