

October 28/29, 2023

Remember
The God Who Delivers Series
Exodus 11:1 - 12:51
Pastor Jeff Petersen

What is it that makes good news truly good? When you walk through the door of your house and you announce to your spouse, “I’ve got good news!” or when you hang up the phone call with the doctor, and you say, “Oh, Lord, thank goodness, it’s good news,” what is it that makes that news good? Well, often what makes news really good news is that it comes in the context of circumstances that are really difficult. And we will need to realize and remember that as we deal with the context of our text this morning. In our study of Exodus today, we are in Exodus, chapters 11 and 12. If you have your Bibles with you, would you turn with me to chapter 11? We ended last week with darkness, and with Pharaoh defiant and angry. And in Chapter 10, verse 28, Pharaoh said to Moses, **“Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face, you shall die!”** And Moses said, **“You are right, I shall never see your face, again!”** We are still in the middle of this dramatic moment as we enter into Chapter 11, beginning with verse 1:

Now the LORD said to Moses, “One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out from here completely. Speak now in the hearing of the people that each man may ask from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold. The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses *himself* was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, *both* in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants, and in the sight of the people. (*NASB, Exodus 11:1-3)

So the Lord tells Moses in verse one that there will be one more strike upon Egypt. But He also says, “This is it; here it is; this is the time!” He says that after that, Pharaoh will let you go. Not only that, He says, “After this last strike, he will completely drive you from the lands.” And so the Lord tells Moses to tell the people in verse 2, “Get ready. This is the moment. Ask from your neighbors articles of gold and articles of silver.” And then verse 3 tells us the context of what has happened among the people of Egypt during these days that we’ve been studying. The Lord has given the Israelites, the Hebrews, favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and even Moses himself is highly regarded, not only by the people, but by Pharaoh’s own officials as well. That’s the context of what’s taking place.

Does it sound familiar? It should. Because this is exactly what God told Moses would happen when He met with Moses back in chapter 3, at the burning bush. Go back sometime and look at Exodus 3:21 through 22. This is exactly what God said He would do. And now in chapter 11, verses 1 through 3 are actually parenthetical to the main narrative, and either the author is bringing us up to speed on what He told Moses before Moses came to Pharaoh on that night of darkness, or somehow God is revealing this to Pharaoh right while he’s in the presence of Pharaoh, because we know Moses is still with Pharaoh. We know that because of what happens in verses 4 through 8:

Moses said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well. Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again. But against any of the sons of Israel, a dog will not *even* bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.’ All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, ‘Go out, you and all the people who follow you,’ and after that I will go out.” And he (Moses) went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. (Vs. 4-8)

In response to Pharaoh’s threat in chapter 10, verse 28, Moses, led by the LORD, pronounces the final strike to Pharaoh. And he declares in verse 8 that Pharaoh's own officials will come to him, and that after that, Moses and the people will go out. And then at the end of verse 8, Moses goes out from Pharaoh **in hot anger**. Why is Moses angry? Well, we'll talk about that, but first, we've got to deal with what we just read.

In verse 4, we're told that the LORD said, **“About midnight, I am going out into the midst of Egypt,”** and in verse 5, **“and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die.”** From the highest of the high, to the lowest of the low, even the livestock—all the firstborn will die. And verse 6 tells us ***there will be a great cry in all the land such as has never been heard before, or since.*** This is really hard to read. How can a loving and merciful God do this? And it is inescapable, because in verse 4, it is the LORD Himself who says, **“I am going out into the midst of Egypt.”** So this is hard, but it is important for us to face. And there are just a few things for us to think about this morning.

First, do not forget our context. The progression of the strikes was intended to spare Egypt from this very moment. Time after time after time, God strikes Egypt to warn them, and to give Pharaoh every opportunity to repent, to change his mind and obey the Word of the LORD and let God's people go. But he refuses time after time after time. And even after the ninth strike, he is more defiant than ever. As we just read in 10:28, it is Pharaoh that leaves no choice but for God's judgment to fully come.

Second, the language of the text brings us back to understanding just how great the evil was that was done to the people of God in Egypt. In verse 5, God declares judgment on the firstborn. That brings us back to Chapter 4 and verses 22 and 23, when the Lord said to Moses: **“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 so that he may serve Me’; but you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will kill your son, your firstborn.”’** And in verse 6, we read of this great cry that goes throughout Egypt. Back in Chapter 3 in verse 7 and in verse 9, the exact same Hebrew word is used to describe the cry that went up from the people of God to God because of the oppression of their slavery in Egypt. And it's also extremely important to note that later in Exodus, in the giving of the Law in chapter 22, verses 21 through 24, the Israelites themselves will be told that if they oppress the powerless, they will be the ones to experience the consequence of death.

Third, no matter how we, in our modern world, want to pretend that it is not true, Romans 6:23 is true. It has always been true, ever since Genesis 3. It says, **The wages of sin is death.** Death! What was the lie that the serpent used in the garden? I mean, how could he convince Adam and Eve to forsake a perfect life of such abundant provision, protection, and communion with God? He, in essence, told them that Romans 6:23 *isn't true*. God had said to them, **“You can eat from all the trees in the garden, but just this one, only one, do not eat of it for if you do, you will surely die.”** And the serpent twisted everything, and he said, **“You surely will not die? No. Instead, you will actually become like God.”** He tells every person the same lie, still today. “You can do whatever you want. You can be your own god, and there will be no consequences whatsoever, for *you surely will not die*. But it is a lie! It was in Genesis 3, and it is here in our story in Exodus 11, it still is today: **For the wages of sin is death.** That is surely as true for every person around us today, as it was in Egypt at this moment. This moment just graphically demonstrates a single moment, showing how horrific are the results of billions of decisions by human beings to defy a holy God, from Genesis 3 all the way up until today.

And finally, in this text, we struggle greatly with the innocents who die. Pharaoh, we can perhaps understand, but every firstborn in the land? Well, let us remember: the entire nation actually has culpability in the oppression of the Hebrews. Actively or passively, they have allowed this to occur. No one is recorded as having risen up against this evil Pharaoh and this oppressive empire, even during the community-enforced infanticide that was thrust upon the Hebrews back in Chapter 1. Let us not forget that. And let us also remember that Romans 3:23, is also true: **For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no, not one.** All of them, and all of us. All who have sinned in any way, at any time, deserve only one thing: Death, and eternal separation from God. From the sin of Adam and Eve all the way up until today, the entire world is under the curse of death because of our rebellion against God.

All of which makes what verse 7 foreshadows, so incredibly important: **But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.** Somehow God will provide a way of escape, and He will show forth in His gracious plan, how He makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. And then in verse 8, Moses is now speaking and says, **“All these servants of Pharaoh will come and bow down to him and say, ‘Go out,’ and then they will go out,” and finally Moses goes out from Pharaoh in hot anger.**” This brings us back to the question, “Why was Moses hot with anger, because Moses knows what is about to happen?” And it is horrific, because of Pharaoh’s stubborn unwillingness to bow his stiff neck, to humble himself, that his people will suffer greatly. And any person knowing this, would be filled with righteous anger at the consequences being brought upon people by the stubbornness of this leader. Verse 9:

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt.” Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of the land.

So, here's a summary statement of all that has taken place in this dramatic account between Yahweh, the eternally existent all-sufficient God, and the Pharaoh of Egypt, who thought himself a god, and continually refused to bow before the One true and living God. And then in chapter 12,

we find out how God will make a distinction between Egypt and Israel, and how this will become central to the people of God for thousands of years to come. Chapter 12 and verse 1:

Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month, shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying, ‘On the tenth of this month, they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house, are to take one according to the number of persons *in them*; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. 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. And they shall eat the flesh that *same* night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, *both* its head and its legs along with its entrails. And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. Now you shall eat it in this manner, *with* your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD’S Passover. (Exodus 12:1-11)

So here we see the instructions for what they are to do that night. But God is also doing something bigger. Did you notice verses 1 and 2? He says in verse 2, **“This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.”** What is about to happen is so important that it will entirely reorient how this community will even mark time from that moment going forward. It's a “reset”. Here is the new beginning of your new calendar. Right here in Exodus 12, God is creating the new calendar. And that's because God is also creating a new community. In verse 3, he told Moses to, **“Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying, ‘On the tenth of this month, they are to each one take a lamb.’”** When He says **all the congregation**, or perhaps your Bible says *community*, the word that is translated from Hebrew there is *Edah* and it will be used over 100 times in the Old Testament in regard to the people of God, gathered together to worship God or to receive spiritual instruction. But this is the very first time that it is used, and in verse 6, He says, **“You shall keep that lamb until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.”** When it says **the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel**, in Hebrew, this is *Edah Kahal*. Kahal is a parallel term, and it's often associated with the New Testament *Ecclesia* which, in English, becomes church.

And so what is being described in Exodus 12 is, God is not just reorienting the entire calendar, He is also creating a community, a worshiping community of His chosen people. Joseph went into Egypt, all alone as a slave, but Israel will come out as a people—the congregation, the assembly of the very people of God. And then here in verses 3 through 11, the Hebrews are given very clear and specific instructions of what they are to do on this very important night when death is going to come into all the land. But for the sake of time, we'll only mention a few things.

First, there in verse 3, we're told that the selection of the lamb is to be unhurried. We read there they are to select it on the 10th day of the month. But in verse 6, it told us they will actually make the sacrifice on the evening of the 14th day of the month. They are to take their time in this process, and part of that is because verse 5 tells us that that lamb is to be unblemished. And as one commentator* says, "*It seems very likely that behind the demand for perfection, lies the truth that while the imperfect can die for its own sins, only the sinless can bear the sins of another.*" Then in verses 6 and 7, we're told that the blood must be spilled, and the blood must also be applied. They are to sacrifice this lamb, killing it at twilight. Then they are to apply it to the doorposts and the frame of their home. Verses 8 through 11 then say the lamb is to be roasted with fire, consumed entirely or burned up, and eaten with bitter herbs, likely to symbolize their bitter suffering in Egypt, and with unleavened bread, and in haste with loins girded, sandals on, staff in hand, all representing urgency in preparation for God's imminent deliverance and their immediate departure for Egypt. These are the instructions given to Israel to protect them by a blood sacrifice from the coming death. For in verse 12, the LORD says:

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. (Vs. 12-13)

Notice that God's judgment is not just a judgment of man, but also a judgment of the false gods of Egypt, and a declaration that He is the only true and living God, and those who follow Him and obey Him and His instruction, they will be delivered. And thus in Exodus 12, we see both grace and faith—grace in that the Israelites have done absolutely nothing to earn God's favor and God's deliverance. It's even interesting, too, that in verse 13 it says nothing about the Lord looking upon them, but rather He will look upon *the blood which has been spilt by the lamb* in their place. For you see in every home in Egypt, on this dreadful night, death will come. But it will be either the death of a lamb or the death of man. And so we see that God calls them to faith. Faith is required by the Israelites to trust and obey, following His plan, for His protection and for His provision. And to have failed to have trusted and obeyed God, would have ensured the same sentence of death upon the people of Israel, just as surely as it will fall on the Egyptians. You see, all the way back to the covenant with Abraham, and through the institution of Passover in Egypt, God's deliverance has been by grace through faith, just as it is for us today in Christ. And now, in this moment, in this very dramatic narrative, we would expect the story to come to its climactic conclusion. That's not what happens. Instead, almost awkwardly, the writer inserts a set of instructions about something the Israelites will be called to do, not on this night, not even in this year, but in their future. Verse 14:

‘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. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day you shall have a holy assembly and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be

——*J. A. Moyer, "The Message of Exodus, IVP, 2005, p. 136

done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. 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. In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is* an alien or a native of the land. You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread. (Vs. 14-20)

So notice twice—in verse 14, and then in verse 17—the text tells the Hebrews to create and keep a **permanent ordinance**. On this new first month of the year, on the 14th night, they shall eat a meal commemorating this Passover. And then for seven days, they will celebrate a feast of unleavened bread, holding two holy assemblies, one at the beginning and one at the end, and eating nothing made with yeast all week. Why? Well, the text gives the reason immediately in verse 14: **Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord**. Not only is God telling the Israelites how to experience His protection and His provision for this night of death and deliverance, He is creating a community of His people whose worship will center on remembering Him, who He is—Yahweh—and what He has done, saving them from death, and delivering them from Egypt. And so right in the middle of this dramatic narrative, the writer inserts these instructions, because the reader must understand not only what happened on that night, but how it applies to their lives going forward and permanently. And the memorial of Passover and the extended week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread will assist the Hebrews in remembering who God is and what He has done. And then in verse 21, the narrative resumes, but intertwined, the writer will continue to reinforce the importance of the ordinance.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take for yourself lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover *lamb*. You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you. And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. When you enter the land which the LORD will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. 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 in worship. (Vs. 21-27)

Notice the further clarity that is given to the purpose of this ordinance of remembrance. He says, “Doing this every year will cause your kids to ask, “Why do we do this?” And this will be your chance to teach your children and to teach future generations about who God is, and what He has done for His people. And after hearing all of these things, the Hebrews respond with the only appropriate response, verse 27. **And the people bowed low and worshipped.** And then finally,

and only after all of this critical instruction, the writer brings this dramatic narrative to its horrible and wonderful conclusion. Verse 28:

Then the sons of Israel went and did so just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. 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 the cattle. Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead. Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, “Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and your 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.” The Egyptians urged the people to send them out in the land in haste, for they said, “We will all be dead.” So the people took their dough before it was leavened, *with* their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. Now the sons of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, for they had requested from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold and clothing; and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so they let them have their request. Thus, they plundered the Egyptians. Now the sons of Israel journey from Ramses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children. A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock. They baked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt into cakes of unleavened bread. For it had not become leavened, since they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves. Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (Vs. 28-41)

And so on that night, both judgment and deliverance come. And the Egyptians recognize the power of the living God, so much so, that fearing for their very lives, they give the Hebrews whatever they ask of them, and send them out in haste. And even Pharaoh, unrepentant Pharaoh, makes the request of the Lord through Moses. In verse 32, he says, **“Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and bless me also.”** Joseph was forcefully, against his will, taken as a slave to Egypt, all alone. Now hundreds of years later, in keeping with the perfect promise of God and in the perfect timing of God, a community of over 1 million people plunder Egypt, and heads out, taking with them even non-Hebrews, a mixed multitude—as it says in verse 38—and their unleavened bread—as it says in verse 39—reflecting the speed with which God's deliverance and their departure in the exodus had finally come. Before the account of Israel's departure is complete, the writer is compelled once again, to call the reader to *remember* as he instructs them again and even more regarding Passover. Verse 42:

It is a night to be observed for the LORD for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for the LORD, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations. The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. A sojourner or a hired servant

shall not eat of it. It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.” 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. (Vs. 42-50)

I really debated about letting you read that last section on your own. But I didn't because we need to *remember* the purpose of repetition in Hebrew narrative. It is to make a point very strongly. And over and over and over, the writer brings the reader back to the instructions on Passover. Exodus 11 and 12 record the last of the 10 strikes on Egypt. They bring us face to face with the horrific consequences of sin, and the goodness and the grace of God to protect and deliver all who will trust in Him. But these Passover instructions—all of these instructions—are clearly a command to *remember*. And for thousands of years thereafter, the Israelite people would continue to celebrate this week-long sensory experience of sight, taste, touch, and smell, all designed not to just mark what God did for others way back then, but rather to invite the community into this shared experience of who this God still is and what He still does for all who trust in Him. And to this very day, Jews around the world still celebrate Passover.

But we, as Christians, do not. And that's because Jesus, on the night in which He was betrayed, He celebrated this Passover with His disciples, but He also announced a new, permanent ordinance to be remembered. It is the Lord's Supper. It replaces Passover because, what Jesus did through His death, burial and resurrection, supersedes and completes what happened on that fateful night in Egypt. In fact, what we have studied in Exodus 11 and 12 simply foreshadows the ultimate reality of what God would do, sending His one and only Son as the unblemished, sinless Lamb of God, who would once for all, provide a way of escape from the curse of sin and death. And in John chapter 1, when John the Baptist sees Jesus, He declares of Him, **“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”** That is who Jesus is. That is why Jesus came. And the New Testament book of Hebrews makes it clear that the shed blood of millions of Passover lambs, and other sacrifices through history, would only provide a temporary covering for sin. And the point, the ultimate reality, would be the saving and sanctifying offering of the body and blood of Jesus, once for all time. For you see, **The wages of sin is death.** That is still true. But the back half of Romans 6:23 reveals the really good news: **...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.** And it is actually in the context of the worst circumstances that good news becomes really good. For nothing can happen to us on Earth that could be worse than standing now and forever in a state of death and separation from the goodness of God. But nothing could be better in life, now and forever more, than to experience the forgiveness of God and be restored to a right relationship with Him, experiencing every day His saving goodness.

So, this morning, as our ushers go ahead, and our worship team comes back up, we will remember with sight and smell and touch, as we partake of the elements of communion, together. We are called to enter into a sensory experience to keep the cross from just being any event in history, and

to bring its presence to us right now, not as something that just happened for others back then, but for what our God has done, and still continues to do for each one of us.

If you're here this morning, and you've never personally trusted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, may this be the day! May this be the moment! All it takes is saying, "Yes." It's a free gift. He just invites you to accept it, to, in the quietness of your heart, simply say, "I surrender. I've been being my own god and doing my own thing, but now I acknowledge you as God, and I ask you to come into my life and be my Savior and Lord. Don't leave here today without missing the day of salvation. But if you're not there yet, you're not ready for that, it's okay. Just let the elements pass you by. But if you have personally trusted Christ as Savior, we invite you to take those elements and to reflect in these moments, to *remember*. Let us think about what our lives would be like if it weren't for the goodness and the grace of Jesus and let us worship Him in remembrance. Take the elements, and in a few minutes, I'll come back up to lead us in partaking them together...

Our Lord Jesus, on the night in which He was betrayed, He took bread, and after He had given thanks, He broke it and He gave it to them saying, "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

And again, He took the cup and He said, "This cup represents the new covenant in My blood. As often as you eat of it, and you drink of it, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Do this in remembrance of Me."

Jesus, oh how we thank You for who You are. Thank You for what You have done. Thank You that You came to be the unblemished, sinless Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world, and all that was required of us. It's just to say yes, to accept Your free gift to stop just going our own way and trying to make it on our own, to allow You to bring Your goodness, Your abundance and Your joy to us. Forgive us, Lord, for our stubbornness, our obstinance, or propensity to try to live this life on our own, in our own strength, to seek to be our own god. We repent and we remember. We thank You for this ordinance, this permanent, lasting memorial which, through sight and sound and touch and smell, we come back to that place of the cross to give you thanks, not only for what You did back then, but for who You still are today. And we worship You, for only You are worthy. It's in Your name we pray, Amen.

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FALL 2023 // WEEK 8

Life Group Questions

Exodus- The God Who Delivers // October 28-29, 2023

Remember // Exodus 11:1-12:51

Introduction

Our chapters this week give us the final strike of God against the stubborn Pharaoh-led Egyptians that resulted in the death of every firstborn in Egypt. Even as we're relieved by the Israelites' deliverance, we wrestle with characteristics of God that are difficult for our human hearts to fathom – severe mercy and righteous judgment.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) Take a few minutes to let each person share 3 things for which you are grateful.

- 2) If you could choose to carry over a tradition or experience of Fall into the rest of the year, what would that be?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

 - 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.
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Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What characteristic or response of God stood out to you from the sermon this week?
- 2) In this passage, God repeatedly instructs the Israelites to observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for generations to come ([Exodus 12:14, 17, 24–25, 42](#)). **Why did God instruct them to commemorate the exodus in this way?**

What benefit is there in making this such a multi-sensory experience for them (taste, smell, actions, emotions)?

- 3) The First Passover foreshadows the sacrifice Jesus made to redeem all of humanity. Look up the following verses. For each reference, how does Jesus ultimately fulfill what the Passover could only partially complete?
John 1:29
Ephesians 1:7
Ephesians 1:11
Hebrews 9:13-15
- 4) When we choose to follow Jesus, accepting that His gift of salvation is the only way for our sins to be redeemed, we are like those Hebrews who walked out of their blood-marked thresholds the morning after the Lord passed over their homes. Imagine the scene. **What would it have been like to realize the great loss others had suffered while you were celebrating deliverance?**

How is this scene in Exodus 12:28-30 actually a picture of what is happening in the lives of people around us right now?

- 5) Pastor Jeff reminded us of the relevance of Romans 6:23 to our passage in Exodus: “for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” Just like in Moses’ day, we live among people who have not experienced deliverance and redemption. **Take a few minutes to list five people in your life who have not yet accepted the free gift of eternal life in Jesus.**

What step can you take to lovingly move toward one or two of them this week, seeking to be used by God to bring light, truth, and hope to them?

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

Scripture Focus: Read Ephesians 2:1-10 each day this week. Every time you read through it, make note of one aspect of the gift of salvation that you are particularly grateful for that day.

Prayer Focus: Ephesians 3:14-21 is one of Paul’s grateful expressions for the wonderful gift of grace experienced by all who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Take time to make it your prayer this week too!

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?