



SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2018

INTRODUCTION :

Exodus 12:1-28, 43-51

The Whole Story series is about to move very fast through the rest of the books in the Pentateuch - the first five books of the Bible. We have jumped 430 years from Joseph to Israelite captivity in Egypt. The Israelites were multiplying, as God had promised, but they were slaves in a foreign land. The Pharaohs forgot about Joseph and began to take advantage of this people living among them. It was at this moment in time that God heard the cries of his people, raised up a leader, and brought salvation.

Exodus 12 became a defining moment for Israel, and it started a religious observance still practiced today: the Passover meal. Although we will not look at them specifically, the Passover was being observed in the midst God's judgment on Egypt through 10 plagues. Through the plagues God began to make a distinction between his people (Israel) and Egypt. The Israelites were safe while the Egyptians suffered. Israel was about to leave the land of Egypt and the distinction would be between those who spread the blood of the Passover lamb over their door and those who did not. The distinction between God's people and others would no longer be based on race, but on faith in God's word.

THIS WEEK'S MAIN FOCUS:

Acting on faith in God's word is the distinguishing mark of God's people.

The Israelites could not save themselves. God intervened in a big way to bring about a drastic change in their circumstances. However, those who wanted to participate in this salvation needed to pack up their things and perform a ceremony to display their trust in God. Not long after, many of these people would lose heart and doubt God's power (Ex. 14:11-12 is just one example), but these doubts did not overturn their status as God's people. The defining moment for Israel was what each family decided to do with the blood of the Passover Lamb. This ceremony became the focal point of Israelite faith for generations until Jesus claimed the Passover meal was about his salvation. We hope that studying this story in Exodus 12 and considering its importance in Israelite history adds depth to your appreciation of Jesus, his sacrifice as our Passover Lamb, and the communion meal that we now celebrate to commemorate him.

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS: READ EXODUS 12:1-28, 43-51

- 1) List the different elements that God commanded to be part of the Passover. Which ones seem the most significant to you? Why?
- 2) Chapter 12 goes back and forth between describing the first Passover Israel observed in the land of Egypt and giving instruction for how the Passover should be kept in subsequent years and generations. What does this passage say are the different purposes between the first Passover and future ones?
- 3) God commands Israel to keep the Passover as “a memorial” “throughout your generations” for teaching children about God’s salvation. How are events and traditions most helpful in teaching new Christians (children and adults) about God’s salvation? Share some good and bad examples.
- 4) What elements from the Passover story seem most significant in helping us to understand God’s salvation. Which specific details point you to connect with Jesus’ life and death?

GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- 1) Although the passage does not directly say this, in verses 21-23 the overall view of this event is that the obedience of the people to put the lamb’s blood on their homes was the evidence of faith and trust in God. How do spiritual disciplines give evidence to our faith in God while also reinforcing our trust in the gospel?
- 2) Divide your groups into groups of three. The Passover is a picture of God’s salvation attached to a story so that it can be transmitted to other people and generations. Have each person in the groups of three share their spiritual story (Past and current struggles with sin as well as present relationship with God.).

PRAYER:

Read Psalm 119:49-56.

Pray:

- That God would help us to remember His word and to have hope in God.
- That we would be faithful to remind one another of God’s word in times of affliction.
- Thanks to God for giving us His words in the Bible.