



A Closer Look at Exodus

You can watch Pastor Andy's introduction to this study [here](#).

Exodus 12:21-32: Passover

This scripture is one of the most life-changing in the whole Bible. None of the other plagues were able to soften Pharaoh's hardness of heart, but this awful plague that strikes down the first-born of all creatures does the trick.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, the story we typically read on Palm Sunday, he was going there to prepare for the Passover celebration. Jesus and his disciples were simply following instructions laid out here in Exodus to have a meal of remembrance. Jewish brothers and sisters gather for Passover to this day.

When we gather for Maundy Thursday worship, we also gather and read this story, followed by the story of Jesus celebrating the Passover with his disciples and the institution of Holy Communion. In a way, every Sunday when we celebrate Holy Communion we remember this story of Passover from death to life. Again we see that Exodus is a critical story to understand the Christian way of life.

Read Exodus 1:1-16

¹⁻²³ "Moses assembled all the elders of Israel. He said, "Select a lamb for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the bowl of blood and smear it on the lintel and on the two doorposts. No one is to leave the house until morning. God will pass through to strike Egypt down. When he sees the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, God will pass over the doorway; he won't let the destroyer enter your house to strike you down with ruin.

²⁴⁻²⁷ "Keep this word. It's the law for you and your children, forever. When you enter the land which God will give you as he promised, keep doing this. And when your children say to you, 'Why are we doing this?' tell them: 'It's the Passover-sacrifice to God who passed over the homes of the Israelites in Egypt when he hit Egypt with death but rescued us.'"

The people bowed and worshiped.

²⁸ The Israelites then went and did what God had commanded Moses and Aaron. They did it all.

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²⁹ At midnight GOD struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sits on his throne, right down to the firstborn of the prisoner locked up in jail. Also the firstborn of the animals.

³⁰ Pharaoh got up that night, he and all his servants and everyone else in Egypt—what wild wailing and lament in Egypt! There wasn't a house in which someone wasn't dead.

³¹⁻³² Pharaoh called in Moses and Aaron that very night and said, "Get out of here and be done with you—you and your Israelites! Go worship GOD on your own terms. And yes, take your sheep and cattle as you've insisted, but go. And bless me." (*The Message Translation*)

Questions for reflection and discussion

- What's the most striking part of the story for you, the part you remember the most? Why do you think that is?
- When someone says "God is a God of love," and then you read this story, what do you think? Can both be true?
- Pharaoh and Egyptians suffered disastrous plagues even before this final one. Why are they willing to endure so much just to keep the Israelites enslaved? What can that teach us?
- Many people paid a heavy price for the freedom of the Israelites. How do you think that affected their lives?
- What did you learn from reading this part of the story again?

Prayer: *Holy God, heavenly Father, you see all the things that try to hold us back, that keep us oppressed by fear and despair. Give us eyes to see oppressive systems and strength to work for a world of justice, peace, and hope for all. Guide our learning during this season of Lent. Open our hearts and heal our world, our bodies, and our souls. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Next week: Exodus 20:1-17 (Ten Commandments). If you have the time, read everything between tonight's scripture and next week's, maybe a couple chapters each day.

To be part of our Zoom Bible Study Wednesday's at 7:00 PM, click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5596136118?pwd=SSStXODZYdk4yOXdYTVdEYWJpUFBFQT09>