

For GC Discussion

- How ought the truth of Jesus as our Passover Lamb change the way we live day to day?
- What does it look like to live your life as a stranger in this world? How can we go about living these kinds of lives?
- What is the connection between the Unleavened Bread (purity) and the Bitter Herbs (trials) in our lives? How does this truth change the way we view the world?

Next Week: we will look at God's final display of saving power as He parts the waters of the Red Sea.

Notes and Questions

For Worship: Listen to *'Remembrance'* by Matt Maher & Matt Redman. You can find it on YouTube, or on the Hill City Church blog on the website.



Week 5: The Passover

Exodus Chapters 11-13

This Weeks Summary

This week we see Pharaoh's resolve finally broken as the final plague causes him to allow God's people to leave. This final plague becomes the basis of a feast through which God's people will remember His saving power for generations to come.

For Study:

Here are some more verses that expand upon the main themes in the Passover meal:

Lamb: A Blood-bought People	Matthew 26:17-29 John 1:19-36 1 Peter 1:17-21
Unleavened: A Pure People	1 Peter 1:13-16 1 Corinthians 5:1-8 1 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
Ready: An Alien People	1 Peter 2:9-25 Hebrews 11:13-16
Bitter Herbs: A Tested People	Psalms 66:8-20 James 1:2-6

This week in our text we finally saw the Israelites being released by Pharaoh to go and worship God in the wilderness. The resolve of the proud, self-sufficient king of Egypt was finally broken and the God of the Hebrews emerges victorious. Here are a few more truths we can pick out of the passage:

Faithful Obedience Required

It maybe isn't something that hits many of us too hard as we read these chapters because we're quite familiar with the concept of the Passover. We've heard many times the instructions God gave His people that they might be saved from the tragedy about to befall the Egyptians. Yet when you stop and think about it, painting blood up on the doorposts and lintel of your house isn't the most normal thing to be doing - in fact it was fairly gruesome. Yet this is a theme we see over and over in the Scriptures - what God asks His people to do often isn't 'normal' or isn't the expected thing, but He asks them to step out in faith, often doing things that just don't seem to make sense. Of course, we can look back and as we see the whole of the Biblical picture about blood sacrifices it can start to make more sense to us, but I'm sure there were a few of God's people with raised eyebrows when they were told what they were to do.

Of course the importance of this idea can't be overstated - the people who painted the blood on their doorposts were saved (I see no reason why Egyptians who feared God shouldn't have been included in this), but those who thought it ridiculous and refused would be punished along with the rest of unbelieving Egypt. This is the salvation principle found in the whole Bible - we are not saved by anything that we can do ourselves, but are saved by faith in the promises of God, and the obedience that flows from that faith. It wasn't a hard thing to do to paint up that blood, but it did require a firm belief that God was to be trusted, and that He is faithful to do just what He says He'll do.

Humbling of the Strong

This is one of the big ideas of what is going on throughout this account. It's a battle of wills between one of the most powerful men in the world, and a God who claims to be above any other. Pharaoh stands his ground and thinks he can win for plague after plague, but this one strikes right to the heart of what was most dear to him. Pharaoh could talk all he wanted, but when it came to it he couldn't protect his family from the God he was sure he could defeat. This is another message that stands throughout the Scriptures - pride and self-sufficiency never pay. We were

created to be dependent beings - primarily on God, but also on those around us, and to think we can stand on our own is foolish and sinful. Even with all of Pharaoh's resources and power there came a point when he couldn't stand, and his stubbornness led to his downfall. Our pride and self-sufficiency can manifest in many ways, but it will always lead to us treating others as worse than ourselves, and therefore treating them badly, and God just won't stand for that. To truly prosper in life we must learn to live life in dependence and submission to God and others, not taking glory, but giving Him the glory which is so rightfully His.

Plundering of the Egyptians

This is just a small extra detail to the story that goes to show the extent of God's victory over the Egyptians. Not only does He humble the Egyptian King, but He also demonstrates His power to such an extent that the Egyptians are just happy to get rid of the Hebrews at whatever the cost. Therefore when God's people visit the Egyptians living close to them they simply have to ask for their possessions and the terrified Egyptians, still shell-shocked from the battering their country was taking just handed everything over! It's another sign that the majority of the Egyptian people had got the point way before their leader grasped it - nothing they could do would ever defeat this God who had set His face against this hard-hearted people. No amount of money or possessions can help you when you are fighting against God, and if a person continues to oppose Him they will ultimately lose it all.

Joseph's Bones

There is just a short verse in our text today that links back to the end of the book of Genesis. It goes to show the continuity of the promises of God, and His faithfulness down through the generations. God had told Abraham originally that His people (and Abraham's descendants) would be strangers in a foreign land, but that He would visit them to rescue them (Genesis 15). Joseph later believe this promise to such an extent that he gives instructions for his bones to be removed from Egypt when the time came (Genesis 50). It's so hard for us to grasp the time frames we're talking about here - Israel were strangers in the land of Egypt for 430 years, but God never forgot His promises. Sadly we can sometimes get jittery if God takes a couple of weeks to answer our prayer - it can feel like He's forgotten or is just not listening, but this is never the case. He is the 'Everlasting God', who never grows tired to weary, and if we wait on Him we will 'mount up with wings like eagles' (Isaiah 40). He can never, and will never forget His promises, but will be faithful right to the very end.