



Exodus

Freed to Worship

Exodus 12:1-13

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Sunday Evening Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Exodus: Freed to Worship

Exodus 12:1-13

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Exodus 12**
- We are continuing our study: **Freed to Worship**
- Tonight we come to one of the most theologically rich chapters of the book of Exodus
- In this chapter we will see the institution of the Passover
- As God prepares to bring the greatest and final judgment upon Egypt, He prepares the Israelites to go, and at the same time tells them in advance that He wants them to remember this event
- In fact, three times in this chapter the Lord tells the Israelites that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are to remind them of this very event
- There are 51 verses in this chapter, we won't be getting through them all tonight, but we will get as far as we can
- The Passover in the Old Testament, in many ways, is a symbol of a New Testament event; the crucifixion of Jesus
- In fact, Jesus was crucified during the time of the Passover
- I will be trying to draw out the connections as we go through this chapter
- Let's get into tonight's text

Teaching

- **Exodus: Freed to Worship**
- **Exodus 12:1-2**
- This event was so important that God told the Israelites to reorient their calendar around the Passover
- This means that their year began in the Spring, in March or April
- That seems weird to us
- We are currently using what is called the Gregorian Calendar – that was instituted by Pope Gregory in 1582
- That replaced the Julian Calendar which was instituted by Julius Caesar in 46 BC

- And before that were different calendars, often connected to the lunar cycle or the seasons
- Orthodox Jews use a Jewish calendar that is a little too complicated to try to explain tonight
- Their calendar starts numbering the year based on when they believe creation took place
- Today's date on the Hebrew calendar is the 15th of Elul, in the year 5776
- Let's continue
- **Exodus 12:3-4**
- First thing I would like you to notice here is the word 'congregation'
- This is the first occurrence of this word in the Bible
- It occurs 133 times and about two-thirds of them are in the Pentateuch – the first five books of the Bible
- Why is that important – it marks a change in how God is relating to the children of Israel
- The word 'congregation' gives the idea of a group of people collected together for a reason or a purpose
- Up until this point they were just the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel
- But now they are the congregation of God
- The Lord told Moses to tell Pharaoh **Exodus 7:16**
And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"'
- This is the first time the Lord refers to them as a religious community
- Once they are out in the wilderness, the Lord will give them the Law and commandments
- He will dictate to them how they are to worship Him by establishing the Tabernacle and the priesthood
- I also like what the Lord tells Moses to tell them
- Every man shall take for himself a lamb... a lamb for a household
- This was to be a family oriented observance or celebration
- Worship of God should be a family activity and I believe it should be the male head of household who should lead it
- It is one of our core values: Every man a priest!

- If your family was small, you were to invite other small families to join you
- This is a reminder that worship should build community
- In later generations it was established that one lamb was sufficient for ten people
- And these couldn't be just any lambs

- **Exodus 12:5**

- This lamb was going to be the sacrifice that would save them from the judgment that was coming to the nation of Israel
- When the tenth plague, the death of the first-born sons comes, it will be to every household in all of the land of Egypt

- **Exodus 12:23**

For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

- Just being a Jew was not going to save them
 - The only way they could be saved was if the blood of sacrifice was covering them
 - Our verse says that the sacrifice had to be 'without blemish'
 - This was explained in greater detail in the book of **Leviticus 22:20-22**
- Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. ²¹ And whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, to fulfill his vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. ²² Those *that are* blind or broken or maimed, or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD.**

- For this sacrifice to be acceptable, it had to be perfect
- In the Bible we have many, what we call 'types', these are symbols of a biblical truth in everyday life
- Blemishes are a 'type' for sin
- We see a picture of that when the Apostle Paul is instructing husbands about loving their wives **Ephesians 5:25-27**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

- This points us to what the lamb is a picture of
- John the Baptist saw Jesus one day and said **John 1:29**

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

- John was making a radical declaration about Jesus
- For what John said to be true, he had to have believed that Jesus was ‘without blemish’ – the perfect sacrifice **1 Peter 1:18-19**
...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,* ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
- Peter is saying that Jesus’ sacrifice was acceptable because He had no sin
- The writer to the Hebrews believed that too **Hebrews 4:15**
For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as we are, yet without sin.
- Even though Jesus was tempted in all the same ways that we are, He never gave in to those temptations
- The same writer also said **Hebrews 9:13-14**
For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴ **how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**
- **Maxie Dunnam**
Nothing but a perfect sacrifice could satisfy the requirements of God, who Himself is perfectly righteous.
- Each head of household was select this lamb without blemish
- Then he was to do something interesting with this lamb
- **Exodus 12:6**
- The head of household selected the lamb without blemish on the tenth day, and they kept it until the 14th day
- For four days the lamb was kept close to the family
- They fed it, cared for it, and the kids probably played with it
- And then on the 14th day, dad killed it
- Now, I don’t know about your house, but if this were my house, this would be a traumatic event
- Why would God want to do it this way?
- God wanted them to identify with that lamb
- He wanted them to understand that lamb was a substitute
- If they had not killed the lamb and put its blood on the doorposts and lintels, the firstborn male in their home would be dead that night
- Dad could point to the oldest son and say, ‘This lamb died so that he wouldn’t have to’

- Because this lamb died, the Lord's wrath will pass over this house and not touch us
- The Apostle Paul said that is what Jesus is to us **1 Corinthians 5:7b**
For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.
- God sent Jesus in the form of a man so that we could identify with Him
- So that we could recognize that the wrath of God will pass over us because the blood of the Perfect Passover Lamb, Jesus was put over our lives to protect us
- As they killed the lamb, they were to collect the blood
- **Exodus 12:7**
- This is an act of faith – think about it
- Moses said, God is going through the land at midnight and He will kill the firstborn son in every household
- But if you kill the lamb and put some of its blood on the doorposts and lintel you will be saved from God's judgment
- It took faith to believe that and do what Moses said
- The Apostle Paul said **Ephesians 2:8**
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves...
- This is what the Israelites are doing
- They are being saved by grace (God offered a sacrifice – the blood of the lamb) through faith (that the Lord would pass over them if He saw the blood)
- This is a picture of what happens when we believe
- Just as there was a sentence of death on every household, there is a sentence on every one of us **Romans 6:23**
For the wages of sin is death...
- But God offered us a way of escape from that death sentence
- And that is come under the blood of the sacrifice of the perfect Lamb of God, Jesus
- The Israelites believed God and they acted in faithful obedience
- And because they did, they were saved
- **Exodus 12:8-10**
- Many of these things are very symbolic
- The unleavened bread was a reminder that they had to flee in haste

- It is also going to point to another truth which we will look at once we get to the part about the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- The bitter herbs was to remind them that God delivered them from the bitter bondage of the Egyptians
- They were given specific instructions for preparation
- And told not to leave any of it until morning
- They were even told the manner in which they were to eat the meat of the lamb
- **Exodus 12:11**
- They were to eat as if they were preparing to depart on a journey suddenly
- Like waiting for the shuttle to come and get you to take you to the airport and you decide to grab a quick bite
- You're not exactly sure when they are going to get there, so you get ready and eat preparing to depart as soon as they get there
- The word 'Passover' is the first of 78 occurrences in the Bible
- The Lord then tells them what He is going to do
- **Exodus 12:12**
- On the 14th day of the month, after they have killed the lamb without blemish God was going to pass through the land and visit every home
- And execute His righteous judgment on the wicked nation of Egypt
- He makes an interesting statement in the middle of that verse, 'against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment'
- We are not to take from that these were real gods
- There is only one true God
- The Egyptians trusted in a wide variety of deities
- They had gods for virtually every aspect of life
- In essence what the Lord is saying is that these gods are impotent compared to the Real God
- And the truth for us is that anything we choose to trust in that is not God is a false god, and God may execute judgment against that god if we do not repent and turn to Him and Him alone
- Even Pharaoh who has been the protagonist in this account was worshipped as an incarnation of one of their gods

- Pharaoh's first-born son would also eventually be worshipped in the same way as his father
- By killing the first-born son of Pharaoh, God was proving His supreme power over the hard-hearted Pharaoh and his idolatrous practices
- Now we come to another deep theological verse
- **Exodus 12:13**
- Two concepts are being expressed here
- One comes from the perspective of the people and the other from the perspective of God
- This is expressed in two theological terms: expiation and propitiation
- Here is a quote that might help us to understand these two terms

Philip Ryken

The doorpost put blood between God and the sinner. When the people looked up, they saw they had expiation – a covering for their sin. When God looked down He saw that they had made propitiation, and thus His wrath was turned aside.

- Expiation = my sins have been covered by a sacrifice
 - Propitiation = God's justice had been satisfied with the sacrifice
 - The blood symbolized the taking of a life
 - When the Lord came to execute judgment – the blood on the doorposts was a sign that a life had been sacrificed, and His justice would be satisfied
 - The same thing happens for us
 - When we look to the cross of Jesus, spiritually we see His blood shed for us and we have expiation – a covering for our sin
 - But because His sacrifice was perfect we have more than just a covering for sin, His blood takes away all of our sin **1 John 1:5**
- And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.**
- Jesus made a once for all sacrifice
 - The Jews sacrificed millions of lambs to try to cover their sins

Hebrews 10:1-4

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every

year. ⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

• Jesus' sacrifice dealt with sin forever **1 John 2:2**

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

- That verse tells us that Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient to satisfy God's holy wrath for the sins of the whole world
- Some interpret this to mean that God is going to save all of humanity
- But we know from Scripture that God is going to pour out His wrath on this world
- And that most are going to perish in their sin
- While Jesus is the propitiation for sin, the sinner must look up and believe that their sins are forgiven
- They must look up to the cross in expiation, or else Jesus' sacrifice is of no value to them
- In this we see the doctrine of substitutionary atonement
- The Bible tells us that all people have sinned, fallen short of God's perfect standard
- The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death
- When we sin, we become guilty before God and incur His holy wrath
- A death is required, blood must be shed **Hebrews 9:22**

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

- But the blood that is shed must come from one who is 'without blemish'
- That rules out all humans, because we have all sinned
- As sinners we are under God's divine judgment, and we have no way of reconciling ourselves back to God
- That left us without hope, and so God made a way, He sent a substitute to die on our place **Romans 5:8-11**

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

- When we look up to the cross in faith, Jesus shed blood washes us clean of sin

- And we are reconciled back to God
- God then clothes us with the righteousness of Christ, which means God treats us as He would His own son because our sins, past, present, and future have been taken away from God's sight **1 John 1:7**
...if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- And that reality ought to set us free and cause us to rejoice and praise the God who loves us that much
- **Amen?!**
- **We are going to stop here for the night – will pick it up next week!**