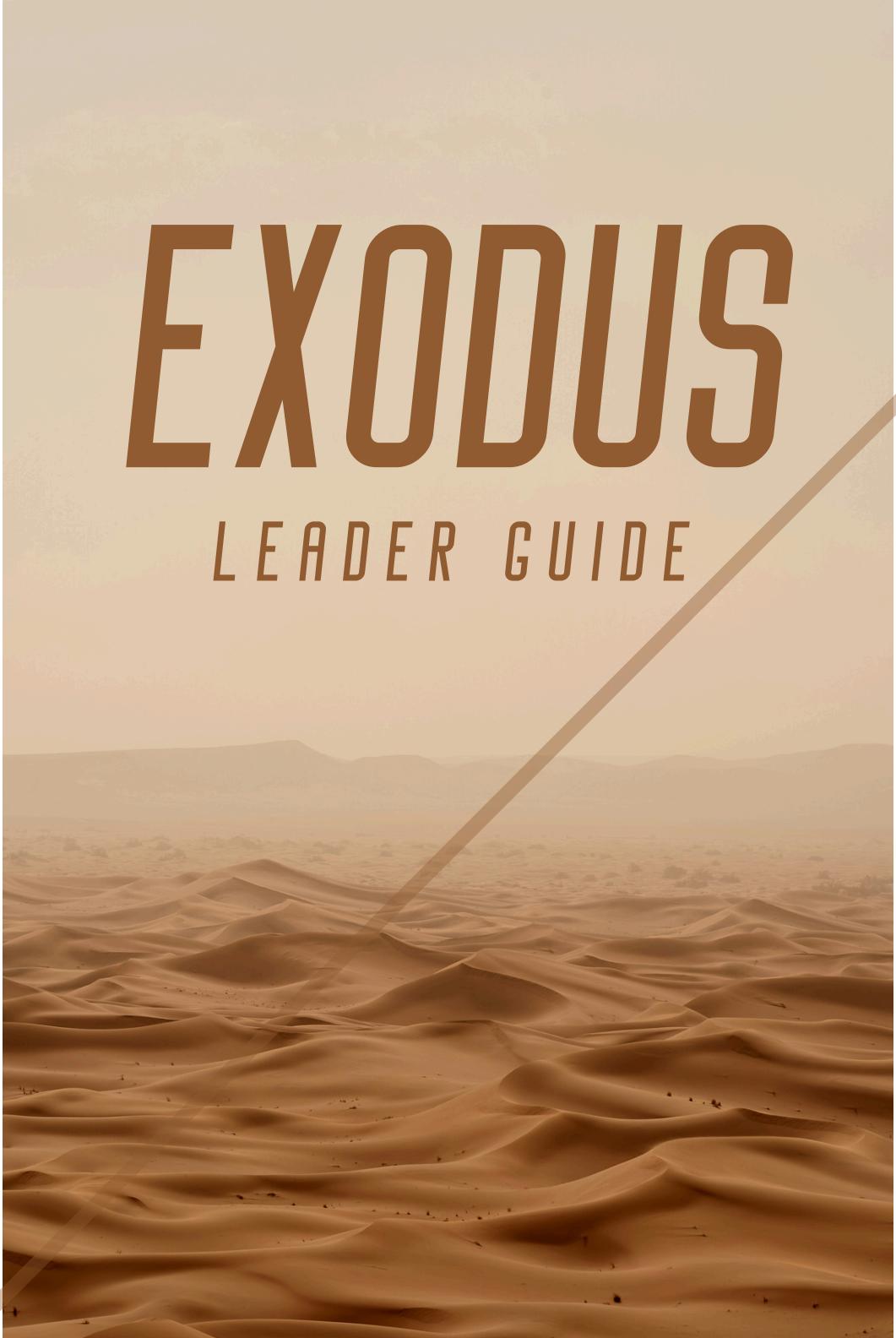


EXODUS

LEADER GUIDE





WEEK 1

SLAVERY & A SAVIOR

DAY 1: GENESIS 15

TODAY'S READING DESCRIBES THE FIRST HINTS ABOUT ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY IN EGYPT. GOD CALLED ABRAM (LATER RENAMED ABRAHAM) TO LEAVE HIS HOME COUNTRY AND ENTER A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP. GOD PROMISED TO PROTECT AND BLESS ABRAM AND HIS NUMEROUS DESCENDANTS (SEE V. 1, 5-7). IN THIS COVENANT CEREMONY, GOD'S PRESENCE PASSES BETWEEN SACRIFICES LAID OUT BY ABRAM. THIS MEANS THAT GOD PROMISES TO KEEP BOTH ENDS OF THE AGREEMENT, BEARING THE CONSEQUENCES FOR A BROKEN COVENANT. THIS REMINDS US OF THE GOSPEL - WE ARE SAVED BY GOD'S GRACE, NOT OUR OWN MERIT.

IN VERSES 13-14, GOD GIVES ABRAM A HINT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HIS DESCENDANTS. THEY WILL BE FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN ANOTHER LAND (EGYPT), WHERE THEY WILL BE SEVERELY AFFLICTED. BUT GOD WILL KEEP THE COVENANT AGREEMENT BY RESCUING THEM AND BRINGING THEM BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND TO DWELL. EVERYTHING WE SEE HAPPENING IN EXODUS IS NOT AN ACCIDENT, BUT PART OF GOD'S PERFECT PLAN.

DAY 2: GENESIS 46:1-15

TODAY'S READING PICKS UP WITH ABRAHAM'S GRANDSON JACOB. EARLIER, GOD RENAMED JACOB ISRAEL, MEANING "WRESTLES WITH GOD" (GEN 32:22-31). THIS BECAME THE NAME OF THE NATION OF JACOB'S DESCENDANTS.

IN GENESIS 46, JACOB RELOCATES HIS FAMILY TO EGYPT TO DWELL UNDER THE PROTECTION OF HIS SON JOSEPH. FOR THREE GENERATIONS, ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS HAD LIVED AS NOMADIC HERDERS IN CANAAN. BUT NOW THEY WILL LIVE IN EGYPT FOR MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED YEARS. IN THESE VERSES, WE ARE TOLD THE NAMES OF THE 70 FAMILY MEMBERS WHO TRAVELED TO EGYPT. OVER THE CENTURIES, THESE PEOPLE WOULD MULTIPLY INTO A GREAT NATION.

DAY 3: GENESIS 49:28 - 50:26

IN TODAY'S READING, WE SEE THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF JACOB AND HIS SON JOSEPH. BOTH BURIALS ARE INSTRUCTIVE. FIRST, JACOB CHOOSES TO BE BURIED IN THE LAND OF CANAAN, IN THE BURIAL LAND OF HIS GRANDFATHER ABRAHAM. THIS IS A SYMBOLIC GESTURE THAT SHOWS THE FAMILY'S FUTURE IS NOT IN EGYPT. HE HAS FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES TO BRING THEM BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND SOMEDAY.

SECOND, JOSEPH PROVIDES INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESERVE HIS REMAINS AND TO MOVE THEM TO THE PROMISED LAND WHEN THE PEOPLE EVENTUALLY RETURN. JOSEPH IS CONFIDENT THAT GOD WILL "VISIT YOU AND BRING YOU UP OUT OF [EGYPT] TO THE LAND THAT HE SPOKE TO ABRAHAM, TO ISAAC AND TO JACOB" (50:24). GENESIS SETS THE STAGE FOR THE BOOK OF EXODUS AND LEADS US TO WAIT WITH ANTICIPATION FOR GOD TO RESCUE THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.

DAY 4: EXODUS 1

THE BOOK OF EXODUS OPENS 430 YEARS AFTER THE ENDING OF GENESIS [EXOD 12:40-41]. IN THOSE YEARS, THE DESCENDANTS OF JACOB GREW INTO A LARGE NATION. HOWEVER, THE PHARAOHS NO LONGER REMEMBERED JOSEPH'S PROSPEROUS RULE AND BEGAN TO VIEW THE ISRAELITES [AKA HEBREWS] AS A THREAT. THEY WERE ENSLAVED AND FORCED TO PERFORM DIFFICULT LABOR AND CONSTRUCTION. PHARAOH ALSO TRIED TO STOP THEIR POPULATION GROWTH BY MURDERING ISRAELITE CHILDREN AFTER BIRTH. TWO HEROIC MIDWIVES ARE DESCRIBED WHO RISKED PHARAOH'S WRATH TO PROTECT THESE CHILDREN. STILL, MANY CHILDREN ARE KILLED, AND THE NATION SUFFERS.

THE IDEA OF A FIRSTBORN SON WILL BE IMPORTANT THROUGHOUT THE BOOK OF EXODUS, AND IT BEGINS HERE IN CHAPTER 1. PHARAOH ATTACKS THE FIRSTBORN SONS OF ISRAEL, CASTING THEM INTO THE NILE TO DROWN.

DAY 5: EXODUS 2

IN CHAPTER 2, WE BEGIN TO SEE GOD'S RESPONSE TO THIS CRISIS. GOD WILL SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO ACT AS A SAVIOR TO THE NATION, A MAN NAMED MOSES. HE WILL SPEAK AND ACT ON GOD'S BEHALF.

THREATENED BY THE EGYPTIANS, MOSES' MOTHER PROTECTS HER SON BY CONCEALING HIM IN A WATERPROOF BASKET, WHICH IS HIDDEN AMONG THE REEDS ALONG THE NILE UNDER THE WATCH OF HER DAUGHTER MIRIAM. IN A SENSE, SHE IS CASTING HIM INTO THE NILE, BUT WITH A PROTECTIVE BASKET. BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE, PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER FINDS THE CHILD AND DRAWS HIM OUT OF THE WATER [HENCE THE NAME MOSES]. SHE DETERMINES TO ADOPT THE CHILD, AND EVEN HIRES MOSES'S MOTHER TO NURSE THE BABY. GOD PROTECTED MOSES AND ALLOWED HIM TO GROW UP IN THE SAFETY OF PHARAOH'S PALACE.

WE JUMP 40 YEARS LATER WHEN AN ADULT MOSES STRIKES AN EGYPTIAN WHO IS BEATING AN ISRAELITE, KILLING HIM. FEARING REPERCUSSIONS, MOSES FLEES EGYPT AND SETTLES IN MIDIAN, WHERE HE MARRIES. DURING THIS TIME, ISRAEL CONTINUED TO SUFFER. STILL, GOD IS NOT ABSENT. HE SEES AND HEARS AND KNOWS, AND WILL SOON ARRIVE TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE [2:23-24].



WEEK 1

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

THE BOOK OF EXODUS CONTINUES THE STORY OF GOD'S COVENANT PEOPLE THAT BEGAN IN GENESIS. GOD CALLED ABRAHAM TO FOLLOW HIM AND ENTER A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP. IN THIS AGREEMENT, GOD PROMISED TO BLESS ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS, GROW THEM INTO A GREAT NATION, AND GIVE THEM THE LAND OF CANAAN. THROUGH THIS NATION, ISRAEL, GOD WOULD BLESS THE NATIONS AND UNDO THE EFFECTS OF SIN'S CURSE [GEN 3:12]. BY GENESIS 46, ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS HAD GROWN INTO A FAMILY OF SEVENTY PEOPLE WHO RELOCATED TO EGYPT UNDER JOSEPH'S PROTECTION AND PROVISION.

WHEN WE CATCH UP WITH THE ISRAELITES IN EXODUS, MORE THAN 400 YEARS HAVE PASSED, AND THEY HAVE GROWN INTO A NUMEROUS PEOPLE. HOWEVER, CENTURIES AFTER JOSEPH'S DEATH, THE ISRAELITES ARE NO LONGER PROTECTED IN EGYPT. THE EGYPTIANS ENSLAVED ISRAEL, USING THEM FOR HARD LABOR. THEY EVENTUALLY BEGAN TO SLAUGHTER THEIR CHILDREN TO PREVENT FURTHER POPULATION GROWTH, THROWING MALE INFANTS INTO THE NILE RIVER.

YET EVEN THIS OPPRESSION WAS NOT UNEXPECTED TO GOD. IN GENESIS 15, CENTURIES EARLIER, GOD TOLD ABRAHAM THAT HIS DESCENDANTS WOULD EXPERIENCE OPPRESSION IN A FOREIGN LAND. BUT GOD WOULD BRING JUDGMENT ON THIS NATION AND BRING THE PEOPLE BACK TO THE PROMISED LAND WITH GREAT POSSESSIONS [GEN 15:13-15]. GOD NEVER FORGOT HIS COVENANT PROMISES, AND HE SAW, HEARD, AND DEEPLY KNEW THE SUFFERING OF HIS PEOPLE [EXODUS 2:2-25]. RESCUE WAS COMING SOON.

EXODUS 1-2 ALSO TELLS OF THE ARRIVAL OF A SAVIOR. MOSES IS RESCUED FROM DEATH IN THE NILE BY HIS MOTHER'S INGENUITY, THE COMPASSION OF PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER, AND GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION. MOSES UNDERGOES AN EXODUS JOURNEY OF HIS OWN, BEING RESCUED FROM THE WATERS OF DEATH, AND DEPARTING EGYPT INTO THE WILDERNESS.

EXODUS SHOWS US A PATTERN OF GOD'S SAVING ACTION. LIKE ISRAEL, WE ARE ENSLAVED TO SIN AND DEATH, UNABLE TO RESCUE OURSELVES [ROM 6:16; EPH 2:1-2]. WE NEED GOD THE REDEEMER TO DRAW NEAR TO US AND BRING US A SAVIOR.



WEEK 1

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- **LIKE ISRAEL, WE ARE UNABLE TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM SLAVERY.**
- **THE LORD IS A GOD WHO SEES, HEARS, AND UNDERSTANDS THE SUFFERING WE EXPERIENCE.**
- **THE LORD RESCUES HIS PEOPLE THROUGH A PROMISED SAVIOR.**

BIG IDEA

AS DISPLAYED BY ISRAEL, EGYPT, AND MOSES, GOD RESCUES HIS PEOPLE FROM SLAVERY TO SIN BY SENDING THEM A SAVIOR.



WEEK 1

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE STORY OF MOSES? WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO LEARN ABOUT MOSES AND THE BOOK OF EXODUS?

REVIEW EXODUS 1-2 WITH YOUR GROUP. THEN WATCH THE WEEK 1 YOUTUBE VIDEO LESSON WITH YOUR GROUP.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. DESCRIBE ISRAEL'S TROUBLES IN YOUR OWN WORDS. WHAT SIMILARITIES DO YOU SEE BETWEEN ISRAEL'S ENSLAVEMENT TO EGYPT AND THE BIBLE'S DESCRIPTION OF OUR ENSLAVEMENT TO SIN? (SEE ROMANS 6:15-23)
2. WHAT MIGHT BE SOME REASONS WHY THE BIBLE DESCRIBES SIN AS SLAVERY?
3. LOOK AT EXODUS 2:23-24. WHAT DO THESE VERSES TEACH US ABOUT GOD'S CHARACTER? HOW CAN THESE VERSES ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING?
4. HOW DOES GOD PROTECT MOSES IN THESE CHAPTERS? IN WHAT WAYS IS MOSES' LIFE SIMILAR TO OTHER STORIES IN SCRIPTURE?
5. IN WHAT WAY DOES GOD BEGIN A PLAN TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE IN THESE CHAPTERS? WHAT SIMILARITIES DO YOU SEE WITH THE ARRIVAL OF JESUS?

PRAY TOGETHER:

1. PRAY FOR GOD'S DIRECTION AS WE STUDY THE BOOK OF EXODUS.
2. PRAISE GOD FOR SAVING US WHEN WE WERE UNABLE TO SAVE OURSELVES.



WEEK 2

YAHWEH THE REDEEMER

DAY 1: EXODUS 3

AFTER YEARS OF KEEPING SHEEP IN THE WILDERNESS, GOD ENCOUNTERS MOSES ON MT SINAI. THE BURNING BUSH IS A MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S PRESENCE AND IDENTITY. THE FIRE THAT DOES NOT CONSUME REPRESENTS GOD'S POWER AND HIS IMMINENCE - HE IS HOLY AND ALL-POWERFUL, YET HE DRAWS NEAR TO BE CLOSE TO HIS PEOPLE. GOD IS COMPLETELY SELF-SUFFICIENT, WHICH EXPLAINS THE COVENANT NAME HE GIVES HIS PEOPLE: YAHWEH. WRITTEN AS "LORD" IN OUR BIBLES, THIS NAME MEANS "I AM WHO I AM." IT TELLS US THAT GOD IS COMPLETELY CONSISTENT AND TRUSTWORTHY, RELYING ON NO ONE, THE SOURCE OF ALL POWER AND GOODNESS. GOD ALLOWS MOSES TO ENTER HIS HOLY PRESENCE, WHERE HE RECEIVES A CALL TO RESCUE ISRAEL.

GOD DECLARES HIS INTENTION TO RESCUE ISRAEL BECAUSE OF THE COVENANT PROMISES MADE TO ABRAHAM [3:15]. HE WILL BRING THEM OUT OF EGYPT WITH "HIS MIGHTY HAND" [3:19-20] AND BRING THEM TO THE BOUNTIFUL PROMISED LAND. MOSES WILL BE ABLE TO DO THIS, NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING SPECIAL ABOUT HIM, BUT BECAUSE GOD WILL BE WITH HIM!

DAY 2: EXODUS 4:1-17

MOSES IS TERRIFIED BY WHAT GOD ASKS HIM TO DO! HE DOUBTS HIS ABILITY TO SPEAK, HIS ABILITY TO LEAD, AND THAT PHARAOH COULD POSSIBLY AGREE TO LET ISRAEL GO! SO GOD PROVIDES MOSES WITH A SERIES OF ASSURANCES.

FIRST, GOD PROMISES TO AUTHENTICATE MOSES' MESSAGE WITH DIVINE SIGNS. HE TURNS THE STAFF INTO A SNAKE, THEN MAKES A HAND LEPROUS TO SHOW HIS UNIQUE POWER AS THE ONLY TRUE GOD. THESE SIGNS WILL CONVINCE SOME, AND ACT AS DIVINE CONDEMNATION FOR THOSE WHO IGNORE THEM. SECOND, GOD ASSURES MOSES OF PERSONAL PRESENCE AND HELP. IT WAS GOD WHO CREATED MOSES, WHO EQUIPPED HIS MOUTH, AND WILL EMPOWER HIS WORDS. MOSES CAN RELY ON GOD, NOT ON HIMSELF. FINALLY, GOD SENDS MOSES HUMAN HELP. HIS OLDER BROTHER, AARON, WILL HELP MOSES SPEAK AND LEAD THE PEOPLE. THIS IS A GOOD REMINDER THAT GOD IS NOT SLOWED BY OUR LIMITATIONS.

DAY 3: 2 COR 3:1-6, 12:9-10

IN THESE NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES, THE APOSTLE PAUL CONFESSES HIS OWN WEAKNESS FOR MINISTRY. HIS AUTHORITY DOES NOT COME FROM LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION OR AN IMPRESSIVE RESUME OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS [3:1-3]. HIS SUFFICIENCY COMES FROM GOD AND HIS CALLING ON PAUL'S LIFE [3:4-6]. SIMILARLY, IN CHAPTER 12, PAUL DESCRIBES A CONTINUAL AFFLICTION AND REMINDER OF WEAKNESS IN HIS LIFE - A "THORN IN THE FLESH." GOD DID NOT REMOVE THIS, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES PAUL ASKED. BUT EVENTUALLY PAUL LEARNED THAT REMINDERS OF HIS WEAKNESSES WERE ALSO POWERFUL REMINDERS OF GOD'S STRENGTH. OUR CONFIDENCE SHOULD REST IN GOD ALONE, SO MUCH SO THAT WE CAN BE CONTENT IN OUR WEAKNESS.

DAY 4: EXODUS 4:18-31

MOSES BEGINS HIS RETURN TO EGYPT, ARRANGING HIS DEPARTURE WITH HIS FATHER-IN-LAW AND FAMILY. IN AN ADDITIONAL MESSAGE FROM GOD, THE THEME OF THE FIRSTBORN SON RETURNS. GOD REFERS TO ISRAEL AS HIS FIRSTBORN SON, WHO RECEIVES THE FIRST INHERITANCE AND THE GREATEST HONOR. PHARAOH IS HOLDING GOD'S SON CAPTIVE, AND IF HE WILL NOT RELEASE ISRAEL, THEN GOD WILL KILL PHARAOH'S SON AS PUNISHMENT [23].

THE NEXT SECTION [V24-26] IS ONE OF THE MOST STRANGE AND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND IN EXODUS. ON HIS JOURNEY BACK TO EGYPT, THE LORD COMES TO PUT MOSES TO DEATH. ZIPPORAH, MOSES' WIFE, RESPONDS QUICKLY BY CIRCUMCISING THEIR SON, SAVING MOSES' LIFE. THE BEST EXPLANATION IS THAT MOSES WAS DISOBEDIENT BY NOT CIRCUMCISING HIS FIRSTBORN SON, IDENTIFYING HIM AS PART OF GOD'S COVENANT PEOPLE. EVEN AS A LEADER, MOSES IS NOT EXEMPT FROM OBEDIENCE TO GOD AND MUST CONSIDER GOD'S COMMANDS WITH DEADLY SERIOUSNESS. MOSES'S FIRSTBORN SON IS DELIVERED FROM DEATH, A RECURRING IDEA THAT WE WILL SEE AGAIN IN EXODUS.

FINALLY, IN VERSES 29-31, MOSES AND AARON ARRIVE IN EGYPT. THEY INFORMED THE ISRAELITE LEADERS THAT GOD WOULD RESCUE THEM FROM EGYPT. TO THEIR CREDIT, THE ELDERS BELIEVED MOSES AND TRUSTED GOD'S PROMISES. IN RESPONSE, THEY WORSHIPPED.

DAY 5: GENESIS 22:1-19

IN GENESIS 22, GOD TESTS ABRAHAM BY ASKING HIM TO SACRIFICE HIS FIRSTBORN SON, ISAAC. ABRAHAM TRUSTED GOD'S PROMISES - THAT THROUGH ISAAC GOD WOULD BUILD A GREAT NATION. HE TRUSTED THAT GOD COULD RAISE ISAAC FROM THE DEAD IF NEED BE [HEB 11:19]. EVEN AS THEY APPROACHED THE ALTAR, ABRAHAM TRUSTED THAT GOD WOULD PROVIDE A SACRIFICE [GEN 22:8], AND GOD DELIVERED - GIVING A RAM AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR ISAAC.

THIS STORY TELLS US HOW GOD REDEEMS, OR BUYS BACK, THE FIRSTBORN SON OF ABRAHAM FROM DEATH. THE SAME WILL HAPPEN IN THE EXODUS RESCUE FROM EGYPT, AND YEARS LATER (ON THE SAME MOUNTAIN ABRAHAM CLIMBED), ISRAEL WOULD BUILD THE TEMPLE WHEN GOD PROVIDES SACRIFICES TO COVER ISRAEL'S SINS. ALL OF THESE POINT FORWARD TO THE FINAL AND GREATEST REDEMPTION - WHEN GOD REDEEMS US FROM DEATH BY OFFERING HIS OWN SON, JESUS CHRIST, TO SAVE US FROM DEATH.



WEEK 2

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

WE HAVE SEEN ISRAEL'S SUFFERING IN EGYPT. WE HAVE MET MOSES AND SEEN HIS PROVIDENTIAL BIRTH AND RESCUE. NOW THE STAGE IS SET, AND WE ARE GIVEN A DETAILED INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS' MAIN CHARACTER - GOD HIMSELF. THESE TWO CHAPTERS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR UNDERSTANDING WHO GOD IS AND HOW HE ACTS WITHIN OUR WORLD. SINCE GOD DOES NOT CHANGE BUT REMAINS FAITHFUL TO HIS PERFECT CHARACTER, THESE CHAPTERS HELP US TO UNDERSTAND GOD IN OUR OWN LIVES AS WELL.

GOD IS THE MIGHTY REDEEMER AND SAVIOR OF HIS PEOPLE. REDEMPTION IS A KEY IDEA IN SCRIPTURE, AND ESPECIALLY IN EXODUS. IT MEANS BUYING BACK, OR PAYING THE PRICE TO RESCUE SOMEONE. GOD ACTS POWERFULLY AND MIRACULOUSLY TO REDEEM ISRAEL OUT OF SLAVERY, SAVING THEM TO BE HIS OWN NATION. MOSES RECEIVES THIS INFORMATION ABOUT GOD IN THREE WAYS AS HE ENCOUNTERS GOD AT THE BURNING BUSH.

FIRST, GOD REVEALS HIS CHARACTER THROUGH HIS COVENANT NAME. GOD IDENTIFIES HIMSELF TO MOSES AS THE GOD OF HIS ANCESTORS - ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB (ALSO NAMED ISRAEL). THIS MEANS HE IS THE SAME ONE WHO MADE THE COVENANT PROMISES TO ABRAHAM, TO MULTIPLY, BLESS, AND DELIVER THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL INTO THE PROMISED LAND [3:6, 15-18]. ALONG WITH THIS DESCRIPTION, GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE A COVENANT NAME BY WHICH THEY WILL KNOW HIM. HE CALLS HIMSELF "I AM WHO I AM" [3:14]. IN HEBREW, THIS WAS THE NAME YAHWEH, BUT THE NAME WAS CONSIDERED SO HOLY THAT IT WAS NEVER SPOKEN ALOUD. INSTEAD, THE ISRAELITES SIMPLY SAID "LORD." IN OUR ENGLISH BIBLES, THE NAME IS WRITTEN LORD. IT SIGNIFIES GOD'S UNCHANGING FAITHFULNESS. HE HAS NO BEGINNING AND NO END; HE NEEDS NOTHING TO EXIST; HE SIMPLY IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE. THIS NAME IS REPRESENTED BY THE BURNING BUSH - A FIRE BURNING CONSTANTLY BUT CONSUMING NOTHING. YAHWEH, THE COVENANT NAME, WILL FOREVER BE TIED TO GOD'S GREAT ACT OF REDEMPTION.

SECOND, GOD REVEALS HIS CHARACTER THROUGH HIS COVENANT PROMISES. THE LORD PROMISES TO DO EXACTLY WHAT HE PROMISED TO ABRAHAM. HE WILL BRING ISRAEL OUT OF THEIR AFFLICTIONS IN EGYPT, DEFEAT THEIR ENEMIES IN CANAAN, AND PROVIDE THEM WITH A BOUNTIFUL PROMISED LAND. HE CAN BE RELIED UPON TO COMPLETE HIS PROMISES! GOD PROMISES THAT MOSES WILL RETURN TO THIS MOUNTAIN WITH THE NATION SO THAT THEY ALL CAN WORSHIP THE LORD TOGETHER [3:12].



WEEK 2

LEADER GUIDE

FINALLY, GOD REVEALS HIS CHARACTER THROUGH HIS MIGHTY ACTIONS. GOD HAS THE POWER TO BACK UP HIS PROMISES. PHARAOH WILL BE COMPELLED TO RELEASE ISRAEL BY GOD'S "MIGHTY HAND." MOSES UNDERSTANDABLY DOUBTS HIS ABILITY TO LEAD ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT, SO GOD PROVIDES A SERIES OF SIGNS THAT DEMONSTRATE HIS POWER. FIRST, GOD TRANSFORMS MOSES' STAFF INTO A SNAKE AND THEN BACK INTO A STAFF. SECOND, GOD TURNED MOSES' ARM LEPROUS BEFORE HEALING IT AGAIN. THIRDLY, GOD WILL TURN THE WATERS OF THE NILE INTO BLOOD (4:2-9). THESE ARE SIGNS OF GOD'S MIGHTY POWER AS THE ONLY TRUE GOD, THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.

GOD IS YAHWEH, THE ALMIGHTY REDEEMER, WHO REMEMBERS HIS COVENANT PROMISES AND WILL RESCUE HIS PEOPLE. THE STAGE IS SET, AND YAHWEH IS ABOUT TO ACT!

KEY IDEAS

- GOD'S COVENANT NAME REVEALS HIS CHARACTER.
- GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES REVEAL HIS CHARACTER.
- GOD'S MIGHTY ACTIONS REVEAL HIS CHARACTER.

BIG IDEA

GOD SHOWS HIMSELF TO BE THE MIGHTY REDEEMER AND SAVIOR OF HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS COVENANT NAME, COVENANT PROMISES, AND MIGHTY ACTIONS.



WEEK 2

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE WORD "REDEMPTION"? WHAT ARE SOME IDEAS OR STORIES THAT YOU ASSOCIATE WITH REDEMPTION?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. DESCRIBE MOSES' RESPONSE TO ENCOUNTERING GOD IN THESE CHAPTERS. WHY DO YOU THINK HE REACTED IN THIS WAY? IN WHAT WAYS IS HIS RESPONSE RELATABLE?
2. WHAT DOES GOD TELL MOSES THAT HE IS GOING TO DO? WHAT DO THESE PROMISES TELL US ABOUT WHO GOD IS?
3. WHAT DOES GOD'S NAME YAHWEH TELL US ABOUT GOD'S CHARACTER?
4. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO DESCRIBE THE MIRACLES IN CHAPTER 4 AS "SIGNS" (4:8-9)? WHAT ARE THE SIGNS POINTING TOWARD? WHAT DO THEY REVEAL ABOUT GOD?
5. HOW CAN GOD'S NAME, PROMISES AND ACTIONS BUILD OUR FAITH IN GOD? IN WHAT WAYS DO WE SEE THEM IN JESUS' SAVING WORK FOR US?
6. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS FOR GOD TO BE OUR REDEEMER?

PRAY TOGETHER:

1. PRAY FOR A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S CHARACTER AS WE STUDY EXODUS.
2. PRAISE GOD FROM HIS MIGHTY ACTS OF REDEMPTION IN OUR LIVES.



WEEK 3

MOSES & AARON BEFORE PHARAOH

DAY 1: EXODUS 5:1-14

MOSES AND AARON MAKE THEIR FIRST APPEAL TO PHARAOH, DECLARING THE LORD HAS COMMANDED ISRAEL'S RELEASE. THEIR MEETING DID NOT GO WELL. INSTEAD OF RELEASING ISRAEL, PHARAOH INCREASES THEIR WORKLOAD. IN EGYPTIAN CONSTRUCTION, BRICKS WERE MADE FROM CLAY MIXED WITH STRAW. NOW THE ISRAELITES WERE GIVEN THE ADDED WORK OF COLLECTING STRAW NEEDED TO MEET THEIR DAILY QUOTAS.

PHARAOH'S RESPONSE IS INSTRUCTIVE. HE REPLIES THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW THE LORD (5:2), AND SETS HIS WORD AGAINST GOD'S (5:10). IN DOING SO, HE DENIES THE POWER OF THE LORD'S WORD, AND ASSERTS HIS AUTHORITY. OVER THE NEXT FEW CHAPTERS, GOD WILL ENSURE THAT PHARAOH AND THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT TRULY KNOW THE LORD AND HIS POWER.

DAY 2: EXODUS 5:15-23

THE ISRAELITES ARE SUFFERING UNDER THEIR INCREASED BURDENS, SO THEIR LEADERS APPROACH PHARAOH ASKING FOR AN EXPLANATION. PHARAOH BLAMES MOSES AND AARON! IF THEY HAD NOT DEMANDED ISRAEL'S RELEASE, HE WOULD NOT HAVE LEVELED THESE BURDENS ON THE PEOPLE. THE ISRAELITES ARE NOW IN WORSE TROUBLE THAN BEFORE, AND BEGIN TO BLAME MOSES AND AARON AS WELL. THEY HAVE MADE ISRAEL STINK TO PHARAOH.

THIS ADVERSITY IS INSTRUCTIVE FOR ISRAEL. THEY ALSO MUST LEARN WHO THE LORD REALLY IS AND COME TO TRUST IN HIS PROVISION AND PROTECTION.

DAY 3: EXODUS 6:1-13

IN THE FIRST HALF OF EXODUS 6, THE LORD REASSURED MOSES AFTER MOSES' INITIAL REQUEST FAILED. ONCE AGAIN, THE LORD REAFFIRMS HIS COVENANT PROMISES, HIS CONCERN FOR THE SUFFERING ISRAELITES, AND HIS DEDICATION TO BRING THEM OUT OF EGYPT. THIS REPETITION IS IMPORTANT. MOSES IS LEARNING HOW TO TRUST GOD. IT IS EASY TO DOUBT GOD'S PROMISES IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY. BUT EVEN IF GOD'S TIMING IS DIFFERENT FROM OURS, HE ALWAYS DELIVERS ON HIS PROMISES.

VERSE 7 IS IMPORTANT. THIS IS KNOWN AS THE "COVENANT FORMULA," GOD'S PROMISE TO ENTER INTO A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS PEOPLE. IN RESPONSE, THE PEOPLE ARE TO SHOW ALLEGIANCE AND FAITHFULNESS TO GOD ALONE.

DAY 4: DEUTERONOMY 7:6-11

THIS PASSAGE IS FROM ONE OF MOSES' SERMONS GIVEN NEAR THE END OF HIS LIFE, DECADES AFTER THE EXODUS. HE WANTS TO REMIND ISRAEL OF GOD'S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS AS THEY PREPARE TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND. GOD CHOSE ISRAEL AND MADE THEM HIS TREASURED POSSESSION, A HOLY NATION - MEANING THEY ARE SET APART FOR GOD'S PARTICULAR PURPOSES. CRUCIALLY, THIS WAS NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING EXTRAORDINARY OR SPECIAL ABOUT ISRAEL. THEY WERE CHOSEN NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR GREATNESS, BUT BECAUSE OF GOD'S GREAT LOVE [V8]. GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES ARE NOT MEANT TO MAKE HIS PEOPLE PRIDEFUL, BUT TO MAKE THEM HUMBLE AND GRATEFUL, LEADING THEM TO RESPOND IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S INCREDIBLE LOVE AND FORGIVENESS [V11].

THE NEW TESTAMENT RELATES THESE PROMISES TO THE CHURCH - GOD'S PEOPLE FROM BOTH THE NATION OF ISRAEL AND MEMBERS OF ALL NATIONS WHO PLACE THEIR TRUST IN CHRIST. CHRISTIANS MUST ALSO AVOID PRIDE AND COMPLACENCY IN LIGHT OF THESE PROMISES. INSTEAD, THEY GIVE US ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND A GRATEFUL DESIRE TO FOLLOW GOD'S COMMANDS.

DAY 5: EXODUS 6:14-30

IN THESE VERSES, THE NARRATIVE PAUSES TO INCLUDE A GENEALOGY. BEGINNING WITH JACOB (ISRAEL)'S OLDEST SON, REUBEN, THE LIST PROCEEDS UNTIL LEVI [6:14-16], AND THEN STOPS TO GIVE A DETAILED LISTING OF LEVI'S DESCENDANTS [6:17-25]. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LISTING IS TO SHOW MOSES AND AARON'S PLACE WITHIN ISRAEL, ALONG WITH SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT RELATIVES, LIKE AARON'S SONS, WHO WOULD BECOME THE PRIESTS. IT ALSO REMINDS US THAT WE ARE READING ABOUT REAL PEOPLE IN REAL HISTORY [6:26-27].

GOD STEPS INTO HISTORY TO SHAPE IT FOR HIS PURPOSES. HE IS NOT DISTANT BUT DRAWS NEAR TO RESCUE HIS PEOPLE.



WEEK 3

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

HAVING ARRIVED IN EGYPT AND SPOKEN WITH THE ISRAELITE LEADERS [4:29-31], MOSES AND AARON APPROACH PHARAOH. AT THE TIME, PHARAOH WAS THE MOST POWERFUL LEADER IN THE KNOWN WORLD! DEMANDING THAT HE RELEASE A LARGE PART OF HIS WORKFORCE WAS NOT EASY! BUT MOSES AND AARON FOLLOWED GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS, DEMANDING THE RELEASE OF GOD'S PEOPLE. THIS SECTION CONTAINS THREE SECTIONS: REJECTION [5:1-23], PROMISE [6:1-13], AND HISTORY [6:14-30].

FIRST, MOSES AND AARON EXPERIENCE PHARAOH'S REJECTION [5:1-23]. AT THEIR FIRST MEETING WITH PHARAOH, MOSES AND AARON CONVEY GOD'S COMMAND: RELEASE GOD'S PEOPLE SO THEY MAY SERVE THE LORD [5:1]. HOWEVER, PHARAOH REFUSES TO OBEY IT. IN FACT, HE DOES THE OPPOSITE. TO SPITE MOSES, PHARAOH INCREASED THE ISRAELITES' WORKLOAD. GOING FORWARD, THEY WOULD HAVE TO MAKE BRICKS WITHOUT ALL THE PROVIDED MATERIALS, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO MEET THEIR QUOTAS. THE PEOPLE CRIED OUT IN FRUSTRATION AND ANGER AGAINST MOSES [5:20-21]. ALL HE HAS DONE IS MAKE THINGS WORSE!

PHARAOH REJECTS MOSES AND AARON, BUT REALLY, HE REJECTS THE LORD. HIS RESPONSE IS KEY, "WHO IS THE LORD, THAT I SHOULD OBEY HIM AND LET ISRAEL GO? I DO NOT KNOW THE LORD, AND I WILL NOT LET ISRAEL GO" [5:2]. PHARAOH DOES NOT KNOW GOD OR HIS POWER, BUT HE WILL LEARN SOON ENOUGH.

SECOND, MOSES RECEIVES GOD'S RENEWED PROMISE [6:1-13]. AFTER BEING DENIED BY PHARAOH AND REBUKED BY THE ISRAELITES, MOSES CRIES OUT TO THE LORD. GOD GRACIOUSLY RESPONDS WITH ASSURANCE. HE REMEMBERS HIS PROMISES TO THEIR ANCESTORS AND IS COMMITTED TO BEING ISRAEL'S COVENANT PARTNER. DESPITE PHARAOH'S BEST EFFORT, GOD WILL DELIVER ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT [6:8-9]. NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS LOOK, WE CAN TRUST GOD'S PROMISES TO SAVE.

FINALLY, THE THIRD SECTION REMINDS US OF GOD'S WORK IN HISTORY, SHARING THE GENEALOGY OF MOSES AND AARON [6:14-30]. THIS LISTING SHOWS THE SONS OF JACOB AND THEN SPECIFIES THE DESCENDANTS OF LEVI DOWN TO MOSES AND AARON. WHY? TO SHOW THAT IT WAS THIS SPECIFIC, HISTORICAL MOSES AND AARON WHOM GOD USED TO DELIVER ISRAEL. THIS IS NOT A FABLE OR LEGEND. GOD IS REALLY ACTING IN REAL HISTORY TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PROMISES FOR HIS PEOPLE.



WEEK 3

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- PHARAOH REPRESENTS THE ENEMIES OF GOD, THOSE IN A FALLEN WORLD WHO SET THEMSELVES AGAINST GOD AND HIS PEOPLE.
- GOD'S MIGHTY POWER OVERCOMES ALL OPPOSITION, ALLOWING HIS PEOPLE TO TRUST HIS COVENANT PROMISES.
- GOD WORKS IN HISTORY TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOOD PURPOSES.

BIG IDEA

DESPITE REPEATED OPPOSITION FROM THE FALLEN WORLD, GOD'S PEOPLE CAN TRUST IN HIS COVENANT PROMISES.



WEEK 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

HOW DO YOU USUALLY RESPOND TO REJECTION? WHAT MAKES FACING REJECTION DIFFICULT?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. DESCRIBE PHARAOH'S AND ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO MOSES' MESSAGE IN CHAPTER 5. WHAT DO YOU THINK MOSES FELT WHEN FACING THESE RESPONSES?
2. HOW DOES PHARAOH POSITION HIMSELF AS AN ENEMY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE? WHAT ARE OTHER EXAMPLES OF SIMILAR FIGURES AND FORCES IN THE BIBLE?
3. WHEN FACED WITH INCREASED OPPPOSITION AGAINST ISRAEL, GOD'S FIRST RESPONSE IS NOT RELIEF BUT A REMINDER OF HIS COVENANT PROMISES [6:1-8]. WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS RESPONSE IS MEANT TO TEACH GOD'S PEOPLE?
4. HOW MIGHT REMEMBERING GOD'S PROMISES HELP US WHEN WE ARE FACING OPPPOSITION AND REJECTION FOR FOLLOWING JESUS?
5. READ ALOUD JOHN 15:18-25. WHAT KIND OF RESPONSE DOES JESUS TELL HIS FOLLOWERS TO EXPECT FROM THE WORLD? IN WHAT WAYS DOES THIS PREPARE US FOR WHAT WE WILL FACE?

PRAY TOGETHER:

1. ASK FOR GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP IN THE FACE OF THE WORLD'S REJECTION.
2. PRAISE GOD FOR HIS UNCHANGING FAITHFULNESS.



WEEK 4

THE PLAGUES

DAY 1: EXODUS 7

THE PASSAGE BEGINS AS THE LORD INSTRUCTS MOSES ONCE AGAIN. GOD EXPLAINS WHAT WILL HAPPEN OVER THE NEXT FIVE CHAPTERS AND HIS PURPOSE BEHIND THESE EVENTS. HE WILL BRING MIGHTY PLAGUES ON EGYPT IN ORDER TO FORCE PHARAOH TO RELEASE ISRAEL [7:4-5]. THE END RESULT WILL BE THE NAME OF THE LORD BEING KNOWN - THEY WILL LEARN WHO GOD TRULY IS. MOSES WILL SPEAK GOD'S AUTHORITATIVE WORDS [7:1-2], AND AARON WILL HELP HIM TO COMMUNICATE.

THE FIRST PLAGUE INVOLVES TURNING THE NILE RIVER INTO BLOOD [7:14-25]. EGYPT ONLY SURVIVED BECAUSE OF THE NILE RIVER AND THE FARMING THAT IS MADE POSSIBLE. THE LOSS OF DRINKING WATER WAS CATASTROPHIC FOR THIS DESERT NATION.

WITH BOTH THE SNAKE SIGN [7:8-13] AND THE NILE PLAGUE, PHARAOH INSTRUCTS HIS MAGICIANS TO MIMIC THE SIGN THROUGH THEIR "SECRET ARTS." THESE COULD DESCRIBE DEMONIC POWER FROM OCCULT PRACTICE, OR MERE DECEPTIVE TRICKS. EITHER WAY, PHARAOH IS DETERMINED TO MATCH POWER WITH MOSES' GOD, WHICH WILL NOT END WELL FOR EITHER PHARAOH OR EGYPT.

DAY 2: EXODUS 8

IN THIS CHAPTER, WE SEE THE SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH PLAGUES - FROGS, GNATS, AND FLIES. THESE PLAGUES AFFLICTED THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT BY OVERRUNNING THEM WITH THESE PESTS. THE MAGICIANS CAN MIMIC THE FROG PLAGUE BUT CANNOT MATCH THE THIRD AND FOURTH PLAGUES. AMAZINGLY, THE PAGAN MAGICIANS URGE PHARAOH TO HEED THE PLAGUES, CORRECTLY RECOGNIZING THAT "THIS IS THE HAND OF GOD." BUT PHARAOH REFUSES TO LISTEN.

IN THIS CHAPTER, PHARAOH BEGINS BARGAINING WITH MOSES, EVEN PROMISING TO RELEASE ISRAEL IF GOD WILL REMOVE THE PLAGUES. BUT AFTER EACH REPRIEVE, PHARAOH GOES BACK ON HIS WORD AND REFUSES TO RELEASE ISRAEL. BY THE FOURTH PLAGUE, GOD DIRECTS THE FLIES ONLY AT THE EGYPTIANS, SPARING HIS PEOPLE IN GOSHEN.

DAY 3: EXODUS 9

THIS CHAPTER DESCRIBES THE FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH PLAGUES - DEATH OF EGYPTIAN LIVESTOCK, BOILS, AND HAIL. THE BOILS DIRECTLY AFFLICTED THE HEALTH OF THE EGYPTIANS, WHILE THE LIVESTOCK AND HAIL AFFECTED THEIR AGRICULTURE. LOSING VALUABLE LIVESTOCK AND HAVING CROPS DESTROYED BY HAIL WOULD CRIPPLE THEIR ECONOMY AND CAUSE WIDESPREAD FAMINE. BUT IN ALL OF THESE PLAGUES, ISRAEL IS SET APART AND SPARED FROM THE DESTRUCTION.

PART OF THE REASON PHARAOH IS UNWILLING TO RELENT IS THE CROPS THAT WERE NOT YET IN HARVEST [9:31]. THE BARLEY HARVEST WAS STILL SALVAGEABLE, AND SO PHARAOH BELIEVED HE COULD OUTLAST GOD. HE STILL BELIEVES HE CAN BATTLE AGAINST GOD AND WIN.

THE PURPOSE OF THESE PLAGUES IS SUMMARIZED IN 9:15-17. ALTHOUGH GOD COULD HAVE DESTROYED EGYPT IN AN INSTANT, GOD INSTEAD WANTS TO SHOW EGYPT WHO HE IS. THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO KNOW THEIR CREATOR AND CHOOSE TO WORSHIP HIM [V. 20].

DAY 4: EXODUS 10

CHAPTER 10 DESCRIBES THE EIGHTH AND NINTH PLAGUES - LOCUSTS AND DARKNESS. THE LOCUSTS CONSUME CROPS, FURTHER DEVASTATING THE ECONOMY. THE THREE DAYS OF DARKNESS WOULD HAVE BEEN TERRIFYING. EGYPTIANS WORSHIPED RA, THE SUN GOD, WHO WAS BELIEVED TO RULE THE POWERS OF EGYPT AND WAS SUPPOSEDLY THE FIRST PHARAOH. BLOTTING OUT THE SUN SHOWS THAT THEIR GREATEST GOD AND THEIR POWERFUL PHARAOH ARE NO MATCH FOR THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

PHARAOH IS GROWING DESPERATE AND ANGRY, YET UNWILLING TO HUMBLE HIMSELF BEFORE GOD AND ADMIT DEFEAT. HE ATTEMPTS TO BARGAIN WITH MOSES, OFFERING TO RELEASE SOME OF THE ISRAELITES. HIS PLAN IS TO KEEP THEIR CHILDREN AND LIVESTOCK IN EGYPT SO THEY WOULD BE FORCED TO RETURN. BUT PHARAOH LEARNED THAT YOU CANNOT BARGAIN WITH GOD. MERCY COMES FROM HUMBLING OURSELVES BEFORE THE ALMIGHTY, NOT BENDING HIM TO OUR WILL.

DAY 5: EXODUS 11

IN A FINAL MEETING WITH PHARAOH, GOD THREATENS THE FINAL PLAGUE - THE DEATH OF EVERY FIRSTBORN SON IN EGYPT. THIS IS THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S WARNING FROM EXODUS 4:21-23. PHARAOH HAS CAPTURED AND OPPRESSED GOD'S FIRSTBORN SON, ISRAEL. SINCE PHARAOH REFUSES TO RELEASE ISRAEL AFTER NUMEROUS WARNINGS, GOD WILL TAKE HIS FIRSTBORN. STILL, PHARAOH REFUSES THIS FINAL WARNING. IT IS THESE TERRIBLE FINAL PLAGUES THAT WILL LEAD TO ISRAEL'S RELEASE.

ALTHOUGH PHARAOH REFUSED TO HONOR GOD, MANY OF THE EGYPTIANS HAD COME TO FEAR THE LORD AND RESPECT MOSES AS GOD'S PROPHET [11:3]. GOD'S PURPOSE HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND WE WILL LEARN THAT MANY EGYPTIANS HONORED ISRAEL WITH GIFTS AS THEY DEPARTED, AND SOME EVEN WENT WITH ISRAEL TO BECOME PART OF GOD'S PEOPLE. THE NAME OF THE LORD WAS GLORIFIED!



WEEK 4

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

IN THESE CHAPTERS, GOD BRINGS TEN PLAGUES UPON EGYPT IN ORDER TO CONVINCE PHARAOH TO RELEASE ISRAEL FROM CAPTIVITY. THESE ARE MIRACULOUS EVENTS AND SHOW THE CREATOR'S MASTERY OVER NATURE, ANIMALS, AND LIFE ITSELF! AFTER MANY PROMISES, GOD IS ACTING POWERFULLY AND MIRACULOUSLY!

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE PLAGUES? WE ARE TOLD IN THE FIRST VERSES OF CHAPTER 7. GOD IS ONCE AGAIN INSTRUCTING MOSES AND TELLS HIM IN ADVANCE WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN. GOD WILL BRING JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT TO SHOW THAT HE IS THE LORD, THE ONE TRUE GOD (EXOD 7:4-5). THIS WILL SHOW WHO GOD IS TO BOTH ISRAEL AND TO NATIONS LIKE EGYPT.

BUT CRUCIALLY, WE ARE ALSO TOLD THAT PHARAOH WILL NOT LISTEN! BY BOTH GOD'S WILL AND PHARAOH'S OWN SIN, HE WILL IGNORE THE SIGNS UNTIL THE TENTH AND FINAL PLAGUES.

REMEMBER THAT PHARAOH REPRESENTS THE EMBODIMENT OF GOD'S ENEMIES. HE IS FOLLOWING THE WAY OF SATAN AND CAIN AND THE MANY WHO CHOOSE THEIR WAY (SIN) OVER GOD. IN ONE FINAL ENCOUNTER BEFORE THE PLAGUES BEGIN, PHARAOH SETS UP A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE GOD OF MOSES AND THE POWER OF EGYPT. ALTHOUGH THEY MIMIC THE SIGN OF TURNING A STAFF INTO A SERPENT, AARON'S SERPENT SWALLOWED UP THEIRS! PHARAOH CHOOSES TO FIGHT GOD AND IS GOING TO LEARN HOW FOOLISH THAT IS.

THESE PLAGUES REVEAL THE LORD'S POWER AS GOD, HIS SUPERIORITY OVER THE SO-CALLED GODS OF EGYPT, AND TEACH US SOMETHING ABOUT GOD'S JUDGMENT IN GENERAL. WE CAN QUESTION ACTS OF JUDGMENT IN THE BIBLE, WONDERING HOW A LOVING GOD CAN DO SUCH THINGS. BUT THESE ACTS SHOW US THAT JUDGMENT ALWAYS ACCOMPLISHES BOTH RESCUE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE AND JUST PUNISHMENT AGAINST GOD'S ENEMIES. TO PUNISH SIN IS TO LOVE AND PROTECT GOOD. GOD SHOWS ANGER AGAINST PHARAOH BECAUSE HE LOVES ISRAEL.

JUDGMENT SHOWS BOTH GOD'S JUSTICE AND MERCY, TO PUNISH EVIL AND TO RESCUE THOSE WHO RECEIVE HIS MERCY. IN EVERY ACT OF JUDGMENT UNTIL THE FINAL JUDGMENT AT THE END OF HISTORY, GOD PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REPENTANCE, A CHANCE TO REALLY KNOW AND FOLLOW HIM.



WEEK 4

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- GOD'S WORK IN PHARAOH AND THROUGH THE PLAGUES REVEALS HIS POWER AND DIVINITY.
- THE PLAGUES DISPLAY GOD'S DIVINITY AND SHAME THE SO-CALLED GODS OF EGYPT.
- GOD USES THE PLAGUES TO DISPLAY HIS GLORY, BRINGING JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT AND REDEMPTION UPON ISRAEL.

BIG IDEA

GOD'S JUDGMENT DISPLAYS HIS GLORY, RESCUES HIS PEOPLE, AND PUNISHES EVIL. ALL THREE ELEMENTS ARE SIGNS OF GOD'S POWER AND CHARACTER.



WEEK 4

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF GOD'S JUDGMENT? WHERE DO WE SEE THIS TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. READ ALOUD EXODUS 7:1-5. WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE UPCOMING PLAGUES?
2. REVIEW PHARAOH'S RESPONSE TO GOD'S DIRECTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER. WHAT DO HIS ACTIONS REVEAL ABOUT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LORD? WHAT DO YOU THINK HE CAN SHOW US ABOUT SIN AND ITS EFFECTS ON US?
3. HOW DO THE PLAGUES DISPLAY GOD'S UNIQUE POWER OVER CREATION? HOW MIGHT THIS AFFECT YOUR DAILY ATTITUDE TO THE WORLD AROUND YOU?
4. THE PLAGUES SHAME THE FALSE GODS WORSHIPED IN EGYPT. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT WORSHIP IDOLS LIKE RA, WE DO WORSHIP THINGS OTHER THAN GOD. WHAT ARE SOME MODERN-DAY IDOLS, AND HOW DOES GOD SHOW HIS SUPERIORITY OVER THEM?
5. WHY MIGHT GOD'S ACTS OF JUDGMENT BE DIFFICULT FOR SOMEONE TO ACCEPT? WHAT DO THESE ACTS OF JUDGMENT TELL US ABOUT WHO GOD IS AND WHAT HE CARES ABOUT?
6. HOW ARE GOD'S WRATH AND LOVE CONNECTED? WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT?

PRAY TOGETHER:

1. PRAISE GOD FOR HIS UNIQUE AND UNRIVALED POWER.
2. PRAISE GOD FOR HIS JUSTICE TO PUNISH EVIL AND HIS MERCY TO RESCUE SINNERS.



WEEK 5

THE PASSOVER

DAY 1: EXODUS 12:1-28

GOD INSTRUCTS THE PEOPLE TO SACRIFICE AN UNBLEMISHED (PERFECT) LAMB AND THEN TO MARK THE DOORWAYS TO THEIR HOMES WITH THE BLOOD. THE SACRIFICE ACTS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN SON, AND MARKS THE HOMES THAT FEAR GOD AND HEED HIS COMMANDMENTS. THE HOMES WITH THE BLOOD ARE SPARED, AND THE OTHER HOMES WILL BE STRUCK WITH THE LORD'S JUDGMENT. THIS FORESHADOWS THE ATONEMENT SACRIFICE OF JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD. WHEN WE ARE MARKED WITH THE BLOOD OF JESUS, WE ARE SPARED. JESUS BECOMES OUR SUBSTITUTE.

THIS SACRIFICE IS SO SIGNIFICANT THAT IT WAS ESTABLISHED AS A CENTRAL ANNUAL CELEBRATION FOR ISRAEL. EACH YEAR, THEY WERE TO CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD, WHICH LED INTO THE PASSOVER FEAST. AS THEY SACRIFICED THE LAMB AND SHARED THE RITUAL MEAL TOGETHER, THE PARENTS WOULD EXPLAIN ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO THEIR CHILDREN (12:25-27). BY THIS, EACH GENERATION WOULD LEARN ABOUT THE EXODUS AND ABOUT THE SACRIFICE OF ATONEMENT PROVIDED BY GOD.

DAY 2: EXODUS 12:29-32

THE FINAL PLAGUE, THREATENED IN CHAPTER 11, IS COMPLETED. THROUGHOUT EGYPT, FROM THE LOWEST FAMILY TO PHARAOH HIMSELF, THE FIRSTBORN SON OF EACH FAMILY WAS KILLED. FINALLY, PHARAOH RELENTS AND RELEASES ISRAEL TO LEAVE EGYPT.

PHARAOH'S SIN BROUGHT TERRIBLE SUFFERING ONTO THE NATION OF EGYPT. DESPITE PROMISING FREEDOM AND POWER, SIN ALWAYS DELIVERS DEATH AND SUFFERING. GOD PATIENTLY ENDURED REBELLION AND DEFIANCE FROM SINFUL PEOPLE LIKE PHARAOH, AND HE PROVIDED MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO REPENT. BUT THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH (ROM 6:23).

DAY 3: EXODUS 12:33-42

AFTER GENERATIONS OF CAPTIVITY, ISRAEL'S RELEASE COMES SUDDENLY. ANXIOUS TO REMOVE GOD'S JUDGMENT, THE EGYPTIANS RUSH THE ISRAELITES OUT OF GOSHEN. THIS HASTE IS COMMEMORATED BY THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD. WITH NO TIME TO ALLOW THEIR BREAD TO RISE, THE PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO BRING FLAT, UNLEAVENED BREAD TO EAT, A GENERATIONAL REMINDER OF THEIR DEPARTURE FROM SLAVERY. WITH NO TIME TO MAKE DETAILED PREPARATIONS, THEY WILL LEARN TO RELY ON THE LORD FOR PROVISION.

EGYPT ALSO SENDS ISRAEL OUT WITH GIFTS OF SILVER AND GOLD [12:37]. THESE WERE MEANT AS A SACRIFICE TO HONOR ISRAEL'S GOD, AND ARE ANOTHER WAY THAT GOD RICHLY PROVIDED FOR HIS PEOPLE. THIS IS SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS THE "PLUNDERING" OF EGYPT AND IS A SIGN OF THE LORD'S COMPLETE AND TOTAL VICTORY OVER EGYPT.

THE SMALL FAMILY THAT ENTERED EGYPT LEAVES AS A GREAT MULTITUDE [12:40-42] AND LIKELY INCLUDED SOME EGYPTIANS WHO HAD COME TO FEAR AND WORSHIP THE LORD [12:38].

DAY 4: EXODUS 12:43-51

THESE VERSES DESCRIBE THE REGULATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL PASSOVER CELEBRATION. ALL MEMBERS OF ISRAEL MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE FEAST. IT WAS CENTRAL TO THEIR IDENTITY AS GOD'S PEOPLE. FOREIGNERS (NON-ISRAELITES) WERE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FROM PARTICIPATING. HOWEVER, IF A FOREIGNER WISHES TO WORSHIP THE LORD AND BECOME A MEMBER OF GOD'S PEOPLE, THEY COULD BE INCLUDED IN THE PASSOVER FEAST.

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, GOD CLEARLY MARKS OUT THOSE WHO ARE TRULY HIS PEOPLE WITH RITUALS LIKE THE PASSOVER AND CIRCUMCISION. BUT THE INTENTION ALWAYS WAS TO EXTEND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD TO ALL NATIONS, INCLUDING THEM IN HIS PEOPLE. THIS WOULD ULTIMATELY HAPPEN THROUGH CHRIST'S WORK AND DEATH ON THE CROSS.

DAY 5: MATTHEW 26:17-29

AT THE LAST SUPPER, JUST BEFORE THE CRUCIFIXION, JESUS CELEBRATED THE PASSOVER FEAST WITH HIS DISCIPLES. AFTER THE MEAL, JESUS REINTERPRETED THE MEAL IN LIGHT OF WHAT HE WAS ABOUT TO ACCOMPLISH ON THE CROSS. THE UNLEAVENED BREAD REPRESENTS HIS BROKEN BODY, AND THE WINE REPRESENTS HIS SHED BLOOD. HE WOULD BE THE PASSOVER LAMB, UNBLEMISHED BY SIN AND WITH BONES UNBROKEN (EXODUS 12:46; JOHN 19:36). HE IS THE ATONING SACRIFICE THAT CAUSES GOD'S WRATH TO PASS OVER OUR SIN, AND DELIVER US OUT OF SLAVERY TO SIN. AT THE LAST SUPPER, JESUS SHOWS THAT THE PASSOVER POINTED TO HIM FROM THE BEGINNING.

THE LORD'S SUPPER IS A MARKER OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY. IT MARKS THOSE WHO BELONG TO JESUS, THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM AS SAVIOR AND LORD. ANY PERSON, FROM ANY TRIBE, TONGUE, OR NATION WHO COMES TO FOLLOW JESUS CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF JESUS' CHURCH AND SHARE IN THE SUPPER.



WEEK 5

LEADER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

THE FINAL PLAGUE RESULTS IN THE DEATH OF EVERY FIRSTBORN IN EGYPT. THIS TERRIBLE PENALTY IS THE RESULT OF PHARAOH AND EGYPT'S SIN AND REFUSAL TO REPENT IN THE FACE OF THE PREVIOUS PLAGUES. HOWEVER, IT IS STRIKING THAT WITHOUT HELP ISRAEL WOULD SHARE IN THIS PLAGUE. GOD GRACIOUSLY PROVIDES A COVERING OR ATONEMENT FOR HIS PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEM FROM THIS JUDGMENT. THIS IS CALLED THE PASSOVER.

FOLLOWING GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS, MOSES TOLD THE PEOPLE TO SACRIFICE A SPOTLESS, PERFECT LAMB, AND THEN TO MARK THE DOORPOSTS TO THEIR HOMES WITH THE LAMB'S BLOOD. THE SACRIFICE WAS A SUBSTITUTE, TAKING THE PLACE OF THE FIRSTBORN AND MARKING THOSE WHO FEAR AND OBEYED GOD.

THE REST OF THE CHAPTER SHOWS HOW THIS DELIVERANCE WAS TO BE COMMEMORATED ANNUALLY IN THE PASSOVER CELEBRATION. EACH YEAR EVERY HOUSEHOLD WOULD REPEAT THE SACRIFICE AND SHARE A MEAL TOGETHER, EXPLAINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LAMB AND RETELLING THE STORY OF THE EXODUS. THIS WAS A DEFINING PART OF THEIR IDENTITY AS GOD'S PEOPLE - THEY WERE THOSE RESCUED FROM SLAVERY IN EGYPT BY GOD'S GREAT POWER AND ATONING SACRIFICE.

THE PASSOVER TEACHES THREE IMPORTANT TRUTHS TO GOD'S PEOPLE. FIRST, THE PASSOVER SHOWS HOW GOD PROVIDES DELIVERANCE THROUGH AN ATONING SACRIFICE. ALL PEOPLE ARE DESERVING OF DEATH BECAUSE OF OUR SINFUL REBELLION AGAINST GOD (ROM 6:23). WE ARE ALL UNABLE TO APPROACH THE HOLY GOD. THEREFORE, GOD PROVIDED A MEANS OF ATONEMENT, A COVERING TO PROVIDE FOR HIS PEOPLE. ON THE CROSS, JESUS PROVIDES THE FINAL, PERFECT ATONING SACRIFICE.

SECOND, THE PASSOVER PROVIDED INSTRUCTION FOR THE IDENTITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE. THE ANNUAL PASSOVER CELEBRATION REENACTED THE UNLEAVENED BREAD, SACRIFICIAL LAMB, AND FAMILY MEAL PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH THE NEXT GENERATION THE EXODUS STORY AND SHAPED THEIR IDENTITY. THEY WERE A PEOPLE BECAUSE OF GOD'S REDEMPTION AND WERE SAVED BY THE SACRIFICE HE PROVIDED.

FINALLY, THE PASSOVER POINTS US FORWARD TO JESUS AND HIS ATONING SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS. THE EXODUS AND THE PASSOVER WERE POWERFUL EXAMPLES OF GOD'S SAVING WORK. BUT THEY WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO POINT FORWARD TO THE GREATEST SALVATION. JESUS SHOWED HIS DISCIPLES THAT THE PASSOVER CELEBRATION WAS PREPARING THE WAY FOR HIM, AND WHAT HE WOULD ACCOMPLISH ON THE CROSS. JESUS IS THE PERFECT SACRIFICE, UNBLEMISHED BY SIN, WHO ATONES FOR HIS PEOPLE'S SIN.



WEEK 5

LEADER GUIDE

KEY IDEAS

- THE PASSOVER SHOWS HOW GOD PROVIDES DELIVERANCE THROUGH AN ATONING SACRIFICE.
- THE PASSOVER PROVIDED INSTRUCTION FOR THE IDENTITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE.
- THE PASSOVER POINTS US FORWARD TO JESUS AND HIS ATONING SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS.

BIG IDEA

GOD REDEEMS AND REFORMS HIS PEOPLE THROUGH THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF JESUS, WHICH IS MARKED BY THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.



WEEK 5

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE ANY LONG-RUNNING TRADITIONS? HOW HAVE THESE IMPACTED YOU OVER THE YEARS?

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS A GROUP:

1. WHY DO YOU THINK ISRAEL WAS NOT AUTOMATICALLY SPARED FROM THE TENTH PLAGUE? WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT GOD AND SALVATION?
2. DEFINE ATONEMENT. HOW IS ATONEMENT CONNECTED TO THE PASSOVER? WHY IS ATONEMENT NEEDED?
3. WHAT SIMILARITIES DO YOU SEE BETWEEN JESUS' SACRIFICE AND THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE? READ JOHN 19:36 AND 1 PETER 1:18-19 FOR MORE INFORMATION.
4. WHY DO YOU THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT TO COMMEMORATE THE PASSOVER IN A YEARLY CEREMONY? WHAT EFFECT DO YOU THINK THIS PRACTICE HAD ON SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS?
5. READ MATTHEW 26:17-29. HOW DOES JESUS CONNECT THE PASSOVER TO HIMSELF? HOW DOES HE ADAPT THE CEREMONY FOR A NEW PURPOSE?
6. HOW DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER SHAPE THE IDENTITY OF CHRISTIANS? WHAT TRUTHS DOES IT HELP US REMEMBER?

PRAY TOGETHER:

1. THANK GOD FOR THE ATONEMENT SACRIFICE OF JESUS.
2. ASK GOD TO CONTINUE TO SHAPE OUR IDENTITY THROUGH THE LORD'S SUPPER.