



FALL 2023 // WEEK 9

Life Group Questions

Exodus - The God Who Delivers // November 4 – 5, 2023

Looking Back to Move Forward // Exodus 13:1 – 22

## Introduction

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We come to Exodus 13 to discover an interlude of sorts. It is the space between two mighty works of Yahweh: the Passover event and the parting of the Red Sea. Perhaps this may seem like a “fly-over” chapter in the exodus narrative. What does the author have us consider in the in-between moments? The God who delivers is worthy of remembrance through our acts of worship. We can trust that He will continue to guide us in the way of deliverance moving forward.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Due to preferences over a wide range of groups, we do not expect you will cover every question each week.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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- 1) Nebraska is often considered a “fly-over” state in the world of travel. What would you say to someone about our state to cause them to reconsider and visit the good life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) What is your favorite family recipe? (Bonus points if you bring a copy of the recipe to share with your life group!)

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
  - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
  - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
  - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you

## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

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- 1) Our passage this week begins with a continuation of the Passover event. **What are some important details from Exodus 11 and 12 that you can recall? How are these details significant in discerning the content of chapter 13?**
  
- 2) Much of chapter 13 describes the details of how the Israelites are to remember and respond to the Passover event. They are asked to consecrate the firstborn, both man and beast (13:2 and 11–16). **How does the dictionary define *consecrate* and *redeem*? Write a definition for both in the space provided.**

**Why do you think God commanded the Israelites to consecrate their firstborn sons? What significance does this hold in the context of the Exodus story? How does this image of consecration and redemption at Passover point us to Christ?**

Consecration of the firstborn is not a memorial practice for current day Christians. We have the opportunity to open our Bibles and read Exodus 11 and 12 to remember how God delivered his people. Still, remembering the mighty work of God in our lives is a way of worship for us now. **Share of a time or moment when you undeniably saw the work of God in your life. How have you chosen to mark this moment in a way that suggests to others that you belong to God?**

- 3) The Feast of Unleavened Bread marked the Hebrews as a unique people—as though they were branded on their hands and forehead. The practices of this feast are meant to create an experiential remembrance of their freedom from Egypt. Take a moment as a group to identify some of the experiences of the feast and what it could represent to the Israelites. **As you read through the details of this feast in verses 3–10, what stands out to you as important (e.g., commands, repeated phrases, metaphors)?**

Perhaps the most important detail of the feast is found in the purpose statement or the *why* behind all the specific details. **We know that there is value in simply remembering, but beyond remembrance, what is the purpose of the feast (see verses 8–10)?**

- 4) **What are some current-day “feasts” and memorials that Christians can experience to remember and proclaim that Christ has delivered us from our slavery to sin?** (Hint: We celebrated a couple of these memorials in our corporate worship the last 2 weeks but there are others as well.)

How do we avoid allowing these practices to become meaningless rituals?

How has your perspective of communion and baptism changed or grown because of our study in Exodus? Are there any next steps or changes you would consider making in order to authentically participate in these spiritual practices?

- 5) The interlude of chapter 13 has us mostly remembering past events, but in verse 17, the author shifts us forward to the other side of the Red Sea when Yahweh guides His people through the wilderness. God doesn't always work in the way that seems best to us. Instead of guiding the Israelites along the direct route from Egypt to the promised land, he purposely took them by a longer route inferring that there is value in walking through the wilderness. **Describe a situation, a type of journey through the wilderness, where God seemed to lead you in a particular direction, even if it was not the most direct or straightforward path. What did you learn from that experience? What did you learn about God? What did you learn about yourself?**

Moses took the bones of Joseph with him as they left Egypt per Joseph's end-of-life request (Genesis 50:22–26). **What significance might this have had for the Israelites, and what does it teach us about the way in which God delivers His people?**

The pillars of cloud and fire are the tangible presence of God guiding the Israelites through the wilderness. **How do you perceive God's guidance in your life? How does He lead you, and how do you recognize His leading?**

## Personal Spiritual Exercises

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Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in Life Group, take a few moments to share how the Lord may have used this exercise in your life.**

**Scripture Focus:** Read, mediate, and engage with Psalm 136 as it highlights memorable moments in Hebrew history (including the Exodus) next to the never-ending statement of God's love. What are some divine highlights in your redemption story? In the style of Psalm 136, write down your redemption highlights and between each highlight insert the praise statement, *His love endures forever*.

**Prayer Focus:** As we learned in Exodus 13 the purpose of remembrance is to show that you belong to God, and to tell others how God has redeemed your life. Prayerfully consider this week how you can remember your redemption story in an authentic way that engages your hands, your mind, and your mouth. *For with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.*

## Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?