

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature,

Lecture 10, Exodus from Egypt

© 2024 Elaine Phillips and Ted Hildebrandt

Well, at any rate, I don't have any announcements for you this morning, I don't think unless anybody has questions about something. So, let's just jump right in and start singing. Remember this one from Monday? All right, here we go.

Oh, that's an interesting sound. We'll just, we'll drown it out. Here we go.

Hinei ma tov u'manaim shev dachim gam Yachad
Hinei ma tov u'manaim shev dachim gam yachad
Hinei ma tov, hinei ma tov Lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai
Hinei ma tov, hinei ma tov Lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai
Hinei ma tov u'manaim shev dachim gam yachad
Hinei ma tov u'manaim shev dachim gam yachad
Hinei ma tov, hinei ma tov Lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai
Hinei ma tov, hinei ma tov Lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai, lai

When we get those two down, then we'll add, you know, three or four more. And by the time the semester is over with, just think all the Hebrew songs you're going to know. Well, let's take some time to pray together as we start.

I think this is a little bit loud, isn't it? Too much echo on the sound? Maybe? Let's try one notch down here. Whoops. How's that? One, two, three, four, five.

Let's pray. Let's pray together.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we would invoke your presence with us this day. We need you. We confess that we fall far short, and yet we're so grateful and thankful for the blood of Christ. And so, as we think of Passover today, Lord, help us make those connections so that we appreciate even more deeply what you have done for us through Christ.

And let us then be beacons of light to those around us who may be discouraged, to those of our family who may need your tender care, to our leadership in this country and beyond where wisdom is so needed. Father, we ask for these things, knowing you're the master of the universe. And so, we do pray earnestly that by your Spirit, you would indeed meet the needs of your people.

We pray that as we study together, your name would be honored. We ask these things in Christ's name with thanksgiving. Amen.

Well, we're moving on today. We got a little bit of a start last time, and I know I kind of possibly overwhelmed you with dates and names of pharaohs and dynasties and all that stuff. But today, we get back to the biblical text.

So, at least I think we're getting back to the biblical text. Yes, here we are. We're going to pick up with chapter five of Exodus, and we're going to race all the way through just about chapter 18, hitting some highlights.

As I've said to you before, I'm counting on you to read the narratives and get the details of the narratives, even though I may not go over all of them. We'll try to shape the background here a little bit. I've entitled this section a contest between basically the God of Israel, Yahweh, and the gods of Egypt.

And it really is a cosmic contest as God is about to deliver his people. So, on the left-hand side, we have, as I'm sure you've guessed, a text of Torah. Actually, it happens to be a manuscript of the book of Esther, which we're going to get to a little later on.

One of the reasons for putting that there is that there are some interesting parallels between what we have in the divine deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the divine deliverance of Israel from the horrors of the Persian government under Haman and the king Artaxerxes at that point, not Artaxerxes, Ahasuerus at that point. So, you know, kind of keep those things in mind. At any rate, that is going to represent the Yahweh side of our contest, if you will.

And here we have, and I think I showed this last time, the head of a very, very large statue of Ramses II. And again, just to make you aware, although it's a cobra on the head of Ramses, the cobra was one of the deities of Egypt.

Interestingly enough, it was intended to terrify the enemies and represent the power of Pharaoh, who, of course, himself is considered to be divine in this whole complex of deities. So, keep that in mind because one of the very first things that happens in the context of Moses and Aaron coming into Pharaoh's presence is that the rod of Aaron swallows up the rods of the magicians, all of whom have become serpents. Notice that these particular serpents get devoured by Aaron's rod.

So, even in that initial confrontation, there's an indication of what's going to happen in terms of the outcome of this thing. Well, just a couple more things to look at. Here we've got, again, a nice picture of our pharaohs, our pyramids.

Remembering, as I keep telling you, that as the Israelites went down into Egypt, these pyramids were already standing. They'd been standing for centuries at that point—a couple more things.

What's this? I have intentionally not labeled it. I heard tomb. Well, you're close.

You're close. This is in the museum in Cairo, and it has to do with death. That's quite true.

Chelsea. Coffin, tomb, death, but just push this a little bit further, and I need help with your name. Jasmine, thanks.

An altar? No, but come back to the tomb-coffin idea. Ah, let's try Tim. Well, that's too close to tomb and coffin, but right, I mean, keep working at this.

I saw another hint. Ginger. No, sorry.

I know, I'm being really nasty. Kristen. A bone box.

Actually, you know what? We don't have bone boxes, ossuaries, until a very tiny window of time right around Jesus' time, interestingly. You don't have bone boxes this early on, but it has to do with death. I know, tantalizing stuff.

You can't see it really clearly, but right down here is a hole, and you'll notice this is a bit of a concave structure. Kalen. Yeah, basically it is a mummification table.

So, embalming bed, mummification table, whatever you want to call it. It is a very interesting process, because what you would do, what they would do, would be to put the corpse here, and notice it's all so that it would kind of drain in, and all the stuff, the fluids, as this process is taking place, would drain out that particular hole, and then they would go through all these remarkable things that the Egyptians could do to preserve the bodies. They would extricate the major organs, took out things through the nostrils, some of the brain through the nostrils, took out the heart, took out other stuff like that, preserved those in tiny little sarcophagi, and then they had a way of embalming these bodies.

As I said the other day, if you go to this museum in Cairo, you can actually see a whole bunch of these mummies, and Ramses II is there as well. He had red hair, if I remember correctly. At any rate, let's go on.

Here we've got another interesting, in terms of the narratives that we read in Exodus 5, picture, because obviously, there are mud bricks dating from a long, long, long, long time ago. I can't remember the exact dates of these, but it is indicative that making bricks with straw is not an anomaly in the Exodus text. It's something they did periodically, did customarily, I should say, and it was an important process because when the straw decayed, that decaying material actually made the clay more plastic, and therefore, when they dried, the clay bricks dried, they wouldn't crack and shatter, so process they knew fairly early on.

Well, that's our little tour through pictures, at least until the end of our day. Let's talk about our God of the Hebrews versus Pharaoh in conjunction with the gods of Egypt, and of course, Pharaoh being one of those divine figures as well. Chapter 5, if you've got your text, and just read a little bit here.

Moses and Aaron have been commissioned. We got through that last time. Moses has made his way back to Egypt.

He met up with Aaron, and they go to Pharaoh in chapter 5, verse 1, and they say, this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says, let my people go so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert. This, by the way, was not an unusual request. We have evidence from some of the texts from that time period that some of these groups that were slaves in Egypt, Asiatic groups, actually did go and worship their gods, and so for Pharaoh to receive this request from Moses and Aaron was not a complete out of the blue thing.

However, notice what he says. Who is Yahweh, the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I don't know Yahweh, and I will not let Israel go, and of course, that who is the Lord is going to get answered in a fairly dramatic way as these things that we call the plagues unfold, and one of the things we're going to learn when we start looking at the purposes of the plagues, one of the reasons for the plagues is to demonstrate to Pharaoh who Yahweh really is, because he obviously didn't have a very good idea up till that point. All right, the second thing I want you just to kind of have on your backburners here.

Chapter 5 makes it fairly evident that this deliverance process is not quick and easy. You know, sometimes we expect God to act in quick and easy, fast ways. Let's get on with it. We almost tell him, but that's not the way it works.

In fact, you know, initially, if you remember Chapter 5, and going back to that picture we just saw, after this request, Pharaoh assumes, well, these people got all this extra time, they can go cut their own straw, and life actually gets harder for the Israelites at that point, rather than easier, and of course, all you need to do is read a little between the lines, and realize that this is Pharaoh's very nasty way of possibly getting these Israelites to turn against Moses as well, and get mad at, which they do. At the end of chapter 5, they're going and fetching against Moses, and then he goes back to the Lord. So, Pharaoh is, you know, he's making life harder for the Israelites, but it's also a nasty way to get the Israelites to rebel against Moses' leadership.

I'm going to suggest to you, even though I will probably keep on using the term plagues, that actually, these might be better understood as signs. Signs and wonders, if you will. In fact, that's the term that's often used as we read through this.

The term plague is not used nearly so much as God saying he is going to bring these signs to pass. So, kind of think of them that way. Signs of forthcoming judgment that's quite true.

The other thing I want you to kind of keep in mind as you read through these is that again, you know, I'm going to count on you to know the plagues, right? Know them. I'll talk about some of them, but you'll want to just read this narrative and know them. Rather than calling them supernatural, they are; they're supernatural, but I'd prefer to call them hypernatural and let me explain why.

God is clearly involved in this. It's at his word as Moses prays, they start, they stop. All right, so it's God's definite timing and intensifying of natural phenomena, and that's why we're going to call them hypernatural.

Now just a quick run through a couple of them to kind of see how some of this works. As I've told you before, the Nile River flooded with wonderful regularity. Started mid-summer, went through probably end of September.

It could be counted on, but if there were extraordinarily bad floods, the Nile bringing all sorts of sediment down, especially from the Blue Nile, way, way, way much farther south, you'd have some microorganisms in this flood water that were actually reddish in color, and this has been observed when there are extraordinarily high, bad floods, and some of those microorganisms can have some rather lethal qualities about them. Some people suggest, and you can take or leave this, some people suggest that some scholars, that when the text uses the term, the water turned to blood. The Hebrew word there is *dam*, and it can mean blood red in color, and we have some other places in Scripture where that is the case. Prophecy in the book of Joel, the end of Joel chapter 2, talks about the moon turning blood red, okay, turns that color, and so maybe what's going on here is not that you have literal stuff that flows out of your veins, and that's what this, all this water in the Nile becomes, but it's turning blood red because of the extraordinarily high volume of these microorganisms that are in there.

Now, here's the other interesting thing. The Nile River was construed to be the lifeblood of the god Osiris, who was the god of the underworld, so there are all sorts of ironies going on as this lifeblood becomes blood red and, of course, kills all the things that are living in it. Fascinating stuff going on.

So, it's an attack in a number of different ways right from the get-go. Then, of course, as things go on, you know, what are your amphibians? Well, they're frogs, and so frogs hop out of the Nile. They can.

Fish can't escape. Frogs can. They come into even Pharaoh's bedroom.

Well, that too has a little bit of a jab to it because the frog was a goddess of fertility, and so here you've got this very interesting twist because the text says the frogs are so overwhelming and they're actually showing up in Pharaoh's bedroom. Well, it goes on to gnats and flies, and I'm not going to mention all of them, but just a couple more that we want to make a note of. The cattle are attacked eventually, and again, you can maybe think of some kind of disease that would affect cattle.

Some people say something like anthrax, perhaps, but in attacking the cattle, two things are going on. These are the major beasts of burden, the domestic beasts, things that would have an awful lot to do with the economy of Egypt. So, there's an attack at that level now, in addition to which there were also bovine deities, Hator, apis.

Those things were cows or cattle that were worshipped in some way. So, as you see this flood of signs flood bed, you see this set of signs unfolding. You're seeing some prods at the gods of Egypt, you're seeing some definite attacks on the economy of Egypt.

The other thing I'd say, I'm going to backtrack just a little ways, when Pharaoh's magicians do the same thing all over again, remember in the first three, they're able to do the same things that Moses and Aaron did? Basically, they are giving a double whammy to Egypt because if they do the whole flood thing all over again, that just means that Egypt is being devastated once more in a way that it already had been. And so I might be so bold as to say that for the sake of making an ideological point, Pharaoh's magicians are bringing even more damage on their own people—kind of an insidious thing.

At any rate, there are a couple more things to mention. Devastating hail, and we're told that this is taking place at the time of the barley crop, which we know is February. So, you're seeing a rather lengthy time span in these signs as they're unfolding.

And then, clearly, when you've got the sun darkening, well, the sun was one of the major deities. Amun-Re was a deity, and therefore, that's another direct attack. Finally, with the slaying of the firstborn, if Pharaoh himself was a deity representative of the great sun god, another major attack on the gods of Egypt.

We're going to come back to that point in a moment. At any rate, that's kind of a long drawing together of plagues and nature gone awry, hypernatural. I mentioned a moment ago that Egyptian magicians could do this.

Why? These are clearly, as Moses and Aaron together are effecting them, the works of Yahweh. And it's a contest. Why are these Egyptian magicians initially able to do some of them? Trevor, you had your hand up.

In what way? Good. To make him stubborn and not believe. Absolutely.

Let me push this even a little bit further. If you look at the Hebrew in this business about the Egyptian magicians being able to do it, you will see that their work was wrapped in secrecy. And you know, the subtext here is that they, too, are tapping into malevolent supernatural powers.

And we're not going to rule out that thing, that there's a dark side to this whole process. And so when they're actually able to do some of these things, they're creating a rather ambiguous situation for the Pharaoh. His gods can do them. This god of the Hebrews can do them, and as Trevor said, this makes him harden his heart.

And that's going to be an ongoing process that we're going to discuss right about now. This is a huge question because as you look at this series of material all the way from chapter 4 right on through chapter 13, we have repeated references to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. And let me just make a couple of comments on this, if I may.

It's a long discussion, by the way. It's an important and very long discussion. As you look at these narratives and make kind of a mental note of this, there are actually three separate Hebrew words that are being used.

One of them means to strengthen, another one means to be heavy, and another one means to be hard. And then to make matters even more complicated, some of them are active, some of them are passive, some of them are reflexive. In other words, Pharaoh hardens his own heart.

So even in the grammar of these narratives, we're seeing the complexity of this whole business between what God sovereignly does and what human beings responsibly do. Are you getting my point there? In the complexity of the words that are chosen and the verbal forms of the words, it's a very interesting study and it shows up over and over again as you see this narrative unfold. That hardening of the heart, I think, is there about, oh, maybe 15 to 20 times, but with all this complexity actually built in.

Second thing I want to say, Pharaoh, and I've got this in kind of a bullet up here, in making people slaves and in that declaration in chapter one, let us deal shrewdly with them, and of course then enslaving them, intending to kill them, and then through having that edict to throw boys and little baby boys in the river, Pharaoh had pretty much dehumanized the Israelite population. He had. He had intentionally put them into a position where they are not fully human because of the oppression that was going on.

The suggestion is that this is a measure-for-measure punishment on God's part. Pharaoh did that to God's people, who were his firstborns. Therefore, God is going to do the same thing to Pharaoh, and in hardening his heart, he is going to pretty much make him sub-human, no longer having the volitional capabilities to do what's right.

But notice God doesn't just do it by himself. Pharaoh, if you want to put it this way, tragically willingly cooperates with the process.

That brings us to the third thing especially. Even though the first couple of plagues may have had an ambiguous message, he could get by saying, well, I don't know who's responsible for this. It could be my gods, could be that one. By the time we get to the end of the series, what's going on? Pharaoh prays.

He says, I know I've sinned. Pray for me. Take this plague away, please.

And then, once it's gone, what does he do? He reneges. And so therefore, that hardening is definitely indicative of the fact that he has no intention of coming back to the Lord at that point. So, but again, it's a long, long process, and of course, we owe it much more conversation than that.

Do you have any questions or comments before we move on? The three words are kaved, which means to be heavy, which, by the way, is a very interesting word in the Egyptian context because, and I'll take a little tangent, Wairo, just for kicks at this point. In the whole idea of judgment in the Egyptian scene, when somebody died, you know what happened in the Egyptian? Yeah, there were scales, and your soul was weighed against a feather. And so, the whole idea of weighing and weight was a really important kind of context here.

So that was one of them, to be heavy. And so the heart there is going to be heavy in that context of the Egyptian judgment scene.

The second one is to be strong, interestingly, hazak.

The third one is simply to be hard, kasha, kashaya. So those are the three. Yeah, Ginger.

You mean, why does God have this unfold? Let me hold that to get to the purposes of the plagues, and if it doesn't answer it for you, then we'll come back and deal with it. One of the things that this is doing, well, let me get to the purposes of the plagues, all right, and then we can come back to it, which happens to be right here. Thank you, perfect segue.

It's a setup. Pharaoh has rather brashly, as we indicated in chapter 5, said, who's the Lord? Interestingly enough, this is going to be one of the ways that God demonstrates to the Pharaoh who he is. Let me read for you 914.

It's not the only place, but this is probably the most helpful one. This is kind of in the middle of something the Lord says to Moses to say to Pharaoh, let my people go, they may worship me. Here's verse 14, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and against your people, so that you may know that there's no one like me in all the earth.

So, part of the answer to that, and I'm going to come back to maybe more answers as well, this is just going to be an ongoing bit of evidence that is going to be packed up in the context of the confrontation of the gods to demonstrate overwhelmingly in every sphere to Pharaoh who has said, who's the Lord? Now he's going to know, and Egypt is going to know as well. So that might be part of the answer. Secondly, not only that, in the same context, we have God saying, you know what, the word of this is going to go far beyond.

Let me start with verse 15 because it might pick up a little more on Ginger's question. By now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that will wipe you off the earth. You know, God could have done that, but in his sovereign wisdom he has more things in mind.

Let's read verse 16. I've raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. In other words, this is going to be such a dramatic unfolding of God's power in the natural realm, particularly with implications for the supernatural realm, that everybody's going to know about it.

And we even have indications of that in the scripture. Who is Zipporah's father? He's going to come having heard what happened, isn't he? What happens when the people get to the land? We haven't studied this yet, but it's a fur piece down the line, like a generation, and they conquer Jericho. And who's the woman there who gets spared? Does anybody know this from Sunday school? Rahab.

Right, and what does she say? We've heard what your God has done. And then, centuries down the line, when the Israelites are fighting the Philistines, what do the Philistines say? We know there's a tradition about your God and what he did to the Egyptians. I'm paraphrasing, but you get the point. It's a word that's going out far and wide, transcending geographical boundaries and actually transcending temporal boundaries.

And it actually becomes paradigmatic then for God's really effecting a deliverance from the horrible evils of ongoing besetting sin that that whole time in Egypt

represents for us. Well, let's carry on a little bit. Israelites need a little encouragement as well so that you may tell your children and your grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them so that you may know that I am the Lord.

In other words, Yahweh, again, coming back to chapter three and what we did way too fast last time, Yahweh is God's covenant name for them. I am who I am. I will be who I will be.

I am your reliable, covenant-loving God. And now he's going to act on their behalf. And so, the plagues are going to show that in a very real way that nobody can contradict.

I can't say it's not God's doing. Well, a couple more, and this is kind of a big one. Chapter 12 has an interesting declaration.

On that same night, I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn, most men and animals, and I'm going to bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. Of course, this culminates with Pharaoh striking the firstborn of Pharaoh, who, as I've said about three times already, is set up to be acknowledged as divine once he takes the throne. But as we've already seen in just a couple of the little hints I've given you, the whole series of these signs demonstrates something about the gods of Egypt and certainly brings judgment on them from Yahweh himself.

So, the whole scene is set up to show that God in this cosmic context is far and above what we have in the whole Egyptian pantheon. Well, one more. What do I mean here? Eschatological foreshadowing.

What did you say, Chris? End times, right? How does that work? In other words, how are these plagues helping us look ahead to end times or being any kind of an adumbration or a foreshadowing? You guys have had New Testament, right? Kristen. Well, that's true, and that's a good theological principle.

God is always going to be victorious, but you know what? Sort of dredge up those New Testament memories. Revelation. What's in the book of Revelation? Susanna.

There is. And? Lots of tribulation. And? Plague-like things.

Good. Such as? There's going to be a darkening of the astronomical bodies. That's quite true.

Anything else that you remember from the book of Revelation, Chris? Well, you've got the four horsemen of the apocalypse, although we don't have four horsemen trotting around Egypt doing anything. Is there anything else that has some clearer,

more specific tie-ins? Not that I'm discounting anything that you've said, but we can be even more specific. Katie.

There are, yeah, some very significant mentions of locusts, water that's turning, and particularly hail that we have showing up. And then in chapter 11, there's a mention of two, well, they're called witnesses, and they're not named, but they sure sound like they could be referring to the thoughts that we might have. Are you getting to the point that I'm trying to be a little bit ambiguous here? But there might be some allusions to Moses and Elijah, and that's stuff in chapter 11.

And so obviously, we're seeing some cataclysmic end times and signs of God's impending judgment, and you're absolutely right to connect them with this bowls of wrath stuff turning over. So that's kind of a sense of the plagues. Ginger, did that help a little bit, especially in terms of the first and second? Okay, good.

Well, let's go on. I've got a couple more things to do. Passover.

Dr. Wilson makes this point, and other scholars make the point as well, but you've been reading Dr. Wilson, that when we think of the whole idea of passing over, you know, something I got to say, there's a Hebrew word, Pesach, and if you've got Jewish friends, when it comes to the time around Passover, and they're celebrating Passover, they're going to celebrate Pesach. And that's the noun that comes from the Hebrew word, which is the sacrificial animal. The verb form is used very seldom, but it shows up in this chapter, and it shows up in Isaiah chapter 31, verse 5, and it helps us to think a little bit about what it actually means because sometimes, I mean, the word Passover implies Passover, and maybe we need to unpack that a little bit more and catch some of the additional meaning.

Let me read for you verses 12 and 13 and verse 23, try and draw some implications of that, and then take a quick tangent to Isaiah 31. But here we go, first of all. I've already read for you verse 12, but got to get a running jump on this.

On that same night, I'm going to pass through Egypt, strike down every firstborn, and bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. Here's verse 13. The blood will be a sign on you.

Okay, they've just taken the Passover lamb, they put the blood on the lintels in the doorpost, and all that. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. Now listen carefully, or read carefully.

When I see the blood, I will, well, it's Pesach. And your NIV says, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

Now let me read verse 23, and then we'll talk a little more about it. When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, He will see the blood, this is a third person, but we've just read the first person. He will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, and He will Pesach that doorway.

NIV says, pass over that doorway. But now listen to the next clause, which is really important. He will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

So not only is it a matter of, oh, you get to this doorpost or this house that has blood on the lintels and doorposts, and you hop over that one, Passover. But notice, there's some sense in which the Lord Himself, who's both destroying and also guarding, is going to keep the destroyer from coming in and taking the firstborn in that house. Are you getting the picture? Now, on the basis of Isaiah 31, by the way, if I'm not making sense, please ask, but take a quick detour to Isaiah chapter 31.

This is kind of an important connection. One of the things we're going to discover when we start talking about Hebrew poetry, which we're going to do in about a month or so, is that Hebrew poetry, unlike our poetry, which has rhyme and rhythm to it, Hebrew poetry is characterized more than anything else by parallelism, which, oversimplified, means this. The first line of any, as I said, I'm oversimplifying it, but when you make a statement in a first line, the next line in some way is going to respond to that statement, either by reiterating the thought, it's called synonymous parallelism, or perhaps saying the opposite, antithetical parallelism.

Those are the two most obvious ones. We happen to have a classic case of synonymous parallelism in Isaiah's poetry, and we happen to have it in the verse that I've noted here for you. Let me read it for you verse five.

Like birds hovering overhead, the Lord Almighty will shield Jerusalem. Okay, hovering, shield. Now let's read the next one, because it gets even more explicit in terms of the parallelism.

He will shield it. Do you have the feeling? He'll shield it from something that could be bad and deliver it. Next line, he will pesah, and that's in parallel to shield. So, best to say, he'll protect it, and then rescue it, rescue it being parallel to deliver.

Am I making sense of this? Now, based on that particular passage, we see a very clear implication with this verb form of protection, and now you need to just bring that back into what it is we're doing when we're reading Exodus 12, and God is saying, this blood on the lintels and the doorposts is going to protect. Yeah, he's going to pass over it, too. It's all in there, but it's going to protect those people who are inside.

Now, all you need to do is think a little bit about what the Apostle Paul is getting at in 1 Corinthians 5 when he calls Jesus our Passover lamb, right? Obviously, there are all those connections, and I'm sure you've done them in the New Testament. I'm going to make some more of them in a moment, but then there are some remarkable adumbrations here. Do I say adumbration? Yes, I do.

Remarkable adumbrations of what it is Jesus does at the crucifixion, hanging on the cross with the shedding of blood, and taking that whole sacrifice thing, and embodying all that in himself, and protecting his people who are in his household. So, it's a beautiful picture. Now, that's not all we want to say about that.

We're going to come back to it in a moment, but a few more things. One of the things you'll notice, and let me get both of these up here, as Exodus 12 unfolds, and if you were reading it, you got a picture of this, you see two things going on in Exodus 12. There are instructions with regard to what to do that night in Egypt, and then those are interfaced with instructions in terms of what to do as you celebrate this festival for centuries to come.

So, one is the Passover in Egypt, the other is the annual celebration, and you got to kind of read and connect those two things and then see some interesting changes in focus, and that's why we've got both of these up here. In the Passover in Egypt, that night, the one they've been preparing for, do you remember, they would take a lamb on the 10th day, and then on the 14th day, they were to slaughter this lamb, and of course, the lamb was to be without blemish, and that tells us something, too, in terms of calling Jesus the Lamb of God, but at any rate, the primary focus is on the lamb and that celebration, and the shed blood of the lamb, and the protective implications of that shed blood. That's where the main focus is for that particular night in Egypt.

Yes, it's true, they're eating bitter herbs, indicative of the bitterness of their slavery, and in their haste, they go out without their bread being able to rise. Those are part of the celebration, but the main focus is on the lamb, and so again, I just note for you, John 129, what does John 129 say? It's a remarkable passage as we start out the Gospel of John. It's John the Baptist, being quoted by John the Apostle, saying, Behold the Lamb of God.

Remember that one? Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Now, that lamb figure might incorporate more than just Passover lamb. It could mean sacrificial lamb, sin offering, etc., but this is probably built into it as well, and then of course, the 1 Corinthians 5 that I've just alluded to, Christ our Passover Lamb is slain.

I'm going to come back to that passage in a moment, and Peter will make the same connection. Once we get to the annual celebration, interestingly enough, the

emphasis changes a little bit, and as a matter of fact, those of you who have Jewish friends, you know, if they're religious or observant, maybe even if they're not because Passover is so significant, you know, they're celebrating Passover on an annual basis, but they're not out slaughtering a lamb, are they? That's gone. The temple's gone.

The emphasis has changed somewhat. First of all, well, there is the importance of telling your children. That comes through in these instructions over and over again.

Pass this on, generation to generation. So, if you're going to a Passover celebration, the youngest boy says, How is this night different from every other night? How is this night different from every other night? That starts the recital of the Passover narrative because you tell your children. Now, that's not the only thing I want to emphasize.

The real deal for people who are observant today, and it's been true throughout centuries, has been getting rid of the leaven, okay? You know, my pretty secular Jewish friends think of it as spring cleaning, but they're getting rid of the leaven because leaven comes to symbolize sin. And again, you know from your New Testament and especially the Gospels, you know, the leaven of the Pharisees, their hypocrisy. Jesus has things to say about that.

And then coming back to that 1 Corinthians 5 passage, when Paul is saying, Get rid of that person who's committing incest in your church, and you're just patting him on the back and saying, That's fine. You're part of the fellowship. He says, Get rid of the leaven.

Get rid of the sin. Get rid of the leaven because Christ, our Passover lamb, is slain. So, leaven clearly comes to represent sin.

Therefore, as this celebration of Passover kind of moves on through the generations, this whole idea of the symbolism between sin and leaven becomes very significant, and getting rid of it is important. Well, also, chapter 13 of Exodus. Yeah, I'm sorry, Becca.

Go ahead. Yeah, the question is, What do I mean by leaven? It's yeast. It's yeast.

Yeah, same thing. And I'm not sure, maybe even the NIV is translating that as yeast in a couple of these passages, but it's the stuff that, you know, makes it grow. Unleavened bread is the way we usually refer to it as opposed to unyeasted bread.

Good. Thank you. Thank you.

Anything else? I want to be clear on this. It's so theologically important. Sarah, Sarah.

When is Passover? It changes. It doesn't fit always with our calendar because they're still on a lunar calendar for determining it. This year, somebody helped me out.

It's probably mid-April. Okay, get to know some people and enjoy a festival of Passover. By the way, I should say this.

Generally speaking, the North Shore has a very nice interfaith Seder. Keep your eyes open for it. It'll probably be advertised in student news online.

Dr. Wilson has been a major force in getting this thing going. Usually, there is a nice little pack of Gordon students who go to it, and it's a great experience. You'll find out it's not a solemn festival. There are kids running all over the place, and they're just having a good time because Passover is a celebration now because of the whole idea of redemption.

But they read the story. They eat the stuff, you know, the matzah, the bitter herbs, all those things. If we hear about it, we'll get some word out.

All right, thank you. Anything else? Chapter 13 in Exodus also talks about the importance of the firstborn, and let me just make a couple of points here. Israel, as I've said before, was God's firstborn.

That whole measure-for-measure thing, because Pharaoh had oppressed God's firstborn, God is going to oppress the firstborns of all the Egypt, of all the Egypt, all the Egyptians, and not only oppress but take their lives. To symbolize that whole very, very overwhelmingly important issue, the Israelites were to consecrate their firstborns to the Lord, and that's part of what's being said in chapter 13. Now, one of the interesting issues here is that once that consecration was taking place, obviously, there was a process for redemption, i.e., buying back.

Have you read the redemption chapter in Youngblood yet? If you haven't, it's forthcoming pretty soon. And the whole idea of redemption, you know, we think of redemption as a basic theological term. Jesus has redeemed me from my sins, but the whole idea of it back in the Israelite society originally was in the economic context, socioeconomic context.

You bought somebody back. You bought something back. You could buy somebody out of slavery, and the term there was to redeem.

So, it's a purchase. It's paying the price to buy back, and that's, of course, where we get our ideas about it, our theological concept about it as well. Passover is an interesting festival in that it changes locations.

Starts out being a home festival. You get this from reading Exodus. It's going to become a major festival in the temple once the temple is structured in Jerusalem, and as a matter of fact, there are two kings, very important kings, who effect reforms for their people.

One is Hezekiah, and the second is Josiah, and we're going to study them. The centerpiece of their reformation in each case was to celebrate Passover, the centerpiece of it, because Passover was the festival where they remembered that God delivered them from the bondage of sin. So, we'll think about that too, but just kind of looking ahead, you've got that whole idea.

All right, racing right along. Just some details to keep in mind, particularly from the end of chapter 12 and going into chapter 13. The text tells us they had been there for 430 years.

Long time. Do you remember what Genesis 15 said when the covenant was cut with Abraham? 400 years, your people are going to be enslaved in the land, not their own. That's a round number, of course.

We've got our specific 430 mentioned here. Notice that they go out wealthy. Already in chapter 4, the Lord told Moses, when the time comes to go, your women are going to ask their neighbors, and they're going to get wealth to go.

And then, as they're leaving, this is what happens. They get all this stuff from their neighbors who are giving them wealth, all sorts of things. And the text says, if you read your NIV, it says, and they plundered the Egyptians.

Now, it's an interesting word. And again, I'm not going to wax long on this, but just to kind of throw this out there. The Hebrew word can also mean to deliver.

It's not Saul. And some folks suggest that although you can understand this as plunder, after all, when you have battles in antiquity, victors plundered the losers. That was part of the whole battle thing.

So, you could understand it as plunder. God's army, his people, are plundering the Egyptians or the losers. But you could also perhaps understand it another way.

Possibly, what's going on here is that the Egyptians are perceiving that the God of the Hebrews is really a fairly powerful God. And they may be, in their mind frame, their worldview, paying off this God to get the Israelites out of here and leave us alone. Some people suggest that we might want to understand a little bit of this as the deliverance of Egyptians from any more potential plagues coming along.

Just a thought. You can think about it, see what you like. You can go either way.

I have to tell you a funny little story at this point, however. About five or six years ago, I think it was now, the Egyptian government—and this is—I'm not kidding. The Egyptian government actually was going to bring a case on the international scene to make Israel pay back the equivalent amount of money.

Have you heard this story? The equivalent amount of money that was taken when the Israelites left Egypt. I'm not trying to be funny. I mean, they really were going to bring the case, but you know what happened? Go ahead, Sarah.

Yeah, exactly. The response was fine. Let's figure out the equivalent wage and you can give us as much money to compensate for 600,000 fighting men, plus all the people that might be part of that, although that number thing is an interesting issue too, for 430 years.

We'll be happy to do this. And then it just all sort of died. Nothing else was said.

All right. Carrying on. Oh, I forgot Joseph's bones.

Little note. It's the end of chapter 13. And as they went, they took the bones of Joseph with them.

What happened in chapter 50 of Genesis? Joseph made them swear a vow. Take a vow. When you go up from here – in other words, he was confident that God would indeed bring them up a deliverance.

When you go up from here, you must take my bones with you. So, they do. Away they go, fulfilling that oath.

Well, they're out of the Exodus. I'm going to look at a map in just a moment. We have protection of cloud and fire.

In other words, God manifests his protective presence there for them. This is an urgent journey. They're moving, day and night at first.

So, God's with them in both ways. And obviously, when they come to that dramatic scene at the edge of the Sea of Reeds, he even keeps the Israelites from the Egyptians. When they cross the sea – chapter 14.

If you haven't noticed it, go back and notice it. The text is emphatic that they're going on dry ground. I'm going to talk about the possible location of the Sea of Reeds in a moment.

Even if it's not the deep Red Sea, there was a lot of sufficient water that when all the walls of water come rolling back on the Egyptian army, they are overwhelmed. But the Israelites have gone through on dry ground. And that's important to keep in mind.

Well, obviously, we have some adumbrations here as well. We can't get away from these adumbrations, and we shouldn't.

But think of the parallels now. Again, if you've read the New Testament, you know how Jesus lives out or embodies in his own life as a human being, as the God-man. He embodies the experiences of national Israel.

Therefore, Israel crosses the sea. They have a time in the wilderness. And as we're going to see, that time in the wilderness is a time of real testing.

And likewise, Jesus is baptized and then is going to go into the kind of a parallel with Israel and that time of temptation. Well, reaching Exodus 15, there is a song that is sung. In other words, all these prose, wonderful events that have taken place, now Moses puts into a song.

And if you read that chapter carefully, it sounds pretty much like at the end of the chapter, Miriam is also going to be involved in teaching the same song because they start singing the thing all over again. What's interesting about this song is that it emphasizes God is king. His kingdom is forever, and we're going to see towards the end of the song, which reminds us, of course, of the whole idea of theocracy, which we're going to get into more.

This picks up on a Youngblood theme as well, chapter. But keep in mind that as we're talking about theocracy, we are talking about all of the government under the control of God. God is the king in this context.

What the song does is really interesting. It starts out by talking about how God has delivered Israel from Pharaoh and his armies. All the deliverance in the past, how Pharaoh had set himself up and made boasts, and those things become as nothing.

But then there's a switch. I think it's along about verse 11, but you know what? Let's make sure. Verse 13, sorry. Verse 12 says, you stretch out your right hand, and the earth swallowed them; the waters have come back over them.

Now, starting with verse 13, we're moving on to the future. Notice it mentions the fact that they're going to deal with the people of Philistia, the chiefs of Edom, the leaders of Moab, and the people of Canaan. Once those folks are dealt with, this is a look ahead, and then it says, you, God, will bring your people and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance, looking forward to the establishment of Jerusalem.

So, promises for the future, declarations about the past, closing down with verse 18, the Lord will reign forever and ever. So, wonderful song of praise here. Let's look at a map a little bit.

People live primarily the Israelites live primarily in Goshen, which is our delta region around here. The Hebrew phrase that's translated Red Sea really means Sea of Reeds. And the general thought is that it's probably referring to an area right in here that was tremendously swampy.

By the way, the idea is that the water level was significantly higher back then. So what we have is a Red Sea edge here that may have made its way into more extensive swamps up in this area. Just where it is, we don't know.

The text tells us that God did not want them to go by way of the Philistines. That would be this red line right here. Remember the International Coastal Highway? Keep them off that.

They're not ready to go that route. They're just a ragtag, a bunch of recently freed slaves. So, he's going to lead them here and then, of course, make them appear like they're confused, so Pharaoh will come out and make that final attack.

Eventually, they crossed what was probably this swampy area. And I'm not in any way trying to diminish the force of the miracle when I say that. If you try to go through a swamp that's eight to ten feet high with papyrus reeds all through it, with who knows how many thousands of people, you know, it's not easily done.

Again, I reiterate what I said before. They went across on dry ground, which is clearly a miraculous event.

Once they get across, then the huge question is where do they go? There are at least 11 different proposals in terms of where Mount Sinai is located. Some people even put it way over here in the area of what they think was Midian. And there's, you know, it's a silly proposal but you can read about it online if you want to.

The guy's name is Ron Wyatt. He's proposed it. Some folks put it up in this area because there are some mountains area right here, right there.

My favorite place, although I wouldn't go to the mat for it, is in the southern third of the Sinai Peninsula for a couple of reasons. That's why I've got the white arrows going down there, right? It's isolated. You know, God is going to take a year to shape them into a people.

This is a very isolated region. What better place to do it? It's a dramatic region. I'll show you pictures in a moment.

Maybe we've already done some. It does have some water sources, unlike this section right in here, which is called Eti, which is a vast, dreadful wilderness. There are at least some water sources that, of course, can be augmented by God's provision for them as he does.

Now, even down in this section, there are different possibilities in terms of Mount Sinai. I don't know exactly, but at least I would propose, for the reasons I just suggested, that perhaps the southern third is the place to think about it. We'll look at some of the tests in the wilderness, and then if we have time, I'll just show you a few more Sinai pictures.

Once they get across the Sea of Reeds, how long is it before things start to go awry? End of chapter 15 of Exodus. Months, years, weeks, three days. Three days.

Now, with all due respect, and by the way, you know, I've had this conversation with some of you and also in class. We need to see ourselves in the Israelites. We really do.

People don't change. After three days in Sinai, in about April, it can be hot during the day. Three days without water for a whole passel of people does get to be scary.

It really does, particularly when you show up at a place and, as you read the text, the water isn't fresh—it's bitter.

Again, if that area north of that particular Gulf of Suez there was swamp, you can understand why it'd be bitter. There'd be salt that'd be infiltrating, kind of seeping in in that region. So, they come across bitter water.

God makes it sweet when Moses tosses a rod into it. Chapter 16, very important chapter, because now they're hungry, and God provides in a remarkable way. He provides manna for them.

The quail, by the way, also shows up in this context, but the quail are of less significance because they seem to be seasonal. And by the way, you still have migration patterns of these birds across the Sinai Peninsula, and they're not there for long. They're going to show up again in Numbers chapter 11.

The manna is a daily provision from God to the people, and so it's a remarkable provision, and it even has its built-in Sabbath observance. Now, just a thing to notice, sometimes we, well, we chafe a little bit, some of us, under this Sabbath idea. We

kind of like to squirm out away from it and work for seven days a week because we feel pretty compelled to be successful.

But think of what? We're going to talk more about Sabbath when we talk about the Ten Commandments, so that's not all I'm going to say about it but think of what an enslaved people who had been working seven days a week all their lives, think how they'd respond to the gift of the Sabbath. That's what's going on, and so God's going to institute the Sabbath for them as part of their whole observance as a real gift to them now. They can rest and enjoy.

The tragedy is, of course, some of them don't, and they have to learn some lessons the hard way. Don't lose sight of some connections here between the giving of manna and what Jesus has to say in John chapter 6. I don't have time to talk about it at length, but John chapter 6 is Jesus' fairly extensive dispute with some people who are opposing him. It's right after the feeding of the 5,000, so he has just brought bread down from heaven, and of course, they're challenging him, and he says, I am the bread which has come down from heaven, the bread of life.

There's more to say on that later. Regarding the lack of water in chapter 17, we have Moses striking the rock. Finally, there's much more to say about that as well, but at the end of that chapter, we also have the Amalekites. Let me just say a little bit about the Amalekite situation.

As you read Deuteronomy 25, we get a different picture of this Amalekite attack. Read the Deuteronomy parallel; you're going to see that the Amalekites were really ugly. They were picking off the people who were vulnerable at the end, attacking them, the weak, and God has very little patience, I would suggest, with that kind of thing, and therefore that's the reason we have such a strong condemnation against the Amalekites in this context.

Got to read those two together. Joshua, Aaron, and Hur, well you may remember that you've got Joshua leading the fight, and that's going to prepare him for something, i.e. the conquest, and then Aaron and Hur are on either side of Moses holding up his arms. Again, think of some symbolisms.

Aaron is the priestly line, Hur is the line of Judah, that's going to be the kingly line. Some interesting things about that as well. Well, what lessons are we to learn? We could do a lot with this, but it's pretty late.

I've intimated some of them. Think about them. And then one last thing, Jethro comes along, as I said earlier, he has recognized, because he's heard the reports of what God has done, he has recognized who God is, and there's going to be this remarkable ceremony in which Jethro basically, well, he becomes a convert to the

Israelite religion, and then makes himself very useful right away. We'll save the pictures till next time because it's 10:10.

See you Friday.