

Exodus 12:1 – 14:31

^{12:1} Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² ‘This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. ⁴ Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. ⁷ Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸ They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. ¹⁰ And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste – it is the LORD’S Passover. ¹² For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments – I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. ¹⁵ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. ¹⁸ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹ Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is an alien or a native of the land. ²⁰ You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’’ ²¹ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. ²² You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. ²³ For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you. ²⁴ And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. ²⁵ When you enter the land which the LORD will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. ²⁶ And when your children say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ ²⁷ you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the LORD who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.’’ And the people bowed low and worshiped. ²⁸ Then the sons of Israel went and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

^{12:29} Now it came about at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. ³⁰ Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead. ³¹ Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, ‘Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel; and go, worship the LORD, as you have said. ³² Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and bless me also.’ ³³ The Egyptians urged the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, ‘We will all be dead.’ ³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls bound up in the clothes on their shoulders. ³⁵ Now the sons of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, for they had requested from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; ³⁶ and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their request. Thus they plundered the Egyptians. ³⁷ Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children. ³⁸ A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock. ³⁹ They baked the dough which they had

brought out of Egypt into cakes of unleavened bread. For it had not become leavened, since they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

^{12:40} Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴² It is a night to be observed for the LORD for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for the LORD, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations. ⁴³ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ‘This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; ⁴⁴ but every man’s slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. ⁴⁵ A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. ⁴⁶ It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. ⁴⁷ All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. ⁴⁸ But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. ⁴⁹ The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.’ ⁵⁰ Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ And on that same day the LORD brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

^{13:1} Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² ‘Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me.’ ³ Moses said to the people, ‘Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the LORD brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten. ⁴ On this day in the month of Abib, you are about to go forth. ⁵ It shall be when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall observe this rite in this month. ⁶ For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. ⁷ Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders. ⁸ You shall tell your son on that day, saying, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ ⁹ And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰ Therefore, you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year. ¹¹ Now when the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you, ¹² you shall devote to the LORD the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to the LORD. ¹³ But every first offspring of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. ¹⁴ And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What is this?’ then you shall say to him, ‘With a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹⁵ It came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ ¹⁶ So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as phylacteries on your forehead, for with a powerful hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.’

^{13:17} Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, ‘The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.’ ¹⁸ Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt. ¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, ‘God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you.’ ²⁰ Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. ²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people. ^{14:1} Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² ‘Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you shall camp in front of Baal-zephon, opposite it, by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, ‘They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ ⁴ Thus I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.’ And they did so. ⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, ‘What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?’ ⁶ So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him; ⁷ and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.

⁸ The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. ⁹ Then the Egyptians chased after them with all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. ¹⁰ As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, ‘Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt?’ ¹² Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?’ For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.’ ¹³ But Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent.’ ¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. ¹⁷ As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots and his horsemen.’ ¹⁹ The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. ²² The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. ²⁴ At the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. ²⁵ He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians said, ‘Let us flee from Israel, for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians.’ ²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.’ ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh’s entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. ²⁹ But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ When Israel saw the great power which the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

Historical and Cultural Background

- This was the tenth and final plague God brought on Egypt to free Israel:

Plague	Exodus Text	Type	Warning?	Time of Warning	Instruction Formula	Who Speaks?	Who Hardens Pharaoh’s Heart?
1	7:14 – 24	Blood	Yes	In morning	Station yourself	Aaron	Pharaoh
2	7:15 – 8:11	Frogs	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	Aaron	Pharaoh
3	8:12 – 15	Gnats	None	None	None	Aaron	Pharaoh
4	8:16 – 28	Flies	Yes	In morning	Station yourself	God	Pharaoh
5	9:1 – 7	Pestilence	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	God	Pharaoh
6	9:8 – 12	Boils	None	None	None	Moses	God
7	9:13 – 35	Hail	Yes	In morning	Station yourself	Moses	Pharaoh
8	10:1 – 20	Locust	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh	Moses	God
9	10:21 – 23	Darkness	None	None	None	Moses	God
10	11:4 – 7 & 12:29 – 30	Death of Firstborn	Yes	None	None	God	God

- *Circumcision and Passover:* This rite is linked to Passover. Moses had to circumcise his son in order to lead Israel in the Passover and Exodus (Ex.4:24 – 26). In the future, only circumcised Israelite and foreign men could observe the Passover; women were not circumcised so they could participate solely based on invitation (Ex.12:43 – 48). Recall that circumcision represented a cleansing; Abraham and Sarah were cleansed of attitudes that did not fit with God’s vision for their marriage and childbirth. Those attitudes were about male privilege and cultural power: the view that the husband’s virility, and not the wife’s, was all that mattered to produce a child (Gen.12:9 – 20), the ability to name a non-biological heir and bypass conception and the married couple altogether (Gen.15:1 – 6), and the ability to use a surrogate mother in place of a true wife (Gen.16:1 – 16). Implicitly, the faith that God cultivated in Abraham and Sarah was not just belief in God’s existence, but faith in God’s ability to bring life out of death, since they were reproductively dead (Gen.17:1 – 18:15). The meaning of circumcision was now made to include the Passover-Exodus deliverance from tyranny, which was arguably another kind of life out of death experience. And it continued to symbolize the releasing of a male child to God: see below.
- *The Firstborn Son and Passover:* Some ancient cultures practiced child sacrifice. Israel saw that as part of the original fall into sin, as Cain controlled his son Enoch for his own selfish purposes (Gen.4:16 – 24), showing that child sacrifice can take many forms. Egypt was willing to sacrifice its firstborn sons (Ex.1:22), and slay God’s ‘firstborn son’ Israel (Ex.4:22). Later, in the wilderness, Israel and the mixed multitude who left Egypt with them sacrificed their firstborn sons (Ezk.20:26; cf. 16:21, 45; 23:39; Amos 5:25 – 27; Acts 7:39 – 43). Yet God had wanted to cleanse Israel of this practice by offering the Passover lamb instead and claiming the firstborn son for his own. Also, the Passover lamb reminded people of the ram God provided Abraham instead of Isaac in Genesis 22, and the general pattern in Genesis of parents having to give up their children to the Lord instead of control them.
- *God Taking Life:* God did not throw the firstborn sons of Egypt into hell. In the New Testament, Peter says (1 Peter 3:18 – 20 and 4:6) that God held people who died before Jesus came. He held them somewhere until Jesus came to them and presented himself to them. So they had the same choice everyone else does: choose Jesus or not.
- *Israel’s Population:* ‘Hebrew University professor Abraham Malamat, for one, points out that the Bible often refers to 600 and its multiples, as well as 1,000 and its multiples, typologically in order to convey the idea of a large military unit. “The issue of Exodus 12:37 is an interpretive one,” says [Egyptologist James K.] Hoffmeier. “The Hebrew word *eleph* can be translated ‘thousand,’ but it is also rendered in the Bible as ‘clans’ and ‘military units.’ When I look at the question as an Egyptologist, I know that there are thought to have been 20,000 in the entire Egyptian army at the height of Egypt’s empire. And at the battle of Ai in Joshua 7, there was a severe military setback when 36 troops were killed. If you have an army of 600,000, that’s not a big setback.” In other words, the head count may have been far fewer than suggested by a literal reading of Exodus 12:37.’ (Kevin D. Miller, ‘Did the Exodus Never Happen?’, *Christianity Today*, Sep.7, 1998; <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1998/september7/8ta044.html>)

Questions

1. Did this really happen?
 - a. Against: ‘The archeological conclusions are not based primarily on the absence of Sinai evidence. Rather, they are based upon the study of settlement patterns in Israel itself. Surveys of ancient settlements--pottery remains and so forth--make it clear that there simply was no great influx of people around the time of the Exodus (given variously as between 1500-1200 BCE). Therefore, not the wandering, but the arrival alerts us to the fact that the biblical Exodus is not a literal depiction. In Israel at that time, there was no sudden change in the kind or the volume of pottery being made. (If people suddenly arrived after hundreds of years in Egypt, their cups and dishes would look very different from native Canaanites’.) There was no population explosion. Most archeologists conclude that the Israelites lived largely in Canaan over generations, instead of leaving and then immigrating back to Canaan.’ (BeliefNet, <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Judaism/2004/12/Did-The-Exodus-Really-Happen.aspx>)
 - b. For: The biblical text itself depicts a gradual displacement with minimal combat (Dt.6:10 – 11; 7:3 – 5; Josh.13:1; 15:13 – 15; 16:10; 17:12-13). ‘A careful reading of Joshua shows there are only three cities that Joshua was specifically said to have burnt with fire—Jericho, Ai, and Hazor... Furthermore, literary comparisons of Joshua with other war chronicles of the period show that the Book of Joshua reflects the rhetorical hyperbole commonly used in such writings. For example, Joshua 10:20 boasts that Joshua’s men had “wiped out” their enemy, but in the very next phrase begins speaking unself-consciously of “the survivors.” One of the three cities under question, Hazor, has, in fact, proven to have been inhabited and destroyed during the time of Joshua. Already current excavations have uncovered a palace with a small chapel area. Littered across its floor are the heads of decapitated statues of Canaanite deities and an Egyptian sphinx with the name of the pharaoh hacked out. “The palace was destroyed in such an inferno that many of the mud bricks actually turned to glass,” says Hoffmeier. “No Canaanites would destroy their own deities, and no Egyptians would deface their monuments.” Only the account in Joshua 11:11 of the Israelites burning “Hazor with fire” fits the evidence.’ (Kevin D. Miller, ‘Did the Exodus Never Happen?’, *Christianity Today*, Sep.7, 1998; <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1998/september7/8ta044.html>)
 - c. For: There is significant evidence marshaled by Egyptologists Kenneth Kitchen and James K. Hoffmeier that the biblical texts reflect actual knowledge of Egypt. For example: (1) The Leiden Papyrus 348 refers to the ‘Apiru’ who transport stones to the great pylon of Ramesses, which could corroborate Ex.1:11; (2) documentation for the period 1450 to 1200 BC about the presence of many groups of people who were forced into labor for building projects, corroborating Israel’s presence in Egypt as well as why a ‘mixed multitude’ (Ex.12:38) left with the Israelites; (3) military outposts have been discovered on a road leading from Egypt to Canaan, built by Pharaoh Seti I and earlier kings in the thirteenth century BC, corroborating Ex.13:17. Moreover, Hoffmeier notes that no papyrus documents from the Nile Delta region have survived because it is too wet; only papyrus records from the desert regions have survived. Inscriptions on temples or statues tend to be government or religious propaganda. (See James K. Hoffmeier’s two books, *Israel in Egypt* and *Israel at Sinai*, as well as Kevin Miller’s article above)
2. Who is God rescuing from Egypt, based on 12:1 – 51?
 - a. Israel, of course
 - b. But also, the mixed multitude in 12:38.
 - i. By what we know from historical accounts, this would have included Egyptians and other Semitic people like the Hyksos.
 - ii. This affirms again what we saw in Genesis, that God wanted to bless all nations. So all nations are actually welcome to join Israel, including Egyptians!
 - iii. Recall that two plagues in particular affected livestock and crops. The fifth plague (9:1 – 7) was pestilence on livestock, which killed lots of animals, although notice that this might be hyperbolic language of victory (like ‘we kicked their butts, we destroyed them, we slaughtered them’) because the mixed multitude still had livestock. The eighth plague (10:1 – 20) was locusts which ate up all the vegetation, presumably in the Nile Delta region where Israel was. This would have made a garden land fairly compelling, and Israel’s liberating God fairly impressive.
3. Why does God use this motif of the Unleavened Bread and the Passover lamb?

- a. Unleavened bread symbolized cleansing, because leaven was as a thing that puffed up bread, and was seen symbolically as a picture of sin, especially pride, which puffs up.
 - b. The Passover lamb symbolized a firstborn son, because it was slain instead of the firstborn son that God would have taken. Notice the characteristics of the lamb:
 - i. Eat all of it (12:8 – 10)
 - ii. Roasted with fire (12:8)
 - iii. Bitter herbs (12:8)
 - iv. Eat it ready to journey (12:11)
 - v. Use hyssop to stain blood on the doorway (12:22)
 - vi. No bones broken (12:48)
4. How is Passover and Exodus like circumcision? Why do you think it is required for a foreigner to be circumcised first before participating in a Passover meal celebration (12:40 – 51)?
- a. In both, you enter new life through blood
 - i. Later, Leviticus 12 will specify that a baby boy will wait for 7 days while remaining unclean (he is being cleansed, in a sense) and on the 8th day, his parents will take him to be circumcised, and he will be clean and enter into the community. That is like Passover: Israel ate unleavened bread for 7 days (Israel was being cleansed, in a sense) and on the 8th day, God brought him out through blood on the door into new life.
 - b. Both are explicitly connected to sons
 - i. To Abraham and Sarah, circumcision was to mark all males, especially Isaac the firstborn son, because circumcision represented sinful attitudes being cut away, and also represented God's claim on your future
 - ii. Moses had not circumcised his son (Ex.4), which showed how seriously God took circumcision before the Passover.
 - c. Both represent cleansing and purification
 - i. From idolatry of child sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of sons
 - ii. The Passover practice was meant to remind Israelites and anyone else who participated in it that God brought them out of Egypt, which did practice child sacrifice at least in Ex.1:16 and 22.
 - iii. This 'fourth of July' celebration was meant to represent freedom from idolatry and not just slavery!
 - iv. The redemption of the firstborn son was meant to remind Israel that God made a direct, personal claim on the firstborn son so that you were only 'borrowing' the child for a while from him. And you certainly could not sacrifice your son.
5. Jesus was called a Passover lamb that takes away the sin of the world (Jn.1:29), bringing about a deeper and greater deliverance
- a. We are to eat of him, that is, to internalize him (Jn.6:53 – 63)
 - b. He condemned sin in sinful flesh within himself (Rom.8:3) – symbolized by the judgment of refining fire connected to the Holy Spirit (Mt.3:11)
 - c. While Jesus hung on the cross, he was surrounded by three women named Mary; and Mary comes from the Hebrew word *mara* (Ruth 1:20), for *bitter*.
 - d. We are to be ready for a journey of conversion
 - e. The Roman soldiers at the cross used a branch of hyssop to lift a sponge of sour wine to Jesus' mouth, marking him as 'a doorway' of sorts – as Jesus said, 'I am the door' (Jn.10:7).
 - f. None of Jesus' bones were broken (19:33, 36).
6. God clearly wanted this event to be remembered, since He gave instructions about future Passover anniversaries during the first Passover. Why would this be so important?
- a. What does this commemorate? Freedom from slavery in order to serve God. This is not about autonomy per se.
 - b. Who can participate in the Passover celebration? Anyone who is circumcised. Circumcision and Passover are mirror images of each other. In one, you enter into new life by having something cut away from you, and passing through your own blood. In another, you enter into new life by remembering your freedom from slavery, and passing through the blood of another.
 - c. Jesus casting the demons into the sea from the demoniac (Mt.8:28 – 34; Mk.5:1 – 20; Lk.8:26 – 39) is a motif of an Exodus deliverance. The name of the demon was 'legion' like the Roman

legions occupying Israel, so the motif of a foreign power being cast out and drowned was very evocative, to say the least!

- d. Jesus casting Satan and the demons into the lake of fire (Rev.20) is a motif of an Exodus deliverance, too.
 - e. Illus: The African-American church has made much of this motif, understandably, because of American slavery. MLK spoke of getting to the promised land of equality.
7. What does salvation mean in the New Testament, in relation to Jesus?
- a. It means salvation from our own *sinfulness* and the grip of Satan's power.
 - i. I am Jesus... I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in me. (Acts 26:15 – 18)
 - ii. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13 – 14; cf. Eph.1:6 – 8)
 - iii. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins... But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ... and raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavenly places (Eph.2:1 – 6)
 - b. Illus: For a picture of how Jesus still wants to deliver us from sin in us and in the system around us, read Allen Noble's article after the Michael Brown, Darren Wilson grand jury verdict, Sin's Part in the System (and Vice Versa): Thoughts on Voddie Baucham's "Thoughts on Ferguson". <http://christandpopculture.com/sins-part-system-vice-versa-thoughts-voddie-bauchams-thoughts-ferguson/>. He writes, 'There is, however, plenty of good reason to believe that our society suffers from systemic racism. First, any system this large is bound to have systemic injustice of some kind of another. Baucham would not hesitate to call out systemic prejudice against Christians or the family unit, so he should be able to appreciate the charge that this same system also harbors injustices against minorities. Second, given the historical reality of widespread, open, violently supported, government sanctioned and enforced racism within a lifetime ago, it would be surprising indeed if systemic racism was not a current and significant reality in our society. Add to this vastness of our government and society and the difficulty of making meaningful change in such enormous systems, and the prospect seems almost absurd. Aside from the historical reasons to suspect systemic racism, there is no shortage of indications that it continues to exist, between police profiling, hiring practices, incarceration rates, and media stereotypes. Reasonable people can disagree on what this data means (and they do), but to characterize a fight against systemic racism as "fighting ghosts" simply dismisses the other side.
 - c. Illus: Ginger Whitacre and her husband Mark, who was the troubled informant on Archer Daniel Midlands, in the movie *The Informant!* Ginger was the real hero. She lived out of the freedom Jesus gave her, freedom from fear, anxiety, and greed. She pressed Mark to confess. She stuck with him while he went to federal prison.
 - d. Illus: leader share a personal story of Jesus delivering you from a particular sin

Appendix A: Did the Exodus Really Happen?

This comes from Dennis Prager, in a post called *Did the Exodus Happen*, on Jewish Journal (http://www.jewishjournal.com/dennis_prager/article/did_the_exodus_happen):

First, the Jewish people would not have survived, let alone died for their faith, if they had not believed that the Exodus really happened. It takes much more than metaphors for a small, dispersed and horribly persecuted people to survive for thousands of years. And this will be equally true in the future. If Jews come to believe that one of the Torah's two most important stories (the other, as I will explain, is the Creation) never happened, it is hard to imagine that they will devote their lives to Judaism — no matter how much “truth” a myth may contain. The ancient Greek stories, as, for example, those of Homer, also contained “truth.” But they didn't perpetuate Greek culture, which was wholly taken over by Christianity. And few, if any, Greeks outside of Greece have ever retained a strong Greek identity thanks to Homer's stories.

Second, as noted, the Exodus is one of the two essential stories not only of the Torah, but of Judaism and Jewish history. Our prayer book regularly contains the phrases *zecher l'ma'asei bereshit* and *zecher litziyat mitzrayim* — “to commemorate the acts of Creation” and “to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt.” Just as Christianity is founded on two events — the atoning death and the Resurrection of Jesus, so Judaism is predicated on two events: Creation and Exodus. The Shabbat Kiddush consists of two paragraphs. The first recounts Creation; the second, the Exodus.

In any event, what archaeological evidence can one expect to find? The Egyptians didn't record defeats. And the Jews were in the desert/wilderness with temporary dwellings that would hardly leave traces after 3,000 years.

Logic, however, does strongly argue for the historicity of the Exodus story. What people ever made up as ignoble a past as the Torah and the rest of the Hebrew Bible relate about the Jews? Every other people in the world made up a grand and powerful history for themselves. They were all mighty and courageous. We Jews, on the other hand, were slaves, idol worshippers, rebels and ingrates. Why make that up? And why make up that so many non-Jews were heroes — such as the daughter of Pharaoh, the Egyptian midwives and the pagan priest Jethro? Why make up that Moses was raised an Egyptian? Why credit God for the Exodus rather than bold Israelites?

At the Passover seder, you have good reason to believe *avadim hayeenu b'ereetz mitzrayim*, “we were slaves in the land of Egypt.” Recite it with conviction.

From Kevin D. Miller, ‘Did the Exodus Never Happen?’, *Christianity Today*, Sep.7, 1998; <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1998/september7/8ta044.html>

“I don't know of any surviving papyrus documents from Egypt's Delta,” says Hoffmeier. “It's too wet. And papyrus [made from the reed-like plant of the same name] is where most of the records were kept. The inscriptions that we see on statues and temple façades tend to be propagandistic, what-we-want-you-to-know messages. And where papyrus records have survived, they tend to be from the desert areas. So we have very few of the day-to-day court records of 3,000 years of Egyptian history.”

In a surviving Egyptian document called Leiden Papyrus 348, orders are given to “distribute grain rations to the soldiers and to the ‘Apiru who transport stones to the great pylon of Rames[s]es.” This brings to mind Exodus 1:11, which says the Hebrews “built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh.” While hotly debated, ‘Apiru is believed by some scholars to refer to the Hebrews, the ‘Ibri. If a future discovery of an inscription could link this word to the Hebrews, this document would prove to be our first direct extrabiblical reference to the children of Israel in slavery in Egypt.

Recent discoveries of military outposts on a road leading from Egypt into Canaan, built by Pharaoh Seti I and earlier kings in the thirteenth century B.C., shed new light on why a northern route for the Exodus would have meant war for the Israelites. Exodus 13:17 states: “When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, ‘If the people face war, they may change their minds and return to Egypt.’ “ Instead, the Bible explains, “God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness.”

While it is virtually impossible 3,000 years later to retrace the footsteps of a people who escaped over a sand-swept wilderness, an Egyptian letter (Anastasi III) from guards at a “border crossing” between Egypt and the Sinai helps explain Moses’ insistent cry, “Let my people go!” The text indicates that in the thirteenth century the Egyptians maintained a tight border control, allowing no one to pass without a permit.

While conservative scholars debate an “early” and “late” date for the Exodus (fifteenth century or thirteenth century B.C.), all but the most skeptical scholars agree that the Israelites were in Canaan by the year 1208 B.C. This date was set a century ago with the discovery of the Merneptah Stele. This seven-foot high, black granite stone contains a victory hymn of Pharaoh Merneptah, which proclaims, “The Canaan is plundered with every hardship. / Ashkelon is taken, Gezer is captured, / [and] Yano’am reduced to nothing. / Israel is laid waste, his seed is no more.”