

INTRODUCTION:

- In Exodus 12, we saw the power of God deliver the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage through the Passover
- The Angel of death, passed through the land and every home that had the sign of the Covenant on the door (the blood of the Lamb) was saved

In vs. 51 we read

Exodus 12:51 (NKJV)

⁵¹ And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies (divisions – 12 divisions by the 12 sons of Israel)

- So we have now the purpose of the Passover... salvation... to save Israel from bondage to Egypt, the bring Israel out of the land of Egypt and this happens through redemption
- THUS Redemption is foundational to salvation
- Redemption is the payment to purchase back from death the firstborn male child which is the definition of salvation
- You are saved from death through the death of an innocent Lamb whose blood is the payment for your life
- As we saw with Passover, the whole purpose of Jesus' death on the cross is for the purpose of Redemption... to be the sacrificial, innocent Lamb who takes away the sins of the world
- But here is a KEY... everything God does has an outcome
- Whatever God says, whatever God does requires a response... you can't ignore God's revelation because if you do, like Pharaoh, your heart will become hardened to the will of God

In Chapter 13 God gives us the response

Exodus 13:1–2 (NKJV)

13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine.”

- The word “consecrate” means “to declare or recognize as holy”
- What are we to declare holy? All the firstborn of man and beast.
- Now why the firstborn? What is so special about the firstborn?

- The firstborn represents the “first time” we see something and what is it that we are seeing? The manifestation of life
- The first thing God points out as the outcome of salvation is salvation results in the manifestation of life and God declares that holy
- Now many people confuse holiness with purity or sinless living... but holiness simply means it is recognized as belonging to God, it is set apart for the purposes of God
- Why is this important?
- Because once you’ve been saved, once you’re born again, this salvation results in the manifestation of life through your life and because it’s the work of God we’re to say YES to life!
- We’re to say YES to God’s will, to His purpose in our lives
- THUS the firstborn, the first manifestation of life belongs to God of man and beast... REMEMBER the firstborn, first fruits represents the WHOLE
- Man represents our life... that we belong to God
- Beast represents our wealth... everything we produce belongs to God

Exodus 13:3 (NKJV)

³And Moses said to the people: “Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (servants); for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this *place*. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

Now we have here a new word being introduced... the word “people”

- In Hebrew it means “citizen”... their citizenship has changed
- Thus through salvation we see the creation of a special people, a called out people... Paul refers to them as the ekklesia... the called out ones
- Moses says to this new people to remember this day...
- What day? The day you went out of Egypt
- This brings up 2 important truths about salvation
- Salvation results in a change of location and a change in identity
- No longer do I live in Egypt... no longer am I of this world AND
- No longer am I a slave to Egypt... I am a free person
- Here we see in Exodus... the concept of the new creation...
- I no longer identify with Egypt... I am identified with the people of God
- No longer a citizen of Egypt... I am now a citizen of God’s kingdom
- What brought this change? The strong hand of the LORD (here we see the GRACE of God manifested)

- GRACE is the powerful presence of God that saves us and that is what is happening here... by the strength of hand the LORD brought you out of NOTICE IS SAYS... THIS
- The word used is non-specific... it could mean this place, this situation, this people (the Egyptians)
- The broadness or the vagueness of the word shows that God brought about a complete and total change
- Everything that is identified with Egypt is left behind... the language, the culture, their national identity... it's all left behind
- THUS Salvation brings a complete and total change

Now look at the last sentence in vs. 3...

- No leavened bread shall be eaten
- The word “leaven” is the Hebrew word “hametz” and according to the Jewish sages the word “hametz” has to do with pride because yeast causes the bread to puff up
- It also symbolizes sin which causes death and decay
- The yeast (leaven) dies and rots and as it rots it releases gas which causes the bread to rise... thus leaven symbolizes sin, which brings death and the corrupting influence of sin which leads to destruction
- We will see this mentioned over and over in scripture

Exodus 13:4–10 (NKJV)

⁴On this day you are going out, in the month Abib (in the spring). ⁵And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites (5 nations), which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. ⁶Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *there shall be* a feast to the LORD. ⁷Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. ⁸And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, ‘*This is done* because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.’ ⁹It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD’s law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

- God is bringing them out of Egypt, which represents the world and into a land flowing with milk and honey, which speaks of abundance and fruitfulness
- 5 nations are listed as being in the land... 5 being the number of grace, 5 nations representing the nations God will deliver into the hands of Israel which represents the work of GRACE in our lives
- Israel is to keep this service... keep the Passover... in the month of Aviv... to remember the salvation of the LORD
- How are they to keep the Passover?
- 7 days they are to eat unleavened bread and on the 7th day is a feast or a festival
- Whenever you see the word festival... you should think worship
- God says it a second time (which means you should pay attention)
- For 7 days you are to eat unleavened bread (Hametz) AND no unleavened bread is to be seen among you
- AND no leaven (se-or) is to be in all your quarters (territory or border)

Now in the Hebrew it reads like this...

- Ve-lo' ye-ra-eh' le-ka' **ha-metz**, Ve-lo' ye-ra-eh' le-ka' **se-or'**
- You can hear the similarity of what is being said... the only difference is the first time "hametz" is mentioned, the second time "seor" is mentioned
- You can have wheat, which is flour, but you can't have hametz
- "Hametz" is the presence of or the result of leaven, the bread rises
- "Seor" is leaven, the ingredient that causes the bread to rise
- The lesson is this... don't partake of bread with leaven and don't even allow leaven within your borders... don't even allow the possibility of it
- God is telling us how to live in FREEDOM...
- Not only are you to stay away from sin
- You are not to put yourself in a place where the possibility of sin exists
- That is what it means to walk in wisdom... don't allow in your borders anything that would result in the possibility of sin
- Paul says to stay away from all appearances of evil
- This is practical wisdom for walking in FREEDOM

Now... as you celebrate Passover your kids will ask why

- This gives the parents an opportunity to share what God has done
- Vs. 8... your response is to be because of what the LORD did for me in delivering us out of Egypt

- What is it that God did? He delivered me from Egypt so that I could worship and serve the LORD
- Vs. 9... it will be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes that the LORD'S law may be in your mouth
- **[SLIDE 1]** Traditionally this verse is interpreted as instituting the Tefillin worn by observant Jews during weekday morning prayer in order to keep the LORD'S law in your mouth (in the Hebrew it's Torah)
- This brings up an important point about the Torah (Hebrew scriptures)
- The Torah has 2 purposes... revelation and response
- God reveals Himself to me and I respond with worship and obedience
- Vs. 10 God institutes the Feast of Unleavened Bread as an annual occurrence in the month of Aviv.

Exodus 13:11–16 (NKJV)

¹¹ “And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, ¹² that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD'S. ¹³ But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. ¹⁴ So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What *is* this?’ that you shall say to him, ‘By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ ¹⁶ It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.”

The LORD is instituting worship

- Worship is when you give to God what He is worthy to receive
 - It is recognizing that everything comes from the LORD
 - It is a response of gratitude for what God is doing and has done
- Thus, when the LORD brings them into the land in fulfillment of the prophecy He gave to Abraham... you will respond with worship
- The worship involves “setting apart” or “transferring” to the LORD every firstborn animal or anything that opens the womb
- The males to the LORD... meaning they will be sacrificed

The firstborn of a donkey is to be redeemed with a lamb

- Donkeys were unclean on two counts... they had no cloven hooves and they did not chew the cud... they were 100% impure
- They could not be eaten and they could not be sacrificed
- However, they could be redeemed and if they weren't they were killed
- Now what is special about a donkey?
- Donkeys were used to help God's people
- Joseph sent donkeys with Jacob's sons caring provisions in Genesis 42 and 45
- Donkeys play a key role in the unveiling of Messiah
- Daniel prophesies Messiah coming with the clouds of heaven
- Zechariah prophesies of a righteous king who makes his appearance as a pauper riding on a donkey
- According to the Mishna, if the Jewish people merit redemption Messiah will come in the heavens with wonders and miracles
- However, if they do not merit He will be a pauper riding on a donkey (Sanhedrin 98a)
- A pauper riding on a donkey is a metaphor for undeserved redemption without merit... like the poverty of a poor man
- The firstborn donkey represents salvation that cannot be earned... it must be redeemed, bought from death (a picture of unmerited favor)

Exodus 13:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them *by way of the land of the Philistines*, although that *was near*; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." ¹⁸ So God led the people around *by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea*. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

- The fastest route to the promised land was directly north
- But God did not take them that way... why? God knew the Philistines would declare war
- Remember, when God brought them out of Egypt He calls them the armies of Israel, but He knows they aren't ready so He takes the long way around
- Now that is the compassion and mercy of God in operation

- They've just been delivered from Egypt
- God knew they needed rest, they needed healing and restoration

Exodus 13:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."

- This is the fulfillment of Joseph's prophecy in Genesis 50:24, 25

Exodus 13:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. ²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

[SLIDE 2] Notice the geography on the right

- They are traveling along the shores of the Red Sea
- When they left Egypt, they camped at Succoth which means covering
- God is protecting them and it's at Succoth that God institutes the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Law of the Firstborn
- Now God is leading them to Etham with the cloud by day and the fire by night and notice how God cares for them in His leading of them
- The cloud shelters them from the hot desert sun and the pillar of fire gives them light and keeps them warm during the cold desert nights
- What does this mean? God is with them 24 hours a day

Exodus 14:1–4 (NKJV)

14 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They *are* bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' ⁴ Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD." And they did so.

- **[SLIDE 3]** Notice... God says to Israel to turn back

- Etham is at the edge or as far as they can go
- God tells them to camp before Pi Hahiroth which is between Midgol and the sea and before Baal Zephon
- But in vs. 3 your English Bible says “for Pharaoh will say” but it is better translated “Pharaoh said”
- Apparently, Pharaoh did not release them...
- He has people watching them and when he gets news about their location he says... they are confused and the wilderness has closed them in
- Now what does this reveal? Pharaoh hasn’t changed... he is looking to take the people into captivity once again
- Vs 4 when God says... I will harden Pharaoh’s heart... what it means is God strengthened Pharaoh’s heart... in other words, God is recognizing what is already there and strengthens the desires of his heart
- Remember, Pharaoh gave in and let Israel go, not by choice but because he had no other option
- Now Pharaoh sees his opportunity and he wants to pursue Israel because they are in a location that he perceives as vulnerable
- Pharaoh is defiant, at enmity with God
- But what Pharaoh does know is when he does God will defeat Pharaoh and the armies of Pharaoh and the Egyptians will know that God is the LORD... again, the purpose is revelation, not punishment
- This is the choice for all people... you can know God through His blessing or you can know Him by His judgment... but everyone will know the LORD

Exodus 14:5–12 (NKJV)

⁵ Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled (a sign of weakness), and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people (this is how the people responded to a perceived weakness); and they said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” (they regret sending the people to obey God – this shows their condition of their heart that is against the worship of God) ⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. ⁷ Also, he took six hundred choice (the finest) chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. ⁸ And the LORD hardened (strengthened) the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel (confidence and boldness is implied); and the children of Israel went out with boldness (“with a high hand” which the Rabbi’s say implies worship.) ⁹ So the

Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold (they saw with their eyes), the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.¹¹ Then they said to Moses, “Because *there* were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? ¹² *Is* this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.”

- The people seeing the Egyptian armies forget that God is the One leading them...
- They forget that God is with them (pillar of fire / pillar of cloud)
- All they see are the mountains on one side, the sea on the other side and the armies of Pharaoh in front of them
- And what do they do? They blame Moses for bringing them out of Egypt so they could be destroyed in the wilderness
- They’ve completely forgotten the revelation of God and as a result they believe they are going to die... they are walking by sight, not by faith
- And now they regret leaving... it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than die in the wilderness
- And now they want to return to Egypt
- Now keep in mind they cried out to God to be released and God heard their prayers and sent someone to lead them out of Egypt
- This is what happens when you start walking by sight and not by faith

Exodus 14:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”

- Moses states the position of faith... do not be afraid
- He speaks the revelation of God to the people
- The Lord will fight for you, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD
- You will stop complaining, you will be quiet and watch because you will no longer see the Egyptians for the rest of your life...

- I'm about to deal with them
- Now I'm going to read the rest of Exodus 14 without comment

Exodus 14:15–15:1 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? (do not cry out to Me) Tell the children of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ But lift up your rod (the same rod that God used to perform miracles), and stretch out your hand over the sea ([**SLIDE 4**] Moses formed the letter Shem which is the name of God) and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷ And I indeed will harden (strengthen) the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.” ¹⁹ And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. ²² So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴ Now it came to pass, in the morning watch (3-6 am), that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵ And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.” ²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” ²⁷ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹ But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst

of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.³⁰ So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.