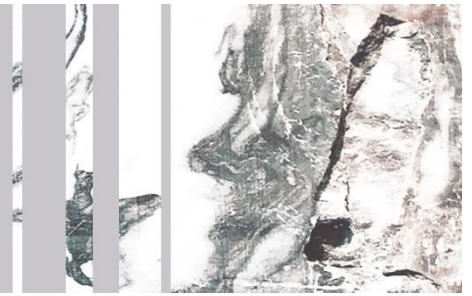


EXODUS

Daily Devotions Week 6



DAY ONE

The story of Israel reaches a significant turning point in Exodus 11-12. These were real situations with real people with real feelings and real responses to what God was accomplishing. Today we want to take some time to encounter the Scripture with our imaginations. This practice, called *Imaginative Prayer*, has been around for centuries and can help us to hear from God as we enter the narrative.

As you begin, be present with God. Settle your mind, heart, and body. Focus on your breathing. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak through the text you will read. Take your time with God. Linger a bit and allow Him to speak in the silence, trusting He will meet you here.

Read slowly and prayerfully through Exodus 11:1-12:30.

As you read, take some time to visualize the scene. Read the words as though you were present.

Pause before you read again, allowing the scene to settle in your mind.

As you read a second time through the text, begin to imagine the scene as if you were right in the middle of it. Don't worry about historical accuracy. Just allow God to bring the story to life.

Trust He is in it.

Remember the people we read about in Scripture were real people who walked the earth and had feelings and thoughts much like ours.

Notice your response to these questions as you read:

Who are you in the narrative? What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What's your position? Who else is there with you? Who isn't present? What are you feeling? What's the mood of the crowd? What is your response to all you experience? What questions do you have? What fears do you have?

What are you noticing from your responses to these questions?

As you read through the text a third time, listen for how God is inviting you to respond to the text. What are His invitations from this story for you today?

Spend some time responding in prayer to what God has revealed in your reading of the text today.

DAY TWO

As you begin today, revisit your encounter with the text yesterday. What is still lingering from your time with God?

With this scene in mind, let's engage the next Scripture passage through another ancient practice called *Lectio Divina*, which simply means "divine reading." It's a practice of praying with Scripture, allowing God to speak through His Word. There are five movements to the reading: *silencio* (silence), *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (speech or response), *contemplatio* (contemplate). These movements allow us to sit with a passage so it can saturate our minds and hearts.

Let's take a look today at Exodus 12:30-51 through this practice.

Silencio. As you begin, put yourself in the presence of God. Find a quiet space and allow your mind to be still. Offer yourself to God and invite Him to speak through His Word.

Lectio. Read Exodus 12:30-51 out loud, slowly allowing the words to resonate and settle in your heart. Linger on the word or phrase that catches your attention. Sit with the word or phrase and savor it as a word of God for you. Write the word or phrase below:

Meditatio. Read the passage again and listen to where the word connects with your life right now. Enter into the scene in your imagination. Imagination is a God-given gift. Envision the scene. Carefully watch the people. Listen to how they interact. What do you hear and experience as you watch and listen?

Oratio. Read the passage one more time, listening attentively. Has God addressed you in this Word and invited you to respond? Allow the Scripture to lead you into a prayerful response. Do not censor your thoughts or requests. Let them flow out spontaneously and freely before the Lord who loves you. Hold nothing back. Respond to God's invitation to you.

Contemplatio. Deeply receive God's word and rest in His presence and love. Give yourself some time to wait and be still before you reenter life as usual. How can you take this encounter with you throughout this day? Return to it and remember it all day long. Stay with God until you feel prompted to leave.¹

¹ This version of the *Lectio Divina* can be found in the following book: Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2015), 189.

DAY THREE

Since the time of the plague of the firstborn in Egypt, the Hebrew people have celebrated the Passover. The night Jesus was betrayed was no exception. The Last Supper was when Jesus and His disciples were celebrating the Passover together. God is intentional and strategic that way. He had a plan of salvation for us all along.

As a part of the Passover celebration, each person drinks from the four cups that are tied to promises God made to the Israelites after Moses first returned to Egypt (Exodus 6:6-7).

6 “Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. 7 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. Exodus 6:6-7

These cups each had great significance for the Israelites, and because God is timeless, strategic, and intentional, they have significance for us today as well. Over the next two days, we’re going to take a look at the meaning of each of these cups and the significance they have for us even today.

First cup: The Cup of Sanctification— “I will bring you out.”

The first cup is called “The Kiddish” (keh-desh) or the Cup of Sanctification. This cup is based on the promise, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” The Israelites were being oppressed by the Egyptians and were slaves to them. *They were not free.* God delivered them from the hand of the Egyptians and this cup celebrates how God kept this promise.

For us today, God promises to bring us out from under the burden and oppression of our sin. Until Christ sets us free, we are slaves to sin. Sanctification is just a “churchy” word for the process of being made holy—or more like God— and becoming less and less enslaved to our sinful nature. As we walk with Christ and allow the Holy Spirit to work in us, we learn what freedom from sin really looks like and how enslaved we once were.

How have you seen God “bring you out” from your slavery to sin? What does it look like to live freely without the oppression of sin? What does the relationship between sanctification and freedom look like in your life?

Second cup: The Cup of Judgment and Deliverance— “I will free you from being slaves to them.”

The second cup is called “The Makkot” (mah-coat) or the cup of Judgment and Deliverance. This cup is based on the promise, “I will free you from being slaves to the Egyptians.” At this point in the Passover supper, the youngest child at the table asks the question, “Why is tonight different from all other nights?” During this cup, the family leader explains the story of the very first Passover in Egypt—the story we find in Exodus 11-12. God sent the plagues, one by one and each time Pharaoh hardened his heart against Israel, not allowing them to go free. So,

God's judgment came down on the people of Egypt. There was a price that was paid for the deliverance of God's people—the lives of the spotless lambs and the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. As a result of Pharaoh's loss, his heart was softened toward the people of Israel, but it came at a great cost—the death of his firstborn son.

For us today, we are slaves to our sin and long to be free. There is judgment coming for those who are not God's people just like judgment came on the Egyptians. A great price was paid for our deliverance from sin—the death of God's firstborn son, Jesus.

How does Christ's sacrifice for your sins affect you? What does it stir in you to know Jesus took the judgment of God meant for you, bringing you deliverance?

Spend some time reflecting on these two phrases:

I will bring you out.

I will free you from being slaves to them.

What in your life do you currently need God to "bring you out" of? Where do you long to be free? Spend some time praying, asking for His deliverance.

DAY FOUR

Today we continue looking at the third and fourth cup of the Passover celebration. To recap, as a part of the Passover celebration, each person drinks from the four cups that are tied to promises God made to the Israelites in Exodus 6:6-7 after Moses returned to Egypt.

Read through these verses that anchor the cups of the Passover:

*6 “Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and **I will bring you out** from under the yoke of the Egyptians. **I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm** and with mighty acts of judgment. **7 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.** Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. Exodus 6:6-7*

The bold sections correlate to the cups of the Passover.

These cups each had great significance to the Israelites, and because God is timeless, strategic, and intentional, they have significance to us today as well.

Third cup: The Cup of Redemption— “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.”

The third cup is taken after the Passover meal is eaten. It’s called “The Haggel” (hah-gehl) or the Cup of Redemption. It’s based on the promise in Exodus 6:6, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.” This cup is used to remind Israel of the blood that was shed from an innocent lamb that brought their redemption from slavery in Egypt. The animal was to be a one-year-old male without any defect. The bones of the lamb were not to be broken and its blood saved the people. The blood of this innocent lamb allowed the Israelites to be passed over by the judgment. They lived because its blood was spilled.

For us today, we’re redeemed by Christ’s outstretched arms. He’s our spotless sacrifice without blemish or defect. The blood that He shed brought us new life and redeemed us from our sin.

What would your life look like if Christ had not redeemed you? How has His redemption made a difference for you? How do you feel knowing He has purchased your freedom with His blood?

Fourth cup: The Cup of Restoration— “I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.”

The fourth and final cup is “The Hallel” (hah-lell) which in Hebrew means “praise.” It’s called the cup of Praise or Restoration. This cup is a celebration of the restoration that is promised for the people of God. During this cup, a prayer of praise is prayed from Psalm 118.

It says:

The Lord is my strength and my defense; He has become my salvation.

I will not die but live and will proclaim what the Lord has done.

Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter.

I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.

*The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
From the house of the Lord we bless you.*
Psalm 118:14, 17, 19-21, 22-23, 26

This prayer celebrates the reality that God has called Israel His people and has made His dwelling among them. He has made a way for salvation.

For us today, we have every reason to celebrate the fact that God made a way for us to be His people—His children. We have a way for salvation in the person of Jesus Christ and He has also made His dwelling among us through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

How can you celebrate what God has done? Write a prayer of praise below:

We didn't deserve to be redeemed or restored, but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:4-5, 8).

DAY FIVE

Israel understood the value of commemorating the saving acts of God that occurred throughout time. There were three main Hebrew feasts they celebrated throughout the year. These feasts had three distinct purposes. First, they ensured that the Israelites remembered their basic history. Second, they reminded Israel of their unique identity and sovereignty of their God. Third, they reaffirmed the kind of conduct that pleased God and helped them to live out their unique covenant identity. The Passover was one of those feasts.

God deliberately chose the time and place of the death and resurrection of Christ, making it no coincidence the event was aligned with the Jewish Passover. The theme of deliverance from slavery in Egypt transferred to the celebration of the resurrection and redemption through Christ with ease.

When Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with His disciples, they were celebrating the Passover feast. Jesus introduced them to a new way of remembering their story. Jesus gave thanks as He broke the bread. As it was shared, He said, “This is my body given for you; do this in *remembrance* of me. (Luke 22:19 NIV)

Read Luke 22:7-23.

In remembrance of me. The disciples already understood they were to remember because their heritage taught them to remember. It was a part of their regular practice to tell the story of the Exodus—but this was new.

The Greek word for *remembrance* in this passage is *anamnesis*. Simply defined, it means “a reminder or remembrance.” A simple definition, however, is not enough. The ancient remembrance was not seen as mere memorialism, something we *do* with our memory, but rather the remembrance is an action of God in which Christ’s saving action becomes present.

His death on a cross and resurrection over two thousand years ago has power in this very moment. Christ’s single act of salvation has power now. Right now. For you and for me.

Jesus is alive. He is alive and working to transform us. His defeat of sin and death still has the power to change our lives. The power of the cross is real. We have victory and freedom because of Jesus’ triumph over the cross and the grave. Paul writes in Ephesians about his prayers for us to fully know our access to this power.

Read Ephesians 1:18-21.

The same power that raised Christ from the dead is the power that changes us. The power of the cross makes things new. The cross repairs. The cross restores. The cross delivers.

When we remember what Christ has done, we are changed. When we encounter the *living God* and receive His redemption, restoration happens. Our stories are different. Those who are trying so hard to be perfect on their own are made perfect in Christ. The self-righteous are forgiven by grace. The broken are mended. The hurting are healed. Those who mourn find joy. Those who are afraid find courage. The anxious find peace. The weary rest. Captives are set free.

How does remembering God saved you in the past change you in the present?

How have you seen Christ's resurrection power in the present?

How can you incorporate the power of remembering into your daily life? If you did, how would it change you?

How has the power of the cross made you new?