



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V24 N15

April 10, 2022

WAY OUT "Past Forward" Exodus 13:1-16

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Faithfulness

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

Proverbs 3:3-4



Why are we
not our own?

Faithfulness was not Israel's strong suit. The descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, the "Israelites" as they are called in the book of Exodus, were God's covenant people (see 2:24; 6:4-5; cf. Ge 15). In fact, the LORD calls the Israelites "my people" eighteen times in the book (3:7, 10; 5:1; 7:4, 16; 8:1, 8, 20, 21, 22, 23; 9:1, 13, 17, 27; 10:3; 12:31; 22:25). In connection with their deliverance from slavery in Egypt, Yahweh gives his people instructions regarding the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They were to observe these annually to commemorate their emancipation.

The Exodus occurred in the month of Aviv (13:4), corresponding to our March/April. On the tenth day of the month, each household was to select a "flock animal," in most cases a lamb, to keep it for four days, perhaps to make sure it was without blemish, and then on the fourteenth of Aviv, to sacrifice it "at twilight." The animal would then be roasted and served whole at the Passover meal. The ritual was intended to remind the Israelites of the LORD's salvation when he "passed over" their houses in Egypt and spared their firstborn — both sons and animals. The bitter herbs eaten with the meal were to remind them of their bitter bondage and the unleavened bread was to remind them of their rapid departure from Egypt (12:1-11, 21-23).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be celebrated in connection with the Passover. It, too, was intended to remind the Israelites of what happened on the night leading up to their deliverance. On 12:14-20, one commentator writes: "Beginning after dark on the fourteenth of Abib (which, since the day began at evening, is in fact the fifteenth of Abib), they were to go without leaven in their food for seven days. The first day (fifteenth of Abib) and the seventh day (twenty-first of Abib) were to be special days in which they were to cease from all unnecessary work and gather together in a holy assembly. A similar set of instructions is given in 13:3-7 (cf. 23:15). Those instructions combine some of the features of the Passover meal with some

features of the Feast of Unleavened Bread" (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 263). Actually, differences between the two sets of instructions are not substantial, e.g., special worship on the first day is not mentioned in the second (see 12:16; cf. 13:), and directions for instructing sons is not mentioned in the first (see 13:8).

This begs the question, did the Israelites *faithfully* observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread throughout their history as commanded? Unfortunately, they did not. Only five Passover observances are recorded in the Old Testament after their departure from Egypt: 1) one in the wilderness (Nu 9:1-14); 2) one upon entering Canaan (Jos 5:10-12); 3) one under King Hezekiah of Judah (2Ch 30:1-27); 4) one under King Josiah of Judah (2Ch 35:1-19); and 5) one after the exiles returned from Babylonian captivity (Ezr 6:19-22). This is not to say that Passover and Unleavened Bread were *only* celebrated on these occasions. But Scripture does either suggest or indicate outright that the Israelites neglected to celebrate these holy days for years on end. For example, the Israelites did not circumcise their sons while wandering in the wilderness, so it's unlikely that they observed Passover and Unleavened Bread (Jos 5:2-9; cf. Ex 12:48). And when Josiah celebrated the Passover in the middle of the seventh century B.C., Scripture says: "The Passover had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; and none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover as did Josiah, with the priests, the Levites and all Judah and Israel who were there with the people of Jerusalem" (2Ch 35:18). What's more, there is no mention of their observance by any king of the northern kingdom of Israel or during the captivity. Faithfulness is not our strong suit either — unfaithfulness being a human trait we all share. Remember Paul's words to the Corinthians, "As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (11:26 ESV). The apostle said, "as often" not "as seldom."



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read Exodus 13:1-16

1 The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal."

3 Then Moses said to the people, "Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because the LORD brought you out of it with a mighty hand. Eat nothing containing yeast. 4 Today, in the month of Aviv, you are leaving. 5 When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites – the land he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey – you are to observe this ceremony in this month: 6 For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the LORD. 7 Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. 8 On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' 9 This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. 10 You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year.

11 "After the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and gives it to you, as he promised on oath to you and your ancestors, 12 you are to give over to the LORD the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the LORD. 13 Redeem with a lamb every firstborn donkey, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem every firstborn among your sons.

14 "In days to come, when your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' say to him, 'With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 15 When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed the firstborn of both people and animals in Egypt. This is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first male offspring of every womb and redeem each of my firstborn sons.' 16 And it will be like a sign on your hand and a symbol on your forehead that the LORD brought us out of Egypt with his mighty hand."

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "consecrate" in v. 2.
- Circle "Aviv" in v. 4.
- Underline "when" in v. 5, "after" in v. 11, and "days to come" in v. 14.
- Bracket "hand" and "forehead" in vv. 9, 16.
- Circle "give over" in v. 12.
- Circle "first offspring" in v. 12.
- Circle "redeem" in v. 13.
- Circle "donkey" in v. 13.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____"



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Put what “consecrate” means in your own words.
 2. Explain *why* the LORD could say, “The firstborn of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal.”
 3. *When* and *where* did Moses deliver the instructions recorded in verses 3-16?
 4. Compare the instructions regarding the Feast of Unleavened Bread in verses 3-10 with those in verses 14-20. List any differences you consider significant.
 5. What do you think of wearing *phylacteries*? Explain why you would or wouldn’t wear them.
 6. Put what verse 12 means in your own words (cf. Nu 18:17).
 7. Name the redemption price for a donkey.
 8. Name the redemption price for a firstborn son.
 9. Summarize what the sons of future Israelites are to learn from the rituals described in 13:1-13.
 10. **Discussion:** Talk about Christian rituals and their catechetical (teaching) value.
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Commentary On The Text

Exodus 12 contains instructions regarding the observance of Passover (vv. 1-11, 21-23) and the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (vv. 14-20). Chapter 13 adds instructions regarding Unleavened Bread (vv. 3-10), and gives instructions regarding an additional rite, involving the consecration of firstborn sons and animals (vv. 11-16). It's important to note that the significance of all three is rooted in what God did for his people in Egypt on the fifteenth of Aviv (vv. 29-36), when he made a distinction between Egypt and Israel (11:7). The relationship of Passover and Unleavened Bread to the redemption and deliverance of God's people is more or less obvious—that of the *dedication* or *setting apart* of the Firstborn *less so*. However, the opening verses of chapter 13 make it *more so* by citing the LORD, who said, "The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal." His words *suggest* that the firstborn males of the Israelites, including both men and beasts, belonged to him, because when he passed through Egypt to strike down the firstborn of the Egyptians, he passed over the houses of the Israelites (12:13). Consequently, those whom he spared *really* did belong to him.

The instructions regarding Unleavened Bread in 13:3-10 are essentially the same as those in 12:14-20. One commentator compares the instructions in chapter 13 to those in chapter 12: "Seven days of eating unleavened bread cakes are mentioned in both passages; the special worship of the first day is not mentioned here [chapter 13]; the perpetual nature of the observance is mentioned in both passages, and its significance is linked to the exodus experience, though only here is a catechetical explanation given and only here are reminding symbols mentioned. The strict prohibition of leaven is made very clear in both passage, though a penalty for being found with leaven is given only in the former passage [chapter 12]" (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 178).

The catechetical function of these ritual observances is worth emphasizing. Regarding the Passover, Moses told the people, "When *your children ask* you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians'" (12:26). Regarding Unleavened Bread, he told them, "On that day *tell*

your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year" (13:8-9). Children were to learn the historical and theological significance of these observances from an early age.

Instructions regarding the dedication of the firstborn beginning in verse 11 pick up where verse 2 left off. One commentator both summarizes and explains: "Because God had redeemed the firstborn of Israel on the night of the Exodus, it was the duty of the people to devote every firstborn male to the service of worship. The firstborn of the clean animals were to be devoted to the Lord by being offered as a sacrifice. The firstborn of the unclean animals (donkeys, etc.) and of human beings were to be redeemed by substitution (cf. Nu 18:15), a sheep in the case of unclean animals and money in the case of the firstborn male child (five shekels, 18:16). At a later time the tribe of Levi would assume the role of the firstborn and be set apart for service in the tabernacle (3:12-13, 45). Even then, however, a redemption price was still to be paid to the Levites (18:14)" (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 267). The dedication of the firstborn, like the Passover and Unleavened Bread, was to serve as a memorial celebration commemorating God's redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt.

Regarding the *upper* story, this passage portrays God as the redeemer, while the *lower* story portrays the redeemed as those who belong to him and by virtue of being his, have a responsibility to worship and serve him. Paul's words to the Corinthians come to mind: "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies" (1Co 6:19b-20).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 2 *consecrate* Cf. “set apart” (NET); “dedicate” (NLT); “sanctify” (NASB). “God had adopted Israel as his firstborn (see 4:22) and had delivered every firstborn among the Israelites, whether human or animal, from the tenth plague (see 12:12-13). All the first born in Israel were therefore his. Jesus, Mary’s firstborn son (see Lk 2:7), was presented to the Lord in accordance with this law (see Lk 2:22-23)” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 13:2). “The firstborn were set apart for the Lord because he had ‘passed over’ them in the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt. They thus belonged to him, and as was later seen with the Levites, they were to serve him in worship. This conclusion is confirmed in 13:11-16 (cf. Nu 3:13, 41). The ‘consecration to the Lord’ was carried out in two ways. On the one hand, the first born were to be set apart from ordinary affairs of life and given over to God’s service. These were evidently the priests mentioned in Exodus 19:22; 24:5. This consecration was later carried over to the sons of Levi when they became priests (Nu 3:41). On the other hand, the firstborn could be ‘redeemed’ by the payment of a sum of money (Nu 18:15-17)” (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 266).

v. 4 *Aviv* I.e., March-April. The LORD proclaimed that Aviv, which means “young head of grain,” was to be the “lead” or first month of the Israelites’ calendar year (see 12:2; cf. 23:15; 34:18; Dt 16:1), because of its link to the time of the Exodus. Later the Babylonian name Nisan was used (see Ne 2:1; Est 3:7). “Israel’s agricultural calendar began in the fall (see note on 23:16), and during the monarchy it dominated the nation’s civil calendar. Both calendars (civil and religious) existed side by side until after the exile. Judaism today uses only the calendar that begins in the fall” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 12:2) – in the month Tishri.

v. 5, 11, 14 *when, after . . .* The instructions given regarding the consecration of the firstborn were given for the benefit of future generations. Note, they do not enter the land for another forty years. “The dedication of every firstborn Israelite male baby was to take place after the nation had entered the Promised Land (vv. 5, 11-12). This was originally to be a memorial of God’s redemption from Egyptian slavery, as were the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread (cf. 12:14). However, God took the Levites for His special possession in place of the firstborn. This happened at Mt. Sinai (Num. 3:12-13). Consequently, this firstborn dedication never took place, but the Israelites did circumcise their sons and observe the Passover when they first entered the Promised Land (Josh. 5:4-7)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes,” 2022 ed., 126, plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf).

vv. 9, 16 *hand, forehead* “Jewish tradition has taken these words to imply more than a mere symbolic function but that actual physical ‘phylacteries,’ small leather boxes containing scriptural quotations (four biblical sections, Ex 13:1-10; 11:16; Dt 6:4-9; 11:13-21), which, according to custom, are strapped to the left arm and forehead. They are also called *tefillin*” (Sailhamer, 267). “The practice may have originated as early as the period following the exile to Babylon in 586 B.C . . . ‘Phylacteries’ are mentioned in Matthew 23:5, where Jesus criticizes a certain group of Pharisees and teachers of the law for wearing them. Our Lord, however, condemns not the practice as such but the ostentatious use of ‘wide’ phylacteries as part of a general statement about those who flaunt their religiosity in public” (Ronald F. Youngblood, *Exodus*, EBC, 66-67).

v. 12 *give over* Lit., “you will cause to pass over to Yahweh;” cf. “set apart” (ESV); “present” (HCSB); “devote” (NASB). “The unusual choice of words in this passage reflects the connection with the deliverance of the firstborn in the exodus when the Lord passed over the Israelites (12:12, 23) . . . Yahweh here claimed the firstborn as his own. The remarkable thing about this is that Yahweh did not keep the firstborn that was dedicated to him, but allowed the child to be redeemed by his father. It was an acknowledgment that the life of the child belonged to God as the one redeemed from death, and that the child represented the family. Thus, the observance referred to the dedication of all the redeemed to God” (*The NET Bible*, 40^{tn} on Ex 13:11).

v. 12 *first offspring* “The firstborn of the clean animals were to be devoted to the Lord by being offered as a sacrifice. The firstborn of the unclean animals (donkeys, etc.) and of human beings were to be redeemed by substitution (cf. Nu 18:15), a sheep in the case of unclean animals and money in the case of the firstborn male child (five shekels, 18:16)” (Sailhamer, 267).

v. 13 *redeem* “The verb means ‘obtain release by means of payment’” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 13:13).

v. 13 *donkey* “Since donkeys were considered ceremonially unclean animals (Lev. 11:2-4) they could not be sacrificed, but they could be redeemed (*pādāh*, ‘to buy back for a price’) by lambs sacrificed in their place. Of course since human sacrifice was unacceptable the Hebrews’ **sons** were also to be ‘redeemed’ . . . The Egyptian **firstborn** were slain, in judgment, and the Israelite ‘firstborn’ were either slain (the animals) in substitutionary sacrifice or redeemed (the **sons**)” (John D. Hannah, “Exodus,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 130).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Since we are not our own because we have been redeemed by the death of Jesus, the lamb of God, we must dedicate ourselves to serving him.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?
2. What does this passage teach me about myself?
3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

In our text today God speaks of both commemoration and consecration. I couldn't help but think of the parenting life in this way. As parents we live both in the past and future, remembering our baby's darling chubby cheeks and milk coma while at the same time preparing them for adulthood and the great launch. We are both looking back at God's faithfulness in gifting us our sweet babies (commemoration) while simultaneously setting up or preparing our children for holiness, to be used by God in the future (consecration). Deuteronomy 6:4-9 flows from our text today as practical tips to both commemorate and consecrate. We must start with examining ourselves. Parents, do you love the Lord with all your heart, soul and strength? Can you remember what God has done for you, how He rescued you and brought you out of slavery to sin? Can you think of a time He protected, provided, or showed extreme patience? Honor the Lord by sharing these moments with your kids. Talk about God's goodness when you sit and when you rise, when you're at home or walking around town. Bring God into your daily life as you teach and train your kids to be holy, set apart for the Lord. Creatively consider ways to commemorate God's faithfulness in your home as a visual reminder – set stones in the garden, decorate and write in a family journal, string colorful beads and hang them in a prominent place. Recording and remembering what God has done in the past will help prepare your family for the future. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 13:1-16.

1. What does consecrate mean?
2. What does commemorate mean?
3. What ceremonies celebrate what God has done?

What Do You Think?

What are some different ways we get ready for our day? How can we prepare ourselves to meet with God?

What Do You Do?

Remember what God has done by making a family keepsake. Create a family journal, decorate a shoebox or gather stones. Write down the ways God has been faithful to your family and put it in your keepsake.

CORE COMPETENCY: Faithfulness

I am loyal to God and others, so they know they can count on me.

MEMORY VERSE: Romans 5:8

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- ☐ I completed my Bible Study
- ☐ I memorized this week's verse
- ☐ I brought my Bible to church
- ☐ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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