

Sermon –Exodus 12:1-28 – 28 June 2020
The Exodus journey - Passover

- **Introduction**

- The story so far
 - Chapter 1 – the Israelites become a persecuted people
 - Chapter 2 – we meet Moses
 - Chapter 3 -Moses meets God
 - Chapter 4-5 Moses is back in Egypt
 - Chapter 6-11 God demonstrates his power with various plagues and signs – however Pharaohs heart is hardened
 - Chapter 11.... In particular there is the promise of a plague on the firstborn.
 - So Chapter 12.... We come to what is known as the Passover – a key event in the history of Israel and by extension a key event for us too

- **Point 1 – You are to prepare thoroughly**

- Verses 1-9 are detailed instructions as to how the Israelites should prepare themselves
- The preparation is **timely**, v3 “the tenth of the month” – not haphazard but organised
- It is **for everyone**, v3 again “tell the whole community” – the preparations are not left to a favoured few or delegated to those willing to do so – it is for everyone – no one is excluded from the responsibility to be prepared

- It is **detailed** – vv4-10 are a detailed summary of what the preparations entail – including provision for the poor or needy, “If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbour, having taken into account the number of people there are” – this is not haphazard or disjointed – the Israelites are to do exactly what God is telling the to do in order to prepare for leaving
- **Application** – How prepared (or otherwise) are we for what God might be asking us to do? How might we be prepared – by prayer?, by reading the scriptures? Do we feel prepared today
- Paul reminds us that “the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, ‘Peace and safety’, destruction will come on them suddenly” (1Thessalonians 5:2-3) – be ready because it could be**NOW!**

Point 2 – You are to be ready to leave quickly

- V11 is a key verse, “This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover.”
- Don’t hand around after the meal and have a siesta!
- Having prepared as God has instructed then don’t be encumbered as you leave – tuck your

cloak into your belt (important fact for those wearing long flowing robes which would encumber swift progress) – wear your shoes because there won't be time for you to go and get suitable footwear – take a staff to help you on your way – eat as you are going – don't have a sit down meal

- So Mark 6:8-9 Jesus says, "Take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt." – in modern parlance, travel light!
- Having prepared don't waste the preparation by being slow to get going – make sure that you can move swiftly on
- ***Application*** – Even if we are making all the preparations we may be called to act and act quickly – we are to be ready – agile – nimble – unencumbered
- Jesus said, "So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." (Matthew 24:44)
- **Point 3 – You are to remember**
 - Having prepared and been ready then commit this time to memory – remember – remember ...
 - V14 – "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate

it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance.”

- V17 – “Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.”
- V24-28, “Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. And 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. Then the people bowed down and worshiped. The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.”
- Remember – remember – remember – this is important – it is a sovereign act of God in saving his people – the Israelites – and you are to do it by a commemorating festival – the feast of unleavened bread – the Passover meal
- You are to teach your children what it means – so that they can pass on this act of God to new generations that follow
- Never forget – remember – remember - remember

- **Application** – Are we too quick to forget God’s action and activity in **OUR** lives – answered prayer? A ‘God-moment’ that gladdens our heart and faith one day – only to be forgotten the next
- We can be very quick to forget God’s sovereign action in our own lives and in the lives of our friends and our community
- **Conclusion**
 - The Passover is a key component of Jewish worship and identity
 - It is a demonstration of God’s saving grace and care for his people
 - It is how Jews remember - the Passover meal with its structure and words recall the God-led escape of the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt and set them on the way to the Promised Land
 - For us - as followers of Jesus, God’s saving grace is supremely demonstrated for us as followers of Jesus in his life death **and** resurrection
 - Jesus was celebrating the Passover meal with his friends in the upper room when he told his disciples “And Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body given for you; do this in **remembrance** of me.’
In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the **new covenant** in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

- We remember Jesus as we celebrate in sharing the bread and wine of communion (also Matthew 26:17-29 and Mark 14:22-24) Jesus associates the Passover meal with his own sacrifice which is to follow shortly afterwards – Good Friday follows the Last Supper meal – with all the imagery of Jesus being the sacrificial lamb, the one who gives up his life voluntarily for our salvation and restoration with God the Father
- But Easter Sunday, Resurrection Day, follows Good Friday – the new covenant is sealed not in the blood of a sacrificial lamb but in the blood of Jesus - and we know that we can trust in this new covenant **BECAUSE** Jesus was raised!
- So let us be prepared and be ready – but also let us remember – Amen!