

Exodus 1-15

This is Our God

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Using this Guide

Reading the Bible for Worship

Why Use this Guide?

We can study the Bible for information or we can study the Bible for worship. It's best to study it for worship, because worship changes us. Worship isn't just singing or raising our hands in the air, it's having our affections caught up in the beauty of God in such a way that it radically transforms how we think, speak and live.

You can be a part of a Bible Study group and not use this guide but something will be missing. I promise. We need time together, hearing the insights of others, but we also need porch time with God. You might call it chair time or living room time or something else, but for me it's porch time. It's the time each day I sit on my porch and I open my Bible and a guide like this to help me be attentive to God's presence and the truth of his word.

On the porch I seek to remove distractions and listen for God's voice through the Bible and the nudges of the Holy Spirit. There are days I don't feel anything profound happening, but I seek to show up anyway—like you would with a dear friend, a spouse or your child. It helps me to have something to guide me. I don't want to meet with the god of my own making, I want to meet with the God of the Bible who promises to be with me and for me, always.

Use this guide as you open the Bible and study, worship, pray, listen, wait, obey, question and let God lead you.

Use this Guide to Meet with God

Right now, determine when and where you will meet with God. Put it in your calendar. Record it on the following page. Guard this time like you guard time for your favorite person, event or show. Each week is divided into five days of study, worship and reflection. It will take just 15-20 minutes each day.

As you work through this guide, notice the many opportunities to **PAUSE**. These pauses are invitations to slow down and listen for God's voice. We don't want to just know *about* God, we want to *know* God and *obey* God. This involves more than getting information, it requires letting God speak to us. His voice will always align with Scripture, it may never be audible but is often a sense or a nudge. To hear God we remove distractions (no phone, no noise) and listen with the belief he is always with us and wants to speak to us.

Focus in on this study—make it your devotional. Don't try to do multiple devotionals and studies at one time. Just do this one. It's only ten weeks.

Gather Together

Gather some friends and meet weekly to discuss how you are experiencing God, his word and life-change through this study. Pray for each other. Listen to each other. Make it a safe time by not trying to fix one another with unsolicited advice. Be fully present with one another, knowing God is fully present with you.

Expect Change

When we come to faith in Jesus a miracle takes place. God, the Holy Spirit, comes to live in us. Jesus told his followers that his Father would send the Holy Spirit to be *with* them and *in* them (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit is committed to our transformation—he instructs us with truth, he convicts us of sin, he empowers us for the mission of God and he grows us in fruitfulness (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control).

Follow the Teaching

www.womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources

YouTube: Women's Bible Study LA

Make a Plan

I will meet with God five days a week at this time: _____

I will meet with God in this location: _____

I will share what I am learning and how I am growing with these people:

An Introduction to Exodus

Exodus is a book about God. It's about Moses and the Israelites, it's about you and me—but ultimately, it's about God. This seems obvious, yet he is easy to miss in the midst of all the drama (burning bushes, plagues of frogs, seas parting, a pillar of cloud/fire, food falling from the sky and so much more). We barely see God in the first two chapters but then he shows up BIG—and I mean BIG—he's on every page, speaking, listening and working.

This is good news because all of us need God to show up, and many of us need him to show up BIG in this season of our life. Where do you need God to show up BIG? Ponder that question as you dive into Exodus and meet God. You will discover who he is, what he does, why it mattered then and why it matters today. Your affections for God will grow and you'll travel with Moses on a path to transformation. Get ready to dive in deep.

Exodus is the centerpiece of the first five books of the Bible known as *The Book of Moses, the Torah* or *the Pentateuch* (five books). To properly understand Exodus we have to look back to Genesis and forward to Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Numbers because all these books fit together. Think of it like the Harry Potter Series but true, and different!

Exodus begins in Genesis, the history of beginnings: the beginning of creation, humanity, sin and the people of Israel. The good news in Genesis is that God pursues and uses broken and sinful people and brings them into relationship with him through covenants. Thankfully the covenant he made with us (through Abraham) is dependent upon him, not us. The covenant was a promise of God to make Israel a great nation, a great blessing and a recipient of a great land. Exodus records the partial earthly fulfillment of these promises. Israel is great in number as the book opens, but they are oppressed under Egyptian rule. God will then gloriously rescue them from enslavement and lead them toward the promised land. Along the way they are formed into a nation under God, receiving the laws necessary for a society to live in harmony. They will also build a place to worship (to bless and be blessed by God), called the Tabernacle.

Five Themes in Exodus and the New Testament

From Leadershipresources.org

The book of Exodus tells the epic story of God delivering Israel out of slavery in Egypt, leading them in the desert, giving the law at Mt. Sinai, and records the construction of the Tabernacle. Exodus contains many great themes and doctrines that point us to Jesus who said all Scripture points to him (John 5:39-40). Here are five of these themes:

1. There is but One God, the Creator Who is Sovereign and Powerful

All the world belongs to him and should know him and worship him alone. He is utterly worthy and deserving of praise and worship. No other master/idol will bring freedom. Exodus begins with a tyrannical master enslaving humanity and ends with service to the Lord that is perfect freedom. The book of Romans describes unbelievers as “slaves to sin” (Romans 6:20). Through faith in Jesus and his death and resurrection, we are set free from sin to live for righteousness and walk in newness of life.

2. Knowing God and Making God Known

God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations’” (Exodus 3:15). God wants to know Israel and make Himself known to the world (see how often these ideas are mentioned in Exodus: 3:6-15, 5:2, 6:2-8, 7:17, 8:10, 22, 9:14, 29, 10:2, 11:7, 14:4, 18, 16:6-12, 18:11, 29:46, 33:12-17). God wants to be known by all people. God reveals himself progressively as the book unfolds as the God who remembers, rules, rescues, judges, speaks, provides, and dwells among his people. By the time of Jesus, this dwelling is even more profound and clear as Christ:

+ ‘tabernacled’ among us (John 1:14)

+ made the Father known (John 14:7)

+ by the Holy Spirit dwells in us and makes God known to our hearts (Ephesians 3:17)

3. The Glory of God is Revealed and His Character is his Glory (weightiness/worth)

God is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, forgiving and yet just. He is holy. He is jealous. Moses and Israel beheld his glory as God revealed his character and ways to them. We have beheld his glory even more clearly than they in the Lord Jesus Christ who dwelt among us full of grace and truth (John 1:14). Read Exodus for an encounter with the living God! The majestic character of God is revealed—mercy, justice, holiness, love, glory, faithfulness and so much more. All believers are on the same journey of faith as Israel. They are rescued from slavery, carried by God, instructed by God and brought to worship and serve God.

4. God's Grace Always Proceeds Law

God rescues, delivers, and THEN gives shape to his relationship with his people by outlining the way they are to live. The law is not given in Exodus as a means to gain blessing and salvation from God but as the way for those who already belong to God to live together under his rule and reign. It is the same in the New Testament: Jesus calls a people to himself (a new Israel) and THEN gives them instruction for life in his Kingdom (Note: Matthew 4:12-22 is before the sermon

on the mount in Matthew 5-8; see also Ephesians 2:1-10, Titus 2:11-14, 3:1-7).

5. Like Israel We are Saved and Freed for a Purpose

Paraphrased from Tim Chester's Commentary on Exodus:

The word used to describe Israel's "slavery" to Egypt is the same root word used to describe her "worship" of God. Exodus is more than a rescue from slavery to freedom, it is a rescue from slavery to serving. Fortunately, serving God is better than serving Pharaoh. Serving God is true freedom—it is what we are made for and is empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Jesus said he "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). To Jesus, serving God is worship. His worship looked like only doing the will of God the Father (John 6:38; see also Romans 12:1).

When it comes to our purpose, Exodus 19:3-6 is a key text in the Bible. Israel was chosen as a holy and special people for the sake of all nations. They were to be holy and priestly, manifesting God to the world. We are chosen for the same purpose.

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 Peter 2:9-12

The beauty of our salvation is that it is accomplished by and for God. For Israel, redemption and liberation are brought about by sacrifice. On the Passover night (Exodus 11-12) the Egyptians and Israelites are each threatened with death. They are saved by placing the blood of a sacrificial lamb on the doorposts of their homes. This sacrifice points the way to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus, "the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) and brings salvation to all who believe (John 3:16; Acts 4:12).

⁷... For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

1 Corinthians 5:7b

The Exodus Story Becomes our Story Because of Jesus

Jesus sets us free from slavery to sin and restores us to a life surrendered to God, our good and faithful Father. Jesus is our Passover Lamb and his blood sacrifice graciously rescues us from judgment and death. Jesus is God's presence on earth — as the Israelites saw the fire/cloud leading them we see God leading us in Jesus, who is the "visible image of the invisible image of

the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). In the face of Jesus we see God's glory (John 1:14-18; 2 Corinthians 4:6). Jesus "tabernacled" among us when he came in the flesh—making the tabernacle a person to worship, not just a place (John 1:14). Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to go before us to live *in* us (John 14-16) and to make Jesus known to us through his work of conviction and illumination. In the resurrection of Jesus, the new creation begins.

Exodus is the key to understanding the person and work of Jesus. It graphically reveals the means of our salvation (redemption through sacrifice) and the hope of our salvation (enjoying God's presence in a world made new).

As Exodus points us to Jesus and inspires us to worship it becomes not just the story of Israel but our story as well. Enjoy.

Week One | Where is God? | Exodus 1-2

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *Where is God?*
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 1-2

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

Introduce yourself and share a bit of who you are and what you hope to gain from this study and time together.

What encouraged you from this message? What challenged you?

How do you need God to show up BIG in your life over the next ten weeks?

Share your plan for meeting with God and using this guide over the next ten weeks.

Pray for one another based on what was shared.

Week 2 | God Shows Up | Exodus 2:23-3:12



See God. See Moses. See You.

Read Exodus 2:23-3:12 and record what you discover about God and Moses, then listen for what this means for you.

God	Moses

What Does this Mean for Me?

Tell God that you are listening for his voice (it will not necessarily be audible—it might be a picture, a sense or a nudge. It will never contradict the Bible and, in fact, will often come directly from the Bible). Read back through Exodus 2:23-3:12. Be silent. Listen. Record what you believe God is saying to you through this passage. What is your response to what you hear?

Day **2**

This is Our God

God is barely mentioned in Exodus 1-2 and then he shows up BIG in Exodus 3. He speaks, reveals his identity, declares his purpose and calls Moses. We will explore the character of God over the next few days. Be prepared to be in awe of who God is to Moses and to you. **PAUSE.** Slow down and consider God's care for Israel and then record how he has cared for you.

²³ During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. ²⁴ **God heard** their groaning and **he remembered** his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.

²⁵ So **God looked** on the Israelites and was **concerned about them.**

Exodus 2:23-25

⁷ The LORD said, "**I have indeed seen** the misery of my people in Egypt. **I have heard** them crying out because of their slave drivers, and **I am concerned** about their suffering. ⁸ So **I have come down to rescue** them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey – the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.

Exodus 3:7-9

How has God seen you/remembered you/looked on you/shown concern for you?

When has God heard and answered your cry/groaning/prayer?

How are you longing for God to show up for you today?

Day **3**

God Comes Down

God says, “I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8). Our God is a God who comes down to rescue. He is not far away, daring us to try harder or to get it right before he comes to us. In Exodus, God came down to rescue Israel from slavery. Ultimately he would send his Son, Jesus, to come down to rescue us from the bondage of sin and give us abundant life with him today and for all eternity.

PAUSE. Meditate on the following passages and worship Jesus. Thank him for coming down for you. Tell him why you love him. Meditate upon his goodness.

¹⁰ Jesus was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ **He came** to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

¹⁴ [God] became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son (Jesus), who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:10-14

[Jesus said:] ³⁸ For I have **come down** from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

John 6:38-40

²² But now that you have been set free from sin [by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, see Romans 5-6] and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:22-23

Is there a time in your life when you placed your faith and trust in Jesus and were set free from the consequence of sin? If so, when? If not, what is keeping you from surrendering to the beauty and pursuit of Jesus?

Day **4**

Our Promise-Keeping God

The God who came down and called Moses was not just any god, he was the God Moses and the Israelites followed and knew to be the one, true God. The Egyptians believed in many gods so it was important for God to identify himself and let Moses know, “I am your God.” In this conversation he revealed two important things about himself: [1] he was a holy God and, therefore, Moses was standing on holy ground (Ex. 3:5); and [2] he was the God of Israel, the God of Moses’ father, “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob” (Ex. 3:6). He was the God who made a covenant with Abraham to give him a good land, make him a great nation and bless him to be a blessing (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:18-21). He actually warned Abraham of the predicament Israel would be in at the time of Moses and now he was coming to rescue them and keep his promise of the covenant.

¹³ Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there.

¹⁴ But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.

Genesis 15:13-15

God is a promise-keeping God. This covenant promise was partially fulfilled in the time of Moses but would be fully and eternally fulfilled in Jesus. The Bible reveals hundreds of promises given by God. Here a few to encourage your faith (from compassionuk.org/blogs).

PAUSE. Meditate on the verses. Don’t rush. Sit with them for at least ten minutes. Circle the one you most need today.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

James 1:17

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

Isaiah 40:29

The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Psalms 34:10

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

Deuteronomy 31:8

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23:4

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your
hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the
pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his
kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:31-33

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6



Hearing God's Call

Moses apparently knew he was called by God to rescue his people *before* he left Egypt. Remember when he stepped in to protect a Hebrew guy and killed the Egyptian (**Exodus 2:11-12**). Or maybe he was just a self-proclaimed savior! Either way, a few things had to happen to Moses to put him in a place to be used by God. He needed a clear call from God and a dose of humility. Let's consider his journey to leadership and then make some application for our own life. Circle and underline key words and phrases.

[Stephen said:] ¹⁷ "As the time drew near for God to fulfill his promise to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt had greatly increased. ¹⁸ Then 'a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt.' ¹⁹ He dealt treacherously with our people and oppressed our ancestors by forcing them to throw out their newborn babies so that they would die. ²⁰ "At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for by his family. ²¹ When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own son. ²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.

²³ "**When Moses was forty years old**, he decided to visit his own people, the Israelites. ²⁴ He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. ²⁵ Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not. ²⁶ The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?'

²⁷ "But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us?' ²⁸ Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons.

³⁰ "**After forty years** had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the

desert near Mount Sinai. ³¹When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to get a closer look, he heard the Lord say: ³²'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look. ³³"Then the Lord said to him, 'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to Egypt.'

³⁵"This is the same Moses they had rejected with the words, 'Who made you ruler and judge?' He was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶He led them out of Egypt and performed wonders and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and **for forty years** in the wilderness. ³⁷"This is the Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your own people' [This is a reference to Jesus; see Deuteronomy 18:15, Acts 3:22]. ³⁸He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living words to pass on to us.

Acts 7:17-38

¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹²And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

Exodus 3:11-12

What was different for Moses from the time he killed the Egyptian to the time he met God in the burning bush? What does God promise Moses in these passages?

What did God want Israel to do after he rescued them from Egypt (Ex. 3:12)? How can you apply this to your life this week?

PAUSE. Imagine God calling your name. Sit with this—don't be in a hurry. Respond by saying in your heart (or out loud): "Here I am." What do you hear God calling you to?

Moses spent forty years thinking he was somebody;
then he spent forty years on the backside of the desert realizing he was nobody;
finally, he spent the last forty years of his life leaning what God can do with a nobody!

Dwight L. Moody

Week Two | God Shows Up | Exodus 2:23-3:12

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *God Shows Up*.

Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 2:23-3:12

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

Which promise spoke to you on Day 4? Why?

How do you relate to Moses in this passage?

What did you hear God calling you to do on Day 5?

Pray for one another according to what was shared.

Week Three | God Has a Name | Exodus 3:10-17



He is Who He is, Not Just Who We want Him to Be

Exodus 3 is incredibly relevant to our time. Just like the Egyptians we have a myriad of gods (they might come in the form of approval, comfort, relationships and material items but they are gods nonetheless as we let them determine our worth and the quality of our life). Even when we look at the God of the Bible we are tempted to make him into the god we want him to be, not the God he is. We want to believe all gods are basically the same and all beliefs ultimately lead to the same place even though Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. The only way to (God) the father is through me."

What we believe about God determines what we believe about ourselves, our purpose and our destiny. Moses' journey (and ours) is not just knowing *about* God, but being known *by* God. Simply knowing *about* God fills our head with knowledge but being known *by* God produces awe, wonder and rest.

Awe and Wonder

Slowly and prayerfully read through this passage until your heart is stirred in awe and wonder over the reality, truth and beauty of God. Answer the questions on the next page.

¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹² And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³ Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you.'

"This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

¹⁶ "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷ And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites – a land flowing with milk and honey.'

Exodus 3:10-17

Who is God to Moses?

Who is God to you?



God's Name is Beautiful and Powerful

It is a helpful practice to simply sit with one or two verses of Scripture and let them speak to you. Today you will sit with Exodus 3:14.

1. As best you can remove all the distractions.
2. Read and meditate on the following verse for at least 5 minutes. Let it captivate your mind and imagination. Do not rush.
3. Seek to listen to God speaking to you. Record all the thoughts that come to mind, any images or nudges you believe are from God.

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites:
'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Exodus 3:14

Bonus: Watch the Bible Project Video called "God". You can find it on YouTube. Search Bible Project God. Prepare to have your mind blown.



Knowing God > Just Knowing About God

Today we jump ahead to an event in Exodus 34 revealing more about the character of God. Prior to Exodus 34, God had given Moses two tablets containing his law.

When Moses came to deliver these tablets to the Israelites he found them worshipping a hand-made god in the image of a golden calf. When Moses saw this debauchery he threw the tablets to the ground, breaking them in pieces. Read the following passage, looking for who God is after Israel had rejected him by worshipping their handmade idol.

The LORD said to Moses, "Cut two stone tablets like the first ones. I'll write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke into pieces. ²Get ready in the morning and come up to Mount Sinai. Stand there on top of the mountain in front of me. ³No one else can come up with you. Don't allow anyone even to be seen anywhere on the mountain. Don't even let sheep and cattle graze in front of the mountain." ⁴So Moses cut two stone tablets like the first ones. He got up early in the morning and climbed up Mount Sinai, just as the LORD had commanded him. He carried the two stone tablets in his hands. ⁵The LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him, and proclaimed the name, "The LORD."

⁶ The LORD passed in front of him and proclaimed:

"The LORD! The LORD!

A God who is compassionate and merciful, very patient,
full of great loyalty and faithfulness,

⁷ showing great loyalty to a thousand generations,
forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion,

yet by no means clearing the guilty, punishing for their parents' sins
their children and their grandchildren, as well as the third and the fourth generation."

⁸ At once Moses bowed to the ground and worshipped. ⁹ He said, "If you approve of me, my Lord, please go along with us. Although these are stubborn people, forgive our guilt and our sin and take us as your own possession." ¹⁰ The LORD said: I now make a covenant. In front of all your people, I'll perform dramatic displays of power that have never been done before anywhere on earth or in any nation. All the people who are around you will see what the LORD does, because I will do an awesome thing with you.

Exodus 34:1-10

What do you find to be beautiful and challenging about God in this passage?

PAUSE. Worship God. Pour out your heart to him. Listen for his word to you.

Day 4

Jesus

Jesus is fully God. All that is true of Yahweh, the Lord, is true of Jesus. He reveals this about himself by using the language from Exodus 3, calling himself “I AM.” Meditate upon the following passages and **PAUSE** to acknowledge Jesus as the Lord and your Lord.

¹⁶When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them.

¹⁸A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. ¹⁹When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened.

²⁰But he said to them, “**It is I**, don’t be afraid.”²¹Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

John 6:16-21

ESV Study Bible Notes: “It is I” can be translated “I AM.” Here it may allude to God’s self-identification as “I AM WHO I AM” (Ex. 3:14) and may thus be an indication of Jesus’ divinity. This connection becomes clear when the phrase is repeated in John 6:35, 8:24, 8:58).

¹⁸ [Jesus said:] I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me.”

¹⁹ Then they asked him, “Where is your father?”

“You do not know me or my Father,” Jesus replied. “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” ²⁰He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.

²¹Once more Jesus said to them, “I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come.” ²²This made the Jews ask, “Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, ‘Where I go, you cannot come?’” ²³But he continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that **I am** he, you will indeed die in your sins.”

²⁵“Who are you?” they asked. “Just what I have been telling you from the beginning,” Jesus replied.

²⁶“I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is trustworthy, and what I have heard from him I tell the world.” ²⁷They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. ²⁸So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that **I am**² he and that I do *nothing on my own* but speak just what the Father has taught me. ²⁹The one who sent me is with me; he has not left *me alone, for I always do what pleases him.*”³⁰ *Even as he spoke, many believed in him.*

³¹ *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 8:18-32

ESV Study Bible Notes: “I am he” at one level may simply mean “I am the Messiah” or the one “sent” by the Father (or in view of v. 12, “I am the light of the world”). The Greek phrase here simply means, “I am” . . . this verse is one of several that hint at a connection with God’s statement to Moses in Ex. 3:14, “I AM.”

⁵⁴ Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵ Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."⁵⁷ "You are not yet fifty years old," they said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"⁵⁸ "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, **I am!**"⁵⁹ At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John 8:54-59

³ **ESV Study Bible Notes:** Jesus is clearly claiming to be the one who was alive before Abraham was, that is, more than 2,000 years earlier . . . He uses the present tense "I am" in speaking of his existence more than 2,000 years earlier, thus claiming a kind of transcendence over time that could only be true of God. Jesus is claiming to be the God who appeared to Moses at the burning bush. His Jewish opponents understood his meaning immediately and "picked up stones" to stone him to death for blasphemy.

⁴ Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"
⁵ "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "**I am!**" he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)⁶ When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

John 18:4-6

⁴ **ESV Study Bible Notes:** Jesus' self-identification, "I am he," has connotations of deity. This is suggested by the soldiers' reaction.

Complete this sentence: "Jesus, I love you because . . ."



Jesus: This is Who I Am

Jesus claims he is one with the "I AM" who commissioned Moses from the burning bush. He also made other "I AM" statements to reveal his character. **PAUSE.** Meditate on these passages and sit with them until a sense of awe and wonder comes over you, leading you to praise and worship Jesus, your God.

³² Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴ "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread."

³⁵ Then Jesus declared, "**I am the bread of life.** Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."³⁶ But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe.

³⁷ All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day . . .

⁴⁷Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸**I am the bread of life.** ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. ⁵⁰But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. ⁵¹**I am the living bread** that came down from heaven.

John 6:32-40, 47-51

¹²When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "**I am the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

⁷Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, **I am the gate for the sheep.**

⁸All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them.

⁹**I am the gate;** whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. ¹¹"**I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

¹³The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴"**I am the good shepherd;** I know my sheep and my sheep know me – ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again.

¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

John 10:7-18

²⁵Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection and the life.** The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷"Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

John 11:25-27

¹"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ²My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?"

³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus answered, "**I am the way and the truth and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:1-6

¹ [Jesus said:] "**I am the true vine,** and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.

Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵"**I am the vine;** you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:1-5

Jesus said, "I am . . ." (fill in the blanks).

_____ John 6:32-40, 47-51

_____ John 8:12

_____ and _____ John 10:7-18

_____ and _____ John 11:25-27

_____ and _____ and _____ John 14:1-6

_____ John 15:1-5

How is Jesus these things to you today?

. . . the Bible claims something radically out of step with its time. It claims there is one true Creator God who made everything. And the world was born, not out of conflict or war or jealous infighting, but out of the overflow of his creativity and love.

. . . when God describes himself, he doesn't start with how powerful he is or how he knows everything there is to know or how he's been around since before time and space and there's no one else like him in the universe. That's all true, but apparently, to God, it's not the most important thing. When God describes himself, he starts with his name. Then he talks about what we call character. He's compassionate and gracious; he's slow to anger; he's abounding in love and faithfulness, and on down the list.

John Mark Comer

O God, I have tasted Thy goodness, and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more.

I am painfully conscious of my need for further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire.

O God, the Triune God, I want to want Thee; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still. Show me Thy glory, I pray Thee, so that I may know Thee indeed. Begin in mercy a new work of love within me. Say to my soul, 'Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.' Then give me grace to rise and follow Thee up from this misty lowland where I have wandered so long.

A.W. Tozer

Week Three | God Has a Name | Exodus 3:10-17

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *God Has a Name*.

Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 3:10-17

¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." ¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

¹²And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' "This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.

¹⁶"Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.'

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

What was one thing you heard in the talk that stood out?

From Day 1: Who is God to you?

From Day 2: Share your experience of meditating on Exodus 3:14.

Pray for one another according to what is shared.

Week Four | Hearing God | Exodus 3:10-4:20



See God. See Moses. See You.

It doesn't take long into Moses' story to find ourselves relating to his questions and fears. Read Exodus 3:12-4:20 and record God's words to Moses and Moses' response.

God's Words to Moses	Moses' Response
Exodus 3:10-13	
Exodus 3:14-4:1	
Exodus 4:2-10	
Exodus 4:11-13	
Exodus 4:14-20	

When God calls you to do something that feels frightening, what are your most common questions and excuses? No shame here, we all have them.

Why do you think these are your particular questions and excuses?



The Call and the Promise

When God calls he includes promises for those who respond. **PAUSE.** Meditate upon these Scripture and record the call, the promise and the whisper of God to you today. Is he calling you to something? Is he encouraging you? Is he giving you hope?

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

The Call:

The Promise:

God's Whisper to Me Today:

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

The Call:

The Promise:

God's Whisper to Me Today:

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.
⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Galatians 6:7-10

The Call:

The Promise:

God's Whisper to Me Today:



The Call and the Promise Continued

PAUSE. Continue meditating upon the call, the promise and the whisper of God to you today.

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

I Peter 5:6-11

The Call:

The Promise:

God's Whisper to Me Today:

²⁷ Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?"

²⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

Matthew 19:27-28

The Call:

The Promise:

God's Whisper to Me Today:

PAUSE. Look back over all the promises from today and yesterday. Sit with them. Receive them as promises to you. Listen. Worship. Spend at least five minutes in this exercise. Record any words or phrases that come to mind that might be from God.



Are You Called?

Moses has a spectacular “calling” experience—God commissions him from a flaming bush! Wow. Isaiah saw a vision of God which was also pretty stunning, but what about you, what about me? What does it look like for us to be called by God to do a great work for him and with him? Is everyone called? Is calling just for paid, professional, pastor-type Christians? What is a calling?

I believe every Christian is called to follow Jesus and join his mission. In the early church everyone was gifted to participate and I believe we are too. Paul was “called” to take the gospel to the gentiles and sometimes he received financial support, while other times he worked his day job of making tents (1 Thessalonians 2:5, 9; Acts 18:1-4). There is biblical support for ministers who collect a paycheck (I’m one of them!) but “calling” isn’t just for the paid professional. Be careful not to fall into the following lies about calling:

1. Calling Equals Elite Christian Status

If we only see calling as something for the paid professional pastor, priest or missionary we start to believe in two tiers of Christians. Tier One is the super Christian, the specially called Christian, the professional Christian. Tier Two is everyone else. The gospel leaves no room for this mindset. All Christians are saved by grace. All Christians are “called” to be on mission with Jesus. Usually this mission looks fairly mundane and normal (loving our neighbors, praying for the lost, the sick and the broken-hearted, raising children, running companies, using our spiritual gifts to build up the local church, sharing our faith, discipling fellow believers, writing novels, teaching, being doctors . . . and on and on and on and on). All Christians have equal access to God—pastors don’t have special access (Hebrews 4:14-16). There is only one tier of Christian—loved, saved, called, adopted children of God.

2. Let the Pastor do the Work

This mentality sees calling only for the professional Christian worker and abdicates the mission of Jesus to those people. This thinking (consciously or unconsciously) says: “Let the pastor visit the sick, let the missionary share the gospel, let the church staff care for the poor and the marginalized.” Jesus called all of his followers to be agents of his love and passionate proclaimers of his message (Luke 10; Acts 1:8). The New Testament authors invited everyone in the church to exercise spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12-14), participate in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:16-21) and care for the marginalized (Galatians 2:10; James 1:27).

Do you want to see God work? Participate in his work! First, embrace that God has called you to himself and to his mission (Mark 3:13-14). Then begin the journey of listening for his unique

invitation to you. We want to hear God's call and also listen for the *how*, the *when* and the *where*. This requires time with God in his word (the Bible), listening and waiting.

How Do You Participate in God's Calling on Your Life?

1. **Thank God for his call on your life.** Acknowledge that he has called you to himself and to his mission. This is true for all Christians. This is true for you.
2. **Listen to God for the details.** Take a warning from Moses and resist the temptation to charge ahead of God. Make it your routine to sit with God daily, reading his word and listening for his voice. Seek the wisdom of godly counsel. Mark Pickerill says, "To follow Jesus you have to stay behind him." Now that's a good reminder.
3. **Consider your reality.** Often we're looking for some big, spectacular, burning-bush calling when in reality our calling is right where we are. Where do you spend most of your time and with who? List those places and people.
4. **Know your spiritual gifts and talents.** What do you love to do? How has God uniquely gifted you? List ways you can use your gifts and talents (i.e. mentoring, leading, serving, praying, organizing, etc.).
4. **Believing God has a call on your life in the everyday, mundaneness—answer these questions:**

Who can you show love to this week? (1 Corinthians 13; Luke 6:27-36)

Who can you forgive today (Luke 6:37; Matthew 18:21-22)?

Who can you bless today with kind and encouraging words (Genesis 12:2; Romans 12:14)?

Who can you serve this week? Can you feed someone who is hungry? Give a drink to someone who is thirsty? Care for a stranger? Clothe someone who needs clothes? Visit someone who is sick? Visit someone in prison? (Jesus says if you do these things to someone in your world, you are doing it for him — Matthew 25:34-45).



Listening to God

Listening to God is one of the most important practices of a Christ-follower. In his perfect humanity Jesus modeled listening to the Father.

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son (referring to himself) can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.

John 5:19-20

²⁸ So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. ²⁹ The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.”

John 8:28-29

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Mark 1:35

We are invited to listen to the voice of God.

¹⁴ [Jesus said:] “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me –

¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd . . . ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

John 10:14-16, 27-30

[Jesus said:] But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 14:26

Practice Listening

1. **Find a comfortable place**—but not so comfortable you fall asleep.
2. **Remove all distractions.** If you have things to do that are consuming your thoughts, write them down and ask God to hold them for you while you listen. Put the list away.
3. **Open the Bible to 2 Corinthians 4.** Ask God to speak to you. Read quickly through the entire passage and then return to the beginning and read slowly, pausing to let the living words of God speak to you. Underline, circle, listen.
4. **Sit for at least 3 minutes in silence.** Allow the Scripture to fill your mind. Listen for the nudge of the Holy Spirit. God's voice is rarely audible but it will come to you in nudges, it will never contradict the Bible, it will often be words straight from the Bible.
5. **Record what you think you hear God saying to you.** Test it against what you know of God and the Bible. Share it with a trusted friend who also knows God and the Bible.

The goal of my spiritual life is such close identification with Jesus Christ that I will always hear God and know that God always hears me (see John 11:41).

If I am united with Jesus Christ, I hear God all the time through the devotion of hearing. A flower, a tree, or a servant of God may convey God's message to me.

What hinders me from hearing is my attention to other things. It is not that I don't want to hear God, but I am not devoted in the right areas of my life. I am devoted to things and even to service and my own convictions. God may say whatever He wants, but I just don't hear Him.

The attitude of a child of God should always be, "Speak, for Your servant hears." If I have not developed and nurtured this devotion of hearing, I can only hear God's voice at certain times. At other times I become deaf to Him because my attention is to other things— things which I think I must do. This is not living the life of a child of God.

Have you heard God's voice today?

Oswald Chambers

From *My Utmost for His Highest*

Week Four | Hearing God | Exodus 3:10-4:20

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *Hearing God*.

Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 3:10-15 and Exodus 4:1-18

¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." ¹¹**But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"**

¹²And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³**Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"**

¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' "This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation . . .

4 **Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you?'"** ²Then the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. ³The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. ⁴Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. ⁵"This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you." ⁶Then the LORD said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow. ⁷"Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh. ⁸Then the LORD said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second. ⁹But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry

ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”

¹⁰Moses said to the LORD, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” ¹¹The LORD said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹²Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

¹³But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

¹⁴Then the LORD’s anger burned against Moses and he said, “What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you. ¹⁵You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. ¹⁶He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him. ¹⁷But take this staff in your hand so you can perform the signs with it.” ¹⁸Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Let me return to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.”

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

As you listened to God's whispers on Days 2 and 3, what did you hear?

Based on Day 4, what do you think God is uniquely calling you to do?

What most encouraged or challenged you from the talk?

Pray for one another based on what was shared.

Week Five | When Life Gets Harder, Not Better | Exodus 4:21-6:13

Day
1

Discovering the Unexpected Nature of God

This week we take a journey with the Israelites that will feel familiar. It's when God doesn't act how you want God to act, when he doesn't show up when we want him to show up, when following him is not what we expected. To properly put ourselves in the story we'll slow down, read the Scripture, ask questions and make observations over the next few days. **PAUSE.** Ask God to speak to you. Slowly read through each passage and answer the questions that follow.

Exodus 4:29-31

²⁹ Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites,³⁰ and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people,³¹ and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

Why did the Israelites believe?

What caused the Israelites to bow down and worship?

What caused you to initially believe in God?

What tends to prompt you to worship God?

Look back at Exodus 1-4 and list what you have discovered about the character of God. Allow these truths to sink deep into your heart and mind. **PAUSE.** Thank God for what he does and who he is.

Exodus 5:1-3

Afterward Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'" ² Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go." ³ Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."

Why did God want Pharaoh to let his people go (also see Exodus 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3)?

What is significant about God's purpose for Israel's freedom? What might this purpose mean for you today?

Pharaoh responds by asking, "Who is the Lord (Yahweh), that I should obey him?" How would you answer this question for yourself?

Day
2

Exodus 5:4-23

⁴ But the king of Egypt said, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!" ⁵ Then Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working." ⁶ That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and overseers in charge of the people: ⁷ "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. ⁸ But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁹ Make the work harder for the people so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies."

¹⁰ Then the slave drivers and the overseers went out and said to the people, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you any more straw. ¹¹ Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all.'" ¹² So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. ¹³ The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, "Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw." ¹⁴ And Pharaoh's slave drivers beat the Israelite overseers they had appointed, demanding, "Why haven't you met your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?" ¹⁵ Then the Israelite overseers went and appealed to Pharaoh: "Why have you treated your servants this way? ¹⁶ Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, 'Make bricks!' Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people."

¹⁷ Pharaoh said, "Lazy, that's what you are – lazy! That is why you keep saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.'" ¹⁸ Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks." ¹⁹ The Israelite overseers realized they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day." ²⁰ When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, ²¹ and they said, "May the LORD look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

²² Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me?" ²³ Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."

How have things changed for the Israelites from Exodus 4:29-31 to Exodus 5:4-23?

How did Pharaoh respond to God's command for him to let the Israelites go and hold a festival?

How did the Israelites respond to Pharaoh?

How did Moses respond to Pharaoh and the Israelites?

Moses had some questions for God. What questions have you had for God when you have faced difficulty?

Day **3**

Exodus 6:1-13

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country." ² God also said to Moses, "I am the LORD. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself fully known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they resided as foreigners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant.

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. ⁷I 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. ⁸And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.”

⁹Moses reported this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and harsh labor. ¹⁰Then the LORD said to Moses, ¹¹“Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the Israelites go out of his country.” ¹²But Moses said to the LORD, “If the Israelites will not listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me, since I speak with faltering lips?” ¹³Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron about the Israelites and Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he commanded them to bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

What is the Lord’s response to Moses’ question, “Why, Lord, have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me?” (Ex. 5:22)?

What is the Israelites response (Ex. 6:9)? How can you relate?

What is the hope in this event? What is your hope in the difficulties you face?



Why?

Moses asks God the question we all want to ask when we face hardship. WHY?

“Why have you brought trouble on this people?” Before we explore this question I have to pause and give a couple warnings and a reminder.

Warnings

1. When Others are in Pain

Always be careful when the question of “why” is not your own. Why did I get cancer? Why has my child rebelled? Why did my spouse lose their job? Why are others succeeding and I just keep

failing? These are honest questions but not ones we can answer. Our best response is to listen, ask thoughtful (not judgmental or attacking) questions and say, "I don't know." Because we don't know. We can pray and we can listen but we cannot presume to know the mind of God. Please, never say, "it will be okay, God works all things for the good" or anything like that, even if it is true. The word "compassion" means "to suffer with." *Suffering with* does not dismiss or remove pain. This is the beauty of Jesus—he enters into our suffering and, then, because he is God he does a work of healing and restoration of the soul that no one else can do.

2. When it Gets Harder, not Better

Be as gracious with yourself as you would be with another (see above). The Psalms are filled with psalms of lament. These are prayers that scream, "why?" and "I'm mad" and "where are you?" God was kind to include these in his holy Scripture because he wants us to know he can handle these kind of prayers. Don't run quickly to relieve your pain or dismiss your suffering—when we do that we often miss the true comfort and presence of God.

A Reminder

Life with Jesus Does Not Mean a Life Without Pain

When Jesus was baptized he heard God the Father declare, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased" (Matthew 3:17) and then he was led by God the Spirit into a wilderness for forty days "to be tempted by the devil" (Matt. 4:1). This, of course, harkens back to Exodus when the Israelites are taken into the wilderness and wander for forty years, being tempted and tested. Jesus warned his followers that they will be insulted and persecuted (Matt. 5:11-12). He told them they will have troubles in this world (John 16:33). But something about Jesus so captured their hearts they persevered through suffering for the sake of knowing him, belonging to him and making him known.

PAUSE. Meditate upon the following passages as you consider the question, *why*. Respond by recording a simple prayer to your God, Yahweh.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ* as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

Hebrews 11:24-17

*Although Moses did not know the name of Jesus he anticipated a coming Christ (which means *Messiah, Redeemer*). Here the author of Hebrews wants his audience to clearly see the connection of Yahweh to Jesus Christ their Lord.

⁷But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:7-11

Record your prayer:



The Beautiful Work of God

God's work is always a work of love. He comes after us like a shepherd leaving all the other sheep to find the one that is lost. He transforms us into people who look like him, living the purpose for which we were created. He delivers us from sin because sin is bondage to a life we were never intended to live. God's work is a work of loving and holy transformation. Just like we find out what we know in history class by taking a test, we discover the substance of our faith when it is tested. We don't like the idea of tests—but it's hard to see change (or be changed) without them. **PAUSE.** Consider the purpose of God's testing revealed in these verses. Sit with them until you are overcome with wonder and awe at the divine purposes of God.

²Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1:2-4

⁷Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:3-9

¹Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. ⁶You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:1-8

Record your response to these verses.

How do these verses give you hope?

How do these verses challenge you?

Week Five | When Life Gets Harder, Not Better | Exodus 4:2-16:13

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *When Life Gets Harder, Not Better*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 4:21-6:13

1 Peter 1:6-7

⁶In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

Share your response to what you heard in the talk.

Where are you right now — in a difficult place or a peaceful place?

What has helped you to wait on God?

Pray for one another, listening for the guidance of the Spirit as you pray.

Week Six | God v. Pharaoh | Exodus 6:28-11:10

Day **1**

Take it All in

This week we dive into a long section of Scripture that we will read over two days. We don't have room to put the Scripture in the guide, so grab a good translation of the Bible for study (NIV, ESV, NASB). Today read Exodus 6:28-9:12 (you'll read Exodus 9:13-11:10 tomorrow).

As you read, **today and tomorrow**, answer these questions and fill in the chart on the following two pages. You don't have to do it all today! Be sure to **PAUSE**, pray, question and worship as you read.

What was the purpose for the signs and plagues (Exodus 7:5, 16-17; 8:10, 9:14, 16; 10:1-2, 12:12)?

What do you learn about Moses and Aaron?

Summarize what you learn about God.

Information in this chart is taken from *Exodus for You*, by Tim Chester and *The New American Commentary on Exodus*, by Douglas K. Stuart.

Exodus	Signs of God's Sovereignty	Egyptian Gods and Religious Thought	God's Word & Character	The Egyptians' Response	Pharaoh's Heart
7:8-13	Sign of Staff to Snake	The world was created by the sun-god who took the form of a snake.			
7:14-24	Plague of Blood	The Nile was considered a god. Hapi, the god of fertility was closely associated with the Nile.			
7:25-8:15	Plague of Frogs	The god Heqt had the head of a frog.			
8:16-19	Plague of Gnats				
8:20-32	Plague of Flies				

Exodus	Signs of God's Sovereignty	Egyptian Gods and Religious Thought	God's Word & Character	The Egyptians' Response	Pharaoh's Heart
9:1-7	Plague of Livestock	The bull was the symbol of fertility with shrines across Egypt. Hathor, the goddess of love, had the head of a cow.			
9:8-12	Plague of Boils	Sekhmet, the goddess of plagues might have been expected to heal the epidemic of boils.			
9:13-35	Plague of Hail	Nut, the sky goddess, could not prevent the plague of hail.			
10:10-20	Plague of Locust	The sky goddess also couldn't stop the east wind which brought the locust.			
10:21-29	Plague of Darkness	Re, the sun-god, did not rise during the plague of darkness.			
11:1-10	Plague of Death				

Day **2**

In Wonder and Awe of God's Sovereignty

Continue adding to the chart and answering the questions on page 49 as you read Exodus 9:13-11:10.

Summarize your thoughts and questions from Exodus 6:28-11:10.

O Holy One,
I hear and say so many words,
yet yours is the Word I need.
Speak now,
and help me listen;
and if what I hear is silence,
let it quiet me,
let it disturb me,
let it touch my need,
let it break my pride,
let it shrink my certainties,
let it enlarge my wonder.

~ from *Guerrillas of Grace* by Ted Loder

Day **3**

A Really Good Question

The Egyptians were not atheists, they believe in all kinds of gods. They had so many gods it's hard to find an accurate accounting of them. Their culture was very spiritual and so is ours. Many people are spiritual today but they want to define their spirituality on their own terms, creating a god according to their needs, wants, experiences and expectations. So, when God doesn't work as we expect, or requires something of us we don't want to do, we ask the same question as Pharaoh. **PAUSE** to meditate upon this question.

² Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him . . . ?"

Exodus 5:2a

Our obedience is intimately linked to God's love. We do *NOT* earn God's love by obedience but we respond *TO* God's love with obedience. Consider the following verses and then answer the questions: Who is the Lord? Why should I obey him?

¹⁵[Jesus said:] "If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – ¹⁷the Spirit of truth.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

²¹Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

John 14:15-21

⁹"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

John 15:9-12

¹Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: ²Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;

⁷and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of

our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

2 Peter 1:1-9

Who is the Lord to you? Why?

Why do you obey him?

PAUSE. Worship. Thank God. Praise God. Receive his love for you. Accept that he wants to empower you with all that you need for life and godliness.



It Matters Who You Worship

It's tempting to believe that who or what we worship can be determined by personal preference. The message we often hear is that all gods are basically the same so the important thing is not which god but which god is best for you. But, the Bible says who and what we worship matters. First and foremost, it matters if our deity is real. If he's not real then we're living a fantasy and standing on sinking sand. This is why the truth of the resurrection was so important to Paul, it was the confirmation that Jesus' was indeed Messiah. Paul said, if Christ was not resurrected our faith is in vain and we are much to be pitied.

Scholar N.T. Wright says:

They say, "Jesus is raised from the dead. Therefore, he really is the Messiah. Therefore, he really is the Lord of the world. Therefore God's new creation has begun. And therefore, we have a job to do!" It's what John 20-21 are all about. It's what Luke 24 is all about. It's this astonishment. The stuff has happened! And that means, we've got to take this message out and make it happen out in the world. It's about new creation, in other words. It's about Jesus' bodily resurrection as the beginning of the recreation of the cosmos. That is so stunning!

C. S. Lewis said:

There are a dozen views about everything until you know the answer.
Then there's never more than one.

Christians believe Jesus is the one and only ultimate answer to Pharaoh's question, "who is the Lord?" **PAUSE** to meditate upon the Apostles' Creed, reaffirming your belief in the triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.



No More Darkness

Exodus 10:21-23 records the plague of darkness. In the midst of the darkness mercy is extended to God's people. Put yourself in this scene. Imagine you're in Goshen where there is still light but you can see the darkness over Egypt. What do you think it means that the darkness could be "felt"?

²¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness spreads over Egypt – darkness that can be felt." ²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. ²³ No one could see anyone else or move about for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.

Exodus 10:21-23

Imagining yourself there, record or draw your reflections upon this event.

Now imagine you are in the place where darkness came again as a sign of judgment, but this time the judgment was absorbed by Jesus on the cross. Tim Chester says,

At the cross, the plagues fell on Jesus, the Son of God. At the cross, the Maker came to be unmade so that we could be remade! The Son was unraveled under the judgment of the Father. He experienced chaos, darkness and death.

When Jesus died, everything changed. The curtain in the temple (representing a barrier between God's holiness and our humanity) was torn in two, "from top to bottom." Now, all can have unhindered access to God because of the grace of Jesus. **PAUSE.** Meditate on these passages, putting yourself at the scene and recording your reflections below.

⁴⁵ From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*"

⁴⁷ When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. ⁴⁹ The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

⁵⁰ And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

The earth shook, the rocks split ⁵² and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"

Matthew 27:45-54

¹ In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it . . .

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1:1-5, 9-13

Week Six | God v. Pharaoh | Exodus 6:28-11:10

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *God v. Pharaoh*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 6:28-11:10

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

What did you learn from filling in the charts on Days 1 and 2?

What surprised you about Pharaoh?

What most struck you about God in this section of Scripture?

Pray for one another. Pray for the person on your right according to what you heard them share.

Week Seven | A Disturbing Night | Exodus 11:1-13:16



The Mysterious, Disturbing, Beautiful Nature of God

Read Exodus 11:1-13:16 and fill this space with questions, angst and praise. Also, consider the quote below.

The picture of Jesus as the coming judge is the central feature of (an) absolutely vital and nonnegotiable Christian belief: that there will indeed be a judgment in which the creator God will set the world right once and for all. The word “judgment” carries negative overtones for a good many people . . . (But) throughout the Bible, God’s coming judgment is a good thing, something to be celebrated, longed for, yearned over.

It causes people to shout for joy and the trees of the field to clap their hands. In a world of systematic injustice, bullying, violence, arrogance and oppression, the thought that there might be a coming day when the wicked are firmly put in their place and the poor and weak are given their due is the best news there can be. Faced with a world in rebellion, a world full of exploitation and wickedness, a good God must be a God of judgment . . . (Judgment in the Bible) is good news, first, because the one through whom God’s justice will finally sweep the world is not a hard-hearted, arrogant, or vengeful tyrant but rather the Man of Sorrows, who was acquainted with grief; the Jesus who loved sinners and died for them; the Messiah who took the world’s judgment upon himself on the cross . . . Jesus comes as judge much as Moses descended the mountain into the camp where idolatry and revelry were in full swing . . .

When the Holy Spirit comes, declares Jesus, he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness and judgment. The final judgment, in other words, will be anticipated in the present world through the Spirit-led work and witness of Jesus’ followers.

N.T. Wright



Put Yourself in the Story | Behold the Lamb

A wonderful practice as you read the Scripture for spiritual formation and worship is to put yourself in the story. **PAUSE** and slowly read through Exodus 12:3-14 and imagine you are participating in the Passover Feast. Record what you see, feel and hear.



Sacrifice and Atonement

The connection between the Passover and Jesus is made clear in the New Testament. **Watch The Bible Project Video on Sacrifice and Atonement** and record what it reveals about animal sacrifice and the rituals we now practice in the church. Find the video at [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search “The Bible Project Sacrifice and Atonement”.

PAUSE and meditate upon John’s statement about Jesus. Sit with this truth. Worship.

John saw Jesus coming toward him and said,
“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
John 1:29



Life and Death

Through the Passover, Israel is rescued temporarily from physical death. Consider now the rescue Jesus provides for all who will believe. Record your reflections below.

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means!

We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin –

⁷because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.⁹For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace. ¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace?

By no means! ¹⁶Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.

¹⁸You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations . . .

²²But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:1-19, 22-23

How will you live differently in light of being rescued by Jesus?

Day 5

Put Yourself in the Story | Behold Jesus

Put yourself in the story of Jesus sharing the Passover with his disciples. Consider how Jesus transforms the first practice of the Passover in Exodus to the practice of the Lord's Supper in Luke. Record your reflections below.

¹³ (The disciples) left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

¹⁷ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you.

¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹ And he 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."

²⁰ 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.

²¹ But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. ²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!"

²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.

²⁵ Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸ You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 22:14-30

Week Seven | A Disturbing Night | Exodus 11:1-13:16

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *A Disturbing Night*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 11:1-13:16

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

How was the practice of putting yourself in the story? How was your experience different in Exodus versus Luke?

How will you now think differently when you take communion (the Lord's Supper)?

Pray for one another with a simple one sentence prayer for the person on your right.

Week Eight | God Leads You | Exodus 13:17-22



Leaving Egypt

Israel is leaving Egypt and heading to the promised land. Finally. For Israel, Egypt represented hundreds of years of being stuck under oppressive slavery. This week we explore God leading Israel to freedom. Along the way we'll make application to our own journey. Most of us have a personal Egypt, a place where we feel stuck. Today we'll consider how God delivered Israel and tomorrow we'll look at how he wants to deliver us.

PAUSE and meditate upon God's rescue of Israel from Egypt in the following verses.

¹⁷ When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." ¹⁸ So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle. ¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place." ²⁰ After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. ²¹ By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. ²² Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

Exodus 13:17-22

Record five observations from this passage—noting the character and work of God

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PAUSE to worship the God you see in Exodus 13:17-22.

Day **2**

Leaving Your Egypt

We all have an Egypt. At least, I want to think we all have one since I certainly do! Egypt is the place we're stuck. Egypt is the place we're tempted to return to even if it never really worked for us. It's amazing how many times Israel will want to go back to Egypt because following God isn't as comfortable and safe as they anticipated. Your Egypt can be on-going sin or just something that hinders you from living the life for which you were created, a life with and for God. The author of Hebrews alludes to this kind of "Egypt." **PAUSE** to read and meditate on this passage. Ask God to reveal the sin or hindrance that is keeping you stuck.

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off **everything that hinders** and **the sin that so easily entangles**. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Are you stuck? Let this list serve as a prompt, but don't stop here. Circle where you feel stuck and feel free to write in your own word.

Greed	Envy	Self-Pity	A Victim to Others
Busyness	Deceit	Striving/Performance	Pride
Fear	Unforgiveness	Immorality	Anger
Shame	Regret	Grumbling and Complaining	Unbelief

What are you hearing from God?

Is there something you keep trying to control that is completely out of your control? What is it and how will you let go of it?

What are the things you can control with God's help? How will you take responsibility for those things?

Cooperating with God's Leadership

1. I'm admitting I'm stuck in _____

2. I will ask God and these friends for help (list 1-3 trusted friends):

3. I need to change the following pattern of thinking and/or living and I will replace it with new thinking/living (Example: I will stop believing I am a victim waiting for my circumstances to change and I will start taking ownership of my choices and actions. Be as specific as possible).

I will stop _____ and start _____



Trusting God

¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place."

Exodus 13:19

Exodus 13:19 feels like a random, unimportant verse in the midst of our passage, but it's actually crucial to understanding the hope of Israel and why they can trust God to lead them. God is a promise-keeping God. He promised Abraham and his offspring that he would do these three

things through them and for them (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:18-19):

1. Make Israel a Great Nation

Israel was merely an extended family of seventy at the end of Joseph's life. Then in Exodus 1 this family has multiplied to become a great nation: "the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them." This promise is eternally fulfilled in Jesus who made a way for all people to join this *great nation*, the kingdom of God (John 3:16-18; Romans 10:9-13).

2. Bless Israel to be a Blessing to All Nations

Israel is blessed to be a blessing to all nations. This promise of being blessed to be a blessing is continued in the ministry of Jesus. He blesses his followers and commissions them to bless others by also serving as God's representatives and conduits of love, forgiveness, grace, mercy, truth and justice.

3. Give Israel a Promised Land

This land is described as a sanctuary for God's people. The temporary promised land was the land Moses would lead his people toward in the wilderness. It was the land promised in Genesis 15:19. Joseph didn't see the fulfillment in his lifetime but he believed it would come and asked his family to keep his bones until they could be taken to the place of God's promise.

Read the following passages and **PAUSE** to worship our God who keeps his promises.

¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates – ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰ Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹ Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

Genesis 15:18-20

²⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

²⁵ And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place."²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis 50:24-26

Note: Abraham and Moses looked beyond the physical promised land to an eternal place where God would fully rule and reign. This place would be a redeemed Eden. The ultimate land is the place Jesus prepared for us in his death and resurrection, described as the "new heaven and new earth" in Revelation 21-22.

⁸By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹By faith he made his home in the

promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.

¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

. . . ²² By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones . . . ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

Hebrews 11:8-16, 22, 24-28

¹ Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them.

They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

⁴ "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Revelation 21:1-4

List six things you love about God after meditating upon these passages.

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. |

How have you seen God come through for you? What promises has he kept?

Day **4**

Let God Lead You

PAUSE, quiet your thoughts, focus your attention and gaze upon God. Invite him to speak to you. Read back through Exodus 13:17-22 (page 65) and answer the following questions.

God takes Israel the long way. Name a time when God took you the long way in dealing with a certain circumstance or relationship. How did it feel? Can you see a reason for taking the long way? Sometimes we can't, and that's okay.

I love that God knew if the Israelites faced conflict they would be tempted to return to Egypt. We'll see them ask to go back to Egypt multiple times in their journey. This is an obscure observation, but it seems God put them in smaller community to help them on the journey. Exodus 13:18 in the NIV says, "The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle" but in the Hebrew it is more literally translated, "The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt organized in fifties." The point doesn't seem to be that they were ready for battle (they had been enslaved or hundreds of years, they had no weapons or military training). The point might be that they had people to journey with and face the battles. The term here for "fifties" doesn't mean 50 people but a small fighting unit that might be called a "squad" today.

When are you tempted to go back to Egypt (return to hindrances and sin)?

Name the "squad" you journey with? Do you have some people? If not, how could you cultivate this type of relationship?

See God Lead You

²⁰ After leaving Sukkoth (the Israelites) camped at Etham on the edge of the desert.

²¹ By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

²² Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

Exodus 13:20-22

God graciously *showed* the Israelites he was leading them by appearing as a cloud by day/fire by night. The cloud/fire is not just a sign of God but it is God and he goes ahead of them so they can follow. He never leaves his place in front of them. **PAUSE.** Worship God. Sit with these verses and picture God leading you today. What words or pictures come to your mind as you sit with God?

Where do you most need God's leadership today?

How has God led you in the past? How did he reveal himself to you?

(We should not conclude) that there were two separate pillars. From Exodus 14:24 ("the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army"), 14:19-20 ("the pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to one side and light to the other side"), 40:38 ("fire was in the cloud by night"), and Numbers 14:14 ("that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night") it is clear that there was only one cloudlike pillar, which represented God's presence, and that it appeared as a great column of dark cloud when viewed during the bright sunlit day but as a column of fire when viewed at night. This is consistent with the descriptions of the cloud that covered the top of Mount Sinai. That cloud was dark to Moses, who was permitted to enter it, but appeared as a blazing fire to the Israelites, who were not.

... (The pillar was) a way of allowing the Israelites to look at God so as to be able to follow him without actually seeing him in his very person (Ex. 33:20). The pillar-cloud was a manifestation of Yahweh himself, not merely something he sent them.

Douglas K. Stuart, The American Commentary on Exodus



God Leads You and Reveals Himself to You Today

We want to see God! We want to hear him and follow him. What a gift that God showed himself in time and space in the coming of Jesus and that today he sends his Holy Spirit to lead us.

PAUSE. Meditate on the following verses and consider how God revealed himself in Christ and then sent his Holy Spirit to be our guide. Record your observations in the margins.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth . . . ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

John 1:14, 18

¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹³This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

1 John 4:12-16

⁶Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." ⁸Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

⁹Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

¹⁵"If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – ¹⁷the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in

my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

John 14:6-21

¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

Romans 8:14-16

Let the Spirit Lead You Today

1. **Unclutter your mind.** Write down your distracted thoughts or imagine them floating by like clouds.
2. **Acknowledge God’s presence before you in the Spirit.** Share with him where you specifically need him to lead.
3. **Wait. Listen.** Record any impressions or words that come to mind. Test them against the Scripture and the leading of the Spirit.
4. **Obey what you hear or see.**

We are being led by the Spirit every time he prompts us to say no to temptation and yes to Jesus (Romans 8:12-13, Galatians 5:16-18). We are being led by the Spirit every time our hearts are set on our heavenly inheritance rather than earthly treasure (Romans 8:16-17, 22-25). So we “live by the Spirit” by putting to death selfish desires (Galatians 5:24-26). If today you refuse to give in to temptation (or reject the lies of the enemy or rest in the love of God or extend love to the unlovable or forgive your neighbor or fight for justice), then you will have been led by the Spirit of God; the same God who lead his people in the wilderness.

Tim Chester

Week Eight | God Leads You | Exodus 13:17-22

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *God Leads You*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 13:17-22

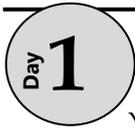
DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

From Day 2: What is the thing you are trying to control and how will you let it go? Is there something you need to take responsibility for?

What steps are you taking to leave your personal Egypt and what is God leading you to?

Pray for each person according to what they shared.

Week Nine | God is Fighting for You | Exodus 14



This is Our God

Exodus is the true story of God. He is not just any god but he is the one true God, Yahweh. **PAUSE.** Record all that you have discovered about God in Exodus 1-13. Thank him for who he is and what he does.

Read Exodus 14 and prayerfully answer these questions:

Who is God in this passage: what are his purposes and how does he fight for Israel?

How do the Israelites respond to the approaching Egyptians (Ex. 14:10-12)?

When are you tempted to want to go back to Egypt (old patterns, sin, lack of faith, etc.)?

PAUSE. By faith, thank God for fighting for you. Imagine him taking on a battle you are experiencing today (a relational conflict, health, fear, loneliness, joblessness, parenting, etc.).



God is Fighting for You

The rest of this week we will slowly work through Exodus 14:13-14. **PAUSE** now to slowly, prayerfully meditate on this passage. Read it through in the following three translations. **PAUSE.** Worship God. Imagine him saying these words to you.

¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Exodus 14:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

Exodus 14:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ Moses spoke to the people: "Don't be afraid. Stand firm and watch GOD do his work of salvation for you today. Take a good look at the Egyptians today for you're never going to see them again. ¹

⁴ GOD will fight the battle for you. And you? You keep your mouths shut!"

Exodus 14:13-14 (The Message)

What do hear God speaking to you through these verses and the tenderness of his Spirit?



Do Not Be Afraid

PAUSE. Ask God to speak to you. Meditate upon this passage again. Read slowly through the whole passage and then rest upon the phrase *“do not be afraid”*.

¹³ Moses answered the people, **“Do not be afraid.** Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Exodus 14:13-14

Ask the Lord to reveal your fears. Don't judge them, just accept that they are real to you. Record them here and imagine God holding each one for you.

Meditate upon these verses and the reason the person might be afraid (put yourself in their place). Ask God to speak to you about your fears. Record what you think you are hearing in the margins.

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, **do not be afraid** to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:18-20

[Jesus said:] ¹⁶ “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the

Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you . . .

²⁶ “So **do not be afraid** of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Matthew 10:16-20, 26-31

²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. **Don’t be afraid.**”

Matthew 14:25-27

⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

⁶ So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; **I will not be afraid.** What can mere mortals do to me?”

Hebrews 13:5-6

What will you do differently this week as a response to these verses?



Stand Firm

PAUSE. Ask God to speak to you. Meditate upon this passage again. Read slowly through the whole passage and then rest upon the phrase “*stand firm*”.

¹³ Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. **Stand firm** and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Exodus 14:13-14

Where do you tend to doubt or waiver in your faith? Don't worry, most of us have doubts and a tendency to waiver in different seasons. I work for a church and I have doubts. Name them and list them here. Don't judge your doubts, simply let God hold them for you.

What is one circumstance in your life, or one belief, in which you need to "stand firm" this week?

Meditate upon these verses. Ask God to speak to you, strengthening your faith, giving you courage not to waiver but to cling to him and stand firm. In the margins, record what you think you are hearing from God through his word.

¹⁰When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous **stand firm** forever.

Proverbs 10:25

⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, **stand firm**. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

¹³ Be on your guard; **stand firm** in the faith; be courageous; be strong.

¹⁴ Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13

²⁰ For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹ Now it is God who makes both us and you **stand firm** in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2 Corinthians 1:20-22

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. **Stand firm**, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery (to sin).

Galatians 5:1

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your **stand** against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand** your ground, and after you have done everything, to **stand**. ¹⁴ **Stand firm** then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Declare, out loud: "Today I will stand firm against _____"



Be Still

PAUSE. Ask God to speak to you. Meditate upon this passage again. Read slowly through the whole passage and then rest upon the phrase "*be still.*" This phrase, "*be still*" might also be translated, "You do not need to do anything" or "You, silence" or "You, hold your tongue." Moses wants them to see, watch, experience God as victorious for them.

¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to **be still.**"

Exodus 14:13-14

The Scripture is filled with commands to "do" - to love justice, to love our enemy, to serve, etc. But here, Moses says, "be still." And sometimes this is what we need to do in the battles we face. We need to "be still" or "be silent".

PAUSE. Ask the Lord to reveal a battle you are facing in which you need to be still and/or silent. Maybe it doesn't feel like a battle but it's the way you tend to approach a relationship with a spouse or child or parent. Maybe you need to not say so much for a season and let God do the work?

Record what God is revealing to you. Write out your fears and concerns. What is keeping you from trusting God in this area and being still/silent?

Pray these verses for yourself. Pray them over your situation.

- ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:
⁶ He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.
⁷ Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.
⁸ Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret – it leads only to evil.
⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

Psalm 37:5-9

- ¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."
¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 46:10-11

Listen for God's word to you in these verses and through his holy nudges. What do you hear?

Draw a picture of you being still and God fighting for you.

Week Nine | God is Fighting for You | Exodus 14

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *God is Fighting for You*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 14

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

What encouraged you and what challenged you from the talk?

Name what is most difficult for you: not being afraid, standing firm or being still?

Where do you need God to fight for you today?

Pray for each person according to where they need God to fight for them today.

Week Ten | This is Our God | Exodus 15

Day **1**

We Will Praise Our God

God rescues Israel and they sing. They sing because he is worthy of their praise. They sing because his faithfulness amazes them and prompts them to worship. The posture of all believers is worship, singing, praise and exultation. Our God is good, he keeps his promises, he fights for us, he sees us—so we sing!

Read through the song of praise in Exodus 15:1-18 and, in the margins, record how it summarizes all you've seen God do in Exodus 1-14.

¹Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

"I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted.

Both horse and driver, he has hurled into the sea.

²"The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.

He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

³The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name.

⁴Pharaoh's chariots and his army he has hurled into the sea.

The best of Pharaoh's officers are drowned in the Red Sea.

⁵The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.

⁶Your right hand, Lord, was majestic in power. Your right hand, Lord, shattered the enemy.

⁷"In the greatness of your majesty, you threw down those who opposed you.

You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like stubble.

⁸By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up.

The surging waters stood up like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart

of the sea. ⁹The enemy boasted, 'I will pursue, I will overtake them.

I will divide the spoils; I will gorge myself on them.

I will draw my sword and my hand will destroy them.'

¹⁰But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them.

They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹Who among the gods is like you, Lord?

Who is like you – majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

¹²"You stretch out your right hand, and the earth swallows your enemies.

¹³In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed.

In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.

¹⁴The nations will hear and tremble; anguish will grip the people of Philistia.

¹⁵The chiefs of Edom will be terrified, the leaders of Moab will be seized with trembling, the people of Canaan will melt away;

¹⁶terror and dread will fall on them. By the power of your arm they will be as still as a stone – until your people pass by, LORD, until the people you bought pass by.

¹⁷You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance –

the place, LORD, you made for your dwelling,

the sanctuary, Lord, your hands established.

¹⁸"The LORD reigns for ever and ever."



We Must Sing to Our God

The first line of the song, “I will sing to the Lord”, contains some wonderful truth. The line could be translated, “I must sing to the Lord”. When we encounter God, we must sing. And this is not just any old’ god we sing to—this is Yahweh. When the NIV uses the word “LORD” it is a translation of the name Yahweh, the name that identifies this God from any other god. Moses is declaring “We must sing to Yahweh, the one, true God!”

Worshipfully read back through this song in Exodus 15:1-18 and record everything it reveals about God. Make your list and then use it as your song of praise today.

Worship Song of the Day: Surrounded (Fight My Battles). You can find the song on YouTube. I like the versions by Tasha Cobb Leonard and Josh Baldwin.



Our God's Unfailing Love Will Lead Us

Psalm 77 mentions the events of Exodus and God parting the Red Sea. It is a Psalm of remembrance that bolsters the Psalmist faith. Let Psalm 77 guide your prayer today. You can record that prayer here.

Worship Song of the Day: God With Us. Search YouTube: Jesus Culture—God With Us—Bryan Torwalt



Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

How I relate to Israel! As they journey with God they seem to take two steps forward in worship, faith and trust and then they fall back again. Me too! Read all of Exodus 15 and not Israel's worship and their doubt.

How have you taken steps forward in trusting and worshiping God? What helped you?

How have you taken steps back and fallen into doubt and fear? When does tend to happen most?

Pour your heart out to God today in prayer and invite him to be your provider and your Lord.

Worship Song of the Day: Not Afraid. Search YouTube: Jesus Culture—Not Afraid (Live).



We Are Made to Be With Our God

Even though God has graciously come at various times and ways – most fully in Christ – to the place where we live, it has always been God's plan that his people should, because of the work of Christ, eventually join him where he lives. The story of ancient Israel mirrors this. God called them out of where they had been born and had been living (Egypt), bound them to himself in a covenant (at Sinai and again in Deuteronomy), and then led them to his holy dwelling (Israel/Jerusalem/the Temple). The same sort of thing happens in Christ, yet on a greater more lasting scale. God calls those who believe in him out of where they have been born and are living (earth), bind them to himself in a (new) covenant (by believing in Jesus as Savior and Lord), and then leads them to his holy dwelling (heaven).

The New American Commentary on Exodus

We will be in heaven—the new heaven and the new earth. The author of Revelation had a glimpse of this place and recorded what he saw in Revelation 15. I love that in his vision he heard angels singing “the song of God’s servant Moses and of the Lamb (Jesus).”

PAUSE. Meditate on Revelation 15 and record your observations and prayers below.

Worship Song of the Day: Great and Marvelous. Search YouTube: Great and Marvelous—Tommy Walker

Exodus 1-15 | Look Back

Take a moment to look back through this devotional study guide.

What has God revealed to you about himself in this study?

How have you changed over the past 10 weeks?

What do you want to be sure to remember from this devotional study?

Week Ten | This is Our God | Exodus 15

Notes Page: Use these pages to take notes on the talk, *This is Our God*.
Find this talk at womensbiblestudyLA.com/resources or on YouTube (Women's Bible Study LA).

Exodus 15

DIG IN WITH YOUR GROUP

Share all you discovered about God from your observations on Days 1 and 2.

Share your reflections from Day 4 on taking two steps forward, one step back.

Reflecting back on this ten-week session, how have you changed?

Take time to bless each person in the group—have each person hear words of encouragement from the others in the group.