

Two Year Bible Trek
Week 7
Exodus 12-19

Key Concepts: The key concept is remembering. The idea of remembering is central to the Passover event, the renewal of the covenant at Sinai and even the giving of the Ten Commandments. The people are to always remember that it is God who has freed them, fed them and protected them.

Stories: The stories in this section include Passover, the Hebrews leaving Egypt, consecrating the first-born, God leading the people to the edge of the sea, Pharaoh changing his mind and pursuing the people, God protecting the people, God/Moses leading the people across the sea, the Egyptians being drowned, the people celebrating their victory, water being made clean, the people murmuring, God giving manna and quail, the declaration of the 7th day as the Sabbath, water from the rock at Horeb, Joshua leading the people to defeat the Amalakites, Moses meeting his family again, Jethro encouraging Moses to appoint elders (which he does), the people being prepared to encounter God at Sinai, Moses and Aaron going up to receive the Ten Commandments (which they do) and then a few miscellaneous rules about altars.

Brief Summary: We pick up our story with the blessing being under threat because God has declared that every first born (human and animal) will die in the coming plague. This includes the Hebrews. However God gives the people an escape route...which is the basis for Passover. God instructs the people to smear lambs blood over the door posts and lintels of their doors. Once they do so the angel of death will pass over them and their first born will be safe. This is why it is called Passover. The death of the first born in Egypt becomes the event which causes Pharaoh to let God's people go. As they go, they are given parting gifts by the Egyptians, which is one more time when God's people are blessed.

As the Hebrews depart they are reminded to remember "this day" and to dedicate their first-born to God. Before they are cleanly away though, the Egyptians change their minds and come after them. Pharaoh leads his army in pursuit of the escaping former slaves. With their backs to the sea, the Hebrews appear trapped. God however has other plans. God protects them until the time is right for Moses to lift up his staff and part the waters of the sea. The people of God go through it as on dry land while the Egyptians get trapped in it and drown. Once the Hebrews see that they are safe they celebrate.

What follows this saving event is a series of murmurings by the people against Moses in which they complain about a lack of water and food. Each time they murmur, God provides for them by making bitter water fresh, giving them manna (bread) and quail (meat) to eat and finally water from the rock at Horeb. At the same time the Hebrews encounter the people of Amalek who threaten the people as did the Egyptians. Under the leadership of Joshua the Hebrews prevail.

The final set of stories has to do with the people being prepared to encounter God at Sinai. Once they are ready, Moses and Aaron go to the Sinai to receive the Law, including the Ten Commandments. This Law, on which we will focus for several weeks, will give order and structure to the lives of the people as they wander in the wilderness as well as their settled lives in the land of promise.

1. How do you practice remembering what God has done for you?
2. How does the death of the first-born affect your perception of God?
3. Where do you see people murmuring today?
4. What role do you see for the Ten Commandments today?