



Fall 2025

EXODUS

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



EASTMINSTER
CHRIST-CENTERED ♦ CROSS-CULTURAL

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Devotional was written and prepared by Rev. Cheryl Lynn Khylllep for Eastminster Presbyterian Small Group Ministry. All scripture references are NRSV updated version. Cover art is entitled "Holy Ground" and is by Lauren Wright Pittman of Sanctified Art. For more information about artwork see page 19.

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Fall Dates

**Wed
September 10**

**Wed
October 22**

**Wed
September 24**

**Wed
November 5**

**Wed
October 8**

**Wed
November 19**

*Every other **Wednesday**
5:30 or 7pm
Dinner at 6:30pm*



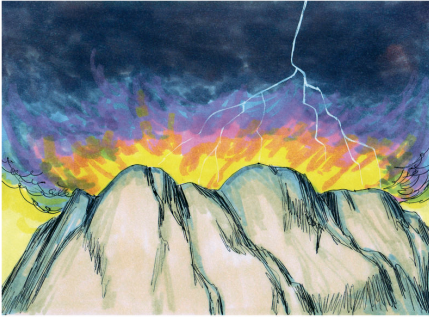
Welcome to

Exodus

We all know something about Exodus. Maybe we learned about it in Sunday school or have heard it referenced in social movements or in popular music. Because we all have some experience (a little or a lot) of the book of Exodus, it comes with a lot of baggage. We may think we already know what Exodus is about:

- It's about God setting God's people free from Pharaoh
- It's about God fulfilling God's promises from Genesis and solidifying the covenant with God's people.
- It is about how the Israelites (and us) complain a lot.
- It is about an angry God.
- It is about how God is with us in the physical and metaphorical wilderness.

And the list could go on. I would like to argue that Exodus isn't about one thing. This book of the Bible is a rich text that can teach us many things. Exodus has the capacity to radically change our perspective on God, power, ourselves, and the people around us. If we make the text about one thing, we might just miss the new thing God is teaching us. This fall as we study Exodus, I deeply hope that we can put our assumptions aside and witness the same God who was at work through the Israelites and the living God who is at work now.



Many commentators see the book of Exodus as a liturgical document. It was to be read and experienced in regular worship. This means three things for us, the modern readers. First, it was written so that the listeners will feel a part of something larger. This isn't just an historical event that happened to some people long ago, we are included in this story. These are our people and our God. Secondly, in worship we suspend our analytical mind and enter into our imaginations. We are meant to imagine—or visualize the burning bush and the parting seas and the manna falling from heaven. And lastly, the book of Exodus, as a liturgical document, is very repetitive. We are constantly reminded that the God we are talking about is the God of Abraham, God repeatedly sees God's people, Pharaoh hardens his heart, and the people complain. The section we might know the most about is the Plagues of Egypt, and while each plague is different, they all follow the same structure.

Exodus isn't about one thing.

If you have participated in these Small Group Bible Studies in the past, you will notice that this study is a little different. We will not be studying the book entirely in chronological order but will instead be focused on themes. Because Exodus is repetitive, these themes will help us better understand the text. I hope you do take the time to sit down and read Exodus from beginning to end in one sitting or over the course of a week, but we will not be doing that in this study. By focusing on themes my hope is this will help you understand and interpret the text better when you do decide to sit down and read Exodus in its entity, while also seeing the ways the themes established in Exodus echo through all of scripture.

May God bless our reading and study, so that we might witness to the living God afresh.

How to use this booklet...

This booklet was written and designed for the Small Group ministry of Eastminster Presbyterian Church for the fall of 2025. Groups run every other Wednesday starting September 10th and ending November 19th. There are groups at 5:30pm and 7:00pm. Dinner is always served at 6:30pm. You do not need to prepare for these sessions, but if you would like to, we have included pages for personal devotion. These pages encourage you to read the text ahead and ponder the words used and the meaning behind each section.

We hope you can join us, but we are aware that this is not always possible for everyone. Even if you are unable to attend, we welcome you to use this booklet for your personal study of Exodus.

Prayer Page: Joys

Sept. 10

Sept. 24

Oct. 8

Oct. 22

Nov. 5

Nov. 19

Prayer Page: Concerns

Sept. 10

Sept. 24

Oct. 8

Oct. 22

Nov. 5

Nov. 19



September 10

Introduction to Exodus

For our first lesson we will be setting the stage for our study of Exodus. The opening lines of Exodus transition us from the Book of Genesis. Genesis is largely centered on the ancestral family of Abraham and finishes with the reconciliation and the resettlement of the Joseph's brothers in the land of Egypt. Joseph at the end of Genesis asks that when the Israelite people leave Egypt that they make sure to take his bones with them, foreshadowing to the book of Exodus. Exodus then begins with a basic genealogy and a clear emphasis on how much the Israelite community grew in great numbers in the land of Egypt. This is thought to echo back to God's promise to the ancestors that they would have many children (See Genesis 15:5). While this is a fulfillment of God's promises, it is held in tension with the current suffering of God's people in the land of Egypt.

Read Exodus 1:8-14

Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. 9 He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we.10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. 13 The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude 14 and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

Take a moment and close your eyes and imagine freedom. Freedom is often treated like an abstract concept, but it has real life implications. So, take a second to think of what freedom looks like? What images or memories come to mind? What does it sound like? Smell? Taste? How do you know if you are free? Where do you feel it in your body?

What are the Israelite people being freed from?

The book of Exodus uses the phrase "Pharaoh's hardened heart" or something similar 20 times. How does Exodus 1:8-14 explain Pharaoh's hardened heart? What does that phrase mean to you?

When reading Exodus, it is easy for us to align ourselves with the Israelites and point out the Pharaohs of this world as someone else. Yet, what if we are the Pharaohs!? What are ways we have hardened our hearts to other people?

Read Exodus 5:1-9

Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness." ² But Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should listen to 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 revealed himself to us; let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the Lord our God, or he will fall upon us with pestilence or sword." ⁴ But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Get to your labors!" ⁵ Pharaoh continued, "Now they are more numerous than the people of the land^[a] and yet you want them to stop laboring!" ⁶ That same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, as well as their supervisors, ⁷ "You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁸ But you shall require of them the same quantity of bricks as they have made previously; do not diminish it, for they are lazy; that is why they cry, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁹ Let heavier work be laid on them; then they will pay attention to^[b] it and not to deceptive words."

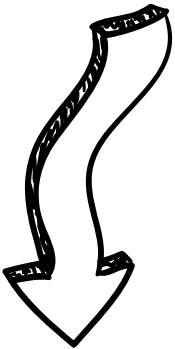
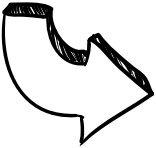
What are the Israelite people being freed to?

Who sets us free? How do we live as a freed people?

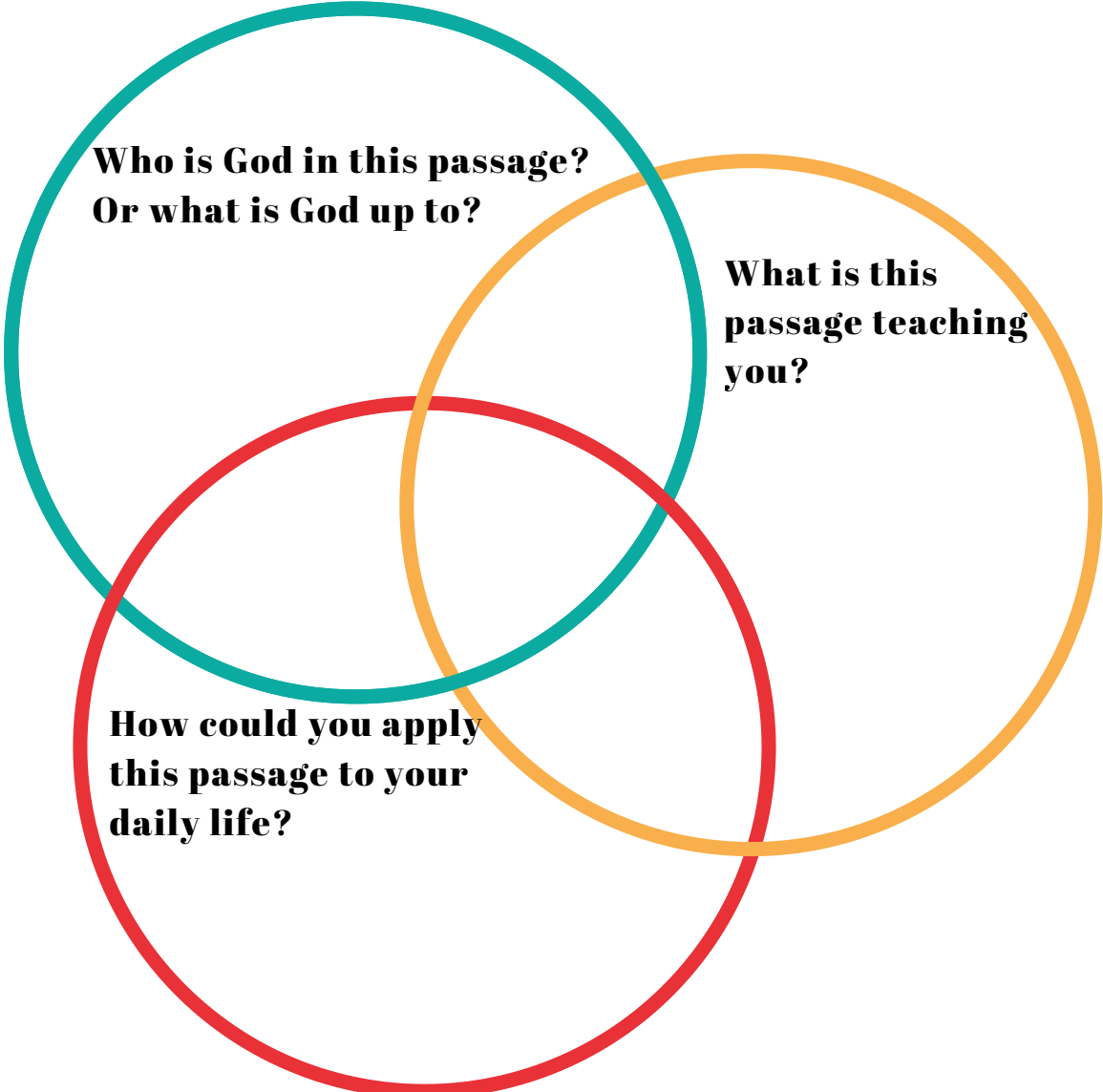
Personal Devotion

Exodus 3:1-15

What  are hard to understand?
Words or
Phrases ...

  surprise you or seem strange?
stand out to you?

Personal Devotion



**Who is God in this passage?
Or what is God up to?**

**What is this
passage teaching
you?**

**How could you apply
this passage to your
daily life?**



September 24

A People Set Apart

A common theme throughout the book of Exodus (and really throughout scripture) is that being a part of God's people means we are different. Following God's ways means we are different than the political and social norms and powers. In Exodus 1:15-22 the midwives disobey the king's order to kill male babies. Their actions set them apart. And in Exodus 3:1-15 Moses enters a holy space and encounters God. This encounter sets Moses apart and changes his identity as a shepherd to a leader of God's people. If we are obedient to God, it changes our actions and even our very identity.

Read Exodus 1:15-22

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiprah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?" ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."

Who is given names in this passage? Why would that matter?

Look back at verse 8-9 of this chapter. Why does the King fear the people? Who do the midwives fear (v. 17)? Is this the same kind of fear or different?

Who has power in this passage? Explain your answer?

We will now jump three chapters. The chapters we are not reading include the formative years of Mose's life. You may remember from Sunday school, Moses was thrown in the Nile, put in a protective basket that then floated to Pharaoh's house where Pharaoh's daughter finds him and raises him in the household. Moses, aware of his identity as an Israelite, is dismayed when he sees an Israelite slave beaten and then kills the man's persecutor. Moses, now wanted for murder, flees to the countryside where he becomes a shepherd working for his father-in-law. This is where we meet Moses in Chapter 3.

Read Exodus 3:1-15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness and came to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. ³ Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up." ⁴ When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Exodus 3:1-15 Con.

7 Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, 8 and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9 The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. 10 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 He said, "I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

13 But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 God said to Moses, "I am who I am." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I am has sent me to you.' " 15 God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations."

Moses responds to God with the phrase "Here I am"? What are the layers of meaning in this phrase?

Why did Moses hide his face (v. 6)? In your opinion was that an appropriate reaction?

Notice all the places "I" and "am" are paired together in this passage. What do these say about God? And what do they say about us as God's servants?

Have you ever "feared God" more than political or social norms? How did you know? What did it cause you to do?

Cover Art: Holy Ground

Graphic Image | By Lauren Wright Pittman

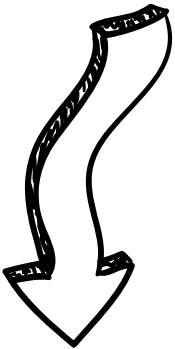
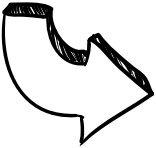
Inspired by Exodus 3: 1-15 | Moses & the Burning Bush

In this piece, I imagine the leaves and flames of the burning bush and God's words for Moses. I have depicted God's message through symbols and imagery that start in the center and radiate out. The words in bold point to particular details I have rendered. I invite you to look for the ways God's words might be translated visually: God's eyes have seen the misery of God's people. The Israelites have cried out in the midst of their oppression, and God knows their suffering. God's hope is for Moses to bring the Israelites to a land flowing with milk and honey, and Moses will know it is God who called him when they are out of Egypt they shall worship God on this mountain (Ex 3:7-12).

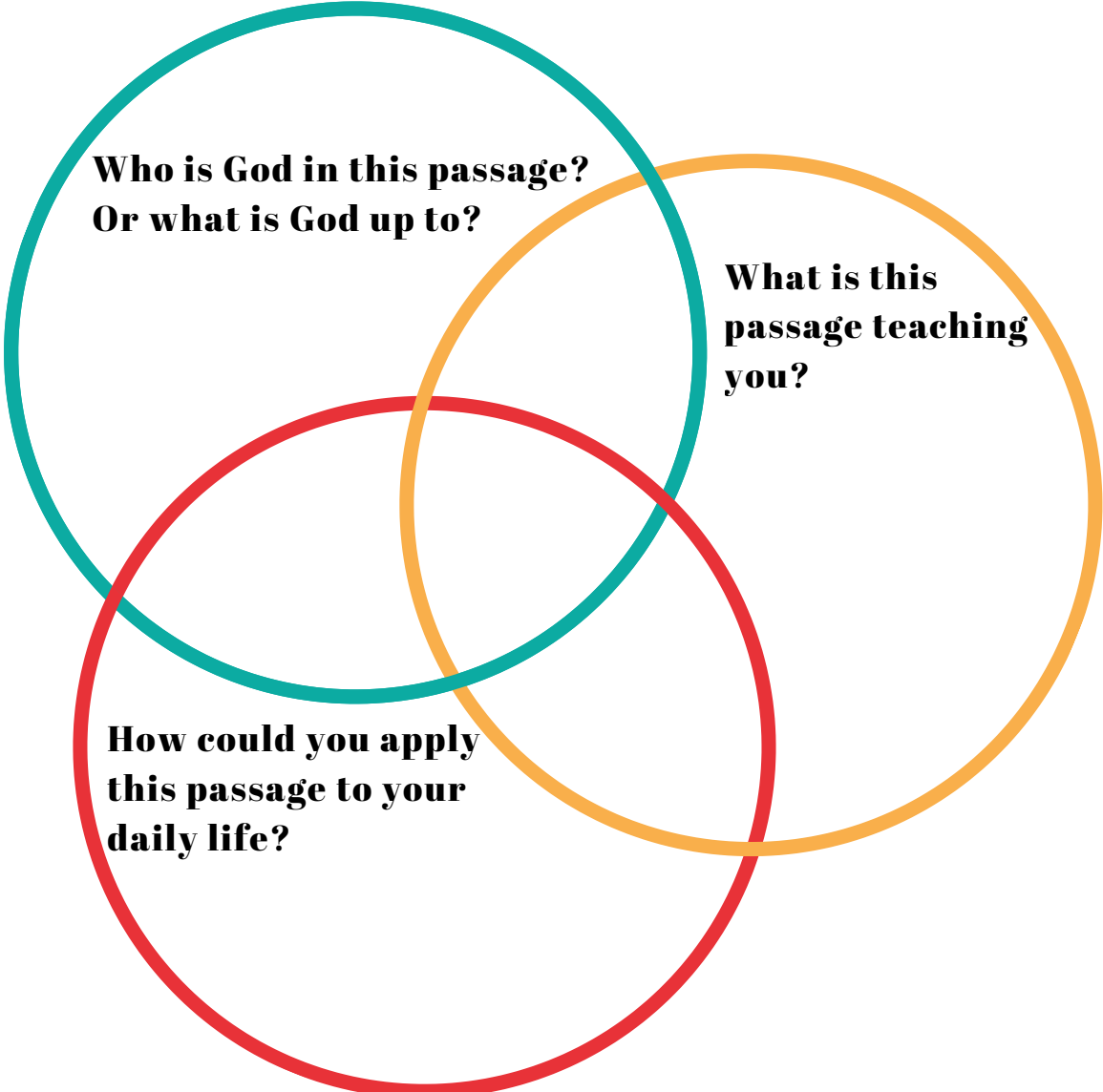
Personal Devotion

Exodus 3:16-4:17

What  are hard to understand?
Words or
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Personal Devotion



**Who is God in this passage?
Or what is God up to?**

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October 8

Liberation

Most dictionaries define “liberation” as the act or state of being freed. We use the word liberation or liberating to refer to something (person, place, or thing) that is under the control of a powerful force, be it political, physical or mental, and it is moving away from that force’s control and manipulation. Pharaoh had control over the Israelite people. God saw their oppression and sought to set them free—to liberate them from the controlling power of Pharaoh over their lives and worship. The first 12 chapters tell of God’s liberation of God’s people from the political and physical power of Pharaoh, and perhaps one could say the remaining 28 chapters tell of God’s liberation from the mental power of Pharaoh. Today’s passage comes directly after the passage of the burning bush and tells of God’s plan to liberate the Israelite people.

Read Exodus 3:16-4:17

"Go and assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying: I have given heed to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷ I declare that I will bring you up out of the misery of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.' ¹⁸ They will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.' ¹⁹ I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go except by a mighty hand. ²⁰ So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go. ²¹ I will bring this people into such favor with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed; ²² each woman shall ask her neighbor and any woman living in the neighbor's house for jewelry of silver and of gold and clothing, and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters; so you shall plunder the Egyptians."

4.1 Then Moses answered, "But look, they may not believe me or listen to me but say, 'The Lord did not appear to you.' " ² The Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." ³ And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake, and Moses drew back from it.

Exodus 3:16-4:17 Con.

3 And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake, and Moses drew back from it. 4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Reach out your hand and seize it by the tail"—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand— 5 "so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

6 Again, the Lord said to him, "Put your hand inside your cloak." He put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, his hand was diseased, as white as snow. 7 Then God said, "Put your hand back into your cloak"—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body— 8 "If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. 9 If they will not believe even these two signs or listen to you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."

10 But Moses said to the Lord, "O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." 11 Then the Lord said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 12 Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak." 13 But he said, "O my Lord, please send someone else."

Exodus 3:16-4:17 Con.

14 Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, "What of your brother Aaron, the Levite? I know that he can speak well; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. 15 You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you what you shall do. 16 He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. 17 Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs."

What does God instruct Moses to do? What will God do?

What are the reasons for Moses' resistance to this call in this passage and in verse 11? What is God's response to this resistance?

Why do you believe God included Moses in the work of liberation? What will help the Israelites listen to Moses? (Remembering their ancestors and the signs of God's power) Do you think this would convince you? Explain your answer.

Why do you think God demonstrating signs and wonders (as described in this passage or in the plagues of Egypt) would be important for liberation?

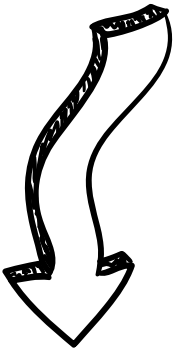
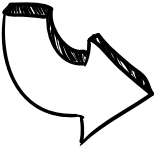
What signs or wonders tell you of God's work in the world?

Does God still use God's people in liberating work? If so, how?

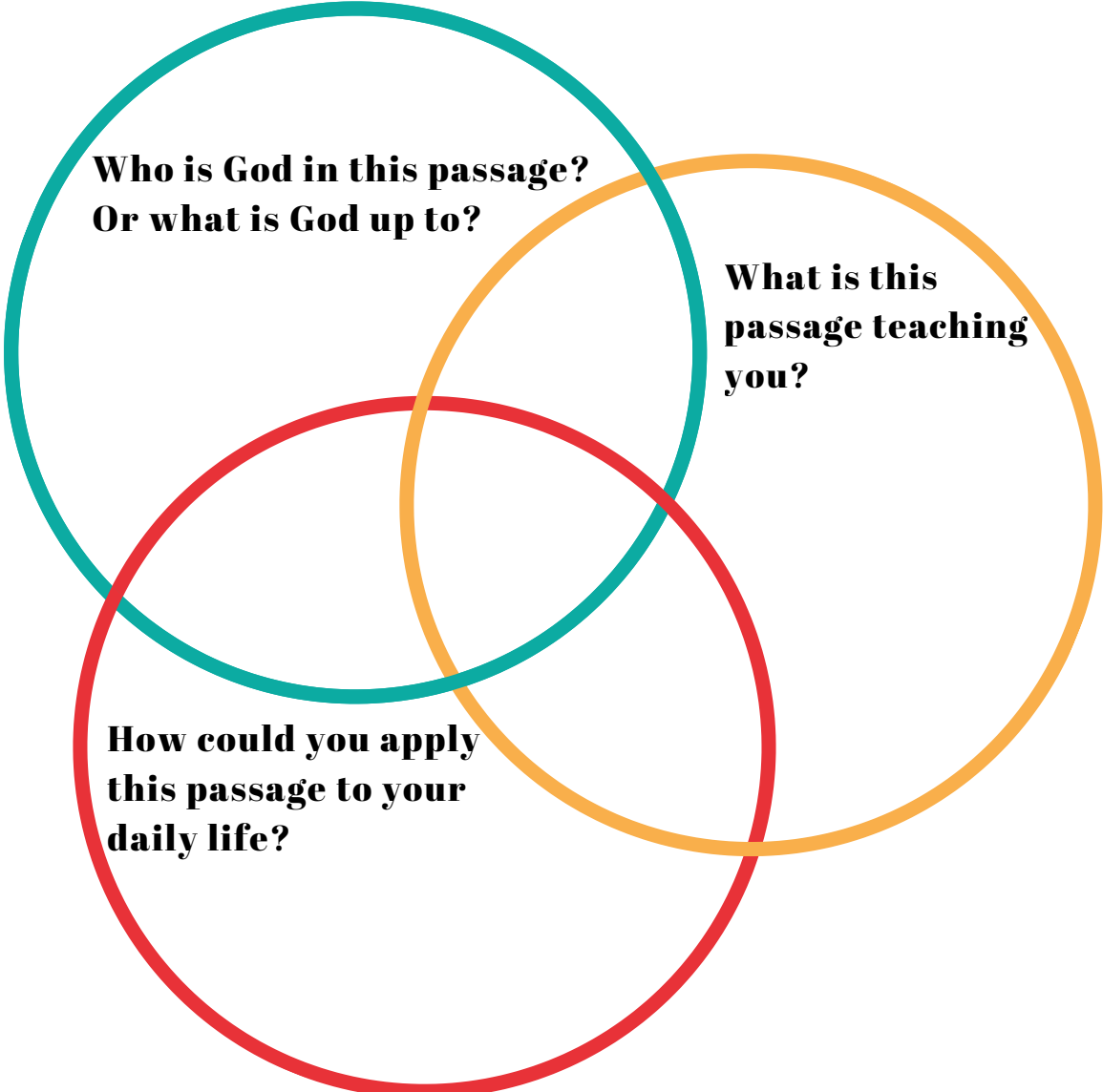
Personal Devotion

Exodus 13: 21-22, 14:1-19

What  are hard to understand?
Words or
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Personal Devotion



**Who is God in this passage?
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October 22

God's Presence & Provision

In the book of Exodus, God is portrayed as a very present God. As we saw in previous lessons, God is physically present in the burning bush. And God is described as being physically present to the Israelites in the wilderness by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. That physical presence serves as provision for the Israelites as they find their way in the wilderness. You will notice in the reading of scripture that the presence and provision changes with context, yet God continues to be present.

This week we take a giant leap forward in the book of Exodus. In the last lesson we looked at God's plan for liberation as told to Moses. That plan has now largely been executed through the 10 plagues. Now the Israelite people are actually departing Egypt and entering the wilderness. Pharaoh, however, continues to want to control the Israelites and the wilderness possesses new threats, yet God's presence and provision is constant.

Read Exodus 14: 4-18

[The Lord said to Moses] 4 "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, so that I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord." And they did so.

5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the minds of Pharaoh and his officials were changed toward the people, and they said, "What have we done, letting Israel leave our service?" 6 So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him; 7 he took six hundred elite chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. 8 The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the Israelites, who were going out boldly. 9 The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, his chariot drivers and his army; they overtook them camped by the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

10 As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone so that we can serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." 13 But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish 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 keep still."

Exodus 14: 4-18 Con.

15 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. 16 But you lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. 17 Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them, and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. 18 Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

Why is God so concerned with Glory? Do you think it has anything to do with God's presence and provision? Explain your answer.

Why are the Israelite people afraid? Do they doubt God's power or presence with them? Explain your answer.

What do find yourself doubting more God's presence in the wilderness or God's power to deliver God's people? Is there a difference?

Exodus 13:21-22 & 14:19

3:21 The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

4:19 The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them.

Why did God's presence move?

Have you ever felt God's presence move or shift in your own life?

Exodus 16:2-12

2 The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days."

Exodus 16:2-12 Con.

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, 7 and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?" 8 And Moses said, "When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord."

9 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites: 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.' " 10 And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. 11 The Lord spoke to Moses, 12 "I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.' "

List all the ways this section is similar to Exodus 4.

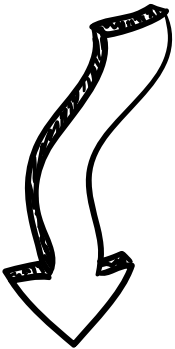
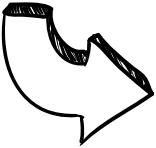
What is surprising about both these texts? What does that teach us about God's presence and provision?

How can we be better at noticing God's presence and provision in our daily lives?

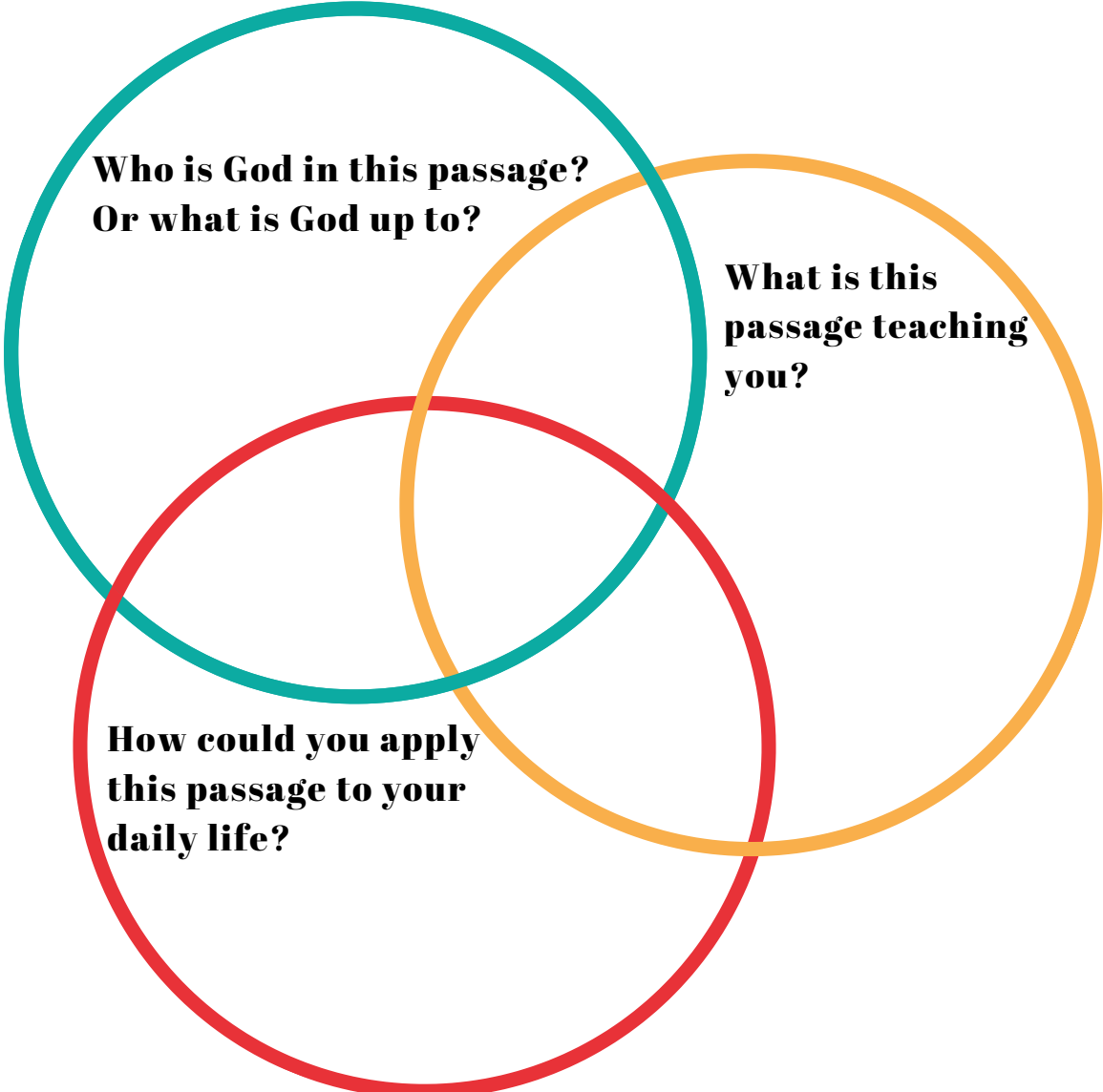
Personal Devotion

Exodus 32:1-14

What  are hard to understand?
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Personal Devotion



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November 5

God's Covenant



This week we are going to study the theme of "Covenant." The idea of covenant is a rich theological term. It means a formal agreement but has a personal dimension. If you would like to learn more about this complex theme, please visit the Bible project website: <https://bibleproject.com/articles/covenants-the-backbone-bible/>

To study the idea of covenant we are using an unusual passage. We are going to read a passage where God's people broke the covenant. Yet, by studying this passage we will better be able to understand what covenant means—what covenant expects of us and what it expects of God.

By the time we read this passage, the Israelite people have already heard the 10 commandments directly from God's mountain. It was startling for the people, but they promised to keep the covenant, they just asked that Moses speak to God because it was too scary for the people. Moses therefore goes to the mountaintop to speak to God, and to get the two stone tablets that includes the 10 commandments. While Moses is on the mountain, the people are getting anxious and are feeling lost, which we all know gets them into trouble.

Read Exodus 32:1-14

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me." 3 So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. 4 He took these from them, formed them in a mold,[a] and cast an image of a calf, and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord." 6 They rose early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being, and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to revel.

7 The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' " 9 The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 10 Now let me alone so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, and of you I will make a great nation."

Exodus 32:1-14 Con.

11 But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' " 14 And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Where is God in this passage? What does this say about God's presence?

What did the Israelite people do wrong? (I know it may feel obvious, but it is helpful to articulate it. It may be helpful to read Exodus 20: 1-6)

What caused the people to rebel? Can you relate to this temptation?

How does this passage illustrate the personal dimension of covenant?

How does this passage illustrate the promise making and the promise keeping dimension of covenant?

How does God react to the disobedience of the people? How do you see God reacting in the same way in other parts of scripture?

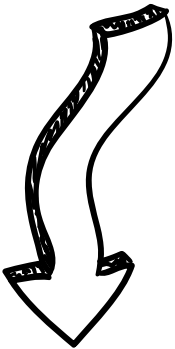
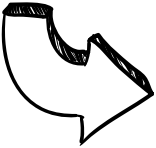
Are we a part of the covenant made between God and the Israelite people in Exodus? How does the idea of covenant relate to us as believers in Jesus Christ?

How (if at all) does the idea of covenant relate to our daily lives?

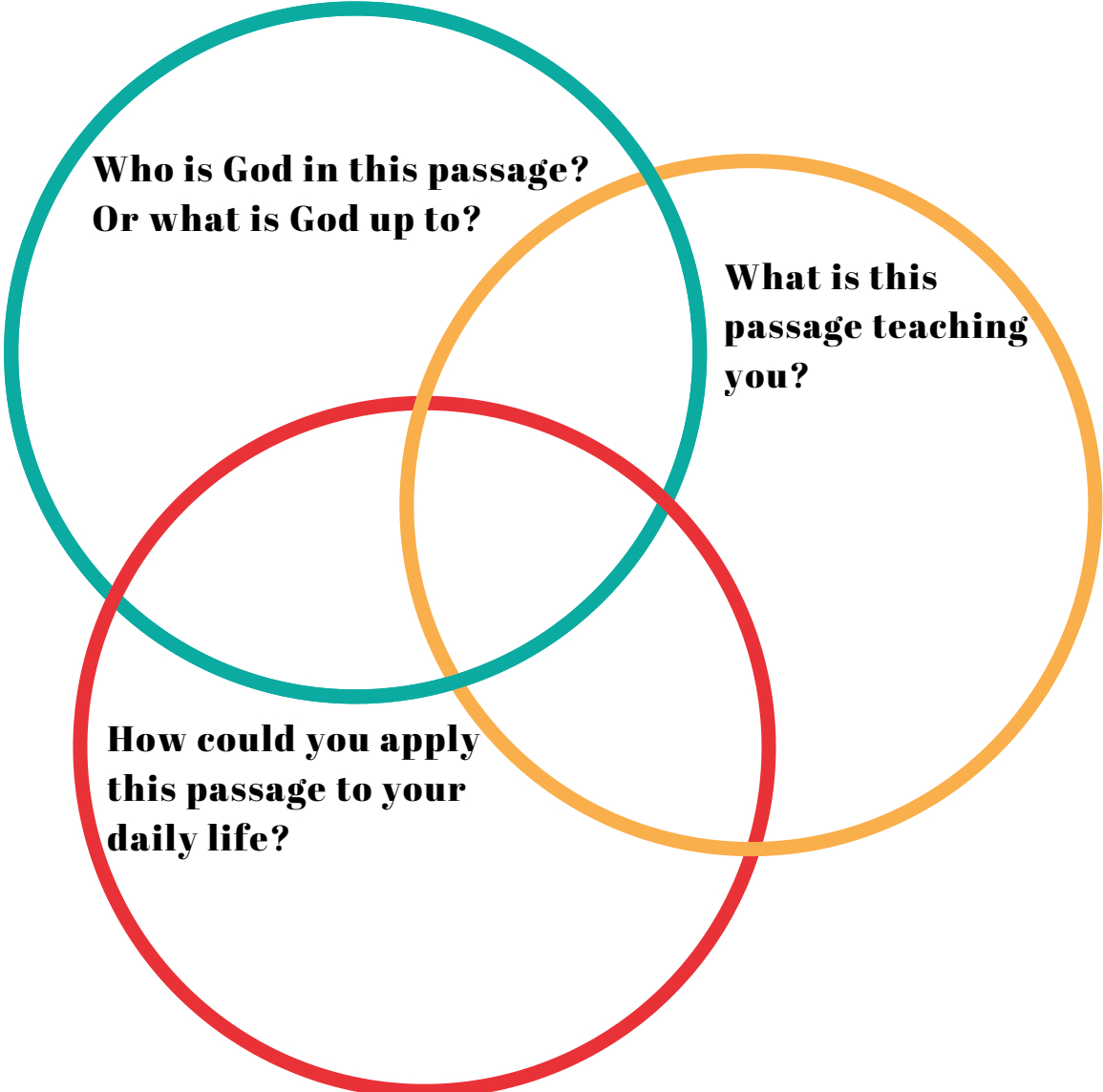
Personal Devotion

Exodus 20:1-17

What  are hard to understand?
Words or
Phrases ...

  surprise you or seem strange?
stand out to you?

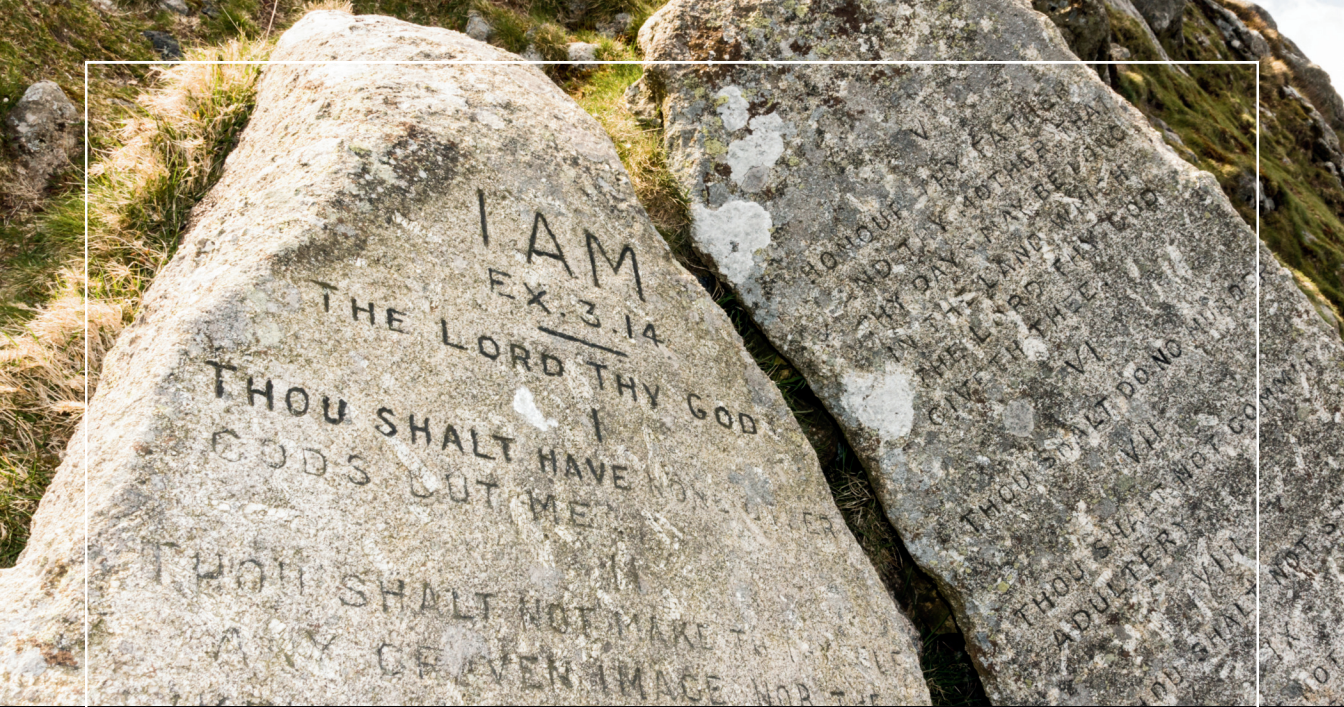
Personal Devotion



**Who is God in this passage?
Or what is God up to?**

**What is this
passage teaching
you?**

**How could you apply
this passage to your
daily life?**



November 19

God's Law

We are studying, probably the most famous and most quoted part of Exodus, the 10 commandments, for our final lesson. We have chosen to study it for the last lesson because it is an illustration and culmination of all of the themes that have come before. God is setting us apart through the law. God is bringing liberation through these 10 imperatives. And God is providing, present, and a God of covenant through the law. In this way, the 10 commandments aren't just rules we are to follow, they reveal the very character of God and who we are to be as followers of the living God.

Read Exodus 20:1-7

Then God spoke all these words,

2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3 you shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me 6 but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 "You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

How is God liberating through the first three commandments?

The God who is described in the first 3 commandments is a God of immense power and has the power to act as God sees fit. How do we often trivialize God and God's work?

Read Exodus 20:8-12

8 "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. 12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

The first, fourth and fifth Commandments are the only commandments that do not have "thou shall not...". Do you think there is something different about these three commandments?

The 10 commandments were presented on two stone tablets and are divided into imperatives that have to do with God, and imperatives that have to do with living in community. Some commentators debate on whether commandments 4 and 5 would be included in the first tablet (having to do with God) or on the second tablet (having to do with community). Why would someone think "honoring the sabbath" relates to living in community? Why would someone think the commandment to "honor your parents" should be included in the imperatives about God?

The Hebrew word for honor literally means, "be heavy." In Hebrew the opposite to "of honor" is "to curse" which is literally translated as "to treat lightly." What does the word "honor" mean to you? How do we honor our parents?

Read Exodus 20:13-17

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female slave, ox, donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

What do these commandments say about God's character and how God views human life?

How are we to be a different kind of people based on these commandments?

Final Thoughts

What is something that is sticking with you in this study of Exodus?

How could you apply what you have learned to your daily life?

Guidelines for Participation in Small Groups

Commit to Eastminster's mission

We are a people centered on Christ and intentionally cross-cultural. This affects the way we study scripture and listen to one another. We are all responsible for stewarding and co-creating community that is defined by our belief in Jesus Christ AND appreciates all cultures.

We take scripture seriously

While the way we understand and interpret scripture may be different, we all come to the table believing scripture is important and vital to our lives in Christ.

Know yourself and make room for all voices

If you are a person who talks a lot try to step back and ask yourself, "why am I talking a lot." If you are a person who doesn't talk much step up and ask yourself, "why am I not talking?"

Listen with humility

Listen to understand not to respond. Have an open heart and approach new ideas with curiosity. Ask real and sincere questions.

Silence is okay

If there are times of silence, don't feel the need to fill that space with words. Sometimes the Holy Spirit does the best work in silence.

Each person in this group is a gift

Treat people with respect and dignity. Do not dismiss new thoughts or ideas.