

Friday – One Law For All

Read Exodus 12-13. Many people who were not “pure” Israelites were part of the massive exodus from Egypt. God did not exclude them from salvation because of their DNA. God set up a plan for their salvation too, so they could also partake in the Passover rituals and customs to follow. And the Lord did not judge them for their differing races and ethnicities. But he judged them on their willingness to follow the commands of the Lord. There was one law set up for everyone. And one law that all were to be judged by. Indeed, the Bible says they were all part of Israel. All were saved by the same God, according to the same rules. Just like Christ saves all who come to Him, God saved all who left with the Israelites. None were better than the others. None were “more equal” than anyone else. God does not cherry pick who He loves – even during a cataclysmic event like that. And because of that, you and I can claim this as our history as well as our future!

Saturday – Courage and Gratitude

Read Exodus 14-15. Imagine that you have been a slave and you are finally free. But where do your leaders end up taking you? To the Red Sea. There is no boat. No ship. No bridge. You have trusted Aaron and Moses – two apparent lunatics – with your life and now your entire nation is trapped between an impassable sea and the Egyptian army. Things are going well – LOL! It is easy to see how defeated one would feel. After everything they had gone through, this was how it would end? The Lord takes us to some crazy places in our lives. Some situations can seem unwinnable, or even fearful. But courage, is not the absence of fear, it is action despite the presence of fear. God provides the skills. God remembers His promise of salvation, which is Jesus. God provides the power to overcome your sin, which is Jesus. God provides the path to our salvation, which is Jesus. He provides it to everyone. And no ocean, mountain, of situation can change that. Take comfort and take courage in that promise!

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
4650 Sunview Drive, Loveland, Colorado 80538

This week's *Bring it Home* devotions were written by James Courtney.
This publication may be reproduced and shared.



*Devotions for
the week of
August 23, 2020*

What Now?

This week look for the opportunities the Lord will give you to tell *your* story and to tell *His* Story – to share love, life, and hope with someone who needs Him.

Monday – Talking to Brick Walls

As we continue with our summer series, *You Can't Make This Stuff Up!*, we focus on some of the most intense chapters in all of Scripture in Exodus chapter 5-15. And in these chapters, we get more and more from our God about His heart and His plans – not just for the Israelites of old, but for us as well. Start today by reading Exodus chapter 5. Moses and Aaron were put in three extremely uncomfortable situations. None of which had any immediate solutions or resolutions. First, Moses was ordered to confront Pharaoh and instruct the king of Egypt, the most powerful man in the world, to let his slaves go. It was not going to happen. Then Pharaoh punished Israel for the request and made their lives much harder for wanting a little bit of freedom. Third, Israel turned on Moses and Aaron and condemned them for making their lives harder! Even though they were doing the Lord's work, no one was making it easy on them. Yet, Moses and Aaron had not failed in their task. The two brothers were courageous, in the face of difficulty and condemnation – because they knew that their real task was to face the difficulty. God would provide the victory. Have you ever found yourself in an impossible situation? What did you do? The invitation our Lord gives to us is that we turn to Him, we trust in Him, and we put our lives and all that we face into His hands. No, it may not always turn out the way we think it should or in the ways we want it to, but we can be assured that we are never alone – no matter what we're facing.

Tuesday – People Forget, God Does Not

Read Exodus Ch. 6 When Moses tried to tell Israel what the Lord had said, they rejected his words. Moses told them of the freedom that God was going to provide, and the people rejected it because their lives were hard already, and they just did not want to make them harder. How many times have we been chained to the negativity in our lives and believed that things are “hard enough”? We often do not want things to become harder by packing up and following the path God laid out for us – usually because it entails heading into some unknowns or needing to make changes to our lives, all of which is hard and can be scary. Even Moses wanted to give up because he was a poor speaker. He tells God that the Israelites would not listen, why would a Pharaoh? But God does not forget His promises as easily as men do. And He does not give up on us as easily as we give up on Him – or ourselves. Praise God for that!

Wednesday – The Plague of Being Pharaoh

Read Exodus 7-10 – it's a long one, but worth reading your way through, if you have time today. Why is it that the Lord creates so many plagues and disasters for the people of Egypt and their Pharaoh? One would think, after all this, that an intelligent and wise king like Pharaoh would learn his lesson. But here's the thing – the plagues were not for Pharaoh, they were for Israel! Who had forgotten the Lord? Israel. Who needed to be reminded of God's power? Israel. Who needed to see that God is persistent and purposeful? Israel. Why did they need to see all this? Because the plain truth is, that in the next forty years to come, the people of Israel will stand in Pharaoh's shoes over and over again. God's own people, whom He saved from their slavery in Egypt, will continually forget His power, His salvation, and His persistence. Pharaoh IS Israel. He does not learn his lesson. He goes back on his word. He thinks he is a god. And to any of the Israelites watching and wondering, “Why doesn't he learn?,” they will soon need a mirror. But it is God who will not betray them. Just as He does not betray us when we stand in Pharaoh's shoes. That is the power of grace – grace that flows freely from heart of the Lord our God!

Thursday – Passover and the Cost of Sin

Read Exodus Chapter 11. Passover was more than about freeing slaves and winning a revolution. To the people in Egypt, it was a cataclysmic event – the final and most dreadful plague where the oldest child in every house was killed. It is unimaginable, the kind of pain and suffering the Israelites left behind when Pharaoh said they could finally leave. Passover is a juxtaposition of the Cross – where many people suffer for the sins of Pharaoh, instead of Christ suffering for all of us. The punishment that we are saved from is also unimaginable. And it is important to remember this one thing: we all deserve to be Egypt – suffering for our own sins. But Christ saved us, and we get to leave with Israel. The details that you will read about regarding the Passover in tomorrow's devotion and what God commanded Israel to do in preparation (and then every year following to remember the amazing act of deliverance that God brought them and to help keep their eyes on the future fulfillment of this event) are details that we continue to retain even today in our celebration of the Lord's Supper, which, in many ways, was what the Passover observance was transformed into. This climactic event is part of God's Story that we must continue to remember because of how Jesus was, is, and continues to be at the very center.