

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

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Lesson 13: Bondage, Passover, and Exodus; Exodus 1-3; 5-6; 11-14

Introduction



Have you ever been rescued from a dangerous situation?

How did you feel toward your rescuer(s)?

This lesson is about one of the most dramatic rescues that has ever occurred—the deliverance of the children of Israel from the plague of death and from Egyptian slavery. In many ways this rescue symbolizes an even greater rescue—our deliverance from sin and death through the Savior’s atoning sacrifice.

The Lord calls Moses to deliver Israel from bondage. (Exodus 1-3)

Background

After Jacob and his family moved to Egypt, the Israelites lived there for 430 years. During that time, a Pharaoh arose who enslaved them and imposed heavy burdens upon them. As Joseph had prophesied, the Lord raised up Moses to deliver the children of Israel (2 Nephi 3:10)

In Exodus 1-2, the children of Israel multiplied and were put in bondage by the Egyptians (1:1-14). Pharaoh ordered that all sons born to the Israelites be destroyed (1:15-22). Moses was born to Levite parents; he was hidden, then found and

raised by Pharaoh’s daughter (2:1-10). In defense of an Israelite, Moses killed an Egyptian and fled to Midian, where he married Zipporah (2:11-22). Israel cried out to the Lord.

Exodus 3:1-4 – Moses was called by the Lord from the burning bush.

Exodus 3:5-10 – Moses was informed that he was being sent to Pharaoh to liberate the Israelites.

We learn from the Lord’s calling of Moses that He knows his people, is merciful to them, wants to bless them, and keeps his promises to them.

Imagine being an Israelite

slave. You would have been taught all your life that you were one of the covenant people and that the promises made to father Abraham would be fulfilled. Yet, you would live daily life in oppression. Today, when we experience adversity, it is helpful to remember that God does not forget us in our difficulties, as he showed by calling Moses and eventually delivering Israel. But usually he does not deliver us from trials immediately. No matter how long the trial, we should continue to pray to him, trusting that he loves us and will have all things work together for our good if we

Lesson Highlights

- The Lord calls Moses to deliver Israel from bondage.
- The Lord sends plagues upon Egypt.
- The Lord instructs Moses in the preparation of the Passover.
- The children of Israel cross the Red Sea.

A study of this lesson will encourage us to (1) trust the Lord to fulfill his promises, (2) increase our appreciation for the Savior’s atoning sacrifice, and (3) make the sacrament more meaningful in our lives.

Next Week

#14: “Ye Shall Be a Peculiar Treasure unto Me”, Exodus 15-20; 32-34



Moses and the Burning Bush

obey him. (See D&C 90:24; 98:3; Mosiah 24:14–15.) Even while enduring, we may receive comfort and assistance.

Exodus 3:11; 4:1, 10 – Moses, in essence, said “Why me? I’m nobody and beside that, they won’t believe me... and I can’t even speak eloquently!”

Exodus 3:12; 4:11-12 – The Lord promised His support and presence and then re-

minded Moses that as the Creator, he could control Moses’ speech and teach him what to say. As we see from this, the Lord knows our inadequacies and needs, but he provides help, comfort, and inspiration so that if we are willing, we can overcome our inadequacies and develop the skills and abilities we need to fulfill any calling the Lord so chooses to give us.

Hebrews 11:24-26 tells us what Moses sacrificed to accept his calling—“the pleasures of sin for a season” and “treasures in Egypt”. We find that he accepted the call because he had faith. With faith, we can deny ourselves worldly rewards and accept the call to serve the Lord regardless of the sacrifices involved.

The Lord sends plagues upon Egypt. (Exodus 5-10)

Exodus 5:1-9 – When told to let the people go, the Pharaoh denied any knowledge of the Lord—“Who is the Lord?”—and, rather than comply, decided to increase the difficulty of the slaves’ work.

Exodus 5:15-23 – The officers of the Israelites were critical of Moses and Aaron during this trial and Moses became critical of and questioned the Lord’s support. From this, we should understand the need for patience in our adversities. The Lord will fulfill his promises, but not necessarily on our schedule.

Exodus 6:4-8 repeats the Lord’s promises of keeping his covenant, redeeming his people and relieving them from bondage, and giving Israel a promised land—the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Exodus 6:9 – In spite of the Lord’s promises, the people hearkened not and were

mired in depression. Hopefully, we have stronger testimonies and will not refuse to listen to the prophet when we suffer adversity. We can maintain faith in God while enduring by praying, studying and pondering the scriptures and the Ensign, giving service to others, remembering our covenants and the blessings associated with those covenants, serving in our calling(s), and reviewing our own and family journals for stories of strength.

Exodus 6:10-12 – Moses asks the Lord why Pharaoh would listen when his own people won’t. While we may sometimes be reluctant to obey the Lord because of our doubts and fears, the Lord will support us.

Summarizing **Exodus 7-10**, Moses was appointed to give the word of the Lord to Pharaoh. The Lord multiplied signs and wonders in Egypt and magicians imitated the miracles of Moses and Aaron. Plagues sent by the

Lord included frogs, lice, flies, destruction of the Egyptians’ cattle, boils and blains, hail and fire, locusts, and three days of thick darkness, but Pharaoh only hardened his heart.

Satan counterfeits God’s power

Exodus 7:8-12, 17-22 demonstrate that Satan could counterfeit God’s power through Pharaoh’s sorcerers as their rods became serpents; then they seemed to turn water to blood just as Aaron did. Today, Satan also attempts to counterfeit God’s power and blessings to deceive mortals. However, we know that God has given us gifts so that we can discern between good and evil. We increase our discernment as we live righteous and faithful lives, so we can protect ourselves from being deceived if we remember our covenants and maintain the companionship of the Holy Ghost.



The Plague of Boils



The Last Supper, c. 1524-25, by Hans Holbein the Younger



Passover, c. 1896-1902, by James Jacques Joseph Tissot

The Lord instructs Moses in the preparation of the Passover. (Exodus 11-13)

Exodus 12:12-13, 22-27 teaches us the meaning of the first Passover and why the Lord instructed Israel to celebrate it “for ever” as an ordinance. In addition to reminding them that God had protected them from the plague of death and delivered them from the Egyptians, the Passover also symbolized an important future

event—the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God—which delivers us from sin and death. (See 1 Corinthians 5:7.)

Similarities Between the Passover and the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ

a. The children of Israel were to use a firstborn male lamb without blemish in

the Passover (Exodus 12:5). The Savior is the firstborn Son of God, the Lamb of God without spot or blemish (1 Peter 1:19).

b. The children of Israel were to sprinkle the blood of the lamb on their doorposts to save their firstborn from death (Exodus 12:7, 22–23).

The Savior's blood, which he shed in Gethsemane and on the cross, cleanses the faithful and saves them from spiritual death (Mosiah 4:2).

- c. The children of Israel were to eat unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8, 15–20). *“Leaven, or yeast, was seen anciently as a symbol of corruption because it so easily spoiled and turned moldy. ... For the Israelites, eating the unleavened bread symbolized that they were partaking of the bread which had no corruption or impurity, namely, the Bread of Life, who is Jesus Christ (see John 6:35)”* (Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel [1981], 119). The removal of leaven also suggested repentance, or the removal of sin from a person's life.
- d. The children of Israel were to eat the Passover meal in haste (Exodus 12:11). Like the Israelites, we need to respond eagerly and immediately to the deliverance that the Savior offers us.

At the Last Supper, the Savior instituted the sacrament in place of the Passover (Matthew 26:19,

26–28). Review Exodus 12:14; 13:9–10; D&C 20:75–79; for similarities between the Passover and the sacrament.

Elder Howard W. Hunter taught that at the Passover meal that is now known as the Last Supper, *“the bread and wine, rather than the animals and herbs, [became] emblems of the great Lamb's body and blood, emblems to be eaten and drunk reverently and in remembrance of him forever.*

“In this simple but impressive manner the Savior instituted the ordinance now known as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. With the suffering of Gethsemane, the sacrifice of Calvary, and the resurrection from a garden tomb, Jesus fulfilled the ancient law and ushered in a new dispensation based on a higher, holier understanding of the law of sacrifice. No more would men be required to offer the firstborn lamb from their flock, because the Firstborn of God had come to offer himself as an ‘infinite and eternal sacrifice.’ ” (May 1985, 19).

Elder Howard W. Hunter said that just as the Passover was a covenant of protection for ancient Israel, the sacrament is a *“new covenant of safety”* for us (Ensign, May

1974, 18).

The sacrament reminds us of the Savior's atoning sacrifice, which brings eternal safety by freeing us from the bonds of sin and death. The covenants we renew as we partake of the sacrament also help provide us eternal safety.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland asked:

“Do we see [the sacrament] as our passover, remembrance of our safety and deliverance and redemption?”

“With so very much at stake, this ordinance commemorating our escape from the angel of darkness should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is. It should be a powerful, reverent, reflective moment. It should encourage spiritual feelings and impressions” (Ensign, Nov. 1995, 68).

In his instructions about the Passover, the Lord emphasized the need for parents to teach their children its significance (Exodus 12:26–27; 13:8, 14). Like ancient Israel, we should teach our children the significance of the sacrament and other ordinances that remind us of the Lord's hand in delivering us from sin and death.

“As I reflect on the memorable occasion when the Savior introduced the sacrament to His apostles, my heart fills with gratitude and my emotions are tender. That indeed was a night of all nights in history, the night of the Passover feast that culminated in the infinite atonement by the Son of God.”

David B. Haight,
“Remembering the Savior's Atonement,” *Ensign*, Apr 1988, 7

“It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus”
D&C 20:75

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How have you received comfort and help from the Lord during times of adversity?
- How has the Lord helped you in callings for which you felt inadequate?
- How has the Lord helped you when you have felt doubt or fear?

The children of Israel cross the Red Sea. (Exodus 14)

Exodus 14:5–9—After Pharaoh let the children of Israel leave Egypt, he turned against them and sent his army after them .

Exodus 14:10–12 records that the Israelites, seeing the pursuing army, lost their faith and lamented that it would have been better for them to remain as slaves in Egypt rather than die in the wilderness.

Exodus 14:13–14—Moses tells the people not to fear and to watch the Lord fight for them. To demonstrate proper faith when we are filled with fear requires extensive prior spiritual preparation to develop an unshakable testimony that will sustain us in moments of tribulation.

Exodus 14:21–31 tells us that the Lord fulfilled his promise, sending a “strong

east wind all that night” to make a dry way through the Red Sea for the Israelites, but causing the Egyptians' chariot wheels to come off and then closing the sea back in upon their chariots and horsemen. This miraculous intervention by the Lord should help us realize that there is no trial that the Lord cannot help us through if we are following his commandments and obeying his prophets.

Conclusion

Just as the Lord fulfilled his promise to deliver the Israelites from bondage, he will fulfill his promises to us. As we partake of the sacrament, we should think of and appreciate his sacrifice and keep the covenant to “always remember him”.