

The following sermon was preached at Redemption Baptist Church on Sunday, 21 April 2019. We encourage you to look up the Scriptures that are referenced. May the Lord speak to your heart as you study His Word.

Christ, Our Deliverer

Exodus 12:1-11

In the Delta region of Egypt, there is a city called Faiyyum; and nearby this city are the ruins of an ancient city called Kahun, which was built during the 12th dynasty. In this city, the pyramid of Pharaoh Senruset II still stands; and about 800 metres away from this pyramid is the ruins of an entire city of slaves. These slaves were *not* Egyptians. The architecture of their houses is that of Canaan or Syria.¹

Now, here's where it gets interesting. When this city was excavated, little coffins were found buried under the floor of nearly every house in the city: and every one of these coffins contained babies, all of which were two to three months of age! Many of the coffins contained *several* babies in one coffin. But the most extraordinary thing about this city is that the slaves, at some point, left the city in a mass exodus, and *left their tools behind them!* Dr. Rosalie David, an archaeologist who has studied this city, simply can't understand this. She says, "The completion of the king's pyramid was **not** the reason why Kahun's inhabitants eventually deserted the town, **abandoning their tools** and other possessions in the shops and houses."² Dr. David also said that "the quantity, range, and type of articles of everyday use which were left behind in the houses may indeed suggest that the **departure was sudden and unpremeditated.**"³

This sounds exactly like what we read in **Exodus**, doesn't it? Obviously, these slaves were *Hebrews* who had once lived in Canaan, and had moved to Egypt. It was the *Hebrews* who built mud-brick pyramids for the Pharaohs of the 12th dynasty. It was the *Hebrews* whose baby boys were killed by the Egyptians, and buried in those coffins. And it was the *Hebrews* who left Egypt in a mass exodus, and left their tools behind them. When, in ancient times, did slaves ever rise up without violence, leave their tools, and tell their masters, "See ya"? It simply didn't happen. Yet, it *did* happen on Passover night, 3,400 years ago!

In the past four weeks, we've seen how every part of the Passover is a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's **slaying of the firstborn** of Egypt pictures the judgment that is coming upon sinners. The **lamb** that was slain in each Israelite house, and its **blood** struck on their doorposts, so that their firstborn might be spared from death, is a picture of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who shed His blood on the cross so that we might be saved. The **eating** of the lamb, and the **eating** of the unleavened bread, pictures Jesus as the sinless, undefiled Saviour, who imparts eternal life to all who "eat" Him (believe on Him). The **bitter herbs** are a picture of the bitter bondage of sin. The bitter herbs also picture the fact that Jesus went through the bitterness of paying the penalty for our sins, so that we might be freed from sin's bondage.

Now, in this final message of our "Passover Platter" series, we will learn about the way that the children of Israel were to *dress* on Passover night. The way they dressed speaks of the *deliverance* that God gives to those who place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The title of this message is **Christ, Our Deliverer**.

Read Exodus 12:3-11.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Lahun

² Dr. Rosalie David, *The Pyramid Builders of Ancient Egypt*, p. 195, quoted by Brian Young in "Archaeological Evidence of the Exodus."

³ *Ibid*, p. 199.

I. The Passover dress: symbols of Israel's deliverance from Egypt

A few summers ago, my family went to the U.S. for a furlough. On the morning when we left, we had to get up at 3:30 a.m., because a friend was coming to our house to take us to the airport. Now, when we came to breakfast that morning, we were *not* dressed in our pyjamas and socks. We came to breakfast with our bags packed, with our shoes on, and dressed in travelling clothes. Why? Because we were prepared to leave as soon as our friend arrived. Well, that's the way it was on the night of Passover. The Israelites didn't go to the Passover meal dressed in their regular night time attire. Why? Because they had to be ready to go. At any moment the word might come from Pharaoh that they were to leave. **(Read verse 11 again.)**

Everything about the children of Israel's dress that night bespoke the fact that they were ready to leave Egypt. First of all, their shoes were on their feet. Secondly, they had staff in hand. They had to have their shepherd's staves to hand, because they had to be ready to herd their sheep and cattle that night. Also, they had their loins girt. What does this mean? Well, they didn't have trousers back then; they all wore long robes. However, when it came time to run, do battle, or do a lot of walking, they pulled their robe up to their knees, and gathered the hem of their robe between their legs, and under the sash that went around their waist. By doing this, they created "trousers," of sorts. They could now run or walk fast without tripping. And walk fast they did! Everything they did that night was in haste. They ate in haste, and they left Egypt in haste. When Pharaoh found out that his own son was dead, he called Moses and his brother Aaron, and commanded the people of Israel to leave Egypt immediately.

Read Exodus 12:29-32.

Can you imagine what it would have been like for the children of Israel to hear that they were free—that they would no longer be under the cruel taskmasters who had beaten them, whipped them, and killed them, and made their lives miserable? They did *not* waste any time in getting ready. They picked up their tents and flocks, and started to travel eastward out of Egypt; and Moses went before them. However, it wasn't Moses who was leading them: it was God Himself! God led the whole host of Israel (including Moses) in the most literal way possible. The Bible says that ***"The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light"*** (Exodus 13:21).

Now, the children of Israel had a long journey ahead of them. The Bible says that they left the city of Rameses, and travelled toward Etham—an area which was ***"in the edge of the wilderness."*** Etham was right at the edge of Egypt's territory. What is called the "Sinai Peninsula" today was all part of Egypt's territory; and it was all wilderness. (Etham was near the modern border of Egypt and Israel.) From Rameses to this area called Etham, it was about 200 miles. By the time the Israelites arrived at Etham, they had been travelling for 2 weeks.

So, what did they do next? Did they leave Egypt's borders, and go into Edom, and up toward Canaan? No! They went south, and stayed in Egyptian territory (in what is called the "Sinai" today)! They travelled near the edge of the Gulf of Aqaba (the eastern tongue of the Red Sea).

Read Exodus 13:17-14:2.

At this point, a question comes to mind: *Why* did God lead the children of Israel this way? We *do* know why God didn't take them by the "way of the Philistines," because the Bible tells us so. God says that He did not take the Israelites by this highway, because it would have taken them directly into Canaan; and they were not spiritually prepared to go to war with the Canaanites yet. So, God kept them in the wilderness. But the question remains: *Why* didn't

God take them out of Egypt straightaway? They were now travelling southward through a narrow valley, with tall mountains on both sides; and they were still in Egyptian territory. Why would God lead them this way? The children of Israel were probably wondering the same thing.

But, you see, God had a plan. God knew what was going on back in Egypt. God knew that Pharaoh was planning, at that very moment, to re-capture the children of Israel; and God was planning to display His power against Pharaoh in a way that the world would never forget.

Read Exodus 14:3-9.

At this point, Israel had been gone from Goshen for three weeks. But remember, they were a huge nation, of 3 or 4 million people! Even with the high level of organisation that they had, they still couldn't travel extremely fast, because they had children, tents, luggage, and flocks of animals. On the other hand, Pharaoh's army could travel very fast (especially with those 600 chariots)! In only a few days, they had caught up with Israel. By this time, Israel was at the shore of the Red Sea (the Gulf of Aqaba today); and they were on the beach of what is today called the Nuweiba Peninsula. The Bible calls it "*Pi-hahiroth*." *Pi-hahiroth* is a Hebrew name which means "the cave's mouth." Why would it be called that? Because as you stand on Nuweiba beach, with your back toward the Red Sea, you see, right in front of you, the opening of a very narrow valley; and on both sides of this opening are tall mountains. It looks like the mouth of a cave! This is the valley through which the children of Israel travelled on their way toward the Red Sea. At some points, this valley is only ¼ mile wide!

To put it simply, Israel was trapped! They couldn't go forward, because they were at the Red Sea; and they couldn't run to the left or right, because there were high mountains on each side. The only way out of this spot was through the narrow valley through which they had come; but now the Egyptians were coming toward them through this valley! All they could do was stand there and wait for the Egyptians to kill them, and take them back to Egypt.

Can you imagine how terrified the children of Israel must have been? And they weren't only terrified: they were angry! They were angry at Moses for bringing them to this place. They said to Moses, "***Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?***" Moses was at his wit's end. He didn't know what to do. But that's exactly where God wanted Him to be! God usually allows His people to come to the end of *their* power and wisdom before He steps in and rescues them. God had a plan of deliverance that was fearful and awesome!

Read Exodus 14:13-28.

This was no last minute idea on God's part, my friends. *Nothing* takes God by surprise. God had been planning this event from the beginning of the world! Even the topography of sea floor in the Red Sea shows the wisdom of God's plan. In recent years, scientists have measured the depth of the Red Sea with their sonar equipment; and it just so happens that in this seven-mile stretch of sea between Nuweiba Beach and the Arabian shore, the ocean floor dips down gently to a depth of only 325 feet. This gentle pathway is about a mile wide; it is very smooth, with no steep slopes, or big rocks; and the grade is only about 15% at the most. However, on both sides of this little underwater bridge, the ocean floor dips down as much as 6,233 feet into a deep, treacherous underwater canyon!⁴ The *only* place where the Israelites would have been able to walk on the seabed was between Nuweiba Beach and Arabia!

⁴ Dr .Lennart Moller, *The Exodus Case* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Scandinavia Publishing House, 2000), pp. 213-216.

By the way, to this day, two ancient pillars (about 11.5 tonnes each) stand on each side of the sea—at Nuweiba, and on the Arabian shore. Who would have gone to the trouble to erect two enormous pillars at these spots—and why? Undoubtedly, these pillars were erected by a king of Israel many years later, to commemorate where their ancestors had crossed the Red Sea.⁵ A scientist named Dr. Lennart Möller even found ancient coral on the seabed in this area *formed in the shape of chariot wheels*; and in one spot, one of the men of his team found an actual bronze Egyptian chariot wheel!⁶

God led the children of Israel through the Red Sea in order to display to the world His great power, and His acceptance of His people Israel. God told Pharaoh, ***“For this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth” (Exodus 9:16)***. But there is another reason why God did all this. The exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt is a picture of the Christian life: and it is all directly tied to the pictures of *salvation* in the Passover.

II. The Passover dress: symbols of sinners’ deliverance from sin, Satan, and the world

If there had been no Passover night, and no blood on the doorposts, there would have been no deliverance of Israel from Egypt—which means that there would have been no crossing of the Red Sea, and no destruction of Pharaoh’s army. Now, think about that for a minute! The Egyptian army was one of the mightiest armies on earth; yet, in a moment, God killed every one of them. The Egyptians *tried* to reclaim Israel as their slaves; but they couldn’t. Their Pharaoh was dead, and their army was dead. A huge number of them had died during Passover night. Their crops were destroyed, and most of their cattle were dead. Egypt still existed; but its power was broken.

All of this is a giant prophetic picture. It’s a picture of how God delivers *sinners* from the power of sin and Satan when they trust in Christ. How so? Well, think about Passover night. That’s when Israel’s exodus from Egypt began. It began with the shedding of the blood of the lamb, and the application of the blood to their doorposts. In the same way, the Christian life begins when the blood of Christ is applied to your heart’s door, by faith. But that is not where it ends. That is only the beginning! Remember, the children of Israel had to eat the Passover with staff in hand, with their shoes on, and with their loins girt. By eating with shoes on, staff in hand, and loins girt, the children of Israel were showing that they were prepared to *leave Egypt*. They were showing that they were ready to embark on an entirely new life!

So it is with salvation. You see, throughout the Bible, the land of Egypt is spoken of as an illustration of the world, and of slavery to sin and Satan. This is why God repeatedly commanded the children of Israel *not* to go back into Egypt for any reason! In **Deuteronomy 17:16**, God commanded that when the future day would come for Israel to have a king, their king was *not* to ***“Multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.”*** This was a standing command from generation to generation. God gave this command to Israel so that they would not be attracted to Egypt’s idolatry. However, He also gave this command in order to illustrate an important spiritual truth to *us*. Israel’s leaving Egypt, and not going back to Egypt, illustrates the fact that Christ has saved us in order to deliver us from this sinful world! **Galatians 1:4** says that Christ ***“Gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.”***

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 237-240.

⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 242-247.

Just as the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, so all of us were born into this world as slaves to sin and Satan. And just as God sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, so God sent His Son to save us from our sin. But, you see, you can't be saved from your sin if you don't *want* Christ to save you from your sin! If you *love* your sin, and you don't want to turn from your sin, you can't be saved. We are not saved *by* our good works; but Christ saves us so that He may now *enable* us to do works that truly please God. **Ephesians 2:10** says, "***For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.***" In **1 Thessalonians 1:9**, Paul reminded the Thessalonian Christians of how they had "***turned to God from idols***" when they were saved. When you truly turn to God for salvation, you are also turning your back to your old way of life. You are turning your back to all the "idols" that you have worshipped—whether those idols be *literal* icons made of wood, metal, porcelain, or ivory, or idols of immorality, filthy entertainment, alcohol, drugs, money, pleasure, recreation, sports, career, friends, family, a false religion, a false philosophy, false "science," or simply "your own way." **Romans 6:18** says, "***Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.***"

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples, "***ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world***" (**John 15:19**). When Christ saves a man, He puts in that man (or woman, or child) a new desire—the desire to be *separate* from the world. A person who claims to have believed on Christ, yet still thoroughly loves and clings to the world, and has never shown a desire to serve and follow God, is not a true Christian! That person has never repented of his sin. He is not saved. The love of the Father is not in that person.

Read 1 John 2:15-17.

Jesus said, "***Repent ye, and believe the gospel***" (**Mark 1:15**). With true faith in Christ, there will also be repentance. When a person believes on Christ, he puts his shoes on, takes staff in hand, and girds his loins. In other words, he is ready to follow Christ. He has a genuine change of mind and heart. He sincerely turns to Christ, with the intent that Christ will now be the Ruler and Leader of his life. Just as the children of Israel dropped their tools of slavery, abandoned their houses, left Egypt, and literally followed God as He led them in a pillar of cloud, so those who have truly put their faith in Christ will begin to follow *Him*. They embark on a new life—a life in which they are led by the Spirit of God. Old things have passed away, and all things are new.

Read Romans 8:11-15.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.

Think about Passover night. What if some of the children of Israel had said, "Well, I don't want my firstborn to die tonight during the Passover; but I don't want to leave Egypt, either"? What if they had said, "You know, I've lived in Egypt all my life; and even though being a slave here is hard, this is still my home. I'd rather stay here in Egypt and be a slave than to go to Canaan and try to conquer the land. I've heard about the giants up in Canaan. I don't want to fight against them! I'd rather stay here. Can't I just put the blood of the lamb on my doorpost so that I won't die, yet stay here in Egypt?" Would God have been O.K. with that?

The answer is a resounding "No!" They had to do everything that God had instructed them, or not at all. If they were going to put the blood over their door, and receive God's deliverance, then they had to be willing to leave Egypt, as well. So it is with being saved. You can't say, "Well, I'll believe on Jesus, so that I'll go to heaven, and miss hell; but I like my sin. I want to live my life the way I've always lived it—with myself in charge. I want to keep doing those sinful things that I like. And I surely don't want to live the *new* life that Jesus talked about. If

I become a Christian, it will be scary. My friends will forsake me. People will mock me for being one of those ‘born agains.’ I’ll have to fight battles against Satan, and conquer old sinful habits. I’m not interested in *that*. So, I’ll believe on Jesus and collect my ticket to heaven; but I’m not going to turn my life over to Jesus.”

My friends, there is no such thing as salvation from hell without salvation from sin. If you have no desire to repent of your sin, then you have no real faith in Jesus, either. True faith and repentance cannot be separated. If an Israelite didn’t believe that it was necessary for him to leave Egypt, then he probably didn’t really believe that it was necessary for him to put the blood on his doorpost either, did he? Well, it’s the same way with salvation. When you truly believe on Jesus, you change your mind about sin. Something happens in your heart. Not only do you *believe* in your heart, but you also *repent*. That means that you “change your mind” about your sin. It means that you decide, “I don’t like my sin anymore. I hate it. I want Jesus to take my sin away, and help me to live for God from now on. From now on, I want Jesus to be the Ruler and Leader of my life.”

When a sinner repents and believes on Christ, he has a radically new direction in his life. He has a new purpose in his heart. He is now filled with a soundness of mind; and this soundness increases day by day, as his mind is increasingly shaped by the Word of God. Just as the children of Israel had their loins girt so that they would be ready to travel, so the Christian’s mind is girt up with the truth of God’s Word. **First Peter 1:13** says, “**Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**” In **Ephesians 6:4**, Paul urged the church to have their “**loins girt about with truth.**” And just as the children of Israel had their shoes on their feet, so Christians are commanded to have their “**feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace**” (**Ephesians 6:15**). In other words, if you know Christ as your Saviour, you should desire to share the good news of salvation with others. Even the most naturally timid people can’t keep their mouths shut about Jesus Christ after they come to know Him personally. From day one of their Christian lives, true believers have a desire to tell others about Christ.

However, that’s not all. There is another desire that new Christians have: namely, the desire to be baptised. By the way, did you know that God gave us a picture of baptism in the story of Israel’s exodus? It’s so big, that you may have missed it! Let’s take a look.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.

When the children of Israel left Egypt, they were already a redeemed people. They had been redeemed from bondage on the Passover night: and it was by the application of the *blood of the lamb* to their doorposts that they were redeemed. As a nation, they were sanctified unto God, and belonged to Him. Yet, they were still in Egyptian territory. Until they reached the Red Sea, the power of Egypt was not far behind them. But when they crossed the Red Sea, and were “**baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea,**” Egypt was solidly behind them. An important line had been crossed over. Through their baptism (immersion) in the sea, they were now identified with their human leader, Moses, in a powerful way.

So it is with baptism in this church age. Baptism doesn’t save you in any way. It doesn’t redeem you to God. If you have applied Christ’s blood to your heart’s door through faith, then you have *already* been redeemed to God, and you have already begun to follow Him. But until you take the step of baptism, the world is not far behind you. Old worldly friends pull at you, and try to get you to turn back. They think that you’re just going through a crazy religious phase, and that you’ll get over it soon enough. But when you are baptized unto your Leader, Jesus Christ—when you *publicly* identify yourself with Christ, and with His death, burial, and resurrection—a significant line of separation is crossed over. Many newly baptized

Christians find that after they have taken the step of baptism, worldly friends take a step back from *them*. Why? Because God designed baptism to be a way for the new Christian to proclaim, “I have died with Christ, and risen with Him to a new life!” God also designed baptism to be the means by which a new Christian becomes a member of a local, Bible-preaching church. The Christian is now within a spiritual realm of protection and security. Fellow church members help to strengthen and encourage that new Christian to live for God.

Read Romans 6:1-6.

Several times, Paul said that baptism is a “likeness” (in other words, a “picture”). A picture of what? Of burial! Being plunged under the water pictures Christ’s death and burial; and it also pictures the *believer’s* death to his old life. Coming up *out of* the water is a picture of resurrection. It is a picture of *Christ’s* bodily resurrection; and it is a picture of the *believer’s* resurrection to a new life in Christ. You who have been saved and baptized can testify that your baptism was a powerful moment in your Christian life. If you know Christ as your Saviour, but have not been baptised yet, I urge you to take this important step of obedience!

What comes next after salvation and baptism? Well...your whole Christian life! Remember how Moses and the children of Israel were led by the pillar of cloud, and how God Himself was in that cloud? That’s the way it is after you become a Christian. Instead of being a slave to sin, and to Satan, God is now your Leader. Now, make no mistake about it: Satan is *furiosus* whenever a person is saved. He has lost one of his slaves! That’s why Pharaoh is a type of Satan. If Egypt be a picture of the world, then Pharaoh is a picture of Satan, because Satan is the “**prince of this world.**” Satan rules this evil world system; and he does *not* just give up and go away when someone gets saved. He will do everything he can to discourage, distract, and persecute that Christian, to try to stop him from being effective for Christ. *But he can’t take back that Christian’s soul.* Pharaoh did his best to capture the Israelites again, after they were free; but he couldn’t do it. In the same way, Satan would love to re-capture people after they get saved; but he can’t do it. After you believe on Jesus, and turn your heart over to Him, *He* is your new Master. Satan does his best to *try* to destroy you; but he cannot take you back. You belong to God now. God will never cast you out of His family! **(See John 6:37.)**

Now, when you get saved, problems don’t go away. Your sin nature certainly doesn’t go away. As long as you are still in this mortal body, you will still have the old sinful nature to fight against every day. However, you also have a *new* nature, which is generated by the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, the Christian is now able to put to death the works of the flesh. Think about the children of Israel. The Israelites had many problems after they left Egypt. For forty years they wandered in the Arabian desert. They went through many crises, and faced many enemies, before God finally brought them into the land of Canaan. In the same way, Christians go through many problems, temptations, and trials. *But*, God leads you all the way. If you will trust Him, He will bring you into the “Promised Land” of victorious Christian living. And one day, after this life on earth is over, He will bring you to an unbelievably beautiful place—the city of New Jerusalem. You will enter through the gates of pearl, and walk on streets of gold. But most importantly, you will be in the presence of the Lamb of God for all eternity. You will stand before His throne, and will sing, together with all the redeemed of all ages, “**Worthy is the Lamb that was slain...and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation**” (Revelation 5:9, 12).

Conclusion: In closing this morning, I would ask you: Have *you* been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb? Have *you* been delivered from your sin? If you claim to have trusted in Christ and His blood, yet you never put on your “travelling shoes,” then you are not saved. If you never had any intention of leaving “Egypt,” then you were not saved! You never truly trusted in Christ’s blood in the first place. In your heart, you must *repent*. You must turn to God from the world and sin, and from all your idols, to

serve the living God. I urge you to do so today! And to those of you who are already saved, I would ask: Are you keeping your eyes on the pillar of cloud? Are you continually looking to Christ, so that your heart will not have even the slightest longing to go back to the world? If not, ask Christ to cleanse you of whatever sin is in your life, so that you may serve Him with all your heart! ***“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”***