

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: Exodus

Week of October 15 (Week 6)

Exodus 13:1–14:31



Sermon Overview

In many ways, the chapters leading up to Exodus 13 and 14 can seem like mere preamble to the “real” story of Exodus ... The exodus! Freedom from slavery through God’s provision. While the destination is the point of the journey, it does not take away from how God chooses to take us from start to finish.

Beginning in Exodus 13:17, we see the formal exodus from Egypt begin. And, it would be reasonable to expect, the point of rescue is when life start going the way is should. This was not the experience of God’s people in Exodus (nor is it our experience now). Not only were the Israelites marched the long way around from the direction of the Promised Land, the Israelites were led to a place caught between an unconquerable army and an impassable sea.

It is in these seemingly impossible times that the real object of our faith is confirmed. We either suffer the constant frustration of self-salvation or turn our trust to the guidance and peace found only in the steadfast love of God, even though it surpasses our understanding.

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Getting Started

Try to imagine what this journey of two million people, just released from a lifetime of slavery, must have been like. What do you think they might have been thinking about, enjoying, fearing, or anticipating as they left Egypt?

Starting with God

1. Read Exodus 13:17-18. God not only frees the Israelites but leads them out of captivity with his presence shown by a pillar of cloud and fire. It was likely surprising to the Israelites that God’s guidance did not take the shortest route. His guidance also led them to a seemingly unescapable situation with mountains at their side, an ocean in front of them and a charging army at their back. Why did God take them the long way (v. 17)? Was leading the Israelites toward the Red Sea a mistake? Do you think the Israelites were confused by God’s guidance

2. God's guidance can often be confusing, especially when our goal is our comfort. Consider Exodus 14:4, 17-18. What does this tell you about God's priority? How can these verses inform our priorities?

Living God's Word

3. Read and compare Exodus 14:5 with 14:10-11. How are Pharaoh's and the Israelite's reactions similar?
4. The Israelites are told to "fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today" (Ex. 14: 13). Yet they had to respond in faith made evident by identifying themselves with Moses and stepping onto the dry ground of the Red Sea. What is the difference between their accomplishing their own salvation and responding in faith to God's salvation?
5. What is the difference for us between responding to salvation offered in Christ and accomplishing our own salvation? (*You might bring Ephesians 2: 8-9 into this discussion.*)
6. It may seem simple, but certainly it is essential to grasp fully: What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

Praise the Lord!

*I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.*

*Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.*

*Full of splendor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.*

*He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.*

*He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.*

*He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the inheritance of the nations.*

*The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy;*

*they are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.*

*He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.*

Holy and awesome is his name!

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever!*

Psalm 111:1-10