



This Sunday we reached the climax of the story so far in Exodus 11v1-13v16 – the final plague, and God’s rescue of his people out of Egypt. But the narrative was interrupted, we noticed, with a lengthy set of instructions for the Passover (and Israel’s on-going commemoration of it in the festival of Unleavened Bread).

There are perhaps 2 things we are to learn from these instructions:

### **1 – Realise that you are God’s saved people**

12v1-11 gives instructions for how God’s people were to prepare and eat the Passover meal. Although the blood of animals (Hebrews 10v4 teaches us) was never going to be enough to take away the sin of God’s people, the nature and stringency of these instructions was to show us that salvation comes at a price. They were also to show us that salvation looks like substitution and it requires sacrifice. They were to point forward to Jesus’ death on the cross, which would be a sacrifice pure and perfect enough to pay for our sin.

From these instructions we learn that we are extraordinarily precious to God. He loves us enough that he sent his Son to swap places with us and be the sacrifice for our sin. We are precious to God, and have been bought at a price, so we should take care how we think about and conduct ourselves.

### **2 – Remember that you are God’s saved people**

God also gives Moses detailed instructions for how the Passover is to be commemorated in the years to come. This is to make the point, we said, that it would be *essential* for God’s people to remember what he had done for them.

Not that they would forget the facts of their salvation, but they would forget their God and the significance and meaning of what he had done for them. Sadly this

generation did forget their God’s goodness and grumbled against him, as we will see in the weeks to come, and were banned from entering the Promised Land. We, too, are prone to forgetting.

There are perhaps 2 things for us to learn from how they are told to remember:

### **1 – remembering is corporate, not just individual**

They are told to remember together, not just privately, on their own. They are to gather together to remember. We must be wary of having an overly individualistic attitude to faith. Corporate worship – God’s people gathering together – really matters!

### **2 – remembering is active, not just intellectual**

God gives his people something to do – a festival with ceremonies to act out – to help them reflect and remember what he has done for them. We have been given something to act out too - the Lord’s Supper. Our *physical* acceptance of the bread and wine is intended to symbolise our *spiritual* acceptance of Christ, and our membership of his one body together. We are right to be wary of empty ritual. But we must be careful also not to over-intellectualise our faith and neglect the supper our Lord has given us by which to remember him.

Here are a few questions you might want to use with your group...

1. Why do you think there is so much emphasis on instruction giving and obeying in these two and a half chapters? What are we supposed to see and learn?
2. How does the Passover point forward to Jesus? What parallels are there between particular instructions and his story/death?
3. How does knowing what God was willing to give up for us affect our view of God, ourselves, and our relationship with him? What practical implications might having a deeper sense of God’s love for us have?
4. How do we in western cultures individualise our faith? How/what could we learn from other Christians and cultures around the world?
5. How important is taking the Lord’s Supper to you? How important do you think it is/should be in the life of our/the church? How has our wariness of empty ritual perhaps pushed away from seeing the value of it?