

Themes in Exodus

Freedom for Serving and Worshipping the LORD

Warm-up exercise and prayer

Name a time in your life when you've had a bunch of time that you feel like you squandered. Go around and share with one another, as you feel comfortable. When everyone has had a chance to share, pray: Holy God, we thank you for saving us from bondage to sin, and bondage to anything. Help us to use our freedom to serve you willingly and lovingly, and worship you in spirit and truth. Amen.

Bondage

Most of our worship services begin with confession and forgiveness. One of our standard confessions reads: "We confess that we are in **bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves**. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In Exodus, what has God freed the Israelites from?

Where are other places in scripture that we can read about bondage or captivity?

To what things / ideas / people are we held captive today?

Read Exodus 12:1-2, 14-20, 24-27 and discuss the following questions

- God gives the Israelites a new calendar. What calendars do we live by? What are the most important?
- What Christian festival does this remind you of?
- Why is it important to teach new generations about the Passover?

Read Exodus 13:1-2 and discuss the following question

- What is the significance of consecrating the firstborn?

Read Exodus 15:22-28 and discuss the following questions

- What are the conditions that God gives, in order for God not to bring disease upon the Israelites? How can the Israelites meet these conditions?
- How do we meet God's conditions today?

Read Exodus 23:12-22 and discuss the following questions

- Who or what are our enemies? What does it mean for God to be an enemy to them?
- What does holding a festival include? What festivals do our local churches have? Are we in step with this Exodus text today in regard to festivals, or have we strayed?
- According to this text, what is the purpose of the Sabbath? How are we following this today?

Read Exodus 32:1-10

- What are some of the implications of using people's jewelry to make the golden calf?
- What would God have wanted the people to be doing instead of making and worshipping idols? What are our idols, as a society, and as congregations?