

Teaching & Application

Big Idea: YHWH is a mighty deliverer and King. He saves to make himself known and to dwell with his people.

Applicational Thoughts

Isaiah uses this as a lens to view God’s coming salvation. Isaiah (e.g., **Isa 43:14-21**) points back to this story to a.) not only point out how fundamentally important it is that God did what he did in it, but b.) also show that the way God *will* save his people again will be even better! He is referring to the historical return from exiles, but in light of Jesus, his language takes on a bigger, fuller significance. And of course, we see Jesus (and the Gospel writers) also employing the Exodus to make sense of Jesus’ person and work. *We will explore what Isaiah does with this story in the coming weeks.* For now it must suffice to simply mention it here.

Jesus, the King (“Yahweh saves”). Jesus is the name we now know that our ancestors before us did not (cf. Exod 6:2-3). The Gospel of John takes pains to connect Exodus to Jesus. Signs and Wonders (7 or 8 of them, depending on how you count),¹ and the “I AM” statements made by Jesus at important junctions in the story (there are 7 metaphorical I AM statements, and a few other places where Jesus asserts absolutely that he is the I AM).² Jesus is the bringer of the New Exodus salvation. **Jesus and the New Passover.** Passover becomes a fantastically important story for making sense of the significance of Jesus’ own saving actions (cf. Mark 14 and pars.). By participating in it (the salvation story but also Communion [cf. **1 Cor 11:23-26**]), we participate in the story. It both works in us and turns us into walking stories, as well. Just like Passover in Exod.

Praise the King, live for his Kingdom. God is fully, absolutely, and exclusively in charge. Sing songs of his deliverance. Salvation is a public act, not a private one. For us, this likely means we need to rehearse the story of our own deliverance so that we can share it winsomely and graciously. (And no, a bumper sticker or facebook post is not what I’m talking about here!) Your story is personal, and sharing it should be, as well. (Or at least, this is when it has the capacity to be most powerful.) **[Illustration]** As we were discussing this in our last Life Group meeting, we spent some time sharing aspects of our stories of how God saved us. Lauren pointed

¹They are:

- 1) water to wine (2:1-12)
[preview of sign 8 with temple cleansing (2:13-22)]
- 2) healing the centurion’s son (4:43-54)
- 3) healing the lame man (5:1-15)
- 4) feeding the 5,000 and
- 5) walking on water (6:1-21)
- 6) healing the blind man (9:1-34)
- 7) raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)
- 8) Christ event of Jesus’ death, burial, and esp. his resurrection (19:16–20:18)

²Those are John 8:24; 8:58; 13:19. The metaphorical I AM statements are:

- 1) I am the bread of life (6:35)
- 2) I am the light of the world (8:12/9:5)
- 3) I am the gate (10:9)
- 4) I am the good shepherd (10:11)
- 5) I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)
- 6) I am the way, the truth, and the life (14:6)
- 7) I am the true vine (15:1, 5)

out that as much as she can't remember all the way back to what God necessarily saved her from (she became a Christian as a young child), she is nonetheless conscious of God's mercy towards her by protecting her *future* against various pitfalls. That is, God saved her from all sorts of pain and destructive behavior *in advance* by redeeming her at such a young age. *It's a great reminder for those of us who may not have a "dramatic" story of salvation, that God nonetheless demonstrated his mercy towards us and continues to do so in many wonderful ways.* We would do well to identify such mercies and learn how to talk about them in winsome ways to others.

Along the lines of living for the King and his Kingdom, we must always be mindful of the way God distinguished himself from other deities that were worshipped in Egypt (likely by both the people of Israel and Egypt!). When Israel sings "who is like you among the gods, O YHWH, glorious in holiness?" (Exod 15:11), it's likely because they learned the same lesson Egypt did! So we need to consider what other "gods" vie for our allegiance today? What — besides God — do we worship and give allegiance to? Family? Friends? Country? Jobs? Money? Security? It's also important to remember that the nature of pledging allegiance to God is such that allegiance can't be pledged anywhere else or to anyone else (see Jesus teaching this explicitly in **Matt 6:24-34**). Allegiance to God (i.e., "faith") is exclusive. Full stop. Period. *Is it for us, though? What do we put after the full stop?*

Know the King. The point of salvation is still the same. Not so "you can go to heaven" but so that we can be a part of the people of God, who know him and make him known. Look at how the Apostle Peter describes salvation, but then what it is we're saved *to and for* (**1 Pet 1:17–2:12**).³ The Exod story also makes it clear that YHWH is a God who is and will continue to make himself known. Both to us and to others through us. He repeatedly insists throughout the story that he does what he does "so that [all people] will know that I am YHWH." He is a relational God, he desires a relationship with his people. Reinforcing all this is the mention of the dwelling place of God at the end of the song in Exod 15:17-18. He will be present with his people and he will reign for ever and ever.

God is ever still present with his people. Through Jesus and the person of the Holy Spirit (see the commingling of these two amazing realities in **John 14:15–16:13**) we can know and experience the presence of God even today with his people (note that central to the Jesus' teaching in the John passage is ch. 15, where "abiding in Jesus" is equated with loving his people; i.e., Jesus' presence is practiced and experienced in community). Perhaps this is key for us to remember here, that as it was, so it is and will continue to be, **that God is present with his people. He dwells in the midst of the camp.** *It is with his people where his presence is most fully experienced and demonstrated.* We today in the west approach this reality as isolated individuals, but inhabits a people — his temple is his people and it is there (or here, depending on when you're reading this!) that his presence is primarily experienced. This is not to suggest God cannot be experienced on our own, as we read our Bibles and pray to him — far from it! I'm only pointing out that when we as western American individualists think about this, we probably think about it and practice it in a 90% to 10% ratio, individual encounter to communal encounter, and the Bible more rightly teaches it is more or less the opposite of this ratio!

³Note that the whole passage here is framed by being a "sojourner" (παροικία; 1:17 and again in 2:11). The whole passage looks at the nature of salvation, its purpose, and what we do in light of it as we're being built into God's people (in this regard, and in light of our Exodus story here, it's deeply significant that Exod 19:4-5 is invoked).

Further Study and Discussion

- (1) What in this sermon and sermon text did you a.) find helpful, b.) find challenging, c.) find problematic, or d.) want to ask a question about?
- (2) What was the big idea, and what do you think God wants you to do about it? How will you be not just a hearer of the Word but a doer of it (James 1:22-27)?
- (3) Take a look at the “Jesus, the King” paragraph above, esp. the footnotes about John’s Gospel making these connections clear. (Maybe go back and read the passages in context, if you want!). Discuss the significance of Jesus being the name of God who saves that our ancestors didn’t know. I.e., what does it mean that Jesus is both the Passover Lamb and the I AM in John’s Gospel? How do you participate in this new salvation story (like Israel did with Passover and with teaching their kids)?
- (4) Read the “Praise the King” section and then practice with each other by rehearsing God’s salvation story for you. What did God save you from? (Either saving you out of something or from something that could have been in your future?)
- (5) From the same section, discuss the exclusive nature of allegiance (over and against other “gods”). How is God more mighty than all other “gods” today? What other “gods” can you think of, and how is God mightier than they are? Maybe read Matt 6:24-34 to jog your thinking and to frame the discussion correctly.
- (6) Read the “Know the King” paragraphs and then read 1 Peter 1:17–2:12. What are God’s people saved *by*, *to*, and *for*? Look at all the things this passage teaches about salvation (and note how Peter invokes Exodus to do so!) and discuss what it means for us today.
- (7) Discuss the notion in the final paragraph of the “Know the King” passage where I say that God’s presence is most fully experienced and demonstrated with his people. How does this strike you? What does Jesus have to teach about this in John 14:15–16:13? What do you think God wants you to do in response to this passage of Scripture?