

## **Sermon Guide: Towards Easter: the Good News of Jesus: “The good news of salvation: Wounds & the Pain we live from” | Max Janssen | March 24, 2024**

### **Summary**

In this sermon, Max explored the multifaceted and exciting reality of salvation through the lens of the Exodus narrative, helping us explore the fullness of the freedom and life Jesus invites us into.

We as a church family are in a series leading up to Easter, focused on the good news of the cross and Jesus' sacrifice. Last week, Sam discussed the concept of cruciform glory, and today Max explored the multifaceted and exciting reality of salvation through the lens of the Exodus narrative, helping us explore the fullness of the freedom and life Jesus invites us into. He worked through the Israelites' deliverance from slavery and their journey to the promised land with a particular emphasis on the desert experience as a metaphor for our present spiritual journey.

We reflected on the past tense of salvation, the Israelites' deliverance from slavery in Egypt, which symbolizes our own liberation from sin, shame, and the deceiver through Jesus' sacrifice. This movement from slavery to freedom is akin to our initial decisions to follow Jesus, moving from darkness to light, and from death to life. From the rule and voice of an oppressive deceiver to a Good Father, from a slave to a beloved child.

We then turned to the future tense of salvation, the Promised Land, which represents the eternal life promised to us in John 3:16. This eternal life begins now and extends into forever, where we will enjoy full communion with God in a restored creation.

Lastly, we landed on the present aspect of salvation that we explored through the Israelites' wilderness experience. Looking at the wilderness as the space of becoming, between who they were and who they are becoming in Christ. In the desert was and still is where we grow in intimacy and trust with God and where He transforms us to become in reality who we already are by faith, a dearly beloved child of God. We explored the desert being the place where Jesus invites us to open more of ourselves up to more of Him, that our wounds may be healed, the stories of fear that we live from rewritten, and our affections reoriented. Max also challenged the cultural definition of freedom, proposing a biblical view that emphasizes the ability to choose what is truly good and life-giving.

Max also looked at the beauty of the one that accompanies us. How Jesus comes not to condemn but to rescue. He has felt the pain, temptation, and wounds yet has overcome it! Jesus can NOT ONLY empathize with our pain but can heal it.

Throughout the sermon, Max emphasized the importance of active trust in God, as opposed to mere intellectual assent. I encouraged the congregation to actively engage in the process of healing and transformation, which requires confronting our fears, wounds, and insecurities with the one who can empathize and heal.

In closing, we were all invited to embrace the fullness of freedom offered by Christ, to come out of hiding to God and each other, and to live a life freed from the bondage of sin and freed for the purpose God has for us.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Salvation is not merely a past event but an ongoing journey of transformation. As the Israelites moved from slavery to the Promised Land, we too are called to grow in our identity as children of God, learning to trust Him more deeply in the 'desert' experiences of life. This process involves active participation and a willingness to confront the areas in our lives that need healing. [\[31:43\]](#)
- True freedom, as defined by Scripture, is the ability to choose what is genuinely good, true, and beautiful. It is not the absence of constraints but the presence of the right constraints that guide us to the fullest life in Christ. This freedom is rooted in our core and extends outward, transforming our desires and actions. [\[21:07\]](#)
- The Holy Spirit is our 'parakletos,' a guide who comes alongside us in the storms of life, much like a rescue boat aiding a smaller vessel. The Spirit's presence in our lives is a source of comfort, guidance, and empowerment as we navigate the wilderness of our spiritual journey. [\[30:29\]](#)
- Active trust in God is essential for experiencing the fullness of salvation. This trust goes beyond intellectual belief to a reliance on God that is lived out in our daily choices and actions. It is an invitation to rest in the assurance of God's love and to participate in His redemptive work in our lives. [\[34:34\]](#)
- The journey of salvation involves not only being freed from sin but also being freed for a purpose. As we experience healing and transformation, we are called to step into the roles God has prepared for us, reflecting His love and grace to the world. This is the essence of living a life that is both freed from and freed for. [\[27:51\]](#)

**Bible Reading:**

1. John 3:16-17 (ESV)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

2. Colossians 1:13-14 (ESV)

"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

3. Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV)

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

4. Hebrews 7:25 (NIV)

"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them."

5. Romans 6:1-4

(MSG)

"So what do we do? Keep on sinning so God can keep on forgiving? I should hope not! If we've left the country where sin is sovereign, how can we still live in our old house there? Or didn't you realize we packed up and left there for good? That is what happened in baptism. When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered into the new country of grace—a new life in a new land!"

(ESV)

"What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life."

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is something that stood out to you from the sermon? Why?
2. In John 3:16-17, what is the purpose of God sending his Son into the world, and what does it mean to believe in him?
3. Reflecting on Colossians 1:13-14, what does it mean to be delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of the Son?

4. How does Hebrews 4:15-16 describe Christ, our high priest, and what encouragement does it give us in approaching God?

5. Hebrews 7:25 says that Jesus can save us completely, in fullness. What is something in life you desire to be set free from that you may have accepted as being part of you forever? What could it look like to surrender and trust Jesus in this area?

### **Going deeper:**

1. Identify a specific area of your life where you feel challenged to live out your new identity in Christ. What is one step you can take this week to align that area more closely with the kingdom of light?

2. What is a way you could prioritize 'undressing' or letting Jesus see more of you in the weeks to come? Of letting Him search you, know you, and meet you with His healing love and grace.

3. Choose one habit or pattern in your life that reflects the 'domain of darkness' rather than the 'newness of life' in Christ. What practical change can you implement this week to move away from that old pattern?

4. Consider the concept of being freed for a purpose. What is one way you can actively participate in God's redemptive work in your community this week?

### **Communal Practice:**

Take some time (Maybe 3-5 mins) in silent prayer and invite the Holy Spirit to "search you and know your heart", asking Him to bring to the surface any insecurities, deep fears, sin patterns, or empty places you may be going to to be filled. Places you may still be living in captivity or living from woundedness and lies.

Sit in silence listening for anything that may be brought to mind. If you're comfortable, share appropriately with the group and lift each other up in prayer.

As you do this may you know His great love for you and experience the freedom of opening deeper and deeper parts of ourselves to His grace and each other.