

the crimson thread

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series introduction

In this series leading up to Easter, we will trace what theologians call a Crimson Thread woven throughout scripture, specifically in the Old Testament. It represents the blood of Jesus that runs throughout the Bible, providing redemption, cleansing, and salvation for all who trust in it.

Long before His birth, before the cross, before the empty tomb, God was telling a story. A story of love and redemption. In the Old Testament we see glimpses and signs pointing forward to Christ.

A beloved son laid on an altar, a scarlet cord hanging in a window, a scapegoat carrying sin into the wilderness, and a lamb's blood spread across the doorway. Each of these prepares us for the ultimate sacrifice—Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose blood was shed to redeem us all.

Each week of this guide includes a message summary and place for notes, a daily Bible reading plan and discussion questions. So, grab your small group, family, friends, and your One, and join us as we prepare our hearts for Easter.



*“I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”*

genesis 12:2-3

abraham sacrifices isaac



weekly summary

This week Pastor Jeff kicked off this series in Genesis 22 and the story of Abraham being asked to sacrifice his son—his only son, the one that he loved—Isaac. He walked through the scripture and how difficult this moment must have been for Abraham to be obedient after this long-awaited promise of a son. In the end, God did not require of Abraham what He ultimately did Himself. God sacrificed His Son, His only Son, the One He Loved—Jesus.

daily reading plan

- day 1** *God's Promise*
Genesis 12:1-7, Genesis 15:1-6
- day 2** *Decendents of Abraham*
Genesis 17:4-8, Genesis 21:1-7, Joshua 24:3
- day 3** *"Here I Am"*
Genesis 22:1-8, Romans 9:7
- day 4** *Obedience*
Genesis 22:9-19, Hebrews 11:17-19
- day 5** *The Substitute*
1 Peter 2:24, John 3:16-21, Romans 8:31-34
- day 6** *The Sacrificial Lamb*
Isaiah 53:1-12, John 1:29
- day 7** *Living Hope*
2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 3:4

genesis 22:1-19

Abraham Tested

²² Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

² Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.”

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, ⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

⁸ Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

⁹ When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

¹² “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”

¹³ Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram[a] caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.”

¹⁵ The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶ and said, “I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸ and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

discussion guide

What are you most looking forward to learning during this series?

Read Genesis 22:1-19. What stands out to you the most? Why?

As you read through it, it's easy to skip over the weight of what God was asking Abraham to do, especially in verse 7 where Isaac says: "The fire and wood are here," ... "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" How do you think Abraham felt in that moment?

Have you ever felt God asking you to trust Him with something deeply important to you? Were you able to? How did it turn out?

How does Isaac carrying the wood up the mountain foreshadow Jesus?

Why do you think Scripture emphasizes "your son, your only son, whom you love"? Does knowing that God did not spare His own Son change the way you view His love for you?

In Genesis 22:14, Abraham names the place "The Lord Will Provide." What does God's provision of the ram teach us about His character? How have you experienced His provision in your life?



rahab and the spies

weekly summary

This week Jeff walked us through the story of Rahab and the spies in Joshua 2. He began by describing the Promised Land, the inheritance given to the Israelites and the picture of what the new heaven and the new earth will be like.

Two spies were sent to look over the land and while they were being pursued by the king's men, they met a woman named Rahab—a prostitute, who hid them on her roof. In return she asked that the Lord show kindness to her and her family. As a sign she tied a scarlet cord to her window. He then talked about Rahab's lie, the destruction it could have caused, but the salvation that came through it.

daily reading plan

- day 1** *Joshua Commissioned*
Joshua 1:1-16
- day 2** *Rahab's Faith*
Joshua 2:1-11, Psalm 145:4
- day 3** *The Scarlet Cord*
Joshua 2:12-24
- day 4** *Faith Remembered*
Joshua 6:22-25, Hebrews 11:30-31
- day 5** *The Lineage of Jesus*
Matthew 1:1-6, Galatians 3:26-29
- day 6** *Faith & Deeds*
James 2:14-26, 2 Corinthians 5:17
- day 7** *Alive in Christ*
Ephesians 2:1-10, Romans 12:1

joshua 2:17-21

¹⁷ Now the men had said to her, “This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us ¹⁸ unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house. ¹⁹ If any of them go outside your house into the street, their blood will be on their own heads; we will not be responsible. As for those who are in the house with you, their blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on them.

²⁰ But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear.”

²¹ “Agreed,” she replied. “Let it be as you say.”

So she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

notes

discussion guide

Have you ever put yourself at risk to help someone else? What made you decide to do it?

Rahab had a past, but God still used her. What does that tell us about how God works through imperfect people?

Fear often holds us back from stepping out in faith like Rahab did. Is there an area of your life where God is asking you to step out in faith?

Rahab's actions could have had destructive consequences, but God brought salvation through them. Can you think of a time God used something unexpected in your life for good?

How does Rahab's story contribute to the Crimson Thread leading to Jesus?





the scapegoat

weekly summary

This week Jeff explained the Old Testament sacrificial system and the meaning behind it. He described how Aaron, the High Priest, entered the Holy of Holies once a year to make atonement for the people, carefully preparing himself through specific cleansing rites. He then brought two goats: over one, he confessed the sins of the people, and it was sent into the wilderness, symbolizing that their sins were carried far away. The other goat was sacrificed. He concluded by pointing to Jesus as the ultimate scapegoat, and when He offered Himself as the final sacrifice, He sat down, signifying that no further sacrifice was needed.

daily reading plan

- day 1** *The Burnt Offering*
Leviticus 1, Hebrews 9:22
- day 2** *The Day of Atonement*
Leviticus 16:1-10
- day 3** *Aaron—The High Priest*
Leviticus 16:11-19
- day 4** *The Scapegoat*
Leviticus 16:20-34
- day 5** *Jesus—The Great High Priest*
Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 9:11-14,
Hebrews 7:26-28
- day 6** *The Final Sacrifice*
Hebrews 10:8-14, 1 Peter 1:18-21,
Isaiah 53:4-6
- day 7** *No Condemnation*
Romans 8:1-4, Colossians 2:13-14

leviticus 16:2-15

² The Lord said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come whenever he chooses into the Most Holy Place behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark, or else he will die. For I will appear in the cloud over the atonement cover.

³ “This is how Aaron is to enter the Most Holy Place: He must first bring a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. ⁴ He is to put on the sacred linen tunic, with linen undergarments next to his body; he is to tie the linen sash around him and put on the linen turban. These are sacred garments; so he must bathe himself with water before he puts them on. ⁵ From the Israelite community he is to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

⁶ “Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household. ⁷ Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ⁸ He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat. ⁹ Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the Lord and sacrifice it for a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

¹¹ “Aaron shall bring the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household, and he is to slaughter the bull for his own sin offering. ¹² He is to take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant incense and take them behind the curtain. ¹³ He is to put the incense on the fire before the Lord, and the smoke of the incense will conceal the atonement cover above the tablets of the covenant law, so that he will not die. ¹⁴ He is to take some of the bull’s blood and with his finger sprinkle it on the front of the atonement cover; then he shall sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the atonement cover.

¹⁵ “He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull’s blood: He shall sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it.

discussion guide

What comes to mind when you hear the word “scapegoat”?

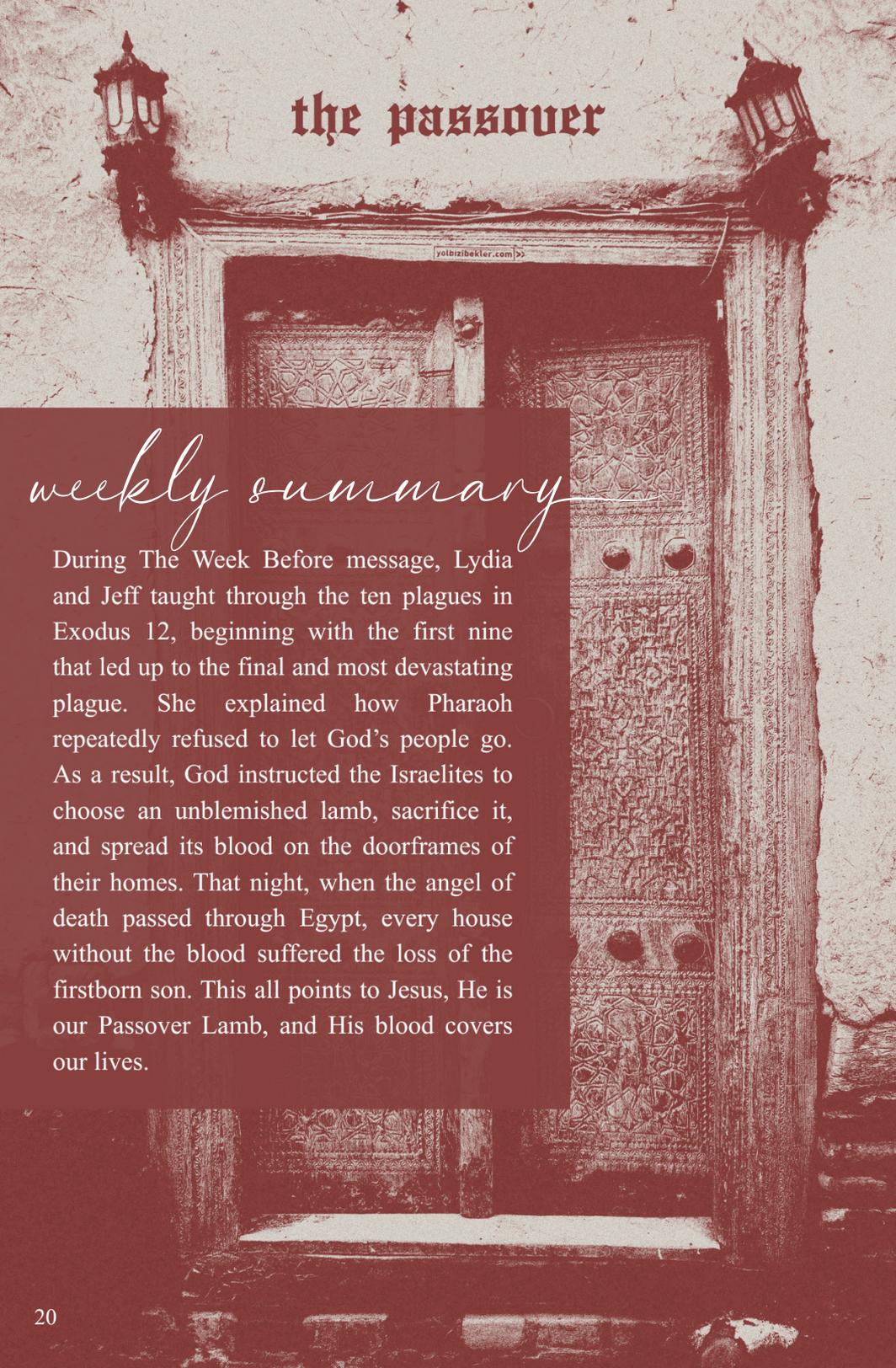
Have you ever taken the blame for someone else? What did it feel like?

The scapegoat symbolized sins being carried far away. Why is it important that sin isn't just covered, it needs to be removed?

How does Jesus fulfill the roles of both the goats, the sacrificed one and the one who carries sin away?

Read Romans 8:1-4. Do you still hold on to guilt or shame that Jesus has already carried away? Why is it so hard to believe our sin is truly removed?





the passover

weekly summary

During The Week Before message, Lydia and Jeff taught through the ten plagues in Exodus 12, beginning with the first nine that led up to the final and most devastating plague. She explained how Pharaoh repeatedly refused to let God's people go. As a result, God instructed the Israelites to choose an unblemished lamb, sacrifice it, and spread its blood on the doorframes of their homes. That night, when the angel of death passed through Egypt, every house without the blood suffered the loss of the firstborn son. This all points to Jesus, He is our Passover Lamb, and His blood covers our lives.

daily reading plan

- day 1** *The Israelites Oppressed/Birth of Moses*
Exodus 1:1-14, Exodus 2:1-10
- day 2** *“Let My People Go”*
Exodus 5:1-2, Exodus 6:1-8
- day 3** *The Plagues of Blood, Frogs, Gnats & Flies*
Exodus 8
- day 4** *The Plagues of Livestock, Boils, Hail,
Locust & Darkness* Exodus 9-10
- day 5** *The Plague of The Firstborn*
Exodus 11
- day 6** *The Passover*
Exodus 12
- day 7** *The Passover Lamb*
1 Corinthians 5:7, Luke 22:14-20,
1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:21

exodus 12

The Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb[a] for his family, one for each household. ⁴ If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor; having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. ⁵ The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. ⁶ Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. ⁷ Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. ⁸ That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. ⁹ Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire—with the head, legs and internal organs.

¹⁰ Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. ¹¹ This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover.

¹² "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord.

¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

¹⁴ "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance. ¹⁵ For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat; that is all you may do.

The Exodus

¹⁷ "Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. ¹⁸ In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. ¹⁹ For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And anyone, whether foreigner or native-born, who eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel. ²⁰ Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread."

²⁴ "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. ²⁵ When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. ²⁶ And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' ²⁷ then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped. ²⁸ The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron.

²⁹ At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. ³⁰ Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead.

³¹ During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested. ³² Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me."

³³ The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. "For otherwise," they said, "we will all die!" ³⁴ So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing.

³⁵ The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. ³⁶ The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.

³⁷ The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. ³⁸ Many other people went up with them, and also large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. ³⁹ With the dough the Israelites had brought from Egypt, they baked loaves of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves.

⁴⁰ Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years.

⁴¹ At the end of the 430 years, to the very day, all the Lord's divisions left Egypt. ⁴² Because the Lord kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the Lord for the generations to come.

Passover Restrictions

⁴³ The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "These are the regulations for the Passover meal:

"No foreigner may eat it. ⁴⁴ Any slave you have bought may eat it after you have circumcised him, ⁴⁵ but a temporary resident or a hired worker may not eat it.

⁴⁶ "It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones.

⁴⁷ The whole community of Israel must celebrate it.

⁴⁸ "A foreigner residing among you who wants to celebrate the Lord's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat it. ⁴⁹ The same law applies both to the native-born and to the foreigner residing among you."

⁵⁰ All the Israelites did just what the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ And on that very day the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions.

notes

discussion guide

If you were living during this time in ancient Egypt, which one of the plagues would have freaked you out the most?

Why do you think God sent the plagues gradually, instead of all at once? What does that say about His patience?

Why do you think Pharaoh repeatedly refused to let the Israelites go, even as the plagues increased in severity?

The plagues were direct attacks on idol worship in that day. What are some modern-day idols we are tempted to worship?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. Jesus, the firstborn Son, died in our place. He is the ultimate Passover Lamb. We needed deliverance just like the Israelites. What does that mean to you personally? How can you share that with others?



*He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.*

*Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.
We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.*

isaiah 53:3-6

