

Journey to Freedom

Session 1 - Slavery

If you are following this course alone as opposed to part of a Lent Group, please ignore the sections in red.

Gathering (10 minutes)

Welcome members of the group and ensure they all know each other.

You may like to give each group member a short time to say how they are and name any stresses or distractions that are on their hearts.

Prayer (5 minutes)

More confident leaders may wish to pray by name for every member of the group.

Pray this collect:

Lord God our redeemer,
who heard the cry of your people
and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery,
free us from the tyranny of sin and death
and, by the leading of your Spirit,
bring us to our promised land.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Introduction (2 minutes)

Feel free to use your own words or these:

On this Lent course we are going to be walking a journey to freedom with the Israelites as they escaped slavery in Egypt and were led by God to the promised land. As we do so we will reflect on what that journey to freedom means for us in the way we live out our Christian faith today.

For this first session we will explore the theme of slavery.

Scripture (10-15 minutes)

Exodus 1, 8-14

Read the scripture passage slowly and clearly. Encourage people to listen deeply to what God is saying to them through it. Ask them to listen out in particular for a word or phrase that strikes them.

After the reading, leave a long period of silence.

Invite each person in turn to name a word or a phrase that spoke especially clearly to them. They may quickly want to say why.

Talk (15-20 minutes)

Show this week's video.

If you can't make it work, don't panic! The text is on the website and the app. Just read it out.

Discussion (20-30 minutes)

*Either in the group or alone, reflect on these questions. **Keep the discussion moving so that there is enough time for all of the questions.***

- Why, when they had once welcomed the people of Israel, did the Egyptians enslave them?
- Try and imagine what the impact of slavery was on the people of Israel. What words would you use to describe it?
- Paul describes us as 'slaves to sin.' How does that expression make you feel? What is the evidence in our world that we are slaves to sin?
- What does it mean, for your daily life, that Christ has set you free?

Application (10 minutes)

- Can you identify some areas of your life where you witness slavery or the impact of slavery?
- How can you be a voice for freedom, either as a Church family or in your own Christian life?

Invite participants to reflect on this last question in silence

- What difference might this session make to your daily life?

Prayer (10 minutes)

Conclude by leading a simple service of Compline as below.

If you are leading a group that is meeting during the day, you may wish to use Prayer During the day which is [here](#).

(If you prefer to use traditional language, the order from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer can be found [here](#).)

Preparation

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

*A period of silence for reflection on the past day may follow.
The following or other suitable words of penitence may be used*

**Most merciful God,
we confess to you,**

**before the whole company of heaven and one another,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed
and in what we have failed to do.
Forgive us our sins,
heal us by your Spirit
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

The following or another suitable hymn may be said or sung

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night;
Tread underfoot our deadly foe
That we no sinful thought may know.

O Father, that we ask be done
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son;
And Holy Spirit, by whose breath
Our souls are raised to life from death.

The Word of God

Psalmody

One of the following psalms may be used.

Psalm 4

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness;
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

2 How long will you nobles dishonour my glory;
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?

3 But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness;
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not;

commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness
and put your trust in the Lord.

6 There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?'
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.

7 You have put gladness in my heart,
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.

8 In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 91 verses 1-7

1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
and abides under the shadow of the Almighty,

2 Shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my stronghold,
my God, in whom I put my trust.'

3 For he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with his wings
and you shall be safe under his feathers;
his faithfulness shall be your shield and buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of any terror by night,
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday.

7 Though a thousand fall at your side
and ten thousand at your right hand,
yet it shall not come near you.

Psalm 134

1 Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, ♦
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.

2 Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary ♦
and bless the Lord.

3 The Lord who made heaven and earth ♦
give you blessing out of Zion.

At the end of the psalmody, the following is said or sung

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Scripture Reading

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5, 1

Silence is kept

Responsory

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.
I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.
Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

The Gospel Canticle

The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said

**All Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

- 1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:
your word has been fulfilled.
- 2 My own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;
- 3 A light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Luke 2.29-32

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

All Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.

The Prayers

Intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered here.

The Collect

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer ([here](#)) may be said.

The Conclusion

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,
so do we look for you, O Christ.

The Lord bless us and watch over us;
the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us;
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.

Amen.