

Exodus 12: 1-14; Romans 13: 8-14; Matthew 18: 15-20
Remembering God's Salvation and Living it in Community

Warm greetings to you. For our meditation today, we turn to the Old Testament lesson from Exodus 12:14: *"This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance."* The topic I have chosen for today's reflection is "Remembering God's Salvation and Living it in Community."

1. Remembering God's salvation: passing the story to the next generation

The God of the Bible is deeply concerned that His people remember His mighty and saving acts. Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly instructs His servants to create memorials, build altars, and record His commandments so that His works are never forgotten. God commands Moses to write down His deeds in a book for remembrance. Joshua instructs the Israelites to take twelve stones from the Jordan, so that future generations would see them and remember how God miraculously dried up the waters and led His people across.

In today's Old Testament reading, God establishes the festival of unleavened bread—the Passover—as a perpetual reminder of His deliverance from Egypt. This observance ultimately culminates in Christ, who at the Last Supper says, *"Do this in remembrance of me."* Whether it is memorial stones, written records, or sacred festivals, the purpose is the same: to pass on the truth of God's saving work to future generations. Scripture emphasizes that children must know the history of God's dealings with His people. Joshua tells the Israelites that when their children ask, "What do these stones mean?", they must recount how God brought them safely through the Jordan (Joshua 4:7). In Exodus 12:25–27, when children ask about the meaning of the Passover, parents are instructed to tell them how God spared Israel from destruction in Egypt.

Even in the offering of first fruits and tithes, Israel is commanded to remember and declare their humble beginnings: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor... (Deuteronomy 26: 5-9)" They are to recall the days of affliction, alienation, and oppression; how God heard their cry, saw their suffering, and delivered them with signs and wonders. The land flowing with milk and honey was not attained by human strength or merit—it was God's gracious gift. This call to remember and to teach the next generation is not limited to the Torah. The prophets echo it, and the Psalms celebrate it. Joel urges, "Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation" (Joel 1:3). The psalmist proclaims, "We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, His might, and the wonders He has done."

Even today, societies build memorials, observe commemorative days, and erect statues so that history is not forgotten. If we fail to remember or neglect to celebrate, history fades—and sometimes becomes distorted. As US historian Jon Meacham notes, what we choose to remember shapes our present reality and influences our future. This invites us to introspection. What are we teaching the next generation? Have we shared our family history with our children? Have we passed on the salvation history of God's dealings with His people? Have we taught the history of the Church to those who come after us? Parents, the Church, and those involved in children's ministry all share this sacred responsibility.

2. Remembering God's salvation: living as people of light

Jewish historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi reminds us that Jewish memory is never a passive recollection of the past. It is an active force—something performed in the present. While we often assume the past lies behind us and the future ahead, Jewish thought places the past in front of us, as something to learn from and grow into, while the future remains hidden. In this way, remembrance becomes a bridge: it honours past deliverance, shapes present obedience, and nurtures future hope. The apostle Paul in Romans 13:8–14 builds on this same understanding. Remembering God's salvation is not merely recalling what Christ has done; it is living out that salvation as people of light. Just as Israel was commanded to remember the Passover, we are called to remember the cross and resurrection. The memory of Christ's saving act becomes the foundation for a life shaped by love.

Paul urges believers to lay aside the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light. He reminds us that genuine remembrance expresses itself in love for one another: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." This love is not sentimental; it is ethical and practical. It avoids revelry and drunkenness, rejects sexual immorality and licentiousness, and refuses quarrelling and jealousy. In other words, remembrance transforms behaviour. To remember Christ is to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." His love becomes our love. His light becomes our light. His salvation becomes our way of life. Remembrance is not only about what God has done—it is about who we become because of what God has done.

3. Remembering God's salvation: becoming a reconciling community

Matthew 18:15–20 teaches that the heart of Christian community is reconciliation and unity. If we truly remember God's mercy toward us, we cannot withhold mercy from one another. Remembrance naturally leads to reconciliation. The gospel reminds us that when a brother or sister sins, the goal is never punishment but restoration. Christ has reconciled strife-torn humanity to God in one single body, and this reconciling love invites us to reflect that same love in our relationships. In a world fractured by conflict, reconciliation is not an optional theme—it is an urgent calling. Hans Küng once observed that there can be no peace in the world without peace among religions, and no peace among religions without genuine dialogue among believers. When the world is wounded, a divided church becomes vulnerable. Martin Luther King Jr. captured this truth powerfully: we must live together as brothers (and sisters) or perish together as fools.

Theologian John de Gruchy describes reconciliation as a mutual effort to heal and overcome enmity, to build trust, and to cultivate a shared commitment to the common good. It is a journey from past brokenness into a future shaped by justice; a movement from estrangement to communion. Reconciliation unfolds through honest speech, attentive listening, and courageous action motivated by hope and love. True reconciliation cannot occur if the truth about past wrongs is ignored or concealed. Blaming others or avoiding responsibility only deepens wounds, while acknowledging guilt and accepting responsibility helps rehumanize both the perpetrator and the victim.

In the midst of the world's brokenness and suffering, the church is called to exist as a community of reconciliation. We point back to the unique reconciling work of God in Christ on the cross, and we point forward—through our witness and our practice—to the ultimate reconciliation of all things. Remembering God's salvation means living as a reconciled people who actively seek reconciliation, embodying Christ's presence in our relationships and in the world.

Conclusion

Remembering God's salvation is never a passive act. It is the foundation of our identity and the calling that shapes our life together.

As we remember God's mighty deeds, we pass the story to the next generation so that faith is not lost and God's works are not forgotten.

As we remember Christ's saving act, we live as people of light—awake, transformed, and clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we remember God's mercy toward us, we become a reconciled and reconciling community, embodying Christ's presence through forgiveness, restoration, and unity.