

JOURNEY GUIDE #1

FROM SLAVERY TO PRESENCE

A 13-WEEK JOURNEY THROUGH EXODUS

WEEK 1

*Barriers to Living
as God's People*

EXODUS 1:7-14



NOTICE



LISTEN



RESPOND

ONE FAITHFUL STEP
AT A TIME.

FROM SLAVERY TO PRESENCE

Week 1: Barriers to Living as God's People

Exodus 1:7-14

Formation Goal: Becoming aware of barriers to spiritual growth.

Opening Reflection

The journey toward God's purposes begins with noticing.

Before God delivers Israel from Egypt, Israel must first recognize the reality of their bondage. Before God leads His people into freedom, they must become aware of what is holding them back.

The same is often true in our lives. We all have habits, fears, assumptions, wounds, distractions, and patterns that shape us more than we realize. Growth begins when we become aware of them.

This week we will practice three simple rhythms:

Notice. Listen. Respond.



NOTICE

Read

Exodus 1:7-14

Reflect

As you read, pay attention to what stands out.

What barriers were preventing Israel from living into God's purposes?

Why do you think these barriers may have become normal or invisible to the people?

What barriers sometimes keep people from fully following God today?

Personal Reflection

Where might you feel stuck, constrained, distracted, fearful, discouraged, or spiritually stagnant?

What might God be inviting you to notice?

In Community

If you are discussing this guide with others:

What stood out to you in the passage?

Why is it often difficult to notice barriers in our own lives?

What makes spiritual self-awareness challenging?

LISTEN

Read

Psalm 139:23–24

"Search me, O God, and know my heart..."

Prayer

Lord, help me see what I cannot see on my own. Reveal anything that is keeping me from walking more fully with You.

Reflection

What emotions arise as you pray this prayer?

Is there anything God may be drawing to your attention?

What area of your life seems to need God's grace, healing, freedom, or guidance?

In Community

What do you learn about spiritual growth from Psalm 139?

Why does listening often require humility?

How can trusted Christian community help us see what we might miss?

RESPOND

Growth begins with one faithful step. Choose one way to practice awareness this week.

Possible Ways to Practice

Choose one of these or another way that helps you pay attention.

Option A: Journaling

Spend five minutes each day writing about moments when you felt especially aware of God's presence or aware of something that may be hindering your growth.

Option B: Drive-Time Reflection

During a daily commute or errand, ask:

"Lord, what are You helping me notice?"

Listen quietly before turning on music or a podcast.

Option C: Evening Review

Before bed, spend a few moments asking:

Where did I sense God's presence today?

Where did I feel resistance, fear, distraction, or frustration?

What might God be showing me?

Option D: Conversation

Talk with a trusted Christian friend, spouse, or mentor and ask:

"What strengths do you see in me? What barriers do you think sometimes hold me back?"

My Next Faithful Step

What practice will you try this week?

What do you hope God will help you notice?

In Community

At your next gathering:

Share which practice you chose.

What did you notice?

What surprised you?

What felt difficult?

What might God be revealing?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for inviting me to walk with You.

Give me the courage to notice what is shaping my life, the humility to listen for Your voice, and the faith to respond with obedience.

Lead me from whatever keeps me in bondage and guide me toward Your presence.

Amen.

This Week's Invitation

- Notice what is shaping your life.
- Listen for God's voice.
- Respond with one faithful step.

