

Exodus: No Longer Slaves – Part 8

A Born Again Nation

The contest between Pharaoh and Jehovah was almost over. There were so many opportunities for the king to repent from his wicked defiance. Warning after warning and plague after plague had been sent but Egypt's ruler still "hardened his heart."

One more judgment was appointed, the heaviest of them all, and then not only *would* Pharaoh "let" the people go, but he would *thrust* them out.

Exodus 10:22-11:8 (NIV)

10:22 - *Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. 23 No one could see anyone else or move about for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived. 24 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "Go, worship the Lord. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind." ... 26 Our livestock too must go with us; not a hoof is to be left behind... 27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go. 28 Pharaoh said to Moses, "Get out of my sight! Make sure you do not appear before me again! The day you see my face you will die." 29 "Just as you say," Moses replied. "I will never appear before you again."*

11:1 - *Now the Lord had said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely..."*

4 So Moses said, "This is what the Lord says: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. 5 Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. 6 There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt—worse than there has ever been or ever will be again. 7 But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any person or animal.' Then you will know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. 8 All these officials of yours will come to me, bowing down before me and saying, 'Go, you and all the people who follow you!' After that I will leave." Then Moses, hot with anger, left Pharaoh.

Distinction in the Land and God's Passover Plan

1) The Distinction in the Land

What is the distinction? The distinction between Israel and Egypt is glorious grace.

11:6, 7 - *There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt—worse than there has ever been or ever will be again 7 But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any person or animal.' Then you will know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.*

- a) This reminds us of Romans 11:22 KJV, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on Egypt fell the severity and on Israel fell His goodness!"

Egypt saw God's severity; Israel saw God's goodness!

Why the firstborn? We see the principle of the first things at work here. The death of the *first born* was *representative*. It spoke of the judgment of God coming upon *all* that is of the natural man. The firstborn, like "the first-fruits" offerings, is a sample of all the rest.

- b) The distinction between Israel and Egypt was grace.

God's unmerited favor... His mind blowing favor was the outflow of grace upon the Israelites.

- i) Israel was an undeserving people: The undeserving Israelites were a rebellious and idolatrous people who were so far away from the God of their Fathers that God had to reintroduce Himself to them.

- (1) The spiritual condition of God's favored people was not much different than the Egyptians.

God had to warn them in the wilderness. Leviticus 17:7 NIV - *They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols to whom they prostitute themselves...*

Underline the words "no longer": the implication is plain that before Moses delivered them, Israel had practiced idolatry.

- (2) Why would God deliver a people who had forsaken Him and played around with idol worship? GRACE!

God's favor on an undeserving people is what makes grace, Grace!

God has His own timeline in the span of His dealings with sinful nations and it was time for God to make a statement that will speak for eternity.

The statement is Sovereign Grace!

Romans 9:15 NKJV - *For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."*

- c) How could a righteous God justify blessing a sinful people while judging another nation?

- i) God would judge *every* firstborn in the land including the Jews.

The Divine sentence of judgment included the Israelites equally with the Egyptians.

Exodus 11:5 - *...every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle.*

Here we find the revelation of the sentence of universal condemnation of sin.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

- ii) God purposed to redeem Israel out of Egypt, but He would do so only on a righteous basis.

How can justice and mercy be reconciled?

- (1) God would satisfy His justice by means of a substitute!
- (2) The sentence of death was executed even in Israel, but the sentence of death fell upon an innocent victim.
 - (a) An innocent victim which was “*without blemish*” died in the place of those who were marred with the blemishes of sin from head to toe!
 - (b) The “distinction” between the Egyptians and Israel was not a moral one, but it was a distinction of grace made solely by the blood of the innocent, the unblemished Passover Lamb!

How did this grace manifest in the land of sinners? The answer is in Chapter 12.

2) The Passover Plan (Exodus 12)

Exodus 12:1-14 ESV - *The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. 3 Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. 4 And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, 6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight. 7 “Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8 They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. 10 And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11 In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s Passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. 13 The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.*

Now you can see why Jesus is given title the “Lamb of God.” This is a title which looks back to what is revealed to us right here in Exodus 12.

This is why Isaiah predicted a suffering Messiah who would be “brought as a Lamb to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:6). Here we find why John the Baptist shouted to the crowds on the Jordan river, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Exodus 12 is the reason why the apostle Peter speaks of Him as “a Lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19).

a) The Passover

i) The Passover is the Lord's Passover.

Exodus 12:11 - *In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.*

Exodus 12:26, 27 - *And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' 27 you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover.*

(1) The Lamb was God's first and then it became ours.

Genesis 22:8 - *Abraham said [to his son Isaac], "God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son."*

(a) It was not simply God would "provide" a lamb, but that He would "provide *Himself* a lamb."

(b) The Lamb was "provided" to glorify God's character, to satisfy His justice, and to magnify His holiness.

(2) The sacrificed Lamb satisfied something in God's judicial nature that released Him to righteously take a sin marred people to become the righteousness of God.

ii) The Passover is more powerful than the past.

Exodus 12:1, 2 NIV - *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.*

(1) According to Exodus 12, the institution of the Passover changed Israel's calendar.

(2) This month (Nisan) and the Passover is actually marked in Jewish history as the month when Israel became a nation.

(3) Israel existed as a people before the Passover, but they truly became a born again nation when God took possession of them through the shed blood of the lamb.

Powerful truth: The new birth is the beginning of the new life. Therefore, all the years we lived before we became new creatures in Christ are not reckoned to our account.

iii) The Passover means a lamb for every household. (12:3 "a lamb for a household")

(1) Protection from the sentence of death only happened if the house was covered by the lamb's blood (v. 3).

(a) God wanted it to become personal, a personal lamb.

The lamb was chosen and kept at the house for 4 days. Four days for the family to become intimately acquainted with the 1 year old lamb.

Have you ever held a 1 year old lamb?

- (b) Bonding with the Lamb - powerful progression

In verse 3, it is “a lamb” ---- verse 4, “*the* lamb” ---- verse 5, “*your* lamb.”

- (2) The blood on the door post must come from a lamb without blemish (v.5).

- (a) The powerful significance of this is obvious. Nothing but a *perfect* sacrifice could satisfy the requirements of God, who Himself is perfect.

God could only be *satisfied* with that which *glorified* Him.

- (b) And before Jesus presented Himself as an offering to God, the Father testified, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

- (3) All the lambs equal one Lamb.

EX 12:6 NKJV - *Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

- (a) Here is the point: Many thousands of lambs were to be slain on that night in Egypt, yet the Lord here purposely used the singular number when giving these instructions to Moses—Israel shall kill *it*, not “them.”

- (b) Never once in the original language is the plural “lambs” used throughout the 12th chapter of Exodus. There was only one lamb before God’s mind that night!

- iv) Israel had some responsibility in their born again experience.

- (1) They had to find the lamb.
- (2) They had to take the lamb unto themselves.
- (3) They had to kill the lamb.
- (4) They had to apply the blood.
- (5) They had to consume the lamb.

- 3) Conclusion: Exodus 12:28-36 NIV - *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.*

The Egyptians and even Pharaoh finally come to realize Yahweh is the great I AM. Notice how Pharaoh pleads for Yahweh's blessing.

They made their exodus as a new people of God, a born again people of God who were sanctified, sheltered, and delivered by the blood of the Lamb.