

# Sin, Death, and the Offer of Salvation

1/20/2021

Message 2

Exodus part 2

## Introduction: The Time has Come

### A. The time has come.

1. The tenth plague of God was to be unleashed.
2. Early on, God had told Moses that it would come down to this big event.
3. God knew the heart of Pharaoh:
  - a. He was a prideful man, who believed that he himself was god.
  - b. He would never easily or willingly release all these slaves.
  - c. Israel's freedom meant Egypt's economic demise, at least temporarily.
4. Pharaoh's claim as God and his nation's prestige would not let Pharaoh repent and be saved, therefore he and his people experienced the judgment of God.

### B. Pharaoh's story is representative of ours.

1. Life and death are set before us.
2. To receive death, we basically have to do nothing.
  - a. Live our life the way we want.
  - b. Pursue our own interests, and do our own thing.
  - c. In fact, many people believe that they themselves are god or a god, so why submit to the God of Heaven?
  - d. Terribly, we let our pride lead us to destruction.

3. Also set before each of us is the offer of life.
  - a. A life directed by God and towards God, and His standards and ways.
  - b. A life that results not only in a future heaven, but a taste of the Kingdom of Heaven here on Earth.
  - c. Will we choose God's way or our own?
  - d. The difference is the difference between life and death.

C. Today, we read about the dramatic end of 430 years of slavery.

1. Generations of Israelites had been born and buried in the sands of Egypt.
2. But now, the day of deliverance had come and God was going to dramatically demonstrate the power that He had long been holding back.

Exodus 12:29–51 (CSB)

#### THE EXODUS

<sup>29</sup> Now at midnight the LORD struck every firstborn male in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner who was in the dungeon, and every firstborn of the livestock.

<sup>30</sup> During the night Pharaoh got up, he along with all his officials and all the Egyptians, and there was a loud wailing throughout Egypt because there wasn't a house without someone dead. <sup>31</sup> He summoned Moses and Aaron during the night and said, "Get out immediately from among my people, both you and the Israelites, and go, worship the LORD as you have said.

<sup>32</sup> Take even your flocks and your herds as you asked and leave, and also bless me."

<sup>33</sup> Now the Egyptians pressured the people in order to send them quickly out of the country, for they said, "We're all going to die!" <sup>34</sup> So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls wrapped up in their clothes on their shoulders.

<sup>35</sup> The Israelites acted on Moses's word and asked the Egyptians for silver and gold items and for clothing. <sup>36</sup> And the LORD gave the people such favor

with the Egyptians that they gave them what they requested. In this way they plundered the Egyptians.

<sup>37</sup>The Israelites traveled from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand able-bodied men on foot, besides their families. <sup>38</sup>A mixed crowd also went up with them, along with a huge number of livestock, both flocks and herds. <sup>39</sup>The people baked the dough they had brought out of Egypt into unleavened loaves, since it had no yeast; for when they were driven out of Egypt, they could not delay and had not prepared provisions for themselves.

<sup>40</sup>The time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was 430 years. <sup>41</sup>At the end of 430 years, on that same day, all the LORD's military divisions went out from the land of Egypt. <sup>42</sup>It was a night of vigil in honor of the LORD, because he would bring them out of the land of Egypt. This same night is in honor of the LORD, a night vigil for all the Israelites throughout their generations.

#### **PASSOVER INSTRUCTION**

<sup>43</sup>The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner may eat it. <sup>44</sup>But any slave a man has purchased may eat it, after you have circumcised him. <sup>45</sup>A temporary resident or hired worker may not eat the Passover. <sup>46</sup>It is to be eaten in one house. You may not take any of the meat outside the house, and you may not break any of its bones. <sup>47</sup>The whole community of Israel must celebrate it. <sup>48</sup>If an alien resides among you and wants to observe the LORD's Passover, every male in his household must be circumcised, and then he may participate; he will become like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat it. <sup>49</sup>The same law will apply to both the native and the alien who resides among you."

<sup>50</sup>Then all the Israelites did this; they did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. <sup>51</sup>On that same day the LORD brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt according to their military divisions.

1. I want to begin by answering an important question for modern listeners?

#### **A. Why did God kill the firstborn of Egypt?**

1. God's judgment came upon every house and killed every firstborn male.

a. The adults, the children, the livestock.

- b. All firstborn males, in one terrible moment, fell dead.
- c. We aren't told the details, for the how doesn't matter.
- d. What matters is that the deaths were at the command of God through this mysterious Destroying Angel.

2. Question: If God is loving, then how could He do something like this?

a. The actions of God are portrayed against the actions of Pharaoh and his predecessors.

b. In Exodus 1, the previous Pharaoh had called for the death of every male Hebrew child.

1. Pharaoh commanded all of his people (1:22) to throw all the male babies into the Nile.

2. While not everyone participated, since there were still males alive, we see that the sin of Pharaoh was to become the sin of the nation.

a. God had not forgotten the plot to kill the generations of Israel.

b. God had not forgotten the tears shed and the cries that echoed through the homes that lost their sons to the Nile.

c. God had not forgotten Pharaoh's attempt to stop the blessings of God upon Israel.

d. God had taken the evil plans of Egypt personally.

c. Second, God initiated the tenth plague because he had heard the cries of His people in Ex 2.

1. The people of Egypt were not lazy.

2. They were an agricultural people who knew all about hard work.

3. But, as a nation, they went far beyond hard work in working the Israelites to death.

4. Egypt was not guiltless in trying to stop God's plan to bless Israel.

3. God is not only a God who loves, but a God who exercises justice.

a. Could a loving God allow a superpower like Egypt to go unpunished for her attempted genocide?

b. Could a loving God allow a nation to work another nation to death for material gain and prestige?

c. **Would God still be good if He had turned a blind eye to the sins of Pharaoh and Egypt and did not call them to account?**

B. Especially in the Old Testament, we find ourselves defending the actions of God.

1. There is a lot of killing that happens.

2. There is a lot of hard stuff that takes place.

a. Some of the hard-stuff is initiated by God.

b. Disclaimer: Just because something is included in the Bible it doesn't mean that God approves of it

3. Even when God's actions do not make sense to us, they are still right.

a. Although our culture loves questioning authority, it does no good to put God on trial.

b. He does not need us to defend His actions or justify them.

4. A necessary part of faith is to believe that God has good intentions in mind and not evil.

- a. And even when we do not understand, we believe the best.
- b. God is justified in bringing the judgment upon Egypt.

## 2. On that fateful night, judgment came upon Egypt.

### A. Not a household was spared.

1. From the most powerful to the poorest, every household lost fathers, husbands, teenagers, babies, and livestock.
2. All the years of mistreatment, of arrogance, of murder were judged on that night.

### B. The result was immediate.

1. Pharaoh had had enough and releases his "claim" to Israel.
2. All of the Israelite people were to leave.
  - a. With all of their possessions, their families, flocks, and herds.
  - b. I think it is important to lay aside the American picture of slavery and what took place here in America.
  - c. In more modern cases, slaves could not own property or lay claim to their spouse and kids.
  - d. Ancient practices of slavery were different.

### C. Even in slavery, God's people had been blessed.

1. They owned flocks and herds.
2. They had multiplied to the point that they potentially outnumbered the native Egyptians.
3. And, in the process of leaving, Israel plundered Egypt.

### D. The plundering of Egypt had a purpose:

<sup>35</sup>The Israelites acted on Moses's word and asked the Egyptians for silver and gold items and for clothing. <sup>36</sup>And the LORD gave the people such favor

with the Egyptians that they gave them what they requested. In this way they plundered the Egyptians.

1. God did not send Israel out of the country empty handed.
2. They didn't come to Egypt empty handed, but came with their livestock and wealth and God's blessings (check in on the story of Joseph and the end of Genesis).
3. Therefore they didn't leave empty handed either.
4. Not only that, but **God would use the wealth of Egypt to build the Tabernacle and all of its furnishings in the wilderness and in the Promised Land.**

*a. Earlier on, Pharaoh refused to let even a few men leave Egypt to worship God.*

*b. By the time Israel left, Pharaoh and his people paid for Israel to worship God and God used the wealth of Egypt, built upon the backs of slave labor, to finance Israel's worship of Almighty God.*

### 3. It wasn't only Israel that was blessed.

A. Verse 38 says that a "mixed crowd also went up with them".

1. Israel wasn't the only one wanting to flee Egypt.
2. In the days of Joseph, 400 years before, the Egyptian people had sold their land and themselves into slavery to Pharaoh.
3. There were native Egyptians and perhaps others from other parts of the Middle East who wanted the opportunity to leave Egypt and to be blessed along with Israel.

B. This was part of God's plan.

1. God had told Abraham that, through him and his Seed, all nations would be blessed.
2. God always intended for non-Jews to worship the One true God.

3. So as Israel marched out of slavery into freedom, others marched with them.

C. God's provision of salvation and deliverance for the Nations is made clear in the provisions of the Passover celebration.

<sup>43</sup>The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner may eat it. <sup>44</sup>But any slave a man has purchased may eat it, after you have circumcised him. <sup>45</sup>A temporary resident or hired worker may not eat the Passover. <sup>46</sup>It is to be eaten in one house. You may not take any of the meat outside the house, and you may not break any of its bones. <sup>47</sup>The whole community of Israel must celebrate it. <sup>48</sup>If an alien resides among you and wants to observe the LORD's Passover, every male in his household must be circumcised, and then he may participate; he will become like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat it. <sup>49</sup>The same law will apply to both the native and the alien who resides among you."

1. Notice how God makes space for those who were not born Jewish.

2. Anybody could share in the same Covenant given to Abraham and his children.

a. The requirements were the same:

b. Circumcision was the outward sign of a man whose family served the God of Israel.

c. If a family wanted to share in the Covenant, then there was room for them.

3. And that person would not have a second-class citizen but would become like a "native" of the land.

D. For the purposes of salvation this is huge.

1. All of humanity has sinned.

2. All of humanity deserves death and separation from God.

3. But God has made room at the foot of the Cross.

4. God so loved the World, that He gave His Son.



5. The blood of Jesus was not shed for a select few, but so that ALL could participate in God passing over their sin.

6. Israel was to make room for the foreigner at the Passover celebration, because God was making room in His presence.

7. Note the vision in Revelation 7:9–10 (CSB)

<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup>And they cried out in a loud voice:

Salvation belongs to our God,  
who is seated on the throne,  
and to the Lamb!

#### 4. The Lamb is still important.

A. Jesus was the identified as the Lamb of God.

1. He was our sacrifice.
2. He is the offer of life before us.
3. It is not by our works, or our actions, or our affiliations that we are saved.
4. We are saved by the shed blood of Jesus, our Passover Lamb.
  - a. When we believe that He is the Son of God, who gave His life as our ransom, it is as though the hyssop is dipped in Jesus' blood and applied over our life.
  - b. **The Blood of Jesus marks us as God's possession and God's people.**

B. I must ask today, are you aligned with Jesus?

1. Have you given Him your life?
2. Are you walking in obedience to Him right now?

Closing: God has set before us Life and Death.

A. We don't have to die.

1. Jesus has already paid that price.
2. While Israel was sacrificing the livestock, God was preparing a perfect and holy Lamb.
3. And Jesus gave His life to redeem yours.

B. Our time in Egypt is not without purpose:

1. Many times in Scripture, Egypt is spoken of in spiritual terms and refers to sin and slavery.
2. None of us are perfect, and we all have experiences of our days in Egypt/sin.
3. Those days were transformational.
4. God did not waste the Egyptian experience.

C. Genesis says that the Israelites who came to Egypt were 70 people, and Exodus 12 says that when they left there were 600,000 men of military age plus their families.

1. Some of you have spent some time in Egypt.
2. Maybe you were in a tough place because of your own sin.
3. Maybe it was part of God's plan to teach you lessons there.
  - a. Though your back may bear the marks of my slavery in Egypt, your soul has been marked by the blood of the Lamb.
  - b. Your story may have a history of slavery to sin, but your future is covered by the Blood.

D. I implore us all to accept the Offer of Salvation.

Prayer