

Exodus 11 - Moses' Proclamation of the 10th Plague: Death of the Firstborn

I. Exodus from Egyptian bondage: Israel's redemption, liberation, and preservation (Ex 1:1—18:27)

(1) Redemption from Egypt (Ex 1:1—12:30)

(C) God's sovereignty over Pharaoh and the Egyptian pantheon (Ex 5:1—12:30)

(d) 10 plagues (Ex 7:14—12:30)

(x) Death of first born (Ex 11:1—12:30)

(a) Announcement of the Passover (11:1-10)

Exodus 11

(x) Death of first born (Ex 11:1—12:30)

(a) Announcement of the Passover (11:1-10)

1 Now the LORD said to Moses, "One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will assuredly drive you out from here completely.

1 Now the LORD said to Moses, "One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out from here completely.

1 Then the LORD told Moses, "I'll bring one more plague on Pharaoh and Egypt. After that he'll let you leave from here, and when he lets you go, he will certainly drive you out from here.

1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

2 Speak now so that the people hear, that each man is to ask of his neighbor, and each woman of her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."

2 Speak now in the hearing of the people that each man ask from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold."

2 Tell the people that each man is to ask his neighbor and each woman her neighbor for articles of silver and gold."

2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

- Verses 1b-2 restates what God had previously told Moses (Cf. 4:21-23)
- The Israelites asked the Egyptians to *give* them silver and gold, not to *lend* them with a view of getting them back
 - From this time on until they left Egypt, the Israelites received many such gifts from the Egyptians, enough to build the tabernacle, its furniture, furnishings and utensils, as well as the priests' garments (Cf. 12:35-36)
 - This reflects the respect and fear the Israelites enjoyed in Egypt during the plagues

3 And the LORD gave the people **favor** in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses *himself* was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, *both* in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

3 The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses *himself* was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, *both* in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

3 The LORD made the Egyptians look on the people with favor. Also the man Moses was highly regarded in the land of Egypt, both in the opinion of Pharaoh's officials and in the opinion of the people.

3 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people

- "...favor" - all fulfilling prophecy of Ex 3:21 and Gen 15:14

4 Then Moses said, "**This is what the LORD says:** 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt,

4 Moses said, "Thus says the LORD, 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt,

4 So Moses announced to Pharaoh, "This is what the LORD says: 'About midnight I'm going throughout Egypt,

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

- Moses was the mediator of the first nine plagues, but the tenth plague came directly from God

— This announcement by Moses to Pharaoh was a message from God

5 and all the **firstborn in the land** of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well.

5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well.

5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl who operates the hand mill, along with the firstborn of the animals.

5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

- "... firstborn in the land" - all firstborn sons of Egypt (both man and animal) who apparently were not fathers themselves, would be struck dead

— Firstborn sons were symbolic of a nation's strength and vigor (Cf. Gen 49:3); Pharaoh was a supposed "god" and so was his firstborn son

— They were also those through whom the family line descended

— Sons old enough to be fathers were members of the older generation; the younger generation was the focus of this plague

— It was the male children of the Israelites that Pharaoh had killed previously (1:15-22)

Moses warned Pharaoh that the way he treated God's firstborn (Israel) would determine how God treated Egypt's firstborn (Cf. 4:22-23). Pharaoh tried to kill Jewish babies and his officers brutally mistreated the Jewish slaves, so in slaying the firstborn in all Egypt, God was simply paying Pharaoh back in his own currency.

6 So there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again.

6 Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again.

6 There will be a great cry throughout the land of Egypt, like there has never been and never will be again.

6 And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

7 But not *even* a dog will threaten any of the sons of Israel, *nor anything* from person to animal, so that you may learn how the LORD distinguishes between Egypt and Israel.'

7 But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not *even* bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.'

7 But among the Israelis, from people to animals, not even a dog will bark, so you may know that the LORD is distinguishing between the Egyptians and the Israelis.'

7 But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

8 And all these servants of yours will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." **And he left Pharaoh in the heat of anger.**

8 All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

8 All these officials of yours will come down to me, prostrate themselves to me, and say, 'Get out, you and all the people following you!' After that I'll go out." Then Moses angrily left Pharaoh.

8 And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

- "...And he left Pharaoh in the heat of anger" - evidently Moses made his announcement to Pharaoh (v4-8) before leaving his presence following the ninth plague (Cf. 10:29)
— Moses' hot anger reflected God's wrath against Pharaoh for his stubborn rebellion

9 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

9 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

9 The LORD told Moses, "Pharaoh won't listen to you. As a result, my wonders will increase throughout the land of Egypt."

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

10 So Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

10 Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders in front of Pharaoh, but the LORD made Pharaoh's heart stubborn, and he would not let the Israelis go out from his land."

10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

- Through the first nine plagues, the central theme has been the negotiations between Moses and Aaron on one hand, and Pharaoh and his servants on the other

— From here on, the main theme will be Moses' and Aaron's preparation of the Israelites for the Exodus and implement it

— The last plague will not be mediated by Moses and Aaron; it will be brought about by God directly

The Firstborn

And, of course, the well-known tenth and final plague was the death of the firstborn - on those homes not covered by the lamb's blood on the doorposts or lintels.

We all know the story of the Passover in Egypt, remembered by the Jews to this day. And, of course, Jesus is our Passover: John the Baptist introduced Him twice as "The Lamb of God" (John 1:29,36).

Lessons for Today

- The invisible war goes on. These same demons are worshiped today (Deut 32:17; 1 Cor 10:20; Rev 9:20)
- The Scriptures tell us that we become like the gods we worship (Ps 135:18)
- Visit Egypt today and when you leave Cairo you will see villages living on dung hills. And this is not a typical third world country: it once ruled the known world!
 - Are idols of stone cold, unresponsive, and immovable? If you worship idols of stone, you, too, will become cold, unresponsive, and immovable.
 - Is the world materialistic? Harsh? Unforgiving? If you worship the world, you, too, will become materialistic, harsh, and unforgiving.
 - You will become like the gods you worship. But if you worship Jesus Christ, you will become more like Him. 1 Cor 13 says it all!

Summary of First Nine Plagues

If you take the 10 plagues and lay them out, you will find there is a strange introversion of these things structurally. The first and the 10th relate to blood (water to blood and blood on the doorposts and lintels). The frogs are night creatures and the 9th is the darkness for 3 days. The lice from the dust and the locusts are notably admitted by the enemy as acts of God. Thunder and the Hail and the flies, in both cases Goshen is specifically mentioned. In the disease of the cattle and the boils, both are focusing on the beasts. A study of these shows that they are structurally attended to.

The purpose of the plagues is to demonstrate the power of God (9:16), even Pharaoh's ministers themselves in 8:19 declared it to be the finger of God. The purpose of the plagues is also to demonstrate God's wrath (10:16). There is certainly the judgement of the demons (Num 33:4). They also serve as a warning to the nations (Gen 12:3). Even Rahab had heard (Joshua 2:8,9; Philistines in 2 Sam 4:8) about what had happened to the Egyptians. These were also to test Israel (Deut 4:33; Ex 15:11).