

The Book of Exodus

Lesson 7: The Passover and the Final Plague -- Exodus 11:1–12:30

It comes down at last to a lamb and a doorway. After all the thunder and hail, all the locusts and the darkness you could feel, the night that finally breaks Egypt's grip is the quietest of them all. There are no plagues of frogs in the streets now, no swarms in the air. Instead, in every Hebrew home, a family gathers around a roasted lamb with their sandals on and their staffs in hand, eating in haste, while outside the door, smeared on the wooden frame, is blood. That blood is the whole difference between life and death on this night. Not the goodness of the family inside. Not their pedigree or their effort. The blood. Wherever the LORD sees the blood, He will pass over, and the firstborn inside will live.

We should not rush past how terrible this night is. The tenth plague is the death of the firstborn, from the firstborn of Pharaoh on his throne to the firstborn of the servant girl at the mill, and there is a great cry through all the land of Egypt, for there is not a house where someone is not dead. This is real. This is historical. This is the just judgment of a holy God on a nation that for generations had ground His people into the dust and drowned their infant sons in the Nile. The God of Exodus is not a tame deity who looks the other way at evil. He is the living God before whom even the proudest empire finally falls silent in grief.

And yet the same God who passes through Egypt in judgment passes over Israel in mercy, and He does it through a substitute. A lamb without blemish, chosen four days early, lives in the home, and then dies in the place of the firstborn son. Its blood, applied to the door, becomes the family's shelter. If you have read the New Testament, you can feel the ground trembling here, because Paul will one day write to the church, Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. John the Baptist will point to Jesus and cry, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Peter will say we were ransomed not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish. This ancient night in Egypt is a shadow, and the shape it casts falls all the way forward to a cross.

So as you study these chapters, hold two things at once. This really happened, on a real night, to a real people God was delivering with a mighty hand. And it was always pointing past itself to a greater deliverance, to a better Lamb, to a blood that saves not from the angel of death for one night but from sin and death forever. The blood had to be applied, not merely shed, brushed onto the doorposts of every home that would be spared. And that is still the question this passage puts to you and me. The Lamb has been given. Has His blood been applied to the doorposts of your life?

Group Discussion: The Passover turned on blood applied to the door, not on the worthiness of the people inside. Why is it so tempting for us to base our standing with God on our own

goodness rather than on the blood of the Lamb, and how does this night confront that temptation?

Personal Reflection: On the night of Passover every family ate with their sandals on and their staffs in hand, ready to leave Egypt the moment God said go. Where in your own life is God calling you to live ready to leave something behind and follow Him without delay?

Read Exodus 11:1–12:30

Study Questions

1. Read Exodus 11:1–10. God announces one final plague, the death of every firstborn in Egypt, while drawing a distinction so that not even a dog will growl against Israel. What does this final and most severe judgment reveal about the holiness and justice of God, and why does He make such a sharp distinction between Egypt and His people?
2. The plague God announces falls hardest on what each home most loves, the firstborn. When you consider the seriousness with which God treats sin and rebellion, how does it change the way you regard the sins you are tempted to excuse as small?
3. Read Exodus 12:1–13. God commands each household to take a lamb without blemish, keep it four days, kill it, and put its blood on the doorposts so that He will pass over them. Why does God require a lamb without blemish, and why does He insist that the blood be applied to the door rather than merely shed?
4. The Israelites were told to eat the Passover with their loins girded, sandals on, and staff in hand, ready to leave at a moment's notice. What would it look like for you to live as someone ready to follow God the instant He says go, rather than settled and comfortable where you are?

5. Read Exodus 12:14–20. God institutes the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a lasting ordinance, commanding Israel to remove all leaven from their homes for seven days. What is God teaching His people about remembrance and about purity through this feast, and how should we, who are no longer under this law, hear it?
6. The removal of all leaven pictures a people purged of the old corruption of their slavery. What is one piece of old leaven, a habit or attitude from your former way of life, that God is calling you to sweep out so your life matches your redemption?
7. Read Exodus 12:21–28. Moses instructs the elders to apply the blood with a bunch of hyssop, and the people bow their heads and worship, then go and do just as the LORD commanded. Why does the proper response to God's gracious provision combine humble worship with prompt, complete obedience?
8. The Israelites went and did just as the LORD commanded, even though the deliverance depended entirely on God and not on them. When you receive God's grace freely, why is wholehearted obedience the fitting response rather than an attempt to earn what is already given?
9. Read Exodus 12:1–13 and 12:21–30 together as the heart of the Passover, then read 1 Corinthians 5:7, John 1:29, and 1 Peter 1:18–19. In what specific ways does the Passover lamb foreshadow Christ our Passover, and why must we say it points forward to His blood without binding the feast itself on Christians as law?

10. Looking back across this night of the lamb, the blood, and the deliverance from death, where is Jesus, the Lamb of God, asking you to trust not in your own goodness but in His blood applied to your life, and what is one specific way He is forming that trust in you?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: 1 Corinthians 5:7–8, Paul's declaration that Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, calling the church to keep the feast with sincerity and truth; John 1:29, where John the Baptist points to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; 1 Peter 1:18–19, that we were ransomed not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish; Colossians 2:14–17, that the feasts and shadows of the old law were nailed to the cross and find their substance in Christ; Hebrews 9:22, that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

More studies available on ChurchOfChristBibleStudies.com