

=THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL=

Lesson 2

The Plagues and the Passover

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 5 - 12:36

BACKGROUND: Review the first four chapters of Exodus in that God, in preparation for the deliverance of the Israelites, called a leader, Moses. God instructed Moses to ask Pharaoh to permit the Israelites to depart. In chapter 5 Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to permit them to go, and Pharaoh not only refused, but began to make the labor of the Israelites much harder. The key to chapter 5 is in verse 4, in that Pharaoh was saying to Moses and Aaron, "If you have the time to come and talk to me, apparently you don't have enough work to do." He commanded the taskmasters to make their labor more oppressive. In verses 22 and 23 we find Moses returning to the Lord and telling Him that the king would not permit them to go. In chapter 6, God reaffirmed the promises that He had made to Moses, at the same time telling Moses that He would bring some plagues upon the land of Egypt to cause Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go.

I. THE CONDEMNATION. (Plagues)

1. The river turned to blood, Exodus 7:20.
2. The land was covered with frogs, Exodus 8:6.
3. The land was covered with lice, Exodus 8:17.
4. The land was covered with flies, Exodus 8:24.
5. The cattle died, Exodus 9:6.
6. Men were covered with boils, Exodus 9:10.
7. Hail rained upon the land, and fire mingled with the hail, Exodus 9:24.
8. Locusts covered the land, Exodus 10:14.
9. Darkness covered the land, Exodus 10:22.

For each of the plagues, there would be a temporary respite. Pharaoh would seemingly relent and would promise to permit the Israelites to leave; the plagues would be recalled; and then each time, he changed his mind and refused to let the Israelites go. Chapter 11 brings the final plague of plagues that causes the king to permit them to leave as God would have them to do.

II. THE CULMINATION. (Passover) Exodus 12 divides the Passover into three sections:

1. The preparation (a proper sacrifice), Exodus 12:1-6a.
2. The application (faith in the blood), Exodus 12:6b, 7.
3. The dedication, Exodus 12:8-10.

God promised that there would be protection for those who properly observe the Passover and that the final plague (Exodus 12:12) would be the death of the firstborn throughout the land. In Exodus 12:29 God kept his promise and because of the final plague, Pharaoh (Exodus 12:31-33) not only permitted the Israelites to go, but urged them to leave the land!

III. THE CELEBRATION. (Prosperity) See Exodus 12:34-36. As the Israelites were leaving, God permitted them to be favored in the sight of the Egyptians. The Egyptians gave them gold, jewels, and items that were of a material value, which seemingly was something that He had not promised the Israelites. He had promised them deliverance, but not prosperity. As the Israelites were leaving the land, they were joyful, victorious, jubilant people following the Lord en route to the Promised Land.

IV. LESSON HIGHLIGHTS.

1. The compromises offered by Pharaoh:
 - 1) Sacrifice in the land, Exodus 8:25.
 - 2) Go out of the land, but no too far, Exodus 8:28.
 - 3) Go out of the land, but leave the children, Exodus 10:8-11.
 - 4) Go out of the land, take the children, but leave the flocks, Exodus 10:24. (The emphasis on this point is that the Devil does not want total deliverance.)
2. The deliverance from Egypt and the plagues were just as much to cause the Israelites to leave as they were to cause Pharaoh to force them to leave. Note in later chapters the desire of the Israelites to return. Note Exodus 6:1; compare Exodus 6:9.

3. The Devil cannot remove oppression; he merely adds to it. Note each time on each plague that the magicians attempted to prove their magic. They did it only by doing the same thing that Moses had done, hence, adding to the problems in the land rather than taking from them.
4. The Israelite could not wait until the last minute to make up his mind. See Exodus 12:3 and 6.

CONCLUSION: The deliverance of the Israelites pictures the deliverance of an individual at the time of salvation. Egypt and Pharaoh picture the Devil and sin; the sacrifice pictures our Passover; the journeys picture the Christian life as we follow the Lord throughout the remainder of our human existence. (Stress the need for following the Lord as well as the absolute need for following the advice of godly human leaders.)