

Part 10: Death of the Firstborn

SERMON SERIES: EXODUS - FINDING FREEDOM Death of the Firstborn Exodus 11:1-12:13; 29-36

Devotion Emphasis: God of Justice

MONDAY – God Threatens His Maximum Punishment

Exodus 11:1-10 The Lord said to Moses, “Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely. 2 Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.” 3 And the Lord gave the people favor 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. 4 So Moses said, “Thus says the Lord: ‘About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, 5 and 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. 6 There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again. 7 But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.’ 8 And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, ‘Get 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. 9 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.” 10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

God's wrath against sin is often misunderstood and sometimes even brushed off. People think they only want a God of mercy who allows every offense to go unpunished but where would that get us? Do we really want to live in a world where murderers aren't held accountable for their crimes? Do we really want a world where rapists run the streets without punishment? Do we really want to live in a world where anyone can do

anything they want to do without any consequence? No way! Sin is an offense against God that must be dealt with and punished. Sin not only offends God but also dramatically impacts all of us due to its corrupting impact on the world. We all desire to live in a world where wrongs are dealt with rightly. Pharaoh's offenses against God were many and his rightful punishment cost him greatly. Many who do not understand God and His righteousness are unable to comprehend why a loving God would punish Pharaoh by taking the life of his firstborn son. It's the same reason why murderers are locked away for life by our justice system. God always meets the offense with the appropriate consequence.

Discipleship Challenge: Your view of God should be founded on and shaped by the Bible. It is sometimes difficult to understand how God can serve such harsh punishments against sin but that is only because our own minds have been corrupted by sin. Think about the offenses in your life you have committed against God? What would the appropriate earthly consequences be for those offenses? The appropriate punishment for any offense against God is eternal separation from Him. Allow this truth to lead you as you live a life that battles your own desire to sin.

Tuesday - The Passover

Exodus 12:1-13 12 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.

While God always appropriately and rightly deals with offenses against Him, He is also always faithful to spare those whom He has made clean. This is beautifully displayed in the Passover. God brought His judgement down on the Egyptians but he spared all who marked their households as belonging to His people with the blood of a lamb. God will never punish Christians for the offenses of the lost. We are sure to go through difficult times as a result of sin in the world but we must always trust that God will spare us from His judgement against the unrighteous.

Worship Challenge: God is our protector! We don't ever have to fear Him judging us unfairly or unleashing His wrath upon us. Like the blood of lambs covered the Israelites during the final plague against the Egyptians, the blood of Jesus covers us now! Spend some time in prayer and praise thanking God for the protection He covers us with.

Wednesday - The Pharaoh Loses His Most Precious Possession

Exodus 12:29-32 29 At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. 30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead. 31 Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. 32 Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!"

Pharaoh's sin cost him and others greatly. God's wrath against Egypt was brought on by Pharaoh's refusal to submit to the Lord and obey Him. Having lost his firstborn son as a result of his sin, Pharaoh's life was changed forever. Greater still, the firstborn sons all across Egypt were struck dead. Whether the consequences are great or small on Earth, sin always has a destructive consequence. We must carry this truth close to our hearts and minds as we are tempted to sin on a daily basis.

Discipleship Challenge: Next time you are tempted to sin, think about all the possible consequences related to your sin. Not only are you offending the creator of the universe, you are also bringing corruption to yourself and others.

Thursday - Not Everyone Will Know God As Savior

Matthew 7:21-23 **21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ **23** And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Everyone will know God as judge but not everyone will know God as savior.
— Jim Jackson

How many will stand before God and experience His unrestrained wrath as judgement of their sin? All those who turn their backs to Jesus. The sheer number of people who will experience God’s full wrath in Hell is staggering, overwhelming, and heart-breaking. The main focus of the Christian life has to be worshipping God and bringing others into a relationship with Him. If we are not concerned over the fate of those who don’t know God, what does that say about our own relationship with Him?

Evangelism Challenge: Your heart is probably breaking for someone who doesn’t know Jesus. Pray for that person today and take a bold step in your own faith by sharing the Gospel with them.

Friday - God Hates Wickedness

Psalms 5:4-12 **4** For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. **5** The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. **6** You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. **7** But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. **8** Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me. **9** For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction; their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. **10** Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you. **11** But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you. **12** For you bless the righteous, O Lord; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

God is not unaware of the wickedness in the world. In fact, God hates it. God hates it because everything in God is good, and right, and perfect! The Lord can not take joy in anything wrong because there is nothing wrong or twisted in God. The only reason why

God hasn't put a stop to the wickedness in the world yet is because He is long-suffering and allowing people to come to a saving relationship with Jesus. One day Jesus will return and all the unrighteousness, wickedness, and wrong in the world will be dealt with. Until that day we have a responsibility to love God enough to pursue His righteousness in our own lives.

Discipleship Challenge: It is easy to become jaded toward the wickedness of the world because there is so much of it. We almost begin accepting it as a normal part of life and something that just happens. We must train ourselves to be concerned over the state of the world. Look up the news today and pray for the issues going on in the world.

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