

**Pastor Jim Jackson, 3/13/16**

***Exodus: Finding Freedom, pt. 10—Death of the Firstborn***

**Exodus 11:1-12:13; 29-36**

### **God threatens His maximum PUNISHMENT**

After systematically crushing nine of Egypt's most revered gods, God reserved the last plague for Egypt's trust in their own Pharaoh. *Lies are eventually shattered against the rock of truth* (Jer. 16:9). Because Egypt 'kidnapped' and abused Israel, God's firstborn 'son', God will bring justice upon their firstborn sons for not letting Israel go (Ex. 4:23). The title 'firstborn' was for the firstborn male, thought to be the best or strength of the family or herd. The firstborn son received most of the family fortune at the father's death and was treated with special favor as the future hope of the family. For the firstborn to die early was thought to be a curse from God and for it to happen to a nation in one night was catastrophic. This last plague challenged all the gods of Egypt and the Pharaoh himself as the self-proclaimed 'blessed one' of the gods. At first the Pharaoh wouldn't obey as he didn't 'know the LORD', now he knew the LORD in judgment rather than blessing (Ex. 5:2). *Everyone will know the Lord as God the Judge, but not everyone will know the Lord as God the Savior* (Is. 45:34; Phil. 2:9-11)!

### **The Pharaoh loses his most precious POSSESSION**

God instructs the men to kill a lamb for their homes, cover the doors with blood, and eat the meat. At midnight, God visited every house without the blood of the lamb and takes vengeance on Egypt while 'passing over' Israelite homes. As a reminder that it was a miracle and not planned, Israel was to eat unleavened bread during Passover showing the haste in which they left. *This event prefigured Jesus, who was called 'Lamb of God', and whose shed blood would make divine wrath 'pass over' believers, being exemplified at the last supper* (Luke 22:19-20; John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7). After the most destructive plague, the Pharaoh releases them. Moses, who was maturing as a godly leader and had been threatened by the Pharaoh before, was now respected by Israel and Egypt. *Leaders can either bless or injure those they lead*. The Israelites were given gold, silver, and animals by the Egyptians and came out as a rich nation as God had prophesied to Abraham (Gen. 15:13, 14). This event was so significant Israel restarted their national calendar here (Abib/Nisan-March). *Though bondage may last for a season, God specializes in breaking bondage and setting His children free* (John 8:36).