

February 27

Scriptures: Read Exodus 11 & 12

Key Verse: “Now 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.” (Exodus 12:13)

Overview

Here we have recorded the greatest event in the history of Israel. After waiting patiently for Pharaoh to repent and let His people go, God, in His wrath, brought His most solemn and serious judgment on this rebellious nation. The last of the ten plagues, the death of the first-born of both man and animal, was the climax of the whole ordeal with Pharaoh in which God ended with victory. Moses gave Pharaoh ample warning to let them go before the plague struck and again he told Pharaoh that God would make a distinction between Israel and Egypt. Moses became angered by Pharaoh's rebellion in his complete rejection of God and by what the consequences of such action would have to be (11:8). Pharaoh's hardening his heart led to the destruction of Egypt and from that point it began to decline.

God gave Moses complete instructions on how to properly observe the Passover, and how they were to leave Egypt. Commemoration of this event marks the beginning of the Jewish religious year, the month of Aviv, in March or April, according to the moon. The Lord stressed to His people that this first feast, founded on God's deliverance through sacrifice, was a very important lasting ordinance (12:14, 17, 24, and 42) to be observed yearly by the whole family. Its significance was to be passed on from generation to generation (12:26, 27). In the same way today, the foundation for a successful family life is spiritual success. Instructing our children about the Lord is the best teaching they will ever receive.

The Passover has great significance for us as well, for it typified our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The New Testament clearly states that Jesus the Messiah is our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). The Passover lamb was to be without blemish (12:5). Jesus Christ was perfect, He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 3:5), and no fault could be found with Him (Luke 23:4), as such He was the ultimate sacrifice. The lamb's blood applied on the doorposts and lintel was evidence that those in the home were prepared and obedient. When the final judgment day of the Lord comes we, too, must be prepared and covered by the blood of Jesus. That was not only a night of destruction, it was also a night of salvation for those who believed. The book of Hebrews explains, “without the shedding of blood there is no remission [forgiveness]” (Hebrews 9:22). The precious blood of Christ was shed for our redemption and our deliverance from the sinfulness of this world. The blood of Jesus is made effective when the repentant sinner applies it to his soul by believing that Jesus, the Son of God, died, was buried, rose on the third day and lives today to forgive our sins and that by His blood we are cleansed from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). In the Old Testament ritual, the blood was sprinkled with the hyssop plant and this came to be a symbol of purification as on the Day of Atonement (Psalm 51:7; Hebrews 9:19-22).

Pharaoh heard the great cry as the Lord struck all the first-born in the homes that were unprepared. Finally he agreed, without trying to make a compromise, that the children of Israel might go, every one and all livestock too. Their Egyptian neighbors were glad to give articles of

silver and gold (later to be used in the Tabernacle) as the Lord had commanded His people to ask of them (11:2) and, as He had foretold, they would not go tout empty handed (3:21, 22). What they received was due payment for all the many years of slave labor that Israel had suffered in Egypt. A conservative estimate of about 2 million people left Egypt that day, fulfilling the prophesies God had given to their forefathers. They left 430 years from the same day that Jacob entered with his 75 family members (Acts 7:14). Their increase was tremendous, because the blessing of the Lord was upon them (Exodus 1:7). We see the grace of God in permitting “a mixed multitude” (12:38) to leave with the Israelites. They must have desired to follow the Lord and His leading. The people of Israel were to be mediators for the other nations, so that through them others might come to believe in God. We see they were never meant to be alone, but to welcome strangers (Isaiah 56:3-8). Even in the Old Testament the door was open for all who wanted to participate in the redemption of the Lord.

Prayer

God of Moses and of the people of Israel, we pray the Blood of Your sacrificial Lamb, our Lord Jesus, to be over us as our protection now and forever.