



# The Lord is My Strength

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## *The Firstborn*

Exodus 11 & 12

- The lesson behind the Plagues for us is the effect it would have had on Moses being the bearer of such horrendous news (and consequences)
- What it would have felt like to bring that kind of suffering into the world
- What the repercussions would be knowing that some of the plagues affected his own people as well
- We noticed:
  - Moses warns on the 1st, 2nd, but not the 3rd plague
  - Moses warns on the 4th, 5th, but not the 6th plague
  - Moses warns on the 7th, 8th, but not the 9th plague
- What is it like to be frustrated when you are working with someone stubborn, and you are dealing with the patience of God?
- Pharaoh gives in on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> plagues
- Even though Pharaoh kept going back on his word, Moses kept going in and negotiating with him
- Pharaoh hardens his own heart for the first 5 plagues, along with 7 and 9
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  of the time it is Pharaoh who is driving his own emotions and controlling his own destiny
- God hardens his heart on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> plagues
- Then the worse of all the plagues comes...
- Exodus 11:1 KJV
  - 1) And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let *you* go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

- Notice how personal God gets

*“I will bring one plague more upon Pharaoh”*

- Basically, Moses, the Israelites, and even the Egyptians have simply become observers in this battle of wills between God and Pharaoh
- Moses was a faithful man
- There never would have been a shadow of a doubt in Moses’ mind about who is going to win this battle
- It would have been painful to Moses every time that Pharaoh doesn’t listen to God
- Moses knows that God will eventually succeed at what He desires, and it’s only a matter of time before he breaks Pharaoh’s will
- It’s only a matter of increasing the severity of the plagues until eventually Pharaoh relents
- And now God knows that this is going to be it
- This is going to be more than Pharaoh can handle  
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- So, God tells Moses to have the people prepare...
- Exodus 11:2 KJV
  - 2) Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

- If you were Moses what would you feel about giving this command?
- If this seems so **WRONG**, why does God encourage this kind of behavior?
  - Unpaid Wages - 430 Years worth!
- So, God actually helps them out...
- Exodus 11:3 KJV
  - 3) And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians.
- Miracle # 13!
  - After these weeks of lice and boils and Fire & Brimstone, I would think that the Egyptians would be **DONE** with the Israelites
  - I would think that they couldn't stand them at all!
  - God gives them favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they can load up on the silver and the Gold
  - So, the Egyptians do freely give their valuables to the Israelites
- Look what else God does in Verse 3
- Exodus 11:3 KJV
  - 3) ...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.
- The individual solely responsible for bringing all of this calamity upon the Egyptians is highly revered and respected by the people
- How would that have made Moses feel?
  - He had given up so much fame and fortune to leave Egypt and go be with his people...
  - And now Moses was finding himself in a **VERY GREAT** position among all of the Egyptians, and they are loading up their camels with all the Fortune that they can carry
- Isn't this often the case with God?
  - That which we give up to follow Him we receive even more so by doing so
- Remember what Christ said?

- Matthew 19:29 KJV

- 29) And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.
- Moses has got to be thinking the same kind of thing now as he sees how God is making them wealthy, and making him popular amongst the Egyptians
  - Notice how the Israelites are NOT included in that list?
    - That is going to come to haunt Moses soon after leaving
  - Why is this recorded about Moses?
  - God is trying to establish why the people would listen to Moses
  - Why is this important?
    - Because God isn't willing that any should perish!
  - God wants the Egyptians to listen to what Moses has to say next...

- Exodus 11:4-8 KJV

- 4) And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:
  - 5) And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that *is* behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.
  - 6) And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.
  - 7) But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.
  - 8) And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.
- What DOESN'T Moses give the Egyptian people an opportunity to do?
  - We are all familiar with the blood on the doorposts, but who is that commandment given to?

- Exodus 12:3 KJV

- 3) Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel...

- God gives the Egyptians NO CHANCE to escape what is coming upon them
- This is one of the most infamous accounts in the Bible
- Atheists and Critics site this account by memory as evidence against a loving God
- Google Exodus 12 and you find more negative comments than positive
- How can we find it possible to justify God's actions here?
- EVERYONE experiences this pain!
- The killing of every firstborn in Egypt, was not only of men, but of the animals as well.
- Not only are innocent children slaughtered by God here, but the occasion is the basis for an annual celebration by Israel, one that is to be carried on forever.
- While the deaths of innocent Jews in the Holocaust are still protested today, in the Bible God is to be praised, partially on the basis of the slaughter of the Egyptians
- As Christians we are obliged to praise and worship God, regardless of whether or not we understand His actions
- We have to understand that God is free to act in any way He chooses.
- God's actions are explainable, just hard to grasp...
- God is Holy, but he is also Just...
- So, it's interesting to see that before God gets into the story in Chapter 12, he reminds Moses, AND US, about where are so far...
- Exodus 11:9-10 KJV
  - 9) And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.
  - 10) And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.
- Now, back up a few days...
- Exodus 12:1-2 KJV
  - 1) And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,
  - 2) This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.
- God establishes the Jewish Calendar

- Exodus 12:3 KJV

- 3) Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth *day* of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an house:

- There were rules and preparation that was required

- Exodus 12:6-8 KJV

- 6) And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.
- 7) And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.
- 8) And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

- It was four days before you killed it

- What did you do with the little lamb during that period?

- Exodus 12:11 KJV

- 11) And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: *it is* the LORD'S passover.

- You had to eat it READY!

- Exodus 12:12 KJV

- 12) For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.

- Notice something?

- Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment

- God was not only saving Israel, but He was teaching them (again) that there is only one God

- There is no clearer example of salvation by grace in the Old Testament than the Passover

- Every person in Egypt, whether an Israelite or an Egyptian, was worthy of God's divine judgment

- The reason that most men find the judgment of God in the killing of the firstborn so difficult to justify is that they do not grasp the seriousness of their own sin
- People commonly ask, *“Do I have to suffer the rest of my life for one little indiscretion?”*
- That’s what people have a hard time coming to grips with...
- For just one little sin, God is just in condemning you, for all eternity
- The reason why we have so much difficulty with the subject of judgment is that we fail to comprehend the immensity of our sin
- If nothing else, the killing of the firstborn of Egypt should cause us to rethink the matter of sin
- Our attitude toward sin is very much shaped by our own perspectives and experiences
- Drunks are people we can laugh at, until they get behind the wheel and kill one of our children
- So, too, idolatrous worship doesn’t seem very serious, until we view this evil from God’s perspective
- Once we have come to grips with the seriousness of sin, we need to focus on the solution
- Just as the firstborn in Egypt were in danger of being smitten by the death angel, so men, women, and children today are in danger of enduring the wrath of God
- The solution to the problem is, once again, a Lamb, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, on whom our sins were laid
- He died for our sins; He bore the wrath of God, so that men could escape from the coming wrath of God, and could participate in His promised blessings
- Because Christ died for us, we are now his possession and should live for him