

Life Lesson 25
The Passover
Text: Exodus 12

Introduction

You would think Pharaoh would have learned his lesson! God said to let His people go to worship God in the wilderness. Pharaoh said, “No.”

God sent nine terrible plagues on the Egyptians. Can you name them? There was 1) turning water into blood, 2) frogs, 3) lice, 4) flies, 5) cattle plague, 6) boils, 7) hail with fire, 8) locusts, and 9) a thick darkness. What horrible things to happen! Every time God sent a plague, Pharaoh would promise to obey and let the Israelites go. When God took the plague away, Pharaoh would change his mind. Pretty foolish, wasn't he? Yet, God had a purpose even for Pharaoh's hard-heartedness. He wanted to show the Egyptians, and the Israelites, too, that He was the great and almighty God. He showed that He was stronger than Pharaoh and stronger than the idols the Egyptians worshipped.

The Israelites would need a lot of faith for the difficult journey they would make through the desert. God was showing His people His power. He wanted them to know that He could take care of their every need. After all, He protected them from all of the plagues. The trials fell on every one in Egypt, except the Israelites. What a proof of God's love and power!

The Story

“Pharaoh will let you go after one more plague,” God told Moses. “Tell everyone to get ready. Go ask your neighbors for gold, silver, and jewels.”

When the Israelites went to their Egyptian neighbors and asked to borrow their jewelry, the Egyptians might have been surprised, but they feared Moses and the powerful God of the Israelites. They gave the Israelites their best treasures.

“God has given me another message for you,” Moses told the people. “Every household shall take a lamb that is perfect and make a sacrifice to God. Take the blood of the lamb and put it on the two sides and the top of the door of your house. Eat the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Eat it with your clothes all packed and everything ready to go, because tonight the death angel will pass over your houses. The houses that have blood on the door posts will be safe. The oldest child of the family will die in every house that has no blood on the doorpost.

“Every year at this time you will eat a special meal like this to remember how God brought you out of the land of Egypt. When your children ask you what you are doing, tell them it is in remembrance of God’s deliverance.”

All through the centuries and even today, the Jewish people eat this same Passover meal once every year.

The children of Israel did as God said. They picked out the best lamb they had. Then they sacrificed it to the Lord and ate it. They took the blood and put it on both sides and the top of the door. Then they waited.

Just as God said, at midnight the death angel traveled through the land. Every door that had the blood on the doorposts, he passed over. Those that had no blood on the door, he did not pass by. The oldest son of the family died.

God had a purpose for all the plagues, and a special purpose for this last dreadful plague. It was a picture of what God would one day do for His people.

The people were to offer a sacrifice of a lamb without spot or blemish. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for sin. He didn't have a spot or blemish. Jesus never sinned.

The innocent lamb was killed as a sacrifice for sin in order to protect the household from death. Jesus was sacrificed on the cross. There on the cross He endured, not only the pain of the crucifixion, but the wrath of God. He endured the punishment our sins deserved.

The blood on the doorposts caused the death angel to pass over the house. Romans 6:23 tells us that "The wages of sin is death." The blood of Jesus that has covered the sin of His people causes God to pass over their sin and they are able to escape the punishment of death that all deserve.

Everyone who believed God and obeyed were kept safe from death. The Egyptians who didn't believe God had a terrible surprise waiting for them the next morning. They woke to find that the oldest son in every house was dead. The son of Pharaoh was dead. The son of the slave in Pharaoh's dungeon was dead, too. In every house in Egypt, there was weeping and wailing, because someone had died.

Do you remember that the Israelites were crying at the first of Exodus, because Pharaoh was killing all the boy babies? Now the Egyptians were crying. They were being repaid for their evil doings.

Pharaoh finally said, "Go. Get out of here –and hurry!"

The Israelites hurried. An angel of the Lord led them and they left Egypt, heading toward the Red Sea.

But Pharaoh changed his mind again. The soldiers followed after the Israelites to bring them back. They were trapped! On two sides there were mountains. On one side was the Red Sea, which was too big to cross without boats. On the fourth side the Egyptians came after them.

But God knew what He was doing. He was ready to deliver His people in a very exciting way.

The Life Lesson

God told the Israelites exactly how to escape death. They were to kill a perfect lamb and put the blood on the doorposts.

Suppose one of the Israelites had said, “I don’t want to waste one of my good lambs. I will put the blood of a goat on the door, instead. The death angel probably won’t notice the difference.” What would have happened?

I think the firstborn would have gone with the death angel. That’s because we must do as *God* says.

Many people think, “I don’t want to give my life up to God. I’ll just give some money, or just go to church. That ought to be good enough to get me into heaven.”

These people are sadly mistaken. The only way to get to Heaven is God’s way. The only way of salvation is through Christ. Only the blood Jesus shed on the cross is able to save us from the eternal death we deserve.

Review Questions

How many plagues did God send in all?

Ten

What was the tenth plague?

The death of the firstborn child in each house.

What did God tell the Israelites to ask their Egyptian neighbors?

They were to ask for silver, gold, and jewelry.

Did the Egyptians give their jewelry to them?

Yes

What did God tell them to sacrifice?

A perfect lamb.

What were they to do with the blood of the lamb?

Put it on the doorposts of their houses.

What would happen when the death angel saw the blood?

He would pass over the house.

What was the special meal they were to eat called?

The Passover meal.

Did Pharaoh let the Israelites leave?

Yes -- but he changed his mind.

What saved the Israelites from the death angel?

The blood of the lamb.

What can save us from spiritual death?

Only the blood of Jesus.