

The Tenth Plague: Preparation

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[0 : 0 0] As we turn back to Exodus 11, as we see the preparations for the 10th plague, we see three aspects in that passage. We see again the sure faith of Moses. We see the sovereign command of God, God in command, God in control of every aspect of what we read there, of even the preparation of the plague to come. And then, as we mentioned a moment ago, the separation, the distinction between Egypt and Israel, the 10th plague, the preparation. Well, the time has come. All the warnings that had been seen and made evident in the previous nine plagues, they hadn't moved the heart of Pharaoh. They hadn't moved the hearts of the Egyptian people. The evidence of God's judgment had been seen, had been seen clearly, but the hardened hearts of God's opponents had remained hardened. God won't be mocked. And God will visit Pharaoh, and God will visit Pharaoh's people, and will bring one more plague, the 10th plague. In fact, when we started reading Exodus 11, we read the word plague, but in fact it's a very different word to the words used for the previous nine plagues. This is a word that speaks of a blow, a stroke, a final act of judgment. And that blow is going to strike at the very fabric of

Egyptian society. It's going to be a final death knell. There's going to be no appeal against that final act of judgment. But there will be life. Life to those in whom God's favor rests.

There will be life given to God's people. And all the principal players in the drama that we've seen up from now, all these individuals, all these groups that we've seen in the story thus far, all are going to be affected. Pharaoh and his people are going to be affected. The Israelites are going to be affected. Moses himself is going to be affected. The Egyptians are going to suffer pain and anguish and destruction. But Moses and the Israelites are going to be saved.

Moses himself is going to be seen to be a man who continues to grow in faith. A man who trusts absolutely in God's authority. And God's going to be seen in all his power, in all his power and judgment. He's going to be seen as sovereign. He's going to be seen as the redeemer of his people.

As we explore this passage, as we read further in this chapter, then of course we must apply what we read here, what's been taught here. Because when we see Moses' faith, though it's been tested, it's been tried, but Moses' faith triumphs. And that you be encouraged when your faith is tested and tried. And by the grace of God, that you find your faith triumphant in the face of so much opposition to the cause of the Savior. And when you see the evidence of God's total command, even here in his control over the events there in Egypt, then be assured of the same sovereign power of God, even in our land today and across the nations. And in seeing the distinction that God makes there between the Egyptians and the Israelites, then be brought to see the reality of that continued separation, that separation between those who are the Lord's, those who've rejected the Savior.

[4 : 0 7] And just to say this, just as in some ways an aside, but still I think important, it so happens that next Sunday happens to be the weekend of Passover in the Jewish calendar.

And God willing, next Lord's Day will be taken to Exodus 12 and the focus next Lord's Day will be on the theme of Passover. That passage that points to the Passover lamb, the lamb slain for us, the Lord Jesus, the lamb of the world who takes, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

That wonderful act of salvation that in these coming weeks, and so many of us will be looking at, reflecting on, giving thanks on, even as we're absorbed in the account of God's passing over his people in salvation.

But let's look first of all then in the passage at the sure faith of Moses. And as we've been considering, even as we've been looking at Moses and his, as it were, the development of his faith, he's grown in faith. Even since that time when he first met with God at the burning bush.

Remember, he'd been perplexed. He'd been called to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. But at first the Israelites in Egypt, they doubted his leadership. Pharaoh wouldn't listen to Moses and Aaron. But Moses had grown in faith. He'd obeyed God, even in appearing before Pharaoh and engaging with him face to face, even in the coming of these first nine plagues. And as Moses sees these nine plagues being inflicted in Egypt, his faith increases. And it's come to the preparation time for the tenth plague. And again, we see Moses in faith, prepared in faith, prepared to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, prepared to take that stand against Pharaoh, which we see that in the words of verse four, where Moses says, thus says the Lord. He's giving the word of God. And he's giving that word that specifies judgment. Judgment that's going to come upon Pharaoh and his people as distinct to the safety that the

[6 : 35] Lord's people are going to be given. That distinction, as we said, that we'll look at more closely in a moment. But here's Moses. Moses has, as we can see here, no fear of man because he has fear of God.

This is Moses who's proclaiming the word of God that he knows is going to be offensive in the ear of his enemies. He knows it's going to be offensive because he's making that, pointing out that distinction between those who are of the Lord and those who are of Pharaoh. But Moses isn't going to somehow massage the language that God is giving him. He's not going to back down. He's not going to cut corners in the message that he's been given to give to Pharaoh. And indeed, for ourselves, even in this time, this time that we're living through, we're not to back down when we still proclaim the word of God, the unsearchable riches of Christ. We're not to cut corners even in proclaiming the word of truth that is so offensive to so many. Moses, that man of faith, feared God rather than feared man. And it's for you and for me to have that fear of God in our hearts as we proclaim the Lord Jesus as the only Savior, the one true way, the way, the truth and the life. Be courageous then in faith as you take that stand for the Savior, as you persevere in faith, just as Moses here persevered in faith despite the fact that, you know, he'd been shown so much hostility by Pharaoh and by

Pharaoh's people up to this point. But now here's this man who's been transformed in his faith. Moses transformed because he saw him who's invisible. He'd seen the evidence of God's power.

He trusted in God. He trusted in the one who's faithful to his people. And now Moses is standing in faith. And you know, there'll be many times when your faith is challenged. Faith challenged because of particular difficulties. You know, even when, like Moses, you've stood firm in faith and you've had that made that stand for the Lord Jesus in a world that really is the more offended by the name of the Savior. But be encouraged by even the faith of Moses here. Moses faced a tax. He was attacked for his standing for the Lord. But he didn't give in. Yes, he'd been weak in faith at one particular point in his life. But he persevered to the point that he wasn't going to back down.

He wouldn't back down even before someone who appeared more powerful than himself. No, why? Because Moses knew that God was with him. The evidence of God's presence, of God's power was there before Moses. And it's not for any who proclaim the Lord Jesus to retreat before a world that, well, appears more powerful. We live in the sort of the mindset of the time, the zeitgeist of the time that seeks to silence the voices of those who proclaim the Lord Jesus. But continue to persevere in faith. Trust in our Lord and Savior. Trust and continue to trust in him. And yes, lift your eyes heavenward. Look to the evidence of God's mighty power before you. Look to that grace that's transformed your life.

[10 : 32] Why? Because of his great love. Think of our faithful God whose word of promise came true in the coming of the Lord Jesus. Jesus who came to die for you so that you might be pronounced not guilty before the holy and almighty God. And again, just as Moses had seen the evidence of God's power, even in the the nine plagues, see the evidence of God's power before you. See the evidence of God's mercies towards you. Even this morning when you woke up, did you not say that great is your faithfulness? Look at what God has done for you and in you. Consider that gift of faith that God has given you to believe.

And that strengthening of that faith, just as Moses was strengthened in his faith. Look to him who keeps you, who watches over you, who protects you, who strengthens that faith, even in the trials and testings of your life, so that you might truly be triumphant in his strength and by his love.

As we think of the command of God, the power of God, let's see that in more detail and as we see there in the sovereign command of God, as we see this in the passage. Because God is Lord and God had never abandoned people. Yes, God had heard the cries of his afflicted ones, those who were all suffering under the oppression and suppression of Egypt. And God would answer. God would answer in judgment. In judgment against those who'd exercise such cruelty against his people. And he would show his absolute sovereignty. He would show his absolute command of every situation there in Egypt.

Even as in that struggle between God and Pharaoh, which in fact was no struggle at all, because Pharaoh had no power against Almighty God. God was holy in command. Even when the forces of evil sought to rise up and to suppress God's people. No, even the combined strength of God's enemies, there's no strength at all against Almighty God. Even as we're seeing there in the nine plagues that were cast in Egypt.

Even in the tenth plague, God's power revealed. But even in this, that time of preparation there before the tenth plague, we see the sovereign command of God. It's evident.

[13 : 19] We read that earlier in the passage. God makes the Egyptian people favorable favorable towards the Israelites. We read there of Moses being highly regarded in Egypt.

Highly regarded by Moses, by Pharaoh's officials. Even by the people. Again, evidence of God's sovereign power in that situation.

And so God's ensuring that the Egyptian people, that they have no hostility towards the Israelites. Even though it was very, very evident that it was by God's power that the previous plagues had come upon Egypt.

Moses himself, he'd come to grow in esteem by the Egyptian officials. He'd seen his faith. He'd seen his resolute stance against Pharaoh.

We read there that Moses was very great in the land of Egypt. In the sight of Pharaoh's servants. In the sight of his people. The man, Moses.

[14 : 22] This was a man. This wasn't some kind of conceived deity in the eyes of the Egyptians. Yes, a man who displayed many weaknesses.

But a man who'd shown such character in the Lord. There he is standing before Pharaoh, prepared to be used by God and showing forth the power of God.

That power that no Egyptian God could match. And this, we look to our present time. When the Lord's people take that stand for truth in the world that's largely rejected the truth of God.

And largely rejected God's word. Be encouraged to know that the sovereign command of God prevails. The gates of hell will not prevail against the Lord's church.

God is sovereign. He's in command. He's in control. He won't be usurped by other religions. He won't be usurped by other powers. He won't be usurped by other political entities.

[15 : 32] He won't be usurped by other nations, other people groups who reject him. God is Lord. He will prevail. He does prevail in power and authority.

And that's what we read there in the announcement of the 10th plague. We read there in verses 4 and 5. About midnight, God says, I will go out in the midst of Egypt 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's behind the hand mill and all the firstborn of the cattle. And you see the consequence of rejection.

The consequence of unbelief. See the consequence of resistance to God and his people. What do we read? We read that the firstborn of Pharaoh will perish.

And in that statement, the statement of God's power against, yes, even the religion of Pharaoh.

[16 : 34] Because in Egyptian religion, when a Pharaoh died, his son became heir. But more than that, in Egyptian religion, the son became the divine personification of the god Horus.

So with the promise of Pharaoh's firstborn to die, that itself was an attack on the powerlessness of Egyptian religion.

Because the divine ruler of Egypt would be seen to be no match for the divine ruler of the universe. Politically, the death of the firstborn of Pharaoh would bring about turmoil in the succession to the throne.

And as we read there, the blanket judgment against all in Egypt, all who would not worship the Lord, that would indicate and will indicate the judgment of God against every nation that rejects him.

Because no power on earth can triumph over God the Lord. No force or no forces of hell can win that victory over our Lord and Savior.

[17 : 46] Of course, seen supremely in the cross of the Lord Jesus when the forces of evil conspired against Jesus. They conspired to put Jesus to death, to silence him once for all.

But in death, Jesus triumphed over sin. He triumphed over Satan. And three days later, triumphed over death itself. These great events that, as we said, will be a particular focus even in these next few weeks.

Pharaoh's throne, that throne there had seemed so secure. The succession there had seemed so secure. Egyptian society, Egyptian religion that had seemed so secure.

You know, there's no security in a mindset, in any political entity, in any nation that turns its back in God. Isn't that a timely reminder for ourselves in these critical days that we're living through?

Even last year, the security that so many had taken for granted, shattered, shattered through the events that we've been living through.

[19 : 01] A pandemic that shattered securities, security in possessions, in political systems, and so many corrupt ways of life. Well, these things have been seen for what they are.

Insecurity. That building of one's house in sand. But as Jesus reminds us, the one who builds his house on the rock, the one who builds his house on the Savior, he knows, she knows that true security in God the Lord.

Because it's God who's Lord, God who's in control, God who's sovereign, God who gives that security that the world knows nothing of because he's Lord.

And it's that security, that eternal security that the Lord's people know that, well, that we read there in verses 6 to 7, the distinction, the separation of Egypt and Israel.

As we read there, there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been nor ever will be again. 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 God and Israel.

[20 : 22] This is the word of God. God speaking of that division to be seen as a result of judgment. God telling of that unprecedented cry of anguish from a people who'd taste the wrath of God as opposed to the peace of those who knew and would know deliverance from God's judgment.

In the whole of Egypt there'd be the, or be heard that the pangs of death in the whole of Israel there'd be no such noise.

The separation of Egypt and Israel would be so clear. There'd be the contrast there on the one hand between the wailing, the crying, the pain, and on the other hand, the sound of silence, the sound of peace.

That contrast that, you know, we just can't ignore now and will not ignore eternally. God tells us, as we read there in Revelation, but God tells us of the last times, these last times when, at the end of the last times when Christ comes as judge and just as in Egypt when all from Pharaoh to the slave crying out in anguish against the judgment of God.

Well, we read in another part of Revelation, Revelation 6, that same torment in the kings of the earth. Notice, Pharaoh's status, the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful and everyone slave and free hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains calling to the mountains and rocks fall on us and hide us from the face of him who's seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of the wrath has come and who can stand?

[22 : 18] But for the Lord's people there'll be that contrast of the Lord's peace, peace through the saving work of the Lord Jesus, peace through him who gave his life for sinners such as ourselves.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more for the former things have passed away.

and the distinction between Egypt and Israel will be seen in the outworking of the tenth plague. But even in that outworking as God willing we'll look at next Lord's day but even in that tenth plague to come in Egypt you might say is but a presentation of that distinction that's a reality now and that distinction that's going to be fully revealed when Jesus returns in judgment.

Thus we again read in another part of Revelation when he'll place his flock his sheep on his right and the goats on his left. That distinction that cannot be breached not after this earthly time is over that distinction that cannot be altered.

So where then do you stand? Which side are you on? Are you with the those of are you with the Egypt of defiance the Egypt of defiance that will not bow before the knee bow the knee to the Lord?

[24 : 02] Or are you with the flock of Christ? Are you with the Israel of God? Are you his by faith in the Lord Jesus? Well then you have yet breath on earth.

Commit your life to him now. Know that peace that passes understanding. And yes flee from the wrath to come. Flee from the judgment of God against sin.

Flee from all that willful disobedience will bring in judgment. You see what we've read there in Exodus 11 it's got a present and a future reality for all.

and we ignore I ignore you ignore this chapter at our peril at our eternal peril. But again we heed the message that the chapter gives us of that distinction that God makes between Egypt and Israel.

Will you truly be of the Israel of God who know him who love him who serve him who are his now and eternally. Amen.

[25 : 10] let us pray. Our heavenly father as we have come to see of solemn matters we pray Lord that none will have left the service without knowing the Lord Jesus as savior without knowing you are God as father without having been drawn by the power of the Holy Spirit to see in the savior the one who came to give his life for sinners.

May there truly be that repentance of heart may there truly be that torment to you may there truly be that joy in the presence of your God in heaven over even one sinner who repents.

So Lord bless we pray your word and continue with us now we ask in Jesus name we pray Amen. Amen.