

July 19th, 2020
“That You May Know That I am the LORD”
Exodus 7-12

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

July 12 Psalms 108-114	July 16 Proverbs 10-12
July 13 Proverbs 1-3	July 17 Proverbs 13-15
July 14 Proverbs 4-6	July 18 Proverbs 16-18
July 15 Proverbs 7-9	July 19 Proverbs 19-21

Lesson Introduction: Our lesson this week focuses on the ten plagues that the LORD brought upon Egypt in order that they (and the Israelites... and us) would know that He was (and is) the LORD. As we study, we will see how God is far greater than any earthly authority, and how He sovereignly executes judgment with complete justice on those who oppose Him. Finally, we will see how the LORD provides shelter and salvation from destruction and chaos for those who are His.

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS:

- ***The LORD alone is to be glorified (8:22; 9:14, 16, 29, 10:1-2; 11:9)***
- ***The LORD is righteous in all His ways (7:3-4, 13, 22-23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34-35; 10:1, 20, 27-29)***
- ***God has delivered us from death through Christ our sacrificial Lamb (Ch. 12).***

Read Exodus 7-12

Discussion Section 1: Hard Hearts, Plagues, and the Glory of the LORD

-What was the main purpose of the plagues that came upon Egypt? (8:22; 9:14, 16, 29; 10:1-2; 11:9)

-How did these plagues execute the LORD’s judgment on all the gods of Egypt? (12:12)

-What does it mean that “the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh”? (9:12; 10:1, 20, 29)

Note: We see a few resounding themes throughout this section of Scripture. We see repeatedly that God would use the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart to show that He alone was the LORD. One of the interesting things about

God’s judgement against Egypt is that it was not simply judgment against the people of Egypt, but also, their God’s. Tony Merida explains in *Exalting Jesus in Exodus*:

“God was judging not only the Egyptians but also the gods of Egypt. In Exodus 12:12 God said that He was going to perform the last sign, the death of the firstborn, and in so doing He was executing “judgments against all the gods of Egypt.” This was also repeated in Numbers: “The Lord had executed judgment against their gods” (33:4).

The plagues fell on all the areas of life that were supposed to have been protected by Egypt’s gods. James Boyce said,

‘There were about eighty major deities in Egypt, all clustered about three great natural forces of Egyptian life: the Nile River, the land, and the sky. . . . The first two plagues were against the gods of the Nile. The next four were against the land gods. The final four plagues were against the gods of the sky, culminating the death of the firstborn.’ (Ryken, Exodus, 216)” (Pg. 46)

As we see all the plagues and the way they correlated with the gods of Egypt, the point should become clear to us... There is One True God, and Yahweh is His name! All that mighty Egypt had hoped in was brought to nothing by one man with a staff. Of course, we know, and they would know, that it was the LORD behind the staff. No mighty river, no dark magicians, and even Pharaoh himself could not stand against the power of the LORD.

The reason all this destruction came about was because Pharaoh was too hard-hearted to listen to the LORD’s instructions. Throughout these chapters we see continually that the heart of the Pharaoh was hardened, and multiple times we see that the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart (9:12; 10:1, 20, 29). This may seem problematic to some, but when we truly think about it, it should not be. What we know is that apart from God’s mercy and grace, all of us are sinful, hard-hearted people. No one seeks God, or desires to walk in obedience to Him apart from His grace (Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:10-12, Ephesians 2:1-3). Make no mistake, Pharaoh’s hard-heartedness was of his own volition. He did not want to be anything but hard-hearted, and that is exactly what he was. Rather than showing Pharaoh mercy by softening his heart, the LORD chose to give Pharaoh over to his debased mind, and hardened his heart even more so, that He might fulfill His purposes

through sending the plagues. Again, that purpose was that He would be high and lifted up, and known not only to that generation, but the generations to come, as the LORD God.

In **Romans 9:14-23**, we see that the LORD is completely within His rights to show mercy to whom He will show mercy, while hardening whom He will harden. He even explicitly mentions that the LORD raised Pharaoh up for the very purpose of showing His power, and that His name would be proclaimed throughout the earth. The wrath He brought on Pharaoh was, **“in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which He has prepared beforehand for glory...” (Romans 9:23)**. Some might think it unfair that the LORD further hardened the heart of Pharaoh, but Paul’s response to that is simply, **“who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?” (Romans 9:20-21)**. Ultimately, as we consider God’s sovereign hand in the judgment that He brought on Pharaoh and Egypt it should simply cause us to tremble and rejoice. We tremble because He is God and He has the right to do whatever He sees fit. We rejoice because He is our merciful Savior, Who has made us alive in Christ, and given us a heart of flesh in place of the heart of stone that we all once had (**Ephesians 2:4-10, Ezekiel 36:25-27**).

Discussion Section 2: The Passover (Ch. 12)

-How does the Passover remind us of Jesus’ substitutionary atonement for our sins?

Excerpt from Exalting Jesus in Exodus by Tony Merida, Pg. 66-67:

“How can we conclude this amazing section of Exodus? Let us remember that true freedom comes in Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He is the lamb who provides us with total perfection and protection from God’s judgment (1 John 2:2; 3:10). He was the spotless, unblemished lamb, chosen before the foundation of the world (1 Pet 1:19-20). He was the lamb whose bones were not broken (John 19:33-36); the ultimate lamb, crucified during Passover (Matt 26:26-32). This lamb will apply His blood to our account (2 Cor 5:21). Will you recognize this today?

If you are wondering, “How can a sinner come into the presence of a holy God?” Look to the Lamb!

Russell Moore says:

‘Does it remind you that the death angel is coming for us too? . . . If the Lord waits . . . we will all be placed in the ground. We aren’t gods! But what the gospel reminds us of is that we’re passed over . . . so even as we eat and drink in this life, we keep our shoes on, we recognize the people we belong to, and when we finally stand in judgment we don’t come cowering in fear, we come marching triumphantly to Zion right through that door, that narrow little door that everybody great or small must pass through if we would be redeemed. And it’s the one with blood all over it—that’s the Gospel!’ (“The Blood-Splattered Welcome Mat”)

We can come into the presence of a holy God through an unblemished substitute. Salvation only comes through this Jesus who lived the life you could not live and died the death you should have died. In a famous sermon, R. G. Lee put it like this:

‘And the only way I know for any man . . . to escape the sinner’s payday . . . is through Christ Jesus, who took the sinner’s place upon the Cross, becoming for all sinners all that God must judge, that sinners through faith in Christ Jesus might become all that God cannot judge.’ (“Pay Day Someday”)

Praise God we have a substitute: Christ Jesus, our Passover Lamb! If you have come to Him by faith, you can sing the song of the redeemed:

‘Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and also of the living creatures and of the elders. Their number was countless thousands, plus thousands of thousands. They said with a loud voice: “The Lamb who was slaughtered is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing! I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them say: Blessing and honor and glory and dominion to the One seated on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever! The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.’ (Rev 5:11-14)”