

The Last Night in Bondage

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Bible Text: Exodus 12
Preached on: Sunday, January 25, 2004

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The book of Exodus chapter 12 reading from verse one. I want to talk to you tonight about the last night of bondage. It will be wonderful tonight if you are here if you are not a Christian, wouldn't it be wonderful if this were the last night of bondage for you? Because if you are not saved you are in bondage, bondage to sin, bondage to self and bondage to Satan. And the only way that you can be brought out is by the blood of the Lamb and by the power of the hand of the Lord.

Exodus 12 and verse one.

And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 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: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 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. 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. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. 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. 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. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.¹

Down to verse 29.

And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.²

Down to verse 40.

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.³

May God bless to our hearts the reading of his own precious Word.

The circumstances were dire enough. The Jewish people were prisoners in the land of Egypt. They were held in a ghetto in Goshen. The king's command was still in force, "Wipe out the Jews!" That is what Pharaoh sought to do. That is what Haman sought to do. That is what Herod sought to do. That is what Saddam Hussein has sought to do.

And, my dear friends, there are still those in the world tonight who want to wipe out God's ancient people. The king's command was still in force, "Wipe out the Jews!" There could be no hope of escape as long as Pharaoh's soldiers guarded the entrance to that ghetto in Goshen. As for the Promised Land, all that had come and gone. Sure, the kinsman redeemer had come, but nothing had changed. They were still captives in a foreign land. Pharaoh was still on the throne. He was unbowed. He was unbroken. He was unbelieving. He was determined not to let this captive people go until that night. What a night it was. It was a night so memorable in the history of the Jewish nation that the Jewish calendar was changed. It was a night black in dismays, terrible in judgments, wild and affrights came in anguish throughout the heart of Egypt's empire. Every house

¹ Exodus 12:1-14

² Exodus 12:29-30.

³ Exodus 12:40-42.

was worn, every face was harder, every hard was misery, death. It forced open all doors. Each eldest child in the life in the nation of Egypt was a lifeless corpse. From the monarch on the throne to the slave in the kitchen all were bewailing the death of the first born. An awful night for Egypt.

But, my friends, it was a memorable night for Israel. What a contrast. For Egypt it was a night of darkness. For Israel it was a night of deliverance. For Egypt it was a night of death. For Israel it was a night of life. For Egypt it was a night of condemnation. For Israel it was a night of emancipation. The Bible says this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations. It was an unforgettable night.

I wonder, dear friend, could this be the same for you this evening? I wonder will this be the night when you look back and say it was on the 25th of January in the year 2004, that was the night that I sealed and settled my eternal destiny. That was the night when I trusted the Lord Jesus. That was the night that I was redeemed by blood or perhaps, my friend, in hell. You will remember this night and you will look back and you will say, "That was the night that I heard God's final call."

I want to suggest to you that this last night in bondage was a night when terror was expressed. It was a night when terror was expressed. The Bible says, "There was great cry in Egypt for there was not an house where there was not one dead."⁴

I wonder. Can you picture it tonight in your mind's eye? I know this is a very personal question, but do you sleep well at night? Let me ask you, further, would you be able to sleep peaceably tonight knowing that the angel of death was about to kill the first born in your home, in your family? Would you parents sleep well that night? Can you picture this scene? It was a night when terror was expressed.

You see, darkness was abounding. They had just gone through three terrible days and nights. There was so much darkness in the land of Egypt that it was a darkness that you could actually feel. There was not only the darkness, but there was the bondage.

Over and over again in the book of Exodus the bondage of Israel is mentioned. You must remember, dear friend, that Israel were not down there on holiday. They were not down there on vacation. They were not down there sightseeing. They were in bondage to Pharaoh. Pharaoh had deprived them of their families. Pharaoh had deprived them of their freedom. Pharaoh had deprived them of their future. Here they were in darkness. They were surrounded with darkness and they were subjected to a ruthless tyrant.

I wonder, does that affect your view tonight? I wonder tonight are you still not saved and you are controlled by the devil and you are bound by the shackles of sin? Oh, for you it started so promising, but, oh, my dear friends, tonight it all looks so bleak. Do you know something, that is the way it always starts with the devil. It starts so sweet, but it ends so bleak.

⁴ Exodus 12:30.

Some years ago there was an old country preacher that said, "Sin will take you farther than you want to go. Sin will keep you longer than you want to stay. Sin will cost you more than you want to pay."

You see, down there in Egypt darkness was abounding and then something else. Death was approaching. For the edict of God was the first born in the land of Egypt shall die.

Do you know something tonight, dear friends? God has condemned our first born. Everywhere in Scripture you will find that God has condemned our first born.

God rejected Cain and accepted Abel. God rejected Ishmael and accepted Isaac. God rejected Esau and accepted Jacob.

You see, the Lord cannot accept your first birth tonight. You might be very proud of your first birth. You might say, "Well, you know, I was born into a very wealthy home. I was born into a well to do home and my parents brought me up so well. I was born into a wonderful home with a great deal of talent."

But God rejects your first birth.

That is why the Lord Jesus said you need to have a second birth. The Lord Jesus said, "Ye must be born again."⁵

And so the first born in the land of Egypt were condemned to die. Darkness was abounding. Death was approaching. In the midnight hour judgment was about to fall.

I wonder tonight, dear unconverted friend, do you realize that because of your first death you are under the judgment of God? Let me give it to you the way the Bible talks. You are condemned already.

Did you ever see the guy in death row? Sure you have. You have turned on the TV. Maybe it has been one of the states in the United States of America and you have watched them. You have watched them on death row. You have watched his final week. And then his final day. And then his final hour. That is where you are tonight. You are on death row. You are condemned already.

I wonder how long it will be before the sentence and execution is carried out. I wonder how long will it be, dear friend, before the angel of death approaches you? I wonder how long before it will be when you are summoned to stand at the bar of God condemned already? And some of you here tonight in Lurgan Baptist church like Pharaoh, you have been faithfully warned, but instead of obedience there has been defiance. And some of you like Pharaoh tonight, you have seen the finger of God. You have seen the power of God all around you. But still you are defiant.

⁵ John 3:7.

You are saying to yourself tonight, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice?”⁶
And like Pharaoh tonight, you have hardened your heart.

What a night it was. It was a night when terror was expressed.

But something else. It was a night when truth was exhibited. You see, God was going to display the truth of salvation. God was going to display the truth of redemption through a little lamb, a little lamb which spoke of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, a spotless Lamb, a Lamb without blemish, a male of the first year.

You see, if that little lamb had been blind or broken, diseased, maimed, marred, it had the scurvy, it was no use.

And I speak reverently tonight when I say if there had have been one flaw in the Lord Jesus he would have been incapable of being our Savior. You see, he was unique tonight. The Lord Jesus was absolutely unique. He was unique in his life. He was unique in his birth. He was unique in his death. He was unique in his resurrection. The Lord Jesus was holy.

Think of it tonight. There was one man on planet earth, one man who never entertained a wrong thought, one man who never spoke a wrong word, one man who never expressed a wrong action, one man who never had a wrong attitude. He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.”⁷

My friend, tonight it is because he is sinless that he can save. It is because that he is perfectly innocent that the can forgive. It is because tonight that he is faultless that he can bring you forgiveness.

Do you know what the Bible says about Christ? The Bible says he did no sin. The Bible says he knew no sin. The Bible says in him was no sin.

Sometimes we sing that old hymn:

There was none other good enough to pay the price of sin,
He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.

I say to you tonight, “What fault can you find in Christ?”

Oh, you say, “Preacher, I can see so many inconsistencies in God’s people and Christians.”

My dear friend, you must understand the question tonight. What fault can you find in the Lord Jesus that you refuse to trust him as your Savior and Lord?

⁶ Exodus 5:2.

⁷ Hebrews 7:26.

It had to be a spotless lamb. And then it had to be a slain lamb. You know, they had to take that little lamb on Passover night and kill it, singular in the evening. And that lamb could never save. It had to die.

And, you see, Christ's life of righteousness would have been useless apart from the cross. He had to die. The unvarying teaching of the Bible is this, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

Will you come with me to Calvary tonight? Will you stand under that old rugged cross? Will you look at those crimson drops that fell from his hands, his feet and side? Will you look at that face that was marred more than the face of any man? Will you see those hands and feet that were pierced? Will you look at that back that was ripped [?] shreds? And all for you. For the Lamb had to be slain.

You will notice that this was not only a spotless lamb and a slain lamb. It had to be a substitutionary lamb.

God says, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."⁸

You see, God intended the death of the lamb to be a substitute in the place, in the stead of others. And when by faith tonight I look to the cross I realize that Christ died for me. I should have been there, but the Lord Jesus took my place. He died in my room and stead.

Many years ago the Duke of Windsor, then Prince of Wales, arranged to visit a certain hospital in London. It was many years ago. Some of the most mutilated soldiers from the First World War were being treated there and the medical superintendent was showing them around the hospital. And he said to him, the Prince of Wales said to the superintendent and to the doctor, he said, "Sir, I have heard that you have some of the worst cases in this hospital."

And he said to the prince, "There are 36 men so terribly mutilated."

And the prince hearing this said, "Sir, I want to see them all."

And he was taken into a ward and he was shown badly wounded soldiers all lying comfortably receiving the best of medical attention. And he went around the ward and he spoke to each individually and he was trying to encourage them and uplift their spirits. And then he turned to the medical officer and he said, "Doctor, you told me there were 36 men. Where are the other six?"

And the doctor looked at him and said, "Your highness, the others are in such a terrible condition, they are in such a pitiable condition that we thought it well to spare you the pain of visiting them."

"But, doctor, I must see them, every one of them."

⁸ Exodus 12:13.

And so he as taken into another ward and there were five men, terribly disfigured and wounded. Some of them were blind. Some of them had limbs blown off. They were all physical wrecks.

And the prince was deeply moved. He was moved deeply and he showed his affection for them all. And he said, “Doctor, I have counted 35. Where is the 36th man?”

The prince was led into a ward apart from all the others and there was a young man. He was in a terrible condition. He was disfigured. He was blind. He a crippled. Half of his body wasn't there. H once possessed a fine physique.

And the prince stood down and he kissed the man on the forehead and then he rose up with the tears flowing down his cheek and he said to the doctor, “Wounded for me, wounded for me.”

That is what happened at Calvary. The Lord Jesus was wounded for me, dying in my place, meeting my judgment, bearing my sins.

Can you say tonight, “He did it for me”? Wounded for me?

What a night this was. You see, it was a night when terror was expressed. It was a night when truth was exhibited. God was showing that through the death of the lamb they could be brought out.

Listen. It was a night when trust was exercised. You see, the children of Israel depended on two things to bring them out. They depended on the preciousness of the blood, not just the blood shed, but the blood applied. They had to take the blood and put it in a basin and with hyssop they had to apply it to the lintel and to the doorposts of the houses. And God says, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”⁹

What do you think would have happened if some foolish Israelite would have said, “Well, I am not going to paint the blood. I am going to beautify the door posts with jewels of gold and jewels of silver.”

My dear friends, he would have perished.

You see, there is no other way to be saved tonight. There is no other way to get right with God. Your good works, your prayers, your religiosity, your sprinkling, your confirmation, your baptism holds no water with God tonight. There is only one way to get right with God and that is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Nothing can of sin atone,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

⁹ Ibid.

Several years ago in the square in Rotterdam Holland there once stood a house that was known as the house of terrors. The name came from the 16th century when King Philip of Spain came against the people of Holland sending the Duke of Alva to slaughter them. The troops were sent from house to house and they went through the city of Rotterdam and they were searching them out and they were killing them. And in this particular house a little group of people had gathered together. There were men and women. There were children and babies. And they heard the pounding of the doors and the screeching of the victims and the marching of the feet coming towards them and terror gripped their hearts.

And then suddenly on the premises a young man had an idea. There was a goat on the premises and he took that goat and he slew it and he began to wipe its blood, push its blood out through the door of the house and the soldiers approached and they were all behind the door. And the commander looked at the blood and said, "Men, the work has been done. Let's get on our way."

And a short time later from the house of 1000 terrors there emerged a band of people unharmed, untouched. They lived because a goat had died.

I wonder. Does God see you sheltering underneath the blood tonight? Is the blood of Christ precious to you? Though it have you found life? Are you depending on the blood?

You see, they depended on the preciousness of the blood.

Ah, but something else. They depended on the promises of the Lord. For it was God who said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."¹⁰

You see, the basis of our redemption tonight is the blood of Christ. But the basis of our assurance tonight is the Word of the Lord.

Dear friend, tonight, does God speak with truth? I mean, when God speaks through his book, does he speak the truth?

Then away with your doubts, your fears, your forebodings, your changing frames and feelings.

What did it matter what an Israelite felt like? What did it matter how much he feared? As long as God was true to his word, as long as God was true to his promises...

I wonder are you in the meeting tonight and is your problem assurance, the lack of it? You have no settled peace. And it is because tonight you have made something subjective, something within yourself the ground of your assurance instead of the promises of the Word of God.

¹⁰ Ibid.

If I were to come and sit by your side tonight and ask you a very simple question, what are you depending upon for life, for death, for eternity? I wonder how you would respond.

I tell you this. If you are depending on the preciousness of the blood you are safe. And if you are depending on the promises of the Lord, you are sure.

When the film was made of the *Titanic* some years ago it was entitled *A Night to be Remembered*. I know there is another one that has come out in more recent days. But this old film was called *A Night to be Remembered*.

What a night this was. Night when terror was expressed, night when truth was exhibited, a night when trust was exercised, a night when triumph was experienced.

For the Bible says, "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."¹¹

They were brought out of bondage.

My friends, they were brought out by the blood of the Lamb and they were brought out by the hand of the Lord.

Are you out yet? Are you out? Out of bondage to sin, to Satan, to self?

I wonder tonight will say and mean it:

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus I come, Jesus I come.
Into thy gladness, into thy light,
Jesus I come to thee.

They were brought out of bondage. Ah, but that is just the negative. They were brought into blessing.

You see, they were not only brought out. They were brought in. For Moses says of the Lord he brought us out that he might bring us in.

Do you know something tonight? Listen to me carefully. Dear unconverted, friend, God wants to save your soul. He wants to enrich your life. He wants to guide your steps. He wants to bless your home. He wants to secure your future.

Now tell me tonight. If you can come around the back and tell me, is there anything more wonderful than that? He wants to bring you out, out of bondage. And he wants to bring you in to blessing.

¹¹ Exodus 12:41.

There is a lovely story connected with this Passover night. It concerns a godly Jewish father and mother. Their large family, it was the Passover night. You can imagine it in your mind. It was the Passover. They had all gathered together around the table of the ceremonial meal as God has commanded and the bowl with the lamb's blood was on the center of the table and the hyssop was there to be used as the paint brush to apply it to the lintels and the door posts of the houses and they were all praying and preparing for what God had promised would be their last night in bondage. And the quietness of the night was disturbed because the youngest child, a little girl, she was concerned about her eldest brother. She was concerned about the first born in the house. Would he be all right, she wondered. Would the angel of death actually see the blood of the Lamb on the door posts and pass over?

And time and again during the darkness of the night she went to her father's mat and she woke her father and she was seeking that reassurance. And just before midnight she awoke again and she went to her sleeping father and he was irritated with her and he said, "Daughter, it is all right. God has promised."

"Oh," she said, "Daddy, are you sure the blood is clear enough on the door posts to see?"

This time the father got up. He got up from his mat and he took the little girl by the hand and he led her through the room to the door and he opened it and he stood outside and he pointed to the lintel and the door posts of the houses and he was about to say, "Look," when he was shocked and silenced by the sight. There was no blood there.

Instantly he dropped his daughter's hand and he ran to the table where lay the blood and the bowl and the hyssop. In preparation for leaving the land and the journey ahead he had forgotten the most vital thing of all.

Just in time the blood was sprinkled on the lintel of the door post. The first born was safe and the story goes on to say it was God himself who kept waking that little girl. It was God himself who kept prompting that little girl to go to her father that he might comply with God's commands.

I'll finish.

But here is what I want you to do in closing. I want you to do a personal check, just a personal check.

Will you check tonight that you are sheltering underneath the blood of Christ? Will you check now?

And remember this. Each house unmarked was a house spared. Death, judgment. And every soul unsaved in this meeting going out into the great eternity will be a soul undone, every soul unwashed will be a soul undone lost in the fires of hell forever.

The last night in bondage. It can be such a night for you tonight when you meet the Savior, when you trust him, when you make him your very own, when you say, "Lord, tonight I am coming home."

Let's bow together.