

## God's Final Plague and Family Plan (Exodus 12:29-51)

Talk about C4C way to give, pray for Didier as he travels

Please turn to Ex 12 and today we come to the actual Exodus, the event the book is named after.

- Exodus means 'exiting,' going out, or departure (Israel from Egypt).
- But for 12 chapters of the Exodus story, there's been no exodus,
  - o no exit permit from Pharaoh, till now, the actual Exodus.

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> plague where God brings death on those not covered by the blood of the lamb

It was in the dead of night, literally 'at darkest night.' **12:29** *At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock.* <sup>30</sup> *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 someone was not dead.* <sup>31</sup> *Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said.* <sup>32</sup> *Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!"* <sup>33</sup> *The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."* <sup>34</sup> *So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders.* <sup>35</sup> *The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing.* <sup>36</sup> *And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.* <sup>37</sup> *And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children.* <sup>38</sup> *A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds.* <sup>39</sup> *And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.* <sup>40</sup> *The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years.* <sup>41</sup> *At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.* <sup>42</sup> *It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.*

I read an ancient Egyptian poem, there's debate if it dates after the exodus, but here's parts of it:

Ipuwer Papyrus:<sup>1</sup> "Plague is throughout the land. Blood is everywhere...death...and the mummy cloth ...many dead are buried in the river... he who places his brother in the ground is everywhere" (sec. 2). [It describes children of princes struck dead and] "children of the neck are laid out on the high ground ... Gone is the gain of abundance of children ... it is the destruction of the land..." (sec. 2, 4, 5, 6) "All is ruin!" [like Ex 10:7] "...It is groaning throughout the land, mingled with lamentations" (sec. 3). "The door [keepers] say: 'Let us go and plunder.': and the [slave] takes what he finds... [Ex 12:35] "he who had no property is now a possessor of wealth... the poor of the land have become rich...Gold and... silver...are fastened on the neck of female slaves" [like Ex 11:2 slavewomen get silver and gold]

The Exodus is real history, regardless of the date or debates about that poem,

- but there's more in history that may relate to this section.
  - o Thutmose IV became Pharaoh after the traditional date of the Exodus,
  - o and he explained why he became king, claiming a dream where the god Horus promised him the throne if he'd remove the sand from the Sphinx.
  - o Normally the firstborn son of the prior Pharaoh would become king and there would be no need to explain or claim a divine vision to justify your reign.
  - o But if Pharaoh's firstborn son died in 1446 BC, and someone other than the firstborn son claimed the throne, that fits history.<sup>2</sup>
  - o But this isn't just history, it's for us.

**Outline: 1. God's final plague for Egypt  
2. God's family plan for the earth**

The context of ch 11 starts with God saying 'Yet one more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and Egypt...'

- This is God's final plague, and Pharaoh had fair warning.
- God told him 'if you refuse to let my son [Israel] go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son' (4:23).
- God is executing justice on a nation that had been killing every son born to Israel in ch 1
- Ex 12:29 says in the middle of the night God killed all the firstborn
  - o from the king to the captive and to the cattle even.
- From the palace to the prison, every Egyptian home greatly cried for lost loved ones

11:5 says 'even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill...'

- In other words, the highest to the lowest levels of Egypt.
- This is no Marxist revolution overthrowing the power structures of the oppressor
- the oppressed Egyptian captives in the dungeon also have their firstborn struck down. God doesn't liberate all like liberation theology would want him to,
  - o He judges all sinners great or small, slave or free.
  - o It's only those covered by the blood that His wrath will pass over.

**TURN TO REV 16**

It's not just OT times where people are struck down like this.

- In the NT time of the church, Acts 12 talks about a proud sinner, it says 'an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he...breathed his last' (v. 23).
  - o That's a warning to any who don't give God glory.

Ex 12 was the final plague on Egypt but God has final plagues to come

- for all who don't glorify Him and repent of their sin. This is relevant and real.
- The local judgment in the past will go global in the future,
  - o not just on one nation but all nations.

In Ex 7-10 water turns to blood so fish die, there's plagues of sores, darkness, hailstones, etc.

**Rev 16:2** So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. [just like in Exodus, it didn't fall on God's people, just God's enemies.]<sup>3</sup> The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the **blood** of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.<sup>4</sup> The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became **blood** [what God did on Egypt He'll do on earth before Jesus returns]

**Again God will make a distinction keeping His people safe as He judges the evil kingdom**

v. 9b...they cursed the name of God who had power over these **plagues**. They did not repent and give him glory.

<sup>10</sup> The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and **its kingdom was plunged into darkness...**

<sup>21</sup> And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the **plague** of the hail, because the **plague** was so severe. It's bigger and worse.

- Plagues are coming again, and even those who die before the end, this book ends with plagues added to those who dishonor God's Word
- Every unrepentant sinner great and small will face judgment worse than Egypt
  - o either in the end times or at the end of life. \
  - o So go back to Ex 12 but know this isn't just history.

**Are you ready if you died today unexpectedly? Have you turned from sin and trusted the Savior?**

There's irony: ancient Egyptians were morbidly obsessed with death

- and trying to prepare for it with their coffins and rituals and pyramids,
- but they can't prepare for all this death all at once.
- Ironically Pharaoh told Moses you see my face again you'll die, but Pharaoh's son dies.

Ex 12:31 *Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people..."*

The Hebrew for 'summon' means send by a third party

like a guy too weak to talk to a girl face to face so he sends someone else to give the message to see what she thinks (yes / no / maybe?).

He's impotent and embarrassed.

**This supposed mighty man of the mightiest nation is utterly weak, in utter defeat**

Pharaoh goes on '*both you and the people of Israel, go...*' he finally admits they're not his *people*

- They're *Israel*, a distinct nation from his own who he doesn't own.
- He calls Egypt '*my people*' but he's wanting '*the people of Israel*' to go from his people
- Earlier he said '*I will let you go... only you must not go very far*' (8:22).
  - o But now there's no pronoun 'I' and no letting
  - o No limitation or qualification or negotiation or hesitation.
  - o This is the end of 'I,' it's just '*up, go,*' and the end of v. 31 repeats it '*go, serve the LORD, as you have said.*'

Isn't it ironic, the guy who said 'I don't know Yahweh and I will not let you go,'

- he now says 'go, worship Yahweh'!

It's no longer 'as I've said as your Lord and master,'

- it's 'as you said, you're the boss, Moses, you call the shots now.'

<sup>32</sup> *Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone...*

3<sup>rd</sup> time he's said go. Like Dr. Seuss:

*'The time has come, the time is now ... you can go by foot, you can go by cow...*

*If you like you can go in an old blue shoe, just go, go, go, please do, do, do ...*

*Marvin K. Mooney! I don't care HOW! Marvin K. Mooney! Will you please GO NOW!*

*... I said GO and GO I meant ... [the book ends] the time had come so Marvin went!'*

The time had come so Moses went with Israel.

- But before he goes, Pharaoh begs v. 32b '*...bless me also!*'
- The Bible says the greater one blesses the lesser,
  - o to ask 'bless me' is admitting 'you're greater and I need you.'<sup>3</sup>
  - o He says basically 'it's as you say, but can you say a little blessing for me?'
- This is too little, too late. It's lame and pathetic.
- Sinners don't need the blessing of man. They need the blood of the lamb.
  - o You don't need a catholic priest to bless you,
  - o and you don't need a Christian to put a good word in for you with the big guy,
  - o you need Christ, beg of Him.

**After 9/11 many wanted God to bless America, but not on God's terms of repentance**

In The Fiddler on the Roof a young Russian Jew asks the local rabbi if God offers a blessing to the tsar that persecuted them. The rabbi said 'God bless him...but keep him far away from us!'

The Jews want to keep far away from their persecutor.

- It's mutual, Egypt wants them faraway: <sup>33</sup> *The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."*

Last week we talked about v. 34, they literally dine and dash,

- unleavened bread is the original fast food.
- They take the dough in a bowl "to-go" in their cloaks.

And in v. 35 they get a massive send-off gift from Egypt, silver and gold jewelry and clothes, all they ask for and more. <sup>36</sup> *And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.*

- Plundered a military term, conquerors carrying spoils of victory.

**And in v. 37 and 41 the words for 'men on foot' or 'hosts' are army terms. This is war God won**

Numbers 33:3-4 (ESV) *'On the day after the Passover, the people of Israel went out triumphantly in the sight of all the Egyptians, <sup>4</sup> while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down...*

- This isn't just an OT story. The NT uses language of Christ our Passover, victory in Him
- He rose triumphantly and led captives in His train and gave believers gifts on the way
- we have in Jesus an even greater *'redemption through his blood...riches of his grace, which he lavished on us...immeasurable riches...'* (Eph 4:8, 1:7, 2:7).
- Rom 8 says we were slaves to sin but are now more than conquerors through His love
- The OT house of Egypt was strong but Jesus talked about entering a strong man's house
  - o to plunder his goods, defeating Satan (Mk 3:27).
  - o Paul says Jesus *'made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross'* [and] *'thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ...'* <sup>4</sup>

**Ex 12 is a picture of future grace, from slavery to victory, bondage to blessings.**

Like *'riches they had not worked for and a freedom that was a gift they could not earn or win.'* <sup>5</sup> The commentators point out *'previously weak little Israel came away from slavery to the greatest power of the day instantly enriched. People suddenly held in their pockets and bags more precious gems and metals than they would ever have had a chance to accumulate in a lifetime and all the clothes they would need for many years of living in the wilderness.'* <sup>6</sup>

Later in the story *'the Israelites took precious metals and fine cloth from the Egyptians and used them to build God's house, the tabernacle...[but also later misused the gold] to make the golden calf. This is the danger we always face: to abuse God's blessing by using his gifts for our own idolatrous purposes. So we become fascinated with the latest academic trends or pop icons. We are consumed by our work, our artwork, our hobbies, or our pleasures. How easily the things of this world become idols!'* <sup>7</sup> Ex 12:12 says in all this, God is destroying false gods, too.

**Whatever you supremely prize, you idolize. What's #1 in life? Repent if it's not Christ**

There's a warning here but also an encouragement: you can trust God as faithful to His Word.

- v. 37 says the people of Israel were 600,000 men plus their families.
- God kept his promise to Abraham: *"Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him "So shall your offspring be." ...* <sup>13</sup> *Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. <sup>14</sup> But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. (Gen 15 NIV)*

Ex 12 says they were in Egypt 430 years, but apparently the first 30 not as slaves

Gen 46:3 to Israel: *"I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. <sup>4</sup> I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again ...*

- God is with His people, whatever you're going through, don't be afraid.
- When you're down, He goes down with you, and He Himself will bring you up.
- He keeps all His promises. Trust Him.

STORY – Didier's trip?

He's faithful to the end, to old age.

- Moses is 80 here and God had big things for him still.
- Sarah and Abraham were about 100 and childless, but God
- He took what was medically impossible and He turned it into millions of descendants.
- Jacob was a great sinner but God made a great nation of him in Egypt.

Jer. 33:3: *call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things...*

For our last point I want to show you a great thing in v. 38: *A mixed multitude also went up with them ... 'Them' from v. 37 is the people of Israel, also going 'with them' was a mixed group (others). People of non-Israelite nations, people of mixed ethnicity join the family of Israel in the exodus.*

God didn't just deliver Jews in Ex 12, a multitude of Gentiles also went out with Israel

**Our closing point: God's family plan for the earth** – it's part of God's promise to Abraham now fulfilled in His descendants, Gen 12:3 *'in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.'*

Gentile families of the earth are being blessed with Israel now in the Exodus

Paul in Gal 3 calls it the gospel preached beforehand

- all nations blessed with Israel by sharing Abraham's faith.<sup>8</sup>
- The NT word is *ethne*, all ethnicities, I call it God's multi-ethnic family plan.

The Passover institution in Ex 12 has been celebrated by Jewish families for thousands of years, but literally from day 1 God had non-Jews join their families. Let's finish reading the chapter:

<sup>47</sup> *All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. <sup>48</sup> If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. <sup>49</sup> There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you."* <sup>50</sup> *All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. <sup>51</sup> And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.*

*'their hosts' include Gentiles from v. 37, 'stranger'=foreigner, 'circumcised'=converted as Jews*

The Passover and Jewish law was the same for native Israelites and nations joining their faith. God's purpose statement for the Exodus is that His name will be proclaimed to all the earth.

In ch 7 God said Egyptians would know He's Yahweh, and in ch 9 some Egyptians fear God.

- Not all Egyptians stayed under God's judgment, some left with Israel in v. 37
- and a mixture of others, likely other African or Middle Eastern nations in mixed multitude, not a few, a multitude

SLIDE – what mixed peoples looked like in ancient Egyptian artwork

God promised Jacob he would make of him *'a multitude of nations'* in Gen 48:4 (NLT) and that started there in Egypt. Turn back to Gen 48. Earlier Joseph married Asenath from On in Africa, and they had 2 sons of mixed ethnicity (half-African).

Look at Gen 48:5, Jacob says to Joseph:

*And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. [i.e., as much in my family as my first sons]*

- In v. 9-10 Israel blesses and embraces them and kisses them as family
- they're on his knees, like adopted boys.
- To Jacob/Israel these African-born sons 'are mine as much as my Jewish sons.'

In v. 16 he speaks of his being redeemed, and says '*bless the boys; and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude ... v. 19 at the end '... his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.'*' [sounds like Ex 12 mixed multitude]<sup>20</sup> *So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, 'God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh ...2 boys of mixed-ethnicity are blessed with the descendants of Abraham, fulfilling Gen 12:3.*

- Ephraim and Manasseh become tribes of Israel!
- Israel's tribes had African blood from the start.

Ex 6 traces the family tree of Moses and Aaron and lists *Phinehas* in v. 25, which means 'black man' or 'Negro/Nubian.'

- At least 9 scholars have demonstrated that name's meaning in Egypt, 'either a person with unusually dark skin or a true African' (his mom married into the family?).<sup>9</sup>
- Phinehas was one of Israel's first and famous priests who saved Israel from civil war
- His prayer spared Israel from judgment and he was zealous for God's glory
- He was a faithful intercessor whose faith was credited as righteousness.<sup>10</sup>

One scholar studying this extensively writes 'it is extremely probable that Phinehas was at least half Black. When combined with the 'mixed multitude' of Exodus 12:38...Phinehas reveals to us that there was a significant presence of Cushites among the early Israelites...at its beginning, the highest level of Israelite priesthood apparently had Black ethnic elements within it ...'<sup>11</sup>

**Cushites in ancient records and artwork were dark-skinned Africans south of Egypt**

Now go to Num 12, and remember Moses was adopted by the daughter of an Egyptian King

- He wasn't raised in a Jewish home.
- He knew of mixed ethnicity in the African multitudes and family he grew up with
- Did you know Moses himself married an African?

Num 12:1 *Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman... [Cush is Sudan today]<sup>2</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed.<sup>10</sup> When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, like snow. God makes her white as snow after she speaks against Moses for his marriage to a black woman.*

**God's family plan for Israel, marriage, adoption, and churches includes a 'mixed multitude'**

On the highest levels of Israel's tribes and priests and leader Moses, God has a multi-ethnic family plan from the start. You can go back to Ex 12 but know God's plan of redemption is big. Listen to Amos 9:7 "**Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?**" declares the LORD. "*Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt ... [God seems to be telling Israel, He cares for Cushites just as He did Israel in the Exodus, and He goes on to] ... all the nations who are called by my name,*" declares the LORD ... Isaiah prophecies there will be another exodus in the future where Messiah gathers His people from Egypt and Cush and the land beyond the rivers of Cush will become true worshippers.<sup>12</sup>

Zeph 3:9 ‘...that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder.’<sup>10</sup> From beyond the rivers of Cush, my worshippers...’<sup>13</sup> The land beyond Cush/Ethiopia would include Congo

Yesterday we got to see a picture of that family plan of God, with 10 people from Congo and Didier with families who adopted and care for African children as their own family. I thought of my great-grandpa who moved his family to Congo in 1900 and came shoulder to shoulder with worshippers calling on the name of the Lord. That family plan started way back in Bible times:

- When the church is born in Acts 2, it mentions converts from several African nations<sup>14</sup>
- In Acts 8, an Ethiopian eunuch is saved and history says planted the 1<sup>st</sup> church ever there
- By Acts 13, there’s black and African leaders where the church is 1<sup>st</sup> called ‘Christian’<sup>15</sup>
- Kid pictures Bibles have all white characters, but there’s a lot more color in the real Bible
- We read last week Rev 7, a multitude mixed of every tribe, tongue, nation praising Christ
- That’s the end of racism. That’s God’s vision for missions and for churches to pursue that
- All countries and culture and colors worshipping the Lamb whose blood is just like ours
- It’s to God’s glory when a mixed multitude of ethnicities is in unity as Christ’s family
- Our closing song is ‘Across the Lands.’ Knowing God’s judgment and family plan for the earth should move us to want to go across the lands (or the street or workplace) for Christ
 

That closing hymn says: ‘Leading captives in Your way ... Interceding for Your own;  
From each tribe and tongue and nation, You are leading sinners home!’<sup>16</sup>
- Let’s step outside our comfort zone to those not like us, and the same Lord who brought out captives from Egypt is with us, as we walk out these doors and enter the mission field

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.gotquestions.org/evidence-ten-plagues.html> and <https://www.bibleblender.com/2020/biblical-lessons/biblical-history/ancient-texts/complete-translation-ancient-egypt-ipuwer-papyrus>

<sup>2</sup> See Gleason Archer, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, p. 245-46, also Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom and Priests*.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 7:7.

<sup>4</sup> Colossians 2:15, 2 Corinthians 2:14 NIV.

<sup>5</sup> Eugene Carpenter, *Exodus 1-18* (Lexham, 2016), p. 468

<sup>6</sup> Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 296.

<sup>7</sup> Philip Graham Ryken and R. Kent Hughes, *Exodus: Saved for God’s Glory* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 351.

<sup>8</sup> Galatians 3:7-9.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Hays, *From Every Tribe and Tongue: A Biblical Theology of Race*, 81-86.

<sup>10</sup> See Numbers 25, Joshua 22, and Psalm 106.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-86.

<sup>12</sup> Isaiah 11:10-11 (note the Exodus imagery in v. 15-16) and 18:1, 7, compare also Psalm 68:31 and 87:4.

<sup>13</sup> NIV84.

<sup>14</sup> In Acts 2:11 ‘proselytes’ refers to Gentiles who converted to Judaism, and v. 10 mentions Egypt, Lybia, and Cyrene in Africa.

<sup>15</sup> In Antioch, where they were first called ‘Christians,’ the church has a leader from Cyrene and one nicknamed *Niger* (13:1, Latin for ‘black,’ which many scholars presume was a nickname for his appearance).

<sup>16</sup> Getty Music, “Across the Lands.”