

repayment plan

exodus 11

Exodus 11 this morning. It's just a little chapter where the Lord announces His final plague against Egypt and starts mobilizing His people to head out of the land once and for all.

Let's see what we see starting in verse 1.

Exodus 11.1 - And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.

"Where is God?" is a question that gets asked a lot, especially in wake of tragedy or suffering. When Adam and Eve sinned they introduced separation between God and humanity, but it seems as though we humanly, culturally perceive that separation as distance. The truth is, God isn't distant. Even there in the Garden, Adam and Eve felt their sin, they understood their nakedness and the separation from God that they had brought on themselves, but in that moment, the Lord was right there speaking to them and dealing with what they had done.

God isn't distant. He speaks and reveals and reaches out. He gives a heads up about what He's doing, both for the believer and the unbeliever. Here He told Moses, "Ok, it's time for you guys to seriously start getting ready to relocate." And for Pharaoh the Lord was going to *again* warn him of the judgment that was coming. Way back in chapter 4, verse 23, the Lord had said up front:

Exodus 4.23b - But if you refuse to let [Israel] go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.

God is never secret about His judgments. In fact, He's overly explanatory and longsuffering about them in the hope that men will repent and avoid them altogether.

So, looking at this we come to the conclusion that if we don't hear the Lord speaking to us about what He's doing in our lives or *going* to do in our lives, then perhaps we've lost that communion and connection with Him that we need. Maybe we've introduced distance between ourselves and the Lord. Because He intends to speak and show us what He's doing.

Exodus 11.2 - Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."

These were back wages that the Israelites should've received for their labors in Egypt. It's not that they needed the money. The Lord was taking them to a land that He was going to give to them, they weren't going to have to buy it. Along the way He was going to cover their room and board Himself. So it's not that they needed the money. Instead it is a testimony that the Lord repays. He repays evil and He repays righteousness. And He will repay us for the actions we take here on the earth. The Bible says that we are going to reap what we sow. That certainly

has application and fulfillment on this side of eternity, but we're also going to stand before the Lord after our deaths and account for our lives, the things we did, and the things we did *not* do.

1 John 3.17-19 - If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.

The Israelites plundering the Egyptians shouldn't make me think that God wants me to have a bunch of silver and gold, it should remind me that when I leave this Bible study God is watching and He's evaluating what I do because He is going to repay either by rewarding my actions or reducing them to ashes.

Exodus 11.3 - And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

I'm glad to be reminded that God goes before us with His power. We're tasked with sharing the Gospel and that can seem like a daunting thing, as if we're salesmen selling something people don't want, but the truth is, the Gospel has power in and of itself. And the Lord goes before us and is regularly working in the hearts and minds of the people out there that we interact with.

Exodus 11.4 - Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt;

This time, the Lord wasn't going to ask Moses to summon the plague. God was going to go into the midst of Egypt and bring this terrible judgment.

As God's representatives, we are rescuers, not executioners. The only other plague that had caused human fatalities was the hail, and Moses did stretch out his arms to heaven and summon the storm, but the people had been adequately and completely warned. No one had to die in that plague. In fact, God had said, "Get into safety, get inside so you don't die!"

Here, when a final judgment was coming to Egypt, the Lord stepped in and relieved Moses and took this terrible mission completely on Himself.

We're left here as ambassadors and rescuers. Not executioners. Not vengeance-takers. We're on a mission of mercy. We'll talk a little more about this in a few verses. For now, let's move on to verse 5.

Exodus 11.5-6 - and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.

Matthew Henry read about this plague and said:

“The prince that was to succeed in the throne was not too high to be reached by it, nor were the slaves at the mill too low to be taken notice of.”

There is a judgment coming to our city and our nation and the whole world that makes the plagues of Egypt seem like small potatoes in comparison. For those people who are not children of God there will be no escape. We've got to understand what is coming and let it motivate us to get out there and rescue people, because it is God's heart to save so it should be our mission and intent as well.

Exodus 11.7 - But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'

Throughout this whole contest the Lord has been very concerned with showing a difference between His people and the people of Egypt. He keeps bringing it up and highlighting it. So the question that comes to us is: What difference is God making in *my* life? There should be one. By all accounts as we see how God works, as we see what Christianity meant in the New Testament, we come very quickly to the conclusion that there should be profound and identifiable differences between us as His people and the people in proximity to us who are not believers.

If I take an honest assessment of my life and find that there's really not much difference between me and an unsaved friend or family member other than our Sunday routines, then I've probably settled on the wrong side of the Jordan river, spiritually speaking. I've probably, at some point, said to God, "You know, this far is enough. I like the look of where I'm at, so You can go on ahead and I'll just hold down the fort here and I'll see You at the pearly gates."

The problem is, that's not what a disciple does. It's not what someone who's in love does. So, if we take a look within and find that we've settled for worldly offers, then we need to repent and pack up and get caught up with where the Lord has led.

Something else here worth mentioning is how the Lord was in complete oversight of His people. He said that dogs weren't going to bark against the Israelites.

That means that whatever is going on in my life, whatever difficulties or afflictions that are being allowed are in the sight of my God, who loves me and wants what is good and best for me.

I remember having a paper route when I was younger and dogs were always an issue. In this one little area in particular there were 2 houses relatively close to one another and at the one house there was a little Cocker Spaniel who would come out every day and meet me in the street and take the paper from my hand in its mouth and bring it inside. Right across the way there was a crazed, angry dog that lived in the bed of the truck that sat in the driveway. It would wait until I was passing by on the sidewalk and then jump out at me, slobbering all over.

Whatever is dogging you in life, and I mean outside afflictions, whether they're small or great, they're in the sight of God. That's what we know from the Bible. And, though suffering is not caused by God, we know that if it is being allowed it's not without reason and it's not something that we can't talk to the Lord about in prayer and supplication. He watches the sparrows, He watches the dogs, He certainly watches you and I.

Exodus 11.8 - And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

Moses was angry at Pharaoh's hardness of heart. Having seen all the things that had already happened, having seen God prove Himself 9 times already, Pharaoh still wants to hold out, this time betting the life of his son and all the first born of Egypt. Moses is angry because these deaths didn't have to happen.

And, notice, he's angry, not happy. He's not taking pleasure in the suffering of Egypt or the death of Pharaoh's son. We see street preachers or some of these Christian groups who relish the suffering of people they deem to be wicked. Westboro Baptist and groups like that. They take pleasure in the death of the wicked and they celebrate it. But God does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked (Exodus 33). God wants *all* men to repent and live.

It's hard not to get a little happy when something bad happens to a bad person, an anti-Christian person. But that is an anti-Christ attitude. Jesus commanded us in Matthew 5 to *love* our enemies. To bless them and pray for them, that they would repent and live. But compassion like that takes cultivation. And if we're not careful, our hearts are the ones that become hard. But they need to stay soft and inclined to rescue.

Exodus 11.9-10 - But the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Egypt was at the point where this judgment could not be avoided. There had been a time where Pharaoh and his servants could have genuinely repented, but now God's repayment plan was in motion.

Something for us to remember is that this world cannot be saved. People in it can be saved, but the world cannot. So, our focus and the bulk of our activity needs to be people-based, not world-system-based. Does that make sense?

Our world is the Titanic. It's hit the iceberg, the thing is sinking. There is an inevitable end coming to human history. But individuals on the ship can be saved. As we search out and call out for people to repent, their final dwelling place can be changed from hell to heaven. So, while it can be helpful to spend time and energy and resources on systems, politics, environment, over-arching structures, the real urgency is on the individual heart level. Because this world will not be saved in the end. America will not be saved in the end. It's all going to be burned because it's ruined. A fireman doesn't sacrifice the life of a person to save a building. But he'll sacrifice the building, or his own life, to save a person.

That's what we're sent out to do. As we go out from here, we need to remember our mission and who our God is. God is watching. He sees what's going on, He's keeping a tab and He will repay. So let's be on His reward payment plan and do what we've been left here to do.