



SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

KEY PASSAGE: Exodus 12 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Exodus 13:3, 9, 14, 16 | Ezekiel 18:4 | John 3:3, 7; 14:6
Acts 4:12 | Romans 3:23; 6:23; 10:13 | Hebrews 9:22, 27 | 1 John 1:9

► SUMMARY

It's not difficult to understand why God devastated Egypt with 10 plagues.

They had enslaved God's chosen people and imposed hard labor on them for many years. When the Lord repeatedly sent Moses to Pharaoh with the same message, "Let My people go," Pharaoh kept refusing, and his heart grew harder each time. There was no way he was going to willingly let the enslaved Hebrews walk away. Therefore, God compelled him by sending 10 plagues.

► SERMON POINTS

God's purpose in sending all these plagues was three-fold.

- 1. He was judging Egypt and their gods.** Although the Israelites had originally been invited to Egypt after God used Joseph to save the entire nation from the devastating effects of a 7-year famine, the Egyptians soon forgot and put them in bondage.
- 2. The Lord used the plagues to liberate the Israelites** from Egyptian captivity so He could bring them to the land He'd promised to give them.
- 3. God was making preparation for the coming of the promised Messiah.** The Lord rescued Israel from Egypt in order to establish them as the nation through which He would bring the Savior of the world.

After the first nine plagues, Egypt was basically destroyed. Even though Pharaoh's servants advised him to let the people go, he repeatedly refused. But there was one last plague by which the Lord would finally break his will. It was

the night God sent a death angel throughout the land of Egypt to kill every firstborn person and animal.

God made a provision to protect His people.

Moses told the people to select a lamb for each household or for two smaller households. His instructions were very detailed and were to be followed exactly (Ex. 12:3-11).

- All the lambs were to be selected on the 10th day of the first month.
- Each lamb was to be an unblemished year-old male sheep or goat.
- They were to keep the lamb until the 14th day of the same month.
- Then at twilight, the whole assembly of Israel was to kill the lambs.
- Its blood was to be put on the doorposts and lintel of the houses in which the lamb was to be eaten.
- The whole lamb had to be roasted and eaten that same night along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.
- None of the lamb could be left until morning. Whatever was not eaten was to be burned with fire.
- They were to eat it in haste with loins girded (their robes pulled up and tucked into their belts), sandals on their feet, and their staff in their hand. The goal was to be ready to leave at any moment.

The Lord explained that this was His Passover.

"For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live;

and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance'" (vv. 12-14).

This would be a night the Israelites would never forget. All over Egypt there was crying and mourning because every family experienced the loss of someone. Even Pharaoh's firstborn child was dead. But the firstborn in every Hebrew family whose doorway was covered in blood was spared. Today the Jews still celebrate the Passover in remembrance of God's protection and deliverance from Egypt.

In one night the Israelites walked out of slavery into freedom, and they didn't go empty-handed. Moses had told them earlier to ask the Egyptians for gold, silver, and clothing, which they willingly gave them. God's rescue and provision for His people came about because the people believed the Lord and obeyed His instructions.

Faith in the truth of God's Word is still essential for salvation today.

Like the Israelites, we must believe what God has said about the way of salvation.

- **John 14:6** Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."
- **John 3:3** "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."
- **Hebrews 9:22** "Without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."
- **Acts 4:12** "There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."
- **Ezekiel 18:4** "The soul who sins will die."
- **Romans 10:13** "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Four times in Exodus 13, the salvation of the Israelites is attributed to the "powerful hand of the Lord," and the same is true of our salvation today. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves. Salvation is only through Jesus Christ who offered Himself as the final Passover Lamb to free us from the sin that enslaves us. However, forgiveness is only possible if we believe and submit to what God says in His Word regarding sin, judgment, and salvation.

The Bible is not an antiquated book but one that still speaks truth.

- **The scriptures warn us about the coming judgment.** "It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment" (Heb. 9:27).
- **The Bible tells us about sin.** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).
- **It describes the consequences of sin.** "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).
- **God's Word shows us the way of salvation.** We are rescued from the penalty of sin when we trust in the death of Christ who shed His blood on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

Long ago, the blood of lambs and goats saved the Israelites from death, but today the blood of Jesus is sufficient to cover every sin and give us eternal life with God in heaven. And the way to receive God's salvation is through faith in Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

► RESPONSE

- What would have happened to the Israelites if they had ignored God's instructions and relied on their own reasoning to protect them from the angel of death?
- What will happen to those who trust in their own ability to save themselves rather than believing and submitting to God's way of salvation?

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