**God’s Deliverance**

**Exodus 11-15 (ESV)**

September 30, 2018

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We’ve been making our way through a series on the life of Moses. There isn’t any person in the Old Testament, in my view, that is more significant than Moses. And there’s no event in the Old Testament that is mentioned more often, that’s emphasized as a symbol of the Messiah who would die, than the one we’re going to study today in Exodus. So if you have your Bible’s, I encourage you to turn there to Exodus 12 together.

Last week, Josh gave such a great presentation, teaching to us about God’s dealing with Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, and how God was showing Himself supreme and sovereign over all other gods through these plagues. And today we come to the tenth plague, which is the plague of the death of the firstborn. It’s by far the most dramatic, by far the most impactful. And God is using this now to bring Him glory. And so we’re going to grab hold of the event mainly described in Exodus 12, but the aftermath that follows, the parting of the Red Sea, the beginning of the journey of this people toward the Promised Land.

***1*** *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,* ***2*** *“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.* ***3*** *Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household.* ***4*** *And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb.* ***5*** *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats,* ***6*** *and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.*

***7*** *“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.* ***8*** *They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.* ***9*** *Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts.* ***10*** *And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.* ***11*** *In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover.* ***12*** *For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.* ***13*** *The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. 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.*

May God encourage us through His Word today.

As I thought this week about God’s deliverance of His people from bondage in Egypt, my mind raced back to a game of *Hide and Seek* when I was about nine years old. I think I’ve told this story before, but it’s sort of settled upon my mind. Our whole house was the field of play and I thought of the perfect hiding place. We had this very narrow utility closet in one of the hallways, and the shelves were spaced every 25 inches from the floor up. So I decided that I could move the stuff out of that bottom shelf and I could crawl in there and put myself in a ball and throw a sheet or a blanket over me so that even if someone opened up that utility closet, they wouldn’t be able to find me and I’d remain undetected. There was a problem, however. As I attempted my plan, I realized that I couldn’t reach up, because of the shelf on top, to the door and close the door. And more importantly, I couldn’t get the door back open. So I enlisted my sister, who was part of this *Hide and Seek* game. I said, “Hey, Joy! I’m going to crawl in here and throw this blanket over me. Would you push the door shut and at the end of the game, would you come back and open the door?” With her beautiful green eyes, she smiled and said, “Sure!” (Laughter!)

I crawled in there. Joy closed the door and immediately, I became extremely uncomfortable. It was a really hot summer day. I felt the confinement of that space. I was in this little ball. Sweat began to break out on my forehead. But I was determined to win the game so I didn’t try to break free. I didn’t announce my presence. Five minutes turned into ten and then to fifteen. I thought, “Wait a minute! No round of *Hide and Seek* lasts this long!”So I decided to break free. At first I tried to reach up to the door handle. I could just barely touch it with my fingers, but I couldn’t open it. So I began to shout, “Hey! Help! Someone! Open this door!” I pounded and I pounded on that door. I began to bang against it with my whole body not caring if I broke the hinges. But it would not move. Sweat now is pouring off my face. I felt such distress that I imagined I might even die in there. (Laughter!)

To this day, I don’t know precisely how long I was in that closet, but it was very clear to me while I was in there that no one was hearing my cries. Emotionally, my brain was filled with terror. Physically, I felt as though I was just burning up and on fire. I felt that if I stayed in that closet just another minute, I might explode. Then a beautiful thing happened. The door opened! I fell out feeling this gush of cool air. I felt freedom wash over me. Such freedom! My sister was standing there with a sheepish look on her face. She apologized. After the round of *Hide and Seek*, they all went outside and had fun together. But you know, I was so relieved and happy to be free, I didn’t really care about who was at fault. That was no longer my central focus. I rejoiced simply to be free.

**Exodus 2:23-25** During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.

I imagine that the people of Israel felt much, much worse for a much, much longer time than I did, in the bondage of their dark, hot, oppressive “closet”; the closet of Egypt. I imagine that they cried and cried and cried out for help, and it seemed to them as though no one was listening. I imagine that at times they felt hopeless and believed that they would simply perish in that land of slavery. But God did hear their cries! He heard their cries from the very beginning. God always hears the cries of His people. God did not immediately act to deliver them when He heard their cries. He had a greater, more joyful plan in store for them. God’s plan included keeping them in that “closet” for a long duration of time so that their joy in God’s glory and sovereign power would be felt and reverberate throughout all eternity. But God saw the people. He knew them. He knew them with a covenant-keeping love. Friends, let us never believe the lie that God does not hear our cries. He always does. David calls this to mind in a time of his deep distress.

**Psalm 34:3-6** Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together! I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.

This is the God we worship! The people cry to the Lord in their distress in Egypt. God sends Moses to Midian for 40 years, shaping Him into this instrument of deliverance. So now we jump to Exodus chapters 11-15. In these chapters, God opens the closet door and the Israelites fall out of the heat and the oppression and the confinement and the misery of their bondage in Egypt. What a day of rejoicing it is for this people! It’s a day so profound that this people still celebrate it 3400 years later. Isn’t that remarkable? That’s how freeing, that’s how joy-producing this day was. As we talk about this event, the event of God’s redemption of His people from Egypt, the central idea is this. God delivers His people from bondage by grace through a blood sacrifice. That is God’s plan. It’s His plan from the beginning. It’s His plan still to this day. He delivers His people from bondage, by grace, through a blood sacrifice. We first want to concern ourselves with

**The Problem Facing God’s People**

What is this bondage? What is this hardship? Let’s identify the problem. If we misidentify the problem, we’ll misunderstand the solution. The problem facing God’s people, the Israelites, in Egypt is two-fold. First, they are cruelly oppressed by the Egyptians. Their male children are threatened with death at their birth. They’re being thrown into the Nile River to drown. Their daily lives are filled with humiliating subjugation and mistreatment. They are slaves in this foreign land with no future, no hope. Pharaoh’s heart increasingly hardens towards them as Moses confronts him. Moses’presence causes Pharaoh to demand the same quota of bricks, but now without being given straw. When they are unable to fulfill their quota of bricks, they are beaten. They are beaten cruelly, mercilessly. This is a terrible, terrible misery for this people.

That’s a problem. But the second aspect of the problem is the deepest. Their own hearts are filled with unbelief. Their own hearts are filled with disobedience and resistance of this God that is theirs; the God who promised a covenant with them to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.Instead of receiving Moses as God’s deliverer, they turn on him with contempt. Turn back to Exodus 5.

**Exodus 5:20-21** They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them, as they came out from Pharaoh; and they said to them, “The Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.”

“You’re the one that is at fault!” This derision reveals a heart not so much of rebellion against Moses, as a heart of rebellion against the God who sent Moses and established him as a deliverer. Many more examples of their unbelief will follow over the next forty years of time. But listen to the Psalmist describe the spiritual condition of the people of Israel at this time of bondage.

**Psalm 106:7-8** Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea. Yet he saved them for his name’s sake, that he might make known his mighty power.

As soon as they got out of Egypt they rebelled right there by the Red Sea. Yet, in spite of their sinfulness, in spite of their unbelief, He saved them. Why? Because they were such great people? Because they were deserving? Because their hearts were pure and good? No. He saved them for His name’s sake, that He might make known His mighty power. Beloved, please understand that this is a people who did not deserve to be delivered from oppression. They do not deserve to be delivered on the basis of their loyalty and allegiance to God, on the basis of their obedience to God’s Law, on the basis of their faith in Yahweh. This is a people whom the Lord redeems while they are yet sinners. This exodus, this redemption is all of God’s grace.

The great problem in our lives that this story points us to is sin and unbelief in our own hearts. Is external oppression a problem? Yes, it is. But it is not the greatest problem this people faces. In Hebrews chapters 3-4, God uses the exodus out of Egypt as a symbol of Hebrew followers of Jesus who have left sin and unbelief. They have left that Egypt. So Egypt becomes a symbol of sin and unbelief, of the hearts of the people in order to follow Jesus. And this is what the New Testament says of these people, these Hebrew believers now who are followers of Jesus.

**Hebrews 3:12-16** Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin …For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for forty years?

We’re in this together. We’re all going to get discouraged at times, so let’s exhort one another, stay in the faith, hold onto Christ, obey Jesus, follow Him, be faithful even though times are rough. Sin is the root problem that we face. Again, this is New Testament times talking about Egypt as a symbol of unbelief, as a symbol of resistance and rebellion to God. The danger that Hebrews cautions against is that we would outwardly leave “Egypt.” It’s that we would outwardly, externally leave our sin and our unbelief, and yet inwardly harden our hearts and move into deeper unbelief. That’s what the Israelites in Moses’ day did. So in other words, being free from the oppression of Egypt didn’t solve their problem. And the next forty years is going to show that. Their problem was not primarily oppression from Egypt because they left Egypt, and yet Egypt didn’t leave them. That sin, that corruption, that unbelief remained with them and that is the root problem to which God is addressing here in Exodus 12 through the sacrifice of a lamb, and all the way through the rest of God’s book.

The point here is this. God’s primary focus in His redemption is freedom for us from the spiritual bondage of our own sin. God’s rest is received when God delivers us from spiritual bondage to sin, not when we are liberated from external oppression. Did you catch that? That’s so vital to understanding the entirety of God’s Book, the entirety of the Gospel message. Deliverance from Egypt is a symbol of God’s deliverance from sin, from death, from Satan himself. It’s a picture of hope that God has a future for His people. It’s a future that would take sinful people and reconnect us to know the living God and to enjoy the living God and to serve the living God and to share a future with God that is filled with blessing and glory.

Many inside the church and certainly outside the church, work hard to persuade us that our greatest problem is not our own sin. And this message has invaded the church in such a rapid pace and in such a deep way that I don’t know very many people who aren’t influenced by it and perhaps completely overrun by it. The message that is being said over and over again by Christian churches and Christian counselors and Christian teaching is that the greatest problem you and I face is not our own sin and our own unbelief. It is the sins of other people. It’s what has been done to us. And if we can just resolve what has been done to us by other people, then we’ll find salvation, then we’ll find freedom, then we’ll find deliverance. It is man’s offer of a salvation that will never ever fulfill its promises.

So man’s salvation is offered then through a process of finding out who that persons or person is, and then through emotion, through relationship, through any means, attacking them with force and defeating them. In man’s offer of salvation, the hope of deliverance is realized through the process of remembering wrongs past suffered, and then acting with hostility against those who wronged us. This message is so deceitful and so alluring because it sounds like gospel to a heart that has been hurt, a heart that has suffered oppression of various kinds. It is a message often skillfully told, that makes the hearer feel like they are finally being understood and finally being offered hope. Yet tragically, this offer of salvation through man’s means leads to deeper slavery. Man’s salvation always destroys and obliterates hope, but never realizes it.

What is God’s gospel? God’s gospel is simple. God invites us to be free of our own rebellious hearts that disconnect us and separate us from Him and place us underneath His judgment. God invites us to be free, to be reconciled to Him so that we can know Him and we can find our rest in Him. If we are thinking at this stage in our life, “My greatest problem, if it were resolved, my life would be great. My greatest problem is this person who has done something against me or who continues to do something against me. If that were resolved, then I’d have rest,” then we’ve missed the main, central, fundamental, foundational truth of the Bible. So how does God redeem His people out of bondage? That leads us to

**The Provision of a Lamb**

***Exodus 11:1*** *The Lord said to Moses, “Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely.*

The last of these plagues is to humble Pharaoh completely.

***Exodus 11:4*** *So Moses said, “Thus says the Lord: About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt,* ***5*** *and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle.* ***6*** *There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again.*

God is using Pharaoh’s hardness of heart to show His power over Pharaoh, over the gods of Egypt, and over every false god that man worships.

***Exodus 11:9*** *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”* ***10*** *Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.*

The Lord then gives Moses instructions for the whole of Israel so that they might not be touched by the judgment of death; the judgment that God Himself is sending to this land.

***Exodus 12:3*** *Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household.* ***4*** *And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb.* ***5*** *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats,* ***6*** *and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.*

There are three key details about this lamb to take notice of. First, the lamb was to be tested. It was to be without blemish in order to be an acceptable sacrifice. Secondly, this lamb had to die. It wasn’t just, take a lamb and tie it to your doorpost. It was, take a lamb and kill it; spill its blood. It had to have its blood spilled in order to be a covering, a means of safety for the household. And third, this lamb died on a very specific day at a very specific time; the 14th day of the month, and at twilight. The reason why these three details in particular—there are others we could trace—are so significant is because they point us to the ultimate Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ our Lord and our Savior.

1400 years before God planned to send His Son to die, God placed posters about the Messiah’s arrival and sacrifice all over the place so we wouldn’t miss Him when He came. And this is one of those huge posters that he set everywhere. The lamb in the Passover is one of those most significant signs pointing us forward 1400 years ahead where God’s ultimate solution for this great problem of sin would be delivered to us.

**1 Corinthians 5:7b** For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

Paul is tying Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of every part of this story that we are reading this morning. The death of this lamb in Exodus 12 is a picture of the death of God’s own first born Lamb who would shed His own blood on the cross. There are three truths I want us to trace through that connect to Christ; that this lamb points us to.

Truth #1: The purity of the Lamb in Exodus 12 points us to the future Lamb of God who would take away our sin permanently.

It points to His purity. Jesus lived 30 years proving His purity and then three years in public ministry being severely tested by Satan and by man. In every way, Jesus proved Himself without blemish. Even His enemies couldn’t find an accusation against Him. Pilate said “I find nothing to lay a charge against this man.” Judas, who betrayed Him said, “I have betrayed innocent blood.” Demons called Jesus “the Holy One of God.” This is what Peter would write.

**1 Peter 1:18-19** knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Peter is pointing us back to Exodus 12. God could have given Moses this incredibly huge caravan of gold. That would have been easy for God. He could take this caravan of gold, lay it at Pharaoh’s feet, say, “I’m here to buy, to redeem my people out of slavery.” And if it were enough gold, I guarantee you that Pharaoh would have said, “That’s a good deal. I’ll take it.” That would have been easy. But God did not do that. Instead, God said, “Here’s how I will redeem my people. Take a lamb and kill it because it’s how *I* redeem my people; through *my* Lamb, *my* Son who sheds His blood. And I want this to be a sign of what I am going to do yet in the future.” Only a spotless Savior can atone for our sins and bring us freedom. An unblemished lamb gives us confidence then to enter into the very presence of God.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The lamb had to be righteous in order to offer us a righteous standing before God. What we lacked, our greatest problem is that we’re not righteous and we needed to have righteousness. It is only a Lamb that is unblemished that could apply righteousness to our life so that we would have a right standing, so that we’d be acceptable as we stood before an infinitely holy God. God, through His Son, offered that unblemished righteousness to cover us so that one day you and I, if we are in Christ, will stand before God unblemished. We will stand before God perfect. We will stand before God without blame not because we’ve never sinned and not because we are without blame, but because our blame has been placed on Christ and Christ’s righteousness has been attached to us.

Truth #2: The bloody death of the Lamb points us to the future Lamb of God who would shed His blood as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

The Lamb had to die in order for the people to be protected from the angel of death. In the killing, no bones of the lamb were to be broken, but the blood was to be shed. A bloodless lamb couldn’t protect the people from the judgment that God would send that night. The lamb had to suffer and he suffered in the ultimate way in order to protect the people from suffering in the ultimate way. They could not simply tie a lamb to the door of their house. They had to kill it. This detail of the Exodus story points us to this central truth of the gospel. Jesus Christ, God of very God, God’s own dear Son must give His very life and lay it down. He must shed His blood on the cross, on the tree, so that we can be made whole. God Himself suffers in order to protect us from the suffering our sins deserve. God Himself suffers! This is what the prophet Isaiah would write of this future Messiah, this future Passover Lamb.

**Isaiah 53:7** He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

**Isaiah 53:10** Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief;…

This is no accident. This is no victim of man’s evil. It was the will, the pleasure of the Lord to crush him. It was God’s design. When God said, “Take a lamb and at twilight, kill it on the 14th day of this month,” God knew what He was saying of His own Person. “Take this Lamb and kill it.”

**Isaiah 53:12**…he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many,…

Only a bleeding Savior can atone for sins and bring us freedom. This is why it’s in the cross of Jesus that we glory. It is not in doing good works. It is not in helping our neighbor. It is not in human ritual. It is not in moral ethics. All these are fine and good in themselves, but this is not the thing in which we glory. None of these things attends to our greatest problem. It is in the cross of Jesus that we glory. Jesus, as our bloody Passover Lamb, makes a complete covering for our sin. A life can only be rescued through the death of another. And this is why John exults in 1 John chapter 1

**1 John 1:7** …and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Isn’t that amazing?!

Truth #3: The timing of the lamb’s death points us to the sovereignty of God in offering His Son as our Passover Lamb.

Jesus’ life was never taken from Him. It was freely laid down by Him and it was freely established by His Father as well. I want you to notice a couple of passages in the gospels that talk about Jesus’ death. In Matthew 26 Jesus said

**Matthew 26:2** “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

That is significant! Jesus knows He is the fulfillment of the Passover and He says, “Two days from now the Passover is coming. I’m safe here. I can flee anywhere I want to. In two days, in Jerusalem, on this day, at this time, I’m going to be sacrificed as the Passover Lamb.”

Now what is very interesting is when we look at Mark’s account and we have the religious leaders talking. So the same day in which Jesus is going to say that “in two days it’s Passover and I’m going to be crucified and die,” what was happening among the religious leaders? What conversations were they having on that very day?

**Mark 14:1-2** It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.”

They were saying, “Anytime but this next week is fine with us. If we can do it early, okay. But I don’t think we can. Let’s wait until afterwards. Let’s wait until all the crowds have gathered in Jerusalem for this Passover week of feasts. When the crowds are all dissipated and all go back home, then we will do it.” Question: When did the Passover Lamb die? Was it according to the timetable of Jesus, or according to the timetable of the religious leaders who were seeking to kill Him? And the answer of course is according to the timetable of God. Jesus, our Passover Lamb, was crucified on the day of His choosing, not on the day of His enemies’ choosing.

And more, in Exodus 12, it says that this lamb is to be killed at twilight. Jewish tradition tells us that twilight is anywhere between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm. And Matthew’s gospel tells us that about the ninth hour, that’s around 3:00 pm, Jesus cries out “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani.” Again, this indicates in every step that God is sovereignly providing a Passover Lamb so that we need never fear sin and death in the future.

**The Plan to Receive God’s Grace**

***Exodus 12:7*** *“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.* ***8*** *They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

God’s plan in order to bring protection to the people included an act of faith in which His people painted the sides and top of their doorpost with blood. To some this sounds really gross. Think of it. Have any of us painted our doorposts ever, in the history of our family, with blood just splattered on? Wouldn’t that be gross to do that? It didn’t sound any more attractive to the people who were being given this instruction in Moses’ day. To others it sounded like nonsense. People with scientific minds would say, “Wait a minute! So this angel of death is going to come over and you’re saying that by just splattering some blood, that that angel is going to kill everybody else, but won’t kill us. How does that work exactly? What is the scientific process behind that protection?” Others today would say it is cruel to animals. But it’s God’s plan. God doesn’t offer any other plan. He offers one way to escape death from the angel, and only one way. There are no other substitutes.

Now let’s ask the question: Why did God’s people who were the ones who were oppressed need to apply the blood? Weren’t they automatically safe? After all, this was judgment on the Egyptians, right? God could have instructed the angel of death without a need of blood being placed on the door. He could have just said, “Here’s my people. Just avoid those houses.” It’s not as though the angel could not have discerned on his own, through God’s instruction, who he was to touch and who he was not. Why would God allow the angel of death to strike an innocent household if they didn’t apply the blood? The answer is that there are no innocent households. Every Israelite deserved to have the angel of death pass by and strike it. There are no innocent households. Every house is stained by sin and deserving of judgment. The Israelites were sinners just as the Egyptians were sinners. There is nothing in them that deserved to be rescued It was not because they were righteous that God provided the Lamb for them. It was because they were guilty that God provided the Lamb.

***12*** *For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.* ***13*** *The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. 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.*

The application of the blood would make a clear, visible distinction between those who believed Yahweh and those who did not believe Him. That’s the issue. It shows who is trusting in God’s provision for deliverance, and who is not. The blood on the doorpost communicates, “We are a house who trusts in Yahweh. We trust what He says. We submit to His will. We adhere to His ways. We are placing the care of our family and our life in His hands. This is what Hebrews 11 says.

**Hebrews 11:28** By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

It was by faith. That’s the issue. God is an incredibly merciful God who loves sinners.   
He always offers sufficient grace to protect us from righteous judgment. But how do we connect to His grace? It’s through faith in God’s clear, communicated provision. That’s how we connect to God’s grace. There is no other avenue to connect to God’s mercy. If we don’t connect to God’s mercy through faith in God’s communicated provision, that is Jesus, our Passover Lamb, there is no way that the angel of death will pass over our house. No way! No chance!

There were other methods that people might have tried to keep the angel of death out of their house that night. Some may have said, “Let’s just burn torches. Let’s light up the place. It’s the angel of darkness. Maybe he’ll be afraid of the light, like a burglar. Let’s really put locks on the doors. Let’s bind up our doors. Let’s seal up the house. Let’s put guards and sentries with weapons who stay up all night. Let’s just sing songs in hopes that the noise is going to deter this angel from entering.” All these would have been human means to solve a spiritual problem, and none would have worked.

***Exodus 12:21*** *Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb.* ***22*** *Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.* ***23*** *For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you.”*

The death of the lamb and its blood applied directly and personally to every house, is God’s means. And I ask you: Have you applied the blood of the Lamb to your own life? That’s the issue. I know in our notes we have a number of applications that I wish I could talk about this morning. I don’t have time. I’m just going to talk about one. Have you applied the blood of the Lamb personally and directly to your life? God tells us that there will be a day in which the angel of death will pass over. There will be a Day of Judgment. And there is only one means of safety, one means of deliverance. And it’s not that my neighbor’s have all applied the blood to the door of their house. It is not that my dad or my children or my spouse or my church has applied the blood to their houses. It’s each person saying, “Yes. I am trusting in God’s provision in Christ and in Christ alone. It is through the death of this Lamb that I embrace the provision of God for my soul and I trust in Him.” The fearful night arrives.

***Exodus 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.* ***30*** *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.*

It was too late! Pharaoh releases the people to go. It took the death of Pharaoh’s firstborn son to loosen his hold upon God’s people. God required the death of His firstborn to loosen sin’s hold on us. Philip Bliss writes this beautiful hymn:

*“Man of Sorrows!” what a name  
For the Son of God, who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

*Guilty, vile, and helpless we;  
Spotless Lamb of God was He;  
“Full atonement!” can it be?  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!*

I want to close by asking you to imagine the firstborn child among the Israelites living in Egypt. He’s taking all this in. He’s hearing the announcements. He’s hearing the promise of this angel of death to come and strike every firstborn. He’s watching his daddy as his daddy takes a lamb and slits its throat. He dips the hyssop branch and begins to paint the house. He’s taking this all in. They begin to feast on this lamb and they talk about God’s promises and God’s privileges. And then it’s time for him to be tucked into bed that night. He’s trembling as he gets under his covers that night. He says, “But daddy, will I really be safe? God promised an angel of death, and I’m the firstborn. Will I really be safe?” The father, with absolute confidence and faith in God’s provision is able to say, “Son, there is nothing for you to fear right now. God has provided a lamb. We have applied it by faith. And you son, are as safe tonight as you have ever been.” Death passes over all who by faith apply the blood of the Lamb. And so I ask you again: Have you? Jesus declares:

**John 11:25-26** “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

That’s the ultimate issue as we worship God and as we connect to Him. It’s the ultimate issue in that it is the beginning of every spiritual life. It’s the ultimate issue in that it is the continuation of every spiritual life. And it’s the ultimate issue because it is the place and end of glory to God in worship forever. It’s where we claim throughout all of eternity, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Worthy to receive honor and wisdom and glory and might and power.”