

Bo Exodus - Shemoth (10:1-13:16)

Bloody water, frogs, lice, and bugs had been God's plagues upon all of Egypt but Pharaoh refused to release his Hebrew slaves. Then God only plagued the Egyptians with deadly livestock disease and destructive hail. God said to Moses, "I have shown the difference between My Hebrew people and the Egyptians. Pharaoh will remain stubborn so I can to show My Might and you can tell your children and their children of what God did to the Egyptians and retell all My Miracles. Then you will fully realize I am God."

Then Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh warning of God plague of land-devouring locusts. Seeing Egypt being destroyed, Pharaoh said. "Some of you go serve God, your Lord." Moses said, "It is a festival to God for all of us. We must all go."

After God had Moses extend his hand over Egypt. All that day and night the east wind brought locusts until they covered the land and ate all the greenery." Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, "I have committed a crime to your God and you. Forgive me one more time and you can leave." Moses prayed and God sent a strong west wind sweeping away the locusts and plunging them into the sea.

But God hardened Pharaoh's heart hard and he would not let the Hebrews go. God said to Moses, "Reach towards the sky with your hand to bring forth darkness." And when he did, darkness blanketed the Egyptian land for 3 days while the Hebrews land remained lighted. Pharaoh summoned Moses. "Your people can go but not your animals." But Moses said, "We must all go." God made Pharaoh obstinate. "Then forget it. Get out of here Moses! If I see your face again, you will die." Moses said, "As you say, I shall never see your face again."

Later God told Moses, "I have one more plague and then Pharaoh will drive you out of Egypt.

Moses went to Pharaoh. "This is what God said, "At midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt. Every first-born in Egypt will die, whether Pharaoh's first born or a slave girls. All first born animals too. All your officers will bow to me and beg me to leave the land and you will fully realize God is making a miraculous distinction between Egypt and Israel." Then he left Pharaoh in great anger.

Afterward, God said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you so I can display more wonders." Thus God made Pharaoh stubborn and he did not let the Hebrews go.

God said to Moses and Aaron. "This month shall be the first month of the year. Speak to the entire community of Israel saying, 'On the tenth of this month, every man must get a lamb which will provide meat for their family and fulfill any needs in the community. On the 14th of the month, the lamb shall be slaughtered. Put a little blood on the two doorposts of each home, then roast the sacrificial lamb and eat it with unleavened matzah bread and bitter herbs. Eat it with your waist belted and your shoes on your feet. Eat it all and eat quickly.

This is the PassOver offering to God. For I will pass through Egypt that night and kill every first born, man and beast. The lamb's blood on the doorposts will let Me know to pass over your homes. This day will be a day you will always remember. You are to keep celebrating it for all time as a Festival to God by eating matzah for seven days. You are to no leaven in your homes, lest your soul be cut off from the community of Israel. The first and seventh day shall be sacred holidays of no work."

So Moses told the elders of Israel to arrange for the lambs and gave all of God's instructions to all the people, saying "You must keep this ritual as law for you and your children forever and in the land God promised and outside of it, whether natural Hebrew or convert. Your children may ask, 'What is this service to you?' You must answer, 'It is the Passover service to God remembering when God Passed Over the Hebrews homes and only struck the Egyptians.'" The Israelites then did everything exactly as God told Moses.

It was midnight and God killed every first born in Egypt on that night, young and old, rich and poor, human and animal. Pharaoh stayed up all night as did all of Egypt. Then there was a great outcry, since there was no house without a death. Immediately, Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and demanded. "Get out!!! Go and bless me too!"

The Egyptians were also urging the Hebrews to go and they packed up quickly. Then they did as God told Moses and they asked the Egyptians for their gold and silver and God made the Egyptians respect them and grant their request.

The people took their dough before it could rise. That very day, God took the Israelites out of the land of Egypt.

God spoke to Moses about sanctifying the firstborn, then Moses said to the people, “Remember this day for with a strong hand God removed you from Egypt. When you come to your land God swore your forefathers, the land flowing with milk and honey, you shall celebrate this day, each year and for all time, by eating unleavened bread for 7 days. You shall have no leavening in the house or within your borders.

And you shall tell your children on that day, “We do this because God acted on my behalf when I left Egypt. And it shall be a sign on your arm and a reminder between your eyes – so that God’s Torah may be in your mouth – for with a strong hand God removed us from Egypt.

Questions: 1) When in your life have you felt you were being freed from slavery? 2) What is freedom? 3) What is your favorite part of Passover? Why? **Illustration Ideas:** The locusts...the darkness...Pharaoh ordering the Hebrews to leave. ...Hebrews escaping with dough on their backs...Anything with regards to the Passover holiday