

Exodus 12

We all know the story of the plagues of Egypt – how the Lord brought terrible disasters upon the land that had enslaved Israel until they finally let God's people go. When the final plague struck, Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and demanded that they leave:

Exodus 12:29: “And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

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 there was not one dead.

31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.

32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

This chapter is one of the most famous ones in the Bible. We know it well. The angel of death was going to come upon the land, and only those who had been covered by the blood were going to be spared. Since the Egyptians were not prepared, their firstborn died. When death came there was a great cry throughout the land – but it was too late. After this judgment the Israelites were finally set free from their oppressors and began their journey to the promised land.

I suspect that all of you could do a good job of retelling this famous story, so rather than tell you what you already know I'm going to go in a slightly different direction. One fact that is easy to overlook is that the Old Testament is more than just a series of history lessons. The events that happened are not random; they were orchestrated by God. Paul tells us that they are examples:

1 Corinthians 10:11: “Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

The story of the Exodus is not simply the story of how God rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt. It has a number of striking parallels to another event – the Tribulation.

1. Water Becomes Blood

The first plague that God sent upon Egypt was turning the water of Egypt into blood:

Exodus 7:19: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.

20 And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.

21 And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.”

Pharaoh, however, was not impressed by this miracle. Since his magicians were able to replicate it he refused to let the people of Israel go. If Pharaoh had listened to the Lord, the nation of Egypt would have been

saved a terrible series of disasters – but he would not let them go. So the disasters kept coming.

Interestingly, during the Tribulation the Lord is going to turn the waters into blood. But this time it is not just going to be the land of Egypt. No, during the Tribulation God is going to act on a worldwide scale:

Revelation 8:8: “And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;”

God going to turn a *third of the sea* into blood! As if that wasn't horrifying enough, the Bible tells us that the two witnesses will also have the power to turn water into blood whenever they wish:

Revelation 11:6: “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

In spite of all of this mankind is not going to listen. Although some people will be saved during this terrible time, there will be many more people who will not repent at the teaching of the two witnesses. When the antichrist finally rises up and murders them, the whole world will rejoice and give presents to one another. They will be glad that these two men of God are dead – until the Lord raises them up from the dead.

But the Lord is not done. Since the world martyred the saints of God, the Lord is going to give them blood to drink:

Revelation 16:4: “And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.”

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.”

The first time this happened it was the *second* angel who turned the waters of the sea into blood. The second time it is the *third* angel who turns the rivers into blood. The Lord does this punishment for all the Christians that the antichrist murdered. Since the world hunted down the children of God and slaughtered them, the Lord is going to poison their water supply and turn it into undrinkable blood.

What the Lord did in Egypt in the Old Testament will be done again during the Tribulation – but this time on a global scale.

Frogs

The second plague that God sent upon Egypt was a plague of frogs:

Exodus 8:5: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.”

6 And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.”

These frogs went everywhere and greatly annoyed Pharaoh. He told Moses that if he would make the frogs go away, he would let the Israelites go. Of course, Pharaoh then went back on his word – and so God sent more devastating judgments.

During the Tribulation there will also be a plague of frogs. But this one will be much worse:

Revelation 16:13: “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

This takes place toward the end of the Tribulation. The Bible tells us that there will be three demonic spirits, “like frogs”, that will go and persuade the kings of the world to gather together to battle at Armageddon. In this battle there will be a great slaughter. The kings and their armies will be killed, and their dead bodies will be given to birds to eat. The devil's plan was to gather the armies of the world together in order to wipe out Israel, but instead *they* are the ones who will be killed.

In ancient Egypt the frogs were just annoying. During the Tribulation they will lead the combined armies of the *entire world* to their deaths. As you can see, the plague will be much worse the second time.

Lice and Flies

When Pharaoh refused to let Israel go after the plague of frogs, the Lord sent lice upon the land of Egypt:

Exodus 8:16: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.”

The lice tormented the Egyptians – but Pharaoh refused to let the people go. When Pharaoh would not listen to the plague of lice, the Lord sent flies to torment the Egyptians. However, the Lord put a difference between those who were His people and those who were not. The flies would only be a plague to the Egyptians, not to Israel:

Exodus 8:20: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

21 Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are.

22 And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth.

23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.

As we know, the Lord did send the plague of flies – but Pharaoh still refused to let the people go.

During the Tribulation the Lord is not going to send a plague of lice or a plague of flies to torment mankind. Instead He is going to do something *much worse*. He is going to send a plague upon men that is so severe they will try to kill themselves but will be *unable to die*! This plague, however, will only affect those who are not the children of God.

What is this plague? We'll get to it a little later on.

Livestock

When Pharaoh refused to keep his word and let God's people go, the Lord killed Egypt's livestock:

Exodus 9:1: "Then the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still,

3 Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain."

The Bible tells us that when God sent this plague, all the cattle of Egypt died. All of them! Imagine what a terrible blow this must have been. A large portion of the nation's food supply had just been wiped out. Not only would it have been a severe blow against their economy, but it would have put Egypt in a very precarious situation. Their supply of meat had been wiped out in a single day.

During the Tribulation the Lord is going to do more than just kill all of the cattle. He is going to send a famine upon the entire world:

Revelation 6:6: "And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

When the Egyptians lost their cattle they did have other food sources to fall back upon. During the Tribulation, though, food will be scarce and extremely expensive. It will take a man's entire daily wage just to buy a single measure of wheat. This isn't just going to affect Egypt; this will be global in scale.

Oh – and in case you were thinking about going fishing during the Tribulation, the Lord is going to kill *every living thing in the oceans*:

Revelation 16:3: "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea."

When all of the water in the world is turned to blood, all of the life that is in those rivers and streams and oceans is going to die. Food is going to become nearly impossible to find during the Tribulation – and yet, in spite of that, men are still going to refuse to repent.

Boils

When Pharaoh still refused to let the Israelites go, the Lord sent a painful plague of boils upon the Egyptians:

Exodus 9:10: "And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast."

During the Tribulation the Lord is going to do exactly the same thing. He is going to inflict painful sores upon all those who worship the Beast and have taken the Mark:

Revelation 16:2: "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon

them which worshipped his image.”

In those days many people will take the Mark because they think that if they worship the antichrist and serve him then they will be spared persecution and pain. After all, the antichrist is going to round up Christians and behead them, so taking the Mark looks like the road to an easy life. But that is simply not the case. When God sent His plagues upon Egypt, He spared the Israelites because they were His people. During the Tribulation, God will send painful boils upon those who take the Mark – but the boils will *not* be sent upon His people.

In other words, God is going to deliberately single out those who took the Mark for torment. But the boils are just the beginning; there are more judgments to come upon those who worshiped the antichrist and took his mark.

Hail

When Pharaoh still refused to let Israel go, the Lord sent terrifying hail upon the land of Egypt. This hail was so terrible that it killed *everything that was outdoors*:

Exodus 9:18: “Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.

19 Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.”

Yet, in spite of this, Pharaoh still refused to let the Israelites go.

During the Tribulation the Lord is once again going to send hail upon the world. But this time the hail is going to be much, *much* worse:

Revelation 16:21: “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

I'm sure we've all seen hail before. Usually it's pretty small, but when the hail is the size of a marble (or, worse yet, a golf ball), it does tremendous damage. The hail that the Lord will send upon the world during the Tribulation, though, will be worse than any hailstorm the world has ever seen. Each one of these massive hailstones is going to weigh *seventy-five pounds*! To put that into perspective, the average cinderblock weighs about 28 pounds – which is *one-third* of what these hailstones are going to weigh. Imagine if a storm of cinderblocks started to rain from the sky! Can you imagine the horror? Anything that was outside would *definitely* die. Buildings would be demolished. Cars would be pulverized. This storm would cause mass death on a global scale.

Yet, in spite of all that, men will *still* refuse to repent of their sins. Instead of seeking the forgiveness and grace that God offers, they will just blaspheme His name even more. (That sounds like Pharaoh's response to the plagues, doesn't it?)

Locusts

When Pharaoh still refused to let Israel go, the Lord sent locusts upon the land of Egypt:

Exodus 10:12: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of

the land, even all that the hail hath left.

13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

14 And the locust went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.”

This was a *devastating* plague. Keep in mind that all of Egypt's livestock had already been killed. When Pharaoh went out and bought more livestock from other countries, those new animals were killed by the plague of hail. Anything that managed to grow since the hailstorm was eaten by the locusts. The land of Egypt was in ruins, and their food supply was gone.

I said earlier that the Lord wasn't going to send plagues of lice and flies during the Tribulation, but was going to do something far worse – something that would make men try to kill themselves, but they would be unable to die. The Bible tells us that during the Tribulation the Lord is going to send **locusts** upon the world:

Revelation 9:2: “And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.”

The locusts in Egypt darkened the sky, and these will as well. In Egypt, though, the locusts attacked only plant life. These locusts will attack something far more precious: they will torment men for five months. The torment will be so bad that men will desperately try to end their life but will be unable to do so. The Lord is going to force them to endure pain that is unendurable – but notice something. Who is going to be tormented? *Only those who are not the children of God*. Who was plagued by the locusts in Egypt? Only the Egyptians – the Israelites were spared.

If you read Revelation 9 carefully you will discover that these creatures are *not* simple insects. The description that John gives us of these monsters, which come from the bottomless pit, is terrifying and is unlike anything we've ever seen. It's quite possible that these creatures are actually demonic. They will be vastly worse than the plague of locusts that struck ancient Egypt.

Darkness

When Pharaoh refused to repent after the plague of locusts, the Lord sent a terrifying darkness upon the land of Egypt:

Exodus 10:21: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.
22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:”

For three days the land of Egypt was covered in a supernatural darkness – a darkness so thick that it could be felt. It must have been a truly terrifying experience. This was not the momentary darkness that comes from an eclipse; this was something far greater.

During the Tribulation the Lord is going to do something even worse. First, He is going to reduce the light that comes to this world by one third:

Revelation 8:12: “And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.”

But that's not all. When men still refuse to repent, God is going to send a terrible and painful darkness upon the kingdoms that are ruled by the antichrist:

Revelation 16:10: “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,
11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”

This darkness isn't just the absence of light; it is something that is actively painful. Yet, in spite of all this, men will *still* refuse to repent.

Firstborn

This brings us back to where we started – Exodus 12. When Pharaoh *still* would not let the Israelites go in spite of all the plagues the Lord had sent upon Egypt, the Lord killed all the firstborn that were not covered by the blood of the lamb:

Exodus 12:30: “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 there was not one dead.”

Here we have a midnight cry – but it is not a joyful one. The Egyptians were horrified to discover that the angel of death had come upon their land, and their cities were now full of dead men. Not one house was spared.

At the end of the Tribulation the Lord is going to once again strike those who are not covered by the blood of the Lamb – but this time it will be done on a much greater scale. When the armies of the world gather to destroy the remnant of Israel, Jesus will personally intervene and kill them all:

Revelation 19:19: “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.
20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

The combined armies of the world will be there, and they are all going to die. But that's not all. Once the antichrist has been defeated and his armies slaughtered, the Lord will gather the entire population of the world and judge them for their deeds:

Matthew 25:31: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:”

In that day the Lord is going to divide the righteous from the wicked. He will separate those who are covered by the blood of the Lamb – by *His* blood – from those who are not. Those who are wicked (and who took the Mark of the Beast) will not survive this judgment:

Matthew 25:41: “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:”

This time it isn't just the firstborn who will be killed. It is *every single last unsaved person in the entire world*. All of them will be cast into everlasting fire and tormented day and night, for all of eternity. The righteous will then go on to live in the glorious Millennial Kingdom:

Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Those who are covered by the blood will be saved; those who are not will be lost.

Conclusion

I do not think that these parallels are accidental. What the Lord did in ancient times in the land of Egypt, He will do again – but on a much greater scale. The land of Egypt received terrible plagues because of their great wickedness. During the Tribulation the *entire world* will be punished with much greater plagues, and will experience a vastly higher loss of life.

The Lord has warned us in advance of what is coming. As Paul said, these things happened to them for examples. You do *not* want to go through the Tribulation! You do not want to experience these awful things. Now is the time to repent; now is the time to be saved and to seek the Lord with all your heart. Seek Jesus now, while there is still time.