

Lenten Devotional 2020

Monday, March 9, 2020
Day 11, Exodus 11

A Terrible Plague

*Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well.
(Exodus 11:5)*

This is terrible. This is death on a mass scale. We can rationalize it by noticing that just as the first born of the Hebrews were murdered now Egypt's first born will die. We could see it as Pharaoh's responsibility, after all he is being warned here. But, nothing lessens the pain of death on such a scale. Yes, there will be a great cry in Egypt as there had been in Israel.

But, I guess that is the point, isn't it? To remind us that, the wages of sin is death. The alternative seems to be to leave Israel under the bondage of slavery—which is not an option for Israel's covenant God. There would be no hope for the world's redemption if Israel remains enslaved. Sin resides in the flesh and therefore must be dealt with in the flesh.

This, of course, points to the gospel itself and the ultimate solution to human sin. Jesus, God's only begotten Son, lays down his life for the deliverance of all people from the bondage of slavery to Sin. In Christ's death, Sin itself is put to death in the flesh of Jesus. That too was terrible; an innocent victim who never violated even God's law dies.

This is also why the reality of the resurrection is so important. Not only is Sin defeated, but so is Death. Death is forced to give up its captives. Death does not have the last word in the story—life does. Life in Christ Jesus.

This is our hope. Our hope doesn't erase the painfulness of what is coming, but it reminds us not to give place to Sin and Death in our lives and points to God's grace for when we do.

Prayer

God of judgment, it is hard to read about death coming to so many who themselves are innocent. We mourn the way sin and death has marred your story. Yet, we rejoice that you did not allow that to be the end of the story. Rather, sin and death have been destroyed and in Christ Jesus we have life eternal. Amen.