

SABBATH 10th OCTOBER 2015 – AFTERNOON PROGRAM

The facilitator will remind the main points of the message delivered in the morning (God hears, sees, and is sensitive to what his people are experiencing; and He wants to deliver them from the grip of the enemy) and then he will introduce the moment of reflection as presented below.

INTRODUCTION

This morning, we have seen in chapter 3 of the book of Exodus, first, how God sees His people, hears their cries, how sensitive He is to their sufferings and secondly, we see how He called Moses to deliver them from the Egyptian captivity.

We have understood that the burning bush represents each of us who is wrestling with the flames of affliction, sorrow, difficulties, conflicts, to the point of having the impression that these calamities would consume us, but like Moses whom the Lord called in the midst of fire, He also calls us in the midst of our fire to say that he would never allow us to be destroyed by this fire.

He gave us this promise that we find in the book of the prophet Isaiah: *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when you walk through the fire, you do not burn yourself, and the flame will not kindle you.”* (Isa. 43:2)

Chapter 4 gives us a report of the dialogue between God and Moses and chapter 5 tells us about the first encounter between Moses and Pharaoh, visit after which Pharaoh made the Hebrews’ labor even heavier.

In chapter 6, the Lord reaffirms His determination to bring his people out of Egypt, it recalls the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and reassures at the same time Moses, who did not understand the reason why God hadn’t freed His people yet.

In chapters 7 through 12, we find the story of the plagues that hit Egypt. We invite you this afternoon to meditate on the end of this episode in the life of the Israelite people and we will focus mainly on chapter 12.

Reading: Ex. 12:1-42

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1. *After the reading, which will be done by one member, the congregation will be divided into groups of 6 to 10 people, depending on the size of the community*
2. *Each group appoints a facilitator and a secretary*
3. *Each group's facilitator will receive the questions written on papers*
4. *There will be discussion within each groups for about 30 minutes*
5. *After the time allotted for discussion is over, the secretary of each group will come in front and give the answers to the questions from his/her group*

Questions

After reading the text, answer the following questions:

1. What does this passage teach you about God?
2. What aspect of God's character seems most important to you?
3. What do you think of Moses as representative of God to the people?
4. Which of Moses' qualities
 - a. do you find in your pastor
 - b. do you wish to find in him?
5. As people of God, do you feel concerned by this episode? In what aspect?

Some important points that the facilitator needs to emphasize after the report of the groups:

Concerning God:

- His sensitivity to the sufferings of His people.
- He informed His people about his plan (Ex. 3) (He does nothing unless He warns His servants the prophets) Amos 3:7.
- His faithfulness. He fulfills what He promises (Ex. 12:41); He remains faithful (2 Tim. 2:13)
- His mercy. The death of the firstborn (Ex. 12:12) was the plague that should have hit Egypt from the beginning (Ex. 4:23). The 9 plagues that precede it are an expression of God's mercy which Pharaoh should have taken advantage of. Ex. 34:6; Ps. 145:17

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Concerning Moses:

- His humility before God
- His patience before the criticisms of the people (Exodus 5:19-22).
- His faithfulness in the accomplishment of his mission. He faithfully transmitted God's message (Exodus 7:6; 12:21-28)
- He spared neither his strength, nor his time
- He empathizes with the people (Ex. 6:22,23)

Concerning the people:

- They are saved by their total obedience. If they had not put the blood on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses (Ex. 12:7,8) they would not be saved. If they had only put the blood on the lintel, or only on one of the doorposts, they would not be saved because God had said to put it on the two doorposts.
- Note also that the lamb was to be eaten within family or within one's closest neighbor (Ex. 12:4). This implies that the relationship between family members should be good and that they did not choose the neighbor; it should be the closest neighbor; this also implies that the relationship between neighbors should be good, because it is impossible for family members or for neighbors to meet instantly if they are not in good terms.

God's plan for his people today

- To bring His people out of modern Egypt and take them into the Heavenly Canaan. He has promised (John 14:1-3) that He will come again!

CONCLUSION

In order to inherit this promise, like Israel in former times, today, God's people must:

- show their faith through their obedience
- maintain good relationships in the family and with others for their salvation