

EXODUS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Exodus chapter 8 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we concluded last time, God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, calling for him to let the children of Israel go, but Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let them go. Thus, God sent the first of 10 plagues upon the Egyptians, turning the Nile River, the streams, the ponds to blood, not like blood! And for seven days this River that was to bring forth life in the minds of the Egyptians, was now dead and the people had to dig wells to get water to drink during this time.

Now keep in mind that these plagues did not occur in rapid-fire succession, but probably over some 9 months or so. Thus, there was some time between each plague for them to repent before God. That is where we will pick-up our study this evening, sometime after the first plague and the beginning of the second plague in Exodus chapter 8, starting in verse 1.

EXODUS 8

VERSES 1-4

1. *THE SECOND PLAGUE: FROGS*

God is very gracious and merciful, giving Pharaoh another chance to let God's people go. But, if he refuses to let them go, then frogs will overtake the land; they will be everywhere, even in their houses!

2. Remember from our last study, in these different plagues God is destroying their deity's to show Pharaoh and the Egyptian people who the real God is! To the Egyptians, frogs were sacred, they were worshiped, they were not to be killed. Heqt was this goddess who had the body of a woman and a head of a frog. She was married to Khum and this god made people and this goddess breathed life into them from her nostrils. I don't know about this god, if that is the best he can do, a woman with a frog head, that is not too good. It is not the kind of love story that croaks you all up – well, maybe it is!

VERSES 5-7

1. Pharaoh refuses to let the children of Israel go and thus, Aaron stretches out his hand with his rod and there are frogs, frogs, frogs everywhere! They wanted to worship this frog god, now they have all the frogs they could ever want. God does have a good sense of humor.

2. Let me make this little side note here. Sin is just like this. That which you worship, be it alcohol, drugs, sex, possessions and-so-on, you can become plagued by them so they overtake your life. The warning is simple. Don't go down that path. Remember, sin is not bad because it is forbidden, but it is forbidden because it is bad. Thus, God warns us to stay away from it because He loves us!

3. Here come the magicians of Pharaoh and they make more frogs, not exactly what they needed at this time. Was this a trick? Absolutely not. There is power in the occult but also understand they were only able to bring about more misery, not a healing. You see, only God can bring true healing!

VERSES 8-15

1. Enough is enough, Pharaoh couldn't take it any longer and he asks Moses to call upon their God to get rid of these frogs and he will then let the children of Israel go to sacrifice to the LORD – to Yahweh! Now please understand that Pharaoh wanted relief, he didn't want the LORD. But Moses does intercede and Moses asks Pharaoh when he wants the frogs to be taken away. "Da, right now!" But that is not what Pharaoh says. He tells Moses, "Tomorrow." Is he crazy? Why not right now? Maybe he thought that by then his magicians will come up with something to get rid of them and he was stalling. But they couldn't and the next day the frogs died and stunk up the land. Their god stunk and is dead!

2. When the frogs were gone, the pressure was removed and Pharaoh hardened his heart once again and refused to let them go! It is like the story of a farmer who was nailing some shingles on the peak of his roof when he suddenly lost his footing. Sliding down the roof, headed for destruction, he said, “Lord, if you’re there, save me and I’ll give you my life.” Just then, as he reached the edge of the roof and was about to plunge to his demise, his belt loop caught on a nail and halted his fall – at which point he looked up to heaven and said, “Never mind, Lord. The nail saved me.” May we be careful and heed the voice of God, not tomorrow, but today, realizing all that we have, the very breath we breathe is a gift from God!

VERSES 16-17

1. ***THE THIRD PLAGUE: LICE***

I believe this plague struck at the heart of the Egyptian worship, affecting the priests and their sacrificial animals. These lice or tiny, stinging gnats that were barely visible to the eye but could be felt, made these priests unfit to worship their gods and their animals unfit for sacrifice.

2. Now remember that every third plague there is no warning. Is that fair? Yes, in fact, if God never showed mercy He still would be fair, He would still be righteous in His actions. But He does show mercy but there are times when warnings have not worked and judgment must come! So as Aaron touched the dust of the earth with his rod, the land was filled with lice attacking man and beast!

VERSES 18-19

1. Why couldn't these magicians produce lice? Because the Devil's power is limited and here we see it come to an end as they are unable to worship their gods and goddesses anymore. Now, what is interesting to me is that these magicians recognized when they have been outdone and they tell Pharaoh, "**This is the finger of God.**" In other words, they told Pharaoh that the God of the children of Israel is better, stronger than all their gods and goddesses! Upon hearing this, instead of surrendering to the true and living God, he hardens his heart to God. As irrational as this is, people do that every day, they refuse to come to the Lord!

VERSES 20-241. ***THE FOURTH PLAGUE: FLIES***

Here begins the second set of three plagues against the Egyptians and this time it is with flies or really blood-sucking insects and thus, it could be a variety of them. Some feel it is the Ichneumon fly, which is related to the wasp. We don't know for sure but whatever the case, they were everywhere. This may be against the Egyptian goddess Uatchit who was suppose to be the protector of Egypt. But this goddess of Egypt could not protect them from this judgment of the true and living God that came upon them!

2. This is the first plague where God set apart His people in the land of Goshen from being affected by it. Why did God do this? We are told, **“In order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land.”** God could have just destroyed the Egyptians and been done with it but He keeps giving them an opportunity to come to Him. Folks, God hasn’t changed. Peter tells us, **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”** II Peter 3:9-10. The tragedy is, like with the Egyptians, many will refuse the grace and mercy of God and his patients and longsuffering will end and they will face His judgment!

VERSES 25-27

1. Pharaoh gives in and tells them that they can worship their God but he offers a compromise, they can’t leave the land but they can worship in the land! And Moses tells Pharaoh that the Egyptians won’t stand for this; it will be an abomination before them as the children of Israel sacrifice the so-called gods of the Egyptians to the true and living God!

2. What does this mean to us? Pharaoh is a type of Satan who will give us a compromise regarding our faith and it only keeps us in bondage, it does not set us free. “You don’t have to go to church, listen to it on the radio, it’s the same thing!” “You can worship God on the golf course, get back to His creation instead of in a building!” “You work hard all week, you need some time off to relax, don’t go to church. God understands!” “Don’t go too far with your faith, don’t get carried away with it but stay within these boarders!” And the list of compromise goes on-and-on and yet, Paul reminds us in Hebrews 10:24-25, “**And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**”

So who are you going to listen to?

VERSES 28-32

1. Moses was not going to compromise what the Lord had told him to do and it seems that Pharaoh agreed, asking Moses to intercede before God for him and get rid of these flies! He knew where this plague came from and that he could not get rid of it on his own and yet, once the flies are gone, once God removes them, he hardens his heart before God and refuses to let God’s people go!

2. Folks, as you continue in sin your heart will grow hard, it will become cold. Think of the alcoholic, they start out with a few drinks here and a few drinks there, before they are addicted! A person who gambles away his paycheck started out with a few harmless bets and now he has lost everything! A person who is addicted to pornography and all kinds of perversion probably started out with a few magazines, maybe a DVD, an Internet sight and now he has destroyed his life with this perversion. It is as Chadwick wrote, “The drunkard, the murderer himself, is a man who at first did evil as far as he dared, and afterwards dared to do evil which he would once have shuddered at.” Be wise, listen to God, don’t go down that path hardening your heart to what God is saying!

EXODUS 9

VERSES 1-4

1. *THE FIFTH PLAGUE: LIVESTOCK DISEASED*

Here is this fifth plague and we see God’s judgment is against the livestock of the Egyptians that are out in the fields but it will not harm any of the livestock of the children of Israel. Also, the livestock that were not in the fields were not affected by this plague, only the ones out in the fields died. The god’s that are being destroyed before the Egyptians here are Apis the bull god. Hathor, who was the goddess who had a woman’s body and a cow’s head. And possibly Khnum or the ram god. Pharaoh has the opportunity to prevent this judgment but he refuses to let God’s people go in spite of what he has already seen and what is coming!

VERSES 5-7

1. As this plague is going on, Pharaoh sends out his men to see if the livestock of the children of Israel were affected, but, as God said, they weren't. But his heart did not change; it remained hard and cold to what God was saying.

VERSES 8-10**1. *THE SIXTH PLAGUE: BOILS***

In the sixth plague God is destroying, in the minds of the Egyptians, the power of their gods. With these boils the idea is a swelling, painful, burning skin inflammation and this will not only affect people but also the animals! Sekhmet was the goddess who was to have power over disease. Sunu was the pestilence god. Isis was the goddess of healing. And Imhotep was the god of medicine. But none of these so-called gods or goddesses could help!

VERSES 11-12

1. It seems that this plague was very painful, even for the magicians who were to be close to these gods, and they bow off the scene, they had no power before God. And Pharaoh, his heart is not changed but he makes his decision firmer in not letting God's people go, he continues to harden his heart.

VERSES 13-211. ***THE SEVENTH PLAGUE: HAIL***

Here we see God come against the Egyptian goddess of the sky, Nut. In relation to the true and living God, this goddess was a peanut! Sorry. Also, Set the god of storms and Osiris the god of crops and fertility. And the Lord says that He could have wiped them out but instead, because He wants them to come to the true and living God, He is bringing these judgments upon them. So far six plagues and Pharaoh's heart remains hard!

2. Now this is interesting. Some of the Egyptians saw the light and they heeded the warnings of God and brought their livestock in from the fields so they would not be destroyed. But those who refused to do this lost the rest of their livestock in this judgment. What I want you to notice is the one's who **"feared the word of the LORD"** obeyed the Lord! I wish more people would fear the Word of the Lord, believe it and apply it to their lives, from pastors to Christians to the unsaved that they would get saved!

It is as Paul said in Romans 1:16, **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."** And in Romans 10:17 Paul said, **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."** And Peter tells us in I Peter 2:2-3, **"as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."**

God's Word saves us, our faith grows as we read and apply God's Word, and we mature by God's Word all empowered by the Spirit of God who brings us to Jesus! That is why the Devil keeps you away from the Word of God or waters it down, changes it so people can't get saved or those that are saved, can't grow! Let us be wise to what he has for us and what God has for us!

3. The Hebrew word for "**hail**" is BARAD and it speaks of a stone. In Revelation 16:21 there is another hailstorm but this hail weighs some 75 pounds! We don't know how much this hail weighed but it was mingled with fire and it was devastating! And folks, this was a judgment of God and not a meteorite shower or something like that because it only affected the Egyptians and not the children of Israel living in the land of Goshen. If God did use meteorites He aimed them perfectly, which He could do!

VERSES 22-26

1. Can you imagine the fear that came upon the Egyptians when they saw this come upon the land!

VERSES 27-35

1. As you read this it seems that Pharaoh is repenting but Moses rightly discerns that his words are empty, he was not going to let God's people go even after this plague is finished. And Moses tells Pharaoh that he will stop the hail but also, he tells Pharaoh that he knows he won't let God's people go, but why? Because he did not fear the Lord, which is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom!

EXODUS 10**VERSES 1-6****1. *THE EIGHTH PLAGUE: LOCUSTS***

Here in this eighth plague God brings locusts upon the land as He comes against Osiris the god of the crops and fertility and Nut, the sky goddess.

2. Now here it says God hardened Pharaoh's heart and that does not seem fair, but it is. You see, God just made firm the conviction of Pharaoh, that is what he wanted and thus, that is what he got!

3. Once again God tells them that these things He is doing is a witness not only to them, but also to their children and grandchildren and-so-on, that He is the LORD! What witness are we leaving for people to see the true and living God, not only to our children but also to our family and friends?

4. This locust infestation will cover the land of Egypt and folks, that is not good. Let me explain. Once in a while, and we are not totally sure why, these locusts become more aggressive. It may be related to a hormone that is secreted or released when there is overcrowding of these creatures, but we are not sure, and whatever the case, these locusts become ferocious in their behavior and their appetite. They not only eat the plants, but also even down to the roots, destroying the land. Their teeth were like a lions teeth with a saw-tooth pattern, again, enabling them to eat right down to the roots. In fact, stories have been told that at night, during these infestations, you can hear them chewing on the vegetation. And there can be anywhere from 1 million to a billion of these locusts flying through the sky, and because of their large numbers, they can occupy a space of 10 to 12 miles in length and 4 to 5 miles in width and thus, they are so thick they can block out sunlight causing the skies to darken, making it dark in the middle of the day! Not only that, but each locust can eat it's own weight in vegetation per day. That may not seem like much, but when you consider the large numbers of these creatures, you can see how they can strip the land bare! And as they fly in their tight military-like units they make a sound that is almost deafening! Have fun sleeping tonight!

VERSES 7-11

1. The land of Egypt is being destroyed and the servants of Pharaoh have had enough and beg Pharaoh to let the people go. And Pharaoh's question to Moses is, "**Who are the ones that are going?**" And Moses basically says, "All of us, both the young and the old will come to worship the Lord." And it would seem that Pharaoh initially gave in and then said that the men can go but leave the children here. Another compromise given to Moses and isn't that what the Devil does? "Kids need to be involved with sports, not going to church!" "Church is boring for kids, don't send them!" "It gets late, the kids are tired, it is better that they stay home!" "He has a job now, he can't come to church!" And again, the list of compromise goes on-and-on but it all focuses on hindering our worship and growth in the Lord. What a joy it is to see children come to church and love to come to church. Even on Thursday evening's we see them and that is a blessing as they not only hear about the Lord but they see how important that relationship is to their parents and the others that are here!

VERSES 12-15

1. God did not accept Pharaoh's compromise and brought the locust judgment upon the land with devastating affects! Do you see what God is doing here? He is exposing and bringing down every false god of the Egyptians and He will do the same in our own lives. And God is doing this to draw them and us to Him.

VERSES 16-20

1. True repentance brings about a change in a persons life. For Pharaoh, he just wanted to get rid of the locusts and he would say anything, but in the end, he did not change. He refused to let God's people go!

VERSES 21-231. ***THE NINTH PLAGUE: DARKNESS***

Once again this third plague in this third set of plagues comes without warning and for three days darkness covered the land. The god's the Lord was destroying were Ra, the sun god, Horus the son of the sun god, Nut the sky goddess and Hathor another sky goddess.

2. This was not the result of an eclipse or some natural phenomena. God put them in darkness for 3 days and the only light in all the land was in Goshen, in the homes of the children of Israel. The Egyptians may have tried to light their lamps, but they either did not light or they did not produce light and they were in complete darkness for 3 days!

You see, if you reject the Lord and want a life apart from Him there is only darkness as John tells us, **“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.”** I John 1:5. And, could it be that in the homes of the children of Israel that the Shekinah glory, the chabod or glory of God brought light to them? It is possible!

3. Now I don't know how many of you have been to Merrimac Caverns in Missouri, but I have an idea of what that kind of blackness is all about when we were there several years ago. At these caves they have a huge chamber that is well lit with artificial light. During the tour they turn off the lights for a few minutes and before they do they warn you to grab a hold of a loved one, for in a minute, you will not see them. And I have to admit that I was a little skeptical until they turned off the lights and I couldn't see my own hand in front of my face. It was an eerie feeling, a darkness that could be felt!

VERSES 24-29

1. The final offer of Pharaoh is to let the families go and worship the LORD but not to let them take their livestock, that is the compromise here. He never gives up does he! And Satan does that same with us. "Go worship the Lord but don't get too involved!" "Don't make yourself a living sacrifice to be used by God but go your one hour per week and be done, you need to have some fun!" And folks, many listen and they miss out on the blessing of serving!

2. But Moses refuses to compromise and Pharaoh has had it and tells Moses to get out of his face, never come back and if he does, it will be death to him! Well, that is not exactly what is going to happen but Pharaoh refuses to repent and turn to God and thus, he will face the judgment of God!

3. Now the three sets of those plagues are complete and the last one, the tenth plague stands alone, as we will see next time. What I want to close with this evening is why God sent these plagues on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, what they were to do. Listen carefully:

- To answer Pharaoh's question, *Who is the LORD?* (Exodus 5:2). In the plagues, God showed Himself greater than any of the false gods of Egypt.
- To show the power of God through Moses (Exodus 9:16).
- To give a testimony to the children of Israel for future generations (Exodus 10:2).
- To judge the false gods - demons, really - of Egypt (Exodus 12:12, Numbers 33:4).
- To warn the nations - more than 400 years later, the Philistines remembered the LORD God of Israel as the one who plagued the Egyptians (1 Samuel 4:8).
- As a testimony of the greatness of God to Israel (Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy 4:34).

That is our God. He is always looking out for us and wants what is best in our life.

May we draw close to Him and be used by Him for His glory!