

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Good morning church,

We are continuing our study through the book of Exodus.

Our text this morning will be Exodus 9

Let's pray...

So far, in our study through the last few chapters, we have seen four different signs or judgments that God used to get the attention of Pharaoh.

Remember God is doing this to bring Pharaoh to his knees – to bring him to repentance.

Pharaoh witnessed the waters of the Nile turned to blood

He witnessed a frog infestation

He witnessed a lice infestation

And the last one we covered was him witnessing an infestation of flies or insects.

He is fully aware that God is trying to get his attention – we saw that in chapter 8 as Pharaoh called on Moses to intercede on his behalf after the infestation of frogs and

insects - but instead of softening his heart and humbling himself before the Lord – he has decided to harden his heart even more.

So far, each of the first four signs has been nothing more than an inconvenience or an annoyance to the Egyptian people.

However, these next few judgments upon Pharaoh are going to start to affect their pocketbooks.

**[Exo 9:1-35 NKJV] 1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.**

Despite Pharaoh continuing to disregard the word of God – I want you to notice how the Lord still warns Pharaoh about the next plague that is coming up.

And I point it out because there will be sceptics and unbelievers who will criticize God for bringing such harsh judgments upon Egypt.

They will say that God is just a big bully

They will say that God is unmerciful

But, the scriptures are clear – God showed mercy by continuing to warn Pharaoh time and time again – “Pharaoh, if you don’t let My people go, I will send this plague!”

Why did God warn Pharaoh?

Because even though He is All powerful, He is also merciful, and He is longsuffering not willing than any shall perish - Even someone like Pharaoh.

**2 "For if you refuse to let [them] go, and still hold them, 3 "behold, the hand of the LORD will be on your cattle in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the oxen, and on the sheep--a very severe pestilence.**

The next judgment against Egypt was a pestilence against their livestock that were out in the field.

The Egyptians lived in an agrarian society – meaning that their entire economy revolved around the producing and maintain of crops.

In order to produce and maintain crops – guess what - you need livestock.

You need livestock to pull the plows

You need livestock to pull the carts with the produce

Their economy would be devastated if they lose their livestock.

Now, we have to remember that these judgments were also directed at the false gods that the Egyptians worshipped.

By these judgments, God is proving these false gods of the Egyptians to be worthless and powerless.

Such is the case with the judgment against the livestock.

The Egyptians considered livestock to be sacred.

They had a cow god that they worshipped - Hathor

They had several bull gods that they worshipped – Mnevis, Ra and Apis.

In fact – in a few weeks when we get to chapter 32, we are going to see the Children of Israel get tired of waiting for Moses to come down from the mountain and they make for themselves a golden calf – where did they get the idea? From their time in Egypt

They molded Apis, one of the bull gods that they had seen the Egyptian worship.

So we can see how this judgment was going to be economically and spiritually distressing to the Egyptians.

**4 "And the LORD will make a difference between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt. So nothing shall die of all [that] belongs to the children of Israel." ' "**

This is the second judgment where God has excluded the Children of Israel.

In chapter eight, we saw during the fly infestation that the Children of Israel were protected as well – God had instituted a no-fly zone over them.

Here – their livestock was going to be protected from the pestilence.

The same God that sent the pestilence is the same God who kept His people's livestock healthy and safe from the plague.

You see, Pharaoh was so stubborn, that even though God protected His people from the previous plague, just as He said He would, Pharaoh still wouldn't acknowledge that the Israelites were God's people, and not his.

**5 Then the LORD appointed a set time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land." 6 So the LORD did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died. 7 Then Pharaoh sent, and indeed, not even one of the livestock of the Israelites was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh became hard, and he did not let the people go.**

I had you make a note where it states that all the livestock in Egypt died – it was all the livestock that was in the field that died – verse 3,

We know that it was not all the livestock because, later on, we will see during the plague of hail, that the Egyptians still had livestock.

In verse 7, we have a sad characteristic of an individual with a hardened heart.

A hardened heart expects the Word of God to fail.

Despite that Pharaoh was told that the livestock of the Children of Israel would not be affected by the pestilence – he still sends people to verify –

You see, Pharaoh anticipated the word of God to fail.

And even though he received confirmation that God was true to His word, Pharaoh hardened his heart even more.

**8 So the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take for yourselves handfuls of ashes from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 "And it will become fine dust in all the land of Egypt, and it will cause boils that break out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt." 10 Then they took ashes from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered [them] toward heaven. And [they] caused boils that break out in sores on man and beast. 11 And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. 12 But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.**

The next plague is one of boils –

The previous one affected their economy. This one affects their personal health.

The Egyptians are starting to get a taste of what Job went through in his testing.

Turn with me to Job 2,

**[Job 2:7-10 NKJV] 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in**

**the midst of the ashes. 9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" 10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.**

I have had boils – and they are very painful.

It was on my first date with Bridget that I had a boil burst on my leg while we were watching a movie in the theater.

– but I have heard cases of people getting them on their face and abdomen.

Notice that this time there is no warning to Pharaoh.

God had already warned Pharaoh before – He didn't have to warn him again.

And once again we see God's judgment upon the false gods of Egypt.

The Egyptians worshipped Sekhmet, a lion headed goddess with power over diseases.

They worshipped Sunu, the pestilence god and Isis, goddess of healing

So once again God shows His power over their false Gods by giving all the Egyptians these painful boils.

Even Pharaoh's magicians get the boils – these guys were the ones that were supposed to rid Egypt from the boils yet they could not even rid them from their own bodies.

In verse 12, we see for the first time that Pharaoh is no longer hardening his own heart – God is doing it now -

Church, God foreknew Pharaoh's response, but He did not determine it.

Pharaoh chose to harden his own heart.

God does not ask someone to do something He predetermines they cannot do.

If anything, God was working all along on Pharaoh's hard heart to soften it.

**13 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me, 14 "for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that [there is] none like Me in all the earth.**

God isn't just out to show you that He's just a little better than the other gods. He's out to show you that there is NONE like Him.

**15 "Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. 16 "But indeed for this [purpose] I have raised you up, that I may show My power [in] you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.**

God could have destroyed Egypt in any number of ways.



But He didn't because He showed grace.

He gave Pharaoh and Egypt every opportunity to repent and obey Him.

Yet in their disobedience – God was going to be glorified.

You see, God's message to Pharaoh is this – “Pharaoh, you exist for one purpose only and that is that I may receive all the glory – and that the world will know who I am”

**17 "As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go.**

By refusing to let the Hebrews go, Pharaoh would not concede to God's power; he would not yield his own claim to be a god among men; he would not admit that Egypt's gods were inferior.

Judgment will come. Pharaoh, made to glorify God, responds to the glory of God with rejection.

Denial of it, a refusal to admit there is One higher than the throne he sits on.

It will be the demise of Pharaoh... the unrelenting weight of the plagues is coming, his own house will be feel the pain of refusing to submit to God's glory, his authority, his power.

**18 "Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.**

What would seem to the Egyptians to be an apocalyptic hailstorm was coming.

It wasn't in the forecast. You couldn't see clouds forming, and there was no report of a storm heading their way.

These events were not simply natural occurrences as the area would receive 2-5 mm of rain annually.

They were started and stopped by God in a way that made them signs.

**19 "Therefore send now [and] gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die." ' " 20 He who feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. 21 But he who did not regard the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.**

This plague is different than the previous plagues as the Egyptians are given a choice, they can heed God's warning and bring the livestock and their servants in from the field and they will escape His judgment or they can choose to do absolutely nothing.

God is giving them an opportunity to demonstrate whether or not they truly understand that there is none like Him.

Every Egyptian had his or her eyes opened by the signs in order to make a personal decision.

God gave them a clear choice: believe and live, or disbelieve and die.

The same message that Jesus had with Martha in the gospel of John.

John 11,

**[Jhn 11:25-27 NKJV] 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."**

In wrath God was remembering His mercy, and by grace was freeing their wills to believe Him.

**22 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt--on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." 23 And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. 24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that [was] in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck**

**every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel [were], there was no hail.**

Once again, we see God's judgment on some of the gods that the Egyptians worshipped.

Nut was the sky goddess - Nut was thought to be the barrier separating the forces of chaos from the ordered cosmos in the world.

Set – was the name of their storm god – however, he couldn't stop the storm and the devastation.

Osirus was the name of the god of crop fertility – he couldn't stop the crops from being damaged.

Once again, we see in verse 26 that the Israelites were set apart.

It was another way God was trying to reach the Egyptians, by showing them the He could make a distinction.

**27 And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The LORD [is] righteous, and my people and I [are] wicked. 28 "Entreat the LORD, that there may be no [more] mighty thundering and hail, for [it is] enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."**

In the scriptures, we have at least eight individuals who confessed "I have sinned"

Pharaoh, Balaam, Achan, King Saul, Judas, Job, David and the Prodigal Son

At least half of them were insincere.

Was Pharaoh truly sorry for the sin that he had committed or was he simply sorry for the consequences that his sin had caused?

Was he just saying the right things in order for the suffering to stop???

Here is another characteristic of a hardened heart –

Sometimes, they will say the right words and have no true intention to change their ways.

Look closer at his confession – I have sinned this time – **what about the other times Pharaoh???** Do they not count?

He then blames the people when it was his own decision making that brought these plagues upon his people.

**29 So Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the earth [is] the LORD's. 30 "But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear the LORD God."**

Moses knew that Pharaoh truly had not repented –

How did he know?

Because the word of God had not been fulfilled.

**[Exo 4:22-23 NKJV] 22 "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel [is] My son, My firstborn. 23 "So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn." ' "**

**31 Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley [was] in the head and the flax [was] in bud. 32 But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they [are] late crops.**

Here in verse 31 and 32 we see God's mercy even in His judgment.

He didn't allow the Egyptians to starve to death by destroying all the crops.

**33 So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and spread out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth.**

As the ground is getting pelted with hail – Moses still has to walk out of the city so that he can raise his hands to the Lord to stop the hail storm.

This shows Moses' truth in the Lord.

**34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35 So the heart**

**of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.**

Church, hardening ones heart against God is a sin –

However, failing to repent when God graciously answers our plea, that is ignoring His rich mercy.

### Illustration

A daughter complained to her father about her life and how things were so hard for her.

She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up.

She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved a new one arose.

Her father took her to the kitchen.

He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire.

Soon the pots came to a boil. In one he placed carrots, in the second he placed eggs, and the last he placed ground coffee beans. He let them sit and boil, without saying a word.

The daughter sucked her teeth and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing.

In about twenty minutes he turned off the burners.

He fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl.

He pulled the eggs out and placed them a bowl.

Then he ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her he asked. "Darling, what do you see." "Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied.

He brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft and mushy.

He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard- boiled egg.

Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. She smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. She humbly asked. "What does it mean Father?"

He explained that each of them had faced the same adversity, boiling water, but each reacted differently.

The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting. But after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. Kind of like the person who wilts under adversity.

The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.



This is like the person who starts off with a soft heart, but after a death, a breakup, a divorce, their heart becomes hard. The outside shell looks the same, but the inside has become stiff.

The ground coffee beans were unique however. They were not drastically changed? You see, after they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest do you elevate to another level?

How do you handle Adversity? ARE YOU A CARROT, AN EGG, OR A COFFEE BEAN?

Don't tell GOD how big your storm is. Tell the storm how big your GOD is!

Amen

Let's pray...



CALVARY  
Santa Cruz