

Bibles???

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

Bulletin

We will not be having a Wed night study this week, but we will have an Online Good Friday Message at 7:00 PM – we will be having communion as well – So we ask that each of you gather the elements of communion – grab some juice and bread or whatever you have and we will remember the hope that we have by the what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross.

Next Sunday we will be having our Online Resurrection Celebration Service – So I pray that you could join us online for that as well.

This morning, we continue our study through the book of Exodus; we are going to see something truly tragic as Pharaoh continues to harden his heart.

And I pray that we me learn from these examples.

Let's pray...

We concluded our study last week the battle of the rods -

God had commanded Moses and Aaron to go show Pharaoh a sign / a miracle.

Aaron cast his rod upon Pharaoh and it became a serpent.

Pharaoh's wise men and magicians were called upon by Pharaoh and they were able to duplicate the sign –

However Aaron's rod then proceeded to swallow up the rods of the magicians and the wise men.

One would think that after witnessing the miracle, Pharaoh would have changed his mind and allowed the Children of Israel to go free.

But instead, we see Pharaoh's heart got a little bit harder that day.

What is going to transpire from today's study through the end of chapter 12 is – we are going to see 10 signs or judgments directed against Pharaoh.

We commonly refer to them as the 10 plagues that came upon Egypt.

However, the word plague is not found in the book of Exodus until chapter 11 and when you study the word in the Hebrew – it refers to a blow or a strike against.

So these strikes or blows are directed at Pharaoh.

And as Pharaoh hardens his heart each time, each subsequent sign is going to be greater than the previous one.

And the reason for them is to bring Pharaoh to his knees.

But before we start off, I want to remind you that none of these things had to happen.

The bible teaches that God is not willing that any will perish but that all will come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9

That God is long suffering – which means all Pharaoh had to do, was to do what God was asking –

[Exo 7:14-25 NKJV] 14 So the LORD said to Moses: "Pharaoh's heart [is] hard; he refuses to let the people go. 15 "Go to Pharaoh in the morning, when he goes out to the water, and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. 16 "And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; but indeed, until now you would not hear! 17 'Thus says the LORD: "By this you shall know that I [am] the LORD. Behold, I will strike the waters which [are] in the river with the rod that [is] in my hand, and they shall be turned to blood. 18 "And the fish that [are] in the river shall die, the river shall stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink the water of the river." ' " 19 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your rod and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their rivers, over their ponds, and over all their pools of water, that they may become blood. And there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in [buckets of] wood and [pitchers of] stone.' " 20 And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded.

I like that church –

They did so – they did what they were asked to do.

Moses, like we as ambassadors of God, have a message to share.

We don't add to it or take away from it.

We deliver it.

Even if it is a message that might be difficult to deliver.

We don't sugarcoat the message, we respond in obedience and deliver the message we have been commissioned to give.

The problem we have today is that we sometimes edit the gospel. We leave out things that we think will offend people. But if we are going to share the gospel, we need to give the entire gospel.

Any gospel that promises the hope of Heaven without a warning about Hell is not the gospel.

And any gospel that offers forgiveness from God without saying that we need to repent of our sins is not the gospel.

The essential message of the gospel is Jesus Christ—Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

That is the message we need to convey.

Church may we be believers that did so – like Aaron and Moses here.

So he lifted up the rod and struck 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 The fish that [were] in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

The first plague that is brought upon Egypt –

Turning the waters of Egypt into blood.

Not only was the Nile River turned into blood – all the waters were turned to blood – the water in the drinking vessels in the homes of the Egyptians – blood, the water in their swimming pools – blood.

I asked you to make a note in verse 17 -

"By this you shall know that I [am] the LORD.

You see, the Egyptians had many deities that they worshipped – many of them were connected with the Nile River.

One of the deities that the Egyptians worshipped was Khnum – he was one of the gods of the Nile that they believed brought life to Egypt by depositing silt and nutrients to the soils whenever the Nile flooded.

But by turning the Nile into blood – no longer was life being brought forth by the Nile – but we see death and stink coming forth.

22 Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said. 23 And Pharaoh turned and went into his house. Neither was his heart moved by this. 24 So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. 25 And seven days passed after the LORD had struck the river.

Once again, the magicians come forth and they also turn water into blood – now, the question becomes, “Where did they get the water?” They dug for it – and when they found the only remaining water that had not turned to blood – they proceed to turning it into blood.

They actually make things worse for the people.

Why didn't they try to turn the blood into water???

Because all they wanted to do was to please Pharaoh.

All they wanted to establish was that they and their Egyptian gods were just as powerful as Moses and the God of Israel.

Whatever He could do, they could do.

And once again, we see the heart of Pharaoh hardened.

[Exo 8:1-32 NKJV] 1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 2 "But if you refuse to let [them] go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. 3 "So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. 4 "And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants." ' " 5 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.' " 6 So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. 7 And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

So the first plague was turning the water into blood – this plague is one of frogs.

Every year after the Nile flooded – it brought forth a migration of frogs.

Kind of like our monsoons season – when we start seeing the Colorado River toads during our summer rains.

The frog was a symbol of blessing to the Egyptian.

The presence of frogs was pleasing to the Egyptians.

The frog became sacred to the Egyptians and killing a frog was punishable by death.

So at some point in their history, the Egyptians started to worship Kermit ☺

The Egyptians had a false goddess named Heket who had a head of a frog.

She was the goddess of fertility -

So God gives them an infestation of frogs.

Everywhere they looked – there were frogs.

In their beds – frogs.

In the cribs of their babies – frogs

In their pots and pans – frogs.

When they tried to bathe – there were frogs

And in verse seven, Pharaoh's magicians show up and once again they make things worse by producing even more frogs.

Instead of alleviating the problem – they made it worse – just like when they turned water into blood.

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat the LORD that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD."

Is Pharaoh softening up a little bit?

Let's see...

9 And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Accept the honor of saying when I shall intercede for you, for your servants, and for your people, to destroy the frogs from you and your houses, [that] they may remain in the river only." 10 So he said, "Tomorrow." And he said, "[Let it be] according to your word, that you may know that [there is] no one like the LORD our God. 11 "And the frogs shall depart from you, from your houses, from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only."

It seems to me that Pharaoh was beginning to realize who he needed to ask for help. He asks Moses to ask Yahweh for help.

He promises that if the frogs go away, he will let the people go.

When Moses gives Pharaoh the honor of setting the time for the frogs to recede – Pharaoh responds with “tomorrow”

Not right now! – Tomorrow.

I know things are bad Moses – I hate these green things running around and leaving their slime all over the place – but I want to wait until tomorrow –

Church, there may be a few things in our own lives that we thought we could control.

Pornography, Alcohol, Anger, Resentment, Sin

And now it is out of control –

God says it is time to allow Him to get rid of that messy frog stuff.

Yet, some of us will respond – tomorrow.

By saying tomorrow, Pharaoh's heart grew harder and harder.

Turn with me to Heb 3:12-15

[Heb 3:12-15 NKJV] 12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Church, to procrastinate and put off getting right with God is to harden one's own heart.

If Pharaoh would have told Moses, today! I want all these frogs out of here today.

I have seen the error of my ways.

I am repenting for what I have done – I am allowing your people to go!

And if he would have done it – think about all the heartache and devastation he would have avoided.

12 Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. And Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs which He had brought against Pharaoh. 13 So the LORD did according to the word of Moses. And the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courtyards, and out of the fields. 14 They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. 15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

Moses interceded on the behalf of Pharaoh and God spoke a word and the frogs were dead.

However, Pharaoh didn't go through with what he said he was going to do.

He was freed from frogs –

He didn't glorify God or thank Him for His mercy – instead - he hardened his heart –

How many of us have cried out to God in a time of difficulty and uttered the words, if You deliver me from such and such – I promise to do such and such, And when He delivers, we turn our back on Him???

Or maybe a nonbelieving friend or family member turned to the Lord in the midst of a difficulty, only to fall-away once it was over?

“As the Lord had said” points to God’s foreknowledge. Of course He knew beforehand what Pharaoh would do.

But once again, God’s foreknowledge didn’t cause Pharaoh to harden his heart.

16 So the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'"
" 17 And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. 18 Now the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast.

The next sign against Pharaoh – lice.

I never had to deal with lice as a youngster but I did have friends and relatives that did have to deal with lice.

And I remember the stories that they would tell me about how hard it is to get rid of them.

The lice in Egypt here were everywhere.

One would think that they were looking at the soil and then the soil would move because it wasn’t soil – it was lice. That is how bad it was.

I want to draw your attention that this time there is no warning.

There is no “let my people go”.

That is because God doesn't always have to give us a warning.

If He's already warned you and me, why does He have to repeat Himself?

I also want you to see that this time, the magicians were not able to duplicate the sign.

They were able to duplicate the frogs but not the lice.

It wasn't that that lice was harder to produce than frogs.

God simply determined it was time to show Egypt that the powers of their magicians were not on par with His.

19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This [is] the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had said.

It's amazing to see what God can do with just His finger:

He can write the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone (Ex. 31:18)

He can write in judgment on the wall to Belshazzar – the writing on the wall, “You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting” (Dan. 5:5).

He can write in the dust as the woman is caught in adultery, then say to the woman, “Neither do I condemn you” (John 8).

And here the magicians realize that judgment is upon Egypt by God's finger.

Yet, Pharaoh's heart had become so hard that now he wouldn't even listen to his own advisors.

20 And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 21 "Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms [of flies] on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms [of flies], and also the ground on which they [stand]. 22 "And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms [of flies] shall be there, in order that you may know that I [am] the LORD in the midst of the land. 23 "I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be." ' " 24 And the LORD did so. Thick swarms [of flies] came into the house of Pharaoh, [into] his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. The land was corrupted because of the swarms [of flies].

The word for flies does not exist in the Hebrew.

So many theologians believe that the swarm was made up of biting insects – some say that they were swarms of scarab beetles that are carnivorous - remember, they had no window screens back them.

You might write down Psalm 78:45 before verse 20

The psalmist writes

[Psa 78:45 NKJV] 45 He sent swarms of flies among them, which devoured them, And frogs, which destroyed them.

Sounds painful.

Now, we don't have Pharaoh's respond to the request to let the people go – but because the plague happened – we know that once again, he resisted.

One of the big difference in this sign was that the Children of Israel were not going to be tormented by these swarms.

25 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land." 26 And Moses said, "It is not right to do so, for we would be sacrificing the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God. If we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, then will they not stone us?

Pharaoh calls upon Moses and offers a compromise.

I will allow you guys to worship your God – however, I am not going to let you go – you will need to offer sacrifices while you are still here in Egypt.

Moses replies with – we can't.

How can we sacrifice sheep when the Egyptians saw shepherds as repulsive and an abomination.

How can we sacrifice cows and bulls when some of the false gods that Egyptians worshipped had the form of cows and bulls.

The Egyptians will kill us if we start sacrificing bulls and lambs while in Egypt.

27 "We will go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He will command us." 28 So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Intercede for me." 29 Then Moses said, "Indeed I am going out from you, and I will entreat the LORD, that the swarms [of flies] may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. But let Pharaoh not deal deceitfully anymore in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

Pharaoh once again attempts to get Moses to compromise.

He is allowing Moses to go into the wilderness but he doesn't want him to go too far away.

He wants to keep an eye on Moses.

Notice Pharaoh telling Moses to intercede on his behalf – Pharaoh knows the true source of the plagues but he still refuses to humble himself before God.

30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD. 31 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; He removed the swarms [of flies] from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. Not one remained. 32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.

By this time Pharaoh should have been listening intently to every word Moses said. But after the flies were gone he hardened his heart (v.32), and so he set himself and his people up for even more serious judgments from the Lord.

Sometimes the Lord uses drastic measures to get our attention.

The “swarms of flies” take different forms—trouble, recurring failure, guilt, the hurt looks of the people we love.

Those are the times we especially need to listen to God.

Amen!!!

Let's pray...