

Good morning church,

Let's lift up our swords and repeat after me -

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

Please open up your bibles to the book of Exodus, we are going to be looking at the 8th and 9th plague.

We are continuing our look through this amazing book of God's deliverance of His people.

For the past couple of weeks, as we have examined the first seven plagues upon Egypt – we have seen Pharaoh continue to disobey the word of God – as he didn't want to do the right thing and we have seen the consequences of his decisions.

His heart got harder and harder and in the process we can even say that he got weaker and weaker.

He wanted to do it his way!

However, I think that sometimes as we overlook Moses' response to the word of God.

Moses – responded with complete obedience to the word of God.

He didn't deviate from it – he didn't take any shortcuts – and in the process, we can say that his response to the word of God had the opposite effect on his heart as his faith grew as he humbled himself and fully submitted to the will of the Great I AM.

His faith grew!

One was humble before God and the other one was prideful before God.

This is what we are going to see in our study today.

Let's pray...

[Exo 10:1-29 NKJV] 1 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him,

Notice the words that the Lord told Moses – I have hardened his heart.

This is past tense – it is done!

God initially told Moses back in chapter four that He was going to harden Pharaoh's heart and here He reveals to Moses that the job is done.

God didn't take away Pharaoh's free will – Pharaoh hardened his own heart over and over again – the scriptures don't reveal that God hardened Pharaoh's heart until chapter nine.

God simply allowed Pharaoh to have what he sinfully desired – and that was a hard heart against God and His people.

If Pharaoh at any time had said, “I truly confess. I have sinned. And meant it without qualification, I believe God would have forgiven him and established him.

There may be some that say – wait a minute Pastor Herb,

Didn't Pharaoh admit that he had sinned after the last plague??? (9:27) Yes – he did.

The problem is that there is a big difference between what Pharaoh says and what he does. Vs. 34- “And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.”

As SOON as the hail and the thunder were gone, he went back on what he had said.

This apparently genuine repentance and admission of sin and even submission to God's will in letting the people go, ALL of it turned out to be disingenuous.

It wasn't real.

Even if he emotionally meant it in the moment, his heart was not truly there.

How do we know that? Because obedience is more than just talk; it is action.

2 "and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I [am] the LORD."

One of the goals involved in allowing Pharaoh's heart to get harder and harder is so that God is allowed to display greater and greater works, not just to destroy the gods of Egypt, but to show that Yahweh is THE Great God.

"Moses – I am going to provide a testimony of who I AM."

I am going to do amazing wonders and signs and I want you to tell your children and your children's children so that they may be encouraged and know who I AM.

3 So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 4 'Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory. 5 'And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. 6 'They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians--which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.' " And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me – that was the question Lord's question to Pharaoh.

For nine months, plague upon plague has come upon Egypt – and for nine months Pharaoh has refused to humble himself and let the Children of Israel go.

And now, locusts are going to devour what's left of the land.

Why?

Pride.

You see church, it is Pharaoh's pride that kept him from letting the Israelites go.

After all, he is Pharaoh – he is looked upon as a god to the Egyptians, his pride prevents him from bowing before another God.

His pride prevents him from being submissive and obedient to the Lord.

Pride says – why should I listen to God when I myself am a god.

This is true for Pharaoh and it is true for every one of us – this desire to be our own god. That is what pride does.

Pride says – My will be done instead of God's will.

There maybe be someone watching this who has never given in, never submitted to God fully, by trusting in Christ alone for salvation, his sacrificial death on the cross and resurrection from the dead.

Perhaps verse 3 is the question you should hear today, “How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?”

Or perhaps you’re a believer, but you’re harboring this little hidden sin that no one knows about.

Guess what - He knows –

And because He loves you, He continue to ask – How long?

How long are you going to continue that lifestyle?

How long are you going to continue to live among the locusts?

How long are you going to hold on to your pride?

Hear this question that God asks Pharaoh: “How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?”

There is only One God and it is certainly not us.

The bible says -

[Jas 4:10 NKJV] 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

7 Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"

The scriptures tell us in chapter nine that the hearts of Pharaoh's servants were also hardened.

Apparently, their hearts were not as hard as Pharaoh's.

They see the devastation of the locusts and they come to encourage Pharaoh to heed the words of Moses.

They are questioning Pharaoh – which takes a lot of guts – don't you see what is occurring in Egypt?

Do you not see the devastation?

Either Pharaoh is oblivious to the destruction in Egypt or his hardened heart has blinded him from the consequences of his own sin.

So they come to him with a compromise.

8 So Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. Who [are] the ones that are going?" 9 And Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we will go, for we must hold a feast to the LORD."

10 Then he said to them, "The LORD had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. 11 "Not so! Go now, you [who are] men, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

What is happening here is that Pharaoh is offering Moses a compromise.

A few chapters back, he had offered Moses a compromise when he said that they could go worship their God but that they had to remain in Egypt

Then he told Moses that they were allowed to leave to worship but that they couldn't go very far.

Here Pharaoh calls in Moses and tells him that he will decide who is able to go worship the Lord and he is only allowing the men to go.

The problem here was not necessarily that Pharaoh was being unreasonable.

It's that he still didn't understand to whom he was talking.

This was GOD himself giving him a command that was to be obeyed.

This wasn't a request, or a suggestion; this was a command.

So Moses refused to compromise and therefore he and Aaron were sent out of Pharaoh's presence.

Church, partial obedience is disobedience.

The word of God cannot be negotiated -

12 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land--all that the hail has left." 13 So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land all that day and all [that] night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. 14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. [They were] very severe; previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them. 15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

In chapter nine, we saw that the hail destroyed the early crop – the barley and the flax. However, the wheat was not destroyed because it was a late crop.

So this swarm of locusts comes and devours the wheat crop – bringing famine to the land.

So not only do you have the creep factor of swarming locusts all over the place – you also have the destruction of the entire food source in Egypt.

Once again, we see God's power over the Egyptian gods – Set, Osirus and Locust god
- Davis.

16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. 17 "Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that He may take away from me this death only." 18 So he went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD.

Upon seeing the locusts – Pharaoh calls upon Moses and Aaron and once again proceeds to try to manipulate Moses by saying the right things.

I'm sorry Moses – I have sinned against you and your God.

Once again, Pharaoh is remorseful for the consequences of his disobedience – he is not repentant.

He doesn't even acknowledge his past sins –

However, I want to draw our attention to verse 18 –

So he went out from Pharaoh and entreated the LORD.

Moses knew that Pharaoh was up to his old tricks again –

Moses could have said – forget it – you're on your own dude!

But, he didn't – he still interceded on Pharaoh's behalf.

Church, is that how we respond when someone has wronged us?

Do we intercede for those that have hurt us deeply?

Do we intercede for those that have gossiped about us – those that have stabbed us in the back?

[1Co 13:4 NKJV] 4 Love suffers long [and] is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

If God's love is in us, we will show longsuffering to those who annoy us and hurt us.

Just like Moses.

19 And the LORD turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt. 20 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.

An east wind brought the locusts into Egypt – so God uses a west wind to blow them out to sea.

And once again Pharaoh goes back on his word and did not obey the word of God.

21 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness [which] may even be felt." 22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick

darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. 23 They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

So here we have the ninth plague – notice again that it was unannounced.

This is the plague of darkness.

Some have suggested that this was a solar eclipse or even a volcanic eruption.

However, solar eclipses don't last for three days –

It couldn't be a volcanic eruption because the Children of Israel were not affected by the darkness.

This was simply the work of God.

In verse 21, it describes the darkness as so dense that the darkness could even be felt.

Think about that –

When we came from Southern California, we were used to having lights on our streets – when we came to Arizona; we were surprised that there were no street lights in our development.

So we learned to use our phones if we were going to throw the trash out or if we were going to go walking at night.

But it is hard to imagine it being so dark that you can't even see your hand in front of your face.

And that is what the Egyptians had to endure for three days.

They couldn't even move around because it was so dark.

Why was it so dark?

In order to understand this we need to remind ourselves that light is not only a physical property; it is an aspect of God's character.

[1Jo 1:5 NKJV] 5 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.

So what we see here is in judgment, God withdrawing His presence so significantly that the only thing that remains in Egypt is a darkness that can even be felt.

The Egyptians worshipped a few sun gods –

They had a god by the name of Ra – he was one their sun gods.

They had Horus – he was another sun god –

They had another god by the name of Kephri – he was the god of the rising sun and they also had moon gods that they worshipped – those that provided the light at night.

Again, all of these were shown to be no match to the One True God.

24 Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you."

Pharaoh once again tries to get Moses to compromise.

He still thinks that he can bargain with God.

He is going to make God his final offer –

This shows that Pharaoh still didn't know who the Lord God was, because he still had not submitted to Him.

This time, he is allowing Moses to take everyone with him – except the animals. They had to stay in Egypt.

25 But Moses said, "You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. 26 "Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there."

Once again, Moses is unwilling to compromise.

God wanted deliverance for all of Israel and for all that belonged to the Children of Israel and was not willing to deal on the point.

Church, I believe that this demonstrates that God seeks complete surrender from His children.

He doesn't want 50% of us or 75% - He wants us to surrender everything to Him.

This includes our time, our attention, our finances – everything.

He doesn't want us to leave anything behind in Egypt.

No compromise –

[Mat 19:16-22 NKJV] 16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" 17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one [is] good but One, [that is], God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 19 'Honor your father and [your] mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " 20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

What was the issue with the rich young ruler –

He wanted to worship God on his terms.

He wanted to compromise by leaving his possessions in Egypt.

He wasn't ready to surrender them.

27 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 28

Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!" 29 So Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will **never see your face again."**

In frustration Pharaoh orders Moses out of his presence and orders him never to come back.

Moses replies with – you are correct – I will never see your face again.

Now, Moses uses the word “never”

There might be some who would be tempted to say that God's longsuffering ended here.

That Pharaoh had used up God's grace here at the end of the chapter.

But that is not the case church -

You see, God will give Pharaoh, and the Egyptians, one final chance before the last plague: The death of the firstborn.

God is going to give them one more opportunity to repent.

God will give clear instructions for how to avoid that final judgment.

They will be responsible to make the decision whether or not they will surrender to His will.

And we will see how they respond next week.

I want to end with this.

[Mic 6:8 NKJV] 8 He has shown you, O man, what [is] good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Church, we cannot walk humbly with our God if we continue to seek our will instead of His will.

Let's pray...

CALVARY
Santa Cruz