

Blood, frogs, gnats, flies, pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness! Egypt was devastated. With crops and animals destroyed, starvation loomed. The gods of Egypt were shown to be a curse rather than a blessing. Pharaoh was shown to be powerless to keep "chaos" from the land. And all this had come through the hand of a stuttering shepherd and his common, yet God empowered, staff. What a mighty God we serve!

Through it all, Pharaoh had remained hard hearted. He would give in, even plead for relief, but when the pressure was off, he immediately turned back and refused to yield to God's demand to "Let my people go!" He hardened his own heart the first five times. Then God began to harden Pharaoh's heart to show His wonders in Egypt that God's name might be proclaimed in all the earth. (Exodus 9:16)

*<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely. God would not immediately harden his heart this time. Pharaoh would yield to the demand, but he wouldn't yield his heart. It will be hardened again. (Exodus 14:6-8)*

It happens in lives today. God puts the pressure on, and finally people do what they know God is demanding them to do but without yielding their heart. We only have to look back to the full churches after 9/11 to see how fear can cause us to surrender to God's demand while refusing to yield our hearts. (2Chronicles 25:2) There is a difference between doing what God requires because you know it is in your best interest, and yielding your heart to God. One is the worship of self. The other is the beginning of a relationship with God. (Deuteronomy 4:29)

*<sup>2</sup> Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry." When God called Moses at the burning bush, He told Moses they were going to plunder the Egyptians. (Exodus 3:21-22) The back wages for their years of slavery would be collected. God used the term, "to plunder", as when an army was defeated. God defeated Egypt's gods, and to the victor go the spoils, but God gave the spoils to the Hebrews.*

They simply asked their neighbors for clothing and precious metals, and because of the power of the plagues, and the respect they had for Moses and his God, the Egyptians readily yielded to the request. The wealth of Egypt went with God's people so that they could build the Tabernacle at God's instruction. **When God's hand is in something, we never need to worry about the cost. The wealth of the world is His.** (Deuteronomy 8:18)

**Commented [Paul Wall1]:** Exodus 9:16 (ESV)  
16 But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.

**Commented [Paul Wall2]:** Exodus 14:5-8 (ESV)  
5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?"  
6 So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him,  
7 and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.  
8 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.

**Commented [Paul Wall3]:** 2 Chronicles 25:2 (ESV)  
2 And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not with a whole heart.

**Commented [Paul Wall4]:** Deuteronomy 4:29 (ESV)  
29 But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

**Commented [Paul Wall5]:** Exodus 3:21-22 (ESV)  
21 And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty,  
22 but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

**Commented [Paul Wall6]:** Deuteronomy 8:18 (ESV)  
18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

We saw that with the building of Hope Cottage. It was a 2 million dollar project. We thought that was pretty ambitious, especially during the economic downturn, and yet by faith we helped start it off with our little gift. In a few years, the mission that had been in the red, opened their multi-million dollar facility to care for homeless women and children and to share with them the Gospel. Much of that money and labor came from unbelievers. That's amazing! The wealth of the world belongs to God. We just get to manage a portion of it for God's glory. (Psalm 24:1)

**Commented [Paul Wall7]:** Psalms 24:1 (ESV)  
1 The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,

The time had come for the final plague. *<sup>4</sup> So Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, <sup>5a</sup> and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die,*

Pharaoh had said in the last chapter (which was an earlier part of this conversation) that if he saw Moses face again he would kill Moses. (Exodus 10:28) Moses agreed, but God turned the threat to Pharaoh's firstborn. Moses, who had been so timid and unsure of himself, now boldly ignored the death threat and proclaimed the word of the Lord. What happened to him?

**Commented [Paul Wall8]:** Exodus 10:27-28 (ESV)  
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 care never to see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die."

He had seen the hand of God. He gained confidence in the power of YHWH over all the powers of this world. He quit looking at himself and his inabilities and looked to God and His omnipotence. **He came to the place we all need to come, total confidence in the Word of the LORD.** (Psalm 119:42)

**Commented [Paul Wall9]:** Psalms 119:42 (ESV)  
42 then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word.

The last plague was the hardest thing a human being can endure, the death of your own child. How could God do such a thing? Does God end lives? Yes! He gives life, and He takes life. (Deuteronomy 32:39) While Egypt thought Osiris was Lord of the Dead, God would prove otherwise. There is a time to live and a time to die and those times are determined by the sovereign God of the universe. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)

**Commented [Paul Wall10]:** Deuteronomy 32:39 (ESV)  
39 " See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

The Egyptians were reaping only a portion of what they had sown. They had thrown the Hebrew babies to the crocodiles of the Nile. Justice was being served. They had enslaved generations of Hebrews and worn them out like tools. They had afflicted God's children, now God would afflict theirs, just as He had warned. (4:22-23) Now it was time to pay in wealth and blood.

**Commented [Paul Wall11]:** Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 (ESV)  
1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

**When we demand that God soften His judgments, it is really our own recognition of our fear of justice.** We don't want others to suffer for their actions, because we don't want to suffer for ours. In making that kind of a demand, we are asking for God to compromise His righteousness. We see it in our own progressive judicial system of today. If God did what man desired, we would hate Him for being unjust and rightly so. If He does what His perfect nature demands, we should fear Him and seek His mercy. (Psalm 33:18) Do you really want an unjust God? Think that through!

**Commented [Paul Wall12]:** Exodus 4:22-23 (ESV)  
22 Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son,  
23 and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.' "

**Commented [Paul Wall13]:** Psalms 33:18 (ESV)  
18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love,

Remember, God already told Pharaoh He could have easily wiped the Egyptians from the face of the earth (9:15) and been perfectly justified in doing so. God's just wrath is measured with mercy. It doesn't have to happen. Pharaoh can repent. The Egyptians can seek refuge with the Hebrews. God even told Pharaoh the very hour that it would take place. Still, Pharaoh would not yield.

**Commented [Paul Wall14]:** Exodus 9:15 (ESV)  
15 For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth.

I would imagine the word spread throughout Egypt very quickly. Again, a choice had to be made. Would they call on the gods of Egypt or flee to Goshen and find refuge in a Hebrew home? It's another chance to make a choice.

*<sup>6</sup> There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again.* Those words must have struck terror in the hearts of the officials that heard it. There would be some serious soul searching that evening about what they truly believed. How would they interpret all the plagues?

*<sup>7</sup> But not a dog shall growl against any of the people of Israel, either man or beast, that you may know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.* Osiris assistant was a canine headed god, Anubis. You see his image in hieroglyphs of embalming the dead. He guided the dead into the afterlife. That may be the reference to "not a dog shall growl".

They had seen the distinction before. The Hebrews were God's people. They were set apart to serve and worship Him. They did not belong to Pharaoh. Shalom (peace) was not the product of Pharaoh's intercession with the gods of Egypt. Shalom is the presence of God in the midst of His people. (John 14:27) He is the only source of true peace.

**Commented [Paul Wall15]:** John 14:27 (ESV)  
27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

This is the distinction or difference today as well. It's not just because you go to church. It's not because you don't do things that they do. It is because God has made His home in the heart of the redeemed. (John 14:23) He has set you apart for His purposes. He manifests His very nature in you. The unselfish love, mercy, grace, peace, and joy are not your own. They are His very own attributes manifest through your life. **The world will always be a place of chaos when the Lord is not invited to be present. Where He is, there is peace.** (1Corinthians 14:33) That is how the world knows there is a difference.

**Commented [Paul Wall16]:** John 14:23 (ESV)  
23 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

We would like the difference to be in programs or activities. That takes the pressure off and doesn't demand that He be Lord of every area of our life. But the difference is seen in the presence of God in the individual life, and that only comes when we die to our self and yield our life to Him. (2Corinthians 4:10)

**Commented [Paul Wall17]:** 1 Corinthians 14:33 (ESV)  
33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,

Remember, these are the words of the Lord through Moses to Pharaoh. *<sup>8</sup> All these officials of yours will come to me, bowing down before me and saying, 'Go, you and all the people who follow you!' After that I will leave." Then Moses, hot*

**Commented [Paul Wall18]:** 2 Corinthians 4:10 (ESV)  
10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

*with anger, left Pharaoh.* Everyone will bow their knee before God. That does not mean that everyone will yield their heart to God and know Him as LORD. They will bow because they must. Some will gladly bow in joy. Many will bow with gritted teeth. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Everything God said through Moses had come to pass. Why would this be any different? Pharaoh would rather hang onto his pride than his own son!

Moses went out from Pharaoh's presence in hot anger. It was the righteous indignation of God within him. It was God's anger that this mere mortal would really think he could stand against Almighty God that gives him his every breath.

*<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." <sup>10</sup> Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.* There are still wonders to be seen, the conversion of many, and the parting of the Red Sea. God is not done. Why? That the world may know that He is the LORD and that there is none like Him.

Egyptians that did not find refuge with the Hebrews would have called on their gods. Everyone must have been up that night watching their firstborn. The breathing was normal. There was no fever. 11:59 and no signs of poor health. They thought, "Maybe Moses was wrong this time. Pharaoh is a god. His firstborn son is a god that will take his place." Midnight! The last breath exhaled and ... no other breath followed. The fulfillment of the Word of the Lord came. <sup>29</sup> *At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. <sup>30</sup> And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead.*

Pharaoh should have been furious with his own heart, but that is rarely the case with the unredeemed. Instead their anger is turned to God, the just Judge, who has warned them, given them sign after sign, and chance after chance. Instead of repenting and pleading with God for forgiveness for the fruit of their sin, they curse God and accuse Him of the things of which they are guilty. Accusations like, "Unfair!" Yes, Pharaoh was unfair in treating the Hebrews as he did, especially after God had used Joseph to save and enrich the nation. "Hardhearted!" Yes, Pharaoh was hardhearted. "Merciless!" Yes, Pharaoh had been merciless. **Sin so distorts reality that it accuses God of the things for which it is guilty.** (Psalm 50:21)

This moment makes me think of the damned entering hell. The curses that will be hurled toward God, and the accusations aimed at Him will be an accurate

**Commented [Paul Wall19]:** Philippians 2:9-11 (ESV)  
9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,  
10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Commented [Paul Wall20]:** Psalms 50:21 (NIV)  
21 These things you have done and I kept silent; you thought I was altogether like you. But I will rebuke you and accuse you to your face.

description of their own heart. (Revelation 16:21) In voicing their anger toward God they will be announcing the very reason for their sentence. The wail will go up for all that they lost, that which was never theirs in the first place, but which they selfishly claimed as their own, to do with as they pleased. Their cry is a declaration of disappointment that they are not the sole reason creation exists. That is the heart of unredeemed man. (Jeremiah 17:9)

**Commented [Paul Wall21]:** Revelation 16:21 (ESV)  
21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

*<sup>31</sup> Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. <sup>32</sup> Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!"* The Word of the LORD came to pass. Pharaoh has another "false conversion". He is pressured into letting the people go. Finally, he gave an unconditional release of the Hebrews, something he could have done from day one if he had not been the hardhearted man that he was. He finally lets them serve another god, the true God.

**Commented [Paul Wall22]:** Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV)  
9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

His request that Moses bless him shows us he is convinced, for the moment, that YHWH is all-powerful. In a pantheistic culture, one can ask for the blessing of another god, even if that god is not the one they worship. It is a kind of superstitious request wanting good to come to oneself from the unknown spiritual realm. It's like the unknown god that Paul addressed on Mars Hill. (Acts 17:23)

**Commented [Paul Wall23]:** Acts 17:23 (ESV)  
23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

It won't be long before Pharaoh thinks he has made a big mistake. God does harden his heart again, just as He said, and lures him to his doom in the waters of the Red Sea. (Psalm 136:15) Pharaoh is an example of the evil that lurks within the heart of man and the end result of that evil.

**Commented [Paul Wall24]:** Psalms 136:15 (ESV)  
15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, for his steadfast love endures forever;

Meanwhile, God has shown Himself to be just, the avenger of the downtrodden, the rescuer of the oppressed. He has turned the words of the most powerful man in the world back on him while his wizards declare it is but a finger of the mighty God YHWH. (Exodus 8:19) He has shown the gods of Egypt to powerless and converted a great number of those in Egypt, even when the testimony of his own people, the Hebrews, was almost non-existent. He has kept the promises to the Patriarchs, because His word cannot fail. God has shown the world that there is none like Him.

**Commented [Paul Wall25]:** Exodus 8:19 (ESV)  
19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Today **God still brings plagues upon prideful man to humble him and turn him. Will we listen?** Will we harden our hearts and look for some other way to save us? Or will we learn from this record that has come down as a warning to us and yield our very hearts to the King of kings and Lord of lords? Will we truly acknowledge that there is none like Him and surrender our hearts? Will we join with those who leave Egypt, those who God has made separate through the blood of Jesus, or will we face His just wrath on our sins as we scream our cursing accusations at God of the sins for which we are guilty?

The greatest plague to face mankind has been announced by God. "The soul that sins must die!" (Ezekiel 18:1) There is but one escape. We stand at the crossroads between Egypt and Goshen. Why would you wait to see if God's unfailing word will come to pass? Why not flee now to the safety of the house of faith? Midnight approaches. Where will you be when the moment arrives?

**Commented [Paul Wall26]:** Ezekiel 18:4 (ESV)  
4 Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

Questions:

- 1 Will Pharaoh yield to God? Explain.
  - 2 Did the Hebrews rob the Egyptians?
  - 3 What gave Moses new boldness?
  - 4 What is wrong with getting God to compromise His justice?
  - 5 How can the world see the difference God can make in a life?
  - 6 How could Egyptians escape?
  - 7 Who do the unredeemed blame for the consequences of their sin?
  - 8 How would Pharaoh's life been different if he submitted to God on day 1?
- Application?
- 9 What does Pharaoh's life picture?
  - 10 Describe how the sense the Hebrews would have had of God?

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