

March 19th, 2023
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Delivered: Rescued from Bondage
Sermon #10 Title: *Unjust Still*
Sermon #10 Text: (Exodus 9:8-12)

Opening up the front door on the 6th plague the first thing to observe here is the Aggression of the Lord.

I. The Aggression of the Lord – vs 8-9

*Note – Like the time between the second and third plague, here between the 5th and 6th, the ink isn't even dry on verse 7, and the Lord continues His divine movement in the land.

A. The Plague Initiated – “And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron.”

- 1.) Like the 3rd plague, there is no warning that it is going to come.
- 2.) But now going with that, is the fact that since there is no warning that it is coming, there is no opportunity to escape it.

*Note – In other words, there is no option to take, in order to avoid it, the 6th plague is coming.

*Note – It is a fair question to ask, how much time passed between each plague? It is another fair question to ask how much time did the entire epic take?

- According to Historians, and Jewish scholars – somewhere between 9 months and a year, in order to make it through all of the plagues, and for Egypt to let go of Israel.

*Note – Now – the point here is that we are moving at the Lord's pace, not Pharaoh's.

- All matters of “timing” belong to the Lord!

- He has the sacred schedule of deliverance

- He has the sacred schedule of judgment

As a matter of fact, the Lord repeatedly throughout this exchange with Pharaoh points to His control over the “timing” of things.

Plague #1 – 7:15 – “Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning...”

Plague #3 – 8:20 – “Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh”

Plague #5 – 9:5 – “And the Lord appointed a set time, saying Tomorrow the Lord shall do this thing in the land.”

Plague #7 – 9:13-14 – “Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh...” “I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart”

- 9:18 – “Tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain grievous hail.”

Plague #8 – 10:4 – “tomorrow will I bring the locusts to thy coast.”

Plague #9 – 10:22 – “there was thick darkness in the land of Egypt for three days”

Plague #10 – 11:4 – “About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt.”

*Note – All of that is just to say that when the Lord moves, the Lord moves at the Lord's pace, and you can no more change His pace than you can change the pace of sunrise and sunset.

*Note – The Plague is Initiated. – But now we see the plague Delineated.

B. The Plague Delineated – “Take you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven.”

*Note – Here is yet another departure from the way the Lord had Moses and Aaron act.

From stretching out his shepherds staff – to striking the dust and dirt of the ground, to just the simple word given in the previous plague – Like Jesus performing miracles with different means, no one needed to get the idea that there was some kind of special formula, or magic method.

1.) Now note there are three specifics marking this plague:

- a.) The Substance of It
- b.) The Subjects of It
- c.) The Scope of It.

*Note – Like the previous plague, this one is like a guided missile, with exact measures and precise effects divinely calculated.

- The Substance of It – “Boils and Blains”

- literally “eruptions and sores”

Countless people have tried to identify the exact disease the Lord sent here, and they have come up with all different sorts of conclusions. – So do you know what that means? – That means the Lord sent “eruptions and sores.”

- The first few plagues attacked the nerves of the people through annoyances and great inconveniences. The previous plague assaulted their confidence by robbing them of their wealth, destroying their cattle in the fields.

- This plague attacks their bodies, not causing some annoying pain like the sting of a flying insect; but a debilitating pain that grow from the inside out.

*Note – The first four plagues were “Macroscopic” in Nature – From the outside in, see it coming, and deal with it, like you were dealing with an invading enemy.

- the Last two – Microscopic. – Unseen, and invisible. – Cannot see it coming, have no idea what it even is, or how to even address it.

- The Subjects of It – “upon man and upon beast.” – Like the previous one, God is inching ever so closely to the very life of man. – He took the life of beasts in the last one. Here now, He does two things that add insult to the Egyptians.

- He lumps them in with the beasts.

- He lumps the beasts in with them.

- If there was anything more disgusting than boils all over you, it would be seeing boils all over your animals as well.

- In the previous plague the Lord poisoned and destroyed their beasts that were in the field.

- If the Egyptians were going to treat the Hebrews no better than animals, the Lord would return the favor upon the Egyptian animals.

- Now in this plague, the Egyptians themselves would be brought down to the same kind of suffering that would be bestowed upon their animals. – and He elevate the animals to be given the same treatment that He gave the Egyptians.

- The Scope of It – “throughout all the land of Egypt” – (vs 12 – upon all the Egyptians.”

- It appears that this plague also was a discriminatory plague – no Israelites.

- What God would do to Pharaoh, God would do to the nation...

- This was a national crisis.

*Note – Here is a powerful example that needs to be noticed. – God let a nation suffer judgment do to the decisions of its leader!

- There is an element of God's judgment where Egyptians were judged with Egypt. There is coming an element in the next plague, where the Lord differentiates between the Egyptians who will fear Him; and the Egyptians who will not!

- God would Judge Egypt – but would save trusting Egyptians

- God would deliver Israel – but destroy untrusting Israelites

Each man will deal with God's judgment of his nation.

Yet each man will be delivered or destroyed based on his response to God's Word.

Now that is the plague Initiated, and Delineated, now we notice the Plague Communicated.

C. The Plague Communicated – “in the sight of Pharaoh.”

1.) The Lord said to Moses and Aaron take handfuls and let Moses...

a.) He obviously said this because He wanted Aaron NOT to participate in this. – This was for Moses to do, and Moses alone.

2.) It was not something for Moses to Say, but it was something for Pharaoh to See.

*Note – While Pharaoh would not listen to what came to his ears, the Lord said, we'll see if He can read what comes through his eyes!

- Pharaoh had better learn some sign language and Biblical metaphor if he is going to know what's coming before it comes.

- We are not told that Moses Said anything.

- He just did in the sight of Pharaoh – what the Pagan priests did when they wanted to appease their gods.

*Note -While there is much here in what Moses did, one of the overall messages was one of “Mockery.”

One of the things Egyptian Priests did to invoke help from their gods, or offer praise to their gods, was to take the ashes of a burnt sacrifice, and throw them into the air in order to seek help.

- Some scholars say this was done often by Egyptian physicians trying to invoke healing.

*Note – Though it is not said, and should not be thought of as absolute. It would not be unthinkable to believe that with each and every plague thus far, the Egyptian priests were already standing in their temples, throwing ashes in the air in order to invoke the favor of their gods.

- if they were, it had be some kind of mockery for Pharaoh to look out and see Moses mimicking them, like the sorcerers mimicked him.

*Note – God has never been above making fools feel like a fool, and feeding mockers a steady diet of mockery.

That's the Aggression of the Lord.

II. The Expression of the Lord – vs 10-11

*note – While the Lord did not speak to Pharaoh, but He demonstrated his message to Pharaoh, what exactly did He show him.

A. His Just Judgment – sprinkled ashes – turning a blessing into a curse.

*Note – No doubt in addition to any mockery to the pagan priests, there are several things the Lord demonstrated when Moses threw the ashes into the air.

1.) The ashes of the kiln –

a.) This word for “furnace” in the Hebrew is literally “kiln.”

(1.) This is most likely a reference to the “Brick Kilns” that the Israelites used to make bricks.

*Note – These kilns were the most easily accessible, and most common frame of reference for furnace.

- the picture here is for Moses to get ashes from the brick kiln, and throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh, just like the pagan priests did. – Why?

- There is MUCH Irony here

1st – The Egyptians did this ritual act to incur a blessing – God did it to invoke a curse.

2nd – The Egyptians used the ashes from their sacrifices to invoke the blessing. – God used the residue of the Israelite labors to bring down the plague.

- all of that soot, all of those ashes, born from the backs, and blood, and sweat, and tears of the Israelites, would be used to feed the

Egyptians heavy doses of the misery they had dished out.

*Note – All the labors and backaches and pains and oppressions forced on the Israelites went into these kilns so the Egyptians could have bricks. – It is as though the Lord said, “You want the bricks, you get the boils!”

- Those labors produced more than building material
- Those labors produced Judging Material.

3rd. – But you know there is potentially a third level of indictment here.

- According to some historians, the ashes that the Egyptians would throw into the air weren’t all “animal sacrifices.” – Some of them were “human sacrifices” to the god of the dead, “Typhon”

- This very ritual that they so cherished, and was used to worship the god of the dead; was used to invoke the blessings of their other gods; and had their physicians use ashes for healing – all of that God would mock them, and turn it all on their head in perfect divine poetry – giving them what they had sown.

B. His Perfect Picture – inside corruption coming out

1.) Blains and Boils –

Boils and Blisters, are unseen infections and microbes that come to the surface.

- It is “unseen corruption” that overtakes what’s seen! – it is the invisible becoming visible.

(As one writer posed the question – What might happen if every time you had a wicked thought – a boil appeared on

your face. – Or every time you were deceptive, or profane, or inwardly sarcastic, a blister swelled up on your cheeks or forehead, or arms. – what a terrible thought)

Sin is in fact spoken of in the Bible in terms that relate to things like an “infection” or “disease.”

- David said in Psalm 38:3 – “there is no rest in my bones because of my sin...”

- The Septuagint, Greek Old Testament translates Deuteronomy 30:3 – “the Lord will heal thy sins”

- The idea of “defilement” and “uncleanness” saturate the Bible identifying sin as infecting, and corrupting of the soul.

*Note – Now think about this...

- If the sin of the soul showed up on the body like large puss filled boils and blisters – just how grotesque would we be to look at?

Preacher – Why would you want us to think such disgusting thoughts? – Because it is those thoughts, and those pictures that help us have the full picture when we read – “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

In one sense, the Lord put on the Egyptian bodies, visible and painful and disgusting tokens, of their inward realities.

- those boils were more accurate a picture of the inside of man, than Pinocchio’s nose growing with each lie.

C. His Meticulous Message – “and his magicians could not stand before Moses.” – there is a special dig of the spur mentioned here for us to know.

*Note – No doubt there were countless people put of out commission due to this plague. There were military generals affected by these boils. Their best physicians were affected by these boils – the very best of their best and the brightest of their brightest were all affected by these boils – but the Lord had Moses write down what it did to the MAGICIANS.

Why? – Don’t know for sure. But there are some things to see and comparisons to make...

1. — It is not unthinkable to recognize the likelihood of “previous arrogance” the Magicians lorded or exuded over Moses.

- when that desert rat sauntered in to Pharaoh’s palace with his sandy clothes, and a dirty mountain stick in his hand acting like he could stand on the same ground as them...

Could be, the one they thought unworthy to be in their presence, now ran them out of his...

- the scriptures paint a stark picture here – “Moses stood before Pharaoh” but these \$3 side-shows could no longer stand before Moses.

(The Lord always has a way of putting people in their place.)

- 2.) – Though the Magicians had ceased trying to imitate Moses, they still were a source of counsel to Pharaoh, as well as their presence still provided him a modicum of stately image... they were still part of his entourage... - not any more.

III. The Progression of the Lord – vs 12

A. The Broadening of His Means – “water, earth, wind, and disease” – annoyance – attacking the

nerves – loss of property – attacking the confidence –
debilitating pain – attacking the body.

(water, earth, wind, and flesh)

- Nothing exists outside of His
Jurisdiction as the one and only
Almighty God.

B. The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart – “the Lord
hardened Pharaoh's heart.”

The entirety of this plague is scripted by God, even down to
the response of Pharaoh.

It appears that the entire point of this plague was to intensify
Pharaoh's anger, and strengthen his rebellion. – as well as
special dig of the spur to be given to the magicians.

- God is helping Pharaoh wallow in the mood
Pharaoh has chosen –

- We are passed the point of no return, and we are
picking up speed.

There is a level of Judgment here that isn't waiting for
Pharaoh to die.

- His Judgment has already begun!

-God has Judicially solidified Pharaoh's will.

- Revelation 22:11 summarizes a point near
the end of time on the whole; that appears to
be a point in time different for every man –

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and
he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he
that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and
he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

Conclusion: - How would you respond, if you were told, that
after today – No More Change. No More Growth. No More
Improvement. Whatever condition you are in, at the end of
this day, is your Eternal Condition.

- That may very well be the case.