

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Pinecrest Baptist Church  
a.m.

Sermon Series: Delivered; Rescued from Bondage  
Sermon #6 Title: *"Let the Plagues Begin"*  
Sermon #6 Text: (Exodus 7:14-25)

There is much to get here today. But if there is anything at all for you to settle in on, is getting to know the GOD that is. Not what you may speculate, not what you may imagine, but what you can know about Him as He reveals Himself through this epic.

(Now yet again, we are faced with two stories in one. God is using Moses, to move against Pharaoh; and such use teaches us about the Lord our God!")

- Now you can learn a lot about Moses
- You can learn a lot about Pharaoh
- Yet stories of both men are that you may know more about the God who used them to show us who HE is!
- In fact, that is the very reason, the Lord has chosen these means and these methods to communicate that very clear message.

\*Note – The entirety of God's motive behind delivering Israel this way is repeated all throughout this epic...

- 7:17 – "thou shalt know that I am the Lord"
- 7:5 – "the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD..."
- 6:7 – (to Israel) – "ye shall know that I am the LORD your God..."

14:18 – "and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh."

- You will see what you will not admit
- You will know what claim to reject
- You will bow to the truth you refuse to acknowledge.

This epic pictures both "the grace of God in gentle goodness" and the "sheer force of God in judging wrath."

We find here that moment in time when Pharaoh, having made up his mind, and settled in his heart that he would not yield to the God of Moses, the fullness of time had come for the Lord to move.

\*Note- Three facts of life that you can stand firm on.

I. God is Sovereign in the Details – vs 14-19

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart [is] hardened, he refuseth to let the people go." – vs 14

\*Note – It is time to get going, and so the Lord sends His man in.

(\*Note – Now here is something to note. The Lord doesn't just look at Moses and say – "Sick em'." – He doesn't merely point toward Egypt and say, now get to it, and don't come back till your finished. The Lord walked Moses through, not just what He would do, but HOW He would do it.

**A. The Movement of His Man** – vs 14-16

1.) The Time to Move – "Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning..."

\*Note- Not now; not this evening, I have a time that I want this to begin, and it is in the morning. – Get a good nights rest first.

- The orchestration of this confrontation would be conducted by the Father.

- Now one can speculate as to the reason that the Lord chose the morning.

- it could be the Lord chose the morning, because He also chose the place, and began things by the timing of Pharaoh's doings.

- it could be to get the most of out of the day – that the initial effects of the plague would have a greater impact, if the Egyptians had the entirety of the first full day of disaster.

- it could be, for a divine reason that the Lord doesn't tell us about.

\*Note – We see here that whatever Matters to the LORD should be whatever Matters to you!

WHEN is as much a matter of obedience to the Lord as is WHAT. – There are great numbers of people who will readily admit they have no problem doing what God says to do, and will be glad to do it..... UNTIL you get to the WHEN!

- They often tell God they will obey Him, like I tell Paula, I'll do the dishes. – I will do them, and she'll tell you that – that's never the conflict – the conflict is in the "When."

- (Do you realize that there are many times in the Bible where the Lord specified, not just what to do, but WHEN for people to do it?)

o He tells Christian WHEN to be in the Church – "on the first day of the week"

o He told the Israelites WHEN to keep the Passover; and When to be in Jerusalem for their feasts; and WHEN not to work. (

o He tells you WHEN to be Saved – "today is the day of salvation. – "now is the accepted time."

o He tells you WHEN to be watching for the Lord's return – "always" – "Watch for ye know not when the master of the house cometh."

\*Note – All of that being said, don't ever get the idea that "obedience" and "timing" are two separate things with the Lord, they are not!

- God did not just have a work for Moses to accomplish, He had a time He wanted it started.

\*Note – He told Moses the "time to move".

2.) The Place to Stand – "thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come;"

\*Note – It never does any good to show up at the wrong place. At many other points in this epic, Moses was able to gain a hearing with Pharaoh, seemingly wherever.

- But not only did the Lord want Moses to begin at this particular time, but also at this particular place.

a.) Moses was to stand between Pharaoh, and his precious river.

\*Note – Whether Pharaoh is going to the river for religious purposes, or for cleanliness, or even to drink, is irrelevant. ON this morning at Pharaoh's place, and at the Lord's time – Moses would cut off this evil king from his false god.

Centuries later, the Lord would speak through the prophet Ezekiel about His disdain for the then Pharaoh's obsession with the Nile River.

- Ezekiel 29:3 – “Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.

\*Note – Now we will see in a moment that there is much meaning and messaging going on from the Lord to Pharaoh. And this messaging will have the most impact in a particular place.

- The discretion and wisdom of God is fathomless. No one has the intellect to reverse engineer the undisclosed methods of God. – We just trust and obey!

3.) The Posture to Take – “the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.”

\*Note -Now there is more than one unique thing about this rod.

- 1<sup>st</sup> This rod is Aaron’s rod, not the rod of Moses.

7:10 – “Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent...”

- the Lord had already shown Pharaoh this particular rod, or staff before. – For some reason this particular rod would be recognizable to Pharaoh, the Lord wanted THIS one, not necessarily Moses.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – It was this rod, that had some snakes in its belly –

-the rod that ate your magicians serpents

- the rod Pharaoh had already seen, and known.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> – take it in thine hand! – (There on Pharaoh’s river, he would see Moses, standing between him and his water, with a rod in his hand that had already humiliated his own magicians once.

- The time to move; the place to stand, the posture to take, and now finally – “the Word to speak”

4.) The Word to Speak – “thou shalt say”

\*Note – Now pause right here for a moment, and examine this simple thought for a second. – “How much thinking has Moses had to do?” – None. – All that He has had to do was to follow the script as given to Him by the Lord!

(I won’t insult you by trying over simplify life; but I have to say, that in certain ways – Life can be just that easy. – Just follow the script-ures, as given to you. – God did not set us adrift on an ocean with no shores, no wind, no rudder, and no map. – Now He is not there to HELP you accomplish your great will for life. – He is there every step of the way to help you get into HIS great Will for your life.)

- the Time to move – the place to stand  
– the posture to take and the word to speak. (How much more could God give to Moses to carry out His Will)

\*Note – This is God being Sovereign over the Movement of His man!

God did tell Moses what to say!

***B. The Publication of His Punishment*** – vs 17-19

\*Note – Moses confrontation with Pharaoh is reminiscent of a court room scene at the announcement of a verdict.

1.) The charges read – (vs 17) “And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, ***behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear.***”

\*Note – Notice the charge – “thou would not hear!”

- You refused to listen and obey.

\*Note – No one has to achieve the position of Pharaoh to be guilty of that charge.

There is no greater treason against the High King of Heaven, than just taking your place under Him and saying Yes, LORD.

(Here is one of the greatest blind-spots of the common mind. – Simply refusing to hear, and obey, is worthy of enduring a falling sky.

- “He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar!” – 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:10. – No man can declare God a liar, and live. – Furthermore, no man can declare God a liar, and have the right to die peacefully.

- No one REFUSES God and lives long, or dies peacefully!

2.) The sentence rendered – “thou shalt know that I am the LORD...”

\*Note – The very ignorance you proclaimed, the very defiance you showed, the very blasphemy you vomited out, will be removed from your mouth.

a.) You will KNOW in such a way, you won’t be able to lie about it.

3.) The punishment pronounced – “the waters shall be turned to blood...”

- Water to blood – gruesome – Water to Wine – Gladsome – Herbert Lockyer

a.) the fish shall die

b.) the waters shall be loathed

\*Note – The Lord will punish Pharaoh first, by humiliating his false god, and eliminating his source of sustenance.

\*Note – Now here’s the second thing we see. We that not only is God Sovereign in the details, God is Sure in His Doing. – He did exactly what He pronounced!

## II. God is Sure in His Doing – vs 20-21

**A. Circumstantially** – “the waters that were in the river turned to blood...”

\*Note -This is not first an “internal” judgment, like sending leanness to the soul, or delusion to the mind. – It is direct force on their physical and financial circumstances.

1.) Now note this:

- Water and Blood - Physical life needs both!

a.) You must have Blood in your Veins

b.) You must have Water in your Nourishment.

\*Note – But now you cannot have water in your veins and blood as your nourishment. Water in the wrong place can kill you, and blood not in the right place can kill you.

- Both water and blood are necessary for the life of the flesh!

- The Lord showed here, I am in charge of both!

- That which comes from without a man, and that which comes from within a man.

2.) Now note the circumstances:

(vs 17-18 – “*I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall lothe to drink of the water of the river.*”)

a.) No drinking water

b.) Fish and Marine life – “food”

c.) Peace – What about their crops?!

\*Note – When this began, no one but the Lord knew how long this would last.

**B. Exhaustively** – “streams, ponds, pools of water, vessels of wood and vessels of stone...”

\*Note – At this point in time, Egypt is actually considered “divided.” – Upper Egypt, and Lower Egypt.

- Lower Egypt is in the North

- Upper Egypt is in the South

- the reason for such naming is because the Nile River flowed from the South to the North.

- that being said, some historians assert that each section of Egypt had it's own Pharaoh – one in the North, one in the South. – (that makes no real difference to this story, but if that is so, there is another element of depth to consider.)

- vs 19 – “Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be **blood throughout all the land of Egypt**, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone. “

(From Northern Egypt to Southern Egypt – is 880 miles! – (This entire exchange between Moses and Pharaoh is happening in Northern Egypt – Can you imagine what the people in Southern Egypt were thinking?

- Having no immediate idea about what was taking place up at Thebes, or Memphis, or Ramses, or in Goshen.

- Can you imagine a man coming in from his labors and reaching for a Water Jar that his wife had filled earlier that morning – and turning it up for some refreshment?

- I cannot imagine the reaction of the Egyptians in the South – having never seen such a thing, and having no idea what was happening...

- (Friend when God judged the nation, He judged the whole nation.)

**C. Symbolically** – “the water of the river”- (Nile)

\*Note – “In the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants.”... that’s the Biblical way to say, God did this to his face!

- Hapi – the god of fertility and life

T.S. Millington, English Clergyman from the late 1800’s – “*One of its names was Hapi, or Apis, which is the same as the sacred bull. There is extant a hymn to the Nile, written about the time of the Exodus, beginning thus – “Hail, O Nile, thou comest forth over this land, thou comest in peace, giving life to Egypt, O hidden God!”... “There is nothing so much honoured among the Egyptians as the river Nile.” Even the fish and reptiles which it nourished, and the very reeds and flowers which grew in it, were held sacred. About midsummer every year a great festival was celebrated throughout the country in honour of the Nile. Men and women assembled from all parts of the country in the towns of their respective Nomes; grand festivities were proclaimed, and the religious solemnities which then took place were accompanied with feasting, dancing, and a general rejoicing. A wooden image of the river god was carried by the priests through the villages in solemn procession, appropriate hymns were sung, and the blessings of the anticipated inundation were invoked. By the miraculous change of the waters into blood, a practical rebuke was given to these superstitions. This sacred and beautiful river, the benefactor and preserver of their country, this birthplace of their chief gods, this abode of their lesser deities, this source*

*of all their prosperity, this centre of all their devotion, is turned to blood: the waters stink; the canals and pools, the vessels of wood and vessels of stone, which were replenished from the river, all are alike polluted."*

- Make no mistake about it, the so called "river of life" had been transformed into a "sewer of death" that saturated the beautiful Nile River valley with a nauseating stench.

\*note – Another historian, referencing an Old Egyptian Papyrus, who Biblical scholars say was written about the time of the Exodus – "The first plague (turning the Nile to blood). The Nile River, which formed the basis of daily life and the national economy in Egypt, was devastated as millions of fish died and the water was unusable. Pharaoh was told by God, "By this you will know that I am the LORD" (Exodus 7:17). The Ipuwer Papyrus says, "Plague is throughout the land. Blood is everywhere" (2:5–6). "The river is blood. . . . Men shrink from tasting—human beings, and thirst after water" (2:10). "That is our water! That is our happiness! What shall we do in respect thereof? All is ruin" (3:10–13).

- And there is one more thing to bring to mind. – This was the River, that Pharaoh had thrown the male Hebrew babies in to drown, and/or eaten by the crocodiles.
- Pharaoh was the first one to fill this river with blood, and now he would drink it.

### III. God is Steady in His Development – vs 22-24

\*Note – He did not destroy Egypt all at once. He did not bring Pharaoh down in a moment, he did it in a slow methodical way.

**A. He Permitted Greater Folly** – "And the magicians did so with their enchantments..."

- 1.) First of all, how and why did this happen?
  - a.) Some parlor trick maybe.
  - b.) Some demonic power maybe.
- 2.) But it is here, where the Lord lets Pharaoh and his magicians resist with all the power they have!
  - Get all of your abilities out on the table... (so they can be compared)

First thing He did was show their stupidity: - Rather than try and turn the blood back into water, all they desired to do was mock Aaron, and pretend like they too could make things bad – but they had no power to make them better.

Second thing He did was show their futility: - Blood was all over the land. The greatest mystery here is not how they did it, but where they got fresh water to do their own thing? Whatever they did, it was on such a small scale, their ability was quickly forgotten.

Comparing Satan's power to God is like comparing the reflection of a night light in your hallway floor, to the light of a thousand noon-day suns.

- There is none.

**B. He Recorded Deeper Foolishness** – "neither did he set his heart to this also."

Faced with reality – Pharaoh would not yield.



Now I want you to know something. The same spirit and mood that was in Pharaoh's heart, is alive and well today. Never get the idea that all of this story is about historical sin. – It is the here and now.

Phillip Graham Ryken in his book on Exodus wrote – *“The average American is not very different from an ancient Egyptian. We still worship the same gods—only the names have changed. What we count on, what we work for, what we play at, what we dream about—these are the gods that we worship. And what matters most to most of us is personal prosperity. We depend on our economy every bit as much as the Egyptians depended on theirs. They worshiped the Nile; we follow the NASDAQ—they are just two different names for the same god.”*

This is the conflict between the Divine and the Demonic –

“When He turned all the waters of Egypt into blood so that they loathed to drink of the river, it was sure proof that God was there; but to my soul it was more assurance than proof when He turned my water into wine, and made my ordinary life to become like the life of those in Heaven by His sovereign grace.” – C.H. Spurgeon