

March 12th, 2023
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Delivered: Rescued from Bondage
Sermon #9 Title: *A Selective Pandemic*
Sermon #9 Text: (Exodus 9:1-12)

The dynamite is set, the fuse is lit, and there is no turning back now, as Pharaoh has set his jaw and face against the God of heaven; and the God of heaven continues turning him over to a reprobate mind.

As we turn our attention to this fifth plague this morning, we are picking up steam in the downfall of Egypt, and the deliverance of Israel.

When we open up chapter 9, we there is something different we immediately notice at the end of that familiar refrain the Lord had Moses speak. The first thing to take note of today, is Pharaoh's personal sin becomes Amplified.

I. Personal Sin Amplified – vs 1-2 – “Then the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still...”

*note – Right at the front door of the fifth plague is the unchanged message from God.

A. The Unchanged Message – “Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.”

*Note - As we have said many times before, no man can outlast the Lord and His Word. Never get the idea that if “I fight long enough, loud enough, and am stubborn enough,” the Lord will change His tune, and He will accommodate me.

(That's what a four-year-old does who doesn't want to eat their green beans – and giving in is what a parent does when the child wears them out.-)

- Now you may behave like that four year old, but you can rest assured, God is not some yuppie of a 30 year old molly coddling such tender little feelings doing whatever he can to keep you from throwing a fit.

- God never changes his message to accommodate temper tantrum fit throwing pouting stubborn toddlers. –

(He just sends the next plague)

B. Pharaoh's Increased Guilt – “For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still...”

*Note – Here is an added phrase, that may be subtle, but it is intently meaningful.

1.) “if thou refuse to let them go” – this phrase is used four times throughout these exchanges between God and Pharaoh.

2.) “and wilt hold them still” – this is an addendum not used any of the other times.

*Note – Note this – not letting them go, is enough of a crime against God all by itself. It is more than enough to bring down the thunder from on high.

- But the Lord God sees all things, especially the things not perceptible to the human eye.

a.) “Wilt hold them still” – is an expansion of the charge not letting them go...

(1.) hold - “to harden, or become more harsh against.”

*Note – The picture that is being painted here, is that Pharaoh’s fist and grip are getting tighter and tighter. He was already holding them, and as his heart gets harder, his grip gets tighter – and as his grip gets tighter – his sin gets deeper.

(2.) “still” – literally it means “longer still.” – this is not “still” as in “standing still.” – This is still as in its relationship to time and timing.

*Note – It has the idea of holding on to something LONG AFTER it was time to let it go.

*Note – Now all of that being said, we are seeing Pharaoh’s sin Amplified. The longer his rebellion, the greater his sin, the deeper his trouble.

- We are met at the front door with his personal sin getting worse, and worse.

- Now comes the promise and arrival of the fifth plague. Like the others, as Pharaoh’s personal sin is amplified, the National struggles are intensified.

II. National Struggles Intensified – vs 3-6

“Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain. And the LORD shall sever between the cattle

of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all that is the children’s of Israel. And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land. And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.”

*note – There are four distinguishing marks about this plague that the Lord emphasizes.

A. The Subjects of the Plague – “the cattle”

*Note – It is important to read what is said and take note of it, because it matters later.

1.) vs 3 – “Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep...”

a.) This is the hand of God, not the finger, (as mentioned by the sorcerers in 8:19)

b.) “thy cattle in the field.”

(vs 6 – all the cattle in Egypt died.)

(vs 19 - two plagues later Moses tells Pharaoh to bring his cattle in from the field.)

*Note – If they all died in plague 5, how then are there still cattle in plague 7?

- Because you need to read plague 5 again. – “thy cattle which is in the field.”

(During the winter, the rainy season of the Nile would overflow its banks, and its tributaries as well and the Egyptians would put their cattle up, in the barns, and fenced areas, out away

from the flooding fields. Then as the floodwaters receded, they would slowly release their cattle in different numbers as the water would go back to normal river levels.

(Here this plague specifically mentions the ones “which are in the field.)

- *(One more point of sovereign power to point out, that the Lord’s guided miseries never miss.)*

c.) Then he lists the cattle – “horses, camels, asses, oxen, and sheep.”

(1.) the term for “cattle” is generic, and just means livestock. – it denotes domesticated livestock for agricultural use.

*Note – We presume that the plague included their cows as well.

*Note-This too, like all the other plagues, was a direct divine attack on the things that they defied in their gods.

- Egyptologists have told us – “Ancient Egypt Apis bull was considered sacred and worshiped as a symbol of strength, vital energy and power. The bull was the earthly incarnation of a god, a manifestation of the Memphite creation god Ptah; it was the ‘soul (Ba) Ptah’ and the ‘Herald (whm) of Ptah’. Apis was considered to host the god himself as unlike the other animal totems who only provided a link to the god, Apis was, therefore a kind of servant, a divine one.”

*Note – Now with that being understood, write these verses down:

Exodus 12:12 – Before the Lord executes the last plague to come He declares – *“For I will pass through*

*the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; **and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.**”*

Exodus 18:11 – Jethro, Moses father-in-law would declare – *“Now I know **that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.**”*

Numbers 33:4 – When recounting these events in the history books, Moses wrote – *“For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: **upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.**”*

*Note – Know this...God has given the human race the freedom of will – but He has not given the human race the freedom to declare their own reality!

- False religion is the same as a false reality!
- it looks to a god that doesn’t exist
- it creates norms and morals of it’s own making
- it is a reality conjured up from the depths of man’s depraved psyche.

*Note – God will never play along with man’s delusions, nor will He accommodate them in any way!

(Here is where we underscore the fact that Moses is dealing in REALITY, and the Egyptians are functioning from the power of their own imaginations.) – It is a Roman’s 1 world, centuries before Roman’s 1 was written! – (Go read Romans 1 later.)

*Note – Now all of that being said, while all the other plagues had both a spiritual picture and a material pain – this one does as well – but there is marked difference –

*Note – The previous plagues were sent to annoy people – this one is sent to destroy property.

B. The Substance of the Plague – “grievous murrain, & death”

- 1.) “murrain” – pestilence, plague, or disease
- 2.) “grievous” – the word that Moses used in the Hebrew for “grievous” means – heavy or oppressing...
- 3.) vs 6 – “all the cattle of Egypt died.”
 - a.) this is the first plague that brings death.

*Note – Furthermore there is an added dimension to this plague the Egyptians had not seen.

- The first 4 plagues were “macroscopic” – Big and visible from the Outside In!

- Bloody Water – you see it coming, or you take it all in like a large spectacle.
- Frogs – the same way – you hear them, you see them, they are outward in scope and nature.
- the Flies and the Lice – Likewise –

THIS one is “MICROSCOPIC” in nature. – Invisible to the naked until it is too late.

One at least may attempt to flee something visible and pursuit. One cannot run from something “in the blood stream.”

One write points out that God is inching ever so closely to the death of men. This plague crosses the line from bothersome, into threatening.

(It should not be lost on us, that if the Egyptians were going to treat their cattle better than they were the Hebrews, the Lord would show Pharoah He will reach them too.)

C. The Specificity of the Plague – “there shall nothing die of all that is the children’s of Israel.”

*Note - Yet another aspect of the plague that the Lord emphasizes is the fact the Egyptians will be singled out and separated from the Israelites.

- 1.) The Lord will Preserve what wealth Israel has.
- 2.) The Lord will Poison what wealth the Egyptians have.

*Note- Never, no never, no never, get the idea that God treats everyone the same way. He does not. He never said He would. But He does treat everyone “justly.”

Israel is being saved! – Egypt is being judged. Israel is being delivered- Egypt is being destroyed.

Now the question might be asked, what did Israel do so special that God was treating them this way? – Nothing. God is just keeping His promise to Abraham!

- God made a promise to Abraham to make His descendants through Isaac a great nation, and that they would live in the land of Canaan; and He is going to keep that Promise!
- God made NO such promise to the Fathers of the Pharaohs. – But He did show Himself to them in grace, with Joseph, and they rejected Him.
- God is keeping His Word to Abraham with Israel
- God is judging a Nation that rejected Him with Egypt.

*Note-Now note one thing that removes any claim that this plague is a matter of coincidence.

Secular historians do every kind of dance they can to say, yes these plagues happened, but they were a chain of events, that were triggered by a volcanic eruption a few thousand miles way.

-The volcanic eruption caused 'red-tides' – red tides caused the frogs to leave the waters – the dead frogs attracted flies and lice, and the flies and lice caused disease among the cattle...

*Note – Of course that is one selective volcano, to be able to produce a selective pandemic, but more than that respond "on demand" as Moses spoke. – Notice the last mark of this miracle.

D. The Schedule of the Plague – "appointed a set time, saying tomorrow." - Tomorrow the Lord will do this...

1.) This plague began when the Lord said for it to.

a.) To control the timing of nature, is to remove all denial of the power of God.

(1.) the disciples at one point were shaken to the core of their being when they saw Christ's command of a thunderstorm on waters, and they exclaimed, "Even the wind and seas obey Him."

*Note- Friend, even the microbes, and bacteria obey Him. The electrons and neutrons obey Him. The barometer, and thermometer obey Him.

2.) Note the potency of the plague:- (vs 6) and the Lord did that thing on the morrow and all the cattle of Egypt died.

*Note – The sickness was sudden, and it was swift, and it was certain, and all the scientists in a Wuhan lab, couldn't have figured it out, or shut it down.

III. Pharaoh's Seething Magnified – vs 7- And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

*Note – Take note of something very important here. – Pharaoh does not need to be convinced that God is God! – We are beyond that.

- He saw that in the frogs, and tacitly admitted it.

- He saw that in the flies and lice, and readily admitted it.

- The idea that Pharaoh still needed to be convinced that God is God is over! – He Knows!

- And He's angry about it.

- it means that he is not God.

- it means that he is not in charge.

- it means that he has no standing.

- it means that he is subject to the power and will of the God of heaven.

- AND HE HATES THAT.

Let me tell you something. Very often the problem with people is not that they need to be convinced that God is God – they know that.... And rage against it. Are angry about it.

When God showed grace to the Israelites and judgment to the Egyptians, the pride of Pharaoh detonated on the inside, and the same spirit and attitude that is in Lucifer saturated Pharaoh's mind.

Conclusion:- You are never more like Pharaoh, than when you know God to be true, and right, and it angers you.

