

LESSON 6



GOD SENDS PLAGUES ON EGYPT

Scripture Texts: Exodus, Chapters 7-9; 10:21-29

Following the events which took place in the lesson last week, the Lord gave confident words to Moses: **Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go.** Yet He had said that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened against letting the people go. So, now comes a struggle between the stubbornness of Pharaoh and the power of God. It compares to the struggle between God and Satan for control of the soul. If the sinner obeys God, he is set free from Satan. If Israel will obey God, they will be delivered from Pharaoh.

To force Pharaoh to release the Israelites, God sent ten plagues upon Egypt. At times Pharaoh promised to let the people go, but his heart was hardened, and he would not—until the last plague. Our lesson today spreads over Exodus, Chapters 7-10. It covers the first nine plagues.

MEMORY VERSE: *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*
 —2 Corinthians 7:10

A Miracle of Warning

Exodus 7:1-19 Again Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh with God's command to take the rod. This is what He asks us to take. The rod is a type of Christ, who is the Word of God. (Read John 1:1, 14; Revelation 2:27; 11:1). They performed a miracle. **Aaron cast down his rod . . . and it became a serpent.** Pharaoh's **wise men and the sorcerers** did the same, **but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods**—showing the superiority of God. It appears to have been Pharaoh's practice to go to the river in early morning. Moses went there carrying his rod. He reminded Pharaoh of his failure to obey God. He said he would turn the river to blood. This would prove to Pharaoh that this was the Lord's work.

When God called Moses, he was a mature, intelligent, educated man of eighty years. Yet he did not know God's plan or His ways of carrying it out. Notice how, at every step, the Lord told him what to do and say. Moses must carefully listen and obey. Intelligence or education never opens the ways of God to us. That comes only by revelation from God. The rod, at first, was only an ordinary stick of wood, but yielded to God, it became a tool with which God would do miracles. We need the rod too. With the rod, we have God's miracle power for victory.

The Plagues

Exodus 7:20-10:14 Aaron struck the river with the rod. All the water in Egypt **turned to blood.** **Pharaoh's heart was hardened.** Other plagues followed, each becoming more severe, sent to persuade Pharaoh to let Israel go. The second plague was **frogs** (Exodus 8:6). Pharaoh's heart was hardened more. Then followed a plague of **lice** (Exodus 8:17), then **flies** (Exodus 8:24). Here compromise set in. Pharaoh said, "Do it my way, and I will let you go." Moses refused. Moses would accept no compromise from Pharaoh. It must be all of the people to go and all of their possessions, no turning back. So it is when one leaves sin. It must be a clean break. God accepts no compromises. All we are and all we have must be committed to God. Complete deliverance comes God's way, not by compromise with

Egyptian ways.

Then came the plague of **murrain**—a disease of livestock (Exodus 9:3-6). Pharaoh's heart continued to be hardened. Many people refuse the voice of God, sent to them through His servant, as did Pharaoh. They do not realize that a hardening process is taking place in their hearts each time they refuse to yield to his warning. Next was sent the plague of **boils** (Exodus 9:10). Pharaoh's heart still hardened against God. Then came **hail** with rain, **thunder**, and **fire** (Exodus 9:23). Here we find deception and hypocrisy and Pharaoh's dealing (verses 27-28). But this did not fool the man of God (verse 30).

One might think that Moses and Aaron would be growing much discouraged after all of these visits and the response they had received. Not so; they were willing to let God have His time and way. Now God sent **locusts** over all the land of Egypt that destroyed everything the hail had left (Exodus 10:14-15). Pharaoh had to call for Moses to remove each plague. Satan cannot remove anything placed by God, whether it be salvation placed within our hearts or a man placed to do a work for Him.

Darkness, the Ninth Plague

Exodus 10:21-29 Moses stretched his hand toward Heaven, and three days of **thick darkness** settled over Egypt. This is what sin does to those souls who refuse the light of truth. **Even darkness which may be felt**—outer darkness. But the Israelites **had light in their dwellings**. Here is a type of the saved of God living in the sin-darkened world in the Gospel Day. Thank God for the light of truth! The Egyptians dared not stir; they stayed in the same place for three days. The terrifying darkness brought Pharaoh to offer another compromise. He thought this offered a better bargain than before. Again, Moses would accept no compromise. Pharaoh was angry. **Get thee from me . . . see my face no more**. Pharaoh failed to remember that he was dealing with the God of Israel, not Moses alone. When the next plague came, Pharaoh would beg them to go.

JUST A THOUGHT

**We are lost, not because of the quantity of our sin,
but because of the fact of it.**

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