

Message #16

Exodus 10:1-29

So far in our journey through these sign/miracle/plagues in the book of Exodus, we have seen at least six reasons why God did the things He did:

- 1) To multiply His signs and wonders (7:3)–These pointed to the power of God and should prompt people to stand in awe of God.
- 2) To force the Egyptians to let the Israelites go (7:4)–This will end up happening because this is part of the reasons for the sign/plagues.
- 3) To reveal to the Egyptians and the world that He is the Sovereign “I AM LORD” (7:5, 17)–God is the self-existing, Sovereign God who has a covenant connection to Israel.
- 4) To reveal to the world that there is no God like Him (8:10; 9:14)–No other Being except God can do what He does and have the power He has.
- 5) To proclaim His name throughout all the earth (9:16)–Even the most godless people have heard of the Egyptian plagues.
- 6) To tell future generations about His great sovereign power (10:1-2)–Part of the responsibility of the people of God is to communicate to others concerning the sovereign power of God.

As we come to **chapter 10**, there is one more reason why God says He did these things. The reason is plainly stated in **verses 1-2**:

GOD HARDENED PHARAOH’S HEART AND PERFORMED THESE SIGN/MIRACLE/PLAGUES SO THAT ISRAEL WOULD COMMUNICATE TO THEIR FUTURE GENERATIONS HOW GOD MADE A MOCKERY OF THE EGYPTIAN WORLD, AND SHOWED THE ENTIRE WORLD THAT HE IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD.

The world would do well to clearly and carefully understand what is being communicated right here. **God is the God of Israel**; and when a nation like the Egyptian world decided to do negative things to Israel, God made a mockery of that nation and He brought her down. He totally humiliated the Egyptian world because she refused to acknowledge that He was the Sovereign God of Israel. He has done this in the past to other nations and He can and will do the same thing to the United States, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran.

According to **verse 2**, this point is to be communicated from one generation to another. This point is so significant that it is reiterated at the Passover feast (12:26-27; 13:8). Wise Jewish people today will still be talking about these things God did for Israel, because He is going to do these kinds of things for her again. God is going to use the Tribulation to regather Israel and He will pour out His wrath on all nations who mistreated her.

By the way, the communication of this point should not ever cease even in this Church Age. God is Israel’s God and He makes a mockery of nations that do not acknowledge this. Replacement Theology is not only devilish, it is dangerous because it puts the people on a path in which God will make a mockery of them. God’s people are supposed to communicate that point.

Also it is our responsibility to communicate to our children and grandchildren what we have seen God do in our own lives. We should testify of the awesome power and protection of God. We should all be able to give an account of how we have seen God personally work. We should talk about the sovereignty of God for evangelistic purposes.

Now tonight we come to two more sign/miracle/plagues:

SIGN MIRACLE #9 – God sends a plague of locusts to destroy all crops and vegetation in the Egyptian land. **10:1-20 (PLAGUE #8)**

Any person who does not willingly acknowledge God's sovereignty over them and over this world, will eventually be taught a very serious lesson and will learn the hard way and a forcible way that God is the sovereign boss over all things. The Scriptures are very clear in multiple passages, O.T. and N.T., that one day every knee will bow before the sovereign majesty and power of God and Jesus Christ. Wise people bow here and now.

In **verse 1**, God told Moses to go to Pharaoh because now He is not only hardening Pharaoh's heart, but also the hearts of his official servants. He is doing this so he can perform more of His signs so that the testimony of God may be communicated to other generations (**10:2**).

As we have stated through this study, one of the things that we have the responsibility to do is to communicate to people the fact that God can sovereignly harden a heart or soften a heart. Should God decide to harden a person's heart, that person is in serious trouble. Wise is the person that asks God to always keep his/her heart soft and pliable to Him.

According to **verse 3**, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and asked him how long he intended to refuse to humble himself before God and not let His people go. They told Pharaoh that he was to let the people go; and if he refused, which he would because God was hardening his heart, God was going to bring locusts into all the Egyptian territory (**10:4**).

Locusts are a species of bugs that are known to be able to strip vegetation from an area with great speed.

In **verses 5-6**, Moses and Aaron explained three results of this locust plague:

Result #1 - The locusts would cover all the Egyptian land to the point they could not even see any land. **10:5a**

Result #2 - The locusts would eat any plant, tree, or vegetation that had not been destroyed by the hail. **10:5b**

This plague with the previous one of hail would completely devastate any and all crops.

Result #3 - The Egyptian people's houses would be filled with locusts. **10:6**

This locust plague would be like nothing any ancestor had ever seen in world history.

After saying this, Moses and Aaron turned and went out from Pharaoh. This is interesting because the Hebrew seems to suggest Moses made his statement, turned his back on Pharaoh, and walked out.

Now you would think that Pharaoh would do the logical thing and let the Hebrews go. You would naturally think that he would say, we can't afford to lose the rest of our crops; **but when God is hardening someone's heart, they do not think logically or rationally.**

According to **verse 7**, the servants said to Pharaoh, don't let this man be a snare to us anymore; let them go to serve "the LORD their God" because Egypt is destroyed. Some of the servants are saying, look around, Pharaoh; don't you see what God has done to our land? They realized they were going to be ruined and these official servants stood to lose a lot.

Their claim was that Moses is a snare or trap to them. The irony here is that the Egyptians were keeping the Hebrews trapped, when in all reality that very issue was ensnaring them. Moses was not trapping them; they were trapping themselves.

According to **verse 8**, Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh and he said go; but then he asks, "Who are the ones who are going?" This shows you that Pharaoh is still trying to have the upper hand. This is the way it is with many political leaders and many people. They do not want to submit to the Word of God completely; they want the upper hand. They want to make some deal as if they are in a position to negotiate with Almighty God.

In **verse 9**, Moses said we are taking everyone and everything, including our flocks and herds, because we must all go worship God. We are taking all ages of people, all genders of people, all relatives, all animals, and all possessions. In other words, we are going to completely exodus this country.

In **verse 10**, Pharaoh is basically sarcastically saying, "God will have to be with you before I will ever let you all go, because I am not letting you and your little ones go. In fact, all you want to do is evil; you want to leave Egypt." According to **verse 11**, Pharaoh said it isn't going to happen and you are not leaving; only the men may go. And he drove them from his presence.

Again this is what a hard heart does; it refuses to acknowledge God's Word and will even in the face of overwhelming evidence. This was not one of Pharaoh's wiser decisions or brighter moves.

In **verse 12**, God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the land of Egypt because the locusts would come up on the land and eat every plant and anything the hail had not destroyed.

According to **verse 13**, Moses did stretch out his hand, with his staff in it, over the land of Egypt; and God directed an eastern wind to blow all that day and night, and by morning of the next day the locusts had arrived. He did not create new locusts; He just summoned existing locusts from a different eastern location.

We do not know the speed of the wind. It was an eastern wind that blew all day and all night. Let's speculate that it is a 20 mile per hour wind blowing for 24 hours. That would mean God brought these locusts a distance of 480 mile east of Egypt, which would put us out in Saudi Arabia somewhere. If we use a 40 mile per hour wind for 24 hours, that would mean God brought these locusts 960 miles. That would put us clear over to the Persian Gulf. God used His nature to call His bugs.

The results were as follows:

Result #1 - The locusts came to the land of Egypt in numbers that would never again be equaled. **10:14**

Result #2 - The locusts covered all land surfaces so the land was dark. **10:15a**

Result #3 - The locusts ate every plant, every tree, and all green vegetation. **10:15b**

No crop, no vegetable, no fruit stood a chance of surviving this.

Now the important thing to see here is that God fulfilled what He said He was going to do literally. Moses made a prophetic prediction in **verses 5-6** of what these locusts would do, and they did exactly what Moses predicted they would do.

This is very important. God always fulfills prophecy literally. It is not symbolic, it is not metaphorical, it is literal. If God promises He is going to send a judgment, it will literally come just as He said. Future fulfillment of things is literal.

According to **verse 16**, Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you." Then he asks Moses in **verse 17** to forgive him and to ask God to take away the locusts. This is nothing new. Pharaoh is not truly repenting here. This is all verbiage designed to get rid of the locusts.

So Moses went out from Pharaoh and made the request to God, and God sent a west wind which took all the locusts out into the Red Sea and not one was left (**verse 19**). It is not specifically stated that He drowned the locusts; He just took them back east to the Red Sea area.

But then we come to **verse 20**: "But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go." There are a couple of observations we want to make:

Observation #1 - It is possible for a person to admit he has sinned against God and not really do honest business with God and not really desire to be right with God.

Observation #2 - Wise are the people who go to the Lord and ask Him to always keep their hearts tender to Him and His Word and His will. A very wise prayer is, please, God, do not ever harden my heart against You.

SIGN MIRACLE #10 – God sends a plague of darkness for three days over all the Egyptian land. **10:21-29 (PLAGUE #9)**

It is difficult for us to grasp the full magnitude of this plague because night is not much of a threat to us. We drive at night in well-lit vehicles; we live comfortably at night in well-lit homes; and we can even work at night in well-lit places.

But ancient people did not have these luxuries. It was scary and dangerous to travel at night; and for the most part, cities shut down at night. Most people who were out at night were the criminal-type. Darkness for people without electricity was serious business.

We move now into the next to the last plague. God does not give Pharaoh any warning about this. He simply tells Moses to stretch out his hand toward the sky and there would be darkness over all the Egyptian land (**verse 21**).

We learn some facts about this darkness:

Fact #1 - The darkness will be felt . **10:21b**

Now how do you feel darkness? Darkness is not something you typically feel. The way you feel darkness is by groping for things when it is dark. When it is totally dark, you have to feel with your hands for various things because you cannot see them. That is how you feel darkness.

Fact #2 - The darkness will be thick . **10:22a**

The idea of thick darkness is there is no light seeping through at all.

Fact #3 - The darkness will last three days. **10:23a**

This was a three day plague. You could not do business. You could not travel. You could just sit in the dark and hope to survive or hope the plague would end. To actually go three days without any light would be a serious sensory deprivation and would lead to serious consequences. One of the things we have learned is that lack of light causes depression. During dark winter months, some doctors prescribe that depressed patients go to tanning salons because it can actually be used as a preventative against depression.

Fact #4 - The darkness only affected the Egyptians, not the Israelites . **10:23b**

We learn an important point here; God has the ability to darken a person's heart and mind so that person cannot see any light of any truth at any time. What God did physically He can also do spiritually.

It must have been eerie, because Pharaoh called Moses and said go serve your God, only leave your animals here. You can take your little ones but leave the animals here (**10:24**). **Pharaoh is still a pompous arrogant man who is trying to have the upper hand against God.**

Moses said we need to take our animals with us because we need to make some sacrifices and burnt offerings. We are not sure exactly what God is going to require us to do, so we need to take every animal we have (**10:25-26**).

But according to **verse 27**, the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart and he was not willing to let them go. Again we see great truth here—**When God is hardening a person's heart, the person perceives it as a choice he makes with his own will.**

There is a very serious N.T. warning that is aimed at believers that says—"Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb. 3:7-8). Every single believer needs to carefully analyze his own heart to make certain that it is not becoming hard, unbelieving, and sinful. We need to analyze ourselves day after day.

According to **verse 28**, Pharaoh said get away from me and hope you never see my face again; because the day you see it, you will be killed. Moses had been threatened before by an Egyptian pharaoh some 40 years earlier, so this didn't faze him now.

Verse 29 is interesting. Moses said to Pharaoh, "You are right; I shall never see your face again." In other words, Pharaoh, we are not negotiating with you anymore and we are going to leave this land and there is not one thing you can do to stop us. Pharaoh would not see Moses' face again; not because he was going to win, but because he was going to lose.