

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes

7-15-20

Exodus 9

The Fifth Plague: Livestock Diseased - Verses 1-7

¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. ² For if you refuse to let them go, and still hold them, ³ behold, the hand of the LORD will be on your cattle in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the oxen, and on the sheep—a very severe pestilence. ⁴ And the LORD will make a difference between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt. So nothing shall die of all that belongs to the children of Israel." ⁵ Then the LORD appointed a set time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land." ⁶ So the LORD did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died. ⁷ Then Pharaoh sent, and indeed, not even one of the livestock of the Israelites was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh became hard, and he did not let the people go.

9:1 This was the fifth time God sent Moses back to Pharaoh with the demand "Let my people go." By this time, Moses may have been tired and discouraged, but he continued to obey. Is there a difficult conflict you must face again and again? Don't give up when you know what is right to do. As Moses discovered, persistence is rewarded.

9:1-3 Like many of the other plagues, this plague focuses on some of the Egyptians sacred objects of worship. Some of the Egyptian gods supposedly appeared with cow heads or took the form of a bull. Cows were even worshiped in some Egyptian cities. In this instance it is like God is killing two birds with one stone. Firstly, He is judging Egypt. Secondly, He is proving the inferiority of the Egyptian gods and sacred symbols. Even their gods cannot defend themselves from God's plagues. This should have shown the Egyptians who the real God was.

9:4-6 Pharaoh sent people to check out the Israelites' livestock, naturally hoping that many had died so they could justify their own religion. However, although he didn't find the evidence he hoped to, he still refused to believe. This is typical of the hard hearted. People who are hard hearted towards God will not change no matter what evidence or proof they see. They search and search for any proof to validate their own beliefs and normally can cherry pick the evidence they like. But even if all the evidence is against them, they will find more reasons not to believe. Pharaoh's heart was once again hardened to the truth, and he did not let the people go.

The Sixth Plague: Boils - Verses 8-17

⁸ So the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take for yourselves handfuls of ashes from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh. ⁹ And it will become fine dust in all the land of Egypt, and it will cause boils that break out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt." ¹⁰ Then they took ashes from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered them toward heaven. And they caused boils that break out in

sores on man and beast. ¹¹ And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. ¹² But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses. ¹³ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me, ¹⁴ for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that *there is none like Me* in all the earth. ¹⁵ Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶ But indeed for this *purpose* I have raised you up, that I may show My power *in you*, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. ¹⁷ As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go.

9:8 God likes His prophets to use graphic symbols to teach His people. Moses throws dirt up in to the air. God then miraculously used this very dirt to turn into a fine dust which descended over the land and caused boils on people's skin. This kind of visible symbol could show people clearly that this was a miracle from God and that Moses caused it to happen (through God's power). It was a graphic symbol of God's power.

9:9 This marked a progression in the severity of the plagues. It was the first one that targeted human health. And this is when things start to get really personal. You can deal with trouble to get water (especially if you are Pharaoh or the nobles you will just command others to get it for you), you can blockade your houses from the frogs, gnats and flies are a big nuisance and caused a lot of annoyances, but they didn't do serious damage to people's health. Cattle dying represent a loss of property. But boils on the skin go a step further. Now people are in very real pain, even in agony.

9:13-17 In these verses we see some of the deeper reasons why God was sending My plagues (notice the personal pronoun) on the Egyptians. These reasons are three-fold. Firstly, "the Egyptians would recognize that God was incomparable, that His power would be demonstrated through His name, character, attributes, and power would be known everywhere. Egypt could not keep from other nations her humiliation by the plagues of Israel's Lord. Secondly, A declaration that whatever royal authority Pharaoh had, it had been because of God's sovereign and providential control of world affairs, which included putting Pharaoh on his throne. This was a telling reminder that He was what he declared Himself to be., the one and only true and immanent Lord. Three, A reminder of the worst scenario for Egypt if God had chosen, in lieu of the preceding plagues, to strike the people first - they would have perished. In other words, God had been gracious and longsuffering in the progression of the plagues.

The Seventh Plague: Hail - Verses 18-26

¹⁸ Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now. ¹⁹ Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die." ²⁰ He who feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. ²¹ But he who did not regard the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field. ²² Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt—on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt." ²³ And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire darted to the ground. And the LORD rained hail on the land of

Egypt. ²⁴ So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. ²⁵ And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. ²⁶ Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

9:18-20 The weather about to be unleashed by the incomparable God was unlike anything previously recorded in Egypt's entire history. Hail can fall at least 100 mph. A golf ball sized hill can kill you if it hits you on the head. The hail storm also came with fire. This was likely a special form of lightning like fireballs, which zig zagged through the sky before hitting the earth. This would have made a grand spectacle. The fire would have been very awe-inspiring and also probably would have started fires throughout the land too.

9:21-26 God warned them ahead of time with the express purpose to allow the Egyptians to save whatever livestock they had by taking them into shelter. This was a very graceful provision to allow a way out for God-fearing Egyptians. I think this verse is also key to understanding accurately God's character of both justice and mercy when administering these plagues, especially the last one of the death of the first born.

Pharaoh lies to Moses again after Moses stops the plague of hail - Verses 27-35

²⁷ And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The LORD is righteous, and my people and I are wicked. ²⁸ Entreat the LORD, that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer." ²⁹ So Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the earth is the LORD's. ³⁰ But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear the LORD God." ³¹ Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud. ³² But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops. ³³ So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and spread out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth. ³⁴ And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart, he and his servants. ³⁵ So the heart of Pharaoh was hard; neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

9:27-33 After promising to let the Hebrews go, Pharaoh immediately broke his promise and brought even more trouble upon the land. Pharaoh's attitude appears very different from before. This time he repents and admits that God is righteous and he is wicked. It seems to be a sincere apology. Perhaps it was true at the time. But many times after a person apologizes they walk away and forget the pain they caused or the pain they went through because of their sin, their heart becomes hard and they repeat the same mistake. This is a very normal pattern of sin.

9:34-35 Although Moses knew that Pharaoh would change his mind and that he wasn't convinced yet, he still agreed to ask God to take away the plague. This is a good example to us. Even if you are having dealings with liars who repeatedly break their promises, don't stoop down to their level. You can't control if other people do what is right, but you can control if you do. Don't allow other people's lies to affect how you do business. You do what is right and always keep your end of the bargain even if others don't keep their end.