

The Battle of the Gods (Part 4)

4.5.2020

3rd week of Corona Virus

Exodus Series

Message 13

Exodus 9:13–35 (CSB)

THE SEVENTH PLAGUE: HAIL

¹³Then the LORD said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning and present yourself to Pharaoh. Tell him: This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. ¹⁴For this time I am about to send all my plagues against you, your officials, and your people. Then you will know there is no one like me on the whole earth. ¹⁵By now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague, and you would have been obliterated from the earth. ¹⁶However, I have let you live for this purpose: to show you my power and to make my name known on the whole earth. ¹⁷You are still acting arrogantly against my people by not letting them go. ¹⁸Tomorrow at this time I will rain down the worst hail that has ever occurred in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. ¹⁹*Therefore give orders to bring your livestock and all that you have in the field into shelters. Every person and animal that is in the field and not brought inside will die when the hail falls on them.* ²⁰*Those among Pharaoh's officials who feared the word of the LORD made their servants and livestock flee to shelters, ²¹but those who didn't take to heart the LORD's word left their servants and livestock in the field.*

²²Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven and let there be hail throughout the land of Egypt—on people and animals and every plant of the field in the land of Egypt." ²³So Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail. Lightning struck the land, and the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. ²⁴The hail, with lightning flashing through it, was so severe that nothing like it had occurred in the land of Egypt since it had become a nation. ²⁵Throughout the land of Egypt, the hail struck down everything in the field, both people and animals. The hail beat down every plant of the field and shattered every tree in the

field. ²⁶The only place it didn't hail was in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were.

²⁷Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron. "I have sinned this time," he said to them. "The LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the guilty ones. ²⁸Make an appeal to the LORD. There has been enough of God's thunder and hail. I will let you go; you don't need to stay any longer."

²⁹Moses said to him, "When I have left the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know the earth belongs to the LORD. ³⁰But as for you and your officials, I know that you still do not fear the LORD God."

³¹The flax and the barley were destroyed because the barley was ripe and the flax was budding, ³²but the wheat and the spelt were not destroyed since they are later crops.

³³Moses left Pharaoh and the city, and spread out his hands to the LORD. Then the thunder and hail ceased, and rain no longer poured down on the land. ³⁴When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail, and thunder had ceased, *he sinned again and hardened his heart*, he and his officials. ³⁵So Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he did not let the Israelites go, as the LORD had said through Moses.

STOP READING HERE

Exodus 10:1-29 (CSB)

THE EIGHTH PLAGUE: LOCUSTS

10 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may do these miraculous signs of mine among them, ²and so that you may tell your son and grandson how severely I dealt with the Egyptians and performed miraculous signs among them, and you will know that I am the LORD."

³So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and told him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may worship me. ⁴But if you refuse to let my people go, then tomorrow I will bring locusts into your

territory. ⁵They will cover the surface of the land so that no one will be able to see the land. They will eat the remainder left to you that escaped the hail; they will eat every tree you have growing in the fields. ⁶They will fill your houses, all your officials' houses, and the houses of all the Egyptians—something your fathers and grandfathers never saw since the time they occupied the land until today." Then he turned and left Pharaoh's presence.

⁷Pharaoh's officials asked him, "How long must this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, so that they may worship the LORD their God. Don't you realize yet that Egypt is devastated?"

⁸So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. "Go, worship the LORD your God," Pharaoh said. "But exactly who will be going?"

⁹Moses replied, "We will go with our young and with our old; we will go with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds because we must hold the LORD's festival."

¹⁰He said to them, "The Lord would have to be with you if I would ever let you and your families go! Look out—you're heading for trouble. ¹¹No, go—just able-bodied men—worship the LORD, since that's what you want." And they were driven from Pharaoh's presence.

¹²The LORD then said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt, and the locusts will come up over it and eat every plant in the land, everything that the hail left." ¹³So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD sent an east wind over the land all that day and through the night. By morning the east wind had brought in the locusts.

¹⁴The locusts went up over the entire land of Egypt and settled on the whole territory of Egypt. Never before had there been such a large number of locusts, and there never will be again. ¹⁵They covered the surface of the whole land so that the land was black, and they consumed all the plants on the ground and all the fruit on the trees that the hail had left. Nothing green was left on the trees or the plants in the field throughout the land of Egypt.

¹⁶Pharaoh urgently sent for Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. ¹⁷Please forgive my sin once more and make an appeal to the LORD your God, so that he will just take this death away from me." ¹⁸Moses left Pharaoh's presence and appealed to the LORD. ¹⁹Then the LORD changed the wind to a strong west wind, and it carried off the locusts and blew them into the Red Sea. Not a single locust was left in all the territory of Egypt. ²⁰But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the Israelites go.

THE NINTH PLAGUE: DARKNESS

²¹Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, and there will be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness that can be felt."

²²So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness throughout the land of Egypt for three days. ²³One person could not see another, and for three days they did not move from where they were. Yet all the Israelites had light where they lived.

²⁴Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "Go, worship the LORD. Even your families may go with you; only your flocks and herds must stay behind."

²⁵Moses responded, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings to prepare for the LORD our God. ²⁶Even our livestock must go with us; not a hoof will be left behind because we will take some of them to worship the LORD our God. We will not know what we will use to worship the LORD until we get there."

²⁷But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was unwilling to let them go. ²⁸Pharaoh said to him, "Leave me! Make sure you never see my face again, for on the day you see my face, you will die."

²⁹"As you have said," Moses replied, "I will never see your face again."

Introduction:

A. Today, we cover the last 3rd of the plagues.

1. God is getting the attention of everyone in Egypt.
2. When it is all done, every person (Egyptian and Israelite) will confess God's power and supremacy.
3. The land of many gods will come to recognize the God of Israel's power and authority.

B. It should be no surprise to us that **it is easier to get our attention in crises than it is during prosperity.**

1. A few weeks ago, I made the comment that *Comfort is the enemy of Calling.*
2. When people are comfortable, they are more easily distracted.
3. But there is something about crises that causes us to take notice of what is most important and what matters most.

C. As we review these last three plagues, I want us to take notice of the extent God goes to care for His people and the Egyptian people.

1. Even in His wrath, God can't help but be good and compassionate.
2. God will go through great lengths to get our attention.
3. Could it be that, even in our day, God is going to use this Corona Virus to get our attention?

Again, we are taking a big picture perspective on these passages so we are focused on the main ideas and not the details.

The main ideas of this section are illustrated most clearly in the first plague, the plague of hail.

1. The plague of hail may be the most important of these three plagues.

A. This plague was devastating.

1. It devastated crops, buildings, and killed people and livestock.
2. It was to be so devastating that God warned Pharaoh and the officials to save their slaves and livestock from the plague of hail.
3. Those who believed in the Lord, took measures of faith to save their people and livestock.

5. Of all the plagues, only 2 were designed to inflict death: Hail and the last plague featuring the Angel of Death.

B. What is significant for you and I to notice is that in Both of these plagues, God offered a salvation or way out.

1. There was to be Shelter to protect from the hail and a Sacrifice to protect from the Angel of Death.
2. Do you see a pattern here?

3. The same God who declared hundreds of years later in Ezekiel that He does not delight in the death of the wicked is the same God who did not delight in the death of the Egyptians.

4. God is not sitting up in Heaven looking for ways to kill people.

a. That is not what the picture is.

b. In fact, before the creation of humanity, God knew we would sin and HE looked for ways to save and redeem her from her sins.

c. So I can assure you today, that God is not delighted in the sickness and death that is ravaging our world.

d. He does not delight in death or in sickness.

e. He delights in salvation and repentance.

5. I encourage all of us today to delight in what God delights in.

a. Not death, sickness, chaos, or disease.

b. But let us delight in redemption and salvation and in the mercy of God.

C. Not only does the author of Exodus want us to see God's love in this passage, but now look at Ex. 9:14-16.

1. "I have let you live for this purpose, to show you my power and to make my name known on the whole earth." (Ex. 9:14-16).

2. God could have killed them all and set Israel free right then.

3. But instead, *God let Pharaoh live so that God and His power would be made known through the whole Earth.*

a. The purpose of miracles and signs are to demonstrate who God is and what He can do.

b. God does not desire for us to hide His power, but to demonstrate it.

c. God is peculiar about His glory: He wants everyone to know and see it.

d. I believe God wants the world to see His glory, even in the midst of our catastrophe.

e. May our prayer be, "God, show your glory to the world and let our world worship you."

D. Last idea I want to show you from the plague of hail is this: Moses knew that Pharaoh would not repent, yet he prayed for him anyway (ex. 9:33).

1. Moses knew Pharaoh wouldn't change, yet he still interceded for God to stop the plague.

2. It's hard to pray for people when you don't expect them to change, but do it anyway.

3. So many of us look at situations with only our own eyes.

a. When we see no hope, no prayers are prayed.

b. When we see no point, no faith is applied.

c. But it isn't our job to determine if a person or situation is worthy of prayer but it is our job to pray.

4. Let us be like Moses: We pray because it is the right thing to do and trust God to do the rest.

2. Throughout all of these plagues, Moses has been asking Pharaoh to let God's people go so they could go and worship.

A. Worship was the reason and pretext for deliverance.

1. Yet, throughout it all, Pharaoh refuses to let them go.

2. He won't let the families of Israel worship, not even for a few days.

3. And Moses refused to sacrifice and worship in Egypt.

4. Ultimately, it was God's will for His people to worship in freedom and not in slavery.

5. When we are still living in sin and our sinful nature, our worship not in Spirit and Truth but in slavery.

B. **Partial slavery is still slavery.** Ex 10:7-11

⁷ Pharaoh's officials asked him, "How long must this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, so that they may worship the LORD their God. Don't you realize yet that Egypt is devastated?"

⁸ So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. "Go, worship the LORD your God," Pharaoh said. "But exactly who will be going?"

⁹ Moses replied, "We will go with our young and with our old; we will go with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds because we must hold the LORD's festival."

¹⁰ He said to them, "The Lord would have to be with you if I would ever let you and your families go!

1. *God had not unleashed all of these plagues and all this power so that only a few would be allowed to leave and worship.*

2. God did not go through all of this to set men free to worship while their families remained in bondage.

3. God intended upon a complete deliverance, not a partial one.

4. In Exodus 10:26, it says, "Not a hoof will be left behind".

5. Deliverance was intended for everyone and everything.

C. It should be no surprise that, when Jesus returns, that all of Creation will experience a resurrection and a new life.

1. All things will be made new, because all things had been corrupted.

a. When sin entered, even the land was subjected to the effects of sin.

b. **Sin effects everyone and everything.**

c. But so, too, does salvation.

2. When God offers you salvation, He wants to save everything you are, everything you own, and everything you love.

a. He doesn't just want to save your soul to go to heaven but everything.

b. He wants to save and redeem and deliver Your attitude, the way you talk to your spouse, the way you treat your dog and your demeanor at work.

c. When God says He wants to set you free, He means every part of you.

3. If God demanded the deliverance of lowly cattle in Exodus, how much more does He demand the powers of hell to let you go in Jesus' name!

a. God doesn't want you walking in partial salvation.

b. God doesn't want you walking in a sort of grace.

c. God doesn't want you to be kind of delivered.

d. God sent Jesus to die completely and to be resurrected completely so that you, too, could experience the complete redemption of God.

4. So today, through the last plagues, we are reminded not only of God's love for us but God's power to deliver us completely.

3. What many of us need today is for God to act powerfully and decisively.

A. I know many of us are praying like never before.

1. We have concerns about our health, our economy, future.

2. For most of us, we know that we will get through this.

3. But our concern is how painful will this deliverance be.

4. If we are honest, what we are really afraid of the most is the amount of pain and disruption we will go through before this is all over.

B. I know it doesn't feel like it, but today is Palm Sunday.

1. It's the day that Jesus marched triumphantly into Jerusalem.
2. It was a joyous day with a lot of fanfare and celebration.
3. Five days after Palm Sunday, Jesus was dead and the believers scattered.

C. For myself, it doesn't feel like Palm Sunday.

1. I think back to even a few weeks ago when we were having the largest services we've ever had and things were going so well.

2. This doesn't feel like Palm Sunday, it feels more like the Holy Saturday when we are in a holding place not sure what's going to happen.

a. If you remember back to some of my messages about Moses in the land of Midian.

b. That's what it feels like.

c. An in-between place.

3. But let me say this: **As great as Palm Sunday was for Jesus and His followers, Resurrection Sunday was even better.**

4. As great as the Exodus was, entering the Promised Land was even better because that was the goal.

5. As great as things were a few weeks ago, the future will be so much better.

D. So let me give you some encouragement:

1. Deliverance is coming.

2. I don't know when, or how.

3. I'm not saying things won't get worse because the example in Exodus and in the life of Jesus was that things got worse.

4. **The worst prepares God's people for the perfect.**

5. I believe everything God does is perfect:

- a. God's plans in Exodus were perfect.
- b. God's plans in Revelation are perfect.
- c. God's plans for us, here in the middle, are perfect too.

Close: This week, will you embrace the anticipation of what deliverance will look like?

A. I can't wait for all of us to be together again.

- 1. I can't wait to go to restaurants again.
- 2. I can't wait for a new normal.
- 3. I am also getting more excited about Jesus' return.
- 4. I'm looking forward to deliverance more than ever before.

B. This week, prepare yourself and your family for a great move of God's Spirit.

- 1. Because, after the plagues of Exodus was over, God's people were given their freedom from Egypt.
- 2. After the Resurrection, God's people were given their freedom from the power of sin, death, hell, and the grave.
- 3. Our deliverance is coming too, and we won't ever be the same.

Prayer.

