

W030202a – 6/24/26

Exodus 4-8

“The Plagues of Egypt”

Introduction

- tonight we are going to continue our study in the book of Exodus
 - the title Exodus simply refers to the content of this book, God’s people the Jews are exiting Egypt
 - but the first word in this book is “And” in Hebrew, because it is just continuing the story started in Genesis
- Genesis closes with a family of 70 people who have been given the best of the land of Egypt and a promise that God will multiple them in this land
 - “and” as Exodus opens, that promise has been totally fulfilled

The Book of Exodus divided into 3 sections

#1 – Exodus 1-4 – God Develops His Man

- It is the story of the background and calling of Moses

#2 – Exodus 5-24 – God Delivers His people

- First by bringing them out of Egypt
- Then by setting them apart in the wilderness
- And finally by giving to them His law

#3 – Exodus 25-40 – God Dwells with His Saints

- He has them design and build a tabernacle so God could meet with His people

Well we continue tonight with God developing His Man

- This first section can divide up in 3 parts for you notes takers to write down as well

Exodus 4-12

The Prologue – Exodus 4:1 – 7:13

- what happened before and brought on the plagues

The Plagues – Exodus 7:14 – 11:10

The Passover – Exodus 12:1-51

Which as many of you know is a Feast of the Lord brought on by the final plague that will set the people free

- the Passover has huge implications in the Sacrifice of Christ, as we will discover next week
 - but let's start with chapter 4 as we see what happened before the plagues, as we continue to look at the calling of Moses

Exodus 4-12

The Prologue – Exodus 4:1 – 7:13 - read chapter 4

In the early chapters of Exodus we saw last week, the need for a deliver and now we see the calling Moses, as God spoke to Him through a burning bush

- and last week we saw the first 2 of 5 question Moses asks

Moses Asks 5 Questions (or Statements) of God

#1 – Who am I??? – Exodus 3:11

#2 – Who are you??? – Exodus 3:13

- In the first question Moses asks God is “who am I?” – I am not the guy you are looking for to be the deliver of your people
 - I may have been that guy years ago, but not anymore
- And God reassures Moses – Moses it is not about who you are, you are not going to deliver this people anyway, I am
 - And of course that revelation brings about the next logical question, okay – so it is not about who I am, but who you are, so who are you?
- And God responds by telling Moses, I AM – and we looked at how the best understanding of this name of God is that He is whatever His people need Him to be and of course we see that in the rest of the Word of God as God combines His name with what His people need
 - Jehovah Jireh – the Lord our provider
 - Jehovah Rapha – the Lord our healer
- And in the New Testament Jesus – the Lord our salvation

Moses Asks 5 Questions of God (Statements)

#1 – Who am I??? – Exodus 3:11

#2 – Who are you??? – Exodus 3:13

#3 – They won't believe me – Exodus 4:1

- The next statement in chapter 4 is Moses saying - Oh Lord you are sending me back to these people and they will not believe that you spoke to me through a bush, that sounds so weird – Lord this won't work

So God has Moses' staff turn into a serpent and then back into a staff and then his hand becomes leprous and then is healed and God is reassuring him through miracles He was going to be with him

- But beyond these signs, there is something very important here we need to notice
 - what Moses is worried about never even happened?? – He thought the people would rebel and not listen to him but notice the end of chapter 4 – the elders of Israel were blessed, they worshipped, they had faith, no doubting

It is so crazy what we worry about – most of it never happens

- It's funny to me, when I first pastored the Garden fellowship they were in a small rented facility and they owned 22 acres of land north of the 10 freeway where really no business were, it was just some neighborhoods and I had three people tell me on my very first Sunday “don't you build on that land up north of the freeway, if you do, no one will follow you there” – and at first I was like oh, well my name is Jason, what is your name, and thank you for sharing with your concern, but as time went on and it looked like we were going to have to use that land to build, I started getting so worried how anyone would find our church north of the freeway – ha! – and I'm laughing because 1000's of people did - so if you are listening what I was so worried about never happened

And that is true for most of our circumstances, what Moses was worried about never happened – now there was a whole lot of other stuff that happened that he didn't see coming and that is normally how it works

- What we are worried about seems to never really happen, but there are other lessons we didn't see coming and they knock us up aside our head and teach us great lessons about trusting God

But the lesson for us is – Trust God and don't worry!

- What you are worried about probably won't happen
 - And bad things will happen, but you are not even thinking about them and need to trust God with them anyway
- Listen friends, Worry is a sin and so we must repent and remember we have a God in heaven who loves you, and will be with you

Moses Asks 5 Questions of God

#1 – Who am I??? – Exodus 3:11

#2 – Who are you??? – Exodus 3:13

#3 – They won't believe me – Exodus 4:1

#4 – I am not a fluent speaker – Exodus 4:11

- The next problem Moses has is that he is not a good communicator - now what we know from history is this was simply not true
 - Moses could teach wonderfully, the New Testament says...

“Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds.” – Acts 7:22

- Now in Moses' defense it could be that he was speaking specifically about how the 18th Dynasty of Pharaohs were known to be with language and customs

What we have discovered historically about these Pharaoh's of the 18th Dynasty is they were very into proper speech and education

And so it could be that Moses was thinking – I have been out of that world for 40 years, I am cowboy now taking care of “dem there sheep”

- So that could be the real problem

But even if that is so, why did it matter??? - You can't speak? Moses I am currently talking through a bush – do you really think your ability to communicate is what I need to free 3 million people from bondage?

- But Moses is working through all of the excuses and then he just comes clean with the last statement

Moses Asks 5 Questions of God

#1 – Who am I??? – Exodus 3:11

#2 – Who are you??? – Exodus 3:13

#3 – They won't believe me – Exodus 4:1

#4 – I am not a fluent speaker – Exodus 4:11

#5 – Someone else can do better – Exodus 4:13

- Now he gets to the heart of the matter – I just don't want to do it
 - There was a time when that seemed like something I wanted to do, but now I just want a good meal, time with my family and eventually to go to heaven
 - I don't want this burden
- And up to this point – God has answered all of Moses concerns
 - But now we are getting to the point of disobedience and God won't take it

You see it is okay to have our doubts

- God I don't know how this is going to work?
 - God I don't think you have found that right guy?
 - God I don't have the skills needed?

Those are all normal human reasons

- But just because they are normal, does not mean that then they give you an excuse to disobey
 - They don't – Moses still needs to obey

And God seems to compromise in giving Moses Aaron, his brother, but as we go through the story, Aaron will be kind of a burden not a blessing

- and that is always the case
 - God will meet you where you are at

But it is far better just to trust the Lord and let Him bring about His perfect will in your life

- So Moses has all of his questions and statements dealt with but as he moves out in obedience toward Egypt, at the end of chapter 4, God tries to kill him
 - What is going on here?

Well apparently, Moses had not circumcised his kids

- We infer that Zipporah was not into it, because she recognizes right away the problem, circumcises her son and then grossly throws the foreskin at Moses calling him a husband of blood – what a happy husband/wife story – all of us who are married, think, well it was a different set of circumstances, but I have been there

But it is not just what is happening that is important to see here, but also why it is happening is so important to consider – Why is this such a big deal to the Lord?

- And the reason I think is, Moses who was supposed to lead God's people into a covenant, law-based relationships with God was not following the most basic of covenant laws himself
 - Circumcision was the most basic of what it was to be a Jewish male
 - And Moses's own kids weren't doing it
- And listen – God was not going to let someone lead His people who thought obeying Him was optional
 - And I want you to hear me on that - what was true then, is true now, if you want to lead people, your family – you need to be first to follow the Lord – He will have it no other way! - We can't take God's people where we are not willing to go ourselves!

As the events that happen before the plagues continues, next we see Moses and Aaron come before Pharaoh as chapter 5 opens– [Read Exodus 5:1-23](#) Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh and boldly declare, “God says, Let my people go”

- And remember Moses would have known this guy, they would have grown up together –Moses was the adopted son of Hatshepsut, and this Pharaoh, who was the son of Thutmose III who was the son of Moses’ adopted father while in Egypt but not his mother, so this Pharaoh would have been kind of like a step brother or more exactly... a cousin
 - And maybe Moses thought – “Cus” will be reasonable – I don’t want his throne, I just want to him to let my people go
- But this encounter sets in motion a chain of events that leads to the coming of the ten plagues

It begins first with the reaction of Pharaoh

- He says, “Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice, I do not know Him, nor will I let Israel go?”
 - Pharaoh is going to come to regret that statement – who is the Lord, I don’t know Him?
 - You are going to get to know Him bub

But then Pharaoh takes it further than a simple rejection of Moses’ request.

- He stiffens the burden upon the people of Israel. – “you have time to think about going to worship your God, then you need more work. Collect your own straw and keep the number of bricks you make in the day the same.”
 - You know it is really interesting to me, they have now done excavations in the city of Pithom (that the Jews built) in Egypt and they have found evidence of this

**Picture of the city of Pithom, and Ramses on one slide
Picture of the brick excavations**

What archeologists have found is great brick structures where the bricks on the lower levels are made with straw and prefabbed pieces, then the next level is like they pulled it out of the ground, then the upper levels was just made of grass and whatever else you would find lying around – just as the book of Exodus talks about

- But this having to make bricks without straw leads to the next chain of events and that is the outcry of the people

They start by asking Pharaoh why they have to collect their own straw?

- and when he tells them it is because Moses and Aaron have asked to leave, they then turn on Moses
 - “you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and you have given him a sword to kill us.” – good job deliverer!
- Instead of coming before the Lord, trusting in the leadership that He had established, and crying out to Him, God save us!

They go in rebellion and complain against Moses

- And unfortunately, we are going to see this scene repeated over and over in the book of Exodus

But the people’s complaining leads to the next chain of events and that is Moses goes to God, and pours out his heart in verses 22-23

- and this is so important for you and I to see
 - as I just mentioned – this will not be the last time the people of God turn on God’s leader – they will do it over and over again, in this book

But that is just the point – God wants to teach Moses how to deal with this issue

- He obviously, as we continue in this story does not just simply want to take away the trouble

We get into our minds sometimes that God’s ultimate goal for us in our happiness - that all He wants for you and me is fields of flowers and joys

- but friends – although God does desire to bless us, and though He does want us to walk in joy, happiness is not His ultimate goal, our holiness, our completeness as a child of God is what the Lord is aiming for with us

And so He will allow us to face things over and over again in our lives, even hard things, as He teaches us the lesson we need to learn

Sometimes I will counsel a married couple who are having trouble with one another – and their conversation goes like this – “He is just like this and it drives me crazy. She does this and I can’t stand it – and so we have decided to end the marriage, the best way out of this trouble is to just remove the situation.

- although that sounds good to our intellects – here is the problem with that type of thinking
 - often God is wanting to teach you something through that circumstance, He is wanting to grow you through that experience
- And just because you usurp His authority and remove the circumstance – does not mean that God is done teaching you that lesson

And I can’t tell you how many times I have seen a couple divorce and then remarry and they find themselves in the exact same situation with another person

- And we use worldly lingo to explain this – “I’m attracted to the same type of hurtful person”
 - Maybe? – Or maybe God is trying to teach you something – and to remove the lesson does nothing but put it off for another day

But Moses goes before the Lord and this will be the foundation of how he deals with what God is going to bring over and over again

- Moses goes to the Lord
 - Moses honestly, pours out his heart before God
 - And friends this is the way to deal with these things
- Some think, “I couldn’t talk to God like Moses did” – wait, He already knows your heart
 - Be honest, cast your cares upon Him
 - And be sensitive to His leading – watch Him work
- God then responds to Moses...

God responds to Moses – [Exodus 6:1-13](#)

4 times God says to Moses as he pours out his heart, “I am the Lord!!!!”

- Looks like God is in charge

Then at the end of chapter 6, we seem to have this random genealogy

- But understand why it is here
 - Israel is saying – who are you Moses? get out of here
- And in our culture we answer that question by saying here is where I grew up, here is where I got my education and experience, here is why you should follow me

But from a Jewish perspective, they introduce themselves by telling you who their forefather were

- And this is why the genealogy is here – it is introducing Moses and Aaron to the people of Israel

We pick up the story in chapter 7, Read Exodus 7:1-13

- God is completely honest with Moses – not everything is going to so great
 - I am going to harden Pharaoh’s heart
 - And he is going to harden his heart against you
- Now this has caused some confusion in the church today

Why would God hold Pharaoh responsible when God is really doing the hardening?

- And God certainly uses different words to describe what is going on

3 different Hebrew words translated “harden” in English

“Kabad” – dull – 7:14, 8:15

“Qasah” – being hard or fierce – 7:13, 13:15

“Hazaq” – to grow firm – 9:12

7 times it will say God hardened Pharaoh’s heart

- Exodus 7:3, 9:12, 10:1, 20, 27, 14:4

But 6 times the text is going to say that Pharaoh hardens his own heart – Exodus 7:13, 7:22, 8:15, 8:19, 8:32, 9:34

- and the different words come into play

I do want to point out that the first two times it speaks of God speaks of hardening Pharaoh's heart, it is predictive, the next 7 are Pharaoh hardening his own heart

- then the rest is God hardening the decision Pharaoh already made

Pharaoh already thought he was god

- Pharaoh already was determined to not follow the Lord
 - So God strengthened him in his decision to accomplish His purposes
 - To deliver His people

But this balance is something we see all throughout scripture

- And when we lose that balance we lose something
 - There are those in the body of Christ that are wonderful believers that believe that God is totally in control in the sense that we have no responsibility at all for our actions – it was all the Lord's doing

And on the other side there are wonderful believers that think it is God who is constantly responding to the decisions we make and He has no idea how it is going to work out

- But what the scripture teaches us is that God is sovereign, He is in control – and yet in that sovereignty He has sovereignly chosen to give man a free will
 - And those two things work together in this thing we call life - God is in control - And yet you are responsible for the decisions you make
- And is true for you – and that is true for Pharaoh as well
 - And when we feel like we have to choose one side or the other on that theological debate we miss out on something - God is in control – you can trust Him with everything - And – You are responsible to respond to what is calling you to in your life
- Don't pick one side or the other – both are true precious men and women

God is honest with Moses, this is not going to be easy, but God also explains to Moses why, what will not be easy has to happen as He brings on these plagues...

God is bringing the plagues...

#1 – Because His people need to know

- God is saying – My people need to know who I am
 - They are dealing harshly with Moses, they are walking in unbelief – they do not have a genuine fear of the Lord
 - And so God says, “I am going to do this – for My people – that they may know I am the Lord!

God is bringing the plagues...

#1 – Because His people need to know

#2 – That Pharaoh and the Egyptians may know

- God is an evangelist and so God wants Pharaoh and the Egyptian people need to know that He is the Lord
 - That God is not these false gods of nature
- And as we see these plagues starting tonight – you will see that each one of them are direct attacks on the gods of Egypt
 - Teaching them the God of Israel is far above anything they were worshipping in Egypt

Now before we start to look at the first few plagues tonight, we need to understand as Bible students how scholars and skeptics alike view the plagues

Now there are 3 ways that Bible skeptics and scholars view the plagues

#1 – This is all myth and legend

- I don't accept this because I believe the Bible is true, plus too much of it lines up with what we know about history

#2 – These plagues happened, but they were just natural, maybe even more severe than normal, and the author gives theological importance to that

- You know in June – Nile becomes stagnant and red, microscopic organisms, like a red tide

In July – that effects the frog population

- In the Hot summer and damp autumn – lice, flies, boils
 - In Jan you get Hail and rain
- In Feb – that is normally when the appearance of locusts in begins
 - In March – you can get darkness from great sandstorms
- And in April there were some deaths, given rise to Legend of the Passover
 - They have history channel shows that talk about this or a volcanic eruption that changed the climate and produced all of these things
- And of course I think God timing a volcano or a close encounter with the planet Mars as Chuck Missler used to suggest is just as much as God working a miracle as anything else, but there is a third theory and that is...

#3 – These plagues actually happened as the Bible said

- Dr. William Albright – who was one of the top archeologists found water troughs in El Arish which has hieroglyphics depicting the 10 plagues

Picture of the water trough from El Arish

- So I don't know why we need more than the account of God, but we are beginning to find it in the sands around Egypt even more evidence these things actually happened

Now I have a few more reasons that I personally don't believe these plagues were just natural occurrences

Why were the plagues not just “natural”?

#1 – Intensity – they had never seen anything like this

#2 – Prediction – Moses said it would happen before

#3 – Discrimination – often the Jews were left out

- So we are dealing with real historical events where God directly challenges the gods of Egypt, so not only His people would know Him, but the world would know Him as well – God is the continual evangelists

Exodus 4-12

The Prologue - Exodus 4:1 – 7:13

The Plagues – Exodus 7:14 – 11:10

#1 – The river turned to blood – Read Exodus 7:14-25

- God first strikes the River Nile
 - Now if you know one thing about Egypt – you know it has pyramids, if you know 2 things – you know the Nile is Egypt's source of life

The people were dependent on the river for drinking water, to water their crops and to perform the necessary cleansing they needed to do – we have ancient hymns they wrote to the life giving Nile

- The River was so important – they had a special god **Hapi (pictures) and his wife Isis** – who were the god and goddess of the Nile

Now some like to say again this first plague was a natural occurrence, sometimes the silt runoff would cause the water to turn a blood like color – though that is true, it wouldn't have killed off the fish

- Some will say – well a little single celled organisms would get into the water and died and the water would have a red like color
 - that would kill fish
 - but then how would you account for the water in pots and jugs on the land turning into blood as well?

Friends – this was a miracle that God actually did

- It is hard for me to image this simply being natural because if this was something that occurred on a regular basis, then why would Pharaoh see it as unusual, why wouldn't he say, this happens all the time?
 - No – the fish died, the water stank and people were desperate

And so as God struck this body of water for seven days and turned it into blood

And it was a direct slap in the face to these false gods who were helpless to do anything about it

- But Pharaoh does not repent, will not let the people go, and so the plagues continue

Now some want to know, 7 days? - people can't live for seven days without water so....?

- Well verse 24 answers the question, God did not affect the ground water, so people could dig, drink and live

The Plagues – Exodus 7:14 – 11:10

#1 – The river turned to blood

#2 – The plague of frogs – Read Exodus 8:1-15

- the frog was very important to the Egyptians

The idol they created which they named Heqet (Hecktick) to represent this goddess had the body of a woman and the head of a frog – pictures of Frog god

- it was like a worse case scenario for a blind date

But they worshipped this representation of the frog god, because they loved their frogs in Egypt

- the frogs would eat the bugs, in days before pesticides
 - they were also considered a delicacy
 - though if you can eat your god, he is not much of a god!
- but they worshipped frogs, they loved frogs and now they have them everywhere

But when the Egyptian magicians were able to duplicate the plague, Pharaoh hardened his heart once again and would not let the people go

- Now a word on these magicians
 - We don't know if they were doing some kind of trick or more than likely, Egyptians were known for their involvement in the Occult, it could be some sort of demonic power
- But here is the thing that is interesting to me – this demonic power never makes things better, it only makes things worse

It would be one thing if they could turn blood back into water, or get rid of the frogs, but they just produce more blood, and call out more frogs

- And such will always be the case
 - the enemy may be able to do powerful things in your life, but it will never make things better
 - Satan does not have good days – oh I'm going to bless them today
 - He will always make things worse

So these guys just keep producing more of the problem

- And what Egypt once worshipped, now they have them coming out of everywhere
 - And Pharaoh says, I have had enough

You see what was once a pleasure to them had now becomes a plague

- and let me tell you what a plague it would have been
 - I've done some research on frogs this week and found some interesting facts

Unlike flies who have multiple eyes and little hairs to sense when you are about to swatting them so they move out of the way – frogs do not - meaning

- In places where they have had infestations before, the people complained that as they would get up at night and walk to kitchens for a drink, they would step on frogs with every step – **Frogs everywhere picture**
 - Frog guts between the toes
 - Sick – oh you think that is sick

When a frog gets sick to its stomach, it can't vomit, so instead, it brings out its entire stomach, not just the contents, listen to me its entire stomach - no it gets better!!!

- the frog then takes its legs and scrapes off the remaining contents of its stomach so it feel better

Picture of Frog throwing its stomach up

There are some great YouTube videos you can watch sometime later and watch this frog clean its own stomach contents off

- think about that next time you eat frog legs

But imagine watching that happen over and over again in your kitchen

- and then that isn't even mentioning the noise
 - over and over again
- Truly what once was a pleasure to them had now become a plague
 - This is what they were facing in Egypt

So Moses asks (verses 9-10 in chapter 8), “What do you want me to do?” – When do you want them to go?

- And Pharaoh says, catch this, “Tomorrow” – one more night with the frogs

Tomorrow??? - What????

- Why did he not say, “right now????”

This seems strange until we pull it from ancient Egypt and begin to see it today

- we too have things we experience that once may have brought us pleasure, but now becomes a plague
 - Alcohol – it relaxes me, it brings me such joy, not big deal - But then it becomes a plague

The relationship was so fun – sure he wasn't a believer but it doesn't really matter – he is so fun

- But now it has become a plague
 - Maybe those pictures off the internet – at first they were just an escape from reality

But now it has become a plague, threatening your family

- and the Lord comes to us and says, “I have provided for you a way of escape, I want to deal with this in your life
 - You repent, and reckon that old man dead and I will work in your life, so when do you want me to free you, when do you want to get started?
- And we so often respond oh I know it needs to go

Oh I know it's bad - I know you have the ability to deal with this in my life

- But how about we start tomorrow?
 - How about one more night with the frogs (as John Courson used to say in his famous study on that)

We kid ourselves when it comes to our sin that we are going to get involved just one more time

- just one more drunken binge
 - just one more high
- Just one more fling with that person
 - Just one more look at that website
- And then tomorrow we will get on deliverance, tomorrow we will have victory

But friends – tomorrow never comes – it is a trick of the enemy to rip you off – today is the day of salvation!

- Amen? Amen!
 - Well that is enough for tonight!
 - We will tackle the next 8 plagues next Wednesday Night!