

7. Sin and compromise

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Satan demands compromises from the believer's heart all the time. He will dangle a carrot of short time pleasure in front of believer's eyes to block the consequence.

Satan will show you a seemingly easy way out instead of perseverance. It will promise you popularity instead of standing alone for your moral, ethical and spiritual value. It whisper to you that you are not forsaking God, just re-prioritizing your life.

We are going to go over eight plagues that God is going to send to Pharaoh because his stubbornness and hardened heart from chapter 8 to chapter 10. During the course of these plagues, the whole country becomes worse than a wasted land, yet Pharaoh does not repent. That is what sin does to a person's heart. It hardens a heart of a man so much that he could care less about the end result. At the same time, that person expects others to compromise and join him in misery. It is correct that misery loves company.

Each plague was leveled at a different god of Egypt. There were thousands of temples, millions of idols and about three thousand gods in Egypt.

God directed His plagues against the idolatry in Egypt, against Pharaoh and against satan. It was a battle between one true God and Egyptians' false gods. God exposed them what they are and He displayed to Israel His ability to deliver them.

We are not going to read the entire three chapters, but we are going to hit highlights of each plague.

A. THE PLAGUE OF FROGS

Exodus 8:1-4 And the Lord spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. 2 But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs. 3 So the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. 4 And the frogs shall come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.'"'"

One of the most beautiful temples in Memphis was the temple to Heka, the ugly frog-headed goddess. It was an offense to kill a frog in ancient Egypt, because they were sacred. But if you found them in your house, bed, food, and underfoot everywhere, as the Egyptians did here, you might feel like killing them.

Can you imagine having Kermit the Frog everywhere you turn? And waking up in the morning, you find that wet slimy thing staring at you from top of your pillow or a couple of them jump out of your cereal box?

As God of all creation, He has no need of powerful armies, the frogs in His hands is a sufficient instrument against the Egyptians.

Exodus 8:8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat the Lord that He may take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the Lord."

Pharaoh thought that if he promised to let the Israelites go, the God of Israel would fall for his false promise. Sin does that to all of us, deceiving and being deceived to think that God would not know about our sins.

B. THE PLAGUE OF LICE

Exodus 8:16-17 So the Lord said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.'" 17 And they did so. For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and it became lice on man and beast.

All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

The Egyptians worshiped the earth god Geb. This sacred earth god Geb is now being despised by the Egyptians. This time God does not show Pharaoh the mercy of a warning and an invitation to repentance.

We must never think God is unfair when He does not show mercy. If God is totally fair, He would never show mercy to the sinners like us. Mercy means that we are not getting what we deserve.

The Egyptian priests were extremely picky about hygiene and ritual cleansing and an infestation of lice made them unable to worship their gods. The plague of lice was also upon every beast. The gods of Egypt would not receive the sacrifice of lice-infested animals, so this stopped their sacrificial system. God has His way to do whatever He wants.

C. THE PLAGUE OF FLIES

Exodus 8:21-23 Or else, if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you and your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they stand. 22 And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the land. 23 I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be."

Some scholars believe that the swarms are horse flies or biting insects. Egyptians had an insect god that was known as Khepara. These insect could be found in the Egyptian tombs and speaks of eternal life. Now the Egyptians are hating their own insect gods who are making their lives miserable.

D. PHARAOH'S FIRST PROPOSAL OF COMPROMISE

Exodus 8:25 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land."

Pharaoh, being a type of satan, was offering to Moses the first compromise as satan often offers to us. He suggests to us, "You can be a born-again Christian. But you still can do what you used to do, like drinking, cussing, watching porno and other fun stuff. God doesn't mind." Right!

But what our Lord says to us?

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

God demands complete separation from the world. The friendship of the world is enmity with God. He tells us to make up our minds – in or out.

E. PHARAOH'S SECOND PROPOSAL OF COMPROMISE

Exodus 8:28 And Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away. Intercede for me."

We all have seen fanatic sports fans from TV sports programs. They paint their faces, topless in the middle of Minnesota winter, some wear cheese head hat, colored wig, chicken outfit, pig noses and so on. Nobody cares and nobody think anything wrong with that. We chuckle and that is far as it goes.

But if you become a born-again Christian, it is a completely different story. Some of you who are not Christians and come to our church for the first time and you see some people raise their hands while they worship the Lord. And you are thinking, "Look at these fanatics," even though you did far more fanatic things at the last baseball game.

God is eternal, but the ball game is not. It is far better to cling onto what is eternal than temporal.

Here we have the temptation to be "borderline believers," trying to stay close to the world and close to the Lord at the same time. It just doesn't work that way.

F. THE PLAGUE OF PESTILENCE

Exodus 9:2-4 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."'"

This time it was a disease that affected cattle. The second largest temple that Egypt ever built was located in Memphis and was for the worship of the black bull Apis.

Can you imagine all these animals dropping dead left and right all over? The whole country is turning into a gigantic animal slaughter house. They are really having a cow.

G. THE PLAGUE OF BOILS

Exodus 9:8-11 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.

The priests of all the religions of Egypt had to be spotless – with no mark or blemish on their bodies – in order to serve in the temples. They had a couple of problems in worshiping their idols during this period. First, the boils were on all the priests.

None of them could serve anywhere. Second, they could not find any animal which didn't have a boil to sacrifice. It was actually a judgment on the entire religion of Egypt.

H. THE PLAGUE OF HAIL

Exodus 9:18-19 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.””

God demonstrates His power with the plague of hail over the sky-goddess Nut who is powerless in her own domain.

Those who did not believe God made no provision for protection. The message God gave to the Egyptians is the same one He gives to the world today. God's judgment is coming. Man is not wise to go on as if nothing is going to happen. It was that way in the days of Noah, and it will be that way before Christ comes again in judgment. Many people in Egypt did not believe God, and they paid the price for their unbelief. All God asks to us is that we believe Him.

Exodus 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

God takes care of His own, the Egyptian gods couldn't.

I. THE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS

Exodus 10:4-6 Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory. 5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. 6 They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians--which neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.”” And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

The judgment of the locusts was against the insect gods. The plague of locusts meant the crops were to be destroyed. Locusts were often used as the judgment of God as found in the Books of Joel and Revelation.

By now, the land of Egypt would make a battle field looks like a paradise. To make the matter worse, they are going to have locusts that devour everything in their sight.

When we continue in our sins, the situation would go from bad to worse. We can harden our hearts or we can repent from it and turn to God.

J. PHARAOH'S THIRD PROPOSAL OF COMPROMISE

Exodus 10:10-11 Pharaoh said, “The Lord be with you--if I let you go, along with your women and children! Clearly you are bent on evil. 11 No! Have only the men go; and worship the Lord, since that’s what you have been asking for.” Then Moses and Aaron were driven out of Pharaoh’s presence. NIV

Like Pharaoh, satan tells us to compromise in our family faith. He says, “If you have to be a fanatic Christian, go ahead. But why do you need to make your children to be such oddballs in their school? Do you want them to be isolated as Jesus Freaks? Let them listen to hard metal acid music, watch MTV videos. Let them be like the rest of kids.” Yeah, like the rest of kids who have no idea for future.

How can you enjoy your salvation as parents when you know that your children are heading for hell? That is what satan wants us to do – leaving our precious children in the world.

K. THE PLAGUE OF DARKNESS

Exodus 10:21-23 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness which may even be felt." 22 So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. 23 They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

God moved in with darkness against their main god that was worshiped – the sun-god Ra. The sun disc is the most familiar symbol found in Egyptian ruins. The plague of darkness shows the utter helplessness of their false god Ra.

Can you imagine when you cannot see anything around you but you can see that Goshen where the children of Israel are located has sunlight? For some of you who do not know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord might laugh at me and other Christians – 'These losers' you call, at the end of your life, you will suddenly realize that you will be in total isolated darkness for eternity while those Christian fanatic will enjoy the light that comes from God in heaven. Who is the real loser? Why do you want to stay with the losing team? Why not join God's winning side?

L. PHARAOH'S FOURTH PROPOSAL OF COMPROMISE

Exodus 10:24-26 Then Pharaoh called to Moses and said, "Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be kept back. Let your little ones also go with you." 25 But Moses said, "You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. 26 Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind. For we must take some of them to serve the Lord our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the Lord until we arrive there."

How often satan put fear in the hearts of Christians, "You can't tithe or give an offering to the church. You may not able to make ends meet. How are you going to pay your bills?" Satan loves to get hold of our material wealth so that we cannot use it for the Lord. All that we have belongs to Christ.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

What a tragedy to rob God by leaving our material resources for satan to use!

We may trace these same plagues in the Book of Revelation, when God describes His final conflict with the god of this world, satan: water to blood (Rev. 8:8 and 16:4-6); frogs (16:13); disease and afflictions (16:2); hail and fire (8:7); locusts (9:1) and darkness (16:10).

M. APPLICATION

Once we start to compromise, there is no end. One compromise will demand another. Soon we will be completely trapped inside of the devil's net. What is the best solution against compromise? Don't even go there.

2 Corinthians 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.